Travelling hierarchies: roads in and out of slave status in a Central Malian Fulbe network

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Acknowledgments: Some words of thanks and belonging

This study is a journey based on interactions and relational dialogues. Although writing a thesis is a very individual and sometimes lonely trip, the words of thanks here bear witness to connections. Being a traveller and longing for discovery, this PhD project made me realize how important feelings of rootedness in friendships and family and collegial relations are. Many people contributed to my sense of belonging – be it by discussing, commenting, singing, emailing, skyping, drinking or dancing together – in spite of or maybe because of my endless journeys. Looking back on all these shared adventures makes me feel a rich person. It is all those who cared, got in touch with me and enriched my travels who I wish to thank here.

My journey began with a yearlong stay with a rich second-generation Lebanese migrant family in Brazil in 1997-1998. This trip aroused my curiosity in cultural differences, which I decided to nourish in the Netherlands at the Department of Anthropology at Leiden University (1998-2003). People like Sabine Luning, Jan Jansen, Jose van Santen and Peter Geschiere inspired me with their teaching and passion for both Africa and anthropology. Mirjam de Bruijn's inspiring course on nomads in the Sahel in 2003 prompted me to do my MA research in the Malian Sahel, which allowed me to explore my already existing passion for Malian music. Anneke Breedveld gave me some language courses in Fulfulde before I left and Mirjam and Jan Jansen helped me with the writing up of my thesis and facilitated introductions for me in Bamako in 2001. And in 2007 Jan generously received my sister and mother on a festive occasion in the Malian Mande hills: *ini che*!

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Leiden allowed for exchanges with my promotor Peter Pels, who I admire for his deep knowledge of the genealogy of anthropological concepts. Mirjam de Bruijn is an artist in drawing out my energy and enthusiasm and in stimulating my creativity: thanks

reader will also give me feedback by reporting any mistakes, questions and remarks to: lotpetot@yahoo.com

Finally, thanking central figures like Martin, my mother May, father Wim and sister Lien seems impossible on paper: I hope they will take pride and satisfaction from having cared for me on my road to finding my place in this world. Upon completion of this thesis, Martin, my soul mate who walked along the first 10 years of my career as an anthropologist with me, made an analogy with the *veni, vidi, vici* funding in the Netherlands: '*ze kwam, keek heeel lang rond en overwon dan eindelijk*'. Indeed, I have finally reached my long-desired destination, after several detours inspired by a restless heart. Recently I won the *Lotterique*: thank you Eric for being such an inspiring man. Indeed, *au bout de la patience, il y a le ciel …*

Notes on transliteration and orthography

The people central to this thesis are nomadic pastoralists by origin and their ethnic group has different names in different languages. They are widely spread over Sub-Saharan Africa, from Senegal in the west to Sudan in the east (see Map 1). In French, Fulɓe are better known as '*peul*' and in English, they are known as 'Fulani'. In this thesis, I chose to stick to the name they use for themselves: Fulɓe.

The written form of the language of the Fulɓe is not standardised as there is no standard Fulfulde dialect, accordingly there is no standard Fulfulde orthography. Many differences in dialects and writing exist between Fulɓe in Senegal, Mali, Cameroon and beyond. But also within Mali, the Fulfulde of Fulɓe living in Kayes or Nioro du Sahel differs significantly from that of Fulɓe living in Maacina or the Douentza region. Since there is still no recognized single Roman orthography, I decided to use linguist Anneke Breedveld's orthography as used in her (1995) thesis, thus Jawaamɓe instead of Dia-waamɓe and Riimayɓe instead of Riimaayɓe. Often used words, such as Riimayɓe, Maccuɓe and Weheeɓe are only in italics in the beginning where the reader gets to know these words first. After ten or more times being used, they are supposed to be 'common sensical knowledge'.

Both French and Arabic have influenced the Fulfulde language: *bitiki* is the word for shop and is derived from the French word *boutique*; *assalaam aleikum* is an Arabic-based formula mainly used by men in greetings. Arabic words are spelled out in the Roman language (Hajj, fiqh etc.). For each foreign word, I have indicated whether it is French (FR), Fulfulde (FF) or Arabic (AR). The reader will find an overview and translation of any foreign word in the glossary in the appendix of this thesis.

For personal names in Fulfulde I used the most basic spelling: Amadu instead of Ahmadou and Musa instead of Mousa. However, for names of official persons, which have become more or less iconic in their French spelling, I have stuck to the French OU instead of U: President Amadou Toumani Toure, dictator Moussa Traore and Ministers Oumar and Hamadoun Dicko. This principle extends to the spelling of place names: I used Segou / Douentza / Timbouctou / Maasina instead of Segu / Duwanza / Timbuktu / Maacina. The spelling of place names as used on my maps is as follows:

Douentza, Timbouctou (not Timbuktu), Maasina (not Maacina), Hamdallaye, Bandi-agara, Djibo (not Jibo), Koro, Kanyume (not Kanyoume, Kaniume), Joona (not Djona), Dalla (not Dallah), Booni, Mondoro (not Monndoro), Haayre, Hombori (not Hom-mbori), Djenne (not Jenne), Segou, Mopti. For small hamlets around Dalla (Map 5, see Chapter 2), I adopted the Fulfulde spelling of U instead of the French OU, which makes Bussuma (not Boussouma), Bumbam (not Boumbam), Diankabu, Bumbani-Kani and so on.

Names of ethnic groups are spelled according to Standard English orthography: Dogon, Songhay (not Sonrai), Tuareg (not Tamasheq), Bambara.

I also added an * to names to conceal the identity of informants who I felt or who had said themselves had an interest in remaining anonymous (see section on methodology).

Pronunciation

Consonants:
C - is pronounced as in chapter
G - is pronounced as in garden
J - is pronounced as in jar
K - is pronounced like the c in courageous
Ñ - is pronounced like the gn in the French *espagnol*
η - is pronounced like ng in song
ɓ, δ & ɸ- are pronounced as b, d and y and with laryngealized voicing (= with creaky voice).

Vowels:
U - as in flute
y - as in yard

Map 1: Fulfulde speakers in West-Africa.
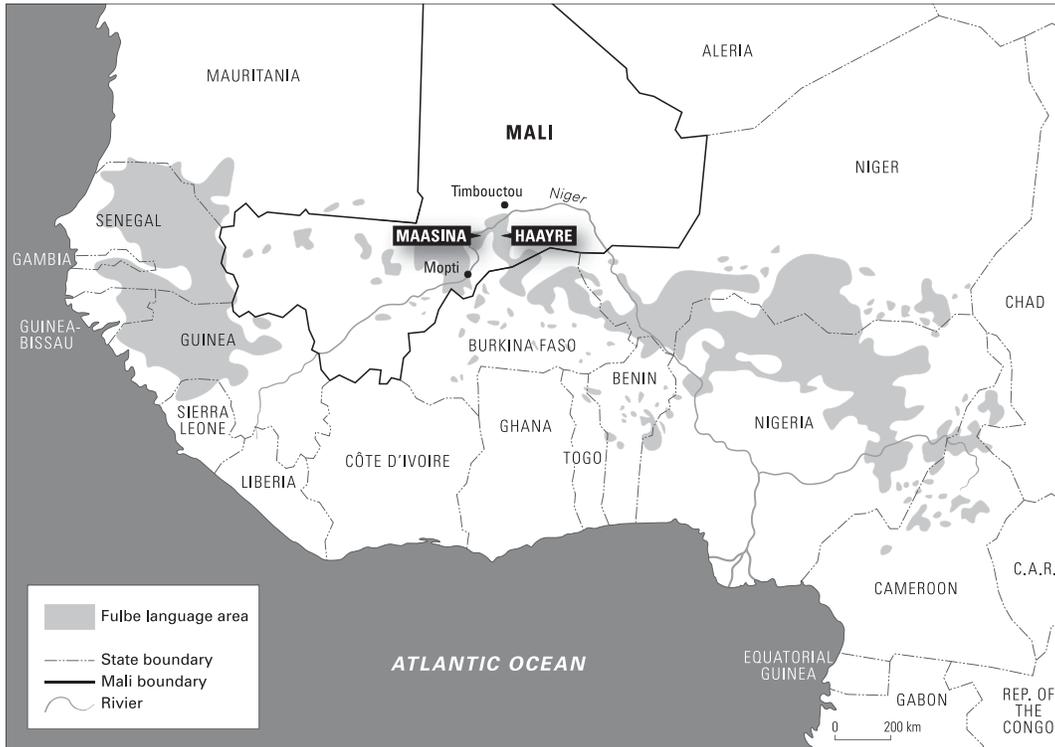
Introduction

Setting the scene

Central to this thesis are the various roads taken by slave descendants who used to belong to one specific noble family.[1] By investigating the social careers of slave descendants I wish to make a contribution to an understanding of a slave past that over time has generated new cultural and social forms in 'modernity' as described by Geschiere *et al.* (2008: 4). The unique aspect of this study resides in its approach to social change in Sahelian hierarchies through the lens of mobility. The way in which the heritage of slavery through social hierarchy "directs" the various itineraries and roads travelled by slave descendants is in a nutshell what this thesis is all about. However, as in theatre play, the nutshell needs to be staged and to do so, I propose to tune in to an average encounter of an anthropologist in Mali.

Tuning in
November 2007. It is a typically dry and hot day in Bamako. When I get in the taxi I am welcomed by *kora* music and greetings from two female co-passengers smelling of incense. An animated conversation starts about why I am in Bamako. When I explain that I am doing research on slave descendants in Mali, the discussion stereotypically moves to the transatlantic slave trade. When insisting that this is not what my research is about, I can see questions in their eyes. Slave descendants in Mali? 'Ah, so you are a historian researching a past long gone?' remarks one of them. I try to explain that I am an anthropologist studying contemporary issues by talking with people about their present situation. Silence follows, so I add that the week before in Central Mali, I talked to someone who proudly showed me his 'manumission document', a kind of contract written in Arabic to confirm his liberation from his master. The taxi driver reacts with disbelief and indignation: 'People buying freedom in Mali? Never heard of it! That can only be the *broussards*.'[2] I reply that I have talked to people in Bamako who also have such a contract or are eager to get one. The conversation stops abruptly and there is a certain unease in the air. Indigenous slavery is something that many Malians feel it is ridiculous to consider today as it belongs to the past. In other words, the country's slave past is not allowed in the present for my fellow passengers.

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[1]   I will describe the choice for this network of mobile people later in the methodological considerations in this introduction and also in Chapter 2).

[2]   French notion to point to those people living in 'the bush', i.e. in rural areas that are difficult to reach.

Photo 1   Dogon staircase, here as a symbol for upward social mobility.

I have engaged in many similar conversations with passengers on buses, trucks and taxi buses and their reactions vary. One person insists on slavery being a thing of the past in Mali, the next denies the existence of indigenous slavery in the first place and the third may actually take pride in 'her slaves' who are at disposition day and night. The history of indigenous slavery is thus clearly a paradoxical topic in Mali. This ambiguity is a recurring issue that is central to this thesis.

Obviously, this ambiguity also travels with Malians who have moved abroad. Not only in Mali but also among Malians in Paris, the issue of slavery crops up now and then. Fanta for example is a woman from a royal family in Central Mali who had been living in Paris for almost twenty years when I first meet her for coffee at the *Gare de l'Est*. When describing a conflict she had with a French colleague, she reminded him of the fact that she was a royal princess, who had slaves at her disposition in Mali and she therefore expected him to display more respect towards her. When some days later he inquired whether what she had said was actually true, she proudly replied that it was. Thinking back on it, I know she is right, she can ask for almost everything to be done for her by people of slave descent belonging to her royal family back in Mali.

From Bamako I take a bus to Douentza Province (Map 2), the area in Central Mali where I was conducting fieldwork among the former slaves of an elite royal family. On the road, I think both situations over. The random taxi conversation points out how the (indigenous) slave past is a 'silenced' (Trouillot 1995) reality in the Malian public sphere. The example of Fanta living in Paris points in an opposite direction, showing how pervasive the idiom of slavery is as a mindset that people apply in completely different cultural contexts. It is precisely this paradoxical contrast that makes the need for a profound analysis of legacies of slavery in the context of mobility even more salient.

Questions and eyebrows raised

> The migrant and the slave share two common aspects: They both transcend locality. Both are at the same time insider and outsider to their host community. Paradoxically they are both in- and excluded, integrated but at the same time alienated.
> (Argenti & Röschenthaler 2006: 38-39)

The majority of younger slave descendants had moved out of the village where I was living in 2001-2002. These youngsters left to spend shorter or longer periods of time in cities like Mopti, Bamako and Segou in Mali, Abidjan and Bouake in Ivory Coast, Kumasi in Ghana, Dakar in Senegal, Malabo in Equatorial Guinea and so on. Do they have more reasons to move out compared to non-slave-descending (freeborn) families? Freeborn families in the village under study clearly migrated less. Migrants were omnipresent in their absence: My neighbour in her fifties was taking care of her son's young children while he was working in the capital city of Bamako, and the peanut seller at the market had just bought new flip-flops with the money her husband had sent her.

Map 2   Mali: Douentza as an administrative zone

One of my key informants was Maman Abidjan, a slave descendant from a village in Central Mali (Map 2). Her name was the result of having spent most of her life in Abidjan. When her husband died, her family moved her back to her home village where, paralyzed and with diabetes, she had to use a stick to keep the children away from her collection of letters, pictures and souvenirs from Mecca. In Abidjan she had been treated with respect, while in her home village even little children ridiculed her.

Maman's story made me wonder about the extent to which migrants are able to change their identity in their new place of residence. Although she was of slave descent in Dalla, she was known as a casted praise singer in Abidjan. How would she have presented herself in Paris? Maman appeared to have moved out of her slave status outside her village but once she returned home, this status was reascribed to her. She tried to uphold her new respectability, but was forced to take her place among slave descendants on ritual occasions and had not been able to uphold her social promotion

once she returned home. These kinds of moral and social obstacles to belonging and social promotion are central to this thesis.

What is original in this study is that it addresses social change related to the slave past in Fulɓe society through the lens of mobility. As the quote that opens this section indicates, the migrant and the slave share the same predicament, that of being an outsider in the places they moved to. This book shows how, for many slave descendants, being a migrant and slave descendant is a double predicament: It is a double articulation of non-belonging and of strangerhood. The central question is therefore in what ways movement allows slave descendants to reconfigure (Rossi 2009a) their status and relations with their former masters? To what extent does movement in space give people room for manoeuvre to adapt to new ideas and social settings? Does mobility contribute to social promotion by slave descendants like Maman Abidjan in Fulɓe society?

The sub-questions related to this are: (i) Is the cultural field of hierarchy in rural areas challenged by the agency of migrants? (ii) In what ways does mobility contribute to the turnover of hegemony to ideology? And, more specifically, when do the distinctive features of race, gender and discrimination based on slave status become collective ideology and thus the subject of debate? Finally (iii) In what conditions does hegemony become unstable and change from anti-hegemonic ideas into an ideological struggle at the cultural frontier of the field of hierarchy?

Before explaining the three notions central to this thesis, I point out what kind of slavery I will be discussing here. Rossi (2009a: 5) outlined four ways in which slavery in West Africa manifests itself: (i) the resilience of historical forms of enslavement (slavery); (ii) stigmatization on the grounds of inherited or putative slave status (categorical slavery); (iii) forms of exploitation akin to slavery (metaphorical slavery); and (iv) exogenous discourses opening up new fields of thought and action around the notion of slavery (extraverted slavery). In this model, only the first category can be considered as a type of 'slavery', as all the others are different phenomena variously related to slavery but they cannot be considered as slavery itself. The forms of slavery I refer to mostly in this thesis are categorical and metaphorical slavery.

The Fulɓe communities I studied changed from being slave economies to a hierarchically organized society. Fulɓe are spread across vast areas of West and East Africa (Map 1) and since the seventeenth century have created several empires.[3] Though each emerged under different conditions, they share a similar social hierarchical organization throughout the Sahel. The Sahel is a so-called frontier zone (Kopytoff 1987) in which kingdoms or empires existed alongside each other. The 'uncontrolled' zones between these areas served as slave reservoirs (Goody 1980: 25). Mobile Fulɓe warlords ruled over vast territories and were interested in accumulating wealth in people and labourers to cultivate the extensive areas of land they acquired (Klein 1993a: 4). Most of their slaves were either captives of war, traded slaves from other ethnic groups or pagans who did not want to embrace Islam (Clark 1999: 93). Slavery was thus an important

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[3] The first empires were in Futa Djallon (present-day Guinea) and Futa Toro (present-day Senegal) in the western Sahel. Later the Sokoto Empire in northern parts of today's Nigeria inspired the rise of neighbouring empires in Adamaoua, today's Cameroon and Chad. See also Map 1 on p. xviii.

institution that reinforced the war economy and the economic development of these pre-colonial Sahelian kingdoms (Meillassoux 1975: 15-16).

Slaves were exploited in various ways and were specialized in forms of physical labour. The traders in slaves and cattle formed a separate social group (FF:[4] *Jawaamɓe*) and the exploitation of slaves by the elites was the basic characteristic of this economy and society. The monopoly of violence rested with the political elites who raided vast areas as warlords. Islam was a justification for their enslavement of others.

This social stratification of society was based on a legal system in which inter-dependence and the exchange of protection, products, trade and religious services were regulated. Slaves and the freeborn had different rights: Freeborn Fulɓe controlled their slaves' movement, activities and labour, while slaves were excluded from the rights reserved for the freeborn. Under Islamic legislation, freeborn were granted exclusive rights to kinship, which were denied to slaves. And on the basis of these legal differences in rights, freeborn set the terms for slave behaviour. Slaves were a necessary contrast that 'proved' the nobility of others.

Slavery in Fulɓe society consisted of multiple relations on a broad spectrum, differing in terms of (social) distance to their masters and of juridical statutes. Slave groups were diverse both among themselves and individually. Depending on the position of their masters, slaves became weavers, peasants, beggars, butchers, traders, soldiers, musicians, squatters, day labourers, concubines or persons of trust, which explains why there was a lot of variety among slaves, some of which had little in common with each other. Upon enslavement, slaves had different cultural backgrounds: They came from different regions with different linguistic background and religion. Also their family relations and professions were varied.[5]

Slavery gained shape in different kinds of relations. In practice, it consisted of very different relations within one single legal institutional framework, which made it almost impossible for French colonial officers to abolish slavery in all its forms. The first steps in the fight against the trade in slaves in the French colonies were taken in 1889 but it was only in 1905 that slavery as a legal system was declared illegal (Klein 1998; Klein & Miers 1999; Kopytoff & Miers 1977).[6] It was difficult to abolish slavery as 30% to 50% of the economy was based on it (Meillassoux 1975) and it was deeply engrained in socio-cultural practices. Its legal abolition did not result in the disappearance of slavery as an important idiom for expressing and reproducing inequalities. Although raids and the trade in slaves were abolished by the French colonial administration at the beginning of the twentieth century in Mali, the references to the Rope demonstrate how inequality continues to be expressed in a vocabulary of slavery. This stigmatization on the grounds of inherited or putative slave status is what has been called 'categorical slavery' (Rossi 2009a: 5).

In the first part of this introduction, I explain how the central line of argument in this thesis is guided by three emic concepts used by Fulɓe themselves: The Rope (FF:

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[4]   The abbreviation FF is used in the rest of this text to refer to words in the Fulfulde language.

[5]   See Chapter 2 for more details on this network.

[6]   The first official treaty dates from 1889 (the Treaty of Brussels) but its rigorous implementation in the colonies only dates from 1905 in West Sudan (contemporary Mali).

ɓoggol), the Head (FF: *Hoore*) and the Road (FF: *laawol*). In the second part, I link these emic concepts to theories of mobility, legacies of slavery and styles. In so doing, I contextualize this study in a broader framework and describe the various (anthropological) debates on slavery, mobility and memory.

Emic notions guiding the research problematic

The rope: Past slaveries connected to present cultural fields of hierarchy

The changes in Fulɓe society moving from a slave economy to a hierarchically organized society will be explained in this section. I describe informants' use of the (metaphor of the) Rope, which they use to discuss present relations to the slave past. The rope is what connects the past to the present and the present to the past. It is a connecting link, a tie that binds.

The first time I remember an informant using the notion of the Rope is when he described how his slave ancestors were sold at the market 'with a Rope tied around their neck'. This informant thus refers to master-slave relations in the past: A master tied his slaves to keep them with him. In fact, references to the Rope contrast strongly with the more generic association between slavery and chains. The transatlantic slave trade is often symbolized by chains binding slaves together, the internal (indigenous) African slave trade has sometimes been portrayed as being more benign, which corresponds to the image of the more benign Rope.

A more symbolic use of the notion of the rope was voiced by the mayor of a village in Central Mali who indicates how between his royal family and the family of their former slave descendants: 'The Rope is always there.'[7] In his use of the metaphor, the Rope points to a connection, a line between the past and the present. The present in this view is directly 'tied' to the past and *vice versa*. This metaphorical use of the Rope in a historical sense points to a social relation that is at present no longer strictly definable as slavery. The mayor implies here that the legacy of slavery is present in various ways.

The third relation is illustrated in the way in which people of slave descendant are called 'children of the Rope' and therefore lack certain assets. One frequently hears people saying: 'I refuse to discuss with a child of the Rope'.[8] Such a remark reinforces the moral boundaries whereby the speaker implies that s/he is of higher status then the slave descendant and considers it a waste of time to spend energy on people of slave descent, whom he considers unworthy persons. This arrogant use of the 'Rope' demarcates the social and moral boundaries between the freeborn and persons of slave descent.

In conclusion, there are three main relationships that are implicitly embedded in the (metaphorical) use of the concept of 'the Rope' by informants. They are: Master-slave / past-present and status-stigma. Below I address the Rope in each of these relations in more detail and illustrate in greater detail how the Rope connects a past ideology of

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[7]   In French this informant literally says: "*Il y a toujours la corde*". See also de Bruijn & Pelckmans (2005).

[8]   In Fulfulde: 'Mi haɓɓataa e ɓi ɓoggol' (ɓi = child /ɓoggol = rope)

slavery to what I call a present 'cultural field' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991) of hierarchy.

The rope as a cultural field of hierarchy
So far the notion of the Rope has explained how hierarchical relations from the past are reflected in the way honour is today distributed among various groups in Fulɓe society. To explain how hierarchies can be understood in the society under study here, I now turn to some theoretical concepts. To understand present inequalities between different social status groups among Fulɓe, I propose using the notion of the 'cultural field of hierarchy'. Comaroff & Comaroff (1991: 27-28) introduced this term instead of 'culture' because it is less all encompassing. The notion of field makes it easier to open it up to interact with other cultural fields such as capitalism, colonialism and Islam. Several fields coexist in one semantic dimension.

Existing hierarchies in Fulɓe society today are not unilinearly traceable as legacies, residues or remnants of slavery. Physical violence by an older person *vis-à-vis* a younger one can be due to a range of statuses that are in no way related to master-slave relations. Beatings can take place in the context of the legal authority of the father over his son or the authority of an Islamic teacher over his student. Legacies of slavery in contemporary Fulɓe society are thus part of a broader cultural field of hierarchy. Within this cultural field, not all practices of inequality necessarily echo accepted practices from when slavery was still a legal institution before its abolition.

Since this study is about changes in relations of power, a framework to address the notion of power is needed. Comaroff & Comaroff (1991: 22) draw a triangular relation between cultural field and the two sides of power: Hegemony and ideology. Power has a Janus face: An active, agentive and questionable aspect (ideology) versus a naturalized, passive and uncontested aspect (hegemony). While ideology is the active, questionable part of culture, hegemony in contrast is the part of culture where power lies 'in what it silences, what it prevents people from thinking and saying, what it puts beyond the limits of the rational and the credible' (*Ibid.*: 23). In other words, while hegemony silences, ideology can be articulated in the public sphere (*Ibid.*: 24). There is an inter-relationship and difference between the world as represented (ideology) and the world as experienced (hegemony). In other words, hegemony relates to ideology like 'form to content' (*Ibid.*: 29) or a recipe to taste.

For now let us zoom in more closely on hegemony in relation to the concept of 'habitus', which Bourdieu (1991: 56) defined as follows:

> Embodied history – internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product. As such, it is what gives practices their relative autonomy with respect to external determinations of the immediate present ... It ensures the permanence in change that makes the individual agent a world within the world.

Habitus is explicitly not about unchangeable practices but about how structure and agency mutually reinforce each other. Put differently, hegemony can be seen as the process of power in habitus formation. The question is how the incorporation of habitus and hegemony is organized. Comaroff & Comaroff (1991) and Foucault (1979) described how government attempts at disciplining the social transformation of people's

habits necessarily ask for 'bodily reform'. Their theories start from the way macro-level processes impact on micro-level practices and actors. The advantage of the habitus approach is that it also allows for an inverse direction: From micro to macro. It allows for a bottom-up analysis of the ways in which slave status has been internalized. Habitus explains both the mental (Baldus 1977) and bodily (Shaw 2002; Hardung 2002) internalization of the cultural field of hierarchy by slave descendants themselves. Miers (2003: 659) called such features the 'immaterial weapons of submission' of slave descendants by freeborn elites.[9] To summarize, habitus is hegemony in that it consists of practices that are internalized but have not yet been experienced as power. Habitus and hegemony can be experienced negatively (constraint), positively (values) or more neutrally as conventions (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991: 22).

In Fulɓe society, habitus is for a large part defined by a mixture of customary and Islamic notions of honour (FF: *Ndimu*). There is unequal access to honour for different groups, which, in Islamic societies, is mainly defined by ancestry and lineage descent.[10] Those who identify with freeborn ancestry (FF: *Riimɓe*) in Central Malian Fulɓe society are the ruling Weheeɓe, the religious Moodibaaɓe and the pastoralist Jalluuɓe, with each having their own realm of honour. Ideally, ruling Weheeɓe derive honour from their political power (FF: *laamu*), pastoralist Jalluuɓe achieve it through their cattle (FF: *Jawdi*) and the Moodibaaɓe gain it from knowledge in the Muslim community (FF: A*lsilaamaaku*). Currently the lineages of trading Jawaamɓe and arts- and crafts-producing Ŋeeŋɓe are also considered part of the community of freeborn (FF: *Riimɓe*). More generally, honour in Fulɓe society can be obtained by specializing in noble behaviour (FF: *Ndimaaku*) and/or piety (FF: *Juulde*). Slaves are usually excluded from these realms.[11]

Slaves have limited access to what is defined as 'honourable' in Fulɓe society.[12] Through their capture, they were disconnected from their ancestry in their society of origin. Their lineage starts from their arrival in the new host society and thus necessarily lacks seniority. Slave lineages continue to be stigmatized because the absence of a lengthy genealogy implies lesser moral qualities, and thus stigma for slave descendants. In the cultural field of hierarchy, non-freeborn members of society can be legally marginalized according to Islamic legal prescriptions. Mainstream interpretations of Malikite Islamic legislation, which is dominant in the study area, have it that slave status in this body of legislation is perpetual. One is either of freeborn status or of slave status (i.e. a slave or a descendant of a slave). In customary interpretations of the Islamic body of legislation, those with freeborn status have more rights than those of non-freeborn status (Brunschwig 1960: 30). Belonging to a freeborn lineage ideally

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[9]   It is impossible to isolate certain acts of exclusion from cross-cutting realms that define people's positions in social relations such as gender, religious status, age, generation and economic status.

[10] Iliffe (2005: 1) in his comparative study on honour in Sub-Saharan Africa describes honour as the 'chief ideological motivation of African behaviour'. As I demonstrate in the second part of this introduction, similar notions of honour are shared by several groups in the Sahel. See Villesante-De Beauvais (2000) for an example of a comparison of ethnic groups in Mauritania.

[11] For a discussion of the Fulfulde notions of *ndimaaku* and *Ndimu*, see Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996).

[12] The same goes for neighbouring societies in Central Mali (see Breedveld & de Bruijn 1996) and for the Sahel region more generally, see Klein (2009).

gives one access to honour. Belonging to a slave lineage does not, and this main difference is underlined by practices of stigmatization (Goffman 1963). The stigma attached to slave descent makes honour less accessible for descendants of slaves. Once acquired, the stigma of slave descent was often transferred over the generations (Klein 1993a: 26). In socio-cultural practice, slave descendants continue to be excluded because of their slave descent.

Slaves and their descendants are stigmatized through insults, the use of discriminatory phrases and stereotypes that constantly remind them that slave ancestry equals lesser moral worth. I mentioned earlier the example of a freeborn person saying that he refused to discuss with a child of the Rope, implying it is not worthwhile having serious consideration for someone of slave descent. Such derogatory expressions reinforce the differences in status between freeborn persons and slave descendants.

The relative absence of contestation of their lesser status by slave descendants today is connected to the fact that slavery was a heterogeneous institution.[13] Those slaves who developed social ties and acquired rights and sometimes even an honourable position in their host societies, such as royal court slaves were not interested in actively contesting their low status as, in practice, their status was fairly high.[14] The elite have no reason to contest ascribed status and hierarchy in relations and actively seek to reproduce them. Habitus, socialization, embodiment and the internalization of hierarchical relations in the ideology and identity of the people involved explains why there is so much conformism and these distinctive patterns tend to be reproduced in Fulɓe history.

However, conformism to an existing cultural field of hierarchy can be superfluous and is not always an outcome of hegemony. Instead, as Comaroff & Comaroff (1991: 27) remark:

> Even when there is no well-formed opposing ideology, no clearly articulated collective consciousness among subordinate populations, (such) struggles may still occur. But they are liable to be heard in the genre of negation-refusal, reversals, the smashing of idols and icons - and not in the narrative voice of political argument.

It is important to note the subtleties of contestation rather than declaring its lack of existence. Furthermore, the section on the Road will demonstrate that the existing cultural field of hierarchy tends to become an object of active contestation by those who have moved out of their home societies. So far this section has demonstrated a double meaning for the Rope: once used as a practical tool for preventing slaves from running away, it has become a metaphor for expressing bondage, stigma and dependency in the cultural field of hierarchy. Slaves were related to their new hosts through Ropes, while freeborn created relatedness through lineages.[15] The mayor of a small Central Malian village, himself a descendant of slaves, became freeborn member of the royal family

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[13] Georg-Deutsch (2003: 176) puts forward a similar argument on East Africa: 'The absence of evidence regarding slave revolts or slave resistance in colonial archives arguably reflects the social heterogeneity of servility in East Africa'.

[14] Their so-called condition is higher than their actual status (Meillassoux 1991).

[15] See Chapter 3 for a description of how differently relatedness and kinship are organized among descendants of slaves as opposed to freeborn.

thanks to the marriage of his mother with the king.[16] Being a royal family member today, he describes his relationship with his family members who were descended from slaves as follows: 'the Rope is always there'. He thus considers his own kinmembers as slaves which are tied to him in dependency relations, symbolised by the Rope. The Rope became a stigmatizing symbol for slaves' lack of relations and freedom of movement in freeborn Fulɓe society. In this thesis, I analyze the extent to which such a lack of relating and of free movement define the trajectories of slave descendants.

Today, the cultural field of hierarchy offers a common ground of belonging and identification for both freeborn persons and slave descendants. Nobility consists of freeborn genealogy and descent, specific rules of behaviour, non-physical labour, wealth, religious ideology and historical claims (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 202-207). Slave status was generally marked by a lack of all these parameters. Some are restrained by an internalized feeling of inferiority embedded in their habitus. One of my informants used the term 'mental slavery' (French: *Esclavage mentale*) to point to the reluctance of rich slave-descending politicians who, despite their position in national politics, do not dare to oppose a freeborn colleague because of the fear of sanctions and insults.

Depending on the specific time, place and socio-political dynamics, stigmatized status was forced on newcomers, while others managed to opt out or only temporarily reengaged in it to benefit from relations of dependency. In the modernization view, master-slave relations moved to client-patron relations to end in monetized contract relations. I go against this perspective, starting from the premise that slavery never consisted of a uniform relation. Since the starting point is already so diverse, the expected evolution from slavery through clientelism to contract relations that monetized over time is necessarily hybrid as well. It is senseless to analyze changing hierarchical relations according to such modern ideas that are often upheld by informants themselves. Instead, relevant questions regarding legacies of a hierarchical past in the present are questions that do justice to the wide variety of responses to the stigmatized status by both people of slave descent and their freeborn former masters.

The head: Knowing one's head and styling one's social status
A second metaphor that points to people who do not behave according to their social status is the Fulfulde proverb 'to know your Head' (FF: A*nndude hoore ma*). This is the reflexive form of the verb to 'know'. To know your Head is a very literal translation of 'knowing oneself'. In this section I connect the idea of knowing oneself to the notion of style developed by Ferguson (1999: 93).

Hierarchy is embodied in appearances, behaviour and in stereotypical discourses people have about one another. The expression of 'knowing one's Head' is either used by slave descendants themselves or by others to remind them that everyone is supposed to stick to his inherited, ascribed style in the cultural field of hierarchy. Behavioural, performative expressions of nobility are subtle and at first sight invisible or difficult to grasp for an outsider. One's nobility can, for example, be derived from the way someone talks: The level of one's voice, the carefully chosen words and the kind of in-

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[16] See Chapter 3 for this special form of concubine marriage, which frees the children of a slave concubine from slave status.

formation that is (not) conveyed. It is in small details and gestures that hierarchical (status) differences are played out.[17] Informants generally describe how they can easily read the status of others from subtle signs in their (embodied) behaviour. Some say they can tell what status group someone belongs to from that person's language and external appearances (dress, hairstyle, behaviour).

Such moral evaluations of appropriate behaviour and dressing according to one's social standing in certain professions are widely shared among different ethnic groups in Mali. Not only differences between freeborn versus slave-descending status groups but also differences between other social status groups are applied to intermediate status groups. Musicians, for example, are not supposed to be of aristocratic descent. The world famous Malian singer Salif Keita is a member of a royal family and was severely stigmatized by his peers and family when he started to sing (Ndour 2008: 29). Politicians of caste status have likewise been ridiculed, for example Mali's President Amadou Toumani Toure (Le Sphinx 2006: 4), Senegalese ministers (Mbow 2000) and Cameroon's President Ahidjo (Saibou 2005: 865).

Besides 'knowing one's Head', a similar expression which my informants only used in French, is 'staying in one's skin'. This expression was used in French by several of informants in Bamako. Demba Dicko used it when referring to the fact that some people no longer respect their status group and display behaviour associated with styles of other social groups. He mentioned how people have to stay in their skin (French: *les gens doivent se reserver dans leur peau*). Moussa Tambura mentioned when discussing the case of a co-villager of slave descent that as soon as he is with his former masters, he takes on the skin of a captured person again (French: *Il se met dans la peau d'un captif*). The reference to skin reflects a racial aspect of differentiation between freeborn persons and people of slave descent.[18] If a person knows himself, then s/he will behave unmistakably in the style that corresponds to his/her status. People perform in expected styles for fear of social sanctions.

To know your Head is thus to respect the cultural field of hierarchy and the stylistic behaviour that corresponds to one's status within this field (as both ideology and hegemony). Informants constantly indicate how it is important to know oneself, literally to know one's position and the correct style of (embodied) behaviour that goes with it. The notion of style seems to be an apt analytical notion for grasping and integrating these internalized ways of talking, thinking and moving in an analysis of experienced differences in status. By emphasizing the dynamics of slave status, the notion of style helps to deconstruct the noble-slave opposition, which was so often recalled by both informants and researchers past and present.

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[17] Zempleni (1996) demonstrates how it took him years to find out that his host family had a slave background because he had been unable to read the 'secretions' (signs that hint to a secret) that informed insiders of the family's slave status. Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 51) describe how there are conscious ways of camouflaging explicit hierarchical differences in many societies in Africa.

[18] Racialized as opposed to racist, which is the biological aspect of physical appearance. See also Schmitz (2006) and Hall (2005).

The head as 'style' in the cultural field of hierarchy

Ferguson (1999: 93) uses the notion of style as an analytical tool to overcome mutually exclusive cultural dualisms.[19] The advantage of the notion of style over habitus is that it draws more attention to performances in relation to dress, speech, attitudes, taste and stereotypes. In short, alongside attention for discourse and practice, this notion immediately highlights intimate aspects where the self communicates with the world.

> Style stands for how 'the doer is constituted in the deed' (Butler quoted in Ferguson 1999: 96). Like riding a bicycle, cultural style is a kind of skilled social action you do with your body, often with little conscious elaboration or awareness ... Style ... is not achieved simply by having certain ideas or adhering to certain norms, it is a matter of embodied practices, successfully performed. (*Ibid.*: 98).

Style requires not only a situational motive but also internalized capacity and skill. Cultural style is a performative competence involving not only abstract know-how but also a certain ease which, as Bourdieu has shown, is related not only to knowledge but to 'the mode of acquisition of that knowledge over time' (*Ibid.*: 96).

Although style is about the construction of meaning, it can only be understood as part of a hard structure, the so-called 'situations of duress' (Ferguson 1999: 101).[20] If a Malian woman wants to wear a 'real wax *hollandais*',[21] the situation of duress is that she will need the capital (money and/or social relations) to acquire such expensive material. So apart from being discursive and bodily enacted, style is practised within given structural constraints. Style highlights symbolic aspects of human interaction as being embedded both in micro-cultural ideology and macro socio-economic praxis.

Secondly, cultivating a style requires investment in social, cultural, symbolic and economic capitals. The style notion keeps intersections with other vital elements constituting selves, such as class, gender, age and profession, in the picture. Style is thus an incorporated way of acting and being acted upon. This process has also been called 'navigation' (Vigh 2009), as interaction with a world that is in movement. Style is not something one can readily adapt as it demands time, investment and interaction with others who 'master' a certain style and set the example. I use the style notion for the interplay between ideology and hegemony in individual behaviour. It allows me to analyze subtleties in the changing ways in which slaves descendants position themselves in the cultural field of hierarchy. Like habitus, it draws attention to how different social groups within Fulɓe society patrol, reproduce and reconfigure the social boundaries of their status groups as contingent on time and place.

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[19] He addresses cultural dualisms in sociological and anthropological analyses of urban and rural orientations of migrant workers in the Zambian Copperbelt. Ferguson labels the ways in which these migrants are oriented towards the first (urban) or the latter (rural) as the cosmopolitan versus the localist style.

[20] An important advantage of the notion of style is that it overcomes the mechanical effects of structure implicit in feminist and symbolic interactionist ideas about roles. I refer to the discussion Ferguson makes on the notion of style. He criticizes feminist notions of role for making it into a secondary manifestation of a given identity or the prior orientation of a distinctive atemporal type of actor (Ferguson 1999: 94). He also criticizes symbolic interactionists' interpretations of roles for their overemphasis on performance and process only, thereby losing sight of broader political economic and historical structures (*Ibid.*: 99).

[21] Wax *Hollandais* is one of the most expensive wax cloths and is renowned for its strength and colour fixation. Production takes place in the Netherlands and it is a trendsetter in new designs and patterns.

The style notion accounts for ideological and hegemonic aspects in the cultural field of hierarchy. My analysis uses the notion of style to frame possible orientations of people from various backgrounds towards different forms of social honour. The concept of style allows the bringing of both hegemony and ideology into one framework. The hegemonic corresponds to the implicit, unsaid, silenced and often intimate aspects of style by which people give meaning to social honour in the set cultural field of hierarchy. The ideological corresponds to explicit rules and expectations of honourable behaviour in the cultural field of hierarchy.

The Road: Trajectories in and out of the cultural field of hierarchy

A last concept that is central to my analysis of the various itineraries of royal slave descendants is the concept of the Road. The expression 'having a Road' (FF: *Hebbude laawol*) links mobility to changing opportunities. It points to the liberty to move and the option for social promotion is expressed as 'having a Road'. When someone does not manage or is not permitted to do something, Fulɓe say 'he has no Road' (FF: o*mo hebbaai e laawol*). To have a Road is about the importance of having access, being given or actively seizing opportunities and experiencing possibility and agency. Put simply, besides spatial movement over physical Roads, 'having a Road' underscores the symbolic Road of social mobility and advancement in life.

The saying indicates how such advancement corresponds to mobility to other places. The Road is a literal and symbolic way out of existing constraint. But does the mobility of people of slave descent generate a certain social distance from existing hierarchies and inequalities? Does mobility transform people's ideas of opportunities in life or does their identity travel with them? What connections and disconnections has mobility brought about and in what ways?

In the Fulfulde expression 'it is the master that binds the feet of his slave', the Road and the Rope become linked. An informant used this expression to indicate that there is an irreversible power relation between the master and the slave. In this literal sense, the binding refers back to the Rope, while the feet stand for the Road. The expression points to the controlled and often forced (im)mobility of slaves. Reference to the Rope thus indicates how the mobility of slaves was curtailed by their masters who 'tied' them. Masters controlled or mastered the mobility of their clients and impeded them from 'having roads.' However this form of power (mastering mobility) has been reconfigured over the past century. There are three ways in which slave descendants tried to obtain social promotion: one was by specializing in noble behaviour (FF: *Ndimaaku*); the second by specializing in religious piety (FF: *Juulde*); and the third was by moving out of slave status, sometimes even actively contesting it. This thesis mainly focuses on the third, spatial strategy of social promotion. The originality of this study lies precisely in taking mobility as the central point of departure to analyze strategies of social promotion as related to (control over) mobility.[22]

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[22] Few other studies have taken mobility or migrants as their point of departure to analyze social change in what I called cultural fields of hierarchy in the Sahel. The exceptions are Leservoisier (2005), Boyer (2005), Sy (2001), Giuffrida (2005) and Ruf (2000).

The road as a trajectory of social promotion

There are two important remarks to be made about the use of teleological concepts like social mobility and social promotion. I decided not to use the notion of social mobility[23] as it can easily be confused with the notion of spatial mobility. I therefore use the concept of social promotion when pointing to those individuals who have managed to move up the social ladder. However having said this, I should emphasize the temporary nature of such a move, whether up or down. The roads travelled by slave descendants and freeborn are necessarily bifurcating and winding and are taken to go or to return. Thus social promotion is not a unilinear trajectory from A to B, which is often implicitly associated with notions such as emancipation and promotion.

Secondly, in addition to temporal variety in the roads travelled, there are structural limits to social promotion in terms of professional specialization. The range of existing slave conditions do not correspond to the spectre of options available to each slave. Instead, slave positions in the past could range from positions such as agricultural assistants to top-level state officials.

> This need not mean that the state official began at the bottom and worked his way up, or that persons acquired by farmers have the slightest chance of becoming state ministers, as has sometimes been interpreted. All it may mean is that the acquired strangers were from the beginning marginal to quite different institutions - the peasant household in one case and the palace in the other. (Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 20)

In short, since slaves' possibilities for social promotion used to be intrinsically tied to the position of their master, the trajectories of emancipation of their descendants are also specific to their masters' position. This is why the methodological approach of studying one single group of slave descendants, namely those who used to work at the royal court, was selected. (See methodological section below.)

To summarize, the notion of the Road refers to strategies by which slave descendants contest the hegemonic aspects and sometimes even the ideology of the cultural field of hierarchy as a result of their mobility. Some migrants have benefitted from encounters with alternative social realities, often while studying abroad in countries like Libya, Russia and Morocco. A small number of them started a social movement (see Ould Ahmed Salem 2007 for Mauritania) that contests the stigma of slave status. In so doing, these leaders have turned hegemony into ideology, in other words they have turned a passive and invisible form of power into an active and discernible one. However, not all migrants have done so: Most migrants who left and lived elsewhere have no interest in contesting existing relations. They simply make their living as much on distance as possible from possibly constraining hierarchies back home. In fact, they no longer hold onto the Rope and the ties of their past. Still others instrumentalize existing relations by actively referring to their slave past and engaging with the Rope to make claims to the ties that bind them to patronizing freeborn elites. Various strategies to obtain social promotion thanks to or despite spatial mobility exist. It is important to realize that the Road can be travelled in different ways and both as a move towards as well as a move

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[23] Kopytoff & Miers (1977) describe how the changes in 'degrees of social mobility' of slaves and their descendants occur in three main dimensions: Formal (slave) status, informal affect, worldly achievement and success.

away from. The Road can be travelled in two directions: Towards social promotion or rather towards social degradation: People can move in or out of their slave status while on the road. It is a two-way process.

Methodological considerations

As mobility is central to my analysis, I opted for multi-sited fieldwork (2001-2007) and ethnography (Marcus 1995; Hannerz 1998) in three main locations: Rural Central Mali (Douentza), urban Mali (mainly Bamako) and urban France (Paris). Although the Haayre region is often labelled 'rural', much of what I describe points to extremely mobile lives in these rural areas and from these rural areas to other places. In Bamako, doing urban fieldwork meant that I had to follow a dispersed minority in a wide, cosmopolitan area. I moved between various people's compounds, shops, associational meetings and ritual events. My fieldwork was thus in itself itinerant, especially in Paris (2005) where the dispersed homes of African migrants (French: *Foyers*) in suburbs (French: B*anlieues*) necessarily meant that my immersion in the Fulɓe networks there was fragmented.

I abandoned the centrality of the field location of Paris for various reasons. First of all, it turned out that there was no Central Malian Fulɓe community in Paris. Migration from this area to France is *ad hoc* and small scale and the few migrants who are in Paris do not interact with each other to any great extent. This was therefore not a suitable field to analyze the transformations of social relations. I decided that an inter-ethnic comparison with Soninke communities in France (Sy 2000; Timera 1996, 2001; Daum 1998; Quiminal 1991; Quiminal & Timera 2002) would weaken the close ties of trust and depth needed to unravel contemporary ideologies of hierarchy, also in terms of language competence and the time available for fieldwork. In the end, I decided to leave out the material I had assembled on Paris.[24]

Dilemmas were constantly arising, not only for my informants but also for me in my position as a researcher. I became a kind of hybrid member in the network of people described: Sometimes engaging more with freeborn, sometimes more with slave descendants. In many ways I was lucky to have the resources to secure my independence both logistically (by buying a motorcycle and living in a private rented room near my host in Bamako) and socially (dividing my time as much as possible between the two social status groups). In the village of Dalla I was more successful in engaging with slave descendants, while in Bamako I spent more time with the freeborn part of the network central to this thesis. The saying 'whose bread one eats, whose word one speaks' thus means that I speak in two tongues or languages in this thesis. The reason why I am emphasizing my own dilemma of loyalty is because I am convinced that these same dilemmas were faced by the people I describe, but in more existential ways.

Time and the different periods when I was able to interact with people impacted on the data I was able to collect. My fieldwork lasted eighteen months in total but had been preceded by six months of research in the Douentza area (2001-2002) while working on

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[24]   Although I have addressed the imagination and transnational practices of some. See Pelckmans (2007).

my Masters thesis. Other fieldwork periods were spent in Paris (November 2005 - May 2006). While based in Bamako, I conducted trips to several regions in Mali between November 2005 and April 2006 and from November 2006 to June 2007. What I was able to learn also depended on factors such as my personal characteristics, gender and race as a white person (FF: *Tubabu*).

The choice to stick to one specific Fulɓe family also means that this study has an ethnic dimension. It has been demonstrated how ethnicity is a politically sensitive issue in the African context (Amselle & M'Bokolo 1985; Amselle 1990). Nevertheless, I did not choose ethnicity as an object of study nor did I assume that this group was a natural unit. The Haayre region is a patchwork of different ethic groups who, over time, have intermixed. Group identities are social constructs (Amselle 1990) that are maintained through social boundaries (Barth 1969). Fulɓe, for example, have a strong discourse over not marrying people from other ethnic groups. In national discourse Fulɓe are represented as one cohesive group and they themselves actively contribute to patrolling the social boundaries of their ethnic group. They do so, for example, through active participation in Tabital Pulaaku,[25] an international organization that promotes Fulɓe culture.

Fully aware of ethnicity as a social construct, I chose to focus on slave descendants in Fulɓe society because I wanted to give precedence to depth over breadth. As outlined in the introduction, the multiplicity of slave groups within one ethnic group is impossible to grasp and is very diverse. Therefore comparisons of the legacies of an institution, which is not singular, would do away with precisely those subtleties and differences from which we would be able to understand the process of change. To keep these subtleties in the picture and account for the interweaving of all the spatial areas described, I decided to make one family central in the analysis. I interviewed and interacted with both freeborn and descending Dogon, Soninke, Bambara, Tuareg, Bozo and Songhay groups in the Kayes, Segou, Mopti and Haayre regions.[26] Nevertheless, this thesis is organized around case material of only one single network of informants to establish close-knit relations of trust. I chose a royal family with the patronym Dicko and their former slaves, who were the descendants of an ancestor called Kau.[27] My host in Bamako was Madame Dicko,[28] a freeborn Dicko, while my host in the village of Dalla was Suleymane Dauda, who is of slave descent. Focusing on only the Kau and Dicko families allowed me to be more accurate in specific transformations in the group of slave descendants of royal domestic slaves in relation to their former masters.

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[25]   See website: www.tabitalpulaaku-international.org, accessed August 2010.

[26]   I conducted research in Kayes for three weeks in 2006 and visited Melga (both the Malian and Mauritania parts on the border), a small town with many migrants in France. I also conducted research among Haayre migrants in Segou and Mopti-Sevare in 2007. Most of the research was done in a six-month period in Paris in 2005-2006 and a further six months in Dalla-Douentza in 2001-2002, plus two periods of six months in Bamako in 2006 and 2007.

[27]   The Kau and Dicko families are interrelated through the marriage of King Yerowal Dicko and a concubine from the Kau family (see Chapter 3). In this specific example, in addition to a culture of relatedness (Carsten 2000), a culture of hierarchy between the two families was established.

[28]   See Chapter 6.

A second reason for sticking to one single network of people relates to issues of trust and confidentiality.[29] Establishing trust is important when motivating people to talk about a traumatic and/or shameful past, which many are not used to addressing in words (Argenti & Röschenthaler 2006; Hardung 2002). This is why language competence was important and in order to improve my competence I studied the Fulfulde language for six months at the INALCO language institute in Paris and followed some courses with linguist Breedveld (1995) in Leiden, the Netherlands.

Most colonial studies on slavery are based on collaboration with and interpretations of noblemen's perspectives. This bias has been denounced (Leservoisier 2005b; Bierschenk 1993) and countered by reflexive anthropology (Riesman 1977, 1992) and postmodernist approaches to ethnography (Marcus 1995). Chapter 2 explains in more detail the impact that my research assistants and the interpreter's status could have had on my data.[30]

Another ethical issue to be addressed was the use of personal names and pictures. Although some would take pride in seeing their contribution to this thesis crystallized with a mention of their name and picture, others have far more interest in anonymity. Some of the public figures, such as politicians, were more difficult to 'anonymize' and their public position necessarily exposes them more than others. To ensure the privacy and anonymity of those who wanted it, names have been changed where I felt it was necessary to do so.

The catch-all practice of participant observation made me realize that attention for and experiences of the cultural field of hierarchy lie in non-verbal, everyday actions (the above-mentioned habitus and style). Understanding a social context requires long-term commitment and physical engagement with the cultural environment. This is why I participated as far as possible in ritual occasions and engaged in activities such as helping youngsters with their job applications and cooking with the maids and shopping for food at the market.

Apart from observations, I also document change in the cultural field of hierarchy by referring to written historical sources I consulted in the Colonial Archives at Koulouba and the National Archives in the ward of ACI 2000 in Bamako (Map 7, see Chapter 8). For additional information and documents, I consulted journalists and members of associations[31] and also used alternative sources such as notes on presents given during ritual occasions by women in town (Chapter 8), letters sent to migrants (Chapter 6) and articles in journals (referred to in this Introduction).

The Rope, the Head and the Road in existing anthropological debates

The first part of the introduction outlined the red line throughout this thesis by connecting three emic concepts to existing theoretical notions. I described how Roads

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[29] Chapter 2 has a description of how my alliance with the King's former domestic slaves sometimes prevented me from establishing relations of trust with other groups of former slaves.

[30] Troughout the theis, methods are addressed there where I deemed it most relevant to mention in the particular analytical contexts. An overview of specific methodological choices I made are discussed in most detail in Chapter 2.

[31] Associations such as TEMEDT and Taabital Pulaaku.

(trajectories of social promotion) reconfigured the Ropes (cultural field of hierarchy) and the Heads (style) of slave descendants in a well-defined social network in Central Mali. Before going into ethnographic detail in the following chapters of this thesis, this second part of the prefaceintroduction first takes up some of the broader theoretical issues raised surrounding the three emic concepts described so far. I will first address the issue of slavery in anthropology and then focus on the particularities of slavery in Fulɓe society. Finally I will discuss contemporary echoes and memories of slavery in the public sphere and how the mobile approach can reconfigure and explain the embedding of these memories.

Slavery: A single institution covering a wide range of relations
Slavery covers a wide variety of institutions, practices and hierarchical social relations in different parts of the world. It is an umbrella concept that has been imbued with different meanings (Testart 1998: 31) ranging from those covering the builders of the Egyptian pyramids to the Atlantic Afro-American plantation slaves to those working in modern sweatshops in Italy. The kind of slavery that is referred to in this thesis is indigenous slavery in the Sahel, which existed in the West African Sahel as an economic (Meillassoux 1975: 15-16), legal (Botte 1999a) and social (Meillassoux 1986) system. Chapter 1 describes the history of slavery in Fulɓe society in Central Mali from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries.

Universal definitions of slavery are impossible because it is a notion that covers many different practices of relating. Paterson (1982: 13) defined it as a 'total social system' and emphasized the fact that it was not only a social relation between slaves and masters but also an institutional process in which slaves' relations with broader society are central. In an edited volume on African slavery, Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 11) discuss how neither property nor saleability are criteria that distinguish slavery from kinship in non-western societies.[32] A common dimension of slaves in various societies is that they are excluded from the fundamental social rights central to their society (Testart 1998: 77).[33] While Greek slaves lacked citizenship and plantation slaves lacked control over their own activities, sexuality and labour, the central issue for domestic slaves in Africa is that they lack and are actively excluded from kinship. Testart (1998: 65) observed that having rights and juridical status in most societies is linked to and guaranteed through kinship. To deny slaves legal rights, one had to exclude them from freeborn kinship systems. In the academic literature, (neo-Marxist) debates on African slavery increased significantly in the 1970s.[34] Slavery in the Sahel has been defined as a system of control over rights in persons (Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 11) and as a way to

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[32] See also Dottridge (2005).

[33] Testart (1998: 77) argues for 'exclusion from social dimensions' as a common denominator of slavery in various societies: 'Whether it is about kinship ties in lineage societies, or citizenship in Antiquity, or the believing community in Islamic right, the slave is always, in every society, excluded from (social) dimensions considered to be fundamental to these societies.'

[34] This literature focussed on the lack of slave access to kinship and social relations. It is by becoming 'unkinned' (Bohannan 1963: 18) that slaves came to be at other people's disposal: They died a 'social death' (Meillassoux 1986: 106). Slaves were initially strangers who ideologically remained outsiders by being deprived of kinship (Meillassoux 1986).

accumulate wealth in people (Guyer 1995), with slaves lacking both (Meillassoux 1986). Some argued that African slavery was more benign[35] because of the (partial) inclusion of slaves in local kinship systems in Africa, while for plantation slaves in Asia, for example, kinship remained hermetically 'closed' (Watson 1980).[36]

Another important aspect of the neo-Marxist resurgence of slavery studies in the 1970s and 1980s is that they increasingly tried to gain access to 'the slave voice' and slaves' experiences. There was a lack of sources describing their views from below. Most colonial reports were based on cooperation with interpreters and rulers that often, but not always, were of noble/freeborn descent. Tracking the changes in the ways of enslavement and incorporation through oral evidence is a difficult process. Informants tend to present 'the past' as a static period of uniform practice (Miers & Willis 1997: 481). Doing research and talking to slave descendants about their past is not easy (Klein 2009) as it is 'the history of those who would rather forget' (Klein 1989). At the same time the hegemonic power of freeborn elites often silences slave histories (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005). Nevertheless, several academics have successfully managed to distil the 'slave voice' from oral accounts (Olivier de Sardan 1976; Wright 1993; Greene 2011 forthcoming).

Over time, some slave groups have found ways of becoming assimilated in their new host societies. This process has been coined as 'absorption' by Kopytoff & Miers (1977) who emphasize that slavery was not a static, prolonged state of being but rather a practice whereby people moved in or out of a society and had opportunities to adapt their condition in this process.

Slavery in the old kingdoms of the Sahel has been distinguished from other societies where fewer slaves were kept by the term 'slave societies' (Finley 1981: 103). Oral traditions and written documents on nineteenth-century Central Mali clearly indicate that slave raiding was part of the economy. Slave societies had external relations with distant economies through the trade of slaves on the Atlantic Coast and towards the Middle East and Asia (Klein 1989), along with other products such as salt and ostrich feathers. The demand for slaves in Mediterranean, as well as American and African production systems stimulated the growth of military and commercial elites in the Sahel. Too date the hierarchical organization of social status groups among Fulɓe in the Sahel reflects the previous positions of these groups in the 'slave economy': Freeborn groups who occupy political positions today used to be the warriors who raided large numbers of slaves, who were in turn traded by trading groups. Religious elites ensured ideological support for slavery and had a monopoly on healing and jurisprudence, and the other subordinate but free groups were the artisans: Smiths, praise singers and woodcarvers. In these warrior economies nomadic pastoralists lived as vassals to warriors who centralized their power and slaves worked the land of any freeborn who could afford to pay for a human being to assist him.

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[35] Cooper (1977) was accused by Morton of presenting slavery as benign and static.
[36] In a comparison of African and Asian systems of slavery, Watson (1980) contrasted the 'open' systems described by Kopytoff & Miers with 'closed' systems where kin groups tend to be exclusive, and where slaves remain outsiders instead of being incorporated.

Tracking changes beyond abolition

The academic literature in the 1980s was led by historians addressing the (French) colonial role in reducing slavery to an illegal institution but not prohibiting the related socio-cultural practices and ideologies (Klein 1998). The first practical steps in the fight against slavery in the French colonies only started in 1905 (Klein 1998; Klein & Miers 1999; Kopytoff & Miers 1977). Slavery was formally abolished but no social or economic freedom emerged for the people involved (Botte 1999a: 17). On the contrary, some have argued that the colonial regime homogenized relations by categorizing a wide variety of different relations as 'slavery'. This homogenization hardened intraethnic social boundaries including those between slave and freeborn groups.[37]

Other scholars such as Soares (2005: 63) and Pollet & Winter (1971: 371) have, however, contested this view and indicate how colonial projects encouraged more fluidity in social relations and removed specific forms of authority. When analyzing this from a 'relational' approach to modernity (Geschiere *et al.* 2008: 2), both situations can exist at the same time. When applying the 'genealogical principle' (*Ibid.* 2008: 4) to the aftermath of slavery, one discerns multiple trajectories in several directions of modern life. Like a genealogy, slavery has branched out in diverse directions and not towards a final teleological 'end'. This corresponds to my descriptions of the Road as a two-way process.

This multiplicity of trajectories was increasingly addressed in a wave of studies on so-called 'post-slavery societies' (Rossi 2009a) in the Sahel in the 1990s. These considered how, despite the legal abolition of slavery, practices related to master-slave relations remained in place, while others vanished. Botte (2003) describes how the embedding of social relations in the legal framework of Islam, which recognizes the property of persons and is thus fundamentally unequal, is crucial to understanding the current legacies of slavery.[38] Others (Hall 2005; Schmitz 2006) indicated how in Sahelian societies, slavery was not racist (as in the Americas) but racialized. Those formerly enslaved are discriminated against in racial terms and, in Fulɓe society, descendants of slaves are commonly referred to as 'blacks' (FF: Baleeɓe). The stigmatization of groups of descendants of slaves is apparent in several realms and will be addressed in more detail later.

Gupta & Ferguson (1992) argued that cultural differences are often read between analytically distinct 'societies'. The challenge in post-slavery studies has been to describe cultural differences within one society. Most of the academic literature from the 1990s indeed opts for relational approaches to status within a given society. In his study of the differences in the construction of self by both slave descending Riimaayɓe and freeborn Fulɓe in northern Burkina Faso, Riesman (1992) demonstrated how children are socialized according to the specific expectations of their own social status group (FF: *Sy*) and lineage (FF: *lenyol*). Other scholars working on Fulɓe in West Africa (Hardung 1997, 1998; Vereecke 1994) describe the marked differences between former masters and slaves, such as labour ideology and politics.

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[37] See Amselle (1990), Bazin (1985) and, for Fulɓe in particular, Guichard (1998) & Bierschenk (1993).
[38] I describe the Islamic legal framwork in more detail in Chapter 5.

Another group of studies questions linear, modern approaches to emancipation and abolition. Implicitly adopting the genealogical principle described above, they analyze the legal ways of emancipation that existed prior to colonial abolition within and outside formal slave status. Stillwell (2004) describes the possibilities for social climbing and alliances among royal slaves at the royal court of Kano in present-day Nigeria. Schmitz (2009) described how in the Senegalese-Mauritanian Fuuta Tooro region slaves were emancipated thanks to social promotion in a matrimonial or religious context. Hall (2009) describes eighteenth-century letters, demonstrating that commercial paths to emancipation existed at that time for Songhay slaves in northern Mali, while Berndt (2008) describes the religious paths to emancipation before and after Malian independence for Fulɓe slave (descendants) in the Guimbala region. Most of these scholars emphasize the existing variety in trajectories of emancipation prior to colonial abolition and underline how they where blocked rather than encouraged by French colonial abolition. But most importantly, their studies emphasize that there have always been ways for groups of slave descendants to improve their condition, despite their inferior social status.

Modern expectations of mobility
I indicated above that there are two dimensions of distance in which the legacies of slavery and the cultural field of hierarchy can be framed: Time and space. The distance in space generated by mobility has made some migrants more critical about the existing cultural field of hierarchy in their home societies. Being able to control one's own mobility defines one's liberty of movement. But is freedom the ability to choose where to go and what to do? In 'modern' thought, mobility is expected to bring betterment (Ferguson 1999). It is a way of moving up and enhancing social mobility. Throughout the case studies in this thesis however, this 'self-evidency' will be bent in directions that go against the ideas of mobility as a linear and modern process. Mobility is embedded in and controlled by socio-cultural institutions. The thesis is mainly concerned with the meso and micro level of the social organization of migration (Brettell 2003: 1-7).

The mobility turn in social sciences has also been applied to studies on the legacy of slavery in the Sahel. Due to increased attention on mobility and transnationalism, studies on social change in Sahelian hierarchies have focused on the interrelationship between social distance and spatial movement. My study is part of this fairly recent group of studies (Boyer 2005; Rossi 2009b, 2011 forthcoming) that explicitly use mobility as a methodological lens to address the Roads available to slave descendants. Boyer's (2005) study, for example, describes how mobility brings temporary relief and social distance in imagination from slave status for seasonal labourers of slave descent among Tuareg in Niger. Other studies have compared the trajectories of slaves and migrants as outsiders (Argenti & Röschenthaler 2006: 38-39; Gaibazzi 2010; Bellagamba 2009a; Miers & Willis 1997; Manchuelle 1997).

Lately, there has been a tendency in academia to go against an overemphasis on mobility. The mobility turn is starting to wane because there is an increasing realization that celebrating 'nomadist metaphysics' (Cresswell 1997; 2002: 15) is equally problematic. Considering nomadism as the norm risks reinforcing tropes of nomadism in colo-

nial and national discourses (Azarya 1996). Secondly there is a large group of people who are involuntarily immobile (Carling 2002; Gaibazzi 2010; Jonsson 2008) because they face cultural, social, economic or institutional obstacles that impede their (possible) migration. This study focuses on mobility as embedded in the power relations underlying the cultural field of hierarchy. It is the idea of being both spatially and socially mobile that is reflected in the expression of 'having Roads' in Fulɓe society.

Mobility and immobility in Fulɓe society
Being mobile and on the move is a way of life associated with groups of pastoralist Fulɓe nomads in the West African Sahel (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a; Botte *et al.* 1999a: 25; Dupire 1970). The idea of a 'travelling culture' (Gillroy 1993; Clifford 1992), a 'culture of migration' (Hahn & Klute 2007) and a 'culture of mobility' (Boesen & Marfaing 2007) have been applied to pastoralist Fulɓe in West Africa (Botte *et al.* 1999a: 24, 28-30). This stereotype is based on the Fulɓe's self-image as nomads.[39]

The recent 'mobility turn' (Urry 2000) and 'mobilities paradigm' (Urry 2007) in the social sciences has denounced 'sedentarist metaphysics' (Malkki 1992) where people are naturally connected to a place and states. By taking a transnational focus (Bash *et al.* 1992), these studies focus on how people organize their lives and identify themselves both within and outside national borders. Migrants thus have mobile livelihoods, long-distance interactions and inhabit their country of destination and homeland simultaneously (Levitt & Glick Schiller 2004). The centrality of mobility as a way of life in African societies is addressed in de Bruijn *et al.* (2001). Increasingly, studies are focusing on the intensification of movements and connections between people that are being facilitated by modern means of communication, such as the mobile phone (Brinkman *et al.* 2010, Horst & Miller 2006). These have intensified possibilities for staying in touch while on the move for both researchers (Pelckmans 2010) and migrants themselves (Vertovec 2002).

Nevertheless, the focus in the West African Sahel has, for a long time, been on the mobile lifestyle of nomads[40] based on a pastoral economy. This exclusive focus on nomadic pastoralists as movers has tended to obfuscate the mobilities of other social groups in Fulɓe society. There is no study that addresses the mobility of former slave groups in the Haayre region. Some freeborn social groups of Fulɓe society have in fact become extremely immobile. Their immobility has facilitated control over conquered territories and people, as is the case of a group of Fulɓe warriors who sedentarized in the nineteenth-century Islamic Diina Empire of Maasina (Klein 1998: 47; Sanankoua 1990). Some of these warriors, called Weheeɓe in Fulfulde language, settled on the outskirts of the empire in a region called the Haayre (Map 3). Today they continue to be distin-

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[39] It is also based on ethnic stereotypes ascribed to Fulɓe by their neighbours (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1997; Amselle 1996).

[40] The cattle-rearing Fulɓe have come to represent Fulɓe identity and have found their way into coffee-table books produced by Western photographers, such as Beckwith & van Offelemn (1983) and Mols (2000), and magazines like *National Geographic* (de Bruijn *et al.* 2001a: 66). A consequence of this mobility is that Fulɓe are regarded everywhere as 'the other' or 'the stranger' (*Ibid.*: 72-73).

Map 3   Haayre region and Gourma region. Overview of former Fulɓe kingdoms Booni, Dalla & Joona ruled by Dicko families
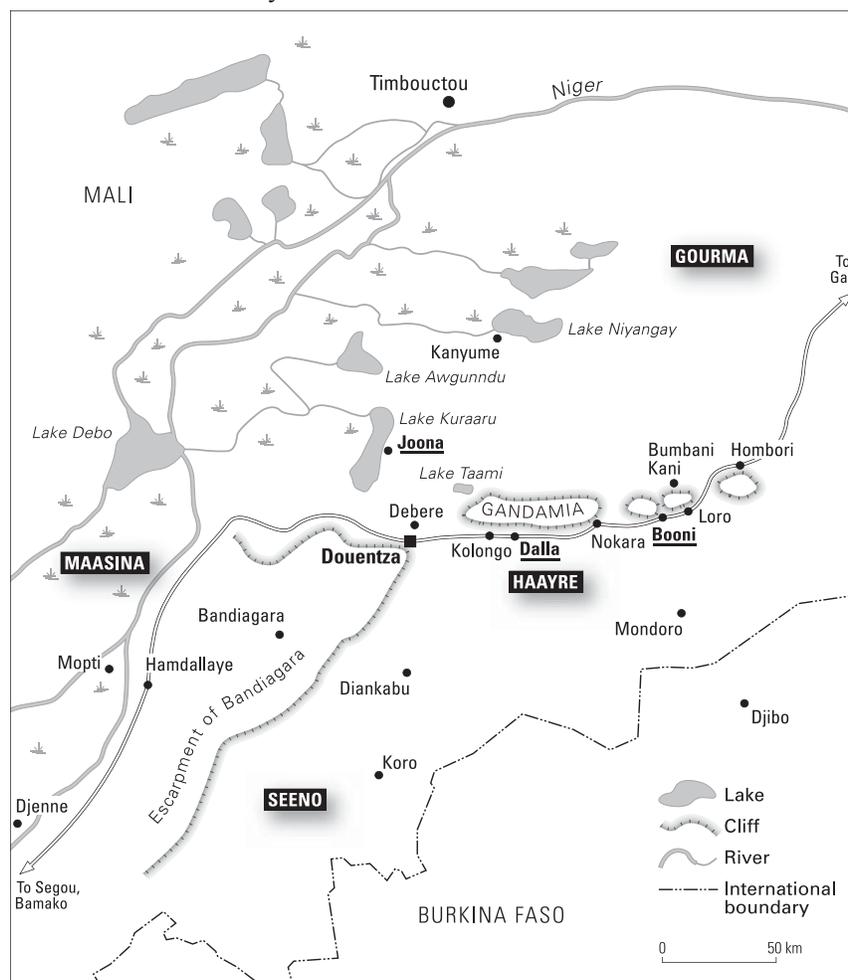
guished from other noble families by their patronym Dicko.[41] As I described in the methodology section, one such Dicko family is central to the social network in this thesis.

A central aspect of power and nobility in the Haayre region was control over the mobility of others. From the outset, enslavement meant that a person was forced to go and live elsewhere, and this removal through capture was an explicit form of 'forced migration' (Lovejoy 2009). Slaves were either immobilized or forced to move but had no freedom of movement:[42] they had no Road. Nevertheless, some tried to become mobile and fled their host societies if they were too oppressive. Georg-Deutsch (2003,

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[41]   The word Dicko literally means 'vultures' and refers to the hunting instinct of this former warrior group.

[42]   On the relationship between freedom and liberty: 'Liberty is the ability to move freely where one is, that is, choosing one's activities and one's associations; or moving to places where it is possible to act freely' Rossi (2009b).

2006) explains the mobility of slaves as a form of resistance to their exploitation and the exodus of slaves from some areas was problematic for their owners (Klein & Roberts 1980; Georg-Deutsch 2003).

Collective slave revolts by running away are not reported in the colonial archives for the Haayre region. The region under study in Central Mali was typically a 'frontier region' (Kopytoff 1987) and escape was difficult because of insecurity and instability due to raiding warlords. Also, the royal elites maintained their power over their domestic slaves well into the twenty-first century, effectively immobilizing them, even if the French colonial government had legally freed them.

The modernity of slavery: Confusion, conflation, ambiguity and paradox
Like witchcraft (Geschiere 1997), references to slavery are often a metaphor, sometimes with real consequences, for commenting on social inequalities in wealth and status. The idiom of slavery can likewise be considered as 'a source and resource of personal and collective power or powerlessness in its call for 'domesticated agency' against various forms of exploitation, marginalization, inequality and individualism' (Nyamnjoh 2005: 246). As mentioned earlier, the use of a pervasive idiom like slavery to refer to exploitation akin to slavery has been called metaphorical slavery by Rossi (2009a: 6), Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 25) and Morice (2005). Metaphorical slavery manifests itself in the renowned West African 'joking relations' that are replete with references to slavery (Canut & Smith 2006: 699, 703).[43] To summarize, metaphorical references to slavery tend to conflate inequality and slavery in one idiom.

Besides the metaphorical use of the language of slavery, there is also the use of statutary language. In Malian joking relations, patronyms are an important tool for negotiating claims to social status as a king, bard or slave (Jansen 1996; Jansen & Zobel 2001; Pelckmans 2011b forthcoming). Van Hoven (1995) describes how kinship relations in The Gambia are expressed in so-called 'statutary language'. A freeborn person can be compared to a slave to refer to his inclusion through the female side, which recalls the way slaves used to be incorporated through matrilineal descent in patriarchal societies.

In the Sahelian context, similar cultural fields of hierarchy are shared by neighbouring ethnic groups, such as Tuareg, Moors and Songhay (Amselle in de Bruijn & van Dijk 1997: 10). Fulɓe can be considered a kind of intermediate category between Tuareg and Bambara in the way they shape and practise the cultural field of hierarchy. *Pulaaku* has been commonly described by Fulɓe specialists as the emic notion describing Fulɓe behaviour (Botte *et al.* 1999a; de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 199). However as Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996) pointed out, the notion of *pulaaku* in the Haayre region simply refers to all those identified as Fulɓe people. There are more specific emic concepts (FF: *Ndimu*, *yaage* and *juulde*) that are central to honourable behaviour for the Fulɓe in the Haayre.

People of slave descent try to obtain social honour in the ways available to them (Klein 2009). With the exception of Iliffe's 2005 publication on honour in African

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[43] See for a range of examples, *Cahiers d'études africaines* on 'Parentés, plaisenteries et politique', edited by Canut & Smith (2006).

societies in historical perspective, most of the literature on honour (and shame) focuses on Mediterranean and North African societies, such as Gillmore (1987) and Bourdieu (1977) who emphasize how honour is based on gender relations. According to (Bourdieu 1977: 133) the honour of men is the most 'elementary form of domination' as it demands the shame of women.[44] Parallels as well as differences in ideologies of social honour in West Africa (Klein 2009) can be drawn between nomadic groups in Egypt (Abu-Lughod 1986), Algeria (Bourdieu 1977) and Mauritania (Ruf 1999; Ville-sante-de Beauvais 2000). A central aspect of honour in Islamic societies that is linked to rights as related to kin groups is descent. Abu-Lughod (1986: 45) describes how: 'The ignominy of origin is a metaphor for present shortcomings. Nobility of origin is believed to confer moral qualities and character.' Furthermore, the dualism between freeborn and non-freeborn was exacerbated by the memory of one group having possessed the other. Sharkey (1994: 189-190), working in Sudan, describes how

> ... elites had relied on some slaves to farm their lands, though they valued slaves as a whole for a loftier reason: The enhancement of status and proof of power that the possession of slaves could bring ... Indeed, the greatest service that slaves may have provided to their owners in the 19th and early 20th century – through the eyes of the owners themselves – was not so much to ... boost their regional economy, but rather to enhance their social status and prestige.

Today a person of slave descent can decide to opt for emancipation, renegotiation over or the maintenance of hierarchical relations. In some cases, slave status is considered advantageous (Valsecchi 2009; Bellagamba 2009a). In times of hardship, some realize that a complete rupture with their past is too costly or risky and they therefore opt back into dependency relations with their former masters (Bellagamba 2009a). This may present people with complex dilemmas (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005). Other descendants of slaves no longer identify with their slave status. They have managed to move out of the orbit of power and existing constraints in their home societies. Instead, they engage in alternative exit options outside the existing paths to social promotion within the social boundaries of their home societies. Examples of such exit options for slave descendants are access to colonial education (Hesseling & Van Dijk 2001); national decentralization politics (Hahonou 2009, 2011; Leservoisier 2005b; Vereecke 1994; de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005; Mauxion 2008); international development institutions (Giuffrida 2005); globalizing interpretations of Islamic legislation (Berndt 2008; Schmitz 2009) and the global monetary economy (Hardung 1998: 219).[45]

The changing exit options described above imply a certain social distance in spatial space (physical distance) as well as in time (emotional distance from the past). As I will demonstrate in the following sections, both distances have grown significantly. The emotional distance to people's slave pasts has increased now that most of those who experienced slavery as a legal institution have died.

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[44] The cultural field of hierarchy is gendered within Fulɓe society too. Freeborn women are expected to respect the rules more than men (Breedveld & de Bruijn 1996: 808).

[45] 'Money as such is situated outside the social traditional order and its symbols. It creates a margin of maneuvering which resets relatively freely from constraints attached to social roles and statuses' (Hardung 1998: 219).

Remembering the rope: Contemporary echoes of slavery
The increased distance to the past and commemorations of the abolition of slavery (in British African colonies in 2007 and in French African colonies in 2005) help to explain the renewed attention for slavery in Africa. Academic studies on slavery in the first decade of the twenty-first century address the (invisibility of) memories of indigenous African slavery. Three main reasons can be identified.

Firstly, West African national governments do not generally invest in research, documentation or commemorations of indigenous African slavery but have prioritized tributes and attention for victims of the transatlantic slave trade.[46] The most telling case in this respect is probably the remarkable offer by Senegal's President Wade to the people of Haiti after the devastating earthquake that hit their country in 2010. He offered them land in Africa (their continent of origin) and wanted to show how the Senegalese empathized with them for being double victims, firstly of the slave trade and later of a natural disaster. A similar proposal would be unthinkable *vis-à-vis* descendants of slaves who have been victims of indigenous slavery in Senegal's recent past.[47] A similar silence can be found in the Malian public sphere. It is rare to find references in Malian journals to an indigenous slave past, although there are some fairly recent exceptions.[48] Only one newspaper has a column by a journalist involved in the new social movement of TEMEDT that defends and promotes the rights and culture of 'black Tuareg' (Tuareg of slave descent, also called Bella in Mali).[49] There is hardly any debate about the recent slave past of different ethnic groups and indigenous slavery remains for most national governments a shameful past mistake that is not or hardly worth commemorating (Hahonou & Pelckmans 2012 forthcoming).

Secondly, the silence in public discourse on indigenous slavery practices can be explained by the active refusal of commemoration. This silence reveals its sensitivity and the unfinished sympathies of some towards the cultural field of hierarchy. Some slave descendants have an interest in omitting, forgetting and/or not reproducing a painful past (Klein 1989). Greene (2003) has argued for detailed attention to be given to these silences and Hardung (2002) emphasizes the importance of body language. Rossi (2009c) notes that there are strategies to gain access to these histories by creating the right environment for interviews, while Stillwell (2001) indicates that those slave groups that take pride in their slave past, like royal slaves, are much more enthusiastic than other groups of slaves to talk about their past. For other groups, slave status is contested and the researcher has to read between the lines of any narratives (Gaibazzi 2010).

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[46] See, for example, the case of the Gambia as described by Bellagamba (2009b).
[47] http://www.jeuneafrique.com/Article/ARTJAWEB20100113194137/onu-facebook-etats-unis-tremblement-de-terrehaiti-craint-plus-de-100-000-morts-dans-le-seisme.html and http://www.france-info.com/monde-haiti-2010-01-17-le-senegal-offre-une-region-aux-haitiens-393284-14-451.html). Accessed August 2010.
[48] Journalist Sambi Toure in *Info Matin*, no. 2770-2771-2772, 9-11 December 2009: 'Le code, le régime L'Islam et le Mali (XVII/XVIII)', 'L'Islam et le maintien de l'esclavage'. Journalist Gamer Dicko in *L'Essor*, September 2005, 'Victims collaterals de l'independence 1-6'.
[49] There is no official website so far, but for more info on TEMEDT, see for example: http://www.ashoka.org/iagidbaltanat, accessed December 2010

Thirdly, the perceived lack of commemoration of slavery in Africa stands in sharp contrast to the extensive and visible commemoration practices of descendants of trans-atlantic slaves on African soil (Argenti & Röschenthaler 2006). Victims of this trade engaged in 'roots tourism' (Schramm 2007) or claims for reparations (Howard-Hassmann 2008) and commemoration sites have been recognized by UNESCO (Austen & Warren 1997).[50] Shaw (2002) argues that the silences and non-commemoration of the indigenous slave past in (West) Africa is not due to a lack of tribute but rather to the fact that these commemorations take place in non-discursive ways. She therefore called on scholars to look for non-discursive ways of remembering slavery and directs academic attention to embodied commemorations of slavery through dance, cults and song. Several academics[51] have started looking for alternative non-discursive (and preferably non-European) sources to access slave experiences past and present. These could range from attention to folklore,[52] spiritual and/or religious experiences,[53] explicit slave voices in colonial and Islamic archives,[54] and novels by slave descendants.[55]

Argenti (2007) argued for interpreting these various non-discursive and 'belated memories' as experiences of collective psychological trauma resulting from centuries of slaving in African societies. These renegotiations over memories have also led to significant shifts in the social and political relationships between groups of former masters and slaves.

As the social distance to lived experiences of slavery in the past becomes greater, new players are entering the field to renegotiate memories. Grassroots organizations and social movements for slave descendants have been emerging among different ethnic groups in the Sahel. Botte (1999c) made a comparison between the former slaves of three ethnic groups in the Sahel: Iklan[56] former slaves belonging to Tuareg; Haratin, former slaves belonging to Moors; and Riimaayɓe, former slaves belonging to the Fulɓe. He found the Riimaayɓe to be the most 'emancipated' because they are the only group not to have their own opposition movement.[57] However this does not mean that discrimination is tenacious for this group (*Ibid*.: 16).

Anti-slavery organizations in West Africa, which are described as social movements by Ould Ahmed Salem (2007),[58] are on the rise. TEMEDT was, for example, founded in

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[50] For example, Ghana's slave castle on the Cape Coast (Mullen Kraemer 1997), the *Maison des esclaves* on Senegal's Gorée Island (Hinchman 1997) and Benin's Slave Route in Ouidah (Law 1997).

[51] Among others, the large-scale project by Greene, Brown, Bellagamba & Klein, called Tales of slavery, which consisted of several conferences and will result in two forthcoming books in 2011.

[52] Such as Child stories (Argenti 2010), ritual masquerades and dance (Argenti 2007) and surnames and patronyms (Pelckmans 2011b).

[53] Such as ancestral cults (Ologoudou 2008; Noret 2008), spirits (Shaw 2002) and shrines (Baum 1999; Noret 2008: Evers 2002).

[54] Slave petitions (Rodet 2009), and slave agency in court cases (Roberts 2009) have been revisited in colonial archives. For analyses of newly accessible Islamic archives in (thanks to digitization), see Hall (2009) and Daddi Addoun (2005).

[55] See Humery (2001, 2010).

[56] Iklan are also known as Buzu in Niger and Bella in Mali.

[57] Iklan united in an organization called Timidria in Niger (Alou 2000) and Bella came together in the *Mouvement pour l'éveil du monde Bella au Mali* (Lecocq 2005), from 2006 onwards called TEMEDT, Harãtin in Mauritania united as El Hor (Botte 1999c) and *SOS Esclaves* (Ould Ahmed Salem 2007).

[58] He refers mainly to *SOS Esclaves*: http://www.sosesclaves.org and *El Hor*: http://elhor.org/Charteelhor.htm in Mauritania. Accessed August 2010.

Mali in 2006 to fight for the recognition of Bella slave descendants in northern Mali (Hahonou & Pelckmans 2011 forthcoming). Such organizations are often led by intellectuals who, having spent time studying abroad and having got a good position in the national administration, are trying to gain access to funds and international attention to fight for 'their' cause. These causes are paradoxically, however, no longer theirs. Some explicitly deny their own slave descent in order to be heard and, as such, confirm the cultural field of hierarchy and downplay their slave status. They have however booked some success in lobbying for the legal criminalization of slavery and there has been an increase in anti-slavery laws in national constitutions (Mauritania and Niger) as well as in interregional agreements, such as those in the economic community of West Africa (ECOWAS).[59]

Several Internet forums address the extent of slave practices in the Sahel and since 2006 IRIN news has regularly covered slavery in Mali, often at the initiative of the above-mentioned TEMEDT movement.[60] There are also more sources, such as family histories (FF: *Tarikh*) that have recently become available to a larger audience, for example the Arab manumission documents from a collection that has been made accessible online.[61]

In addition to these civilian organizations, (West) African scholars (Saibou 2005; Sehou 2010; Alou 2000; Nkwi 2011 forthcoming; Perbi 2004; Sy 2010) are starting to address the role of African elites in the Atlantic trade and in the (legacies of) internal African slave economies. Research on indigenous slavery by African scholars was a taboo subject for a long time and remained unthinkable during most of the twentieth century (Thioub 2005). Today, scholars in Mali are expressing their fear of studying legacies of slavery in certain areas because this arouses frustration by powerful freeborn elites who might engage in vengeance.

Not only individual scholars but also international human-rights action groups such as Anti Slavery International[62] (Dottridge 2005; Miers 2003) and Free-the-Slaves[63] (Bales 2000) are increasingly financing research on remnants of slavery in the Sahel. Anti-Slavery International financed a cross-country comparison between Mauritania, Niger and Mali. The Mali report (Keita 2009) mentions many forms of discrimination that slave descendants in Mali encounter today.[64] Lastly, the linkages between the modernity of slavery in (West) Africa versus modern slavery are being put on the agenda, for example in an edited volume by Botte (2003). And new attempts to come to terms with universally accepted definitions of exploitative practices have been described by Dottridge (2005) and Quirk (2009).

So far I have described the existing debates commemorating slavery in historical, legal, social and religious realms. This thesis adds two realms of memory that, I think,

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[59] In 2008 this led to a court case in Niger, see Duffy (2009).
[60] See: Irinnews.org/PrintReport.aspx?ReportId=79242. Accessed August 2010.
[61] See: http://ecollections.crl.edu/cdm4/index_.php?CISOROOT=/. Accessed August 2010.
[62] See: http://www.antislavery.org, accessed August 2010.
[63] See: http://www.freetheslaves.net, accessed August 2010.
[64] Anti Slavery International organized an interregional comparative study on legacies of slavery in Mauritania, Niger and Mali, coordinated by Romana Caccchioli and Abdel Wadoud Ould Cheickh. For Mali, Naffet Keita coordinated the country study (personal communication and draft report 2010).

have been insufficiently addressed to date: These are spatial organization (Chapter 2) and mobility as memory (Chapter 7). These specific chapters describe how the cultural field of hierarchy is also commemorated through movement and spatial organization.

Zooming in: An overview of the chapters

The thesis consists of two main parts. The first describes the cultural field of hierarchy 'back home', which is in the home villages of the migrants who are central to the second part. The first five chapters demonstrate how in various realms the legacies of statutory differences between freeborn and slave descendants continue to be 'readable'. The stigmatized position of slave descendants is based on difficult access to claims on the past (Chapter 1), the conflations of place, power and hierarchy (Chapter 2), a lack of ancestral lineages and protecting relations (Chapter 3), internalized stereotypes of hierarchy as expressed in labour and style (Chapter 4) and hierarchy as resulting from the manipulation of legal pluralism and religious ideology (Chapter 5).

Mobility is central to the second part of the thesis. The ways in which people move and the fact that mobility is embedded in social networks and power relations are the focus of Chapter 6. Chapter 7 discusses the ways in which place and ritual interactions reproduce the cultural field of hierarchy in Bamako. Chapter 8 discusses styles and jobs in Bamako, while Chapter 9 focuses on the return of migrants and how their newly acquired social mobility plays out back home.

When zooming in on the chapters in more detail, Chapter 1 demonstrates how there are always different interpretations of the past in the present. The chapter focuses not so much on what history is but rather on how it is instrumentalized at present: History is seen as a political resource that legitimizes ascribed status positions. For slave descendants, history is more difficult to manipulate because (i) freeborn status groups have written sources; (ii) freeborn have a vested interest in silencing the histories of their slaves to maintain their own position; and (iii) freeborn positions were often reinforced by colonial regimes (and colonial archives). Despite these impediments, slave descendants increasingly attempt to engage in their own personalized histories.

The Haayre region is described in Chapter 2 with an emphasis on social relations between the Kingdoms of Joona, Dalla and Booni. What is central is the interrelationship between places where people live and their status and I focus on the village of Dalla and its subdivisions with freeborn and slave wards. In the section on the royal slave ward I also address the methodology and introduce the key figures in the Kau-Dicko network. Finally, I discuss how social status cannot only be read from the landscape but also from habitus and the style of social interactions, such as greetings.

Chapter 3 focuses on relations and indicates how categorical slave status is maintained through restrictions on marriage (endogamy). It demonstrates how some slave families have managed to integrate in freeborn lineages although the majority of descendants of slaves have not. The Dicko and Kau families became interrelated through marriage and thus became family members. However, they remained distinct social status groups and this can be observed in the differences in (the ritual styles of) their marriage ceremonies. The social organization of the marriages of slave descendants continues to accentuate the social boundaries between them and the freeborn Fulɓe. This

is emphasized by the fact that new marriages between the Kau and Dicko families have remained unthinkable even though some other slave groups have managed to renegotiate their social position through marriage with freeborn families.

Chapter 4 describes two main styles on each side of the spectrum of the cultural field of hierarchy, which I have named the 'patriarchal' and the 'loyalty' styles. I describe how those who identify and/or are identified as slave descendants are expected to behave according to the so-called 'loyalty style'. In other words, if people who identify and/or are identified as slave descendants 'know their Head' well, they embody and internalize a habitus that corresponds to expectations of the loyalty style. Both styles combine in what I label 'stereostyling', which is ultimately about the internalization of belonging to Fulɓe society. Finally, the chapter considers the social sanctions adopted towards those who do not know and/or disrespect their Heads.

Chapter 5 discusses how a culture of hierarchy is reproduced in the face of legal pluralism. I describe how the plurality of law – Islamic customary law and modern law – leads to ambiguities in the legal status of freeborn and slave descendants. The example of manumission shows how this form of social promotion in a legal Islamic context frees people but does not make them equal to those born free. Secondly, the case demonstrates the importance of the (Islamic) legal context, which prevails over national state law in defining the cultural field of hierarchy. This chapter also describes trajectories of slave descendants in the spiritual realm and how, by specializing in religious education, they have obtained esteem and managed to reposition themselves.

Chapter 6 considers the histories of movement of the status groups in the network described. This chapter points out how the ways one moves can reflect one's social status. Both dependent and independent forms of mobility as related to social status are discussed and the chapter addresses the (spatial) 'Roads' of royal elites and their slave descendants, with a focus on those moving into the urban areas of Bamako. Hosting is an important mechanism and can reinforce one's position in the cultural field of hierarchy.

In Chapter 7, I describe Bamako and how the settlement history of the Kau versus the Dicko families again shows how hierarchy is linked to place. The focus is on interactions between the families through an exploration of the work of maids and ritual assistance during a baptism in the urban context of the capital. It is a description of how cultural fields of hierarchy travel through the styles discussed in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 8, the various symbolic Roads to the social promotion of the Kau and the Dicko family members are considered in the urban context of Bamako. Firstly there are those mentioned in Chapter 7 who move 'on' or 'back into' the cultural field of hierarchy by engaging in stereostyles during rituals, or assistance more generally. Others explicitly move out of the cultural field of hierarchy through what I propose to call 'exit mobility'. Their movement helped them to 'exit' from the cultural fields of hierarchy back home. This often also means that these migrants decide to not return at all. Active contestation of the existing cultural field of hierarchy (moving 'against') is only done by a minority of people, often through their engagement in associations for human rights or against discrimination more generally. This chapter thus gives an overview of the wide

variety of options slave descendants have managed to engage in over time thanks to the socio-spatial distance of their home society.

In Chapter 9, I describe the return of migrants and how the village remains an important point of reference for the diaspora. Do mobile migrants of slave descent renegotiate their status when they return home? And if so, how? I address these issues by describing the return and reintegration of a freeborn and a slave-descending informant. Lastly, the case of an intellectual of slave descent, who tries unsuccessfully to intervene in the liberation of his cousin, illustrates how although some manage to rid themselves of their Heads and Ropes, other choose or feel forced by structural constraints to remain tied and bonded in the cultural field of hierarchy.

Finally, I formulate conclusions on the interrelations between mobility and power (hegemony and ideology) from the angle of the Rope, the Road and the Head.

Present(-ed) pasts

A disturbing past

This introductory chapter provides an outline of how the descendants of Fulɓe slaves in Central Mali have appropriated their own history and the way they present their past today. The first section offers an overview of how a hierarchy was created in the Central Malian Haayre region[1] in the twentieth century. It describes how social hierarchies became institutionalized due to several main political events in Fulɓe history: The pre-colonial Fulɓe Empire, the colonial intervention, post-independent socialism and the decentralization processes of the 1990s. The claims people make on their history today are politically loaded and stem from these political events.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Fulɓe warriors[2] had settled permanently in Central Mali and became kings[3] who established their own slave economies. The enslavement and raiding of other (ethnic) groups in the region were legitimized as a crusade against disbelievers and undertaken in the name of Islam. During these 'civil-izing' missions, power constantly shifted between those ruling and those who were ruled. This generated 'floating populations' (Warnier 1975: 385). Argenti (2007: 45) de-fines these floating populations as 'roaming bands that resulted first from raiding and later from internal predation and exploitation'. In this pre-colonial period there was a 'full house of variation' in slave statuses and conditions (Ferguson 1999). In addition, various trajectories of emancipation were available to different groups or individual slaves.

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[1] The Haayre is an area of rocky plateaus in Central Mali that extends from Douentza in the west to Hombori in the east. See Chapter 2 for a more detailed description of the area.

[2] For other studies on FulBe pastoralists in this region, see publications by de Bruijn & van Dijk in the period between 1994-2003 and Gallais (1975).

[3] I am aware that the word 'king' is maybe not the best notion to use here. However, my informants themselves use it when they translate the Fulfulde notion of *laamido* (French: *Roi*). I use the notion of king instead of 'sovereign' when referring to the specific group of former Fulɓe warriors whose status group of origin had access to political power in these societies. Also for the territorial areas reigned by these laamido's, I use the notion of 'kingdoms' even though the concept has a different bias in Europe.

Photo 2   Colonial officers with Hamadoun Dicko (from the personal archives in ina Oolo, Joona)

The emancipation of slaves did not come about suddenly as a result of colonial abolitionist measures. Although the French colonial intervention was successful in legally abolishing the slave trade, it did not change the socio-cultural worldview of actors in Sahelian Fulɓe society. In the post-colonial era too, national legislation and its representatives did not fully succeed in bringing about a radical shift in ideas on equality and hierarchy. The first section thus provides a historical explanation of the layers of the meaning of slavery over time and explains why legacies of slavery still continue.

To illustrate this variety, the second part of the chapter, on contested histories, demonstrates how different groups of slave-descending people understand their history today. It analyzes how the past is used as a resource to make claims on the present by the heterogeneous mix of statuses and sub-groups covered by former slaves, who are called Riimaayɓe[4] in Central Malian Fulfulde dialect. Claims to history in the present are in practice leading to differential access to social status based on descent and to land rights. The chapter closes with a discussion of how legacies from the past continue to weigh on cultural perceptions of inequality today. The past still hangs heavy in the present.

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[4]   Riimaayɓe is often translated as 'former slaves' today.

The formation of hierarchies in the Haayre region

This section focuses on the pre-colonial settlement of Fulɓe warriors in the Haayre region. It considers the emergence and trajectories of inclusion and exclusion of the floating populations in relation to Fulɓe society. The geographic focus is on the Central Malian region, which is situated east of the capital Bamako and south of Timbouctou (Map 3, Introduction), and specifically on the memories of the inhabitants of Dalla (Map 4), one of the Fulɓe kingdoms. Like the neighbouring Kingdom of Booni, Dalla was a node[5] of Fulɓe influence in the region. Apart from archival documents, many of the interpretations of Central Malian history described in this section are based on bard Aamadu Baa Digi's oral memories.[6] He is a representative of the social group of craftsmen who are loyal to the royal family of Dalla. His oral recitals of the region's history deal mainly with the deeds of the ruling Weheeɓe (see Angenent *et al.* 2003). The absence or minimal presence of slaves in oral and written traditions is a recurrent feature of history in Sahelian slave societies. As Klein (1989: 211) puts it: 'They are mentioned as followers, companions or victims. Traditions are concerned with the deeds of leaders, rulers and founding heroes.' This is why the second section in this chapter attempts to counter this bias of slaves as historical 'passives' and/or 'outsiders'.

Map 4 The Gandamia plateau of Dalla and its direct surroundings

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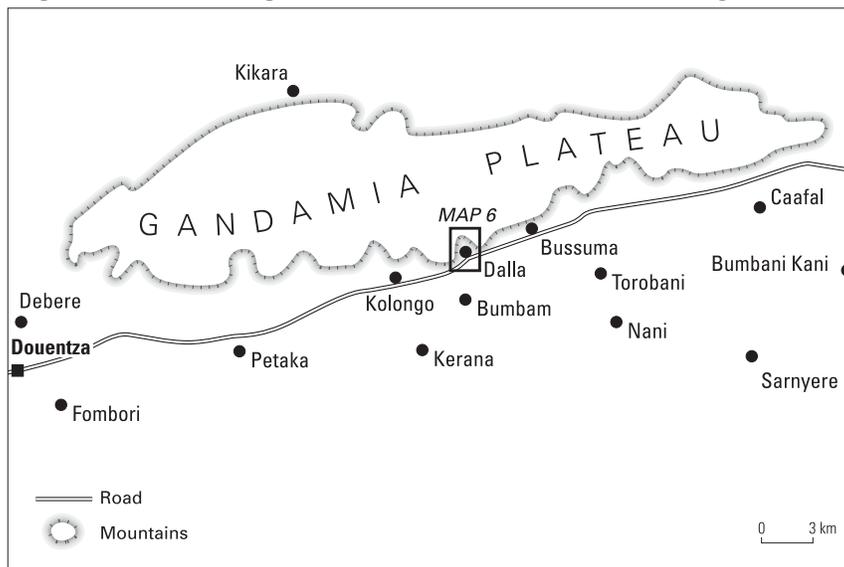
[5]   Gallais (1975: 134) uses the term *noyau* in French, which I translate here as 'node'.

[6]   I use the word 'bard' to refer to a sub-category of craftsmen (FF: *Ɗeenɓe*). Within this category, bards are praise singers and/or historians attached to the important (royal) families. Amadou Baa Digi was such a historian and attached to Dalla's royal court (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 2). His descendants are engaged in jewellery and leather crafting. His son, Hama Amba Yattara, was one of my research assistants during my first fieldwork period in 2001-2002, which was mainly conducted in Dalla and Douentza.

Pre-colonial establishment of Islamic master-slave hierarchies

Baa Digi mentions how raiding Fulɓe warriors occupied the plateaus (FF: *Haayre*) of Gourma in Central Mali from the seventeenth century onwards.[7] The Haayre region was a zone of internal chaos and turmoil and the presence of slavery in the area from the sixteenth century onwards is clear from the vast corpus of Islamic legal documents.[8] Rulers and the ruled were continuously interchanging and constantly at risk of being overturned by new political players.

Warnier (1975: 385) uses the concept of 'floating populations' in the Cameroonian context[9] to describe the constant power shifts that resulted from raiding, internal predation and exploitation. His concept aptly describes similar processes in Central Mali where there were floating populations on the margins of the Maasina Empire due to the presence of roaming warriors.[10] An early colonial document[11] describes how the people of Bambara Maounde migrated because of the plundering Tuareg[12] warriors near Lake Kuraaru (Map 3). At the end of the nineteenth and the start of the twentieth century, Fulɓe warriors were roaming and conquering the Haayre region and generated new floating populations there. In the context of perpetually alternating alliances between the various warrior groups, the floating populations were both raided and protected by the Fulɓe. These populations were obliged to pay tribute but their right to protection was only temporary and insecure. The following French colonial document[13] outlines how the original inhabitants of the plateaus became slaves to the royal courts of local elites:

> ... the Haɓe, inhabitants of the mountain massifs in Maasina, who, having been taken by the Songhay, were exploited by all the conquerors of Maasina: Fulɓe, Moroccans, Toucouleurs. After ten centuries in this region they became real slaves that patiently succumb to the law of the winner.[14]

Whole populations were subjected to Fulɓe raids in the name of religious conversion. The system of enslavement ensured the marginalization of the majority of the population. For many of these marginalized groups, the only way to ensure protection was to

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[7] Historical sources mention a Fulɓe presence in Gourma on the right bank of the Niger Delta in Central Mali from the sixteenth century onwards (de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001a: 222). Fourteenth-century chronicles talk about how the region was first inhabited by cultivators and hunter gatherers (Angenent *et al.* 1998: 15).

[8] The documents written by Ahmed Baaba exemplify this (Lovejoy 2006).

[9] Warnier (1975: 385) develops this concept in his PhD thesis in the context of the Cameroonian Grassfields and Argenti (2007: 45) recycles this concept. I use it here as a metaphor for the shifting composition of populations circling around local rulers and elites to whom they deferred.

[10] The Maasina Empire (1818-1862) is also called Diina, an Islamic term (de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001a: 217). It is nowadays acknowledged as the most important, centralized Islamic Fulɓe reign in the history of the Malian nation-state (Sanankoua 1990). Its first leader, Sekou Ahmadou, centralized the activities of cohabiting occupational groups of Fulɓe herdsmen, Bozo fishers and Bambara cultivators to the advantage of the Fulɓe herdsmen. With the fertile Niger Delta as its central heartland, the control of dry areas such as the Haayre region near Douentza was important for the empire because they provided cattle grazing when the delta region was flooded. This ecological relationship between the Delta and the Haayre remained important (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a).

[11] ANM, FA-1E-96. Rapports Politiques, Bandiagara (1904).

[12] I use the word Tuareg, although the notion of Kel Tamasheq, which literally means 'speakers of the Tamasheq language' is this groups' self-denomination. Nevertheless, most of the literature about this group in the Malian context uses the term Tuareg (Lecocq 2005, Klute 2005, Giuffrida 2005).

[13] Archives Nationales Mali (ANM), Fonds Anciens (FA): 1E-156 (August 1894).

[14] Author's translation from French in ANM, FA: 1E-156 (August 1894).

defer to the current ruling raiders. They circled those in power in the hope of gaining favours. Argenti (2007: 45) describes how floating populations in the Cameroonian Grassfields moved on as soon as they had alternative 'exit options' (Hirshman 1970) with other patrons elsewhere. The same is likely to have been the case in the Haayre region.

The Fulɓe warlords, known as *arduɓe* in Maasina, conquered the Haayre region as nomadic kings with strongholds of power.[15] They then established their own lineages with the ancestral name Dicko and became known as vultures (FF: *Weheeɓe*) ruling the local populations they encountered. Coming from Douentza, they settled in Dalla[16] under the Islamic leadership of the devout Moodi Mboolaye towards the end of the nineteenth century when they were incorporated into the centralized Muslim Empire of Maasina near the present-day town of Mopti in the western Haayre region (Sanankoua 2001). The islamization of the sedentarizing Fulɓe warriors in the Haayre resulted in a strong hierarchization of society (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 57-59). The Weheeɓe warriors there became allies of the empire's leader, Seku Amadu (1818-1848) (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 55), protecting the Maasina Empire from raiding northerners by sending soldiers when necessary (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 176). They also kept the Tuareg and Dogon in the Haayre region in check (Gallais 1967: 156).

The established Fulɓe hierarchy made an explicit distinction between those who were freeborn and those who were not. Not being freeborn resulted in slave status, according to Islamic conceptions. Slaves became an important social category both demographically and economically, and Fulɓe society became a slave economy (Finley 1981: 103). As Meillassoux (1982: 94) stresses: 'Slavery was in no way a superficial feature of the organization of these societies; history cannot be understood if one ignores it!' Today the number of villages inhabited by slaves' descendants testifies to the demographic preponderance of slave populations in the area.[17] Slaves were essential for the economy of the Fulɓe kingdoms as they carried out heavy physical labour, such as cultivating the land, which the Fulɓe warriors (FF: *Weheeɓe*) had appropriated.

Fulɓe rulers in Dalla and Booni were a constant threat to the area's peasant populations because of the raids they undertook for loot such as horses, cattle and slaves. Based on a census in Bandiagara District in 1904, Lovejoy (1983: 186-187) describes how 35.6% of the male population, 47.7% of the women and 16.7% of the children were slaves. As a result of these large numbers of slaves, economic surpluses were generated and contributed to the wealth of Fulɓe rulers who, for a long time, even expressed their wealth in slaves, although their economic value fluctuated over time. In the 1920s, a female horse was paid for an adult slave,[18] while Bard Baa Digi described

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[15] Gallais (1975: 134) mentions Noukuri, north of the Gandamia Plateau.

[16] According to Baa Digi, their common ancestor, Alu Maane, left three sons, each of whom obtained his own part of a territory spanning from Bandiagara in the south to Lake Niyangay in the north (Map 3). Each son headed his own kingdom: Joona, Kanyume and Haayre. Dalla was the centre of the Haayre region which then also included the territories known today as Gourma and Seeno. Joona and Kanyume are situated in a region now called Guimballa (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 49-50).

[17] For more details on the area, see Chapter 2 and Maps 1-5.

[18] El Hajj Bocoum, aged about 70, Dalla. Interview with research assistant Amadu Amiiru Dicko, March 2007.

how ten slaves were equal to the value of a horse in another period (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 97). Slaves did not necessarily have fixed owners and sometimes were able to bypass this by becoming part of one of the above-mentioned floating populations. The trafficking of slaves took place through raiding and capture but also through marriage and, as Angenent *et al.* (2003: 179 Document F) show, in gift exchanges between owners and rulers.

The model of slavery in the Haayre is a variant of slavery that was widespread across the West African Sahel. Two main categories of slaves are generally distinguished in other Sahelian slavery studies (Lovejoy 1983; Meillassoux 1975; Olivier de Sardan 1976): Slaves living on slave estates, and domestic slaves. The slaves on the estates, who did agricultural work, were often the populations who had inhabited the region before the Fulɓe conquered it. Domestic slaves were likely to have been enslaved during raids elsewhere and tended to do domestic work.

Bard Baa Digi described how Moodi Mboolaahi, the first Islamic ruler of Dalla, turned many villages in the Haayre region into slave estates. Ownership over these – often original – inhabitants of the region was divided among the raiding Weheeɓe, the religious Moodibaaɓe and the pastoralist Jalluuɓe families. These estate slaves worked the land and generated surpluses but had to give part (frequently half) of their produce (millet, cotton) to their master, although the rates were not fixed.[19] Upon their conquest of the region, Fulɓe warriors forced entire – often Dogon – villages to become agricultural slave estates in their kingdoms. Baa Digi (Angenent *et al.* 2003) indicates how freeborn Fulɓe presented the slave estates mainly as reservoirs of labour, grain and animals. The fact that their property could easily be taken away from them is remembered today with indignation and frustration by the descendants of estate slaves living on the plateaus today.

In the sedentarized Fulɓe Kingdoms of Dalla and Booni, it were mainly warrior families who controlled the slave populations on the estates. The pastoralist Fulɓe owned fewer estate slaves because they needed to rely on other freeborn families in villages neighbouring their slave estates[20] to control their slave populations when they were not occupying their cattle camps near these estates.[21]

Domestic slaves were another category, the majority of them had been captured during raids or wars.[22] They could be resold, while those on the slave estates could not. They lived in the compounds of their master or the king and sometimes the children of the slaves on the estates were taken as domestic slaves or as concubines for their masters. Domestic slaves[23] had tasks that included food preparation, fetching water and

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[19] Chapter 4 gives more details of slave labour. On the issue of (land) taxes by ruling elites, see Chapter 5 on legal pluralism.

[20] Examples on the territory of Dalla are the villages of Torbani and Nani (Map 5).

[21] Due to the pastoralist mobility of these Fulɓe, their estate slaves had to be controlled by others. Such was the case for slaves inhabiting the sub-ward of Wuro Birigiri (Map 6 and Chapter 2). However, the domestic slaves of pastoralist Fulɓe were incorporated into the families of their masters and joined them on transhumance.

[22] Domestic slaves often remember their former family ties less well than the Riimaayɓe on the slave estates (Meillassoux 1991).

[23] See Chapter 4 on stereo styles for more about stereotyped slave labour.

cleaning. Male slaves took care of the horses, fought as soldiers or prepared building materials such as wood, mud bricks and reeds. Some domestic slaves voluntarily deferred to powerful and wealthy elites to obtain economic support and ensured protection against enslavement by other rulers (Iliffe 1987).

Although both groups shared the same slave status, their individual conditions differed (Meillassoux 1991). Some became trusted persons and historical sources attest to the fact that some masters allowed their slaves to trade (Hall 2009; Baier 1980). In Dalla, slave descendant Allay Jangine[24] was given as a tax payment from a trader (FF: *Jawaando*) to the royal Weheeɓe family of Dalla. Allay proudly remembers how he had the honour of guarding the royal granaries and prisons, a position of trust. In the last ten years of his life, he became the head of the slaves (FF: Amiiru *Maccuɓe*) at the royal court of Dalla.[25]

Not only the roles and individual conditions of slaves but also their possibilities for emancipation varied considerably. Since the floating populations continuously changed positions and alliances, those enslaved sometimes managed to become rulers. Islam too encouraged the redemption and manumission[26] of slaves (Lofkrantz 2008; Lovejoy 2009; Dadi Addoun 2005) and for others marriage with partners in other ethnic groups created options to emancipate.[27]

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Maasina Empire of Seku Amadu was overruled by Fulɓe from the west (FF: *Fuutankooɓe*) led by El Hajj Oumar. Weheeɓe warriors were being raided themselves and to maintain their status and income, they oppressed their slaves. This is allegedly why a group of exhausted but powerful warrior slaves decided to leave their masters in Dalla and follow a new leader called Maamadu Nduuldi who founded the Kingdom of Booni some 40 km to the east of Dalla. Until the arrival of the French at the beginning of the twentieth century, Dalla, Booni and the Songhay Kingdom of Hombori dominated the political scenery of the present-day Haayre region.

Questioning French colonial abolition of slavery
This sub-section considers how the French colonial abolition of slavery affected master-slave relations in Fulɓe society and how this policy remained superficial and formal. With regard to slave trade and markets, French colonial policy was successful but not when it came to domestic slavery and socio-cultural perceptions of slavery. As a result of reliance on indirect rule, French policies often strengthened Sahelian slave societies. Occasionally, and especially towards the end of colonial occupation, the French administration drastically inverted existing hierarchies.[28]

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[24] Allay Jangine, born around 1935, interviews with research assistant Umu Sangare, Dalla, November 2001-May 2002.

[25] See Chapter 4 for more about Allay's life history and his position as the chief of slaves.

[26] For more on (Islamic) manumission procedures in the region, see Chapter 5.

[27] Chapter 6 describes how various forms of mobility offered ways for the emancipation of slaves in the pre-colonial period.

[28] Various examples are mentioned by Berndt (2008) for Guimballa; by Lecocq (2005) for Northern Mali and Klein (1998) for Maasina and the West African region more generally.

The first French base on present-day Malian territory (then called the French Sudan) was established in Bamako in 1883 (Roberts quoted in Lovejoy 1983: 175). Anti-slavery measures were part of the motivation for and legitimization of the colonial regime's civilizing mission. The first official treaty between the colonial powers was the Treaty of Brussels in 1889, which resulted in rendering slave markets and the trade in slaves illegal in oversees colonies. However, slavery as an institution was only abolished by French colonial legislation in 1905 (Klein 1998; Kopytoff & Miers 1977; Klein & Miers 1999a: 4; Botte 1999a: 15). There was much regional variation in the effectiveness of French abolitionist policies. Since the Haayre region, which is central to this study, was part of a vast territory governed by only one French commander, French colonial policies had a marginal effect.

When French commanders arrived in Bandiagara, they reported on the many raiding groups in the area, sketching a situation of turmoil, unrest and repression, and a flourishing slave trade.

> The trade of non-free persons is effectively very active in the region. Sarafere is a market where people from the North come to buy. Since the beginning of the month, I counted 43 non-free (people) being bought by various individuals in this market in order to take them to Timbouctou () and Goundam. Women and children are the ones feeding the market mostly. Where do they come from? Some say they are Mossi, others say they are from Maasina and still others say they come from the South.[29]

Colonial documents also mention the trading of eunuchs to Turkey[30] and regional slave markets in the towns of Bandiagara (Lovejoy 1983), Hombori and Dori.[31] Slaves were transported south via Douentza and Hombori[32] to Dori and on to the British Gold Coast colonies until the French blocked this trading route in 1885.[33]

Elderly slave descendants recount memories of how their fathers and mothers were captured. Allay Jangine,[34] an elderly slave descendant, was visibly emotional when describing how his grandparents 'were sold at the market with ropes around their necks, like animals'. Slaves were either captured collectively during raids or kidnapped as individuals in adjacent areas, such as Mossi from Burkina Faso, Hausa from Tera in Niger.

French abolitionist measures that rendered slavery illegal resulted in the return of captured slaves from many areas to their regions of origin.[35] Others – often first-generation slaves – left their masters and founded their own villages (FF: *Debere*) (Griep 2005; Riesman 1977: 120). From 1897 onwards, the French encouraged this emancipatory movement of slaves they wanted to free. To do so, French policy officially

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[29] Author's translation of an excerpt from ANM, FA: 2E-04; *cercle* Bandiagara, 1899-1907. *Politique Indigène.*

[30] ANM, FA: 2E-04; cercle Bandiagara, 1899-1907.

[31] Today Dori is in northern Burkina Faso near the border with Mali and the Central Malian Seeno (Map 3).

[32] Hombori used to trade with the coastal regions to the south, such as Ghana and Ivory Coast.

[33] ANM, FA: 1E-102; Gourma-Hombori (1912).

[34] Allay Jangine, born around 1935, various interviews with interpreter Umu Sangare, Dalla, November 2001-May 2002.

[35] The best-known example in Mali (or at least best described) is the exodus of slaves from Banamba (in west Mali) by Klein & Roberts (1980). On female (slave) migration during colonial occupation, see Rodet (2009).

created so-called liberty villages (French: *Villages de liberté*) (Bouche 1968). Slaves complaining about bad treatment by their master and/or slaves taken by illegal traffickers could live in these liberty villages where they were given land to cultivate. They had to stay for at least three consecutive months to obtain a certificate of liberty that would prove their freedom on release and allow them to settle as freemen in their village of origin or elsewhere.[36] In the Haayre region, no such villages existed; the archives only mention liberty villages in Bandiagara[37] and Goundam.[38] Abolitionist measures in French Sudan were poorly institutionalized and the absence of liberty villages in the Haayre region underlines how French policy was almost absent here.

By 1910, the trade in slaves in French Sudan as a whole had decreased significantly and slave markets had been successfully abolished. The French colonizers had new goals, such as responding to the political realities in Europe and the First World War. Abolition became less central as slavery from then onwards was supposedly non-existent. After 1911, references to slavery were markedly absent from colonial archives. The French colonial government decided that making a distinction between freeborn and slaves in legal documents was discriminatory and against the law. French administrators thus no longer listed slaves who inhabited liberty villages but instead kept track of the 'nominative state of former servants in refugee villages, who are authorized to return to their country of origin'.[39] Instead of only documenting the fact that they were slaves, their sex and their age, administrators now described slaves as freeborn subjects and registered their place of birth, residence and names.

Another measure that clearly reflected the official denial of the continued existence of slavery is the fact that, from 1911 onwards, the French colonial administration stopped issuing liberty certificates to runaway slaves. In the National Malian Archives the silence on the issue of slavery is most tangible between 1911 and the 1940s.[40] The French administration's change in wording, which was directed at the international community, effectively veiled the fact that slavery had only nominally been abolished (Meillassoux 1975: 12). A typical colonial change in terminology was the replacement of the term *esclaves* with that of *captifs, servants* (Meillassoux 1989) or non-free.[41]

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[36] For more on the certificates of liberty issued after a stay in such villages, see Chapter 5.

[37] In Bandiagara, the first liberty village was set up in 1898. From 1903 onwards, the coming and going of people was registered, with 59 persons living in the village throughout the year. In 1905 the totals were 82 versus 96 for the first and second semesters respectively. In December 1906, the French administrator in Bandiagara registered 116 inhabitants. From 1906 onwards, the totals are given per month and differentiate between men, women and children. Source: ANM, FA: 1E-123: *Etats numériques de villages de liberté*, Bandiagara (1897-1911).

[38] ANM, FA- 1E-171: Correspondances sur les villages de captifs libérés-Goundam (1897).

[39] Author's translation of archival document ANM, FA- 1E-171. Goundam (1897).

[40] The studies before 1911 are: ANM, FA: 1D-2 (1894)/1D-35-4 (1910)/1E-156 (1894-1904)/\1E-167 (1908)/1E-181 (1904)/1E-182 (1905-1906)/1E-183 (1895-1904)/1E-184 (1908)/\1E-292 (1903). The studies after are in the ANM, NUM: 1E-1246 (1957)/2D-1983 (1958)/1E-1871 (1918). The only exception is the discussion on pawnship (French: *Mise en gage*) in the 1930s as described for example in ANM, FA-1D210: 6 (1957)/2D-1983 (1958)/1E-1871 (1918). The institution of human pawnship (whereby a person serves as a guarantee replacing a value) was finally decided to be neither slavery nor trade in persons.

[41] An early example of a change in wording is Circulaire no. 92, 17 Mars 1897 (ANM, FA-1E-177) that describes how the term captive (French: *Captif*) had to be replaced by the term non-free (French*: Non-libre*).

Some informants attributed the emergence of the term *Riimaayɓe*, literally meaning 'freed persons', as a new qualification for slaves previously called *Maccuɓe* to the French 'liberation of slaves'. Today the word Riimaayɓe is commonly used as a generic term to refer to the whole group of people of slave descent within Fulɓe society. It has become the word to describe a heterogeneous social group. Some informants distinguish between Maccuɓe as slave descendants still linked to (FF: *Maraaɗo*) their masters from Riimaayɓe as independent descendants of slaves.[42]

French influence in the Haayre region increased only after the First World War. On one of his tours in the region in 1911, French Lieutenant Matras described the following situation:[43] 'I noted that: 1. All the Dogon (Habes, sic) or Rimaibes (sic) villages in the mountains are excessively poor 2. Mortality is very high here, especially amongst the children.' The first decade of the reign of King Yerowal Nuhun Mbaabi (1911-1966) in Dalla coincided with an increased French presence in the region. Baa Digi describes how Yerowal received a letter in the 1920s insisting on the complete abolition of slavery in all its forms (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 99-101).

> The Fulɓe no longer traded in slaves, but continued to dominate them. You take advantage of your dependants, make them work for you and have them registered as yours. This situation continued for years until a letter from the French forbade all forms of servitude. No person was a slave to any other. All men are free, which is what we call a democracy. This really worried the Fulɓe.[44]

It was difficult to abolish slavery in daily practice because 30% to 50% of the economy was based on it (Meillassoux 1975: 17). Slave-holding elites resisted abolition for fear of losing their labour supply and revenue (Klein & Miers 1999a: 4-5; Meillassoux 1975: 13) and as the French depended on the powerful local elites through indirect rule (Klein 1998), abolition of slavery in all its forms was impossible. Yerowal maintained much of his power because he collaborated superficially with French colonials[45] and, like other rulers in the area, the French accorded him special favours. These included the right to land ownership, which concurrently guaranteed him continued control over the labour of so-called "former" slaves (Klein & Miers 1999a: 6; Klein 1993a: 24). Yerowal continued to abuse the floating populations well into the twentieth century.[46]

Before then, the French ruled indirectly through King Aguibou Tall[47] from the town of Bandiagara.[48] There was widespread instability among the ruling Fulɓe families

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[42] This corresponds to my typology of Riimaayɓe Haayre versus Maccuɓe Wuro described below.

[43] ANM, FA: 1E-102: Hombori, 8 September 1911, number 136.

[44] Author's translation of: 'Alors, les Fulbe ne faisaient plus le commerce des esclaves, mais ils continuaient à les asservir. Tu disposes de tes dépendants, tu les fais travailler pour toi, tu les récences avec toi. Cette situation a durée plusieurs années, jusqu'a ce que la lettre suivante des Français interdisant toute servitude Personne n'est plus l'esclave de son prochain. Tous les hommes sont libres, ce que nous appelons une démocratie. Cela a beaucoup souciée les Fulbe.'

[45] Dalla, for example, assisted the French colonial regime in suppressing the revolt of the Samo in Bobo Dioulasso in 1916.

[46] El Hajj Bocoum, 70 years old, village of Dalla. Interview with research assistant Ahmadou Amiiru Dicko, Dalla, May 2007.

[47] Aguibou Tall is a descendant of Omar Tall, a leader who came with his Fulɓe army from the west (FF: *Fuutankooɓe*).

before the arrival of the French but the situation changed when they installed their commanders first in Bandiagara and later in Hombori. King Surgu of Hombori was the leader of the region's Songhay population and befriended the colonial administrators, who transferred their main centre of indirect rule from Bandiagara to Hombori. For King Yerowal, this shift of power from Bandiagara to Hombori was a relief. He had close ties with King Surgu, and managed to negotiate paying less tax (Angenent *et al*. 2003: 111). Those who opposed French intrustion, were eliminated. In the kingdom of Booni, Allay Yero Maamudu was killed by the French, who replaced this ruler with his 17-year-old son Hammadu Yero, who was much more maleable.

Nevdertheless, a lack of funds and administrators meant that the French presence and control in the Haayre always remained limited. Depending on the system of indirect rule, meant they had to take into account the interests of existing rulers. The French for example informally granted King Surgu[49] and King Yerowal permission to maintain domestic slaves if they promised to stop raiding. This partly explains why relations today between local political elites (FF: *Weheeɓe*) and clients descending from their former slaves (FF: *Riimaayɓe*) have remained so close and hierarchical.

Stories abound about how the kings resisted French anti-slavery politics. In 1939 King Yerowal (Dalla) and king Baa Lobbo (Hombori) cooperated by killing one of the locals working for the French. Baa Digi explains how this interpreter had become too demanding in terms of corruptive gifts and cows (Angenent *et al*. 2003: 115). In addition to overt forms of resistance, there were ways of hiding illegal slave practices. Small-scale trading in slaves continued well into the 1930s, with one of the last slaves sold by king Yerowal being the father of Maman Abidjan.[50] Yerowal sold this man to slave traders but he managed to flee back to Dalla where he died in the 1950s.[51] Corporal punishment was also easy to hide from public control as El Hajj Bocoum[52] recalls:

> When the French came they said slavery was finished: People were no longer allowed to beat or buy slaves. They made laws and spread the news everywhere. However, this did not stop the masters from treating their slaves badly or re-selling them. The noblemen and leaders did not accept French laws. They kept on doing things secretly. Slaves were now asked to beat their fellow slaves inside the house of their master. To avoid the screaming being heard, a cloth was put in their mouths. To avoid others discovering the wounds, these were covered with herbal butter.[53] Such punishments made sure that

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[48] Bard Baa Digi (Angenent et al. 2003: 99) remembers how Aguibou and his followers made the local FulBe rulers suffer: 'Ils faisaient tout: Vendre ou tuer ou battre ou emprisonner tout personne a leur gré. Ils disposaient des chefs, leur demandaient des captifs'.

[49] Upon his death, King Surgu was replaced by Allay Baa Lobbo, who as an intellectual was even more favourably inclined towards the French and their educational system. He encouraged as many family members as possible to study in French schools (Angenent *et al*. 2003: 115). He had a lot of power during the French regime and like his father continued to befriend King Yerowal in Dalla (*Ibid*.: 123). This resulted in intermarriages between the two royal courts of Dalla & Hombori. Like King Yerowal, Baa Lobbo is remembered as a cruel ruler by the slave-descending populations. Gaillais (1975: 130) describes how some groups of slaves and agriculturers revolted against Baa Lobbo.

[50] For more about Maman Abidjan: See De Bruijn & Pelckmans (2005) and Chapter 2 in this book.

[51] Phone conversation 31 August 2009, Amadu Amiiru Dicko, born 1980, Dalla.

[52] El Hajj Bocum, about 70 years old, village of Dalla. Interview with research assistant Amadu Amiiru Dicko, May 2007.

[53] In West Africa this butter is known for its hydrating skin-care qualities.

slaves would not try again to refuse things. When I was a teenager, I witnessed such secretive physical punishments several times in my family.

The French managed to decrease the trade of and raiding for slaves in much of the Western Sudan (Klein 1998; Miers & Roberts 1988) but other forms of extreme personal dependency remained in place throughout the twentieth century. Studies of the droughts in the Haayre by Gallais (1975: 111) and by de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a)[54] describe how the 1913-1914 drought undermined slavery as an economic institution when the slave-holding elites could no longer feed their slaves and sent them away. However, relations between marginalized persons deferring in extreme dependence to better-off individuals in times of crisis remained a form of social organization and identity ascription. Stories by elderly slave descendants paint a picture of slave acquisition and/or the subjection of people in personal dependency through human pawnship (Lovejoy & Falola 2003) well into the 1930s and 1940s.[55] More specifically, Klein & Roberts (1980) argue that the Depression was felt in West Africa in 1931 and 1932 with a sharp drop in commodity prices that threatened livelihoods. In response, many people in poor families were forced to pawn their children, usually girls. These populations thus continued to 'float'.

Once the French established themselves in Hombori, they introduced infrastructural changes (Angenent et al. 2003: 117-121) using local forced labour to build roads and colonial administration buildings (Cooper 1996: 31-43; Klein 1993: 24). Many of Dalla's inhabitants remember how they had to construct a road for the French commandant (Angenent et al. 2003: 119). Although slaves were supposed to have been liberated, most slave descendants today describe the French colonial regime as exploitative and enslaving, just like their former masters. Allay Jangine[56] remembers how he and other porters had to transport a French officer in a chair from Dalla to Booni, a distance of some 40 km. Often their local masters cooperated with the French and lobbied hard to keep freeborn Fulɓe free from French forced labour sending their slaves instead (Angenent et al. 2003: 117). The French realised how they were indirectly reinforcing existing hierarchies through these consequences of their indirect rule. A report on the recruitment of soldiers by the French mentions:[57]

> … the land being occupied by Fulɓe (French: *Foulbe*) and their Riimaayɓe (French: *Rimaibes*), one should not wonder about the recruitment procedure. The Riimaayɓe will give men and the Fulɓe have done everything to scare them off. The Fulɓe politics in this district (French: *Cercle*) have always consisted of avoiding a situation where servile populations (French: *Populations serviles*) and the French authorities would have close contact because it is the loyalty of the Riimaayɓe that the Fulɓe use to obtain political influence, their power and a large part of their wealth. The day that the Riimaayɓe manage to flee from their authority (French: *échapper a leur direction*) will signal the end of Fulɓe hegemony in Maasina.

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[54] There are comparable studies for similar societies in the Sahel region: Clark (1999), Ruff (2000) and Berndt (2008).

[55] Reports on slavery were replaced by those on pawnship: ANM, FA 1D-197(Senoufo)/1D-200 (Koulikouro)/1D-211 (Tonomassigui).

[56] Interviews, Allay Jangine, born around 1935 in Dalla. With interpreter Umu Sangare, November 2001-May 2002.

[57] ANM, FA: 1E-30:Djenne, Rapport Politique, September 1913.

Other changes introduced by the French that remained vivid in local memories were the introduction of taxes on people and property (including cattle)[58] and the recruitment of soldiers (French: *Tirailleurs*) on Malian territory (Mann 2000; 2006) to fight in the First and Second World Wars. In Kolongo (Map 4), a neighbouring hamlet to the village Dalla, an elder of slave descent[59] showed me a picture of himself wearing a French army uniform. Like so many others, he complained about still not having received his pension.[60] Lastly, the French reorganized existing geographical and political units (French: *Cantons*)[61] and most of the kingdoms became either districts (French: *Cercles*) or cantons. Much to the indignation of local kings, the French commander Bariyatou declared Kikara and Jamweli independent cantons (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 115).[62]

With the territorial reorganization of administrative units similar to provinces (French: *Arrondissements*) in the 1950s, the canton of Dalla became part of the province of Douentza, while Booni obtained the status of an independent province.[63] This important change explains the declining importance of Dalla *vis-à-vis* Booni. With its independent administrative status, Booni was more influential in national government services than Dalla. Many more of its inhabitants received a French education and this difference has resulted in different configurations of hierarchy in the respective villages.

The French turned existing power relations upside down and some slave descendants worked as administrators in the French colonial government because they had had a French education. In an article on primary-school enrolment among (pastoralist) Fulɓe today, Breedveld (2006a) describes how distrust of formal education is not only due to economic considerations but is also a historical legacy of colonial intervention. By the end of the 1940s, colonial officers were increasingly hesitant about the fact that slaves were being appointed to important positions. The French knew that some were engaged in cruel politics of revenge towards their former masters (Klein 1993a: 24). Slave resistance and agency existed although often more at an individual than at a collective level.[64]

The gradual decline in French engagement in the abolition of slavery from 1911 onwards only started to increase again at the end of the 1950s in the run-up to Mali's independence. Colonial and national reports from 1956 and 1957 describe concerns about the continued existence of slavery in French Sudan.[65] Forced labour was increasingly being problematized (Cooper 1996) and among the international community,

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[58] People are still wary of mentioning the number of children and cattle they have.

[59] Burra Baa, about 60 years old, village of Kolongo, Diimaajo. Interview with assistant Hama Amba Yattara, Dalla, 2002.

[60] It is well known that the national government retained or at least had difficulties distributing pensions to these former soldiers who served in the French army.

[61] See Map 2, Introduction. During French colonial rule in Mali, a *cercle* was the smallest unit of French political administration. It was headed by a European officer and consisted of several cantons, each of which in turn consisted of several villages.

[62] This was especially shocking since they lacked the royal drums that symbolize power in the area (Breedveld & de Bruijn 1996: 810).

[63] Booni and Mondoro were attached to the province of Hombori (Map 3) but revolted against the rule of Hombori's King Baa Lobbo (Gallais 1975: 130; de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 90). Their revolt was taken seriously by the French who finally granted them independent administrative status.

[64] For more on resistance in the area, see de Bruijn & van Dijk (2003b).

[65] ANM, NUM (numérique): 1E-1246 (1957)/2D-1983 (1958)).

existing UN conventions of 1956 on slavery and forced labour in 1957 were amended (Miers 2003) in the decade preceding independence.[66] Now that slavery has been legally abolished worldwide, the concept of slavery is more often used to obtain political concern for practices akin to slavery. Contemporary use of the concept of slavery is confusing because it is no longer an existing legal category (Quirk 2009; Rossi 2009a). Dottridge (2005: 690, 706-710) demonstrates how the terminology for intolerable practices against humanity (forced labour, slavery, trafficking) is defined differently by different organizations (the ILO, the UN and others), which makes the implementation of anti-slavery policies by international organizations in the West African Sahel problematic.

Post-colonial legacies of slavery during socialism and decentralization
This section describes how various national Malian governments failed to eradicate aspects of earlier hierarchies in Dalla. However, social change continued to take place in the region and affected the position of those slaves furthest in distance from the powerful political and religious elites. As already outlined for the colonial period, the success of abolitionist measures depended on the logistics available for implementing policies that varied from one region to another. It was just before, during and after independence that new efforts to eradicate the legacies of slavery were made.

Attempts to legally abolish slavery were more effective in the post-colonial era because they were being made by 'cultural insiders' who had obtained positions in the national administration and were often former slaves who had climbed the social ladder through French educational trajectories. The political regime of the first Socialist Republic of Moodibo Keita (1960-1968) managed to effectuate more sustainable changes against local inequalities than the French colonizers had. And as many of the new politicians were of slave descent, they knew exactly how and on which themes to interfere as insiders to remove such hierarchies.

The Malian government came to be considered an enemy by many freeborn Fulɓe. The new socialist regime of Moodibo Keita did quite some efforts to invert freeborn political elite's superior position by raising the social status of former slaves and encourage access of slave descendants to national administration. Many Fulɓe continue to consider government officials to be descendants of former slaves, a fact that, in their eyes, legitimizes their distrust of government today.

Under the banner of the Secular Republic of Mali, some politicians and administrators of slave descent tried to reduce the role of Islam as a political institution. Berndt (2008: 290-291) discusses the way in which they preached the primacy of the national judicial system over Islamic law as a way of changing the on-going practice of slavery in people's livelihoods as well as in their minds. Nevertheless, Islam remained an important identity marker in the Haayre region and, more specifically, in Dalla with its

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[66] The UN's 1926 Slavery Convention was amended with the Supplementary Convention on Practices similar to Slavery in 1956. The abolition of forced labour internationally was also refined with the 'Abolition of Forced Labour Convention' in 1957, in addition to the existing UN Forced Labour Convention in 1930 and the Protection of Wages Convention in 1949. See: http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C105, accessed August 2009.

renowned imams.[67] It also remained important for legitimizing status differences and inequality in rights.

Other attempts to level access to citizenship and politics were undertaken by the governing socialist political party, USRDA.[68] The opposition PSP party,[69] by contrast, regrouped traditional rulers (Lecocq 2002: 36-48) and president Keita's 'Return to the Land' (French: *Retour à la terre*) policy encouraged many interregional migrants to return home to engage in agricultural labour in their home towns. Returning slave-descendant migrants and intellectuals with knowledge of citizenship and human rights had witnessed less strict social hierarchies elsewhere and on their return criticized the existing hierarchies in their home towns.[70]

With Malian independence, the hegemonic position of the local kings declined. The death of King Yerowal Nuhun Mbaabi in Dalla in 1966 was a turning point and the power of the ruling elite subsequently faltered due to internal strife. Yerowal's successors had considerably less power (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 91) and the domestic slaves at the royal court no longer live with their masters. They have built their own houses, a transition that marked the start of their emancipation and, as a result of the droughts, acquiring their own land has increasingly become an option for tenants of slave descent[71] who can call themselves freed slaves (FF: *Riimaayɓe*) instead of slaves (FF: *Maccuɓe*). The end of Yerowal's reign was the beginning of many changes for the Riimaayɓe in Dalla.

On the national political scene and only two years after Yerowal's death, Moussa Traore, a member of the main Malian ethnic group of Bambara, seized power in 1968. His dictatorial regime (1968-1991) negatively impacted on socialist efforts to discard hierarchical ways of thinking in two ways. Firstly, the administrators of slave descent who started to initiate changes in social hierarchies from within by addressing religious beliefs were removed from positions of power. And secondly, Moussa's regime coincided with two severe droughts (1971-1973 and 1983-1984) which, due to poor management of national distribution channels and of production more generally, made many slave-descendant populations either return to their masters or face food and water shortages. Despite increased interference and the presence of both the government and international community in the hitherto isolated Haayre region, the socio-economic position of the Fulɓe did not improve in a sustainable manner (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 540).

In brief, the first thirty years of independence from France saw Mali as a failed socialist state and, later, as a dictatorial regime. This resulted in economic and political decline that stagnated or even reversed the newly acquired independence of some slave descendants who decided to defer to their wealthy former masters as a form of social

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[67] Dalla is an important site for pilgrimage because the imam is a descendant of the once-famous Islamic scholar Moodi Tawhidi who is considered as an almost holy person (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 92). See Chapter 5 for more on the impact of Islam on hierarchy and slavery.

[68] Political party USRDA: Union Soudanaise - Rassemblement Démocratique Africaine.

[69] The PSP (Sudan Progressive Party: *Parti Soudanais Progressiste*) is an affiliate of the French Socialist Party.

[70] The links between hierarchy and mobility are central in Chapter 6.

[71] Mauxion (2008) describes this process in detail for the Gao region to the east of the Haayre.

security. Many poor and marginalized people merely disappeared: Some may have managed to achieve social mobility, while others died.

Following a coup led by Amadou Toumani Touré (popularly known as ATT) in the early 1990s, a transitional government laid down the legal foundations for Mali's return to multi-party democracy and Alpha Oumar Konaré was elected president in 1992. He initiated an ambitious programme of decentralization aimed at strengthening democracy by bringing the government closer to the people (Mamdani 1996). This also proved to be an effective strategy in countering the threat of secession in the northern regions, mainly by Tuareg (see Lecocq 2010), because this strategy provided greater autonomy to lower administrative levels. During the 1990s, 10,000 Malian villages were re-grouped into 703 municipalities.[72] However the 'crisis in citizenship' (Geschiere 2004) that these kinds of decentralization policies brought about intensified struggles all over West Africa.

French colonial political reforms in independent Mali turned kings into chiefs, who were in turn replaced by communally elected mayors from 2002 onwards (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005). Despite the decentralizing policies, which in principle made it possible for all status groups to participate in politics, the existing hierarchies have not changed as much as expected. Today, the villages of Dalla, Booni, Joona and Kanyume are still ruled by chiefs from the Weheeɓe lineage and their local chiefs possess the royal drums (FF: *Tubal*).[73] The present village chief, Hamidu, does however complain that his power is waning and has described what he perceives as a serious decline in the ruling power of the so-called *'Rois tambours du Haayre'* (Angenent *et al*. 2003; de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 91). His brother Musa Dicko was elected mayor and has managed to initiate a promising comeback for the former ruling Dicko families in the national administration and politics. Musa's children are currently gaining influence in national politics (see Chapters 6 and 7) and many slave descendants belonging to the royal court of Dalla continue to defer to their former masters. Some assist the Dicko family in politics but no one has yet dared to propose his own candidacy. Engaging in politics is still considered highly inappropriate for descendants of slaves.[74]

The international expectation that decentralization would induce radical changes and generate equality for all citizens has not materialized. A decade after this political model was first introduced, the local political leadership seems to be even more firmly in the hands of the former elites in Dalla (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005). However, hierarchical political power constellations in the region are increasingly being challenged by decentralization (Nijenhuis 2003). They are being contested within an existing historical context and in combination with the socio-economic changes that have

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[72] Based on Loi n.96-059 '*Portant création des communes*', November 1996. For more on decentralization in Mali, see Diarra (1999); Kassibo (1997); Sy (1998); Fay *et al*. (2006) and on decentralization in West Africa more generally, see Blundo & Mongbo (1998).

[73] On the importance of drums as symbols of (royal) power in the wider sub-region, see Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996: 810).

[74] See Chapter 4 for more details.

taken place over the past decades (Mauxion 2008).[75] However, many of these changes were already emerging and preceded municipal elections.

The emergence of former slaves becoming political leaders in decentralized political units such as municipalities of Fulɓe communities in West Africa have been explicitly adressed by Leservoisier (2005b) for Mauritania, Mauxion (2008) for northeastern Mali and Hahonou (2009) for northern Benin and Niger.[76] Within traditional political elite groups, internal shifts in favour of intellectuals with positions in the national administration have taken place, which is how Musa Dicko was elected mayor instead of his older brother, Chief Haidu. A more detailed explanation of such shifts and changes in power positions as lived in the daily practice of the municipal community of Dalla are described later.

In the descriptions of hierarchy over time, the word 'change' comes up time and again. Some changes in social hierarchies such as the abolition of the slave trade were permanent, while others were superficial, such as the prohibition of the use of slave labour. Others were temporary, as emancipation, for example, collapsed during times of drought. The historical outline in this first section has grounded 'change' as a unilinear trajectory over time although justice has not yet been done to history by presenting it in a linear way.

Addressing major political events in a linear way[77] allows for a stronger argument in the following section since a linear approach is but one of the many ways in which the past can be (re)presented. Central in the second section are precisely the contestations of change as a unilinear path from tradition to modernity. Trough an analysis of how history was and still is instrumentalized by different groups to legitimize or improve their current social position, this section describes the heterogeneous approaches by which the past can be (re)presented today. The main argument is that the past is not a fixed entity and generates a patchwork of variation over time.

Contested histories

> It is the 'powerful' who are at the centre of historical legends.
> (Guichard 1998: 195, author's translation from French)

> Many can tell you where their fathers came from, but some cannot or will not tell even that. In a sense, servile informants can say a lot about 'the world the masters made'. They tend to say very little about 'the world the slaves made'.
> (Klein 1989: 211)

These quotes indicate how slaves have very little place in history. This section considers how passivity among slave groups is shifting by looking at how different groups of

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[75] Mauxion (2008: 153) describes the effects of rice-farming intensification on local power constellations in the wake of the droughts in the 1970s and 1980s, demonstrating how the changing players in the elections are the outcome of three decades of socio-economic change rather than the elections themselves.

[76] Other authors describing the impact of decentralization politics on local power constellations in different ethnic groups in Mali include Zobel (2004); Fay (2002); van Dijk & Hesseling (2005) and Kassibo (1997). The impact of decentralization policies on land relocation in Douentza is described by de Langen (2004/2005).

[77] The history of the area, with a focus on control over mobility, is described in Chapter 6.

people understand their history. They make claims with respect to the past to legitimize their status in the social hierarchies of the present.[78] Historian Vansina (1985: 94) remarked that historical messages are social facts and that oral traditions underline a certain collective conscience. Starting from this idea, Jansen (1995) demonstrated how in Mali's Mande Mountains, history can be considered as a 'revolving well'. In his study of interpretations of the Sunjata epos, he described how oral traditions cannot be used as sources of historical knowledge in an uncritical fashion as they are revolving around the well of history. History is a flexible vehicle for contemporary political claims and in the process of appropriating and representing history, social groups in the present claim history in various ways.

Rossi (2009a: 2) points out that because today 'the ideology of slavery loses its grip on the way people think and act, it becomes possible for slave descendants to talk about their ancestry'. These new possibilities are also generating confusion and there are conflicting views of the past among slave descendants. Some distance themselves as far as possible from the stigma of their enslavement by being outspoken about the slave-raiding rulers of the past, while others choose to remain silent about the atrocities their ancestors experienced. This explains why the position and personality of King Yerowal has been evaluated both positively and negatively by different slave descendants in Dalla. Some see him as 'the last king of Dalla', stressing his power and ability to rule Dalla: 'Yerowal took good care of the drums (FF: *Tubal*) symbolizing his power and paid the religious scholars well for working with him'.[79] Others are overtly negative about Yerowal's reign, claiming he was unnecessarily cruel and terrorized their ancestors.[80] These different representations of the past are the focus of this section.

There has always been a 'full house of variation' (Ferguson 1999: 80) in (re-)interpretations of the past and it is important to shed light on these (re)negotiations to do away with stereotypes of slaves as 'people without a history'. Patterson (1982: 4) describes how slaves: 'Had a past, to be sure. But a past is not a heritage. Slaves differed from other human beings in that they were not allowed freely to ... anchor the living present in any conscious community of memory.'

Historian and anthropologist Trouillot (1995) developed a theory about how any production of history inevitably generates silence: Historical accounts are always partial and coloured. This partiality necessarily leaves other interpretations unrepresented or, Trouillot's words, 'silenced'. When applying Trouillot's ideas to the Haayre region, it is clear that the religious and political elite define regional history hegemonously: It is the history as sung by the bard Amadou Baa Digi (Angenent *et al.* 2003). In the Haayre region, both the ethnic group of Fulɓe and Songhay have historical 'statements' (*Ibid*.: 52) archived in written documents (FF: *Tarikh*).

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[78] Baldus (1977) convincingly demonstrates how specific Fulɓe slave groups in northern Benin developed creative ideological adaptations by which these groups internalized their subordination.

[79] Macca Maiga, born around 1958, Dalla (Wuro Mango). Interview with interpreter Umu Sangare, Dalla, 2002.

[80] Hassan Tambura, born around 1952, Dalla (Wuro Burram). Also interviews with Riimaayɓe living on the Gandamia Plateau near Dalla. Interviews with assistant Burra Yero Cisse, in villages on Gandamia, February 2002.

The history of slaves and slave descendants in Fulɓe society remained marginalized for a long time (Pelckmans 2003). Nevertheless, a slave history has always existed and most slave descendants in the Haayre region remember their origins as freeborn (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005: 90), as do slave descendants in other Sahelian societies (Hardung 2002; Botte 1994: 115; Rossi 2009a). Descendants of slaves in the Haayre continue to be excluded today because their slave ancestors lacked written sources and due to freeborn religious ontological interpretations of race. Fulɓe often claim to have fairer skin than most Bambara and Dogon populations and so in freeborn Fulɓe ideology, Fulɓe are either white (sedentary freeborn) or red (nomadic herdsmen), while slaves are 'black'. Being black is considered a sign of inferiority and lesser moral worth.

The voices of slaves in Fulɓe history have been largely silenced. When asked about their history, Fulɓe slaves in Dalla tend to recite the oral history as it has been told by their masters, incorporating ideas of their own inferiority but ignoring stories about the suffering of their own ancestors. When trying to obtain the histories of slave descendants themselves, the way in which they are approached is important. Methodologically, a relationship of trust is needed and this has to have been built up over time to enable someone to talk about their own personal history. Firstly, the obstacle of silences and taboos needs to be overcome. Hardung (2002) mentioned the importance of noting body language and silences when interviewing slave descendants in the Fulɓe society of northern Benin as this gives emic perceptions of what is shameful and what is not. Anthropologists, and gender theorists in particular, also acknowledge the importance of studying silences and not focusing on words alone (Smith-Rosenberg 1985: 11, 26). Silence is not a 'non-reaction' but just a different reaction and can be equally telling. This thesis thus includes descriptions of the body language and non-speech noted in interviews in order to interpret silences.

Secondly, a relationship of trust is important because the wrong questions can lead to shame. To avoid such shame, it is often bards who ask for names and relations between ancestors. For example, if a researcher asks someone with no father for his father's name, this could elicit feelings of shame for the individual involved. Being a 'bastard child' is, according to Riesman (1977: 79), a very shameful thing in Fulɓe society: It is the worst insult possible.

Thirdly, secrecy is a powerful instrument for all parties involved. Encouraging people to share their secrets is facilitated by trust and reciprocal interaction. Most Riimaayɓe and Maccuɓe today know a lot about their own history. Over the years there have been changing reasons for the silences regarding their history. One is precisely because, in the process of their emancipation, their history became that 'of those who would rather forget' (Klein 1989). For those who have only recently managed to distance themselves from the restraining chains of their past, its reconstruction is not a priority. Today, addressing the past has become less difficult emotionally because of the passing of time. This is facilitated by the fact that the older generation who had personal experiences of slavery are now dying.[81]

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[81] Five of the elderly informants of slave descent who I interviewed in Dalla in 2001-2002 have since passed away: Allay Jangine, Maman Abidjan, Asse Kau, Kumbaare, Allay Kau, Diougal and Pooro Weleende. All were Riimaayɓe who served at the royal court of Dalla (Wuro Mango ward).

The growing ethnic consciousness of various slave-descendant groups explains why the noble families of Dalla now more than in the past are hiding written historical documents that describe which families obtained which slaves and on what occasions. A member of the ruling family in Dalla said: 'once Riimaayɓe know how and from where they came, they would probably no longer respect our supremacy and go back to their ancestral lands'.[82] The ruling freemen want to silence their slaves' history for fear of losing control. Since knowledge is power, the nobility keeps their documents well hidden as a way of avoiding revolt, contestation and a revival of the past. In addition, the national administration (which in Dalla is in the hands of the Weheeɓe elite) forbids any history of slavery on the school curriculum[83] as it is considered to be too sensitive. All these measures have obstructed or even silenced the production of a slave history.

However, silence is not necessarily being imposed by the elites. This would imply that Riimaayɓe are being denied agency. The nature of their history as outsiders has for a long time been stigmatized and undervalued, rendering it shameful. Some have subscribed to the stigma of their past and have thus relegated it to the realm of silence themselves. This does not mean that former slaves do not have a history or that it is excluded from their daily lives.[84] What it does mean, however, is that in the public domain if one asks a former slave about his/her ancestry, hardly any Riimaayɓe will be proud of their slave or foreign origins. This is information that has been relegated to the realm of public secrets. Zempleni (1996: 33) described how secrets involve 'knowing how to keep silent' (French: *Savoir taire*) and that 'a large part of social peacekeeping is founded on the forbidding of saying what one knows'.[85]

The crucial point is that 'the law of silence does not forbid the sharing of *knowledge* but it is a joint *enunciation* by those holding the secrets towards those the secret is addressed'[86] (Zempleni 1996: 36). This convention of silence is reproduced by some Riimaayɓe parents who prefer not to tell their children about their slave past precisely because it is likely to generate an inferiority complex. Most informants confirmed that they knew where and how their grandparents became enslaved but added that they will only talk about it in private. The silencing works two ways: A hegemonic forced erasure of the slave past (consciously silenced in the interests of the former masters) as well as a strategic and deliberate silencing of history (by Riimaayɓe themselves) to free the road to upward social mobility.

Reasons for present and past silences on slavery are not only due to the hegemony of the dominant groups in societies. Instead 'these kinds of collective secrets could be analysed as principles of social organization ... Silencing the secret of the origins of one's lineage fulfils an inverse, but comparable social function as the genealogical recitation' (Zempleni 1996: 36). Rossi (2009a: 1) describes how some descendants of slaves consciously 'bury their slave past in memory' to emphasize their successful in-

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[82] Interview, Almaami Dalla, aged about 45, with assistant Amadu Amiiru Dicko, Dalla, May 2007.
[83] Attempts to voice this history in the educational curriculum in Chad have resulted in violent confrontations. Two village children were beaten to death by their teacher for being critical of the history of slavery as it was taught in school (Personal conversation, de Bruijn, 2004).
[84] Some historical details are recounted in songs (Klein 1989; Diawara 1989).
[85] Author's translation.
[86] This author's translation; emphasis as in the original.

corporation into the society of freemen. And Meillassoux (1991: 125) mentions how the 'very fact that an individual's servile origins were known, showed that he or she had not been integrated into freeborn society. Only silence on the subject of these origins could prove enfranchisement in the full sense of the term.' As I argue elsewhere (Pelckmans 2011b forthcoming) names are often subject to manipulation to conceal slave descent.

A final consideration is the 'defensive secret' (Zempleni 1996: 39) in the ethnographic relationship between informants and their ethnographer. By keeping secrets, informants try to fend off public secrets from the gaze and/or understanding of the intruding ethnographer. Over time, the ethnographer might be able to draw conclusions from hints (called 'secretions' by Zempleni 1996: 24) s/he has been given or observed and that might reveal well-kept public secrets. Time and trust, as mentioned earlier, are two fundamental issues in this process. This is why, in writing this ethnography, it was methodologically necessary to stick to one social network of people with whom I could interact over a long period of time (2001-2010).

Contested origins and land rights
The way history is (re-)interpreted is important to understand changing identities and power constellations in the region. In today's Haayre region (Maps 1-3), the stories about people's origins involve migration: Everyone has come from somewhere else. Dogon claim to have come from the Mande area and Fulɓe from the Inner Delta of the River Niger or further west from Fuuta Tooro (present-day Senegal). Songhay claim to be the first settlers in parts of the region, living there since the Gao Empire (1340-1591) (Hunwick 1988). Most groups have no concrete proof of where they come from. This is not particularly important as the relevant issue is the political motivation behind their claims. Some have been more successful in claiming their space in the Haayre region than others, and have effectively monopolized natural resources and control over people.

In their version of history, freeborn Fulɓe emphasize how their warrior ancestors conquered those already in the Haayre during the nineteenth century. The subjection of these populations is justified in Fulɓe oral traditions as a religious crusade against non-Muslims. Most populations that were subordinated or enslaved in this period were of Dogon origin. As Angenent *et al*. (2003: 69) put it:

> Moodi transformed all the Dogon into slaves (Riimaayɓe). He says, you Dogon, I will transform you into dependants. If I transform you this way, Islamic law will be 'light' on you. Stay in your houses, do not move your cultivated hamlets. You will be the owners of your fields and your gardens and all that you own. All that my people find with you, will remain yours. [87]

Bard Baa Digi's quote above shows that the newly settled Fulɓe recognized rights over land and even over the possessions of the first settlers. It was not land, which at that time was not scarce, but rather control over people that they sought to underline their nobility.[88] Slaves, like cattle, contributed to freeborns' prestige and wealth. In the past, land was abundant and not a source of power in itself (Goody 1971). Baa Digi (Angenent *et al.* 2003) explains how Riimaayɓe consisted mainly of Dogon populations

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[87] Author's translation.
[88] See also Hyden in Boone (2003), Goody (1971) and Kopytoff (1987).

who settled there first and therefore maintained their land rights but had no say over their children: 'If a freeborn (*pullo*) does not have a slave, his nobility cannot be complete ... We will take your children in order to have ourselves served by them. Once they will be adults, they will be returned to you. We take your daughters to serve our women' (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 69; author's translation).

Land has since become a scarcer resource and as rights to it are closely tied to membership of specific communities, membership is increasingly being contested and negotiated and can change over time (Kuba & Lentz 2006: 1). Today, Weheeɓe and Moodibaaɓe elites in the Fulɓe kingdoms of the Haayre have converted social and political capital into control over land.

Over time and in connection with political events, land use and property changed. The incorporation of Dalla into the Islamic Fulɓe Maasina Empire resulted in radical changes in land use. The formerly pastoralist warriors created slave estates and put a system of surplus production in place. However, French colonizers interfered in property rights as can be seen from the following excerpt:[89]

> The slave (Dimadio) is not an autochthon in origin, he has been captured by the conquerors. This is why once the Markas (an ethnic group) had been chased, the slave cultivates the land. What he cultivates is not for him, but for his master who is the only free person and the only one who has rights. This is at least the indigenous thesis that dates back the coming of the Fulbe to the area in the seventeenth century. Subordinated to the Foutanke Empire in Bandiagara and compelled to go and live in Kounari, they obtain, after the French conquest, from monsieur the Governor Grodet, the right to return to the lands that have been theirs for ages, in the same social status as before their servitude. Because even until now, none of the slaves (Rimaibe) ever contested the right of the Fulbe (peul) to be the owners of the land.

As they granted land rights to the first settlers, the French no longer accorded Yerowal property in hamlets on the Gandamia Plateau.[90] This contributed to the emancipation of the Riimaayɓe hamlets on the plateau, many of which emphasize today how they were the first real settlers in the area even before the Fulɓe warriors (FF: *Weheeɓe*) arrived. They insist that they are the only rightful owners of the land under cultivation (de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001a: 232) and refuse to pay taxes. They reinterpret official Weheeɓe accounts of enslavement, explaining how they were never enslaved and were simply tricked by the religious elites who wrote their Riimaayɓe names down as property in the historical documents of the freeborn Fulɓe. Their current claim to indigenous rights is thus being renegotiated in relation to land. This is an important aspect of their relative emancipation from an inferior position in the social hierarchy.[91] They are reinforcing their claims to rights over land by pointing to their pastoralist masters who profited from non-territorial livelihood strategies to negotiate belonging (van Dijk 1997; Diallo 2002).

Different groups of slave descendants in the Haayre region are thus renegotiating the past in the present. A first example described here is the way the inhabitants of Ko-

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[89] ANM, FA: 1^E-30/fev.1910/Djenne/pp. 7-8.
[90] These hamlets are Muniyol, Gaana, Bunti, Bula, Orowel and Baanikaani.
[91] Mauxion (2008) describes the emergence of local entrepreneurs who, by providing land to landless peasants and managing irrigation systems, are playing an increasingly important role in the local political organization. It is due to their manipulation of land ownership that they have achieved political influence.

longo,[92] a hamlet near Dalla (Map 4), are contesting the freeborn Fulɓe's interpretation of history. They explain how the term Riimaayɓe should be translated as 'free' instead of 'freed' people because they are independent and own their own land. They claim that their original historical documents were stolen by the French and were never returned to them. This is why they lost their customary rights as first settlers, and thus landowners. They also insist that the national government mistakenly placed a board on the asphalt road pointing to where Dalla is situated rather than to Kolongo. Freeborn Fulɓe in Dalla ignore this interpretation saying that the inhabitants of Kolongo only came down from the hills a few decades ago and that their occupation of the land is quite new. Nevertheless, the mayor of Dalla was not comfortable with my visits to this small hamlet and instructed my host, Suleymane,[93] to forbid me and my research assistant from returning to interview the villagers of Kolongo 'who don't know anything'. We however continued going there and encountered no problems.

A second case illustrates how contestations over land rights are not unique to former slave groups.[94] Boumbam, a hamlet south of Dalla which has fertile land (Map 4), is another site of current conflict concerning land claims and negotiations over history. This conflict is not between former slaves and their masters but shows similarities in the way latecomers, much like slaves, have had to negotiate access to land with freeborn Fulɓe rulers in Dalla. The son of the chief of Dalla explains it as a conflict between low status Dogon and the ruling Fulɓe elite of Dalla. The Dogon in the hamlet Boumbam were originally hosted by the ruling Dicko family in Dalla.

> Two family members of the politician Samba Ongoiba, members of a low social status group among the Dogon, wanted to set themselves up in Dalla. My father's father (King Yerowal) lent them some land in Boumbam but, over time, these Dogon families multiplied much faster than the Fulɓe in Dalla. This is why there was increased demand for cultivable land (FF: *leydi*). Due to Ongoiba's position in the national government (he was a deputy under Moussa Traore), his family members are now trying to legalize their claims to being the first settlers at the court in Douentza. They deny having been lent land by Dalla's ruler in the past. To legitimize their claims, they bribed lawyers in Douentza court and also bribed the mayor of Dalla, who accepted their gifts and complicated matters for the chief. Before, poor peasants like them would never have thought of going to court or to make claims to the land; they would not have stood a chance because they had no status or influence whatsoever.

Outside Dalla, similar negotiations are taking place too. In the neighbouring Kingdom of Booni, Riimaayɓe are also contesting dominant interpretations of history. They deny having been submitted to the Fulɓe ruler of Booni (King Maamadu Nduuldi) and instead claim they assisted him in his war against the Tuareg (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1994: 103). The way in which Bilaali, a sixty-year-old slave descendant, recounts the history of the area demonstrates his attempts to align himself with the heroes of the past.[95] He emphasizes that he is a proud follower and descendant of Maamudu Nduuldi and stresses the heroic legacy of King Maamudu Nduuldi. In a contrast, the French

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[92] Interview, Burra Baa, born around 1950, with assistant Hama Amba Yattara, Kolongo, February 2002.
[93] For more information about my host Suleymane, see Chapters 2 and 8.
[94] Nijenhuis (2009) describes how conflicts over land in the Haayre should not be interpreted as typical conflicts between herders and farmers, nor as conflicts between first-settled versus later-settled. Instead these conflicts are often between autochthons to the detriment of migrant farmers or those who settled later. Land conflicts are always part of any conflict of power.
[95] For a more detailed description of this case, see de Bruijn & Pelckmans (2005: 84-87).

archives and more marginal groups of slave descendants emphasize how Maamudu Nduuldi ravaged the area and violated local populations. Bilaali is thus actively assimilating his ancestors into the heroic history of Fulɓe freemen.

The fact that Bilaali is now considered the hamlet's leader makes it possible for him and his wife to deny their slave backgrounds and to claim never to have been linked to any master. Nevertheless his mother 'gave' one of her daughters to her master, a trader (FF: *Jawaanɗo*) in Dalla but Bilaali's position today allows him to deny this past relationship. This illustrates how people overwrite their history by adapting it to their present status and although they do not document such claims on paper, some groups are trying to have their oral claims legally sustained, like the inhabitants of Boumbam did with their bribes.

The ways in which certain groups have appropriated alternative readings of history, such as the Riimaayɓe of Kolongo, reflect the weakening radius of power held by the elites at the heart of the kingdom. The relative spatial distance of the Riimaayɓe in Kolongo has allowed them to develop their own counter-discourse away from the centre of power at the royal court of Dalla. Nevertheless, the occasional, self-proclaimed independence of Riimaayɓe in practice needs to be taken with a pinch of salt. The ruling family in Dalla continues to levy slave taxes on their most loyal former slave families (Riimaayɓe slave descendants). The emancipatory discourse on belonging and land concerning slave descendants does not necessarily remove the existing legacies of slavery although some are more successful than others in bypassing them.

These processes of 'rooting in the soil' as a primal form of belonging are not specific to the Haayre region and have also been documented in several other West African countries (Luning 1997; Kuba & Lentz 2006). As Lentz (2006: 8) mentions:

> Access to land was, and still is, mediated by membership in specific communities and groups, which is based on descent, shared histories of migration or flight, physical proximity and political allegiance. The boundaries of these groups, however, were and continue to be notoriously fuzzy, meaning that membership needs to be negotiated. The ways in which these negotiations take place, depends on the possibilities and creativity of those involved.

The fuzziness and different outcomes of negotiations of such membership come to the fore in terminology and this is discussed below.

Explaining diversity among slaves (and their descendants)
The group generically referred to as Riimaayɓe in Fulfulde language broadly incorporates all people who have ever been classified with a slave status, whether they were actually enslaved by Fulɓe or not. In Fulɓe society, Riimaayɓe are in the majority and constitute the most heterogeneous social group. Although they are considered part of the Fulɓe ethnic group, the category of Riimaayɓe has been interpreted by some (both in an emic and etic sense) as an ethnic group rather than as the specific status-holding social group within the Fulɓe ethnic group (Hardung 1997: 138; Hahonou 2011).

The generic term Riimaayɓe veils an enormous diversity among populations' self-defining or being defined by others as Riimaayɓe. To draw attention to this diversity, I adopt Ferguson's concept (used to describe local and cosmopolitan mineworkers in the

Zambian Copperbelt) of the 'full house' or 'bush of variation' (1999: 80).[96] This meta-phor aptly highlights the importance of diversity instead of dichotomous models in which masters are opposed to slaves, freeborn to non-freeborn and Fulɓe to Riimaayɓe. Informants dichotomize their worlds in such ways themselves. Both freeborn and slave descendants tend to describe the differences between them in dualist and strict catego-ries. As opposed to Riimaayɓe who have different terms for variations and sub-groups among them, freeborn Fulɓe stress that RiimayBe are all the same. There is no differ-ence between the two groups because both still belong to them. In the Haayre Fulfulde dialect, the term for 'those we own' (FF: *Jeyaa*ɓe) is still used among freeborn Fulɓe. Some adopt the euphemism 'those we see' (FF: *Jiyaa*ɓe) for public use to indicate those that they still *see* as theirs, those still under their tutelage. By homogenizing all Riimaayɓe, they cover up differences in power and status that in some instances threat-en their authority. So even though informants themselves resort to dichotomies in emic terms, this does not mean that they do justice to the necessary multiplicity of reality.

To understand the emergence of this multiplicity, this thesis focuses on variation and diversity in Riimaayɓe status by examining seven main dimensions that have co-shaped this variety past and present. Firstly, there is diversity in ancestry that accounts for diversity in a person's current status. Fulɓe were likely to treat court slaves they cap-tured from the Bambara much better than the young children of a minor village captured in a non-prestigious village.

Secondly, the diverse ways of incorporation into Fulɓe society of various Riimaayɓe groups also explains their diversity. Most Riimaayɓe ancestors were incorporated in Fulɓe society as slaves, and the enslavement of individuals from the floating popula-tions described earlier has resulted in different kinds of slaves. Domestic slaves or Maccuɓe were captured in wars (de Bruijn 2001a: 231), while Riimaayɓe were either the first inhabitants or refugees in the region who were forced to convert to Islam by Fulɓe kings. Other groups chose or felt forced to defer to local elites, sometimes as a result of extreme need, for example in times of drought. Others were pawned, kidnap-ped or exchanged as tax or commodities by family members and/or traders.

These newcomers, since settling in a Fulɓe community, have been labelled Rii-maayɓe because, as relative outsiders, their status came closer to that of slaves on the estates than to that of Maccuɓe domestic slaves. Such newcomers were often only allowed to marry slave women, since other status groups were strictly endogamous and, for some, this assimilation through attribution of the Riimaayɓe status (see Chapter 9) remains difficult to accept or is a way of denying slave origins elsewhere.

Thirdly, insertion and incorporation in Fulɓe society was different for everyone. After the 'natal alienation' that brought about the 'social death' and 'secular excommu-nication' from their former home society (Patterson 1982: 4), slaves who initially had an 'outsider' status (Finley 1981) were incorporated into their host society. Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 16) describe slavery as 'the institutionalization of marginality', empha-sizing that although the 'willingness to absorb people' in kinship systems is ample

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[96] Ferguson (1999: 80) argues that 'at every historical point, the evidence suggests that a wide range of strategies were followed. Some strategies were more successful than others at various moments in time.'

(*Ibid*.: 14), they have remained less incorporated than insiders of their host society (*Ibid*.: 15-16). The time frame is important here. The earlier on a specific Riimaayɓe group became part of Fulɓe society, the higher the level of incorporation they tend to exhibit today.

Fourthly, individual characteristics of specific groups or individuals within the Riimaayɓe group have resulted in multiple 'conditions' (Meillassoux 1991) and privileges for some. Social climbing and assimilation were possible and differed even among slaves of the same generation who lived side by side (*Ibid*.: 125). The strategies of some were to buy slaves (FF: *Soodtaaɓe*) themselves. Others became higher-status court slaves (FF: *Maccuɓe wuro*) who were promoted to the prestigious function of 'right hand' to the chief or to 'chief of the slaves'. This difference in status among slaves depended on their master, generation, age and origins and has meant that, for some Riimaayɓe, their individual status prevailed over the collective status of the Riimaayɓe group (Hardung 1997: 109).

Fifthly, there are as many different kinds of master-slave relations as there are individuals. The degree of affection and interaction between master and slave in the past has to some extent co-shaped current relations between their descendants. This will be analyzed in more detail in Chapter 4.

A sixth point is related to the intensity of the master-slave bond in the past. Some slave descendants today continue to orient themselves primarily to social relations with their former master's family. This overemphasis of vertical relations with freeborn results in a downplaying of horizontal relations among slave descendants and partly explains the continued lack of strong social cohesion among Riimaayɓe.

The last point, which to some extent explains the 'bush of variation' in Riimaayɓe status, is place. The places in which Riimaayɓe have lived (close to or far from their respective former masters) has co-shaped the way they are associated with or associate themselves with slave status. This last point will be illustrated in more ethnographic detail in the next chapter.

These dimensions all contribute to an interpretation of Riimaayɓe as a label hosting a 'full house' of statuses and 'variations'. Today many inhabitants of the plateau villages and hamlets are outsiders who have been absorbed into Fulɓe society as Riimaayɓe. Alongside the descendants of the slaves of Fulɓe, other ethnic groups, such as Tuareg, Dogon, Songhay and Mossi, all co-habit with Riimaayɓe in the Haayre today (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 12-16; de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005: 83-87). The generic term Riimaayɓe is sometimes even stretched to include all those who are marginal to Fulɓe society: Groups as diverse as impoverished Fulɓe but also slave descendants of Tuareg,[97] Dogon and Songhay origin.[98] All these groups have been labelled or assimilated into the Riimaayɓe category but their only common denominator is that in some way or other they arrived

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[97] Bella is a concept often cited in the (colonial) literature. In Malian Tamasheq dialect of the Tuareg however, this group calls itself Eklan (Lecocq 2005). In Burkina Faso the word Iklan is used (Bouman 2003: 52, 58-62), which in Niger is strictly forbidden (Hahonou 2009: 155) because of its negative (and stigmatizing) connotations linked to slavery. The word Bella is derived from the Songhay language *bellay* and was translated into Fulfulde language as *Bellaaɓe*.

[98] For examples, see Angenent *et al.* (2003: 12-16) and de Bruijn & Pelckmans (2005: 83-87).

as relative outsiders and were by choice or coercion absorbed into Fulɓe society (Fan-chette 1999: 191).

It is important to note how conditions for assimilation and/or autochtonization have changed over time. Lentz (2006: 3) describes how:

> The former processes whereby immigrants were gradually autochtonised have come under pressure. Moreover bureaucratic decentralization and the international debate on the rights of indigenous peoples have contributed to the growing importance of land in the on-going struggle to assert belonging and political rights.

In the Haayre region, as elsewhere in Africa and beyond,[99] claims of belonging and autochthony flared up after the elections in 1997 that were organized in the context of political decentralization. The decentralization process generated a new context for legal claims to democracy and constitutional rule. In practice, claims of belonging depend on the ways in which one manages to avoid the risk of *not* belonging, or even of being accused of making false declarations. In the Haayre region, such claims have not yet led to outbreaks of violence as has been seen in other regions in Africa.[100]

Summarizing these seven dimensions demonstrates how the simple binary equation of Riimaayɓe status, being equal to a (former) slave, obscures more dimensions than is desirable. These seven dimensions of variety in my view explain why there is no communal history or oral traditions among Riimaayɓe. Due to internal differences in status and social hierarchy among the different groups and individuals of slave descent, it was difficult for a long time to formulate a common source of identification, let alone a communal history.

Social boundaries and fragmentary identities among Riimaayɓe slave descendants
Not only history but also social boundaries have been contested and reinterpreted over time by various Riimaayɓe sub-groups, such as Riimaayɓe, Maccuɓe and a smaller group of Kommongalluuɓe. The inhabitants of the Haayre region explain the differences between these sub-groups as follows: Those who still defer to a master (FF: *Maccuɓe*) are not the same as those who do not (FF: *Riimaayɓe*). Riimaayɓe live on the plateaus in independent villages (FF: *Riimaayɓe Haayre*), while Maccuɓe live near their masters (FF: *Maccuɓe Wuro*). And Kommongalluuɓe are the descendants of slaves with no specific masters.

Kommongalluuɓe have been called 'noble Riimaayɓe' in the colonial archives.[101] Some explain this by the fact that they obtained their freedom fighting as soldiers or by buying their freedom through the payment of their economic worth or trade price (FF: *Soodtooɓe*) to their masters.[102] Others claim that Kommongalluuɓe[103] never had per-

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[99] Similar struggles over belonging are taking place in other parts of the African continent too. See for example, Geschiere & Gugler (1998) and Geschiere & Nyamnjoh (2000).

[100] For example in northern Ghana, as described by Wienia (2009).

[101] ANM, FA 2E-4: Politiques indigènes. Correspondances-cercle de Bandiagara. 1899-1907. 'Les rimai-bes de Loro, nokora, Bassari, Ourou-Ngayrou and Badaga sont appelés Komogalloubes qui signifie rimaibe nobles. Ils étaient tous les captifs du seul fama de boni et en tirent un supériorité sur les riimaibes des pauvres, sur lesquels ils peuvent exercer une certaine influence.' Signée: R. Poincelet, Hombori, 4 July 1904.

[102] For more on manumission procedures, see Chapter 5.

sonal masters but deferred to whom they chose. Kommangalluuɓe in the region of Booni[104] voluntarily sought the protection of Maamudu Nduuldi at the beginning of the twentieth century when there was unrest in the area. Many claim to have volunteered in his army and since noble freeborn consider deference a form of slavery, Kommongalluuɓe also used to be considered as slaves, but with a higher ranking. Kommongalluuɓe today take pride in granting themselves a more independent social identity and distance themselves from any reference to slavery or slave status. They take offence at being called or categorized as Riimaayɓe; have different privileges; are free to make their own sacrifices during the sacrificial feast of Tabaski; and try to maintain their slightly higher status by resorting to endogamy among themselves.

The social boundaries between Riimaayɓe and Maccuɓe are often explained in terms of spatial occupation. Most informants explain the differences between Riimaayɓe and Maccuɓe as reflecting their different origins in terms of space:[105] Maccuɓe live next to their masters in villages, while Riimaayɓe live in the bush and cultivate for their masters.

Riimaayɓe Haayre claim to have been settled when the Fulɓe warriors arrived, as opposed to Maccuɓe Wuro who were captured as war booty and brought into the area by their masters. Maccuɓe Wuro are descendants of those born as slaves in their masters' house. They live in the central village (FF: *Wuro*) with elite families to take care of the domestic labour.[106] Riimaayɓe Haayre, on the contrary, lived on the slave estates where they worked their own land as cultivators. They are of either slave or free-farmer tenant descent but both groups were economically dependent on the land owned by the freeborn elite. They cultivated the elite's land and/or assisted in herding cows in the surrounding hamlets. It is an extremely heterogeneous group since most strangers and migrants have been categorized as Riimaayɓe as well.[107]

Freeborn Fulɓe tend to homogenize perceived differences among Riimaayɓe. The word Maccuɓe, according to the former mayor of Dalla, Moussa Dicko,[108] was used in the past to identify slaves. Due to the declining power of their masters, some Maccuɓe managed to start cultivating and identifying themselves as Riimaayɓe. The former imam

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[103] In the region of Maasina north of Mopti, there is a herding territory (FF: *Leydi*) called Kommongallu. However, none of my informants ever referred to it to explain their background. See Map 28: Les Leydi du Macina in Pouget (2000: 241). The archives (ANM, FA: 1E-30/nov. 1910/Djenne) also mention a canton called Komongallo in Maasina.

[104] Most Kommongalluuɓe live near Booni, about 40 km from Dalla in the villages of Girimarie, Gegi, Gai, Nokara, Wurangerou, Looro and Douena-Banaga.

[105] Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996: 808) also indicate how 'what remains is the spatial division between groups. The elites live in villages, the pastoral Fulɓe live in semi-nomadic cattle camps and those who used to be slaves either cohabit with their former masters, either they live in their village of origin, or in places created more recently.' See Chapter 2 on the relationship between spatial organization and hierarchy.

[106] Meillassoux calls this 'partial organization' and questioned whether talking about slaves is appropriate for these groups. According to his definition, slaves are those who have been incorporated through violence, thus excluding birth.

[107] Slaves have been described as 'the perfect strangers' by Simmel (1923/1950: 407) in Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 15).

[108] Moussa Dicko, interview with de Bruijn, Douentza, 2002.

of Dalla,[109] a representative voice among religious scholars (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*), empha-sized how Riimaayɓe and Maccuɓe both remained attached (FF: *Maraaɗo*) to their masters.

Maccuɓe and Riimaayɓe recognize the perceived differences between themselves but are most concerned with status differences within their respective sub-group. Maccuɓe Wuro are extremely heterogeneous because they had more opportunities to climb socially than Riimaayɓe Haayre. Their status differed according to occupation, gender, age and, above all, the status of their masters in the freeborn hierarchy. Slaves adopted the prestige of the status of their masters: The slaves of the chiefs thus looked down on and commanded the slaves of the traders (who where inferior to the chiefs).

But even a single sub-group of slaves belonging to the same freeborn family can fragment hierarchically among themselves. An example is the way in which some slaves were appointed by their masters to act as chiefs over their fellows. In the past, a chief of the slaves (FF: *Amiiru Maccuɓe*) divided the tasks given to him by his master among his fellow slaves.[110]

Today Riimaayɓe Haayre claim to be more independent from Fulɓe than Maccuɓe Wuro, who continue to live next to their former masters. The Riimaayɓe Haayre there-fore feel higher in status than Maccuɓe Wuro. Maccuɓe Wuro and Riimaayɓe Haayre have marked the social boundaries between themselves through marriage prohibit-ions.[111] Although both groups maintain strong claims to the perceived status differences between them, these boundaries have blurred.

Maccuɓe claim that Riimaayɓe are as enslaved as they are because once French colonials controlled the area at the beginning of the twentieth century, Fulɓe could no longer go raiding and were forced to find slaves in nearby Riimaayɓe villages. Maccuɓe Wuro claim that this is how Riimaayɓe Haayre were reduced to slaves, much in the same way as they themselves were once captured during wars. Secondly they emphasize how during the droughts of 1912-1913 (FF: *kitaangal*) and the 1970s and 1980s (FF: *Jolbeere*), many Riimaayɓe Haayre (who used to have pastoralist masters who were then poverty-stricken themselves) began to defer to rich (freeborn elite) families in bigger settlements. They offered their children as pawns to work as domestic slaves in exchange for food.[112] The royal family too recruited Riimaayɓe women from the villages on the plateau as concubines, wives or housemaids. That their children and wives always had to be available as Maccuɓe Wuro contradicts the claims of greater autonomy made by Riimaayɓe Haayre when comparing themselves to Maccuɓe Wuro.

In their approach to the past too, the social boundaries between these sub-groups of Riimaayɓe are clear-cut. Riimaayɓe Haayre and Maccuɓe Wuro have different ap-proaches to memories of their past. Most Maccuɓe Wuro are interested in the fact that ties with their original home areas have faded. In interviews they insisted that they never knew their ancestors because they were very young when captured. However,

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[109] Almaami Dalla, taped interview by Hama Amba with Almaami, 2002. Translated by Hama Amba and Burra Yero Cisse. This imam died in 2007 and his successor is considered less powerful.

[110] This title is described in more detail in Chapter 4.

[111] Chapter 3 elaborates on the endogamous practices of slave descendants.

[112] Interview, Allay Jangine, born around 1940, with interpreter Umu Sangare, Dalla, 2001-2002. Inter-view in Bamako with Moodi, born around 1950 in Dalla, February 2007.

other people in the village could remember something about the precise origins of their families. In two interviews, my interpreter confronted the informant with what he knew about her slave past but in both cases the (female) informants[113] denied everything.

In contrast, Riimaayɓe Haayre often take pride in preserving and recounting the memory of their ethnic group of origin, for example as Dogon, Hausa, Mossi, Songhay or Bambara. Some even returned to their regions and families of origin before en-slavement. Diougal, one of the eldest slave descendants at the royal court in Dalla, was told by his father about the origin of their family. His grandfather had been taken as a slave in a raid in a Bamana village in the Inner Delta of the Niger near Konna. De Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 59) describe how he and his father went back to their village of origin and found some of the children of the brothers of Diougal's grandfather there but did not stay.

El Hajj Bocoum's father, a freeborn tradesman, went to look for the descendants of some of his slaves who fled their master during the colonial occupation. Family members of slaves who fled or went back to their region of origin often kept in touch either with their master or family members they had left behind. It was through such family that El Hajj's father managed to trace his former slaves in Burkina Faso. This case demonstrates but one of several ways in which Riimaayɓe slave descendants are dealing with their past. There are however various other options: Some went back to their regions of origin before enslavement, while others decided to reconstruct their genealogies (Cf. Schmitz 2009) thereby erasing all traces of slavery.[114]

Presenting and performing slave status: Audience and time frame
Apart from the instrumental use of history and the different claims by the sub-groups of Riimaayɓe in Fulɓe society, the 'audience' to which each social group presents its his-tory makes a difference. History is 'performed' according to the audience. In retrospect, my interaction with slave descendants during my first fieldwork period in 2001-2002 was clearly a performance to persuade me of the righteousness of their claims. Only after several interviews over a longer period of time did I discover just how much some informants had tried to manipulate their representation of the past so as to be seen differently by me, a naïve outsider. To understand how status is performed and staged, it is important to consider the context and audience.

Apart from the audience, the time frame in which specific claims about history are made matter too. To illustrate this, the case of Musa Dicko's family is taken here. Musa Dicko was a son of King Yerowal and his mother Faata was a concubine of slave descent who was courted by the king and bore him children (see Figure 2). Faata's grandmother was a Songhay who had been captured at the end of the nineteenth cen-tury. As the King of Dalla took Faata as a concubine, this connected her enslaved family members to the family of the Fulɓe rulers. Musa's mother's family (Riimaayɓe Haayre

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[113] Interview with Kumbel Dauda and interpreter Musa Dicko jr. in Bamako, 2007. Interview with Asse Kau Dicko, with research assistant Umu Sangere and Asse's co-villager Dikoore Samba, Dalla, 2002.

[114] See Noret (2008), Ologoudou (2008) and Zempleni (1996) for genealogical manipulation processes among other ethnic groups in Benin and Ivory Coast. In Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming) I describe how not only a return to one's roots by reconstructing genealogies but also a move away from these roots by manipulating genealogies was, and still is, common.

from the hamlet of Onga) became kinsmen of the lineage of King Yerowal through this marriage. They feel justified in claiming the history of the royal lineage group with the patronym Dicko as their own. As long as nobody talks openly about their family's inferior role in Yerowal's family nor about the dependency relations they used to have, their invented narratives of belonging are upheld. Claiming free origins *vis-à-vis* new-comers and strangers allows them an independent, less stigmatized identity but it re-mains a fragile and undefined claim. When asked whether they are free, some openly express their doubts, feeling they have to confess that they have never been freed before God.[115] Islam, in emic terms, is thus considered a very important element for the status and positioning of slaves.

Chapter 4 will present this Riimaayɓe family that openly asserts a historical master-slave relationship with the royal family and a privileged position *vis-à-vis* other slave descendants. By reclaiming this historical relationship, they recall duties[116] the nobility has towards dependants. I will indicate why a rather down-to-earth reason for slave descendants to activate these memories of slavery is that a relationship with wealthy freeborn potentially provides them, as a less powerful family, with access to develop-ment agencies, the courts and the national administration. Influential wealthy freeborn families, such as the royal lineage of Dalla, provide 'bureaucratic assistance' that can be much needed since the national government fails to provide for its citizens.

In addition to the context of the moment, whether or not slave status is performed explicitly also tends to be related to perspectives of the younger versus the older gene-ration. Chapter 4 deals with young people and their reproach of the older generation for their naïve conservatism and for still 'believing in slavery'.[117] Some young Maccuɓe Wuro in Dalla accuse their parents of working for free for those who they naïvely consider their former masters. Many elders stress that it is important to respect one's ancestors and rebuke the youngsters for denying their ancestors and being ashamed of their slave origins.

Conclusions: Presenting the past over time

The manipulation, negotiation and thus the 'performance' of the history of slavery are all contested. Memories of slavery, like slavery itself, are inherently relational and therefore necessarily heterogeneous, reflecting multiple views from various social per-spectives. By discussing the presented pasts of slave descendants in the Haayre region today, this chapter has focused on discursive memories of Fulɓe slave descendants, with their negotiations of history as a case in point.[118]

This chapter has discussed how 'change' is emerging as an ever-increasing variety of choices over meanings attributed to hierarchy over time. Each change has added new layers to slave-master relations, transforming them and blurring their former specificity.

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[115] Chapter 5 describes how religion is central to identification and underscores status differences be-tween the free and non-freeborn.

[116] Chapter 2 and 4 consider the content of such duties in more detail.

[117] Bellagamba (2009a) describes similar processes for the Gambia.

[118] Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming) describes how surname changes are another attempt at social climb-ing by Fulɓe slave descendants by contesting discursive memories of slavery.

The first section outlined the gradual changes in Fulɓe hierarchies in the Haayre region over the course of the twentieth century, as presented by Bard Baa Digi who voices freeborn historical oral tradition. For local hierarchies, a first and very profound change was the sedentarization of Fulɓe warlords in kingdoms in the nineteenth century. Their settlement allowed them to organize labour surpluses through the establishment of a slave economy. Fluctuations as to who was marginal versus who was dominant were discussed in the context of Warnier's (1975) concept of floating populations. The second change in Fulɓe hierarchies was the abolition of the slave trade and slave markets by the French colonial state but official legal abolition did not change the socio-cultural worldviews of their subjects. Colonial and post-colonial abolitionist campaigners were divided by power relations between actors with conflicting agendas. Legally, most ethnic groups can be considered as post-slavery societies since slavery was abolished in 1905. In practice, however, socio-cultural legacies of slavery have remained important.

The third political event discussed in the first section of this chapter was the emergence of Mali as an independent nation-state. Attempts to abolish slavery by national legislation have not profoundly altered ways of relating in the Haayre region. The First Republic only had eight years to impose its socialist policy of secularization and education and after that the dictatorial regime of Traore did not insist on such matters. Constitutional legislation has hardly gained any ground. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, religious ideologies based on slavery and inequality have remained the basis for socio-cultural organization in the Central Malian hinterland.

Lastly, the chapter mentioned the decentralization policies of the 1990s, which initially promised change by emancipating citizens and granting equal access to political functions for all. In the former Fulɓe Kingdom of Dalla, which is now administratively classified as a rural community, decentralization did not lead to significant changes in local hierarchies. The ruling Weheeɓe family in Dalla for much of the twentieth century managed to maintain their favoured position in the Fulɓe hierarchy while other groups looked for mobility within or outside these hierarchies. They did so through their own agency (clearing their own lands and establishing new settlements) or by connecting with external opportunities (access to political positions, education and mobility), all of which had been created by the French colonial government.

The second section in this chapter dealt with discursive reflections of slave descendants on their past in the present. Initially the control of the freeborn over slaves was not necessarily obtained through territorial power and land distribution. Instead they gained prestige thanks to their wealth in people (slaves) and a monopoly over historical representation. Freeborn Fulɓe monopolized freeborn status by appropriating written sources that continue to underscore their historical narrative, while silencing other slave voices and versions of history. Slaves and their descendants often lacked the right tools to validate their claims to the past. Today the hegemony of the elite's interpretations is waning and oral contestations by Riimaayɓe have been successful.

Power within the group of slave descendants is articulated differently in what can be perceived as the centres (the village) versus the peripheries (satellite hamlets beyond the village). Geographical distance between the ruling elites and the floating populations on

the periphery sometimes translate into greater social distance, which has allowed some slave descendants to make more solid claims concerning their own history. Many groups with a slave identity in Fulɓe society are classified with a homogenizing generic collective terminology (Riimaayɓe, Maccuɓe), reflecting the stigma of slavery. In practice, some of these groups have rid themselves of all aspects of slavery.

The multiplicity of claims over historical alliances echoes the multiplicity of the social positions of slave descendants. Many have developed their own narratives as to who they are and why, which are reflected in their attempts to claim land rights and in historical interpretations of autochthony (as first settlers). These claims not only differ among different ethnic groups but also within each sub-group of slave descendants.

Slave descendants lack a common narrative because they are not a homogenous group. In addition, written evidence and source material to claim a position in history are missing. Nevertheless, there are ways in which they effectively (re)present and instrumentalize their past today. A common strategy to avoid talking about their inferior role in history is to identify with a proudly presented history of the freeborn (their former masters). In appropriating freeborn history, slave descendants claim a common belonging to the Fulɓe community (FF: *Pulaaku*) but others, such as the inhabitants of Kolongo, are contesting existing histories of land and origins. Turning stigma into an asset is not always possible and many are continuously reminded of the weight of their history on their shoulders. For them, their history is a constraint. Finally, explicitly maintaining silence can be a conscious strategy to 'pass as non-slaves' (Rossi 2009b: 182). The silences, which may illustrate power inequalities over historical representation, are in this case instrumentalized by slave descendants themselves to relegate history to the realm of secrecy and the 'unspoken'.

This chapter outlined how the Haayre region has always been a region in constant flux with populations moving in and out of the area. If any one feature could define the area, it is its hybridity in many realms of life. In the following chapter, the way in which this hybridity is reflected today in the inhabited spaces across the Haayre will be addressed.

Photo 3   The village of Dalla and the surrounding Haayre rocks (Dalla 2002)

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Mapping hierarchies

One of the first people I met in the village of Dalla was Maman Abidjan. Although she was an enthusiastic talker and had a wide vocabulary, Maman Abidjan expressed frustration about the way she had been received when she returned to her home village after living abroad for forty years. She was amazed how, despite her social, socio-economic success in Abidjan, she was put 'in place' again once back home. She was upset about the associations people make between social status and place of residence, and reflected on how my interpreter and I, as relative strangers in Dalla, immediately identified her as a slave descendant in our first meeting because she lived in a former slave ward. We took her back to the past and literally put her 'back in place' because of stereotypical associations with her ward. She felt that her new status and social mobility had been undermined from the moment she returned home.

Such perceived constraints and frustrations work the other way too. Seydu Dicko, a freeborn son of Musa Dicko, grew up in Bamako and speaks better Bambara than Fulfulde. When discussing a recent visit he made to his father's home village of Dalla in 2007, Seydu described his annoyance at his mother's instructions about dressing in an expensive traditional costume (French: B*oubou*), while he prefers his jeans and a shirt. She wanted him to maintain his status as a prince, while he is uncomfortable with being treated as such. The moment he gets out of his vehicle in Dalla, someone of slave descent takes his suitcase, sends a child to bring him water and makes sure he is accompanied all the way to the family compound. Seydu finds himself in an awkward situation, and one he would prefer not to have to deal with.

Both of these stories illustrate how hierarchy is forced upon people when they are (back) in their home village: Seydu and Maman are ascribed a given status even though in the urban contexts they were socialised in they have developed a different habitus and identify themselves differently. Once physically present in a village, it is difficult to change historical patterns of belonging that have been established through an existing cultural field of hierarchy. As Maman Abidjan pointed out, hierarchy and the position one can take are inscribed in the landscape, literally in the place one is allowed, forced or expected to occupy. Hirsh & O'Hanlon (1995) argued that landscapes are not simply

backdrops to action but an integral part of it. Places are invested with moral value despite the anthropological denunciation of 'localizing' cultures (Hastrup & Olwig 1997). They cannot be reduced to mere voids: They always obtain meaning and merge with local ideologies and relating practices. This chapter describes how places are in themselves sites of memory.

My line of argument is that places are thus an alternative form whereby the history of slavery is remembered. As has been noted by several scholars, written sources of slave voices are generally lacking,[1] so academic descriptions of the external and the internal slave trade in the West African region have increasingly focused on alternative ways of remembering to nevertheless represent slave voices and agency in written history. Various academics tried to get closer to these 'slave voices' by studying non-discursive and therefore radically alternative sources of slave memories. Shaw (2002) was the first to describe how several religious cults in Sierra Leone, continued to make reference to the slave past. Argenti (2007) has described the trauma still embedded and embodied in mask performances, song and children's storytelling. Hardung (2003) addressed how memories of slavery are still being practised in the ritual labour of Riimaayɓe in northern Benin.

As mentioned in the introduction, several other scholars discussed more institutionalized memories in the public sphere, such as religious institutions & cults (Argenti & Roschenthaler 2006), cultural heritage festivals (Schramm 2007) and museums (Bellagamba 2009). Attention has also been given to discursive claims of slave descendants who are fighting over access to cults (Noret 2008), ancestral tombs (Evers 2002) and family lineages (Ologoudou 2008), which in the respective societies remained for a long time the exclusive realm of the freeborn. This recent wave of studies demonstrates a growing body of alternative approaches to commemoration practices of slave descendants. In this chapter I argue that geographical organisation of specific places, can be seen as another form of non-discursive memory of slavery.

Inscribing social hierarchies from above and below

> In a sense, the social and the geographical space are conflated in experience. It is impossible to 'think away' the actual geographical location of social life, lives are always grounded.
> (Hastrup 2005: 145)

As Hastrup suggests, the geography of a specific space is important to an understanding of the social life of its inhabitants. At the same time, social relations identify places as being meaningful. This chapter focuses on how hierarchy 'takes place' in the general spatial organization of the Haayre region and, more specifically, in the residences of my network of informants in Dalla. It describes how the organization of places, both in a geographical sense (place of residence) and social sense (interactions), implicitly defines people's positions in hierarchical social relations, considering how hierarchy is

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[1] Although many historians are doing an excellent job in reading or retrieving slave voices in Arabic correspondence (Hall 2009) and in court cases (papers by Roberts & Rodet as presented at the 'Tales of Slavery' conference in Toronto in May 2009.

'mapped' in a physical place. It addresses the 'grounding' of social life in the physical landscape.

In his essay entitled 'Walking the City', De Certeau (1988: 92) described how elevation, the view from above like Icarus's view when looking down on the world, makes one into a voyeur with a 'celestial eye'. This chapter provides the reader with such a view. This celestial (bird's-eye) view first maps and describes the spatial organization of the Central Malian Haayre region and its capital city, Douentza. After a short review of the literature on the interrelationship of spatial arrangements and hierarchy more generally, the third section provides a different perspective by taking the reader for a 'walk' through Dalla and by zooming in on the various neighbourhoods, each of which has a role in the village's hierarchy. Dalla is presented as a concrete material landscape that structures and contextualizes the ways in which people relate and make their living.

On the walk, we will inevitably encounter people. Since the village of Dalla is home to the social network central to this thesis, a fourth section 'casts' the main informants who live in one of the wards and I describe the social network of the Dicko and the Kau families and present their links to the past based on the genealogies of both families (see Images 2 and 3). When encountering people on a walk, greetings are exchanged and I demonstrate how basic interactions, such as greetings, are imbued with the cultural field of hierarchy and literally 'put people in their place'. The anthropological method of participant observation trained my eyes to 'read' hierarchy from the interaction between people. In the final section, important ethical issues when engaging in research on hierarchical interactions between different social groups are presented and the methodological choices taken during my field research are described.

Reading hierarchies from the Haayre landscape

The development of the cultural field of hierarchy is intertwined with the Sahelian environment in social and ecological terms (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a). The inward ecological fragility of the area demands exchange systems between pastoral and agricultural groups as the environment is poor in terms of natural resources. Its exploitation is mostly through pastoralism, and agriculture to a lesser extent. In areas where the Fulɓe established their empires, rivers and highlands were sources of wealth and the Fulɓe elites exploited these resources through their dominance over other people (Gibbal 1994; de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001a). One way of incorporating people into their society was through the submission of villages and another was to capture people from outside the region.

Today, Mali is divided into eight regions and one capital district, Bamako. Each region is in turn subdivided into 50 *cercles,* the smallest unit of political administration that was set up by the French.[2] At independence the *cercles* were renamed as *prefectures* and subdivided into smaller administrative units called cantons, which have been restructured in so-called rural and urban communes since the 1999 decentralization reforms.

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2   The first administrative unit called Cercle of Bafoulabé was created in Mali in 1887.

The fifth region, Mopti, is one of the poorest in the country and includes the administrative unit of the Douentza c*ercle* (Map 2). Douentza is the capital of the Haayre, a region that is named after its rocky plateaus: *Haayre* in the Fulfulde language means 'rocks'. Located in the central Malian Sahel, sand dunes and plains dominate the irregular but impressive rocky plateaus. The Haayre is situated on the southern bank of River Niger, known as the *Gourma* in Fulfulde (Gallais 1975: 2),[3] and to the north of the *Daande Seeno* region, which can be literally translated as 'the border of the sandy zone'. This is also the meaning of the word Sahel, which means 'the banks (edges) of the desert' in Arabic (Gritzner 1988: 1).

The Haayre region has a semi-arid climate with a maximum annual rainfall of 300-600 mm. Rainfall is concentrated in three months of the year (July-September) and fluctuates even within a single zone. In August 2009, for example, Dalla and nearby Nokara were unexpectedly flooded, while there was no rain at all in neighbouring Douentza and Booni. The flooding was a disaster for Dalla and destroyed 129 houses, seven latrines and part of the tarmac road.[4]

The region consists of two main ecological zones: The plains, where water is relatively scarce, and the mountains where water is accessible most of the year. The unpredictability of the climate and the extreme local climate variations result in regular crop failures,[5] high numbers of cattle deaths and hunger. In January and February the Harmattan blows its hot desert winds (FF: *Heendu*) over the plains, bringing dust, eye infections and spoiling food. From March to July, the sun scorches the earth and the intense heat makes life difficult, draining people's energy and leading to an increase in influenza, infections and scorpion bites. The long-awaited but unpredictable rains between July and September result in harvests by October or November, if they are not first destroyed by birds (as in 2001) or locust plagues (as in 2004).

The area's ecology makes agriculture an unreliable source of livelihood and may explain why the kingdom's economies were based on a slave-raiding economy (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a; Finley 1981; Lovejoy 1983). Being able to rely on people and having access to a social network is of utmost importance in an environment that renders people highly vulnerable.[6]

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[3]   See also the *Carte morphologique du Gourma* in his study. Gallais (1975: 3) also describes the Haayre region as the 'Gourma of the Mountains' (French: *Gourma des monts*), squeezed between the High Gourma (French: *Haut Gourma*) up north and the sandy Gourma (FF: *Seeno-Gondo*) down south. See Map 3.

[4]   Personal phone communication, Amadu Amiiru Dicko, August 2009. See also: http://www.primature.gov.ml/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2821&Itemid=1. Accessed end of August 2009.

[5]   Often also due to or combined with plagues. For Douentza, the locust plague in 2004 was a disaster: http://www.irinnews.org/IndepthMain.aspx?IndepthId=18&ReportId=62747. In 2001 birds destroyed much of the harvest: Observations and interview, Burra Yero Cisse, Douentza, 2002.

[6]   The 1995 study 'Arid Ways' by de Bruijn & van Dijk focuses on issues of identity, vulnerability, climate variability and livelihood. They describe the region in more geographical, geological and climatic detail (1995a: 41-47). Bouman (2003) confirms the importance of social networks in order to survive in a region of northern Burkina Faso which has a similar climate.

Within the current national context of Mali, the Haayre region, like its original nomadic Fulɓe inhabitants,[7] has been marginalized. And apart from cattle, there are no notable resources. In her work on indigenous communities and deforestation companies in Indonesia, anthropologist Tsing (1993) demonstrated how the marginality of such 'out-of-the-way places' is not only the product of a political system and an economic structure but also consists of an ideological vision and an outsider gaze that construes exclusion. Not only in terms of physical distance but also in imagination and representation, Central Mali is far from the capital. Despite being accessible from Bamako along the main tarmac road (913 km) since 1985, some continue to see it as being remote because the road is not well maintained and it takes a full day to reach the area. Local elites and wealthy tourists prefer to take internal flights to Mopti, Mali's 'Venice of the North', from where it is still another 280 km by car to Douentza. Mopti has a harbour at a strategic junction of the Niger and Bani Rivers, where the Niger Delta starts. Bozo fishermen, agriculturalists of Bambara or Riimaayɓe background and pastoralist Fulɓe herdsmen share this ecological niche.

The main ethnic groups in the Haayre region are Fulɓe and Dogon. During the nineteenth-century Fulɓe hegemony, Dogon were enslaved by Fulɓe. Among the Dogon, a distinction is made between those occupying the plains and those living on the plateaus. Those on the plateaus retreated there in the past for protection from the slave-raiding Fulɓe in the area, while those living on the Seeno Plains historically had more contact with the Fulɓe, which explains why most of them are Muslim. By contrast, Dogon refugees living on the plateaus maintained their folk beliefs or were converted to Christianity by European missionaries (van Beek 1993, 2004, 2005).

Although some villages are clearly Fulɓe or Dogon in origin, others have been heterogeneous from the outset. During the course of the twentieth century, some slave families took their new position as freed persons seriously, leaving their masters' villages, clearing their own land and forming new hamlets across the plains of the Haayre. Debere, Kolongo and the hamlet of Serma are examples of Riimaayɓe settlements established by those who had left their masters' villages. As described in de Bruijn & Pelckmans (2005), Serma is a conglomeration of rainy-season cattle camps and a Riimaayɓe hamlet that also serves as a market place. Serma is not a proper village but a collection of houses, with no streets and sometimes even no paths from one house to the next. It is made up of diverse families, the majority of whom consider themselves to be Riimaayɓe, some of whom are descendants of impoverished noble Tuareg and pastoral Fulɓe families, while others (FF: *Kommongalluuɓe*) claim a special position as royal soldiers from the past.[8] The families in this hamlet are related to a greater or lesser degree, but not through historical family relations. What links them most closely is the fact that they no longer want to be considered as slaves. They each formulate, in their

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[7] Many actors reinforced ideas of Fulɓe pastoralists as marginal populations: Academics, colonial officers and Fulɓe themselves. They all contributed to the perceived marginal integration of Fulɓe in the national socio-political economy (Azarya 1996).

[8] By refusing a Riimaayɓe identity, this group denies having been Fulɓe slaves because they voluntarily offered their services as soldiers to the royal Fulɓe armies.

own way, a short history of themselves that attests to their free status. Their settlement and occupation of space underlines their emancipation.

For the past century, Fulɓe have been the dominant ethnic group in the region. Some sedentarized in the course of the twentieth century, while others remained pastoralist cattle herders and settled in the Haayre when the Niger Delta flooded. However drought brought about significant changes not only for slaves but also for their pastoralist masters. The Fulɓe pastoralists went to towns to try their luck with aid organizations who distributed food[9] and similar patterns of pastoralists sedentarizing in small towns took place in other parts of the Sahel (Boesen & Marfaing 2007).[10] Not only pastoralists but also groups of slave descent, such as Riimaayɓe and Bellaaɓe, increasingly settled in Douentza in order to have access to schools, healthcare and employment.

Douentza: A bleak town

Douentza is the capital of the Douentza *Cercle* and a co-passenger on a bus once described it as 'the gateway to the north'. It is literally a gateway to the rocky plateaus of the Malian Sahel and the desert to the north.[11] New roads have increased Douentza's strategic position, with an asphalt road linking Bamako and Gao since 1986 and, more recently, the Peace Road (French: *Route de la Paix*)[12] connecting Douentza with Timbouctou to the north since 2002. The town has developed at a constant rate because of its role as an administrative centre and being the capital of the *Cercle*. In 1998, Douentza *Cercle* had a population of 152,185[13] and, according to the 1996 census, Douentza had 4958 inhabitants (Zondag 2005: 175).

People of all the major ethnic groups in northern Mali are to be found there, each with a history of assigning some of its members to a slave category. In Douentza, members of all ethnic groups hold slaves in low esteem. The economic diversification that accompanied the steady growth of this town has created new options for people of slave descent, many of whom left their former masters. Slave descendants continue to engage in occupations stereotypically assigned to slaves and their descendants, such as brick making, housemaids and servants. Labour migration has created new opportu-

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[9]   The droughts in the twentieth century resulted in the changing ownership of cattle stock. Cattle were no longer owned by the family-based and subsistence-oriented pastoralist enterprises but by urban-based commercial workers, wealthy traders (often migrants) and civil servants from elsewhere (de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001b: 5). Today one can see many compounds in Douentza with the reed huts of former pastoralist Fulɓe who are trying to make a living in town. Pastoralist families saw themselves increasingly obliged to settle in the urban centres (de Bruijn & van Dijk 2003a).

[10]   Van Steenbrugge (2005) mentions Koutiala as an attractive pole in southern Mali and other examples can be found in Boesen & Marfaing (2007).

[11]   The biggest plateau in the area is situated southeast of Douentza and known as the Bandiagara Cliffs or the Dogon Plateau, referring to the major ethnic group living there. North of Douentza is another large plateau, the Gandamia, which is less well known but central to the settlement history of the inhabitants of Douentza and its surroundings. Further east is a plateau in the form of 'the hand of Fatima' near the former Songhay Kingdom of Hombori.

[12]   This road increased access to Timbouctou, which used to be difficult to reach and accessible only by boat, plane or four-wheel-drive vehicle. The construction of the road boosted tourism in the Douentza area, which became the newest gateway for tourists wanting to visit 'the hand of Fatima', the pink dunes of Hombori or the increasingly popular annual music Festival of the Desert in January.

[13]   'Circles of Mali: 1998 Census'. Statoids 1998. http://www.statoids.com/yml.html, accessed 20 July 2009.

nities, first by aligning people with new masters but also thanks to new occupations such as trade, and through the accumulation of wealth.

Some migrating slave descendants became wealthier than their former pastoralist masters because they engaged in wage labour, while their masters lost substantial parts of their herds during the droughts in the 1970s and 1980s. As some slave descendants became wealthier, the hierarchical distinctions between freeborn nobles (FF: *Riimɓe* or the broader notion of Fulɓe) and slaves (FF: *Riimaayɓe*) remain social labels that do not correspond to their current economic positions in the local hierarchy. The label of slave status or being of slave descent, which is an inferior social position, no longer necessarily translates into an inferior economic or class status. Chapters 6 and 7 will highlight how slave descendants who migrated have managed to hide their origins, and some changed their identities altogether.[14]

Douentza ranks very low in national school enrolment figures and students used to have to travel long distances to attend school. Although the number and accessibility of schools has increased over the past decade (Breedveld 2006: 145), enrolment has remained low, especially among pastoralist Fulɓe who have historically rejected state institutions.[15]

At the start of the twentieth century, colonial administrators created new opportunities for people to enrol in French education and slaves were initially enrolled by their masters. Later, when the elite discovered education was important for contact with the powerful French colonial rulers, noblemen decided to enrol their own children in French education too. King Yerowal of Dalla sent his son Musa Dicko[16] to a French school but this was exceptional as the kings were in general reluctant to have their own children at schools run by the 'colonial enemies' and preferred them to have an Islamic education. They also rejected formal education because of distrust of modern educational projects. This suspicion has remained and most pastoralist parents today still prefer to give their children an Islamic rather than a French education.

To cooperate with French colonial officers, being able to read and write in French became an asset. For example, the princes in the royal Dicko family in Dalla who received a French education are today wealthy and influential in both national and village politics.[17] Education became indispensible not only to cooperate with French officers but later also to gain access to development projects and state politics. All the interpreters and research assistants working on this research had enjoyed a formal French education and were teachers themselves. Umu Sangare was my interpreter and we first worked together in Dalla in 2001-2002. Umu studied and graduated in administration, after that she has been teaching in different places (Debere, Mondoro) in the region. In 2001 we (me, Umu and her six-month-old child) would leave each Monday morning from Douentza to the village of Dalla and return at the weekend. Burra Yero Cisse, who has a long-standing position as a research assistant (for de Bruijn, van Dijk

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[14] They do so by changing their name or ethnic affiliation. See Pelckmans, 2011b forthcoming.
[15] Breedveld (2006: 163-164) describes how this suspicion towards modern education dates from colonial times.
[16] Musa Dicko, born 1932 (†2008), Dalla. Interviews 2001-2002; 2006; 2007.
[17] Chapter 6 elaborates on this argument by focusing on the princes from three Fulɓe kingdoms in the Haayre region: Joona, Dalla and Booni.

and several of their students)[18] also assisted me in Douentza and had been trained as a Fulfulde teacher by a local NGO in Douentza in the 1980s. Those students from small villages in the Haayre region who want to receive higher education all spend several years studying in Douentza, which is an important hub for educational trajectories in the region.

Image 1   Scan from excerpt from Bradt travel guide to Mali (Velton 2000: 155)

DOUENTZA

Beyond Mopti, the main highway to Gao continues northeast until it reaches Konna, where it gradually veers eastwards, passing Boré before reaching Douentza. Officially the *chef-lieu* (main town) of one of the four *cercles* of Dogon country, Douentza can also be considered the principal town of the Gourma area. This, however, is not saying much. If you want to see the elephants, it might be worth your while stopping at Douentza for advice on where best to spot them; otherwise, there is not much else to detain you for too long in this rather bleak town.

Getting there and away

Traffic on the highway to Gao dwindles considerably after Mopti. Buses going east and west do stop to pick up passengers as they pass through Douentza, but they are often very full and places are not guaranteed. Hitchhiking, therefore, might be quicker than public transport.

Douentza is also an important centre for healthcare but, similar as with national rankings for education, the region of Mopti scores badly (Hill 1985).[19] Douentza's medical infrastructure is poor although there is a hospital and a reasonably well-equipped dispensary run by Save the Children. Access to the hospitals and dispensaries remains problematic for many, especially for poor pastoralists in isolated villages (Randall 1993: 293). Many people are reluctant or afraid to consult doctors and few women give birth under medical supervision in a hospital. When they do go to hospital, it is often only because of last-minute complications. On one of my trips in a *taxibrousse*, a woman in labour was lying in the middle surrounded by other passengers and although the bus headed directly for the hospital, news spread the next day that she had not survived the complications of her pregnancy.

Douentza, in spite of its poor infrastructure, is booming and is far from 'the rather bleak town' it was once considered to be (Velton 2000: 155; Image 1). Between 2001 and 2007 the number of hotels and campsites in Douentza grew from two to at least

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[18]   Burra Yero Cisse was the main research assistant of De Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a) who subsequently put him in touch with their student researchers, such as for example Griep (2005), Nijenhuis (2009) and myself.

[19]   The majority of my informants and assistants died between my first field visit in 2001 and my last one in 2007.

eight and today tourists can be seen walking around the weekly market on Sunday. More and more houses are being built of brick and restaurants, shops, bars and small businesses appear to be flourishing.

The main trading hub was moved out of the city centre to along the tarmac road leading from Bamako to Gao and Menaka where new bars, restaurants and shops selling western clothing, CDs, DVDs and cell-phone accessories are opening up. Merchants, tailors, photographers and female food traders who used to work in the central market downtown but lacked space have moved to the roadside bus stop (Zondag 2005: 189). This is a good location to serve travellers on the major bus companies who stop over for dinner, breakfast or prayers. Most newcomers and migrants to Douentza try their luck as traders: Mauritanian traders sell carpets and Ghanaian hairdressers have brought in their knowledge of the latest hairstyles. Although there are many ethnic groups cohabiting in Douentza, the lingua franca in the zone remains Fulfulde.

Mapping Dalla as a 'typical' Haayre village

Some 35 km from Douentza, Dalla is a village strategically located at the foot of the Gandamia Plateau, which provided natural protection from raiders and warlords in the past. Nowadays the plateau makes it impossible to pick up mobile-phone signals in the centre of the village. Wealthier members of the ruling Dicko family in 2009 have there-fore paid an extra antenna on the plateau to allow the villagers to receive calls and get online. In 2011 the 'chattering sphere' of the mobile phones made its entry in the village as it obtained its onw antenna that ensures stable connections for phoning.

The rural community of Dalla spreads across a large territory that is divided by the Gandamia Plateau (Map 5). To cross the plateau from Dalla to the north takes at least two days on foot and one needs to take enough water as the infamous guinea worm still lives in the waterholes of the isolated villages in the hills.[20] There are some small Riimaayɓe cultivator villages and seasonal Fulɓe hamlets too (Maps 4 & 5). Like Booni and Joona, also sedentarized Fulɓe villages that used to be kingdoms in the past, Dalla is surrounded by hamlets, seasonal pastoralist camps and permanent cultivator settle-ments.[21]

Shifts in land ownership and territorial organization took place in what, according to the national administration, is now called the 'rural community' of Dalla. Before, during King Yerowal's reign (1911-1966), the territory of this Fulɓe kingdom went from Gana to Bunti to the independent village of Kikara (Map 4, Chapter 1). In the 1940s, Yerowal had a conflict with the French colonial Commander Bayiratou, who declared Kikara and some neighbouring villages[22] to be independent cantons. Yerowal complained about

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[20] Due to their inaccessibility, many of these villages have never been visited by NGOs or sanitation projects. While their isolation in the past guaranteed safety, it now has the opposite effect. Some of them (Kolongo, Ama and Bara Aoussi) have split in two, with some of the villagers coming down from the plateaus to live on the plains at the foot of the plateaus. The neighbouring Dogon have done the same.

[21] Examples of such settlements on the territory of Dalla are: Boumbam (2 km), Naani (15 km), Aoussi (10 km), Bara-Aoussi (9 km), Torbani (15 km), Ama (10 km) and Diayel (15 km). Maps 4 and 5.

[22] The new cantons are Muniyol, Gaana, Bunti, Bula, Orowel and Baanikaani.

Map 5   The official territory of the municipality ("commune rurale") of Dalla
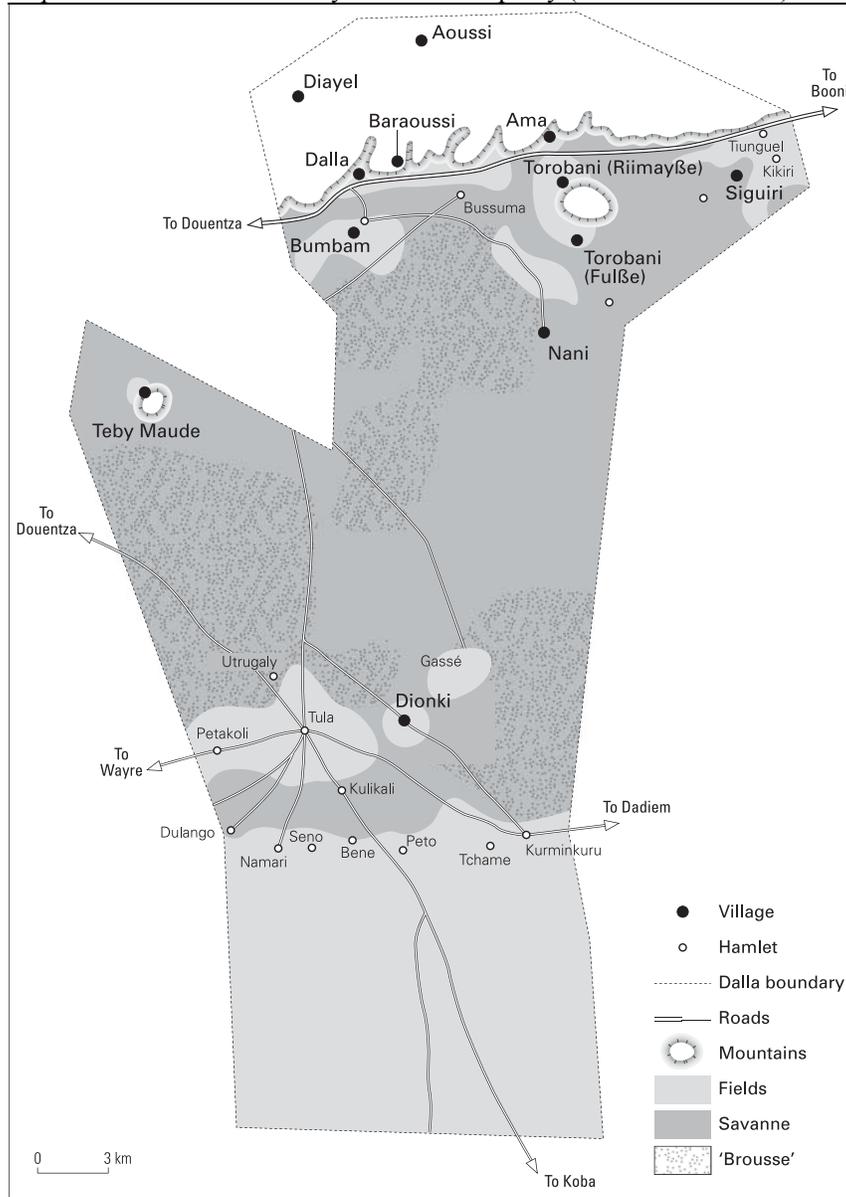
having lost this part of what he considered his territory, and his loss was compensated for with some new villages[23] along the road (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 117).

When Dalla obtained administrative status as a rural community in 1999, its territory became more or less fixed (Map 5). According to the *Annuaire officiel 2001*,[24] the rural community of Dalla has 4823 inhabitants. While the elite glorify the history of their

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23   The new villages are Peetaka, Sigima, Allaɓenguma and Gooma.
24   Association des municipalités du Mali, 2000. Annuaire Officiel, Bamako. Excerpt: pp. 108-109*:* Name of the commune, mayor, number of inhabitants: Dalla - Musa Dicko - 4823. These figures tend to be low because not everyone registers in Douentza or elsewhere to avoid paying head tax.

royal hegemony in the area, Dalla is today a medium-sized village and one of the smallest rural communities along the tarmac road. Roughly a-third (about 1500 people) of its inhabitants are slave descendants (FF: *Maccuɓe Wuro*).[25] This corresponds with observations made by historians Klein (1998: 53-54) and Lovejoy (1983) that slave descendants in the Sahel often constituted an average of 30% to 50% of the total population (Botte 1994: 112-114). A majority of the slave population in the village belonged to the ruling Dicko family (FF: *Weheeɓe)*.

Various ethnic groups cohabit on Dalla's territory: Songhay (FF: *Sonhaykooɓe*), Dogon (FF: *Humbeeɓe*), former Fulɓe slaves (FF: *Riimaayɓe Haayre/ Kommongalluuɓe*),[26] Bella (FF: B*ellaaɓe*) and small groups of semi-nomadic Fulɓe cattle herders (FF: *Egge-Hoodaaɓe/Jalluuɓe*). The heterogeneity of the populations, homogeneously categorized as non- Fulɓe (FF: *Haaɓe*) by freeborn Fulɓe is reflected in the housing. Some are made of mud bricks produced by Riimaayɓe, while other settlements are temporary and homes are made of millet stalks, reed mats or cloth. Although many of the Dogon have settled on the plains, they used to make their houses in caves on the plateaus. Most nomad huts are round while mud-brick houses built by Riimaayɓe are generally square. Some have several rooms, others just one, and they can be well-kept or hopelessly dilapidated and neglected. The different forms of housing and the internal decoration of a house (FF: *Suudu*) indicate differences in wealth, occupation and ethnic background.

In Fulɓe literature, Boutrais (in: Botte et al. 1999: 32) describes how: 'Fulɓe pay much attention to the placement of people and things. Their pre-colonial state-formations functioned in social spaces, bundling correlations between positions and social relations.'[27] Bierschenk (1999: 196-197)[28] describes how the spatial organization of Fulɓe in northern Benin:

> ... represents a constitutive element in the social process. It makes possible and at the same time delimits social actions. At the same time they have an objectifying function: They make all who inscribe themselves in these spaces believe that social facts are 'natural' and, as such, inevitable although they are products of history and culture. In this sense, spatial structures have to be considered as the 'unconscious biography' (Lewis 1979: 12) of a society.[29]

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[25]   *Maccuɓe wuro* are descendants of former house slaves living in the village.

[26]   *Riimaayɓe Haayre* are descendants of slaves living on slave estates, Kommongalluuɓe are slave warriors who would only work in the service of the king upon his request.

[27]   'Les peuls accordent une grande attention à l'emplacement des gens et des choses. Leurs formations étatiques précoloniales fonctionnaient sur des espaces sociaux, des faisceaux de correspondances entre des relations de positions et des rapports sociaux.'

[28]   Bierschenk (1999: 197-203) describes the spatial ordering of things but much less so from a perspective of social hierarchies and with a focus on pastoralist Fulɓe. Dupire (1970) describes the spatial alignments and orientations of cattle camps and Fulɓe habitats.

[29]   Translated from French: 'Les structure spatiales réprésentent un élément constitutive du processus social. Elles rendent possible, en même temps qu'elles délimitent, les actions sociales, tout en remplissant par excellence une fonction objectivante: Elles font croire a ceux qui s'inscrivent dans ces espaces que les fait sociaux sont «naturels» et ainsi inévitables alors qu'ils sont des produits de l'histoire et de la culture. Dans ce sens, les structures spatiales peuvent être considérées comme la biographie inconsciente (Lewis, 1979: 12) d'une société.'

Bierschenk mainly focuses on pastoralist Fulɓe settlements.[30] Pouget (2000: 103-158) compares the spatial organization of the Fulɓe societies of Adamawa (North Cameroon), Maacina (Central Mali) and Fuuta Djallon (Guinea) and demonstrates that, in spite of strong social-spatial correlations, there are many differences among Fulɓe and Riimaayɓe settlements across the Sahel. Fanchette (1999: 191) points out how the typical spatial hierarchy in the Senegalese Fuladu region between the freeborn Fulɓe villages and slave-descendant Maccuɓe villages[31] has disappeared due to the inter-mixing of the groups over time and is correlated in part with seasonal labour migration. This is much less the case in the Haayre region where spatial organization reflects past social hierarchies in the present.

From a bird's-eye perspective, the village of Dalla is situated in the midst of its surrounding clients: Tenant-farming Riimaayɓe Haayre, pastoralist Fulɓe who defer to the local political rulers and Dogon who used to be incorporated in the Fulɓe kingdoms as tenant farmers.[32] The ruling Weheeɓe families settled in the royal court, which is in the heart of the territory (FF: *leydi*). The floating populations settled in a more or less concentric spatial organization around it such that freeborn were at the centre and others surrounded it.

This spatial division between freeborn and slave-descendant Fulɓe is reflected in local toponyms. A village politically controlled by Fulɓe is called a *wuro*.[33] A village inhabited by cultivating Riimaayɓe is called a *Debere*.[34] By extension, Fulɓe call all villages inhabited by cultivating non-Fulɓe *Debere*. Similar spatial divisions in Fulɓe communities are described for the region of Fuuta Djallon in Guinea by Botte (1994: 111) who explains how the relative separation of slaves in their villages from the freeborn ruling political elite facilitated their emancipation. The geographical distance from their masters made it easier for them to be critical of their rulers and to function independently. Land ownership and management of resources by the elite tended to be less enforced further away from the centre of the kingdom. Further away from the political heart of the kingdom, there was less control imposed by the ruling Fulɓe families, which underlines the interrelationship between place and power.

An important spatial source of authority and hierarchy today is the claim to land. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the French administrators saw the need for a

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[30] The same goes for de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 151-164) and Dupire (1970) who described spatial and social organization among pastoralist Fulɓe.

[31] Freeborn villages in Fuuta Djallon are known as *Misiide* versus *Ruunde* (Fanchette 1999: 191).

[32] These Dogon were generally ascribed a status similar to that of FulBe slave descendants living on the estates (FF: *Riimaayɓe Haayre)*.

[33] This word is derived from the verb 'to live' and indicates co-residence. Nevertheless, who cohabits with whom and the exact meaning of the word *wuro* depend on the Fulɓe context (Botte et al. 1999: 21). A *wuro* often indicates a more permanent settlement. Temporary Fulɓe settlements of nomadic herdsmen in the Haayre region are called *Koggi* or *Honnde Fulɓe*.

[34] Riimaayɓe villages (FF: *Debere*, plural: *Debeeje*) are called *saare* in the Fulfulde dialect of Maacina. The word *saare* according to Pouget (2000) refers to mud-brick houses built by Riimaayɓe. According to Berndt (2008: 10), working among Fulɓe in the Guimballa region, a saare is the cultivator's district of a village. In Guinea Riimaayɓe, villages are called *Runnde* and its Riimaayɓe inhabitants are called *Runndeeɓe*.

territorial reorganization to eradicate master-slave relations. In 1910 General Fasstier remarked:[35]

> I would have wanted to establish written contracts of land lease between the proprietors and the Riimaayɓe (*rimaibe*), but I encountered bad will on the part of the Fulɓe (*peul*) based on the pretext that the ownership of land is not individual. On the part of the Riimaayɓe (I encountered) an incredible apathy, resulting from the blind confidence they have in our verbal decisions. Therefore (to combat the bad will of the *peul*) I ordered all the chefs of the Fulɓe tribes to describe the division of lands between every family of the tribe. This division will be registered in the historical books (*Tarik*) held by the imam (*cadi*) of this group and it will be transmitted to the *Cercle*, which in turn will have it translated and conserved in its archives.

From this excerpt it would appear that the French underscored the importance of proving land ownership by historical documents (FF: *Tarikh*) and the national administration. However, the documents that would prove who owned what lands in the Kingdom of Dalla have now disappeared as they were handed out for settling a national court case on a border dispute between the Haayre and northern Burkina Faso. Despites various efforts, they have never been returned.[36]

In the Haayre region, indigenous, Islamic, colonial and later national customs regarding land rights overlapped.[37] In the nineteenth century, Weheeɓe warriors established a monopoly over land in the Kingdom of Dalla. Land-lease rights were accorded by the political chief (FF: *Amiiru*), who had the ultimate authority over who had access to land. Land rights were also partly regulated by Islamic law, which is why the religious Moodibaaɓe elites have their say in land division in the region. The French colonizers tried to alter prevailing ownership relations but rarely managed. In 1917, after some administrative visits (French: *Tournées*) to the different cantons of Maacina, the French administrator Parouks concluded:[38]

> Above all, a cantonal reorganization becomes necessary ... (T)he population is composed of *peul* (Fulɓe) and Riimaayɓe, the latter being the liberated slaves of the Fulɓe. With time, their liberation makes them leave their masters villages and they settle sometimes rather far away from their place of origin, on good cultivable terrains that are still virgin. A lot of villages were constituted in which the inhabitants continue to take part administratively in the chief-lieu of their canton where they used live before in captivity. It is in this way that, for example, a small village in the territory of the canton Sosobe-Guile depended administratively on the canton of Dipoule, because the people of this village before, used to be the former slaves of the Fulɓe from Dipoule. This state of affairs, which is very common in Maacina, is the supplementary cause of anarchy in the country because it opens up possibilities for the rich and influent Fulɓe to claim contributions in nature from their old serfs (French: *Anciens serviteurs*) ... which is why I propose to: 1. Reorganize the cantons, following the geographical emplacement of the villages ... without considering origin or race.

Signed 28 November 1917 by Agard Parouks

This quote indicates that the French administrators knew that their own administrative structures for legalizing land rights reinforced the dependency of slave villages on elite settlements. This problem of dependency on elites for access to land for the

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[35] Archives Nationales Mali, FA-1E-30/letter 15 March 1910.

[36] Personal conversation in 2006 with de Bruijn & van Dijk. See also de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a).

[37] Ownership of land is increasingly contested by various groups, each with its own interpretation of customary law based on historical claims. The example of the inhabitants of Boumbam shows how some managed to get their claims on land accepted by (legal) administration.

[38] Archives National Mali, Anciens Fonds-1E-30. Djenne (1917).

floating populations (Warnier in Argenti 2007: 45) remained unaddressed for a long time. In general, the colonial authorities intervened as little as possible on local land tenure issues and largely ignored the landless masses. At independence, customary tenure officially became regulated by the national administration (Marie 1989), which resulted in a curtailing of the power of chiefs over land in favour of the new Malian administration that made new bush land legally available to the landless.

Nevertheless, even with the decentralization politics of the 1990s, the political Fulɓe rulers of Douentza still have more assets to gain access to land (de Lange 2004). Most slave-descending Riimaayɓe on the hills surrounding Dalla continue to depend on land leased from their masters but since land can now be bought, some slave families who became wealthy have managed to buy land from impoverished pastoralist Fulɓe. The most powerful families own the best agricultural lands. Although both colonial and post-independence national administrations have tried to formulate laws to provide access to such goods (land, political authority) for former slave groups, these laws have often remained unimplemented in practice. De Langen (2004) demonstrated how decentralization and the redivision of land in Douentza reinforced the power of the ruling elites. Those former slaves who bought land did not receive it in property in the end. On paper, they had equal citizenship rights but in practice they did not. In Dalla, only the wealthy slave descendants (FF: *Maccuɓe Wuro*) who formerly belonged to the freeborn traders (FF: *Jawaamɓe*) managed to buy land from their former masters. None of the members of the Kau family of slave descendants have bought land from the Dicko family to date. I will not further detail land-tenure relations between the Dicko and Kau families because Kau family members still lease land from the Dicko family. Unlike some other rich slave descendants, they have not yet managed to negotiate ownership.

Another reason for not going into details of other tenure relations in Dalla is because they are extremely diverse: For each rule there are exceptions that came about by specific social interrelations. De Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 62-63, 338-342) underlined how the plurality of law in relation to land-tenure systems on the periphery of the chiefdoms of Dalla and Booni made generalizations on patterns in tenure relations impossible.[39]

The interrelationship between social and spatial organization in the Haayre

Few authors, except Hahonou (2009: 156) and Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996: 808), have explicitly linked spatial organization with the hierarchical organization of the Fulɓe communities they describe. This is the focus of the remainder of this chapter, starting with a description of the convergence of social and spatial stratifications in the ideology of the hierarchy of inhabitants of the Haayre region.

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[39] Nijenhuis (2009) details how land claims are problematic between Fulɓe and Dogon in the Haayre region. For a description of access to land and divisions of land in the Fulɓe hamlet of Serma, see de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 309-312).

Although they are subdivided into different administrative regions,[40] the main former Fulɓe Kingdoms of Kanyume, Dalla, Booni and Joona (Map 3) are believed to share a common ancestry and are historically related to each other in a hierarchical manner. This is conveyed in the way people talk about their interrelationships in kinship terms: The villages are represented as older and younger brothers *vis-à-vis* each other. In the eyes of the inhabitants of Dalla, Kanyume and Joona are the older brothers, as they were the first established and are thus considered the elder brothers to both Dalla and Booni. Booni is the most junior of these present-day rural communities.

The hierarchy corresponding to the emergence of these former kingdoms is also reflected in the social relations of the freeborn inhabitants in the villages. For example, Dallanke (inhabitants of Dalla) respect Joonanke and Kanyumenke as older brothers. Dallanke are in turn respected as older brothers by Booninke. In short, the hierarchical relationship that holds between these villages is translated into rules of morality governing behaviour.

Spatial hierarchies had methodological consequences for this research project. Interviewing slave descendants living in villages that were spatially separated from the villages and towns inhabited by their masters, felt less restrained by the social control of their former masters. Slave descendants did not seem to feel ashamed about actively approaching me rather than waiting for me to approach them, like many freeborn did. Freeborn Fulɓe displayed some reserve, as is expected of them according to restrictive moral codes of behaviour for freeborn noblemen (FF: *Ndimu*).[41]

The hierarchical relations between the villages described above come with restrictive moral codes of behaviour related to honour and shame. For example, interviewing a person from Joona with an interpreter from Dalla could be problematic because Dalla ranks lower than Joona, even though the interpreter was of the same rank as the interviewee. Sometimes informants refused to be interviewed and suggested we asked our personal questions about their status, age, amount of children, names and so on to bards.

Although I first thought such refusals had to do with the hierarchies related to gender or age, informants themselves would point to shame rather than age or gender to explain it. The following example of an interview between me, Mawludu a senior member of the royal family from Joona and a younger male interpreter from the royal family of Dalla (Demba Dicko) illustrates this. Demba explicitly respected behaviour related to hierarchical relations between elder versus youngster, by not looking into his uncle's eyes and never contradicting him. However, he also explicitly respected their feelings of shame (FF: *Yaage*). Despite the fact that his senior uncle Mawludu insisted time and again that, since he had been living in Bamako for decades, he really would not mind if Demba would eat or drink in front of him or look him in the eye, Demba never succumbed and refused the water, bananas and anything else we were offered. We could never stay for too long due to Demba's avoidance of shame in the potentially tense relationship between them.

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[40] Kanyume is administratively part of a region called Guimballah in the sixth region, while Joona, Dalla and Booni are part of the fifth Mopti region. Unlike Joona, Kanyume is part of Douentza *Cercle*, but only Dalla and Booni are part of what people refer to as the Haayre region.

[41] For an analysis of the term *Ndimu* (*ndimaaku)* in the Haayre context, see Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996: 808-809) and de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 202-207).

Shame is an important emotion that Fulɓe have to observe in close relationships. *Yaage* literally means withdrawal from interacting publicly with someone in a superior or rival (equal) position (related to age, gender, descent, family). For example: A father and his eldest son practice *yaage* because the eldest son will take over his father's tasks and as such will become his rival.[42] Practising *yaage* means avoiding certain inter-actions with specific persons in public, such as speaking, eating, showing emotions and greeting in public. De Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 212) emphasized how *yaage* can only be felt among people of the same social status.

Ideas about shame and hierarchy can also be applied to relations between villages. One day I planned to interview my interpreter's peers from the royal Dicko family in Joona. Upon our arrival, we exchanged greetings and then my interpreter, to my frustration, was in a hurry for us to leave. Afterwards he explained that he felt unable to interview his peers due to shame relations between him as a noble Dicko from Dalla and his noble Dicko peers from Joona.[43] He explained that, besides the discomfort of not being allowed to eat, drink or express any emotions or bodily needs, the most prob-lematic factor was that our questions might cause shame to both him and his peers.

Yaage is also practised among slave descendants who formerly belonged to the same status groups of freeborn masters. In most Fulɓe strongholds in the region, royal slave descendants tend to mimic elite behaviour by being quiet, in control and dressing nicely. The fact that they live in close proximity to their former masters allows them less freedom of behaviour than those slave descendants living in satellite villages (FF: *Riimaayɓe Haayre*). Griep (2005: 133) observed the subtle differences between the behaviour of slave descendants in Debere and those in Joona. Debere is a village near Douentza that was founded by slave descendants and she contrasts the lively and noisy behaviour of slave descendants there with the silence and passivity among slave des-cendants co-habiting with their former masters in the Fulɓe stronghold of Joona who had remained much more under the control of local rulers. The ruling Dicko family (*Weheeɓe* elite) in Joona continue to put their stamp on appropriate behaviour for status groups. The authority of freeborn elites who impose noble behaviour in the public space is lacking in villages like Debere. The geographical distance from one's masters trans-lates into a certain social distance and differences in behaviour.

This does not mean that villages of people of slave descent can easily be distin-guished from Fulɓe villages. Only to the trained eye and ear are differences between freeborn and slave-descending Fulɓe villages apparent. Derman (1973: 257) claims it was only after a while that he realized that he was doing fieldwork in a former slave village and describes how this was not his intention and that it is almost impossible for an outsider to identify the differences between such villages.

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[42] Relations between in-laws (FF: *Esiraaɓe*), husband and wife, elders and youngsters, locals and visitors are marked by the application of shame. 'it is thus precisely in their home that one runs the greatest risk of committing an error' (Riesman 1977: 131-132).

[43] For an analysis of this term, see Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996: 809-811) and de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 207-214).

There are no obvious physical or visible sings to distinguish a former serf from Fulɓe villages. Only much later in my stay did I come to perceive the differences between the two. The differences were more the carriage of the body, dress, and bearing than actual physical differences.

The importance of being able to read subtleties of existing status differences in greeting practices will be outlined in the following section.

Walking the village of Dalla

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Maman Abidjan complained about how her place of residence immediately links her to the slave past. To explain this in more detail, this section 'walks the village' of Dalla, mapping it out not from a bird's-eye view but rather from a more grounded perspective, focusing on the lived reality of how the spatial organizes the social. In 2001-2002 I walked the village of Dalla with four different informants: My female neighbour of slave descent Dikoore Seydu,[44] my male host of slave descent Suleymane Dauda,[45] my female interpreter from Douentza Umu Sangare, and my male research assistant from the Ɲeeɲɓe (FF) caste group Hama Amba. For the sake of consistency, I blend the different walks I made with them into one here. The description of Dalla is thus the description made through the eyes of my pedestrian informants walking their village and commenting on it. To visualize the spatial organization of Dalla, Map 6 shows how the village is organized more or less concentrically. At the heart of the village is the royal court called *Galbal* (Map 6: Situated in the bigger ward of Wuro Mango) of the former king and surrounding this centre of power are the various sub-wards of slave descendants, craftsmen, traders and freeborn scholars.

When walking into Dalla from the main tarmac road, one sees the remnants of a stone brick house built at the beginning of the twentieth century by the former French colonizers. These days it offers shade near the road and has become a transit zone where people sit while waiting to catch local transport. To the east of it is a spot, which, at first sight, looks like nothing more than some greenery and trees. It is, however, a cemetery and a possibly dangerous place, especially for women, who are never allowed to go there. There are three different cemeteries in Dalla. One is across the tarmac road in Boumbam, a hamlet south of Dalla, where the ruling Weheeɓe elite and their wives (including slave concubines and their families) are buried. The second is the graveyard east of Dalla, which has separate areas for slave descendants and freemen but nevertheless unites them in the same space. And lastly, west of Wuro Burram near the plateau, there is a special cemetery for young children. Among the Soninke ethnic group in west Mali, hierarchies are explicit about the places were people are buried. Soninke villages have separate graveyards for free and slave-descendant families,[46] although this is not exactly the case in Dalla.

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[44] Dikoore's husband is Seydu and she is thus often referred to as Dikoore (married to) Seydu. For more on the importance of naming, see Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming).

[45] Suleymane's father is Dauda. The name of the father is often added to a person's first name.

[46] Personal conversation with Umaar N'Diaye (Mauritania), Paris, Spring 2005. Personal conversation with El Arbie Ould Saleck (Mauritania), Paris, Spring 2005.

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Map 6   Subdivision of the village of Dalla in three main and various subwards (based on a drawing by the author)
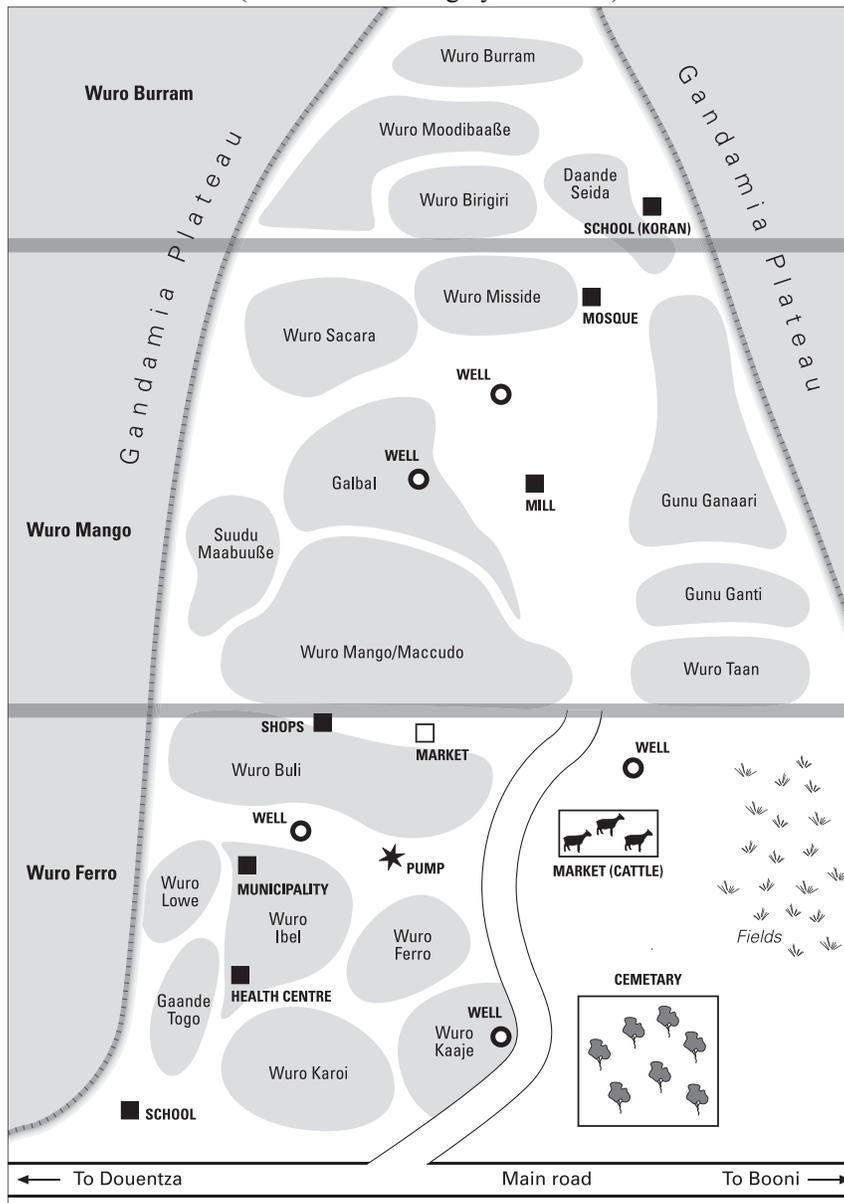
For the visiting outsider, order in the chaos of the village of Dalla is initially hard to see. Upon closer inspection and with the help of my co-walkers, the patchwork of the village compounds gradually emerges as an organized landscape in which people and things are accorded their own place. All four walks revealed surprising, different and meaningful elements in the landscape, such as the sandy dune in front of the house of Bard Hama Amba. It was described as a 'heavenly soft bed' by a group of village youngsters and what looked like empty land on the left-hand side of the entrance to the royal court turned out to be the tomb of King Yerowal.

To external appearances, the people in the different status groups all look alike and even their housing appears similar. The houses are made of dried mud bricks with reed roofs and provide a monotone yellow-ecru background that contrasts nicely with people's colourful clothes. This monotony is however only superficial. There are large and small family compounds and differences in their upkeep betray both the wealth and the well-being of the different families. The compound of the Islamic scholars and that of the political elite, for example, stand out because of their spaciousness, as opposed to the patchwork of small compounds of their slave descendants.[47] To be given a place to build a house, one needs the chief's permission and the land on which people's houses are built is under his control. This can be problematic as the following example shows.

One of the ruling Weheeɓe family members decided to construct his own house in the vicinity of his paternal kin but found there was not enough space. His solution was to make one of the slave-descendant families living next to his father's compound pull down the compound in which they had been living for two generations. This family of slave descent did not feel they had any right to protest since their house was built on the chief's land and the fact that they followed orders demonstrates the fragility of their position. It also indicates the increased demand for space in the overcrowded village of Dalla and although this case is exceptional, land ownership remains problematic and prevents the independence of descendants of domestic slaves (FF: *Maccuɓe wuro*).

Dalla can be subdivided into three main wards, corresponding to its three main freeborn status groups: Weheeɓe, Jawaamɓe and Moodibaaɓe (Map 6, supra). The tradesmen (FF: *Jawaamɓe)* form the majority in the ward of *Wuro Ferro* (tiger bush, which used to grow there). The ward of the Islamic scholars or Moodibaaɓe is called Wuro Burram. Burram means fertile and protected land, which is due to its location near to the only water spring on Dalla's territory. *Wuro Mango* (meaning big ward) is at the centre of the village and hosts the majority of the ruling political families (FF: *Weheeɓe*) and arts and crafts groups *(*FF: *Ɗeeŋɓe)*. Each ward is mixed to some extent through the hosting of immigrants, friends or administrators who have temporarily ended up in Dalla. The division of sub-wards of freeborn and slave-descendant groups is reflected in the political organization of Dalla and each ward has a chief who represents the freeborn and one who represents slave descendants.

These three main wards are then sub-divided into sub-wards, confusingly also called *wuro*. The term *wuro* is thus used for at least three levels of socio-spatial organization: A sedentarized village controlled by Fulɓe, the main wards of such a village and thirdly the sub-division of the main ward (which I call sub-wards here).[48] In Dalla, these sub-wards often have a freeborn family with their slave descendants residing next door. All freeborn Fulɓe families in Dalla used to own domestic slaves (often children) and although they lived in their masters' compounds, they have now settled (often after marriage) in wards neighbouring their masters' wards on land that is still owned by their

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[47] These bricks are made of local mud enriched with animal dung and straw (French: *Banco), Banco* is a common building material in much of the Malian Sahel, the city of Djenne being famous for this style of architecture (Schutyser 2003). *Banco* is put into moulds and then baked in the sun. The Riimaayɓe often make these bricks.

[48] Sometimes a ward is called *Daande* (instead of *wuro*) when it indicates that the ward borders somewhere else. *Daande seeno* for example means: 'Bordering the sand plains'.

masters. This is why to date most slave-descendant compounds are separate but situated next to those of their freeborn former masters.

Generally, however, freeborn masters and their former slave groups are being categorized as one single sub-ward. This can be seen on Map 6 (supra) where each sub-ward has a freeborn population with a Riimaayɓe group attached to it. There are two exceptions to this rule. The first is the sub-ward of Wuro Maccuɓe, which is only inhabited by slave descendants. In Dalla the royal court had so many slaves that they could not all be included in the royal ward and thus occupied their own separate ward, which is nevertheless clearly located right next to that of the royal court. Clark (1999: 93) describes a similar spatial division for the Bundu region in Senegambia: 'most slaves lived in their masters' compounds or in a particular part of the village reserved exclusively for Maccuɓe'. Wuro Birgire is the second exception and is inhabited by slave descendants only. This is because most of their pastoralist Jalluuɓe masters abandoned Dalla sometime in the 1960 and since some of these slave descendants married slaves of the royal Dicko family, some Dickos 'adopted' these slave descendants as their own. More specifically, the youngest brother of Musa Dicko and his children claim to own these Riimaayɓe, adding that their grandfather was descended from those pastoralist Jalluuɓe families who left and once owned these slaves. That they consider them 'their slaves' shows in how they expect them to be loyal and to vote for this branch of the Dicko family.

Walking from the main road, one comes to Wuro Ferro, the first of the three main wards. This one is home to recently built institutions such as the town hall (1998), the medical post and the local school (1982). Today this ward has four waterholes, two of which have pumps. My neighbour Dikoore and research assistant Hama Amba remember how these buildings were built on what was left of a ward called Wuro Lowe that used to host the cavalry of the royal court. These soldiers all died during the drought (FF: *Kitaangal)* of 1913-1914, but for a whole ward to completely disappear was exceptional.[49]

Wuro Ferro is considered the strangers' ward. As well as Jawaamɓe traders and their Riimaayɓe, the director of the school (a Songhay from the north), the male nurse (a *Bambara* from Bamako) and Tuareg leather craftsmen (FF: *Gargasaaɓe*) live in this ward. The majority of freeborn in Wuro Ferro are Jawaamɓe with their former slaves.[50]

Within Wuro Ferro is the cattle market, which consists of some trees to which the pastoralists attach their cattle, goats, donkeys and camels. In the centre of Dalla, on the edge of Wuro Ferro and Wuro Mango wards is the main market (FF: *luumo*). The market place is recognizable, as in every other Malian town, by the wooden sticks that are covered by plastic cloth or bundles of cane on market days. On the other days, the market space hosts some pastoralist Fulɓe women from the surrounding villages who

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[49] Periods of extreme loss of cattle, wealth and people due to drought and famine which have been part and parcel of this environment for the past century.

[50] The sub-wards of Wuro Ferro are Wuro Kaaje (Jaawamɓe and their Riimaayɓe), Wuro Karbi (Jaawamɓe and their Riimaayɓe), Wuro Ibbel (Jaawamɓe and their Riimaayɓe), Gaande Tombo (Jaawamɓe only) and former Wuro Lowe (now uninhabited). See Map 6.

sell goats' or cows' milk from their calabashes at dawn and again at dusk.[51] Other permanent market traders are the descendants of traders (FF: *Jawaamɓe*) but also slave descendants. Male slave descendants are generally the one who butcher and sell meat and female slave descendants specialize in the preparation and selling of food. The permanent shops (FF: *Bitiki*) sell daily necessities like cooking and lamp oil, dried dates, tea, sugar, soap, cigarettes and batteries. Each of the shops has its own clientele and personal social networks.

For items that are unavailable in Dalla, people go to Douentza, on foot, by donkey cart, motorbike or on public transport. Although Dalla is in many ways close to Douentza, it is important in itself for the surrounding villages and hamlets because of its school, medical post, market, shops and access to transport on the tarmac road.

Market days are the liveliest days of the week and offer an occasion for the exchange of news, personal visits and also new encounters between boys and girls. As the market is such an open and public arena,[52] activity there is forbidden for married noble women (of the ruling and religious elite). I observed how women from the royal Dicko family used to send someone (a young child or a woman of slave descent) to the market on their behalf. Sometimes they complained how difficult it was to find an adult woman of slave descent to help them out. Most food is produced, prepared and sold by local slave-descendant women, who rely on the market for an estimated 50% of their cash income. Women of slave descent thus have an interest in maximizing their profits by selling their homemade foodstuff, such as baked millet pancakes, roasted peanuts and bean beignets.

In contrast to the lively and colourful larger market in the neighbouring village of Booni,[53] Dalla market is neither big nor especially varied. According to Burra Yero, my research assistant from Douentza, this is because Dalla is hostile to strangers moving to it. Some Douentza traders bring cloth, sugar, cookies, batteries, cases, buckets and so on and the quantity of the items bought and sold are probably the best indicator of the fragility of the local economy. One does not buy 500 grams of red beef but assembles a small pile of different parts of an animal by price: A tiny piece of brain, 2 cm of intestine, a grey stomach piece the size of a cola nut and at the bottom, the 'real stuff' i.e. fat covered red meat. The price of these piles ranged from FCFA 50 to FCFA 500 on my last visit in 2007.[54] Tomato concentrate is sold by the teaspoon, garlic by the clove, lamp oil in quantities of 10 cl bags, cigarettes and Maggi[55] by the piece. These incredibly small amounts and the recycling of almost everything (cutting off the opening of a small plastic bag containing peanut sauce in order to tie up five grains of pepper) makes one realize exactly what 'petty' traders are.

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[51] The distances some travelled from their hamlets in the mountains just to sell two litres of perishable milk for a maximum of FCFA 500 in total (€ 0.75 in 2007) is striking.

[52] See Boesen's analysis (1998) of how Fulɓe in northern Benin construct their alternative identity (French: A*lterite*) as pastoralists in the public sphere of the markets in cultivators' villages.

[53] Booni became a major hub for selling illegal products through border smuggling from Burkina Faso.

[54] FCFA 655 = € 0.99 in 2007.

[55] Maggi flavour-enhancing stock cubes have conquered much of the West Africa market and are now the basic ingredient for many dishes.

Northeast of the market is the mosque, one of the most important local landmarks and oriented towards Mecca in the east. The tombs of its religious intellectuals (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*) made Dalla an important site of pilgrimage in the past.[56] The father of the current imam was highly respected in the region (De Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 92). In the last few years before he died in 2007, he was attentively cared for by his slave-descending Riimaayɓe who washed him, gave him massages and were available to provide anything he asked for. People came from far away to visit him, hoping to get their share of his divine blessing (FF: *Barke*).[57] Seydu[58] explains: 'People, even those living in Bamako, sent him gifts in order to obtain blessings. My brothers and sisters in Bamako[59] send about FCFA 100,000 each year. Giving to religious scholars (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*) is thought to bring blessings: You do it for yourself, depending on your material wealth and capacities.' When the old Imam died in 2007, the village could barely manage to host all the visitors who came to express their condolences. Even President Amadou Toumani Toure,[60] who was campaigning in the region, considered it worthwhile to make a detour to offer his personal condolences.

The inhabitants of Dalla strongly identify with their Islamic heritage. They claim to have become practising Muslims before the Maasina Empire of Seeku Amadu and the importance of religious tradition is illustrated by the recent investment of FCFA 2 million that the inhabitants of Dalla paid for a new mosque in 2006/2007. Although the mayor was offered a mosque by a Saudi NGO, the local chief and imam refused it because it was too decorative and would not do justice to the old mosque that they consider a holy place. Only in 2009 was it decided to build a new mosque (FF: *Misiide*) but on condition that it respected local knowledge and materials. They hired and hosted three architects from Djenne[61] to construct the mosque with the bricks in the Sudanese building style.

Most of the religious institutions and families are in Wuro Burram.[62] Northeast of the mosque is Daande Seida, a neighbourhood housing Dalla's Koranic school (FF: *Dudɗal)*. Male Fulɓe children in Dalla get basic teaching in the Koran from early childhood and although most boys abandon these studies after a few years, some do continue studying. In many ways the relationship between a master and a slave has the features of that between a scholar (FF: *Moodibo)* and his pupils (FF: *Taalibaaɓe)*.

> However long his studies, a boy becomes like a son to his master and, as long as he is with him, he both serves and depends on him for everything. In fact, should he remain a scholar and choose the life of a *moodibo* (Islamic scholar), it is his master, not his father, who will ensure that he gets married. *(*Riesman 1992: 45)

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[56] Their graves are in the Boumbam cemetery.
[57] See also de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 182).
[58] Seydu Dicko, born 1978, a *beweejo* living in Bamako, interview, March 2007.
[59] Seydu Dicko is one of the sons of Musa Dicko and lived in Bamako until 2008. The brothers and sisters he talks about are described in Chapter 6.
[60] Amadou Toumani Toure has been President of Mali since 2002.
[61] Djenne, one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, is famous not only locally but also internationally for its Sudanese architecture (Schuytser 2003).
[62] Wurro Burram is further subdivided into sub-wards: Wuro Burram (Moodibaaɓe and their Riimaa-yɓe), Wuro Moodibaaɓe (Moodibaaɓe), Wuro Birigi (Riimaayɓe of the Weheeɓe), Wuro Daande Seida (Weheeɓe and a few Riimaayɓe).

Access to religious studies used to be restricted for slave descendants but Islamic learning has given some slave-descendant Riimaayɓe the chance to climb the social hierarchy.

Those who excel in Islamic education enjoy local esteem and Islamic scholarship can be considered part of the cultural field of hierarchy within the broader framework. In addition, Islamic learning generates possibilities for accumulating wealth, which is one reason why it has been described as 'the prayer economy' (Soares 2005). Islamic scholars are paid for their prayers based on Koranic knowledge in the field of law,[63] ritual ceremonies,[64] healing and conflict mediation. As well as being paid for consultations, they receive gifts of food, milk and money from those who, through such offerings, show their respect for him and his family. This religious economy is a fundamental aspect of the Sahelian economy more generally[65] and is based on mobile scholars who teach children entrusted to them by (often poor) parents (Bouwman 2005). These young students are obliged to undergo trials and hardship such as begging, pain, a lack of sleep, neglect, illness and hunger in their quest for religious knowledge. However, as one of the local chief's sons put it, even violent beating and physical pain are compensated for by the virtues and values one gains from enduring pain: 'It is only through suffering that one fully becomes a person'.

Religion is thus central to the image Dalla has of itself. The religious scholars (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*), like the majority of imams in the region, are part of the Islamic brotherhood known as Qadiriyya. The scholars in Dalla have always had a large share in local political power positions since their families are wealthy and owned many slaves. They also have access to the most fertile lands near Dalla's spring and during the rainy season, water runs down onto this land from the Haayre Plateau. Wuro Burram is where the all-year spring (FF: *Dambaare*) is that is used by cattle herders and for watering vegetables in nearby gardens. For youngsters, it is a favourite spot to hang out when it is hot and on market days it is an ideal location to observe visitors walking down from the plateaus carrying goods to trade.

In the same way that religion is a central feature to Wuro Burram, politics and power are key to the most central neighbourhood of Dalla, Wuro Mango, which means 'big village'. The relationship between Wuro Mango and Wuro Maccuɓe is close-knit as they host the most powerful groups (Weheeɓe and Moodibaaɓe) who claim Islamic heritage. Wuro Mango is described in more detail here because it is the cradle of the social network of informants central to this thesis.

Wuro Mango

Wuro Mango has two major parts that are both enclosed by walls: The ward of slave descendants (FF: *Wuro Maccuɓe*) and the royal court (FF: *Galbal*). Wuro Maccuɓe is

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[63] For the role of religious scholars in the application of Koranic law, see Chapter 5.

[64] For more on the role of religious scholars in marriage ceremonies, see Chapter 3.

[65] For literature on Islam and the Fulɓe in Mali: see Soares (2005) on Fulɓe in Nioro du Sahel and Berndt (2008) who describes the careers of slave-descending Fulɓe in religious education in the Guimballa region. For Islamic education practised by pastoralist Fulɓe in the Haayre region, see de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995: 169-194; 2009: 116-127).

one of the most densely populated parts of Dalla and the many houses, granaries and small alleyways between them give the bewildering impression of a dense labyrinth. The best way to get around is to ask children for a specific family compound. From November 2001 to April 2002, I lived in Wuro Maccuɓe with my interpreter Umu Sangare and her baby in the house of Kodo, a young man with a stigmatized position in a family of slave descendants. It was a public secret that Kodo was a bastard but we were allowed to live in his house because it was empty during his seasonal migration and it was also conveniently situated next to the home of my main hosts, Suleymane and his wife Hadiata.

Wuro Maccuɓe is separated from the royal court by a path and a wall, built by King Yerowal after the Second World War, runs between the two wards (De Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 80). Yerowal needed the political support of the Riimaayɓe during the first organized elections and the wall physically separated the domestic slaves from the royal compound, symbolically demonstrating the emancipation of the house slaves *vis-à-vis* the royal court. Some informants suggested that it was the French who insisted on this wall to underline the physical separation between the two groups.

When asking a villager of slave descent where he lives, most slave descendants prefer to use the euphemism of the 'global ward' (FF: *Wuro Mango*) rather than the name of the sub-ward Wuro Maccuɓe (ward of captured slaves) with its pejorative connotations.[66] The families in this ward are predominantly former domestic slaves of the political elite (FF: *Weheeɓe*). As a result of virilocal settlement,[67] some of the king's domestic slave women have moved out. The male descendants of royal domestic slaves over time married slave women belonging to other elite families.[68]

Wuro Galbal, the ward of the royal court, is the political heart of the village and hosts a large number of Weheeɓe. It is a public secret that a different branch of the Dicko family had political power first but at the beginning of the twentieth century another branch successfully forced them out of power.[69] Since this particular royal Weheeɓe family is central to my network of informants, I will distinguish them from the other Weheeɓe families in Dalla by calling them the Dicko family. So although several other Weheeɓe families in Dalla use the patronym Dicko, when I refer to the Dicko family in this thesis I am referring to the family that lives in the royal compound in Wuro Galbal.

The royal family is no longer as rich as it used to be and only has two horses left. Nevertheless, it is still one of the wealthiest in the village and the one to which clients from surrounding Riimaayɓe villages defer, for example by visiting and passing by on

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[66] It is the Weheeɓe who use the name Wuro Maccuɓe much more. Wuro Mango is the larger unit in which Wuro Maccuɓe is situated and the inhabitants of Wuro Maccuɓe prefer to use the name Wuro Mango (big ward).

[67] Virilocal settlement means women move in with their husbands and settle in his village after marriage.

[68] Although their slave ancestors were not allowed to marry other masters' slaves, the slave descendants of the royal elite married wives formerly belonging to other masters, for example, Jaawamɓe of Wuro Ferro (wife of Amadun Dauda), Wuro Gaanare (Altinee of Hamma) or pastoralist Jalluuɓe from the surrounding Haayre villages (Dikellayya).

[69] Interview in Dalla {2002} with hair-plaiter Kumba Yero, a slave-descending Maccudo from Wuro Taan.

market days. The royal court has a hall to receive visitors, which ensures privacy for the compounds inside the royal palace. My neighbour Dikoore explained that this is a way of preventing curious visitors from setting eyes on the beautiful noble wives. The area has many other functions too and during my stay, I observed female chairpersons of local NGO projects counting out their monthly savings there and taxmen calculating and discussing the levying of taxes.

The internal organization of the royal compound reflects social hierarchies through spatial arrangements. Each of the king's wives had her own chamber with a personal kitchen and although the king's slave concubines also live in the royal compound, they did not enjoy the same privileges. They had the smallest houses and did not have slaves cooking or cleaning for them.

Although I spent time with the freeborn Weheeɓe women who weave their coloured straw mats all day long, it was more difficult to interact with them than with the Riimaayɓe women in the ward of Wuro Maccuɓe where I was staying. Since the royal women of the Dicko family were expected to respect shame (FF: *Yaage*)[70] and nobility (FF: *Ndimu*) as described above, interactions with them were more complex. Some Weheeɓe (both men and women) initially refused to talk to me and my female inter-preter, feeling more senior and higher in status and thus in a position to refuse to answer questions.[71] While living in Dalla, my loyalties were ultimately closer to 'their' Mac-cuɓe than to them and later, when I was hosted in Bamako by one of the Dicko family members, I became much closer to the Dicko family.

Wuro Mango has a total of eight sub-wards,[72] most of which had close ties with the royal court in the past. The ward of Suudu Baa Bunti, for example, hosted the craftsmen and bards (FF: *Ɗeeŋɓe/Maabuuɓe*) of old who were attached to the royal court and sang the praises of the ancestors of the royal court. Bard Baa Digi, who passed away at the start of this century, used to live here and it was his son, Hama Amba, who became my research assistant in 2002.

Wuro Mango is the geographical centre of Dalla and boasts the only two shops (FF: *Bitiki*)[73] and tailors in town. The mosque is officially part of Wuro Mango rather than the main ward of the religious scholars called Wuro Burram. East of Wuro Mango are some small gardens, an empty square where youngsters play football at dusk and the chief's millet fields, one of which is used during the collective prayers for Tabaski. Just prior to the 2002 elections, Dalla received a motorized mill to pound millet from presidential candidate Amadou Toumani Toure. The chief negotiated for this mill to be

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[70] De Bruijn &van Dijk (1995; 212) emphasize that *Yaage* can only be felt among people of the same social group.

[71] Riesman (1992: 199)[71] claims that 'Not only do Fulɓe usually restrain themselves in the way they express emotions, but they also hold back in the very expression of meaning itself. In general, they do not like to make things explicit.'

[72] The wards are Wuro Taan (trading Jaawamɓe and their Maccuɓe), Wuro Misside[72] (Weheeɓe, differ-ent lineage as current chief), Wuro Sokkara (trading Jaawamɓe and Riimaayɓe (Maccuɓe no longer attached to them), Gunu Ganaari (Weheeɓe, different lineage as current chief and their Maccuɓe), Suudu Baa Bunti (iron and leather artisans called Ɗeeŋɓe, Maabuuɓe), Guntu Ganta (Weheeɓe, differ-ent lineage as current chief) and Wuro Buli (Jaawamɓe and Riimaayɓe). See Map 6.

[73] From the French term *boutique* and assimilated into Fulfulde as *bitiki*. It literally means 'shop', often a small part of a house where luxury products such as cigarettes, tea, sugar and petrol are sold.

installed near his compound in Wuro Mango. Amadou Toumani Toure won the elections and remained popular in Dalla through his connections with some of the Dicko family members living in Bamako. When I visited Dalla in 2006, the mill was no longer functioning and some inhabitants said it was better this way as there had been too many quarrels about who was allowed to use it. Personally I was happy that the engine's noise no longer disturbed the otherwise peaceful and quiet village.

Cattle have remained important for sedentarized former pastoralists. The royal elite and religious scholars still have a daily diet based on milk and, if there is money, meat too. The cows that provide this milk are never far away from the big compounds of the important sedentary Weheeɓe and Moodibaaɓe families in Wuro Mango and Wuro Burram. Near the royal compound is the main water hole where the animals drink and their dung turns the muddy surroundings green and encourages mosquitoes and flies. One thing is certain, Dalla, in all aspects of its lived reality and with its corresponding smells, dust, noise and disease, was sometimes impossible to compare with the stereotypical postcard-perfect images of rural Mali. However, thanks to its people and their gradual acceptance of me over time, my walks through Dalla village at specific times of the day even exceeded the idealistic postcard stereotypes.

Setting the scene: The cast of informants
The walk continues but now in the form of social encounters. Having mapped the region of Haayre, its various interrelated Fulɓe strongholds and the lived spatial organization of the village of Dalla, this section casts some of my main informants from the network of people central to this thesis. The majority of my informants live in Wuro Mango where freeborn informants are the royal descendants of King Yerowal. Most of the slave descendants living here are the descendants of a common royal domestic slave called Kau who was captured somewhere south of Bandiagara. I made a genealogy of Kau's family from his generation through to the present (Image 2) and my main informants are descendants of Kau's son Dauda and mostly live in the sub-ward of Wuro Maccuɓe. They are the descendants of the domestic slaves at the royal court who never left their masters, did not flee during the 1913-1914 droughts, and did not move elsewhere after the abolition of slavery or following independence. A lot of them take pride in their relationship with the royal court and in the prestige of the ruling elite, who used to be their masters.

Although I lived in the slave ward, my relationship with the royal family was very good. Both the chief and the mayor were cooperative and welcomed my research. It was Mayor Musa Dicko who made sure I was hosted in the ward of Wuro Maccuɓe in 2001, as requested by my supervisor Prof. de Bruijn.[74] Living among slave descendants, I certainly gained their sympathy and had easy access to the confidences of most of the people in the ward. However, my close ties with them meant that contacts with other

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[74] On my arrival in 2001 in Dalla, I presented a letter from my supervisor de Bruijn to then-Mayor Musa Dicko, explicitly asking him to host me in Wuro Maccuɓe. This letter was important and prevented him from hosting me with his own family. He was surprised that I would prefer to live in the dirty and chaotic compound of their slave descendants rather than in the more luxurious royal compound but when I explained my research was about this group, he agreed and appointed one of his most loyal assistants, Suleymane Dauda, as my host.

slave groups were closed off.[75] As Derman (1973: 257) writing on Fulɓe in Fuuta Djallon (Guinea) indicated:

> If I had been living in the Fulbe village, they would have classed me with all the other whites who hobnobbed with the chiefs and would have assumed I would adopt the attitude of the Fulbe towards them. By living in a former serf village I avoided those problems. However, it did not close off the world of the Fulbe to me … due ... to the Fulbe's desire to indicate that they knew more about the history and religion … than did their former serfs.

During my first stay in Dalla (2001-2002), my interpreter Umu Sangare insisted from the start that we should go and greet the royal family each morning. We never missed this ritual, bringing our personal morning greetings to the royal Dicko family, and the chief in particular. At first I considered it a waste of time as these greetings took up a lot of time because of their ritualized lengthiness with a series of questions about family, work, health and the weather, which are not expected to be answered truthfully. Greetings are a formalized way of establishing communication, which is why my interpreter and I invariably went to greet the royal family and our informants each morning, a group that increased in size considerably over time and by the end of my stay it took up the first hour and a half of each day. Interpreter Umu explained that doing so would significantly increase the quality of our future interviews as the process contributed to our respectability.

Umu Sangare was born in 1975 in Mopti but had been living in Douentza for quite some time and her surname, Sangare, identifies her as part of the Fulɓe community associated with southern Mali (Wassoulou region). Since she is from a different Fulɓe clan, she was considered 'neutral' in many ways in Dalla. Umu became a good friend and I admire the way she has always managed to get paid jobs as a teacher somewhere. In 2006 she travelled with her baby all the way to Mondoro on the border with Burkina Faso to teach during the week. Umu took her six-month-old baby with her during the week when we lived and worked in Dalla. Returning to Douentza at weekends gave me the opportunity to write up interviews, and for Umu it was important to take care of her husband, her oldest son and the household. She always joked how the weeks in Dalla were a holiday for her compared to her busy weekends.

Rokiatu Dicko was how I was baptized by my research assistant Burra Yero Cisse on arriving in Douentza in 2007. Burra proposed the name Rokiatu because of the similar 'o' sound (as in Lotte-Rokiatu), which is not very common in Fulɓe names. He convinced me to take the patronym Dicko if I was to work in the Dicko network of Dalla. This white researcher posed a real challenge for some in Dalla. What should they think of someone who looked like a woman but was not married and did nor have children, and on top of that sometimes behaved like a man by wearing trousers and a wristwatch,

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[75] Examples are descendants of slaves who formerly belonged to the trading Jaawamɓe. The head of a women's association in the ward of Wuro Ferro from the outset outrightly refused to allow women from her association to talk to me. Slave descendants living in the hamlets on the plateaus (FF: Riimaayɓe Haayre) who had bad memories of being harassed by the royal slaves of the Kau family also only talked to me when I was not accompanied by a member of the Kau family. This was the reason for my four-day trip visiting villages on the Gandamia Plateau accompanied by my partner and by Hassane who was a slave descendant from Dalla's imam family and Burra Yero Cisse, a slave descendant from Douentza.

smoking and being constantly on the move? Such a peculiar species was definitely worth spying on for the local children. Fortunately, 'our' house was right at the back and one had to cross many other compounds to get there. Umu and I were thus relatively well shielded from curious passers-by, although the *radio trottoir* did not prevent curious visitors from coming to see for themselves. We were the best theatre for years and living together as two women with one baby, we came closer to being a comedy duo than anything else.

Also in interviewing people, our strange ways were awkward. Asking individuals personal questions is often delegated to specific groups in Fulɓe society. Asking questions more generally is thus considered inappropriate in the first place, let alone when two young women set out to interview an older man in his own house. Since Umu tried hard but never felt comfortable about this, I started working with bard and ironworker (FF: *Ɗeeŋo*) Hama Amba if he was around. With Hama, I was able to interview the imam and other respected elders because, being a bard, it was his duty to keep himself informed and so people expected him to ask questions.

Most of Dalla's inhabitants (FF: *Dallanke*) were charmed by Umu: She (and her baby Najoum) had the ability to win people's trust in a very natural way and, with Umu, I interviewed 35 inhabitants of Wuro Mango and conducted a total of 81 interviews in six months in 2001-2002, usually in their own compounds. In general, we first made an exploratory visit, which could last from ten minutes to several hours and only in a second visit did I ask whether I could note things down. We mostly worked with semi-structured interviews and recorded some conversations that I transcribed verbatim at weekends in Douentza. From these transcriptions I extracted new questions that emerged for each individual informant. Over time we learned about strategic moments that would allow us to speak with them in private. Maman Abidjan, who could not walk anymore, was often lonely in the early morning, but not on market days because her house was full of visitors then. However, privacy during interviews remained a challenge: There were always people and children who continued to 'assist' in our activities, and elders were a special challenge as they were constantly surrounded by others. Luckily some informants themselves over time felt the need to organize more privacy when we had an appointment. My fieldwork periods were always arranged to coincide with the dry season (November-April), which is a relatively quiet season since no cultivation needs to be done.

Mayor Musa Dicko appointed Suleymane Dauda, one of his most loyal assistants, as my host. A host-guest relationship is often a relationship that lasts a lifetime.[76] Over the years Suleymane has continued to be my respected host and I owe him a lot. Suleymane Dauda is, as his name suggests, one of the many sons of Dauda who in turn was one of the sons of Kau, the ancestor of the biggest family of descendants from the royal house slaves of the Dicko family. They are at the same time the biggest family in Wuro Maccuɓe.

As the genealogy of Figure 1 indicates, Suleymane is the youngest of Dauda Kau's six children. Suleymane married the daughter of one of my main informants, Allay Jangine (†2009) and his brothers and sisters will be discussed time and again in the

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[76] I describe the importance of the hosting institution called *Njaatigi* in Chapter 6.

chapters to come. Suleymane's elder sister, Kumbel Dauda, for example, will be described in Chapter 7 on Bamako, as the assistant of a noble woman who was mourning her deceased husband. Asse Kau, Suleymane's oldest aunt is the main informant who in Chapter 3 describes the life of her sister Pendolde Kau (Figure 1). Pendolde Kau used to be married to King Yerowal as a slave concubine. Thanks to her marriage with the king, this particular slave descending family called Dauda became kinmembers of the freeborn Dicko family of the King. Dikelayya, the wife of one of Suleymane's oldest brothers (Hama Dauda), is related to Burra Yero Cisse (†2007), one of my research assistants from Douentza. This proved instrumental as Burra would always have a proper host whenever we visited Dalla.

Figure 1   Specific branch of domestic slave descendants formerly belonging to the Dicko family in Dalla (genealogy)
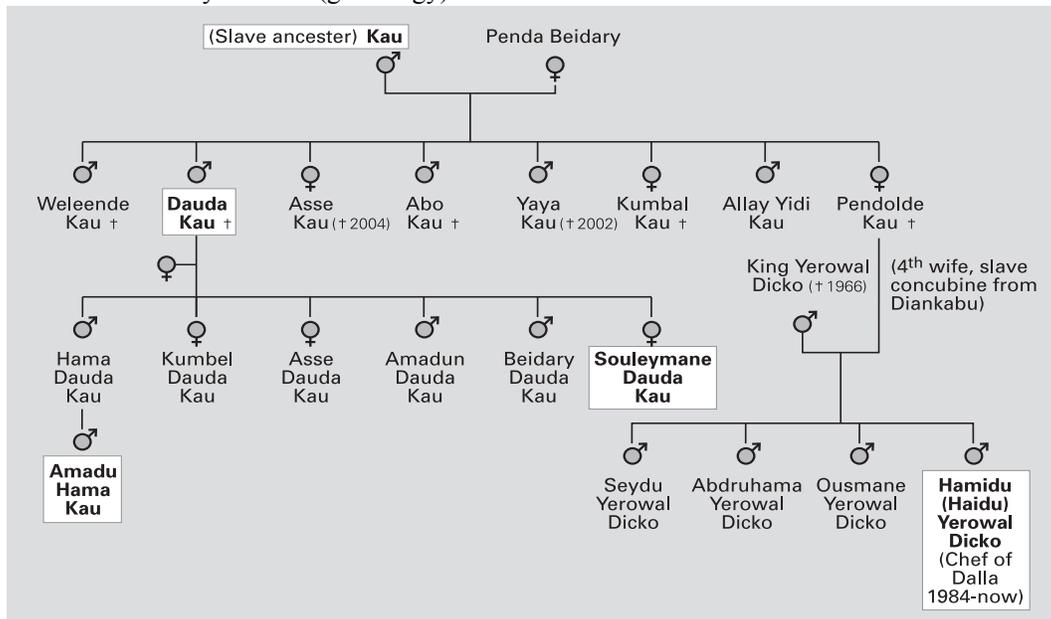
The network of people central to this thesis and whom I have known intimately are in the genealogies of both Figures 1 and 2 (see below). Many of them lived in Wuro Maccuɓe and were neighbours, friends and key informants at the same time, although most of my key informants have since died of old age. Some of Suleymane's siblings have settled in Bamako, others in Segou (Chapter 6). Chapter 7 describes how Amadu Hama Dauda, a son of Hama Dauda, delivers bread in Bamako and hosts many young people from Dalla. And I also mention Beidary Dauda and his family who live humbly and quietly in a marginalized ward in Bamako.

I have tried as sincerely as possible not to abuse people's names and identities in this thesis and have respected their decision to remain anonymous if they requested this or clearly had an interest in remaining anonymous. It is difficult to maintain the balance between professional curiosity and respect for a person and his/her feelings, and al-

though my informants gave me their informed consent to use the data from our inter-views, it would not be fair to do away with the attempts at social climbing of some by bluntly using their names and backgrounds. On the other hand, I have tried to be as specific as possible about their personalities and their relationships as they deserve to be mentioned as important contributors to this work as informants. In short, this dilemma is one I have dealt with by taking my own conscience as a guideline. 'There has been much talk about "multiple authorship" in recent debates about ethnographic writing. In this study, the authors of statements or texts are identified and whenever possible, named. But I shall not burden them with authorship in the sense of being the ones who present this story to a public and therefore have to take a responsibility for its anthro-pological findings and implications' (Fabian 1990: xv).

Figure 2   Specific branch of royal Dicko family in Dalla (genealogy)
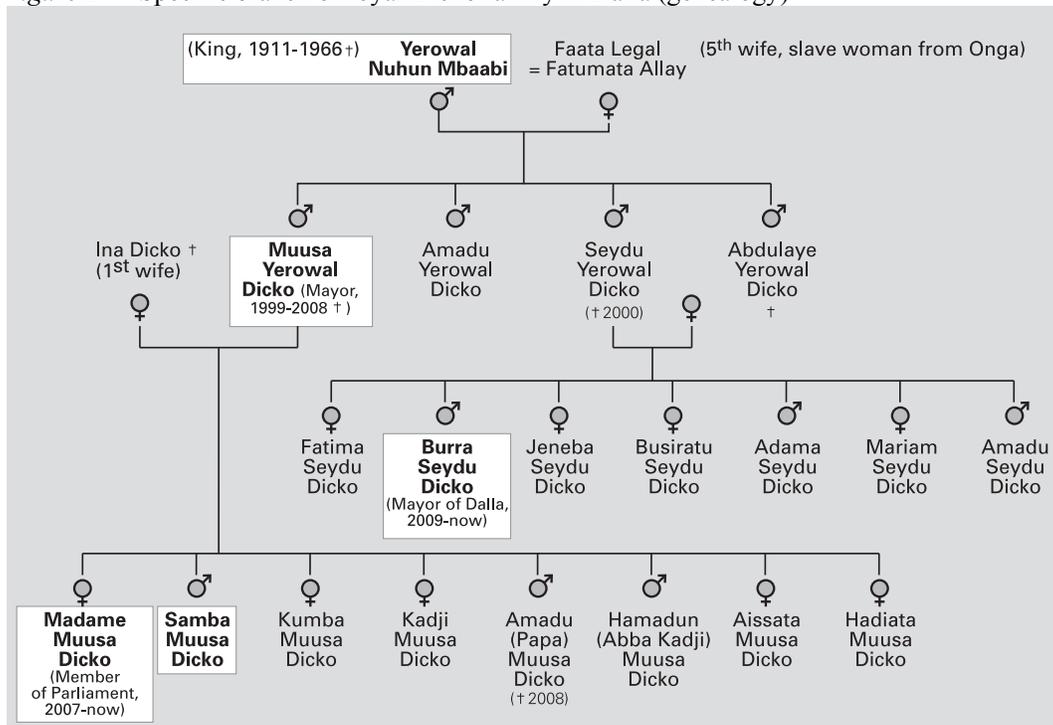
Most of the main characters of noble descent that I describe are the descendants of King Yerowal Dicko and, more specifically, the descendants of Yerowal's sons Musa (†2009) and Haidu Dicko (†2010) Figure 2). Mayor Musa and Chief Haidu Dicko have already been mentioned (Chapter 1) and more features of the political organization of Dalla will be described in Chapter 4. Musa's children live in Bamako, Kayes, Paris and elsewhere and Madame, Samba, Kadji and so on are present from Chapter 6 onwards. For most of my interviews in Bamako, Chief Haidu's son, Amadu Amiiru Dicko, worked as my research assistant from 2007 onwards and before then I mainly worked

with his cousin Musa (the son of Musa Dicko's younger brother) who was my interpreter and research assistant during much of my 2005-2006 research period in Bamako.

Having an interpreter of freeborn status added a certain 'colour' to interviews with informants of slave descent, which I will try to illustrate when referring to interviews in the chapters to come. In general, both freeborn and people of slave descent exaggerated their loyalty or authority when someone of the other status group interviewed them, tending to give socially acceptable answers according to the dominant discourse of hierarchy. At the same time, the artificial micro-encounters that I sometimes established in this way became concrete observations on the interactions between the status groups and how different generations proceed. Finally, working with a freeborn interpreter was due to the practical considerations of language, behavioural style and logistics. I had difficulties finding an interpreter of Riimaayɓe status who spoke French well enough to assist me. It was only near the end of my stay in 2007 that I met a youngster of slave descent who was born in a hamlet in the rural community of Dalla. His father used to be a slave on the estates of the royal court and in the 1960s set himself up in Douentza. All his sons finished school and since they lived in neighbouring compounds in Douentza, they grew very close to Musa Dicko's freeborn family. The boy was thus well acquainted with both the Kau and Dicko families but was busy finishing his studies and lived on the opposite side of Bamako. Furthermore, the few times we did set out together, he had difficulty overcoming expectations of hierarchy related to shame, age and gender. He was so polite and deferring that we did not get to talk to people at all. This is a more general feature of interpreters of slave descent from the Kau family: Most of them, out of loyalty, would refuse to impose themselves on those they considered their superiors. A last and very practical concern that influenced my choice for a freeborn interpreter was the fact that I needed someone who knew how to get to the different family members' compounds in Bamako by motorcycle. Most youngsters of slave descent in Bamako do not have a motorbike, work long hours and are only in town temporarily, and consequently do not know the city very well.

Greeting is placing people
People move through the landscape throughout the long day. Inhabitants of Dalla walk round their village every day and greetings have a central place in their lives. Depending on how well they know each other and how often they have already greeted others that day, such greetings can be between three and twenty sentences long. Apart from occasional encounters, people also actively set out in the early morning to go and greet the people they consider part of their social network.

It is impossible to deny the importance of greeting for social cohesion. Fagerberg-Diallo (1984: 1-2) in her Maasina Fulfulde course book opens with a 'cultural note' on the importance and use of greetings: 'Few things will be more important to you in your rapport with people than knowing how to greet properly'. In a spatial sense, the daily tours of morning greetings most people make to those they respect are imbued with detailed information. In general, the one who arrives will start the greeting, even if he interrupts an ongoing conversation. If people meet somewhere, the oldest person will start greeting but many things (also the length of the greeting) depend on factors such as

how well the participants know each other, how long it has been since they last met, their respective ages and social status. Fagerberg-Diallo (1983: 2) points out how: 'the appropriate tone of voice and gestures are determined by the respective ages and social status of the people greeting, so it is difficult to give any simple rules'.

Tracing who greets who is useful for tracing social networks. When living in Dalla in 2001-2002, I observed about fifteen people coming to greet our neighbour Yaya Kau (†2002) between 5 am and 8 am. Just before he fell sick in 2002, Yaya, by then the oldest man of the ward, was the head (FF: Amiiru) of the slave descendants in Wuro Maccuɓe.[77] He was respected by many and daily greetings were the most appropriate way of expressing this. Later more visitors from farther away and with higher statuses (the village chief and his family members) dropped by to show their respect. I am sure some considered it to be a great opportunity as well to observe the whereabouts of the curious white person (FF: *Tubaabu*) living there. And this allowed me to get to know the visitors, who with time also greeted us (my interpreter and myself) more extensively.

Those deemed of lower status, such as young people or slave descendants, make the effort to greet those they consider higher in status such as elder people, and political and religious freeborn families. Ideally, young people visit elders and slave-descending Maccuɓe visit ruling Weheeɓe. Nevertheless, there are exceptions whereby such hierarchies can be reversed. In the case of Yaya's illness, the village chief visited Yaya instead of the other way round. Burra Yero was very angry when my host in Douentza failed to visit him when he was sick for more than a week. Not visiting a sick person is a serious insult and deviates from the concern people expect from one another.

Lastly, the kind and quantity of questions inform the observer about the relational closeness between two persons, their families and their social status. Concerning content, following Hardung (1997: 129), I observed how greetings among slave descendants would always contain questions about work (FF: *Golle*), while questions about different family members seem more central in Fulɓe greetings. Obviously, moral ideologies are subject to change. According to Demba Dicko,[78] differences in social status these days are not reflected as much as before: 'When greeting today we don't consider someone's social status anymore. We greet each other as family members. Today Maccuɓe and Weheeɓe have a kind of kinship relation. I no longer consider you as my slave, but as my parent because ever since our grandparents' generation we have been close.'[79]

Nevertheless slave descendants in Dalla go and greet their former masters' families rather than vice versa. If I were to make a functionalist analysis of greeting practices, I would say that choices over who greets who can be interpreted as calculated future investments, comparable to a gift. Maccuɓe women of slave descent greet the Weheeɓe in the royal court each morning and often literally give a gift or make a gesture, such as

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[77] For more about the political function of the chief of the slaves (FF: *Amiiru Maccuɓe*), see Chapter 4.
[78] Demba Dicko, 1979, a youngster from Dalla studying in Bamako.
[79] Literally in French: 'Aujourd'hui on ne regarde pas ça (salutations) parce que tu es mon maître. Mais aujourd'hui on va dire que c'est mon parent et c'est pour ça qu'on va saluer. C'est comme ça qu'on dit, on prend ça sous une forme de relation parental, ce n'est pas mon captif, c'est mon parent, parce que c'est depuis les ancêtres qu'on est soudé.'

bringing along a bucket of water or offering some hours of their labour to pound millet to underline their deference to the influential Dicko family.

In short, greetings put people in place through unwritten moral codes and expectations. Greeting visits are thus indexical with belonging and provide people with opportunities to strengthen relations and identify with respectable members of the community.

Taking places in everyday life interactions and ritual occasions
Amadu Diallo, a Pullo (FF: Singular form of *Fulɓe*) from the Kayes region in western Mali[80] describes how, when entering a Fulɓe village, one can discern at a glance who is noble and who is not. When I asked him how, he mentioned three points: Dress, skin colour and the 'place occupied'. When asked about the place they occupy, Amadu detailed how slave descendants are not allowed to sit at the same height as freeborn and will sit on a mat while the freeborn sits higher, such as on a tree stump or a chair.

Such discourse on the symbolism of place with respect to social status underlines the unease expressed by Maman Abidjan and Seydu in the introduction to this chapter. Besides her place of residence, Maman added that ritual occasions in Dalla put her in her place. She details how she experienced that, despite her respectable age and migrant status, on ritual occasions in the Dicko family she is still expected to act as a legal minor, offering assistance instead of observing and being served. Others writing on the relationship between slavery, memory and hierarchy also highlight how it is in the ritual sphere that hierarchy remains obvious.[81]

The places occupied by different actors on ritual occasions are highly symbolic of the social position they are ascribed. Typically noble freeborn occupy central positions on ritual occasions, while groups of slave descent assist by working on the peripheries of the geographical space occupied during the ritual. During a baptism for example, noble freeborn women sit next to the new mother in a closed circle. The slave descendants who assist at the ceremony sit in the outer circles far from the new mother if they are not cooking or engaging in other tasks.[82] During marriage ceremonies, the Riimaayɓe pound away in a back corner of the compound of the married couple. Maman explains that the scandal for her was to sit with the other poor slave descendants, compared to which she, as a manumitted, wealthy slave felt much higher in status. When Maman Abidjan describes her frustrations over 'being put back in her place', she is therefore referring to the fact that she no longer wanted to sit with slave descendants on ritual occasions. After 40 years of upward mobility in Abidjan, she no longer identified with her former slave status.

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[80] Interview (2006), Amadu Diallo, aged about 35, village of Melga in the west Malian Kayes region.
[81] Shaw (2002) describes how slave societies continue to embody hierarchy in ritual. Hardung (2003) emphasizes how former exploitative labour relations are ritualized and Argenti (2007) describes the ways in which masks, songs and play symbolize relations of power between kings and their floating clients.
[82] Chapters 7 and 8 demonstrate how the use of space by different social categories reflects the ideology of hierarchy in the urban context of Bamako.

Conclusions: Dalla puts everyone into place

The saying 'everyone has his place' (French: *à chacun sa place*) was often used by informants to explain why they accept their social position but also how it is made or takes place in a performative sense. I described how migrants Maman Abidjan and Seydu Dicko questioned the way in which they were put in place through the performative acts of their co-villagers. They expressed a desire to change their ascribed place in the existing hierarchy of their home village. For both, this proved difficult in practice because (memories of) specific ways of hierarchical relating have been mapped onto concrete places. The way in which Dalla village is inhabited and organized contributes to the subtle reproduction of hierarchies. The argument was that precisely because hierarchy is implicit in the spatial organization of the landscape it renders explicit contestation difficult for insiders (inhabitants of this place).

By approaching the region and the village of Dalla from two different perspectives, I have demonstrated how the culture of hierarchy is inscribed in the landscape and is reproduced implicitly. The large number of former slave villages in the region as well as the number of wards inhabited by slave descendants in former Fulɓe strongholds, such as Booni and Dalla, are evidence of the past importance of slavery in the region. The hamlets of floating populations surround the rural communities (former Fulɓe Kingdoms) of Booni and Dalla concentrically. The further away from the centre of power they are, the less inclined slave descendants are to defer to centres of power. The cultural field of hierarchy is not only respected between settlements of freeborn and slave descendants but also among inhabitants of interrelated Fulɓe villages. The former Kingdoms of Kanyume, Dalla, Booni and Joona are related to each other in a hierarchical manner. This hierarchy is reflected in a status discourse (Jansen 1996) between the inhabitants of these villages: Freeborn Dallanke respect freeborn Joonanke as older brothers and, in turn, are considered as older brothers by Booninke. The village walk in Dalla painted a picture of important public spaces, such as the market and its local economy, the mosque and the importance of religious life, and the royal court at the political heart of the village. The three main wards corresponding to three main freeborn status groups, who all have their former house slaves (FF: *Maccuɓe Wuro*) living next-door, were also identified. Due to their physical proximity, these groups of slave descendants have had a harder time refusing demands than those living on the slave estates (FF: *Riimaayɓe Haayre*).

Lastly, the focus on greeting and ritual occasions revealed how the culture of hierarchy is not only inscribed in the social landscape but also reproduced in much more explicit, though subtle, ways. To illustrate the value of participant observation, I described how greeting practices index belonging and/or dependence. The social action of greeting in itself reconstructs the social and hierarchical difference between people. The culture of hierarchy recreates social groups that 'take their place' in a performative sense to the detriment of others who feel 'put in their place'. Being put in place is a power relation implicitly recalling the hierarchy of slavery. The (re-)creation of hierarchies through social ties is central in the following chapter on social relations.

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Relating to other social status groups

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C'est dans le mariage que la mémoire de l'esclavage c'est accentué.
(Umar, a teacher of slave descent, village of Fatoma, Mali, 2007)

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Getting married

It promises to be another hot day in Dalla. It is early morning and I can hear music. The sun is rising and is shining on a delegation of women accompanied by musicians playing flutes and drums who are heading in the direction of the ward of Wuro Ferro in the village of Dalla. The musicians are frequently away from home because they can make more money playing at the weddings of elite families in Mopti and Bamako but as the husband-to-be, Kodo, is himself a drum player, his comrades have made an extra effort to be present here.

Apart from the music, there are also gunshots, a common noise when important events are taking place. Today Kodo, a member of the Kau family living in the ward of *Wuro Maccuɓe* is going to marry Mariam, a young girl of slave descent who lives in *Wuro Ferro* (see Map 6, supra). The delegation sent by Kodo's parents (in this case his grandmother who adopted him) consists of two groups. The first is the family of the groom, who are bringing gifts for the family of the bride. After receiving these one or two well-grilled goats and three or four bundles of millet, the bride's family will start to prepare a meal that will be eaten at dusk when they throw a party, literally a 'flute' (FF: *Fijo*), when the drummers and flute players invite the unmarried women and men to dance.

The other part of the delegation brings items that allow the young bride to leave her parents' house: A pair of shoes and two sets of cloth. One cloth will be used to cover her hips, the other to cover her face,[1] while the plastic shoes are for her 'journey' to her new home, which is undertaken either on foot or on the back of a donkey or by bus, motorcycle or car (depending on the distance and the wealth of the families involved).

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[1] The woman who covers her face and hips is a trustworthy woman who ideally has never been divorced and has never left her home after fighting with her husband.

In this case, young bride Mariam walks from her house in Wuro Ferro to the house of Kodo's grandmother[2] and cries all the way to express her anxiety at leaving her family's compound although the music sometimes drowns out her loud sobbing. Her best friends accompany her and present her to each family member and to their neighbours in the village.[3]

Photo 4   Slaughtering a goat as part of the marriage (*nafaayi*) gifts (Dalla 2006).

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[2]   As Kodo was adopted by his grandmother, she fulfils the parental role here.
[3]   This 'presentation of the bride' is not a part of the wedding ceremony of the freeborn Weheeɓe.

Kodo managed to collect the money for the wedding (FF: *Nafaayi*) by migrating to Burkina Faso and Segou to work in construction and as a painter. He divorced his first wife, with whom he had a daughter, and his hopes are high that Mariam, as his second wife, will give him a son.

On her arrival, Mariam spends a week in her new house (Kodo's grandmother's house) and various events take place. She is constantly accompanied by her female friends, is given food and presents and is visited by friends, family and her new in-laws. On the seventh day, she leaves the house for the 'day of the big washing'.[4] She, her friends and other youngsters collect all the dirty clothes in the village and start to wash them at the public well in Wuro Maccuɓe. Mariam has to wash her husband's pants but symbolically refuses although in the end she will agree to do so and also to washing the rest of her co-villagers' clothes. Then she will go back to her parents' house, only to be returned to her new husband's house by the old woman who covered her up on the first day. It is only now that she will spend her first night with her husband. It is very important that she can prove her virginity, which is shown in the form of blood on a white cloth the next morning. Since Kodo found Mariam to be a virgin (FF: *Muntari*), she was allowed to return to her parents and, as a sign of respect, Kodo butchers a billy goat and spills its blood at the entrance to their house. Mariam is given presents by her own and her husband's families to underline her respectability.[5]

What a contrast there is between this lavish ceremony and the way Mariam and Kodo's parents who used to be slaves, were married before. The older generation of royal slaves in the Kau family had to accept that marriage was arranged for them by their masters and the choice of partner and the actual wedding ceremony (if there even was one) were entirely in their masters' hands. Bridewealth was missing since the master was already giving away his source of labour. In fact, his giving of a slave as a bride was considered to be bridewealth in itself. Nevertheless, Kodo's uncle, Allay Jangine, remembers how as a privileged slave of the king, one of the king's wives lent him some of her jewellery and he was even allowed to marry two wives, which was exceptional for slaves.

Kinship was an important aspect of slaves' integration into their new host societies. Being able to trace the genealogy of members of one's family over several generations is a source of honour and pride. The longer the genealogy, the more respectable the family. In a way, long genealogies that stretch far back in time, testify to the free origins of a family and allow to distance oneself from the social stigma that surrounds slave status. However, genealogies and origins have always been manipulated. Given the fact that the overwhelming majority of the population in these societies were bonded or controlled through slavery or pawnship, it is technically almost impossible today to claim a family genealogy without any trace of non-free members. Although they would certainly deny it, most contemporary freeborn families in Fulɓe society must have had some ancestors who were bonded at some point in the past. Nevertheless, pure freeborn

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[4] Although one might associate the washing of her co-villagers clothes with slave labour, this ritual is also part of the marriage ceremony of the freeborn villagers.

[5] If the girl is not a virgin, she will become the subject of gossip and will not be shown signs of respect in the form of gifts and visits by her in-laws.

origins are an important rhetorical means of claiming political status today. The rhetoric of the importance of royal ancestry, whereby social status matches that of one's political and economic position more generally, was taken up and arranged by the colonial administration itself.

This could explain why enquiring into a person's social origins is such a taboo topic, and is often embedded in the haze of ambiguity and a lack of lucidity. In Fulɓe society, as in many West African societies (see McCaskie 1995: 99), the main way to change status legally was by binding assimilation into freeborn (host) lineage groups. The main way in which slaves' marginality was institutionalized was through restrictions on their access to social relations (socio-cultural inclusion) and kinship to exclude them from attaining corresponding rights in persons (juridical inclusion) (Kopytoff & Miers 1977). Slaves were not entitled to start their own families, had no say over their children and their marriages, and could only take a restricted number of wives from within their own limited group.

Changing one's status legally implied marriage within the right kin group but was not easy as slaves and slave groups were not allowed to marry people from groups other than their own. For precisely the opposite reason, namely the maintenance of social status, the freeborn elite had an interest in matrimonial discrimination and controlling endogamous marriage rules. Legally, there is only one accepted form of marriage whereby, at the initiative of freeborn men, marriage can take place with someone from an inferior status group. Freeborn men can marry women of slave descent (hypergamy) but a freeborn woman would be unlikely to marry a man of inferior status (hypogamy).

The emphasis on endogamy by the freeborn in Fulɓe society has been explained as preventing former slaves from benefiting from such alliances through juridical inclusion and from taking revenge for earlier domination (Leservoisier 2009b: 142). As long as slaves remained legal strangers and were not part of freeborn ancestral lineages, they could be excluded from strategic positions. And as they were excluded from formally marrying freeborn members of society, most groups of slave descendants in the Haayre region to date still organize their marriage alliances and ceremonies in a different way from the freeborn.

The institution of marriage has been described by many authors (Meillassoux 1986; Botte 1994: 124; Schmitz 2009: 97; Leservoisier 2009b: 142-143) who view Sahelian Fulɓe societies as being a core ideological tool with which to preserve the stigma of slave status. Patriliny dictates the rights, duties and privileges of individuals in society and is why access to powerful patrilinies is important. Ideally this goal can be reached through strategic marriage alliances, but the cultural field of hierarchy is very clear about the importance of endogamy.

In the first section of this chapter, I illustrate the marriage strategies and ceremonies of the Kau compared to those of the Dicko family and in the second, I describe how endogamy is organized by different social groups and how marriage is an institution controlled by the freeborn elites who instrumentalize it to exclude slave descendants from their own kin groups. However, some groups have found ways to overcome this social boundary as the analysis of the alliances in the royal Dicko family in Dalla in the third section demonstrates.

Marrying slave concubines was a legal way for the freeborn Dicko family to bypass endogamous rules. While this was widespread practice during colonial occupation, it has waned among the current generation of Weheeɓe in the Haayre. The third section therefore focuses on the specific ways in which the Kau family became integrated in the Dicko family through King Yerowal's marriages to slave concubines. A fourth section addresses why only the semi-freeborn children from these specific marriages became influential as chiefs and mayors in the villages of Dalla and Booni.

The struggle for incorporation in Fulɓe society is very specific to each subgroup of slaves and their descendants. Some achieved it by marrying (noble) women from other ethnic groups (such as Bambara, Bozo) and settled in distant regions, while others, often migrants who are already wealthy or influential, openly defied endogamy and have managed to marry noble Fulɓe women. Such hypergamous marriages between slave descendants and freeborn have been criticized and are considered socially deviant.

Different marriage styles in the Kau and Dicko families

Freeborn groups used to dictate the marriages of their slaves. A colonial document of 1910 describes some of the legal entitlements of masters to their slaves in terms of marriage.

> Mister Governor Clozel has decided, because of the incessant reclamation of the Riimaayɓe of the cercle of Djenne, that all personal servitude, resulting form the older state of captivity, such as: The obligation of the *dimaajo* to give his kids to be elevated until they grow old by the old peul master, the absolute right for the old peul master to marry as he wants these kids and even to take the *dotte* (French: Form of bridewealth) that has been brought in by one of the marriage partners of his slaves.[6]

In this section I explain how this has resulted in differences in the marriage practices of the social status groups that continue to be identified as dependent former slave groups (FF: *Maccuɓe Wuro*). Their marriage ceremonies and practices differ significantly from those of the Dicko family in terms of religious integration, bridewealth, authorization, timing, legal acceptance and displays of wealth.

Although Mariam and Kodo's marriage can be qualified as lavish when compared to those of their enslaved parents and ancestors, it appears less special when contrasted with those of their freeborn former masters' families. Today the Kau family organizes their own marriage ceremonies but in a different way from the freeborn Dicko.[7] Most slave descendants copy aspects of their own masters' marriage ceremonies as far as possible, which means that the Kau family as part of the ruling Weheeɓe have copied their masters' ways of intermarrying rather than those of other Fulɓe groups, such as the pastoralist Jalluuɓe.

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[6]   ANM, FA-1E30/Letter 15 March 1910.
[7]   For differences in marriage practices between slave descendants and freeborn in northern Burkina Faso, see Riesman (1992: 75-86) and in the Haayre of Central Mali, see de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 367-395).

When asked for the differences, the freeborn Dicko family claim that their ritual occasions stand out in the way they respect Islamic rules of conduct.[8] Secondly, they tend to stress how their ritual festivities are much more prestigious since they spend more money as they have more responsibility and more hosts/clients. Anthropologists, such as Hardung (1997, 1998), N'Gaide (1999: 161-162) and Botte (1994: 122-123) also point to such differences in marriage practices between freeborn Fulɓe and their slave descendants. Nearer to the Central Malian region, Riesman (1992: 75-86) described such differences in Fulɓe communities in northern Burkina Faso and de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995: 367-395) describe them with respect to pastoralist Fulɓe and their slave descendants in the Central Malian Haayre region.

Marriages generally have four or even five important stages: The proposal, the religious union, the engagement party and the actual union. Today, civil marriage is sometimes also added, especially by elite families in urban areas. Maccuɓe slave descendants in Dalla celebrate the engagement (FF: *Nafaayi*) as the core ritual event of the alliance. In freeborn Weheeɓe marriages, the celebration of the actual union is central (FF: *kurtungu*). While for the freeborn, the engagement (FF: *Safannde*) is just the confirmation phase of an arranged marriage,[9] for the Riimaayɓe it has become the main celebration that confirms the union between man and wife. Although gifts are exchanged and animals are slaughtered to mark the occasion, both Riimaayɓe and freeborn confirm that Riimaayɓe do not have a proper marriage ceremony or pay bridewealth the way freeborn do, which is reflected in the different names and translations of their ceremonies. The emphasis by slave descending Riimaayɓe on what the freeborn consider the engagement has probably emerged because their official union continues to be controlled by the Weheeɓe elite in five different ways.

The first is the way marriages among the Maccuɓe Weheeɓe are controlled by their masters concerning the religious aspect of the ceremony, which is supervised by the bride's former master. While it is the parents of the groom among the freeborn Fulɓe who arrange the religious ceremony at their own compound, the Kau family in Dalla arrange the religious ceremony either in the compound of the girl's former master or in a public space, for example at the mosque. For freeborn in general, the religious ceremony is conducted by the imam himself, while weddings of slave descendants are presided over by one of his representatives or assistants. In the freeborn Dicko family, the religious marriage ceremony is paid for by the family of the girl, but among the Kau slave descendants it is the former (Dicko) master of the bride who pays. Elder Kau family members indicate how religious legislation needs to be respected, which is why they continue to give part of their bridewealth to their former master. At the same time, some youngsters consider this religious aspect of marriage to be a symbol of their continued subordination to their Dicko master. The religious marriage of Mariam and Kodo deviated from this because Mariam's family is no longer formally attached to

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[8] Islamic legislation emphasizes different ritual observations for noblemen and slaves. A slave is, for example, only expected to observe half the mourning period of a noblemen, the seclusion of a wife who has just given birth has to be respected by a noble woman, but not for a slave woman, and so on.

[9] It consists of the meat of a cow being sent to the family of the girl who has reached the age of puberty. It is prepared by those who sent it, with the flank and a back leg going to the girl's mother and the other three legs to the father.

their former masters (Jawaamɓe tradesmen) and do not have to pay this symbolic sum to their former masters.

Secondly, a marriage ceremony involving bridewealth (French: *la dotte;* FF: *Futte*)[10] is non-existent among slave descendants. For the Kau family, the engagement gift mainly consists of goat meat, but bridewealth among freeborn Weheeɓe, depending on the wealth of the families involved, consists of at least one or two cows for the bride and an additional engagement sum[11] (FF: *Safannde)* of FCFA 50,000 to FCFA 100,000 is divided between the categorical mothers and fathers of the bride.[12] Riimaayɓe have no bridewealth, although some consider the symbolic sum of FCFA 2,000 to FCFA 5,000 paid to their former master as a form of compensation for having lost a dependent/slave to be an alternative form of bridewealth.

A third difference between marriages in the Dicko and Kau families is that most Kau family members consult their former masters' family for authorization about the date and validity of their marriage. Although Kodo refused to do this, his grandmother did consult the chief on the matter and the older generation of slave descendants in Dalla still believes in the need to obtain their former masters' permission before their children marry. Although they agree that this is not compulsory today, most of the Kau family continue to do so because 'they know their head and want to stay in their skin' (part of the tradition of respect). Youngsters of slave descent still consult 'their freeborn counterpart' to agree a date for their wedding.

A fourth difference between the Kau family and the Dicko family is that Kau descendants only consider a marriage officially binding when the bride has given birth to a first child. Two months before giving birth, she goes to live with her parents and it is only when she comes back that her house will be finally furnished with the necessary items, such as a wooden bed and cooking utensils. A bed and a necklace will be given to her by her father (to a value of about FCFA 50,000) and her mother's youngest sister will provide blankets. The point when a marriage is considered legally binding is different in the two families. For the Dicko family it is when the bridewealth is paid, while for the Kau family it is when a child is born.

A final difference between marriage ceremonies is the amount of wealth displayed and the differences in marriage transactions.[13] Girls of slave descent are given wooden

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[10] The *Futte* consists of the animal(s) given by the husband to his wife when they get married. It is the transfer of property rights over cattle from the husband to his wife (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 376) and is different from bridewealth (FF: *Safandde*) and dowry (FF: *Hurto*).

[11] The name for the engagement sum and the engagement ceremony itself are thus the same. The timing of this payment varies: sometimes it happens right after the engagement and sometimes during the religious ceremony.

[12] Apart from the money, in freeborn and slave descendants' families, the sisters of the groom also make a contribution such as ointments, soap, bras and shoes. Only among freeborn is there the gift from 'older age mates' (French: *Cadulets maude*) of 60-70 pieces of cloth.

[13] The gifts exchanged among the freeborn Dicko for the engagement party only, are for the Kau family the total sum of their wedding ceremony. In Dalla today an engagement in the Kau family costs about FCFA 50,000 to FCFA 75,000, two goats and ten units of millet. By contrast, the bridewealth that the freeborn pay costs between FCFA 75,000 and FCFA 150,000 plus at least one bull and money to pay for the transport and labour of all the different groups of clients (griots, Riimaayɓe, Maccuɓe). For both groups, prices have gone up dramatically in the past ten years. Note that FCFA 50,000 = € 76 in December 2010.

bowls and calabashes, while more expensive iron cooking utensils and woven carpets are typical gifts for freeborn women. Some freeborn still feel these differences should be maintained but an informant from the hamlet of Torbani indicated that 'today everyone does as he pleases, especially those Riimaaɓe who have become very wealthy'. However Demba Dicko, a youngster from Dalla who is living in Bamako, criticized slave descendants who decorated their houses with expensive carpets, reproaching them for 'not knowing their heads, putting on airs and being conceited'. He felt it was bad (French: *Malvue*) that they did not respect their ancestors' traditions (FF: *Tawaanga*).

So far I have described how some ceremonial aspects are different when comparing the marriages of freeborn with those of slave descendants.[14] Searing (2002: 150) describes how endogamous groups of slave descendants have turned into a 'pseudo caste`. However, different groups of slave descendants within these 'pseudo castes` claim social boundaries between their and other groups' wedding ceremonies, differences that are related to whether or not one has a master. I refer here to those who have maintained ties with their masters as dependent groups of slave origin and will also refer to those who no longer want to be associated with their former masters anymore as independent groups of slave origin. Obviously this dichotomy between the two groups is artificial since most individuals opt in and out of dependency.

During King Yerowal's reign, the slaves living on estates in the Haayre hills were under his tutelage, which is why religious weddings would have been held in King Yerowal's compound. These Riimaaɓe used to pay a symbolic bridewealth to their master but after King Yerowal's death, the practice declined and slaves became more independent of the ruling Dicko family.

The marriage ceremonies of families of independent slave descendants (FF: *Caworɗi*) resemble more closely the wedding ceremonies of the freeborn than those of the Kau family and other Maccuɓe Wuro (see Table 1). Like freeborn Fulɓe, well-off independent slave descendants slaughter a bull for their brides, in contrast to the much cheaper goats that the dependent slave descendants slaughter for a wedding or engagement (FF: *Nafaayi)*. Independent groups of slave origin call their wedding ceremony *caworɗi* instead of *nafaayi*, which is the term used by dependent slave descendants such as the Kau family.

Hama Adja, an independent slave descendant from the hamlet of Kikara (Map 4, Chapter 1) explains: 'A Diimaajo bride (slave descendants of the hills) spends one week separated from her husband, just like a Diimo (freeborn) bride would. A Maccuδo (dependent slave descendants) bride on the contrary only spends three to four days in seclusion.' It is worth noting that Hama Adja himself makes the comparison with freeborn marriages.

Mariam spent a week in seclusion because her family is independent and they no longer belong or defer to their former masters. However no bull was slaughtered for her because groom Kodo belongs to the dependent Kau family and was not allowed to slaughter one by his former master. If he had done so, his own peers, family members and the ruling Dicko family would have accused him of not respecting tradition. Mari-

am and Kodo's wedding ceremony was in many ways a complex negotiation of honour and styles of relating between their respective groups within the overarching category of slave status.

Table 1   Overview of different stages and names of marriage ceremonies, by status group

Social status group of the families involved in the union	Weheeɓe such as Freeborn Dicko family (Figure 2)	Maccuɓe wuro such as dependent slave descendants of Kau family (Figure 2)	Riimayɓe Haayre, such as independent slave descents, for example in village of Diayel (Map 5)
Engagement	*Safannde* (money paid by groom's family)	*Nafaayi*	*Caworɗi*
Marriage	*Kurtungal* (actual wedding) *banngal* (wedding ceremony)	*(Nafaayi)*	*Caworɗi*
Marriage gifts	*Futte* (transfer of cattle from husband to wife) *Hurto* (comparable to dowry or mother's gifts to daughter (consisting of a bed and household equipments(such as ceramic cooking pots and plates).	Rather small (no ceramic cooking pots and plates for example) and less prestigious dowry when compared to *Hurto* that is given among freeborn Dicko. Among Kau family hurto is given by family and friends and not only mother.	*No Futte* But a substantial *Hurto,* that is comparable to the mother's gifts among freeborn Dicko (household equipments & bed)

Endogamy

Endogamy was and still is an important institution in regulating and maintaining social boundaries between freeborn and other status groups, and endogamous rules in the Haayre region are reinforced by Islamic ideology and legal prescriptions. The ideology of endogamy is an important instrument for freeborn members of society to institutionalize the marginality of former slave groups and to reinforce the links between nobility, lineage descent and freeborn ancestry. It effectively maintains the boundary between different social status groups who as such reinforce their exclusive claims to nobility and delegate others to the sphere of marginality.[15] Endogamous marriage rules are sustained by the belief that such alliances would be dangerous and bound to fail (Botte 1994; Hardung 1997).

Due to the cultural field of hierarchy, which is related to descent and ascribed status, marriage partners and the purity of one's lineage and clan remain important. The freeborn Dicko family had a vested interest in controlling the reproduction of their slave

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[15]   Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 18) defined power as the power to define and decide over what is marginal and what is not.

women (FF: *Horɓe*) and prohibited marriage between their (female) slaves and slaves of other freeborn families. Moodibal[16] explains this principle as follows:

> Because slave descendants of the Dicko family are higher in status than the slave descendants be-longing to the traders, we (freeborn Dicko) did not accept their intermarriage because it would make us lose control over their children. These days slavery itself is over, but it continues to be considered somehow. Now it is only there culturally.[17]

He indicates how it used to be impossible for slave descendants to marry slaves of other masters but the case of Kodo and Mariam demonstrates how, today, members of the Kau family marry women from slave groups that became independent of their former masters as *Jawaamɓe*[18] or pastoralist *Jalluuɓe*[19] in the surrounding Haayre vil-lages.

Fulɓe, as so many other ethnic groups in the sub-region, recognize three main (mostly) endogamous strata: Freeborn elites (FF: Riimɓe), clients and craftsmen (FF: Ŋeeŋɓe) and slave descendants (FF: Riimaayɓe). Among themselves, freeborn Riimɓe are endogamous and there is a preference for women from their own patrilineage, class and/or occupational status. [20] A woman from the ruling Weheeɓe will prefer not to marry a man of pastoralist Jalluuɓe: Their class and occupational status diverge too far.

Overall, the ruling freeborn Weheeɓe preferred to marry among themselves or into Moodibaaɓe families. In the 1970s it was unthinkable for Weheeɓe to marry Jawaamɓe. In the same vein, it was impossible for the Kau family to marry slave descendants of the trading Jawaamɓe. The Kau family looked down on these slave descendants, just as their Weheeɓe masters looked down on Jawaamɓe. Like the Dicko family, the Kau family prefer parallel cousin marriages.[21]

Slaves used to be married off by their masters without bridewealth and the fact that a slave was allowed to marry made him indebted to his master. The children from these marriages were seen as compensation and were supposed to engage in domestic labour for these masters. Often masters married off their slaves among each other to maintain authority and control over their children. So slaves of different masters hardly ever

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[16] Moodibal, interview (in French) without interpreter, Bamako, April 2007.

[17] In French: 'Parce que les Riimaayɓe des Weheeɓe sont au plafond des Riimaayɓe de Jawaamɓe. Ils se marient, mais ils se glorifient d'être plus que les autres. Oui ils se marient depuis longtemps. Avant on n'acceptait pas que notre femme esclave se mariait avec un esclave des Jawaamɓe. Mais on donne les femmes de nos esclaves à eux pour élargir. Mais actuellement l'esclavage même est parti, maintenant c'est la culturellement seulement. Mais c'est vrai que ça joue.'

[18] Examples are the wife of Amadun Dauda who as a Maccuɗo slave formerly belonged to Jawaamɓe in Wuro Ferro and the wife of Hama Maiga who as a Maccuɗo slave used to belong to Jawaamɓe in Wuro Gaanare.

[19] Such an intermarriage was for example the case for Dikellayya who as a Maccuɗo slave formerly belonging to Jawaamɓe married Hama Dauda Kau, a Maccuɗo slave formerly belonging to Weheeɓe.

[20] Religious Moodibaaɓe, ruling Weheeɓe and pastoralist Jalluuɓe. There is a class difference between the sedentary Moodibaaɓe and Weheeɓe and the pastoralist Egga-Hoddaaɓe, which is for some free-born mothers a strong argument against such marriages. Dicko Djunu, a Beweejo woman from the royal court of Dalla, born 1974 for example protested a lot when her son married with a pastoralist woman. (Interview with interpreter Burra Yero Cisse, Douentza, 2007).

[21] Parallel cousins are either a mother's sisters' children = ego's maternal aunt's child or father's brothers children = ego's paternal uncle's child. In the Dicko family there is a preference for marri-ages between freeborn parallel cousins. Today most youngsters no longer accept the marriage partners their parents deem most appropriate and there are more exceptions to this rule.

intermarried.[22] It was only with the end of the reign of King Yerowal in Dalla towards the end of the 1960s that the Kau family started to intermarry with slave descendants of other masters. The fact that the Dicko and Kau families now had familial relations through marriage definitely helped allow these 'exceptions'.

Allay Jangine,[23] a slave descendant living in the former slave ward of Wuro Maccudo, had exceptionally been allowed to marry two wives by the Dickos. The first one belonged to the Dicko family but Allay was given a second wife of slave descent who formerly belonged to the family of religious scholars (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*) in Dalla. As this second wife had been manumitted, her master had no claim to ownership over her children. My host Suleymane married one of Allay's children (with his second manumitted wife) in the 1980s. The example of Kodo and Mariam's marriage illustrates how intermarriage between descendants of different freeborn families is complex but not impossible.

Slave descendants of the Kau family over time started organizing their own marriages amongst themselves. In the past, their masters would not accept such marriages but today Maccuɓe Weheeɓe marry Maccuɓe Jawaamɓe. Many Maccuɓe Jawaamɓe, such as Mariam's family are relatively rich because they are traders who went to Equatorial New Guinea, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast. Secondly, the Maccuɓe Jawaamɓe are more independent of their former masters and are able to put on 'freeborn airs' without being insulted or stigmatized.[24]

While increased intermarriage among slave groups with different masters is possible, slave descendants rarely have access to freeborn marriage partners. They have in fact become an independent endogamous group or a 'pseudo caste'.

Within the group of slave descendants, there is a heterogeneity in the form of internal differentiation and a striving for status. There are marriage restrictions and endogamous groups within this pseudo caste but over time they have developed their own lineages based on their common belonging to patrons and the same ancestors. There is an internal stratification between these groups (Riimaayɓe, Maccuɓe, Kommongalluuɓe), each claiming superiority *vis-à-vis* the others.

In the eyes of the slave descendants living on the plateaus (FF: Riimaayɓe Haayre), those living in the village next to their masters (FF: Maccuɓe wuro) are still enslaved because they have little negotiating power, work for free and always assist their former masters on ritual occasions. The independent Riimaayɓe emphasize how Maccuɓe Wuro are dependent on their masters' goodwill when it comes to access to land, religious

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[22] And if they did so, this could be done when both freeborn families agreed on the ownership of the children. Often they had to pay for it, as the following archival document suggests: 'When a domestic slave (French: *Captif de case*) wants to marry a captive from another house, he has to pay a fixed sum of 10,000 *cauris* to the master of the woman in question. The children always remain for the master of the wife. The father does not have anything to say about them (French: *Le père ne les commande pas*). A bought slave (French: *Captive de vente*) can marry another captive while paying 5,000 *cauris* but even while living with her husband, she continues working for her master and her children are also for her master. The children never become free. When a free man marries a captive de case, the day that she gives birth to a child, she is free. The Bambaras, Toucouleurs, Rimaihbes often marry their slaves. The Fulbe only very rarely marry their slaves, the Habe never.' ANM, FA: 1E-156. (August 1894).

[23] See also Chapters 1 and 4.

[24] For more on insults and stigma, see Chapter 7 and Hardung (2009).

piety and even marriage, which is why independent slave descendants today look down on the Kau family. Nevertheless, Kau family members explain that it is because they used to command the Riimaayɓe Haayre and could take their products or children away that their relationship is tense. This tension has been translated into a refusal to intermarry. Manumitted slave descendants are very close in status to the Riimaayɓe Haayre, but in general these groups do not accept intermarriage.

Hama Adja, himself an independent slave descendant from the village of Kikara near the Gandamia Plateau, describes the differences between the endogamous groups of slave descendants as follows:[25]

> We (Riimaayɓe Haayre) marry among ourselves, we are not used to marrying Maccuɓe Wuro. We have our own land, we built our own houses, we pay for our own marriages, all of which the Maccuɓe Wuro don't. We don't intermarry but there are some exceptions. Sometimes we might decide to marry those among our women we considered badly educated with dependent Maccuɓe Wuro. Even so, these marriages are subject to insults and gossip.

Not only Riimaayɓe Haayre but also Kommongalluuɓe jealously guard their privileged position within the social group of slave descendants through endogamy. Hama Adja explains that:

> We (note: Riimaayɓe Haayre) don't marry Kommongalluuɓe, they feel higher in status than us and claim nobility because some had their own slaves. This is why we Riiimayɓe cannot marry them. The slaves of the Kommongalluuɓe (FF: *Maccuɓe Kommongalluuɓe*) only marry among themselves.

The social boundaries are maintained and intermarriage between freeborn and slave descendants (hypergamy), but also among several groups of slave descendants, are legally and morally prohibited. However, there is room in Islamic law for one legal exception: The case of concubine marriage.

Legal hypergamy: Concubine marriage

Although different status groups are highly endogamous, the ideology of slavery allowed the freeborn elite to use the sexuality of their slave concubines at will. Sexual intercourse was something slave women could not refuse their masters, whether they were married or not. Today, male freeborn youngsters explain how their first sexual experiences were with girls from families of slave descent. Some informants in Dalla mentioned that certain members of the royal court have sexual relations with (married) women of slave descent.

Islamic legislation allows for freeborn to marry slave concubines, on top of the maximum of four freeborn wives. In practice, the option of marrying more than the four women, as is legally permitted in the Koran, was only open to men of the highest ranking. There are examples of such marriages among religious Moodibaaɓe scholars and ruling Weheeɓe families, but not among Jalluuɓe pastoralists. In the mid-twentieth century, Fulɓe chiefs in Dalla and Booni, but not in Joona, married their slaves as fourth or fifth wives and only elite ruling Fulɓe families married their slave concubines. Other

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[25] Hama Adja, interview, Bamako, 2007.

freeborn groups (religious scholars, pastoralists and traders) did not.[26] The ruling Weheeɓe could afford to take any slave as a concubine because they ruled over all the inhabitants in their kingdoms.[27]

Islamic legislation allows for one exceptional form of hypergamy, whereby male members of the ruling Dicko family can marry slaves without breaking the rules of endogamy. On the other hand, hypogamy, when a freeborn woman marries a man of slave descent, is legally and socially unacceptable in all forms. If a freeborn wanted to marry his slave concubine, he had to manumit her first. Another option described in the Koran is not to marry or manumit one's slave but simply to legally recognize her children as part of the father's freeborn patriliny.[28] A slave concubine who is married or whose children by a freeborn are recognized is called a *taarnaajo* (FF).[29]

Apart from the king, no other members of the Dicko family in Dalla married their slave concubines. People other than the king did so in Booni, but then only freeborn Weheeɓe. Booni's former chief[30] married a slave concubine by whom he had a lot of children.[31] In Dalla it was in his interest as king that Yerowal married wives from various status groups to reinforce strategic political alliances. He married a Songhay woman from the Kingdom of Hombori and, by so doing, forged ties with Hombori's ruler who in turn had close ties with the French colonial regime. His second wife was a pastoralist woman (FF: *Jalluuɓe*). During the French colonial regime, many Jalluuɓe left Dalla to live elsewhere. Here again we see how certain alliances were, due to crisis, brought closer through strategic marriage.

The same goes for the two slave-descending women Yerowal married. He reinforced his political support from his slave populations by these marriages as he badly needed to have good contacts with the slave population as a result of French colonial abolition policies and the growing threat of emancipation for the majority of his slaves and their descendants. Yerowal was the last ruler of Dalla to marry two slave wives from Riimaayɓe villages in his kingdom: Faata Legal from Onga and Pendolde from Siguiri (Map 5). While King Yerowal was alive, Faata and Pendolde worked for their co-wives,

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[26] This contrasts with the Maacina region where religious scholars married their slave concubines. An example is the famous religious scholar of Dogon origin in Konza (near Mopti) who married four wives: One Pullo, one Dogon and two Riimaayɓe women. Interview with Belco Tamboura, Bamako, 2007.

[27] Taped interview with Burra Yero Cisse, Douentza, 2007. In French: 'Un chef, c'est pour tout le village, n'importe de quelle Diimaajo il a envie, il peut la marier!'

[28] If one legally recognizes children fathered by a freeborn man with a slave concubine (slave mother), the concubine will be manumitted on the master's death. It is by leaving her freeborn husband's compound on his death that the slave concubine gains back her freedom (McDougall 2007: 172, Footnote 8). See also Chapter 5.

[29] Singular: *Taarnaaɓo,* plural: *Taarnaaɓe*; *Taarnugol* is also used. These terms are derived from the verbal root *Taarn-uude* (to transform). The transformation is, in this case, that of a female slave (FF: *Kordo*) into a woman who has been freed from her (inferior) social slave status. In northern Cameroonian Fulɓe society, Sehou (2010) mentions that such slave concubines are called S*oulado* (FF).

[30] This chief was Amadu Hamadun Dicko.

[31] Burra Baa, slave-descending soldier who fought in Europe (French: *Tirailleur)* from the hamlet of Kolongo. Interview with interpreter Hama Amba, 2002.

and were stigmatized and discriminated against within the royal harem.[32] Their marriage to the king legally manumitted them but, in practice, this was only symbolic and gave them no new entitlements. Compared to Yerowal's freeborn women, they had no rights of inheritance, nor were they entitled to bridewealth, the labour of other slaves or fixed nights (French: *Tour de ménage*) with their husband.[33]

Faata Legal, Yerowal's fourth wife of slave origin, outlived her husband (†2009) and all her children, one of whom Abdul, died very young. She became a renowned child healer, probably due to her slave status which is often associated with special healing powers when it comes to children (Gibbal 1994).

Pendolde Kau was also a slave concubine (FF: *Taarnaajo*)[34] and died in the 1980s. I interviewed her sister Asse Kau Dicko, who described how Yerowal fell in love with her sister at first sight because of her beauty. [35] The king took her from her slave hamlet of Siguiri to the royal court in Dalla and her brothers and sisters (Asse among them) moved to work as house slaves in the royal court where each freeborn woman had two young slave children at her disposition. Both Asse and her concubine sister stopped working when the king died but other servants who were unrelated to Pendolde continued to work there. On King Yerowal's death, Pendolde was automatically set free. Asse emphasized the fact that, as Pendolde's sister, she also became 'a bit noble' too but her children were never freed or included in the royal patriliny. Asse never married and only had one son.

In our first conversation, Asse did not mention that slave women were discriminated against by their co-wives and only emphasized her sister's prestige at being incorporated into freeborn society. She concealed the suffering that was part of this 'semi inclusion'. Only in later conversations did she come up with stories about the frustrations and humiliation they encountered. She recalled how for each night spent with a woman of slave decent, the king would spend two with a woman of freeborn descent. Pendolde also had to do all the manual domestic labour herself, while her freeborn co-spouses had (children of) slaves to do it for them. Asse's parents felt it degrading that she was never officially married and her family never received any form of bride price or compensation.

Slave concubines, like Faata and Pendolde, were not passive victims however. When Yerowal died, Faata took pride in her new status, which was equal to that of a manumitted person. And she changed her name to Fatumata Allay Dicko,[36] from the more pejorative, typical slave name of Faata Legal (Pelckmans 2011b forthcoming).

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[32] Interviews with slave concubine Faata Legal, with interpreter Umu Sangare, Dalla, December 2001; with Burra Yero Cisse, Douentza, May 2007; and Allay Jangine, with interpreter Umu Sangare, Dalla, 2001-2002.

[33] Interview with youngster Amadu Amiiru Dicko and his father (the chief), Dalla, May 2007.

[34] Being a *Taarnaajo* slave concubine is not to be confused with being a *Taaraajo* pastoralist. Taaraaɓe are a specific group of pastoralist Fulɓe in the Haayre region and are the only group of pastoralists with a joking relation with the ruling Weheeɓe families.

[35] Asse Kau Dicko, interview with Umu Sangare, Dalla, 2001.

[36] For more on naming, see Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming).

When I met her in 2001 she behaved in the same bossy and authoritarian way as her co-wives and many of her grandchildren felt she was rigid and unapproachable.[37]

Like the other freeborn women, she refused to answer my questions directly as that would be unworthy of her status. During my first fieldwork period in 2001-2002, I only once managed to talk to her in private. In her search for recognition whereby her slave origins had to be silenced as much as possible plus the fact that as an old women she was always surrounded by people, it was difficult to get to talk to Faata and she refused to answer questions about her slave past, thus defending her honour and respectability (FF: *Teddungal*).

Although hypergamy is legally accepted in Islam, taking pride in being a slave concubine was for both Faata and Pendolde only a reality after the death of their husband. Belco[38] explains how 'The Koran prescribes the precise conditions for marrying one's concubine. A certain number of cattle have to be given. It is comparable to committing a crime: The Koran tells you what kind of reparations to make.' His comparison of slave marriage with crime seems to suggest that the Koran equates marriages to one's slaves as a sin for which one can make reparations. McDougall (2007: 173) indicates though how 'In Islam, concubinage is completely acceptable. Honourable even. However, only slaves can be concubines.'

The honour of being a slave concubine was questioned by most of my informants. Burra[39] said that 'although a slave concubine in our society is not considered a slave, she never obtains the nobility that freeborn women have. She is not as noble as the others because she did not have her own slaves to work for her.' Burra defines nobility as having slaves as personal property and, for him, the slave concubine has an in-between status as she has no rights over the labour of others.

It was due to these concubine marriages that family alliances developed among freeborn Dicko family members and their Kau slaves but the inclusion of Kau wives in freeborn kinship networks remained fragmented. They are symbolically called family (FF: Bandiraaɓe) but do not enjoy the same rights and duties as freeborn family members who are full lineage members. Calling slave descendants 'family' is thus a form of discursive inclusion that conceals their exclusion. Botte (1994: 124) claims: 'This is why Fulɓe do not use the same terminology for their Runndeeɓe parents-in-law compared to the terminology they use among Fulɓe themselves.'[40] Stillwell (1999b: 157) in his analysis of royal slaves in the nineteenth-century Kano Caliphate describes how:

> The ties between royalty and royal slaves were not 'formal' or 'acknowledged' in the same manner as were marriage and family ties within freeborn families and lineages. Royal slaves could not make the same political and social claims on these relationships as could 'real' members of the family and lineages.

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[37] One of them, Kadji, remembers with anger how her grandmother forced her to tattoo her face according to traditional beauty standards. She had it surgically removed in 2007.

[38] Belco Musa Barry, a slave descendant born in Nokara, interview in French without interpreter, Bamako, March 2006.

[39] Burra Yero Cisse, interview, Douentza, 2007.

[40] Translated from French: 'Du coup, les Fulɓe n'emploient pas a l'égard de leurs beaux-parents runndeeɓe les mêmes termes d'adresse que ceux qui sont d'usage entre Fulɓe' (Botte 1994: 124).

Family members who continued living in the hamlets of Siguiri (Pendolde Kau) and Onga (Faata Legal) gave away two of their wives but hardly ever see their grand-children. The grandchildren of the union between slave concubines and the king rarely visit the village of their maternal (grand-)parents[41] though, exceptionally, Faata's son Musa was educated for the first four years of his life by his grandmother in Onga. Although the alliance between the Kau and Dicko families has been beneficial to most Kau family members, they have not allowed them to become fully integrated in the freeborn lineage of the Dicko family. They have not, for example, gained access to political office, a right that remains reserved for the freeborn Dicko.

My host Suleymane (also called Suley) is a grandson of one of Pendolde's sisters and a direct cousin of Pendolde's children. These (semi-freeborn) children call him 'father Suley' (FF: *Baaba* Suley),[42] which has an affective connotation. Nevertheless this kin relation does not give him any specific privileges and does not allow him, for example, to butcher his own sacrificial animals, unlike manumitted slave descendants in his neighbourhood who can do so.

Instead of generating unity and social proximity between slave descendants and their masters, these marriages have perpetuated hierarchy. Concubine marriage is no longer practised in Dalla or Booni and neither freeborn nor slave-descending families see any advantage in it although they express different motivations for not having it. Kau family members claim that concubine marriages no longer exist because of their own refusal. For example, Allay Jangine said:

> We have seen that a Beweejo man marrying a Diimaajo woman only gives troubles. The slave con-cubine has to do all the work and is humiliated, even following the abolition of slavery by the French. So why should we assume that things would change now? It is more interesting for us to marry each other and to have a proper marriage ceremony and baptism for our children.

Dikoore's husband Seydu[43] ads that even if freeborn had been willing to let their daughters marry slave descendants of the Kay family, the Kau family members them-selves would be too scared (FF: *Huulaade*) to ask their masters for the hand of a free-born. This would be unthinkable today.

Concubine marriages confirmed the social boundaries for most members of the Kau family. For a slave concubine, the only advantage came after her freeborn husband's death but the children of concubines managed to become very influential and their status today is equal to that of the freeborn Dicko elite. Interestingly, in both Dalla and Booni, it has been the semi-freeborn children of slave concubines who have come to occupy the most important political positions: Musa, the semi-freeborn child of Faata, became mayor, and Hamidu, Pendolde's child became chief.

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41 The same argument has been made by Derman (1973: 118) quoted in Botte (1994: 124, Footnote 55).
42 Suleymane is classified as a paternal uncle (FF: *Kau*).
43 Asse Kau Dicko, interview with Umu Sangare, Dalla, 2001.

Slave concubines' semi-freeborn children (FF: *Bibɓe Taarnaaɓe*)

> Being freeborn but at the same time being a descendant of a
> slave concubine mother can hurt, it is a big question![44]

It is a public secret in Dalla that both the local chief and the mayor are descendants of a slave concubine. Pendolde was the mother of the former chief of Dalla (†2010), while concubine Faata Legal gave birth to Musa Dicko, who was democratically elected mayor of Dalla (†2008). As indicated in Chapter 2, Musa's family is central to this thesis. Many of the relatives and descendants of King Yerowal's slave concubines live in the ward of Wuro Maccuδo today. Although everyone knows this, it is not supposed to be discussed in public and this was made very clear in an interview with one of the semi-freeborn daughters of King Yerowal and slave concubine Pendolde. When I asked her whether she could give me some examples of slave concubines in her village, my assistant, Bura Yero Cisse who is himself of slave descent, refused to ask her this question out of respect (FF: *Teddungal)* and because it would generate feelings of shame (FF: *Semteende*). Despite their inclusion in patrilineal freeborn descent, semi-freeborn children are still the victims of discrimination.

In Dalla, the children of the king who have a freeborn mother emphasized their superiority over his children who have a slave concubine as mother. This is why semi-freeborn children tend to emphasize their 'freeborn' patrilineal background. Some, like Kadji who now lives in Paris, hates her matrilineal slave background and keeps quiet about it as far as possible. Legally, semi-freeborn children of a slave concubine do not inherit the status of slave from their mother, have no master to obey and were allowed to own their own slaves.[45] Meillassoux (1991: 136) describes how the ambiguous status of what he calls these 'half breeds' (and who I refer to as semi-freeborn) was similar to that of manumitted slaves as they shared the same functions and obligations *vis-à-vis* their patrons. Nevertheless, the most important difference between semi-freeborn, their slave concubine mothers and manumitted slaves was that the semi-freeborn were truly part of a freeborn lineage and were allowed to marry other freeborn women. This remained impossible for concubines and manumitted slaves.

Whether a person's ancestors' slave background is seen as negative depends on the generation one talks to. Amadu, the second-generation son of a slave concubine has no difficulty discussing his semi-slave background. As the son of the chief, his family has a lot of influence in the village and he emphasizes the advantages of semi-freeborn status for his father. He became the chief because he could rely on support from both the freeborn Dicko patrilineage and the slave-descending Kau matrilineage. It is advantageous alliances and this double form of 'wealth in people' that explains why the most in-

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[44] Burra Yero Cisse, taped interview, Douentza, 2007. 'Si tu demande est-ce que les Riimaayɓe (slave descendants) marient les riimɓe (freeborn) tant que moi même je suis diimo (freeborn) d'une mere dimaajo (of slave descent), ça peut blesser. C'est une grosse question! Le père est chef, la mère est diimaajo taarnaaδo. Un taarnaaδo chez nous en réalité n'a pas un korδo, ni un maccuδo. A cause de son mariage elle est noble, mais pas si noble que les autres femmes du roi.'

[45] McDougal (2007: 172) gives the example of a slave-descending semi-freeborn slave descendant of Moors (Arab: *Haratin*) who had his own slaves in Mauritania.

fluential political functions in Dalla and Booni are occupied by the families of semi-freeborn. The former chief and former mayor of Dalla as well as Nassuru Amiiru, the former mayor of Booni, all had a slave-descending concubine mother.[46] In the literature on other slave societies in West Africa, the advantage of semi-freeborn occupying royal and/or important political positions is also mentioned.[47]

Musa Dicko, one of King Yerowal's slave concubine sons became mayor at the start of the twenty-first century. Legally he is not allowed to marry a slave concubine like his father did. In addition, Musa, as the son of a slave woman, did not inherit slaves from his mother and has no personal slaves in the way his freeborn peers in the royal compound do. He did, however, inherit his father's slaves as part of the family fortune. He can point to 'my slaves' in the plural but it is impossible for him to point out 'one individual slave' as being his personal property, often because some of them are his maternal family too.[48] He would not have been interested in marrying into his maternal family and instead married a noble princess at the court of Joona and one in Booni. Both these wives enhanced his social position and helped him to become the elected major of Dalla in 2002 (De Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005).

To conclude, the semi-freeborn children of slave concubines often made huge leaps in intergenerational mobility (Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 19) but the option has now been abandoned. Nevertheless, several factors have contributed to some individuals' daring decisions to break with tradition (FF: *Tawaangal*) and marry the partner of their choice.

Breaking away from one's past position

Marriage used to be an important resource and institution for the organization of social difference, control over social mobility, alliances and reproduction. Most informants agree that changes coincided with the end of the totalitarian reign of King Yerowal in 1966. In addition, the droughts in the 1970s and 1980s reduced the power of other free-born as well as reinforcing their position through endogamy. The son of Dalla's chief[49] indicated that:

> These days things have become worse. People do whatever they want, even if it goes against tradition. If it was not for the droughts, a male slave descendant would have never been able to marry a freeborn Beweejo woman. The old men say that when a rich slave descending man marries a freeborn woman, all their property disappears. This actually happened before. To prevent such misfortunes, it is better

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[46] She was a Diimaajo belonging to the family of Arsukeeru, Nassuru Amiiru's uncle.

[47] Perbi (2004); Hahonou (2009: 152-153, & 2011); Vereecke (1994) on Niger; and Valsecchi (2011 forthcoming) on Ghana.

[48] Burra Yero Cisse, Diimaajo, Douentza, 2007. Taped interview in French: 'Les enfants de ces unions sont consideré noble, mais seulement entre eux. Celui (l'enfant) de la mère peule se glorifie devant celui (l'enfant) d' une mère diimaajo. Mais on ne peut pas effacer le nom du père, et lui il est noble. Quand tu deviens chef et ton père avait des esclaves, on peut hériter ses esclaves (comme une fortune). Mais Musa Dicko ne peut pas dire celui la ou celle la est pour moi. Donc Musa Dicko ne peut pas dire que se sont ses esclaves, il peut le dire «mes maccuɓe» mais pas «mon maccuɗo», parce que sa propre maman vient des maccuɓe. Musa sait très bien que sa mère n'a jamais possédée un korɗo (female house slave), donc on ne peut pas marrier ce qu'on n'a pas.'

[49] Amadu Amiiru Dicko, born 1985, the son of the chief of Dalla, studying and living in Bamako and Sevare. Interviews in French, March 2007.

that, even if you are rich, you 'stay in your skin' (French: *Tu te reserves dans ta peau*). You simply take a slave descending Diimaajo woman and keep silent and calm.[50]

In this freeborn interpretation, it was the demise of the nobility that gave the slave-descending Riimaayɓe room for manoeuvre. Slave-descending informants, on the contrary, insist on how they constitutionally now have the legal right to make their own choice regarding marriage partners. They are no longer dependent on their masters for the right to have a family.[51]

To avoid stigmatization based on a lack of honour (Klein 2005), slave descendants try to upgrade or change their lineage by manipulating their (collective) history to their own benefit[52] or by marrying women from higher status groups or other ethnic groups. Below is an outline of how descendants of slaves, other than the Kau family, have contested and manipulated endogamy thanks to various capitals, such as senior positions at work, wealth, beauty and education.

Since the Kau family did not bypass endogamous marriage rules but some other groups of slave descendants in the Haayre region did, the section below describes their 'scandalous marriages', namely those alliances that have received attention because they defy existing endogamous rules. My interpreter uses the term 'mediatized marriages' to describe such extra-legal, non-endogamous marriages, explaining that these marriages are 'mediatized' on the 'pavement radio' (French: *Radio trottoir*), the most effective medium for spreading rumour and gossip (Ellis 1989: 321).[53] Although most freeborn fiercely contest such intermarriage because it means that their women are incorporated into the male lineage of their former slaves, exceptions to endogamous rules are increasingly being seen.

From the 1970s onwards, these marriages were frequent among Dallanke who had left their villages and gone to live in towns and cities like Douentza and Bamako that offered more protection against or at least a comfortable social distance from slander, gossip and social exclusion. Informants in Dalla and Joona indicate how it was mostly the slave-descending inhabitants of Booni who bypassed the rules of endogamy. Most informants deny that exogamous marriage existed in their own village because they probably do not want to give out sensitive or taboo information about their co-villagers. However, the differences between these three villages are also due to structural factors.

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[50] Amadu Tambura, Diimaajo, Douentza. Taped conversation in French, March 2007/'Mais actuellement vue que les choses se détériorèrent, les choses n'ont plus leurs chances. les gens se permettent. Sinon avant, un Diimaajo ne va jamais prendre une femme noble. Les vieux ils disent que quand tu vois un homme Diimaajo très riche, quand il se marie a une femme noble, tous ses biens vont disparaître, des cas ont existé ... en tout cas, tous ce que tu as, tu ne le fera pas. Tu te réserves dans ta peau ... Tu prends une femme Diimaajo, tu te tais, tu restes tranquille. Tu ne vas pas prendre une femme peule.'

[51] Sidibe *et al.* (1997: 227) attribute the increased flexibility of endogamous marriage rules between Fulɓe and their former Riimaybe slaves in the Issa Ber region of Central Mali to the droughts and the exodus of pastoralist Fulɓe to cities where alternative ideologies and options for relating prevail.

[52] See Chapter 1.

[53] Ellis (1989: 322-323) defines the 'pavement radio' as: 'Related to a phenomenon known in all societies at all times and generally called by pejorative names such as "rumour" or "gossip" ... pavement radio in Africa operates within an essentially oral culture ... In part, their credibility depends on who recounts them and in what context. Over time pavement radio selects the most credible rumours and repeats them, helping to form popular consciousness.'

The differences in the maintenance of the cultural field of hierarchy between Joona, Dalla and Booni emerged over time and were expressed in hierarchical kinship language as a metaphor for social positions. Booni is the 'younger brother' village but seems to have leapfrogged over the more conservative, elitist and older villages of Dalla and Jooni. As described in Chapter 1, Booni became an independent administrative division much earlier than Dalla and Joona, which also gave it an advantageous position in national politics.[54]

Secondly, the people of Booni had a school in the village two decades before Dalla and Joona did and education clearly influenced many slave descendants' ideas about hierarchy. Thirdly, Booni is a flourishing centre economically because of its thriving market due to the illegal border trade with Burkina Faso. The influx of money is creating more possibilities for migration to study or trade elsewhere. Many of those who migrate come back with a good job, money and new ideologies. In general, Booni's inhabitants have a more worldly orientation than the people living in Dalla and Joona.

Fourthly, both Dalla and Joona have strong social control over influential religious scholars. Chapter 2 highlighted the importance of religion in Dalla. Hama Adja,[55] a slave-descending Diimaajo from the village of Kikara explains:

> In Dalla it is the Moodibaaɓe (religious scholars) that are extremely conservative. They are the ones who behave as if slavery was still there. They consider us Riimaayɓe (slave descendants) as slaves. According to them, the Koran forbids giving one's freeborn daughter to a slave.

The emancipation of slave descendants in Dalla and Joona is lagging behind that in Booni.

For reasons explained above, most of the 'scandalous marriages' described here involve inhabitants of Booni. The first example is one of the first exogamous marriages that took place in 1989 and was particularly shocking as it was not only a case of exogamy but also a hypogamous marriage between a freeborn woman who we will call Kumba[56] and a male Diimaajo called Diougal Tambura. Two factors made the marriage possible: The fact that Diougal had money and a good job, and that they lived in Douentza where they were less harassed than they would have been in Booni, their home village. Diougal is descended from slaves who used to work for an influential Weheeɓe family close to the royal Dicko family in Booni. He now lives and works in Douentza where he earns a good salary as the director of a communications business. Diougal is not particularly handsome but has studied and became very wealthy thanks to his business activities, which have made him an influential person in the region. Kumba is the daughter of an impoverished freeborn family and a lot of people ignore her. However their relationship has become increasingly accepted, especially as they seem to have been immune from bad luck: They have a lot of children, all of whom are thriving and the eldest son is now studying at university.

A second case involves a freeborn Beweejo from Booni called Idrissa who was born in 1969 and married a Diimaajo girl called Altinee in 2006 as his third wife. The girl is

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[54] Members of all three Dicko chiefdoms had positions in national politics, education and administration.
[55] Various taped interviews with slave descendant Hama Adja Tambura, born in Kikara in 1974, with interpreter Muussa Dicko Junior, Bamako, 2005 and 2007.
[56] All the names here have been changed to protect the privacy of the persons involved.

a so-called natural child (French: *Enfant naturel)* or illegitimate child, which is a highly stigmatized position. Illegitimate children often cannot find good marriage partners. Since Altinee was not part of the slaves formerly belonging to Idrissa's family, she could not be accepted as a legal concubine according to Islamic legislation either. So this marriage was a double scandal: The girl was born outside wedlock and the marriage was deemed illegal according to Islamic legislation.

Nevertheless, at the time of their marriage in 2006, both the imam and the girl's former master authorized the marriage. Gossip has it that the fact that Idrissa was very rich and had a good position in the NGO sector gave him the power to bypass endogamous rules. After their marriage, Idrissa built a new house for Altinee. This made the scandal even bigger for the inhabitants of Booni, who were outraged that he did not set her up outside the village, out of sight of his co-villagers and at a greater physical distance, for example in Douentza.

Some social sanctions were taken. Idrissa's mother and brothers decided never to enter this new house, never to talk to her and to insult her in front of others. Idrissa's mother insists she will never talk to Altinee, who is suffering as a result of the insults, not only those from her in-laws but also those of her own family and peers. Crossing social boundaries is often socially sanctioned and not complying with the rules means that a person can be subjected to severe social scrutiny.

A third case is the recent union in 2006 of Hama, a freeborn Jawaanδo from Dalla and slave-descending Penda from Booni. Penda was renowned for her beauty and had a lot of men courting her but she became pregnant while still unmarried, which severely damaged her reputation. Some say that she is lucky to have got married at all. Hama and Penda had a religious wedding and she gave birth to a daughter. What is most problematic in their marriage is the way it stigmatizes their children. The daughter is cursed (FF: *Huɗuɗɗe)* by both families because she was the result of illegal hypergamy. Secondly, prior to her marriage, Penda had already given birth to another child who has been expelled from her family. Hama's family does not accept the child either and even Hama was supposed to curse her child. In this exceptional case, some family members have more or less accepted the child but only with the passing of time. However the fact that she is illegitimate has been archived forever in collective memory. My research assistant,[57] who wrote his Masters thesis on the stigmatized status of illegitimate children in the Haayre region, uses the metaphor of 'female archives' to indicate the tenacity of female memory in the region. As he mentions: 'The memories of women are the best archives: Women never forget. They keep track of each and every error and remind everyone of them. They are capable of insulting the children and even the grandchildren of "mediatised" marriages.'

The last example of a mixed-status marriage is that of an inhabitant of Dalla and a woman from Booni. Demba is a freeborn animal trader (FF: *Jallo*) from Dalla who married Pooro, a slave-descending woman from Booni. They met because Demba used to leave Dalla to go and trade in Booni every week and for years he spent time with Pooro in Booni. Demba used to visit her family so it was almost as if they lived together

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[57] Amadu Amiiru Dicko, born 1985, the son of the chief of Dalla, studying and living in both Bamako and Sevare, March 2007.

and Pooro finally convinced him to marry her. Their religious wedding was held in 2004 but was seen as scandalous, not only because it involved hypergamy but also because it took place when they were both much older and Pooro would probably not have been able to give birth anymore as she had passed the age of menopause. Here again it was the children who suffered most from this unusual union.

Pooro's and Demba's children have been insulted and excluded by their peers due to their parents' marriage. Pooro's children tried hard to dissuade her from engaging in this 'crazy' marriage for two reasons: Firstly because they deemed their mother too old and secondly because, as a second wife with slave status, she would be inferior to Demba's first wife of freeborn status in Dalla. However, Pooro felt that this was not a problem as the two wives do not live in the same village. Here again we see that residence can ease some of the more direct consequences of social control. Now that he has officially married Pooro, Demba continues to divide his time between his two wives in different villages.

These cases show how, despite a strong discourse on the non-existence of exceptions to the rules of endogamy, exceptions do in fact exist. Despite the freeborn discourse about the purity of their blood and lineages, these examples demonstrate how people's individual decisions have always created exceptions to the rules. The 'hard' social boundary of endogamous rule separating slave descendants from freeborn is increasingly being challenged. While in the 1970s, hypergamous marriages of a male freeborn to a female slave descendant were exceptional; today these marriages are on the increase and are slowly challenging the existing norms. On the other hand, hypogamy, where a female freeborn marries a male slave descendant, has remained more difficult even if wealth, beauty, education and professional position are favourable.

These examples demonstrate how both mobility (the couple's place of residence) and the passage of time are crucial in creating a safe distance from stigmatizing gossip and sanctioning social controls. Residing in bigger towns, such as Douentza, which is at a safe distance from the gaze and comments of direct family members, has helped some to survive their exogamous marriages. Time has also helped. Some previously scandalous marriages now seem to be accepted as normal and the passage of time, preferably in combination with geographical distance, is making it increasingly difficult for people to remember the leaps in the genealogies of certain families. Camara (1995: 23) also describes how although the origins of most Mauritanian Fulɓe families have not been forgotten, social climbing through marriage is possible over several generations.

A final strategy, which only Maman Abidjan from the Kau family in Dalla has successfully applied, was to present herself as being from a slightly higher status group when abroad. On arriving in Abidjan, she claimed to be a descendant of bards (FF: *Ɲeeɲɓe*) to hide her more stigmatizing slave status and, by so doing, was able to marry her Senegalese husband, the son of a Fulɓe man and a European mother. This strategy has been described by other informants[58] as well who indicate how slave-descending families in Maacina typically claim the status of arts and craft groups (FF: *Ɲeeɲɓe*) to try to marry women in these social status groups and specialize in their activities (wood-

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[58] Dinda Sarre, Bamako, 2007; Belco Tambura, Bamako, 2007; Musa Tambura, Bamako, 2007; and Burra Yero Cisse, Douentza, 2007.

carving, music making, etc). Processes of social promotion are typically guarded in the realm of public secrets within the ethnic group as the status one claims depends a lot on the credibility of historical claims that families can validate.

This section has demonstrated the structural conditions needed to bypass endogamous marriage rules. As well as personal characteristics, these conditions include wealth, education, beauty, the passage of time and, preferably, geographical distance too. For those who do not have these various capitals, moving up the social ladder through alliances with freeborn women in other ethnic groups is sometimes considered. Paradoxically, this is easier than marrying someone of higher social standing in one's own ethnic group. The social control of genealogies and ancestry among ethnic groups is much weaker (and also more complex) than within one's own ethnic group.

Conclusions: Reshaping the cultural field of hierarchy through marriage

An important aspect of the social immobility of slave groups and their descendants is that their access to upwardly social relations is blocked by the freeborn institution of endogamy, which is patrolled by social control. Different groups of slave descendants belonging to different freeborn families in the area have developed their own specific ceremonies and moralities on relating.

Some slave descendants have improved their position through their marriage strategies but the room for upward manoeuvring is different for the various status groups among slave descendants. For the Kau family, concubine marriage proved a specific niche for some of its members. The legal institution of hypergamous concubine marriages did not necessarily defy the dominant cultural field of hierarchy but the semi-freeborn children of slave concubines in Dalla and Booni have been legally freed of the stigma of slave status. This has even led to their accessing political office. Semi-freeborn children have become like nobles. They are allowed to behave like patrons vis-à-vis other freeborn and family members of slave descent. They did not however challenge the existing social boundary between slave descendants and their former masters but simply trespassed them, often ending up on the 'other side'. The children of slave concubines have obtained access to freeborn lineages and been inserted in the kinship continuum (Kopytoff & Miers 1977) and the freeborn culture of relatedness (Carsten 2000).

The institution of marriage, and endogamy in particular, has been described by many as an 'ideological weapon' in post-slavery societies where the stigma of slave status has remained. Within the social boundaries of their home societies, slave descendants from Dalla and Booni have challenged existing norms of endogamy thanks to their accumulated capitals, such as wealth and education. Often personal characteristics, like beauty and the courage to defy the social order, have proved crucial. And lastly, the more structural context of economic decline during the droughts that impoverished several freeborn families, in combination with the opportunity for education in areas such as Booni, contributed to new ways of reshaping the existing cultural field of hierarchy regarding marriage. Compromises are still being made between actual practice and formalized moral requirements.

Photo 5   Female assistance to household labour

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Expectations of stereo styles
in the cultural field of hierarchy

Assisting in style

The Harmattan winds are showing no mercy in Dalla today and are blowing the yellow Saharan sand around. It is January and the harvests are stored safely in the granaries so the dry season is the ideal period for ritual celebrations. *Tabaski*, the sacrificial Muslim feast, has just finished and many other celebrations, such as circumcisions and weddings are still to come. My interpreter Umu and I are to assist in several of these rituals but today Kumba Dicko's son Nassuru is getting married so the members of the Kau family are helping the Dicko family. I observe how my neighbour Dikoore is bringing buckets of water and her husband Seydu and Kodo are stripping the skin off the bull that has been sacrificed in honour of the young Dicko bride. Seydu's son Samba is off collecting firewood. Always optimistic, fifty-year-old Pooro is singing and clapping to encourage the young slave-descending girls in her neighbourhood with their millet pounding in the royal compound.

  Only women of slave descent pound millet for festivities in the Dicko family and it has become an 'identity marker' connecting someone to his/her slave ancestry.[1] In many ways, ritual assistance symbolizes the continuity of a past relation in the present, a form of commemoration in the present. However not all Kau family members will be working today as some are in town and others have manumitted[2] themselves. Various other people will also be helping, for example, women of slave descent among Tuareg (FF: *Bellaaɓe*) are contracted during the dry season as seasonal labourers and engage in domestic activities for the royal family of Dalla and they will also pound millet today. Elder Kau slave descendants who help the royal Dicko family with similar chores are not rewarded in cash although the seasonal *Bellaaɓe* immigrants (slave descendants in Tuareg society) are. Such inequalities in rewards demonstrate the complexity of today's

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[1] Hardung (2003: 94) made a similar observation during a wedding ceremony in northern Benin.
[2] In Chapter 5, I explain how manumission works.

hierarchical relations. Master-slave relations have never been uniform nor have they evolved unilinearly from slavery through clientelism into contractual relations. Analyzing changing hierarchical relations according to such modernization theories is futile. Instead, relevant questions in relation to legacies of a hierarchical past in the present are those that do justice to the wide variety of responses to their status by people of slave descent and their freeborn former masters. This variety depends on the time, place and the socio-political dynamics: Stigmatized status was forced on to newcomers such as Bella for example, others such as Kau family members managed to opt out by migrating and finally there are those like Pooro who temporarily (re-)engage in and benefit from relations of dependency.

When the guests arrive in the afternoon even the dust cannot hide their bright coloured clothes. Some of the male visitors are wearing spotless white outfits with gold plaited stitching. The contrast with the outfits of the working slave descendants of the Kau family is striking: My neighbour Dikoore is not even wearing sandals, one has to guess the original colour of Seydu's outfit and young Samba is wearing a T-shirt full of holes. They are clearly not wearing their best garments for work but even when they have finished work and changed for the party, the contrast remains. Differences in status between slave-descending Dikoore and royal Kumba Dicko can be seen from the differences in their dress, haircuts and behaviour. Dikoore's outfit is of an inferior quality and the design of the cloth and the style of her clothes are somewhat outdated. My host Suleymane is dressed in white, which Dikoore's husband Seydu describes as 'putting on airs and graces' as he himself would never dress so ostentatiously. However, even Suleymane in his flashy white garment lacks the golden stitching that most members of the Dicko family can afford and the appearance of the slave-descending Kau family is not as impressive as that of the freeborn Dicko family members.

Observing my neighbours in relation to their patrons (their former masters in the Dicko family), I am surprised by their modest appearance but also their humble behaviour. Instead of their familiar noisy quarrels, I see them as silent observers who only move when asked to render service to a freeborn, for example taking a crying (freeborn) child, serving water or distributing cola nuts among the guests. While my interpreter and I are given a place at the centre of events, my Kau neighbours take seats faraway at the back, echoing the argument that status positions correspond to the places occupied.

Although for me as an outsider it took time to become acquainted with certain stylistic preferences, once I had more or less mastered them, I realized how ritual celebrations[3] undeniably underscore difference. They are a magnifying glass through which the social boundaries between social status groups can be cast. The above observations reveal how activities (work), behaviour, place and appearances are influenced by people's relative status in their society.

Central to this chapter is the way status positions come with expectations of style in the cultural field of hierarchy. The preceding chapters have demonstrated how inequality of status was widely accepted in pre-colonial, colonial and in post-slavery Fulɓe

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[3] I analytically separate ritual contexts from other work contexts realizing that this distinction is not tenable in practice. Rituals can only be understood as daily lived realities of their actors (performers). Bell (1992) underlines this by taking a processual approach of ritual, which she calls 'ritualization'.

society. The introduction to this thesis identified the cultural field of hierarchy as a common ground of belonging and identification for freeborn and slave descendants, and this Chapter discusses how the cultural field of hierarchy generates expectations regarding specific styles that people ideally have to abide by in accordance with their ascribed social status.

The first section of this Chapter analyzes how belonging to and partaking in the 'cultural field of hierarchy' is done on a continuum of two variable styles: The patriarchal style and the loyalty style. They complement and reinforce each other, which is why I have coined them 'stereo styles'. The second section describes possibilities for mobility within and between these styles. I use here the typology of social promotion proposed by Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 19) called 'informal affect' or 'affective incorporation'. Affective incorporation is a change in status that occurs in the personalized sphere of emotions and sentiments as opposed to legal changes in formal status. Affective mobility has to do with the esteem and affection in which people are held in practice. Although some slave-descending Kau family members are treated with the greatest respect, they may not be entitled to the basic rights many less-respected commoners in society enjoy. Their legal incorporation does not correspond to their affective incorporation. Two main aspects of this affective dimension of social mobility for the Kau family in Dalla will be described: Link-up and chiefly positions for slaves. This affective dimension offers social mobility to those who maintain ties with their former master and is the major difference with the dimension of worldly success.

The third section is a form of social promotion that Kopytoff & Miers (1977) called 'worldly success'. It is the dimension of change that becomes possible outside the direct relationship between the Kau and the Dicko families. In fact, this dimension is composed of those changes in social mobility of slave descendants that are not related to their formal and/or affective incorporation (the two other dimensions). The so-called worldly mobility of the Kau family with case material on floating patrons, the monetization of labour and emigration are also described.

'Stereostyling' the cultural field of hierarchy:
The internalization of belonging in Fulɓe society

It is my second month in Dalla and I am starting to recognize faces and make connections between people. At the market, I recognize the butchers who sell meat as the husbands of the slave-descending women I have interviewed in the ward where I am staying. Further down, near the well, I recognize my neighbour Seydu and his son who are making mud bricks. Later on, I realize that this is quite common: In Fulɓe villages in the Haayre region, most of the brick makers and butchers are of slave descent (and/or seasonal immigrant workers) and do physically demanding jobs that are looked down on and that the well-off would never engage in. Also, these are activities that are associated with and are overtly qualified by some as 'slave labour'.

Their work makes arranging interviews with my neighbours of slave descent more difficult than those with members of the royal or imam family. Freeborn Dickos have

their daily activities but always seemed to be able to make time for me. If they felt like it, most of them could arrange for someone else to do what needed doing.

Noble women, like Kumba Dicko, invariably spend their days in their houses engaging in tasks that do not involve much physical effort. Kumba Dicko spends most of her time plaiting colourful reed mats, has her millet pounded by a Bella worker and on market days, orders what she needs from one of the slave descendants who come to great her in the mornings. What a contrast from Dikoore and Pooro who are busy pounding millet, grinding peanuts and preparing and selling foodstuffs either at home or at the market.

While butchering and brick making are typical activities among the male members of the Kau family, their women engage in domestic chores and sell prepared foods at the market. The Kau family thus continually engage in labour that links them to their not-too-distant slave past.

To understand how the cultural field of hierarchy was shaped and internalized over time by the Kau and Dicko families, I will briefly describe the history of labour relations during King Yerowal's reign (1911-1966). Chapter 1 discussed the differences in labour between those slave groups living in Dalla who mainly engage in domestic labour and the slave-descending Riimaayɓe on the slave estates who are mainly engaged in cultivation. This is a very general feature of the organization of slave labour in the Sahel (Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 43; Meillassoux 1989; Klein 1989). These two slave groups both belonged to the Dicko family but had different rights and duties. While most estate slaves (Riimaayɓe Haayre) were allowed to keep their land as first settlers,[4] their harvest was taxed by the nobility. Their main occupation was cultivation, although some specialized in cotton weaving or music making.

In contrast, house slaves (FF: *Maccuɓe Wuro*) had no entitlements to land and rarely cultivated it either. Their occupations were more geared towards giving personal assistance to the ruling family in terms of tax collection and guarding the royal palace, its granaries and the prisons. The royal slaves of the Kau family also took care of the horses, provided water and wood, and maintained the palace buildings. The slave women at the palace were either concubines or domestic workers. The most trusted among them worked as intermediaries and had public functions: They were the king's messengers and, as such, commanded other (subordinate) slave groups in the kingdom. Many slaves on the estates remember how the royal domestic slaves (Kau family) came to take their property or children on the king's orders. To date, the relationship between families of slave descendants on the estates (Riimaayɓe Haayre) and the royal descendants (Maccuɓe Wuro) are tense, a tension that shows in their refusal to intermarry.

During much of the twentieth century, possibilities for social mobility for the king's slaves were largely determined by their masters' social status. The slaves of Jawaanδo traders were likely to trade for their masters, while the slaves of warriors became soldiers. As Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 40) put it:

> The master sponsors the outsider's placement in the social structure and the master's position determines through what gates the outsider may enter it. The outsider's subsequent status and style of life are a function of this point of entry ... The Kau family entered through the gate of the political repre-

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[4]   As first settlers, they were allowed to occupy these lands (de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001a: 232).

sentatives of Fulɓe society. This is why they occupied the position of political representatives among slaves.

Different slaves occupied different kinds of jobs in the past depending on the position and specialization of their masters.

At King Yerowal's court, the royal Dicko family exploited Kau family labour. They were not rewarded for their work but there were few forms of protest since their masters had the monopoly on violence (beating, resale, rape). In Chapter 1, El Hajj, a freeborn informant pointed out how corporal punishment was the normal way in which his father 'educated' his slaves. Most Kau family members recall how their ancestors feared not only their masters' violence but other threats as well. There was the fear of sale (of relatives) to worse masters and the threat of one's kin being sold to a master in another country. The option of flight was not a viable alternative for most as running away resulted in either death or being enslaved by another kingdom.[5] In short, many forms of (symbolic and real) coercion worked because there were not many exit options open to slaves.

French abolitionist policy originally intended to eradicate all forms of slavery but in practice the French rarely intervened in domestic slaves' problems and focused on abolishing the trading in slaves and having slaves on the estates. In bard Amadu Baa Digi's memories, the abolition of slavery resulted in a redefinition of work relations. As Angenent *et al.* (2003: 101) put it:

> The following letter from the French prohibited slavery. People were no longer the slaves of their neighbours. All men are free, which we call a democracy. This troubled the Fulɓe a lot ... because they did not know how to work the land and their wives did not know how to take care of the household: Crushing, cooking and fetching water. Everything was done for them by their slaves. The French repeated that slavery no longer existed.[6]

Although several Fulɓe groups were forced to start working for themselves, the royal elite kept their domestic workers. French colonizers tolerated domestic slavery among the ruling elites because they needed their cooperation and authority over their citizens. This is the reason why the exploitation of slave labour at the royal court in Dalla maintained the status quo during King Yerowal's reign. Older informants, born in the 1930s and 1940s,[7] remember the corporal punishment they received as (child) slaves at the royal court. Allay Jangine (†2008) was one of these child slaves at the royal court. Although when I interviewed him in 2001-2002 he took pride in the fact that he was given jobs requiring trusted persons, such as guarding prisoners and the granaries, his memories of being a child slave were less positive and he recalled with indignation how one of Yerowal's wives once humiliated him by using his back as a board to wash clothes on.

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[5] The region was unstable due to raiding groups. More generally, the Sahel was characterized as a frontier zone for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This was the focus of a paper by Camille Lefèbre, which she presented during a workshop on 'Slavery and Mobility' in Liverpool, May 2010.

[6] This is author's translation. See for the French text: Angenent *et al.* 2003: 101.

[7] The following of my elder informants have passed away in the meantime: Allay Jangine, Asse Kau, Kumbaalde. To my knowledge Macca Maiga is still going strong.

It was only after Malian independence in 1960 and the death of King Yerowal in 1966 that the Dicko family started working their own fields themselves. The elite's perception of the innate impossibility of changing labour roles, as required by the French, met considerable resistance. Praise singer Baa Digi (in Angenent *et al.* 2003: 101) used the following metaphor: 'It is as if one gave a mortar to a European woman and told her to pound millet to prepare a meal. After only a day, her hand will swell and even start to bleed.'[8]

After independence, Mali's national government gave people of slave descent the same rights as any other group in society, at least on paper.[9] Slave descendants are entitled to own their own property, have authority over their own family and if injustice is inflicted upon them, they can turn to the courts. For the Kau family, the main switch from formal slave status to a more clientelist status is only now starting to take shape. With King Yerowal's death, the power of the royal Dicko family over their domestic workers came under close scrutiny and was increasingly undermined by national administrators, who were sometimes of slave descent themselves. However, although the Dicko family lost its monopoly on violence to French and national Malian administrators, from 1966 onwards the Dicko family replaced this with a monopoly on access to certain 'goods' (land, political authority) and continued to institutionalize forms of their former slaves' marginality.

A youngster from the Kau family[10] who is currently studying in Segou confirmed that his family only started to emancipate slaves after independence. When asked for a concrete example, he describes how his uncle, Saalumaane Adu, was one of the first to actually take pride (FF: *nayiraad*) in the fact that they were considered equal to the Dicko family:

> Saalumaane is considered a rebel by many because he was one of the first to refuse to do what the chief asked him to. At a certain point in time, the chief asked his Riimaayɓe (Kau family members) to make bricks for him and repair the entrance to his compound. Saalumaane was the only one who openly refused to do so. All the other Riimaayɓe in Wuro Maccuɓe obeyed.

When I asked Alu why Saalumaane did so, he explained:

> Saalumaane no longer took pride in his relationship with his former masters. Often the people who no longer take pride are the ones whose master is poor and worthless. For us (referring to the Kau family), thank God, we get all that we ask from our former masters (referring to the Dicko family). They reward us for everything, we never lack anything. Since the beginning of the 1990s, we have even been paid for building a house. Nevertheless, we continue to do many small tasks for free.

Interestingly, it was at this point that my freeborn interpreter Musa Dicko Jr intervened. He was well aware that Alu considered him his 'patron' and therefore assured him that he should not feel ashamed about whatever he wanted to say. He encouraged Alu to behave as if he (the interpreter) were not there. But Alu did not change his loyal tone and continued to express pride in walking in the footsteps of his ancestors.

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[8]   This is author's translation. See for the French text: Angenent *et al.* 2003: 101.
[9]   In remote areas, such as the Inner Niger Delta, there are villages where people of slave descent are still working their fields without being able to keep any of the harvest for themselves. It is claimed by their former masters. In one village, people of slave descent started to work at night to store their harvest in their granaries before dawn. Seku Bocoum, personal communication, Bamako, 2006.
[10] Alu Paate Tambura Jr, interview with interpreter Musa Dicko Jr, Segou, March 2007.

> Since my grandfather obeyed your grandfather, I take pride in doing the same. When I am in Dalla for the feast of *Tabaski*, I always assist the Dicko family with their sacrifice and butchering their animals. That is how my ancestors found things (FF: *Tawaangal*) and this is why I continue to do them this way.

Alu's discourse demonstrates how he is more conservative than his older uncle. The past alliance between master and slave remained central for Alu, while other youngsters of his generation have slowly started to take different directions offered by alternative alliances and possibilities. It is often the mobile youngsters or migrants who have most possibilities and are least dependent on maintaining ties. Bard Hama Amba explains how the younger generation heard stories about the atrocities of their (grand)parents' enslavement but they do not have such personal memories or experiences. There is no longer a personally embodied experience in which their memories of hierarchy are incorporated, which explains why the current generation of youngsters no longer feels respect (FF: *Teddungal*) for their parents' former masters. They have fewer difficulties in asserting their independence and refusing orders.

Age and generation are not unilinearly defining the position and attitude of members of the Kau family. Slave descendants are a heterogeneous and diversely emancipating economic group. Despite homogenizing stereotypes in which both freeborn elites and slave-descending clients stress continuity, current labour divisions are diversely carved out by personal historical trajectories and contingencies. Some, like Alu, continue to defer to those who they consider their former masters, while others, like Saalumane, explicitly do not. The ways in which the relationship between freeborn and slave descendants are shaped today vary according to individual characteristics, historical trajectories, wealth, perceptions of opportunity as related to one's stage in life, gender, social control of the surrounding context and kin obligations.

The cultural field of hierarchy as performed in 'stereo styles'[11]

Chapter 1 defined styles as performances of identity (see Ferguson 1999). I have used these in combination with the notion of sub-cultural style to describe the behaviour, rituals and, more generally, the way in which Riimaayɓe have (not) integrated into freeborn society. In this section, the two main styles that together make up the 'cultural field of hierarchy' are central: The patriarchal style and the loyalty style. The first style, which corresponds to the behaviour of many freeborn, is called the patriarchal style and is defined as comprising all those performances that bring the performer closer to the 'patriarchal ideal' described by Manchuelle (1989b). The patriarchal style comes with an ideology of 'nobility' (FF: *Ndimu*), which is linked to the capacity to delegate mobility, physical labour and immoral behaviour to others (clients). I define the opposite style as the loyalty style. It is the style by which clients try to obtain favours with an influential or wealthy patron.

A combination of the loyalty and patriarchal styles is what I propose calling 'stereo styles', which complement and are dependent on each other. I add the word 'stereo' to Ferguson's (1999) style concept for two reasons. Firstly, both styles are based on deeply

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[11] I defined my use of the notion of sub-cultural style as informed by Ferguson (1999) in the introduction to this thesis.

rooted stereotypes of a common slave history. The cultural field of hierarchy ultimately often romanticized an ideal division of labour and behaviour among different groups in the area and, for example, linked slaves to land in ideological opposition to freeborn Fulɓe who are stereotypically associated with cattle and/or world and religious power. These stereotypical distinctions are an important legitimization for the cultural field of hierarchy in the discourse of many informants. Although these stereotypical distinctions have hardly ever corresponded with actual practice, they are instrumental in defining belonging to Fulɓe society.[12]

The second reason for using the additional prefix is that each style exists by virtue of the other. So the patriarchal style can only be performed to the fullest by loyal followers who engage in the loyalty style, and vice versa. So the patriarchal style and the loyalty style reinforce each other. The word 'stereo' metaphorically reflects how, in combination, these styles 'sound' better. The two styles share common elements and it is possible for a person to act somewhere between the two extremes and to draw on both styles in different contexts. As Ferguson (1999) describes for the cosmopolitan versus the localist style, one does not move from one style to another in a day. The cultural competence to engage in each is something that takes time, effort, resources and various forms of social capital. Although the social status of slave descendants is stereotypically expected to be specialized in the loyalty style rather than the patriarchal style, within their own status group and family context they often 'perform' the patriarchal style as well. On the other hand, mighty patrons ideally perform the loyalty style *vis-à-vis* God, for example. The most loyal client in a one-relational context (*vis-à-vis* one's master) can be a very authoritarian patriarch at home.

The two styles come with certain expectations and morality. I will describe how deviant styles are socially sanctioned and therefore important aspects in the socialization and internalization of the cultural field of hierarchy.

The patriarchal style

> In daily life it is important for an individual in Fulɓe society to 'have people'.
> The presence of *Yimbe am*, which means 'my people', is narrowly related to
> one's social position and status in society.
> (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 137)

'Having people' is an important principle of social organization in the patriarchal style and in understanding people's positions in the Fulɓe culture of relatedness. The cultural field of hierarchy, and more specifically of nobility, is a moral order closely associated with adulthood generating responsibility over dependants. The people one has responsibility and therefore authority over, namely dependants, are called *koreeji* (FF) in the Haayre dialect. Only adults can have *koreeji* as the term refers to the spouse or children

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[12] Many slave descendants do not only engage in cultivation and those who become wealthy often become owners of large herds. In the past, not all slaves were only cultivators and some herded cattle with their nomadic masters. Even Allay Jangine, who used to occupy an important position as a royal slave, spent most of his life herding cows with the former chief of Dalla (†2010). In practice, the activities of the various groups have always blended and shifted.

of an adult man or woman, and defines adulthood and adult responsibility (Berndt 2008: 164).[13]

In Fulɓe society, the family is a kin unit with a patrilineal bias. The 'ideal' compound consists of a man and/or several of his brothers, their wives, children and their children's spouses. This family ideal has however always been subject to an enormous variety of relationships. Not everyone was related through blood to the compound head because compounds have always drawn in immigrants, clients with debts, sons-in-law, cousins and so on. However within the compound there is a hierarchy where strangers, youngsters and women are defined as juniors in relation to the senior head of the compound. The head was responsible for the well-being of its members and heading a compound with dependants was impossible for slaves. They were denied access to their own offspring and 'having people' was never recognized for them, and was even impeded, through the institution of endogamy (Chapter 3).

While slaves were not entitled to establish their own families and thus lacked authority, they were ideal clients who were forced to contribute to the authority and nobility of others. Slaves were necessary for the freeborn nobility. Sharkey (1994: 189-190) describes how in Sudan:

> ... elites had relied on some slaves to farm their lands, though they valued slaves as a whole for a loftier reason: The enhancement of status and proof of power that the possession of slaves could bring ... Indeed, the greatest service that slaves may have provided to their owners in the 19th and early 20th century - through the eyes of the owners themselves - was not so much to ... boost their regional economy, but rather to enhance their social status and prestige.

Patrons are persons (usually male) who, by using their authority,[14] delegate less prestigious tasks, functions and styles more generally to their clients. So a father delegates the making of tea to his son, like a mother delegates the sweeping of the compound to her daughter. This system applies across layers of society and is strongest for heads of families and compounds but is also played out in hierarchical differences between older and younger unmarried persons and between the genders.

A central aspect of power and nobility in the Haayre region was control over the mobility of others (mobility capital). From the outset, enslavement meant that a person was forced to go and live elsewhere and this removal following capture was an explicit form of 'forced migration' (Lovejoy 2009). The first and probably most important aspect of the patriarchal style that still defines labour relations is the extent to which patrons (freeborn elites) control their clients movements. While mobility has been described as the norm rather than the exception among Fulɓe cattle herders (de Bruijn *et al*. 2001), immobility became a luxury to strive for among the sedentarized Fulɓe of Dalla but was only possible by controlling the mobility of their slaves and other clients like herdsmen, traders and craftsmen. Freeborn Fulɓe controlled the mobility of their slaves and used them to deliver messages, cultivate their fields and gather forest products or wood for construction. The ruling Weheeɓe still have most of their tasks involving movement delegated to their former slaves: The collection of taxes, assistance

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[13]   *Koreeji* in other *Fulɓe* groups refers to neighbours rather than kin. For more on *Fulaaɓe* in Mauritania, see Ciavolella 2008.

[14]   Descent and genealogy are important in defining one's authority and status.

during travel, the distribution of voting cards, and so on. The immobility of the elite has been possible due to their control of the mobility of their clients.

Besides controlling one's own mobility and that of others, the ability to have others working for oneself is frequently mentioned by informants as the single most defining feature of nobility and authority in the patriarchal style. Burra Yero Cisse defines nobility as the possibility to use slaves as one's personal property: 'The slave allowed to the freeborn person (FF: Diimo) to preserve his noble ideology (FF: *ndimaaku*) by limiting as much as possible his contacts with manual work' Camara (1995: 14). And McDougal (2007: 173) explains that 'because the issue was not "freedom" versus "slavery" but rather "freed" versus "non-freed", the acquisition of rights to slave labor or slave ownership affirmed one's non-slave status.' Outsourcing certain forms of labour liberated not only freeborn men but also freeborn women from the need to work or move around in order to survive. In the memories of hierarchy recounted by the local bard, the (gendered) division of labour was part and parcel of being noble.

> Moodi (an Islamic scholar who brought Islam to Dalla) stressed that the nobleness of the nobility is not complete if black people cannot be enslaved. People say 'you, you are a noble woman: Enter your house, do not work, do not ground the millet, do not prepare the food!' But if there is nobody to work for you, your nobility cannot be real. If you do not have a servant, you are obliged to work yourself ... The law says that noble women are supposed to sit down but the law does not forbid slave women from going out to work.[15]

To date, there are concrete ideological rules related to the patriarchal style that limit the mobility of freeborn women. A freeborn married woman, like Kumba Dicko, is only allowed to leave her compound on important occasions.[16] Going to the market as a married noble woman remains taboo. This is why outdoor activities are delegated to clients or youngsters (a female slave descendant or young noble child), who will be sent in their place. Other tasks, such as preparing a baby's food or fetching water, are also delegated to former slaves. In 2007, I interviewed another noble woman called Dicko Djounou. We met in Douentza and as she insisted that nothing had changed in relations between the Kau and Dicko families since King Yerowal's reign, I asked her what forms of assistance her former slaves give her today. She explained how the porridge she was feeding her child at that moment had been prepared by one of her domestic assistants (French: *Une de mes captives*) the night before.

Clients need patrons and patrons have to behave in certain ways. Their clients will leave and thus 'punish' them if they do not comply with expectations. Patrons also therefore have their obligations to respect. The saying 'nobility obliges' (French: *noblesse oblige*) is especially relevant for noble women. It is in the female realm that the cultural field of hierarchy as based on status differences is proudly guarded.

The patriarchal style is not something one naturally has but it needs to be activated on the basis of not only ascribed status and authority but also wealth and influence.

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[15] Translated from French: 'Moodi a compris que la noblesse des nobles n'est pas complète, si les noirs ne peuvent pas êtres faits des esclaves. Si on dit, toi, tu es une femme noble: Entre dans ta maison, ne travaille pas, ne pile pas, ne prépare pas le repas, s'il n'y a pas quelqu'un pour piler, préparer et travailler pour toi, ta noblesse ne peut pas être véritable. Parce que si tu n'as pas de servante, tu es obligée de sortir et travailler toi-même ... La loi dit que les femmes nobles soient assises, mais la loi n'interdit pas que les femmes servantes sortiront pour travailler.' (Angenent *et al.* 2003: 69)

[16] This would also encourage their becoming lighter skinned and fatter.

Moreover, being freeborn was never a fixed boundary for being able to have clients. McDougall (2007) describes how the defining criterion for being a master of slaves in Mauritania, according to Islamic interpretation, was not necessarily the fact that one was freeborn but rather that one had been freed from the duty to be loyal to someone else and that: 'to be master did not necessitate being 'free', only being 'freed' (*Ibid*.: 172). This is why the children of slave concubines and slaves owning slaves could develop patriarchal styles themselves in Dalla. Some patrons, like the Dicko family, are better capable than others of accumulating clients and the position of patron is an almost self-fulfilling prophecy for this family. Since they managed to maintain an influential position through education and political occupations throughout the French colonial occupation, they were able to keep the monopoly on important status resources such as land, wealth, authority and movement. These resources, in turn, reinforced their position as patrons and they even attracted the slave descendants of other impoverished patrons who became their clients. 'New' clients such as these underscore the flexibility in patron-client relations.

The loyalty style

Most slave descendants of the Kau family behave very modestly in relation to their former masters. In the Haayre region, being modest is expressed in Fulfulde by the verb that also literally means to make something smaller (FF: *Fandinkinaade*). If someone is modest, he makes himself small (FF: *omo fandini*). Modest slave-descending Riimaayɓe know their place (FF: *Anndude hoore*) and thus avoid being reproached for behaving in a superior manner.[17]

'To their host communities, slaves often represent a subversion of familiar concepts of place, culture and bounded community. By their very definition they transcended locality' (Argenti & Röschenthaler 2006: 38-39). Slaves were often encouraged, or at least expected, not to behave in a way deemed noble. Dancing, singing and music making are thus stereotypically 'slave' activities. Negative attitudes towards dancing and music are explained by reference to the religious conventions prescribed by Islam. So married noble women are not supposed to dance (or at least not for too long), while slave-descending women can dance for as long as they like and generally behave unlike nobility (Riesman 1977: 127-130).[18] Slaves, and by extension slave descendants, are less restrained in their behaviour and have fewer rules to observe (Riesman 1992: 216; Griep 2005: 131). However in relation to their patrons and former masters, slave descendants' behaviour is subject to constraining rules and they have to respect their place in the social order.

Each style comes with restrictions but people strive for honour in both. When I was collecting old slave songs (FF: *Direre/guluro*), older people of slave descent confirmed that they knew such songs but did not want to sing them because they now consider themselves good Muslims and no longer want to lower their status by doing a shameful

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[17] Not knowing oneself and one's position is expressed as *maani ada andaa hoore* (FF) and behaving too grandly is *maani ada ganda* (FF).

[18] Hardung (1998: 207) gives a detailed account of the ways in which Fulɓe slaves in Benin were forced to behave contrary to the rules of Pulaaku.

thing, such as singing. Singing, according to one of them, would be like 'breaking a promise towards God' and is thus a moral issue.[19]

Slaves were supposed to be loyal and modest and the relationship between a noble master and his soldier of slave origin could be very affective and close. Loyalty is idealized in the oral history of Silaamaka and Pulloori. Silaamaka is the noble master and the story ends when Pulloori, his personal slave assistant, decides to give his life to save that of his master Silaamaka (Seydou 1972).

Abu Lughod (1986: 79) explained the same mechanism in her study on honour in a Bedouin society. She described how, in a hierarchical system, those who cannot comply with social honour, or only partially so because they find themselves in a dependent position, have an alternative 'code of modesty' to resort to. This voluntary modesty is crucial for obtaining social honour in a bottom-up approach.

> One way for those at the bottom to resolve the contraction between their positions and the system's ideals, is by appearing to defer to those in authority voluntarily ... What is voluntary is by nature free and is thus also a sign of independence. Voluntary deference is therefore the honourable mode of dependency. (Abu-Lughod, 1986; 104)[20]

Acceptance of a marginal place within the dominant culture of relatedness was the best way for descendants of domestic slaves like the Kau family to maximize their own interests. A concrete application of the loyalty style is the naming of one's children after a wealthy patron. My host Suleymane, for example, named one of his sons after his patron Musa Dicko, the former mayor of Dalla. Other examples are the daily greetings and small gestures (bringing water, pounding millet), which are strategic acts of deference to maintain contact and 'smooth the difficult hands' (FF: *Junngo makko ina tiidi*) of a patron.

While Islamic legislation has encouraged forms of integration and turned slaves into clients, such clients were equally expected to exhibit the loyalty style of behaviour. Islamic ideology encourages the loyalty of slaves towards their masters and masters to be good patriarchs (see Chapter 5). In Dalla, the religious elite encourage clients to defer to their former masters who, in turn, will defer to God. Being loyal to a master is believed to include serving God well too. Loyalty to a master was encouraged with the promise of manumission.[21] Such forms of religious institutionalization of deference and loyalty are discussed in the next Chapter.

Loyalty can thus be defined as working in the service of someone else, but another aspect is that one is explicit about compensation. The idea of begging (French: *quemander*) and asking for help, food or gifts is associated with the loyalty style and working for someone else and asking for favours are forms of behaviour that have a negative connotation in the patriarchal realm. For those like the Kau family, performing

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[19] The old man finally sang some of these songs because of his grandson. In Fulɓe society, grandsons have privileges and this is why my research assistant Amadu contacted his best friend, a maternal cousin to his and a grandson of the old man. It was Amadu's cousin who managed to convince his old grandfather to sing some songs.

[20] Such voluntary deference also exists among freeborn and is expressed in ideas and behaviour related to the concept of shame (FF: *Yaage*).

[21] Manumission is the freeing of a slave by his master. According to this legal Islamic procedure, the freed slave obtains the status of client. See Chapter 5.

the loyalty style is an honourable way of making a living and they take pride in their loyalty and deference.

Applying stereo styles to the family networks in Dalla

When applying stereo styles to the Kau and the Dicko families, one could say that while the Kau family has incorporated the loyal (humble/subservient) style, the Dicko family has engaged in the patriarchal style. Both styles reflect memories of hierarchy and expectations that are often directly related to interactions over past decades.

Engaging in the patriarchal style was almost impossible for most of the slaves of the Kau family during King Yerowal's reign and most of them were not entitled to have their own families, had no say over their children (or their marriage) and could only take a restricted number of wives within their own group. Access to social relations with a restricted number of other low status groups contributed to their immobility.

Being a patron and leader does not only depend on ascribed social status (descent) but on the ability to outsource labour and mobility. Chapter 1 described how slave soldiers (FF: *KommongalluuBe*) acquired property as a result of assisting the elite in raids and some even ended up buying their own slaves. However King Yerowal was furious when one of his wealthier estate slaves bought himself a slave, thus violating the loyalty style that was expected of him. Here the difference between legal and affective status comes to the fore. Buying one's own slaves was impossible for royal slaves (the Kau family) but some slave groups managed to become patrons themselves by buying their own slaves. One's capacity to patronize has thus always depended on the ability to provide the necessary resources (wealth, authority) to clients. As a result of various floating trajectories in the past, there is even more variation in today's post-slavery relations among Fulɓe and their former slaves, ranging from almost master-slave relations at one end of the spectrum of patron-client relations to a reversal of the hier-archical relationship, which has turned former clients into patrons at the other end.

Over the generations, the Kau family obtained more rights and has been able to climb to important positions in which the loyalty style was especially rewarding and they take pride in their close ties with the Dicko family. Some gained the trust of their master and became soldiers, while others were entrusted with guarding prisoners or granaries.

Stereo styles kept the Kau family dependent on their former masters and these same stereo styles have kept their masters in a patron position *vis-à-vis* their former slaves. Stereo styles are thus a fundamental and functional aspect of the cultural field of hierarchy and have been internalized by the descendants of slaves and their masters who uphold these styles depending on their formal social status. Internalizing styles contri-butes to a sense of belonging in Fulɓe society, which is maintained through social con-trol.

Sanctioning not knowing one's head

Central to knowing who you are (knowing your head) is respect for the rules of conduct in society. If not shown deliberately, such respect can also be enforced through social sanctions. Suleymane offers a clear example of this: He is not as modest and loyal as

most of his peers in the Kau family and on returning from working elsewhere, he adopted his own style of doing things. This was why, earlier in this chapter, we found him wearing a white outfit when, according to his peers, this was too ostentatious for someone in his social position. Suleymane is exceptional in many ways, being the only one in the Kau family to send his daughters to school.

In 2001-2002, I observed how non-compliance with existing rules and expectations was immediately signalled and corrected. There was an incident between Suleymane and the Dicko family during the annual *Tabaski* celebrations when they were all taking pride in the number of sheep they would butcher for their wives and family. I then asked Suleymane how many animals he would slaughter and, to my surprise, the answer was none. It was not because he lacked the money but rather because, according to the Dicko family, his Kau family members were of slave descent and were not supposed to make their own sacrifice due to their status. However he added that when he was in Burkina, he would always butcher a sheep in honour of his freeborn wife Hadriatou.

Some days later, Suleymane informed me that he had decided not to butcher his master's sacrificial animal anymore and would send his cousin Kodo to do it in his place. This would allow him to butcher his own animal right after morning prayers on the first day of *Tabaski*. I still wonder to what extent my conversation with him influenced his decision: This is a methodological concern that is difficult to answer. When I asked him, he told me our conversations had had nothing to do with it but there were several moments like this during my fieldwork when I sincerely wondered whether it had been my questions that had triggered changes in the behaviour and ideas of informants. My interpreter agreed with me on this point.

On the first day of *Tabaski*, right after morning prayers, members of the Kau family walked up to the royal compound. Suleymane however was missing: He had gone home to change his clothes and butcher his own animal. This appeared to cause a lot of discussion between the then chief of the slave descendants, Allay, and the Dicko chief and mayor. In the midst of the consternation, Kodo was sent to find Suleymane, who ended up butchering animals for Mayor Musa Dicko's family. My interpreter Umu suggested that we leave the Dicko compound once Suleymane arrived to avoid increasing his feelings of shame. In the coming days, Suleymane was insulted and reproached both by his own and Dicko family members for his disrespectful behaviour. In the end he only sacrificed his own animal on the third day of *Tabaski*.

Suleymane returns several times in this chapter as his progressive and rather deviant ideas have often caused him trouble. Over the ten years I have known him, I have witnessed how he increasingly started to give in to his co-villagers' expectations. He became more modest, realizing that the loyalty style would yield more results than sticking to his deviant principles. Not only did he experience pressure from the Dicko family and was reproached for not sticking to the loyalty style, he also experienced constant pressure from his own family and his peers. The most striking example was the recent marriage of his daughter Aafi. Suleymane's family did not approve of his attempts to educate his eldest daughter but, thanks to his close ties with the well-educated mayor of Dalla, Suleymane managed to have her live with the Dicko family in Douentza so that she could complete her high-school education. According to traditional

ideas of marriage, Aafi had been promised to the son of Suleymane's eldest brother Hama (a parallel cousin) and for years Hama had been insisting on the marriage taking place because he felt the girl was becoming too old to get married. Since Mayor Musa, who had been hosting her, died in 2008, his widowed wife had not been supportive of her education either and in April 2010 Suleymane finally gave in to pressure from his older brother. Aafi married Hama's son in Dalla in May 2010 and she will now never be able to complete her education even though she was expected to graduate in June 2010.

Suleymane's case outlines how knowing oneself is not only a matter of personal stylistic competence. Style is performed within the limits of what is socially acceptable and can be reinforced in practice by officious rules of social control and morality. The cultural field of hierarchy incites people to stick to tradition and to know their position in society. Moral rules of behaviour related to the social organization of hierarchy make it difficult to remove the Riimaayɓe's stigmatized status. There is a discourse about respect for ancestors: People are supposed to walk in the footsteps of their ancestors and to respect 'what is found', i.e. to respect their ancestors' example. Most references to tradition (FF: *Tawaangal*) underscore the importance of transgenerational continuity. The son of the chief in Dalla pointed out that not respecting customary rules is 'like taking off the pants of your old man (father)'. It would dishonour one's father in front of other family members and be shameful. The best way of avoiding shame is by conforming. Conformity is enforced through strong social control in both styles, and social control reminds people that being considered pretentious is a social sanction in itself. As Riesman (1992: 200) put it:

> It is important to recall, for instance, that not only are Fulɓe and slave descendants aware of differences in what their behavioural patterns express, but also that they are constantly calling attention to them in everyday conversations. These everyday references serve not only to keep certain images constantly in people's minds, but also have the weight of sanctions: Fulɓe who act like slave descendants degrade themselves, while a Diimaajo (singular form of slave descendant) who acts like a Pullo (singular form freeborn Fulɓe) would in many contexts be considered uppity.

Although many informants insist that education and the passage of time have changed many things, it remains difficult for the younger generation to defy the authority of their elders. Their room for manoeuvre is still restricted, as I demonstrate with an incident Musa described. Musa Tambura is a 25-year-old descendant of slaves (FF: *Riimaayɓe Haayre*) from the village of Sigiri (Map 5). His father had made a lot of money, set himself up in Douentza and became the neighbour of former mayor, Musa Dicko, in Douentza. When his father died, Musa was adopted by Musa Dicko who ensured he received an education and he went on to study at university in Bamako. He described the following incident to illustrate how the generational gap is hard to overcome for his generation.

> I was on a visit to Dalla with Vieux, one of my Dicko friends. We came from Douentza and when we arrived at Vieux's house (the royal Dicko family compound), Vieux ordered a person of slave descent called Bilal to go and fetch water so that he could wash himself after the journey. Bilal however refused to do so and Vieux decided to get the water himself. On seeing this, Vieux's uncle got really angry. He told Vieux – in the presence of Musa and Bilal – that, after all, slaves (FF: *Maccuɓe*) were born to take care of the needs of others. He explained how slaves are like dogs and that you have to train them to obey you. Then he ordered Vieux to hit Bilal. Vieux refused to do so. (Here Musa added that Vieux had refused to do so because he had been to school.) To save his authority, Vieux also

added that if one day Bilal should ever need him, he would not help him. (This was his punishment.) Vieux's uncle was not satisfied however and ordered Bilal to bring the requested water.

With a deep sigh, Musa added that the man of slave origin did go and get the water. For him, the case demonstrated how in some contexts and with some conservative elders, it is still complex for him and his peers to change the cultural field of hierarchy.

However, not only the loyalty style of slave descendants is controlled by others. Patrons and freeborn noblemen are equally subjected to gossip, insults and sanctions if they do not respect the cultural field of hierarchy. The expression *noblesse oblige* seems accurate in this context.

With the following case of Musa Dicko Jr, I show what repercussions can follow from not respecting differences in behavioural styles. The case demonstrates how the weight of sanctions works. Musa Dicko Jr is a youngster of the royal Dicko family studying in Bamako. While on holiday in his home village Dalla in 2006, he was shown that he had crossed the social boundaries and was reproached for not respecting the moral rules related to his 'patriarchal' noble style because he had eaten rabbit meat. He went out hunting with his slave-descending friends (FF: *Maccuɓe Wuro)* but because of his freeborn status, Musa was not allowed to give in to his hunger (a bodily need) and eat rabbit as it is considered impure. Since he was hungry and his friends were eating with relish, Musa decided to taste some. This was much to his regret later on because the 'bad mouths' (FF: *Hururuy*) gossiped. Musa was insulted by co-villagers, both free-born and slave descendants, for behaving 'like a slave'. Gossip sanctioned his mistake, i.e. the non-realization of bodily control. He had crossed the moral boundary of the ideology of nobility (FF: *Ndimu*). People insulted him for his 'slave behaviour' and when he walked by people would call him 'slave' (FF: *Maccuɗo*) in public and some even considered Musa to be cursed (FF: *Huɗaaɗo*).

Musa was sanctioned for not maintaining the patriarchal ideal. It is not only people of one's own social status groups who 'protect' the social boundaries and sanction each other. Slave descendants can just as easily sanction the freeborn if the expected patriarchal style is not respected. The notion of 'difficult hands' directly refers to the threat of social sanctions by clients over their patrons. If a patron is greedy and is not reciprocal in the way clients expect him to be (as related to status, wealth, power, gender and seniority), people will 'dirty his name' (FF: *Bonnde inde makko*). If a patron is not as generous as would be expected according to his position, he will be sanctioned with reproaches and social control.

Maintaining a good (moral) reputation in the face of the community is controlled by (mostly discursive) sanctions in the public sphere. A person who crosses the social boundaries (Musa, Suleymane and Bilal in the above-mentioned examples) is insulted for putting on airs and graces (FF: *Maani ada ganda*) and not 'knowing himself' (FF: *Maani andaa hoore*). Sanctions involve gossip and insults, which are sources of shame (Riesman 1977: 77-79; Riesman 1992: 29, 46-49). As described in Chapters 2 and 3, shame is an emotion that needs to be avoided at all costs (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 212-213). Insults referring to characteristics associated with slaves, non-Muslims[22] and

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[22] In the Haayre region, it is especially the Dogon that are referred to as people who do not pray (FF: *Heeferɓe)* (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 215). To be categorized as such is a grave insult.

blacks,[23] such as impatience, lying, selfishness and ingratitude, are especially powerful insults for noble freeborn.

Religious curses (and blessings) also effectively prevent people from crossing certain boundaries (Hardung 2009: 119-123; N'gaide 1999). During interviews, informants started whispering when discussing sensitive issues in the hope of avoiding being cursed for passing on secret information. They thus underlined how God hears everything. And finally, repercussions for not respecting tradition and ancestral customs (FF: *Tawaangal*) are often expressed by using the powerful idiom of witchcraft (FF: *Sukunya*) (Botte 1994: 115-116).

All the above-mentioned forms of social control are common and the effect of discursive sanctions in the form of stereotypes, insulting jokes, pejorative vocabulary and degrading remarks should not be underestimated. Social control and sanctions are an important mechanism for understanding socialization and the internalization of the cultural field of hierarchy. They contribute to social control and the maintenance of the hierarchical status quo, which is reflected in the stereo styles at either end of the spectrum. This section has demonstrated how the cultural field of hierarchy is internalized and maintained through social control by knowing oneself and performing the right stereo styles. The following sections describe how stereo styles have been adapted and manipulated in the practice of affectionate relations between people.

Affective mobility within stereo styles

Based on Kopytoff & Miers's (1977: 18-20) analysis of the 'dimensions of marginality in relation to mobility', this section describes how changes in degrees of social mobility among slave descendants occur in the dimension of informal affect. I prefer to use the concept of informal affective stretch of social status, which refers to the fact that although inequality between ascribed status groups is recognized, it does not necessarily result in unequal treatment *per se*. The strictly legal content of social status was stretched and slaves and their descendants were incorporated thanks to personal relations of affection that developed over time.

Historians and anthropologists alike, such as Hall (2009, 2011 forthcoming; Miers & Kopytoff 1977), point to affective elements in master-slave relations in the past. Hall (2009) for example concludes from nineteenth-century correspondence between slaves trading for their wealthy masters that they enjoyed a great deal of respect and were accorded relative freedom: They were allowed to study, had books, married freeborn women from other ethnic groups and managed their own family compounds. These slaves became important traders with a more-or-less independent status and are addressed in respected terms in the letters. The trust bestowed on them demonstrates how their affective status corresponds more with that of freeborn clients than with their formal status of slave. However, according to their formal status, they could legally still

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[23] The Fulfulde term *Haaɓe* (sing. *Kaaɗo)* literally means bitter and with the term *Baleeɓe* (the colour black) is used to refer to other African ethnic groups such as Dogon, Bambara and Bozo. The terms *Haaɓe / Baleeɓe* thus refer to all African populations considered inferior by Fulɓe. The exceptions are Arabs, Songhay and Tuareg.

be resold. In other words, within the legal status of 'slave', there has always been room for individual appreciation and exception, which I propose to call 'affective stretches' in the cultural field of hierarchy.

When it comes to contemporary literature, forms of affective stretch in hierarchical relations are mentioned by Janson (2002: 158), who analyzed patron-client relations between Mandinke praise singers (French: *Griots*) and their patrons in Gambia and describes them as hierarchical relations imbued with affection. In her description of labour relations between people of slave descent and local freeborn Fulɓe in northern Benin, Hardung (1998: 214) uses the concept of asymmetrical, institutionalized rapport (French: '*rapports asymétriques institutionalises*').[24] In my view, a combination of these concepts would come closest to the affective mobility some groups of slaves and their descendants in the Haayre region enjoyed. The hierarchical relations between the Kau and Dicko families can be characterized as asymmetric and hierarchical but they were imbued with affection too. Emotional affect in practice thus 'stretched' the boundaries of slave status considerably, contributing to social mobility in this category.

Although many slave descendants have been formally recognized as freeborn citizens by the Malian nation state, such rights in Fulɓe society are overshadowed by the central importance of Islamic legislation and ideology. Despite their immobility in the legal Islamic realm, slave descendants in Dalla enjoy considerable social mobility in their affective relations with their former masters or patrons. Affective mobility is the esteem and affection in which people are held. Although some slave descendants may be treated with the greatest respect and affection legally, they may not even be entitled to the basic rights many less-respected commoners in society have. Legal incorporation does not always correspond to affective incorporation as actual forms of incorporation can explicitly diverge from legal status. The affective status of most Kau family members is much higher than their legal status, which still corresponds to that of a slave. Some have tried to gain recognition for their higher status by requesting manumission according to Islamic prescriptions but this legal procedure to upgrade the rights and entitlements of slaves is hardly ever granted and does not lead to freeborn status.

So although some slave descendants of the Kau family enjoy great respect and affection, according to Islamic legal practice they are not even entitled to the most basic rights many less-respected commoners in society have.

Affective stretches in 'link-ups' between the freeborn Dicko and slave-descending Kau families

That slave descendants of the Kau family are still considered to be the property of the freeborn person they are linked to is explained by informants from different backgrounds in Dalla through references to animals: The owner of the cow is the owner of its calves. As Olivier de Sardan (1975: 117) noted for the Songhay society in Central Mali, this comparison is commonly used in informants' discourse and in juridical

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[24] She specifically refers to the asymmetrical institutionalization of work relations in which inequality remained and became part and parcel of making a living in daily life.

Islamic prescriptions (Brunschwig 1960).[25] Another freeborn informant described how the rope (French: *la corde*), which used to tie slaves together is still present (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005).

This idea of slave descendants being personalized property belonging to individuals is institutionalized by important Fulɓe families. Most freeborn youngsters in the royal and imam families[26] are given and/or appointed someone of slave descent and often of the same age.[27] This is what I propose to call a 'link-up', an arrangement either made officially at birth or as a present at the time of circumcision. Link-ups used to be publicly announced on major ritual occasions and today such linked-up pairs (a youngster of slave descent from the Kau family and a royal youngster from the Dicko family) will spend most of their youth playing together, going hunting, learning how to seduce girls, sharing their secrets and in their teens sleeping together in so-called boys' houses. However within these friendships, each person is expected to behave according to stylistic performance: The link-up can be seen as the ultimate institution that matches two individuals who ideally end up performing in stereo style.

Most of these linked-up pairs remain close friends for the rest of their lives. An example of a link-up from the older generation in Dalla is that between Macca and the former chief (†2009). As a child, Macca was linked up with the chief and they went out herding together and typically adhered to the same political party (called ADEMA). Macca performed the loyalty style by hosting the chief's visitors and in 2002 when Macca assisted the chief on his annual taxation tour in Dalla, the chief performed the patriarchal style by rewarding Macca with a goat for his loyalty.

Another example of a link-up in the younger generation is that between Samba Dicko (Yerowal Dicko's grandson) and Suleymane Dauda (Kau's grandson). Suleymane and Samba both emigrated but engaged in different trajectories: Samba Dicko left to study while Suleymane went to work. Samba these days works for the World Bank in Bamako, while Suleymane worked as a cultivator in Burkina Faso and then returned to Dalla to educate his children at home. They are still in touch but as they do not live in the same locality, Suleymane started to assist Musa Dicko, Samba Dicko's father and the former mayor. After the mayor's own link-up assistant died, Suleymane became the mayor's right hand and he engages in more or less the same tasks as Macca: Guiding taxmen in the villages near Dalla, hosting the mayor's personal visitors, supporting the same political party (PSP) and so on.

Another task that most of the male linked-up slave descendants of the Kau family provide the Dicko family with is ritual assistance. On important occasions in the Dicko family, descendants of the Kau family help with typical 'slave' tasks: Butchering and

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25 Both cattle and slaves are symbols of wealth and are metaphorically interchangeable. Many stereotypes draw an analogy between slaves in their relations with Fulɓe masters.

26 This historical link-up as forged between former masters and slave descendants is not applied between masters and slaves of all status groups. In Dalla, the religious elite of the imam's family and the ruling Dicko family follow this tradition. Among the freeborn traders' families in Dalla, there is only one family (Alu Bah Kaado & Umaru Boolo Bocoum) who also have their own *Maccuɓe* linked up. During *Tabaski* celebrations, their link-ups will, for example, butcher their sacrifice for them.

27 Interviews with Amadu Amiiru (aged 26), Seydu Dicko (aged 29), Aai Dicko (aged 18), without interpreter, Bamako, Mopti 2007.

barbequing an animal, cooking and fetching wood and water. Like their male counter-parts, noble Dicko women are also linked up with a personal slave descendant from the Kau family.

In Dalla, noble Dicko women may be assisted by their link-up assistant at important transitional points in their lives: When they become a widow[28] or after giving birth. Not only the linked-up peer but often also older women of slave descent are asked to assist the noble mother for at least 40 days with the feeding, dressing and care of the baby. In 2002 they received the then standard reward of a length of cloth[29] and FCFA 500 for such assistance.

Maintaining good link-up relations and demonstrating one's loyalty can be done by greeting and visiting one's link-up partner regularly. Many slave-descending woman of the Kau family greet the royal Dicko family every morning and in many ways the linked-up couples look like friends, but legacies of master-slave relations have remained in these stereo-styled relations. The exchange of labour is not reciprocal but uni-directional. A Dicko woman would never assist her slave-descending link-up friend when she gives birth to her first child. Assistance in the form of labour is typical for the loyalty style and will be rewarded by the patron in kind. Slave-descending men and women claim that they are not 'formerly enslaved' by this link-up relation because they are not rewarded in cash. Most of them, on the contrary, express pleasure in maintaining close relations with 'their' patron and appropriate the loyalty style as a source of pride.

The elite are conscious of the asymmetry of this link-up relationship. This is under-lined by Amadu,[30] who explains that it is increasingly difficult to openly claim in public that a certain person is being 'given', and thus belongs, to you. This is why his father and other members of the Dicko family now use a different vocabulary when official-izing the link-up between two persons. They avoid offending slave descendants by calling them Maccuɓe in public and use different, less shocking words to talk about those they consider their slaves. They speak of 'those we own' (FF: *JeyaaBe*) or more euphemistically 'those we see' (FF: *Jiyaaɓe*). Such language reproduces the cultural field of hierarchy precisely because it is so implicit and the contestation by those stigmatized is less overt. This use of language demonstrates how hierarchy became increasingly delegated to the sphere of less tactile and more subtle social boundaries. And although the cultural field of hierarchy may have been relegated to the sphere of secrecy and taboo, it is omnipresent but with a subtlety that is difficult for outsiders to interpret.[31]

Not only the older generation but also freeborn Dicko youngsters in their twenties used to be linked up with personal assistants. Some have migrated and are no longer in touch on a daily basis but, even in the diaspora, the majority of freeborn men and women from the royal (and Islamic) court in Dalla have been linked up with at least one

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[28] Chapter 7 describes how Kumba, a noble woman whose husband died, was supported by her linked-up female former slave during the period of mourning.

[29] Known as *pagne* in French (FF: *Disaare*), this is a length of printed cotton cloth. The cheapest quality printed cotton in Douentza cost FCFA 1500 in 2002.

[30] Amadu Amiiru Dicko, interviews in Bamako, Mopti and Dalla, 2006-2007.

[31] See also Zempleni (1996).

personal slave descendant at birth or at their circumcision.[32] The children of intellectual members of the royal family who live in the mayor cities of West Africa and in Europe remain linked up with such an 'assistant'. There is flexibility as to who exactly is going to fulfil the function of the linked-up partner. This becomes clear if we look at the case of Amadu, the son of the chief of Dalla who is studying in Bamako and Mopti, who was linked up with 'his *diimaajo*' at the time of his circumcision. However since this person lives in Torobani (Map 4) they did not often spend time together. Over time Amadu got along better with his schoolmate Nou, who is of slave descent. Today, Amadu always hangs out with Nou and both of them became stereopartners.

Nou is working for the customs in Mopti and whenever Amadu is on a visit to Mopti they spend time together. Nou shows his loyalty by accompanying Amadu for hours or while waiting at the bus stop to return to Bamako or to travel on to Douentza. By so doing, Nou risks losing his well-paid job but explains that being with Amadu is more important. Many people consider them to be the typical *diimo-diimaajo* pair and they behave in stereo style.

Another example of the same generation (youngsters in their twenties in 2007) is that of freeborn royal Moustique Dicko who is studying in Bamako and his linked-up assistant Alou who is studying in Segou. When we visited Segou in 2007, Alou offered us his services, insisting on his loyalty by saying he was prepared to do 'anything' for us. He arranged a motorcycle for Moustique and helped us trace and arrange interviews with informants from Dalla. When we spent time together, he would invariably be the one making the tea, bringing water and so on.

An example of a link-up in the diaspora is the relationship between Ibrahim and Bilal. Ibrahim is the 12-year-old son of Oumar Dicko, an important politician from the royal Dicko family of Joona, and was linked up with Bilal, the son of a slave-descending Tambura family from the village of Joona. The two children are always together and could be considered best friends, but their friendship is embedded in structural differences. Ibrahim Dicko (Oumar's freeborn son of royal descent) is studying and wears smart clothes, while Bilal (his linked-up friend of slave descent) does domestic work in the service of Oumar's family (like his parents) and is dressed far less well.

The link-up relationship between the Dicko and Kau families continues to be attributed a great deal of importance: It is an institutionalized way of perpetuating the cultural field of hierarchy by matching pairs of people who are ideally expected to perform in stereo style. If the link-up is successful, affective stretches and the social promotion of slave descendants can result.

Chief of slave descendants

The most respected way of social promotion for individual Kau family members is to become the chief of the slave descendants. So within the Kau family, a chief (FF:

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[32] Chapter 7 discusses the distance between linked-up clients and patrons (due to migration) and how it can be overcome by paying for transport. For example, Madame, the eldest daughter of the former mayor of Dalla, pays for her personal assistant to go to Bamako if necessary. This demonstrates how those performing the patriarchal style regulate the mobility of their clients.

A*miri)* is chosen, usually the oldest man in the group.[33] There is no official ceremony to enthrone this chief and changes in the position are made public by the village chief. Some suggest that it is a position that was created by the French to organize forced labour. In an early French archival document of 1894 however, the function of the chief of slaves (FF: Amiiru *Maccuɓe*) is described.

> As I already mentioned before, the slaves of the Fulɓe are grouped in their villages, but near the Fulɓe huts. They have a chief, a captive like them who is an intermediary between captives and the chief of the Fulɓe village concerning the questions that are in the communities' interest.[34]

This does not necessarily suggest that it was a French colonial invention as the colonial administrator in the excerpt describes it as a peculiarity among the Fulɓe. However it may be, each ward of slave descendants in Dalla[35] still has its own chief (FF: Amiiru *Maccuɓe*). The Maccuɓe of Wuro Ferro have Pate Baa and in Wuro Burram it is Sambo Baa. Reflecting the hierarchy among freeborn Fulɓe families, all of these ward chiefs are under the command of the chief of the Kau family in Wuro Mango. The ward chief of Wuro Mango is not only the chief of the royal slave-descending Kau family, but also of other slave descendants formerly belonging to freeborn families (traders, religious scholars) living in Wuro Mango.

Born in the 1930s, Allay Jangine was one of the most loyal slaves of king Yerowal. In the 1990s he occupied the position of *Amiiru Maccuɓe* in Dalla and the social mobility he achieved in his lifetime (†2008) is remarkable. In my 2001-2002 interviews with him, Allay[36] described himself as a privileged court slave who directed other slaves. He became linked to the royal court as a slave because his grandfather was given as a pawn to King Yerowal to cover a missing tax payment. The story goes[37] that because there was a conflict between two Jawaamɓe families, both of which were striving to get close to the royal family, one of them advised the king to tax his rival extra. The king did so and ordered the trader (FF: *Jawaanɗo*) to sacrifice his most beloved slave as a tax payment, which is how Allay's father became a slave of the royal Weheeɓe family. Some informants indicate how this story is shameful as being pawned is the least honourable way of becoming enslaved. It is more heroic when one can claim to have been violently captured against one's will in a decisive war.

However, this less honourable way of enslavement does not seem to have affected Allay's personal career or his chances of promotion. As a child, Allay started working for King Yerowal and milked the royal family's herds, took the cows to the bush to graze and taught the sons of the chief and the king how to herd. (Hence his nickname of

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[33] Author's translation from taped interview with Moodibal, Beweejo, Bamako, April 2007 in French: 'Le chef des Riimaayɓe, c'est le plus âgée d'entre eux. Ils lui donnent cet honneur. C'est comme le chef de village, le seule critère à part son âge, c'est que sa mentalité soit bien (s'il n'est pas fou quoi). Chaque quartier a un chef Riimaayɓe. Eux aussi ils se sont organisé, ils voient le plus âgée d'entre eux ou bien celui qui est le plus proche des Riimaayɓe, on va lui donner la chefferie de Riimaayɓe.'

[34] Archives national du Mali, FA-1E-156/August 1894.

[35] Other Fulɓe villages in the area, such as Booni and Joona but even big towns like Mopti and Douentza, still have their Maccuɓe wards headed by an *Amiiru Maccuɓe*.

[36] Allay Jangine (†2008), interviews, Dalla, 2001-2002.

[37] Email from Musa Dicko, April 2006.

'teacher', FF: *Janginoowo*).[38] The king liked him and entrusted him with additional responsibilities, such as guarding the keys to the granaries and the prison. Allay became one of Yerowal's most trustworthy councillors and gained prestige and influence *vis-à-vis* other slaves. In 1968 when Yerowal died, he was linked up to Hamidu, Allay's best friend among Yerowal Dicko's children. Hamidu Dicko some years later became Dalla's chief, which obviously helped to improve Allay's career too.

Allay Jangine occupied the position of chief of the slaves for about ten years, which meant that on ritual occasions he used to coordinate the activities of his fellow slave descendants. He decided which slave descendant would slaughter the goats and sheep for which freeborn and which women would prepare what and when for whom. Not only on ritual occasions but also for other kinds of labour, such as the construction of houses or the harvesting of a field, did the village chief generally ask Allay to organize labour for him. Moodibal Dicko explained how he called on Allay who was then the chief of the people of slave descent (FF: Amiiru *Maccuɓe)* when he needed labour in his fields.

> During the rainy season I did not have enough labour in my own family, and thus I presented myself with the chief of the slaves and told him I needed him to send people to help me cultivate my fields. *Amiiru Maccuɓe* sent me some of them to assist me.

Although Allay always emphasized how he took pride in this prestigious position as mediator between the Kau and Dicko families, after some months of regular interviews, discussions and visits he increasingly began to voice his frustrations at the matrimonial rules of endogamy (whereby his kin do not have access to freeborn women). In an interview in 2002, he described how he had tried to manumit himself in about 1995 and, despite his lifetime loyalty to the Dicko family, was not granted this according to Islamic legislation. The more trust my interpreter and I built up, the more Allay started to make use of the discursive space offered him to be critical of the way his slave status had marginalized him. He was frustrated because he had enjoyed social mobility through his affective relations with the Dicko family but this had not affected his formal status or that of his children. There would still be limitations on who could marry his children and how things are organized. His voicing of his frustration is a methodological dimension that came out on several occasions and proves the importance of relations of trust between informants and the ethnographer on such sensitive issues.

The task of this chief to convince people to work for the royal family has become increasingly arduous. Many youngsters in the Kau family no longer see the advantage of working hard for patrons who do not reward them as they used to. When I was in Dalla in 2001-2002 and Allay was *Amiiru Maccuɓe,* there was some conflict because many of the slave descendants he had told to butcher for their former master had not gone there straightaway after prayers. Allay as chief of *Maccuɓe* had to send those who did turn up to go and get the others. Those who had not come on their own initiative, indirectly demonstrated their resistance vis-à-vis a relation that no longer suits them by delaying their 'duties' as stereopartners.

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[38] Interview with youngster A*lu Paate Tambura*, Segou, 2007.

Allay was the chief of slaves until 2003 when he had to stop for health reasons. Diougal, one of the eldest Maccuɓe in the ward and who had been manumitted by his master, replaced him but he went blind and has been replaced by Suleymane who still occupies the position. Today Suleymane divides most of the tasks among his fellow slave descendants. He is also the appointed intermediary in cases of conflict, such as when herds go onto Riimaayɓe fields and destroy their harvests. Whenever there are important gatherings in the Dicko family, Suleymane is the one who invites all the inhabitants of slave descent from *Wuro Maccuɓe*.

When asked whether this position is rewarding for Suleymane, people indicated that it indeed is, as he gets money to pay for his petrol if he has to drive somewhere. He also receives presents from the international visitors and NGO representatives that he hosts. That Suleymane benefits from his position can be seen from the number of chickens and goats in his compound: He is quite well-off. Social mobility by becoming 'chief of slaves' is thus an interesting trajectory for a lucky few in the Kau family.

Not only in the different wards of Dalla are there chiefs of slaves. Even in the Fulɓe wards of cities like Mopti and Djenne, one can ask for the chief of slave descendants. In Dalla the name *Amiiru Maccuɓe* has not changed into *Amiiru Riimaayɓe* and this is quite telling for the perceived continuities in hierarchical relations by the elite. The old name, which is much more pejorative, has been maintained.

Social promotion through geographical and relational mobility

This section describes how the changes in degrees of social mobility of slave descendants occur in what Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 18-20) have called the dimension of worldly achievement and success. This includes all forms of social mobility outside of or in direct competition with former masters and patrons. These alternative forms of social promotion have been obtained by bypassing the ideology of Fulɓe hierarchy.

Three aspects of worldly mobility are described: The possibility of becoming loyal to new patrons; the way emigration has changed perceptions of authority and new forms of remuneration. Some youngsters have earned more money by migrating, some have obtained political influence as a result of their studies and others have benefitted from their ability to maintain their own wealth and have increased their success *vis-à-vis* their impoverished former masters.

Matching stereo styles: Maintaining, abandoning or multiplying alliances

For the Kau family, the most strategic way of obtaining the 'informal affect' (Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 19) of the Dicko family has been by specializing in the loyalty style. However, the loyalty style is not only used by slave descendants to relate to their former masters. Today most slave descendants instrumentalize their freedom to express their loyalty to several patrons at the same time. This flexibility in relating to chosen patrons has introduced an element of competition between patrons and could not have been played out by slave-descending clients to the same extent before. Slave descendants now have more possibilities to strategically enact the loyalty style because there is more flexibility concerning who is allowed to relate to whom. Restricted access to social

relations was what made slaves so vulnerable in the past but opportunities for slave descendants to relate to others have increased.

Even if one's ancestors never worked as slaves for a particular patron, slave descendants these days have and are taking the opportunity to switch patrons. The case of Pooro, a 50-year-old Kau family member is illustrative of how multiple patrons allow her to increase her profits. This is most explicit when she engages in the loyalty style to several freeborn families during ritual events. When I inquired about her activities during the *Tabaski* ceremonial animal sacrifice[39] in 2002, she explained:

> This morning I went to Diki's (a wealthy trading Jawaando woman in Wuro Mango) to help her cook rice. This afternoon I helped people of the royal court do all different kinds of things: I cleaned the rice, I fetched water and so on. They (the ruling Dicko family) will probably not give me anything in return, they are too mean. But they are the masters of my husband (her husband was working in Bamako at that time). Tomorrow I am planning to help the family of the former master of my mother (the imam's Moodibaaɓe family). Today the imam gave me cloth as a reward for my assistance (she shows it laughing). Both families are rich, but the Weheeɓe are rather stingy. I am not quite sure if I will go back to work for the royal Weheeɓe family tomorrow again. It is risky not to maintain good relations with everyone though: We are supposed to respect and fear our former masters.[40]

The more patrons Pooro can demonstrate her loyalty to, the more she will gain. When discussing her choice of patron, Pooro indicates that there is only one patron who she does not choose herself: Her mother's former master's family. She has to be loyal to them because of the historical bond of link-up with them. At the same time, she explains that she defers to her husband's master's family because this family is so influential. Good relations with them are an important asset in times of need. One day Pooro's husband was short of money to pay his taxes but the fact that Pooro had often assisted the ruling Dicko family turned out to be an advantage. The Dicko family lent them the money to make their tax payments. Pooro finally explained that she assisted Diki because the tradeswoman ensured her place at the market where Pooro sells roasted peanuts and she had an interest in maintaining her sales spot.

While royal domestic slaves used to be linked up with only one family, and often with one specific individual member, Pooro demonstrates how slave descendants these days have obtained more freedom and can opt for showing loyalty to several patrons. She herself demonstrated loyalty *vis-à-vis* three patrons. Since the Kau family is close to the Dicko family who rewards them well, Kau family members hardly opted for being loyal to new patrons. Their wives, like Keleere's wife Pooro are necessarily loyal to at least two patrons: Their mother's and husband's former masters. Most of the older slave descendants of the Kau family have chosen to remain dependent clients of their former masters, as is demonstrated by Seydu, Macca, Diougal, Hama, Pooro and Dikelayya.

In contrast to this family, several slave groups of less wealthy and more marginalized masters are no longer loyal to their former masters but chose new patrons to match in stereo style and became loyal to new patrons. Examples are youngsters who get along with individual freeborn who are other than their link-up partner. Pooro's daughter no longer helps her grandmother's former master and thinks her generation has finally understood that they have no obligations *vis-à-vis* so-called masters who do nothing for

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[39]   In Mali this is known as *Tabaski* (French), *juulde layya (*Fulfulde) and *El Aid* (Arabic).
[40]   Interview with interpreter Umu Sangare, Dalla, December 2001.

them. Most slave-descending women of this generation stress no longer see themselves as captured slaves (French: *Captives)*. In Dalla however, it is only the youngest generation that would make such bold statements. Another example of those who have switched patrons are the slave descendants of the Tuareg (FF: *Bellaaɓe*) who now do domestic work for the Dicko family during the dry season. Domestic labour was the task of female slaves (FF: *kordo*). Since the younger slave descendants are no longer as deferential as their parents were, the rural nobility is increasingly contracting seasonal domestic labourers from among the Bellaaɓe,[41] who arrive in the Haayre region looking for work on their north-south rural-rural migration. Thanks to both unpaid labour by voluntary deference of older Riimaayɓe women and paid contract labour with Bellaaɓe, noble Fulɓe women in the Haayre are managing to avoid engaging in tasks they consider degrading.

Personal affective relations sometimes develop between individuals or families that spontaneously show the loyalty style *vis-à-vis* new patrons. These attempts to link up however do not come with the same rights and obligations that the cultural field of hierarchy ascribes to linked-up pairs. Claims to obligations in the form of mutual assistance are considered more binding among those who had a master-slave bond in the past. The only original masters of slave descendants are those who owned their mother (and/or father) in the past. Such masters cannot refuse demands from their slave descendants and slave descendants cannot refuse to assist them with their labour either. Recognition of the link-up relation is accentuated in situations where social mobility and the independence of slave descendants are high, such as in Booni.

Many more people have attended school[42] in Booni, which several informants claimed is why people there are less dependent and more assertive. When a freeborn asks them to do something, they will insist that they are not obliged to do anything for them as there is no link-up from the past and there are no rights of ownership to force them to do things. Not only in practise, but also in the more symbolic domain of language, more slave descendants in Booni are openly refusing to be called *captif*, *maccudo* or anything referring to a slave past. In Booni, it is considered insulting if a freeborn calls someone of slave descendant a *maccudo* to his face. Open conflict and dispute may arise. This contrasts with the way in which the Kau family in Dalla, which enjoys high esteem *vis-à-vis* other slave groups, stoically accept insults and reproaches from freeborn Dickos with no signs of overt defence.

Pooro and the older generation of the Kau family indicated that they need to respect *la corde* with former masters and fear (FF: *Hulaade*) the repercussions (cursing, insults) from their former master's family if they refuse to do things. For them, the loyalty style is the easiest and most internalized way of ensuring access to relations that generate social security. This is why they prefer to invest in the loyalty style *vis-à-vis* several patrons, in contrast to the (royal) slave descendants in Booni who generally only display the bare minimum of loyalty towards their linked-up freeborn counterparts.

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[41] These are slave descendants of Tuareg. For more on these group in Northern Mali, see: Lecocq (2005) and for the same group in Northern Burkina Faso: Bouman (2003: 27).

[42] The first school building in Booni opened in the 1950s, while in Dalla it was only in 1982.

Like the floating populations described in Chapter 1, rulers and the ruled have switched positions. There was intergenerational mobility whereby groups who used to be the patrons now are the clients. This long-term instability in existing power relations has kept expectations of social promotion alive and the cultural field of hierarchy has been reconfigured by new clients displaying their loyalty to influential patrons. Those performing the loyalty style are always looking for patrons with the 'smoothest and easiest hands'. So performing the loyalty style is not something only slave descendants do *vis-à-vis* their former masters. It has become a more general strategy that can be applied by anyone willing to develop multiple allies and social networks.

Conclusions: Reconfiguring individual versus intergenerational mobilities

Most aspects of master-slave relations, based on a monopoly of violence for masters and no property rights for slaves, have disappeared over time. Stereo styles have been internalized and are sometimes instrumentalized by both groups but for different reasons, with both emphasizing their 'relatedness' in order to benefit from the cultural field of hierarchy in stereo style. Unlike slaves, most slave descendants are now remunerated for their labour and inherit their own property. The internalized cultural field of hierarchy nevertheless continues to motivate older people's activities and labour.

The first section described the cultural field of hierarchy by analyzing two opposing stereo styles: The loyalty style versus the patriarchial style and how the Kau family had internalized the loyalty style, while the Dicko family specialized in the patriarchal style in their relations with the Kau family. Ongoing forms of social mobility for the Kau family were considered in the following section. Social relations between slave-descending Kau and freeborn Dicko are asymmetric and hierarchical but offer room for 'affective stretch' at the same time. It was concluded that the institution of link-up and the position of the chief of slaves generate potential for affective mobility. Often those who have close ties with a wealthy patron prefer to explicitly stick to the loyalty style to partake in the wealth and influence of their patron, thus maintaining the cultural field of hierarchy and gaining something from it. Many older Kau family members invest in relations with their master to ensure a kind of social security. Their loyalty style *vis-à-vis* the Dicko family is a form of investment in social capital.

The third section described how freeborn and slave descendants coped with internal and external shifts in their relations. Over time, the exclusive link-up between master and slave has had to compete with alternative (patron-client) alliances. Some have changed their survival strategies completely by moving away and therefore becoming disconnected from relations. Those who have remained loyal to the Dicko family have tried to maximize their profits by performing the loyalty style. Increased access to cash has made the younger generations less bound to the kinds of social security offered by patrons. They have gradually developed a more independent discourse and identity.

I described how the status mobility of slaves should not be equated with a movement out of slave status because there has never been a single slave status and because most forms of social climbing of slaves and their descendants consisted of 'reconfigurations' (Rossi 2009a) of their status. Affective and/or worldly dimensions have generated social mobility for the Kau family in Dalla and between the generation of elders and young-

sters is the generation of (mostly) married men and women in their thirties and forties who are trying to disconnect from their former masters, for example by no longer forcing their children to work for their masters.

To conclude, the loyalty style is no longer seen as rewarding by those Riimaayɓe youngsters who have migrated. They have become used to higher, and often cash, remuneration and increasingly negotiate what is being exchanged. For the older generation, the loyalty style is still a valuable way of ensuring honour. The younger generation is specializing in becoming wealthy, which allows them to perform the patriarchal style instead of optimalizing an affective stretch in their ascribed social status through the loyalty style in the social network of their ancestors.

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Legal paradoxes of the cultural field of hierarchy

Contradictory understandings of freedom

Slavery is approached differently in every religion (Klein 1993a: 14-15). Islamic scholars in the Haayre region today have opposing ideas and interpretations about whether and how to interpret the legacies of slavery and slave status. This chapter demonstrates how blurred the boundaries between the freeborn, the freed and the non-free have become and shows the paradoxes and misunderstandings this may generate in the case of a slave-descending woman from Onga (Map 4).[1] Talaata's ancestors used to belong to a renowned Islamic scholar from the village of Nokara (Map 3) but in 1994, she decided to self-manumit, i.e. to purchase her freedom according to Islamic legislation, and prepared a gift by weaving a large number of cotton ribbons and added two big rams and some money. However the imam of Nokara refused Talaata's demand and her gifts, quoting the passage in the Koran that says that God considers people to be equal (FF: *Yimbe fuu potti*). In his interpretation of the Koran, as opposed to that of the imam in Dalla, Talaata has already been freed by State Law. Placing national State Law above Islamic Law, he insisted she need not resort to a costly process of self-manumission.[2] Often however, the contrary is true and many imams in the Haayre region, such as those in Dalla and Booni, continue to accept and reinforce differences in social status in their interpretation of Islamic legislation.

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[1]   Research assistant Burra Yero Cisse, interview in French, Douentza, 2007.
[2]   According to informant Burra, the story goes that when Talaata arrived, the imam was absent and she was put up by his family. Although the imam refused the gifts, his family members made the woman give the money and cotton ribbons to them. They made her keep the rams, which she took home. Unfortunately Burra did not know exactly why Talaata decided to liberate herself and how she felt once it was clear she would not obtain her freedom on paper. Since Talaata passed away, I could not verify this either.

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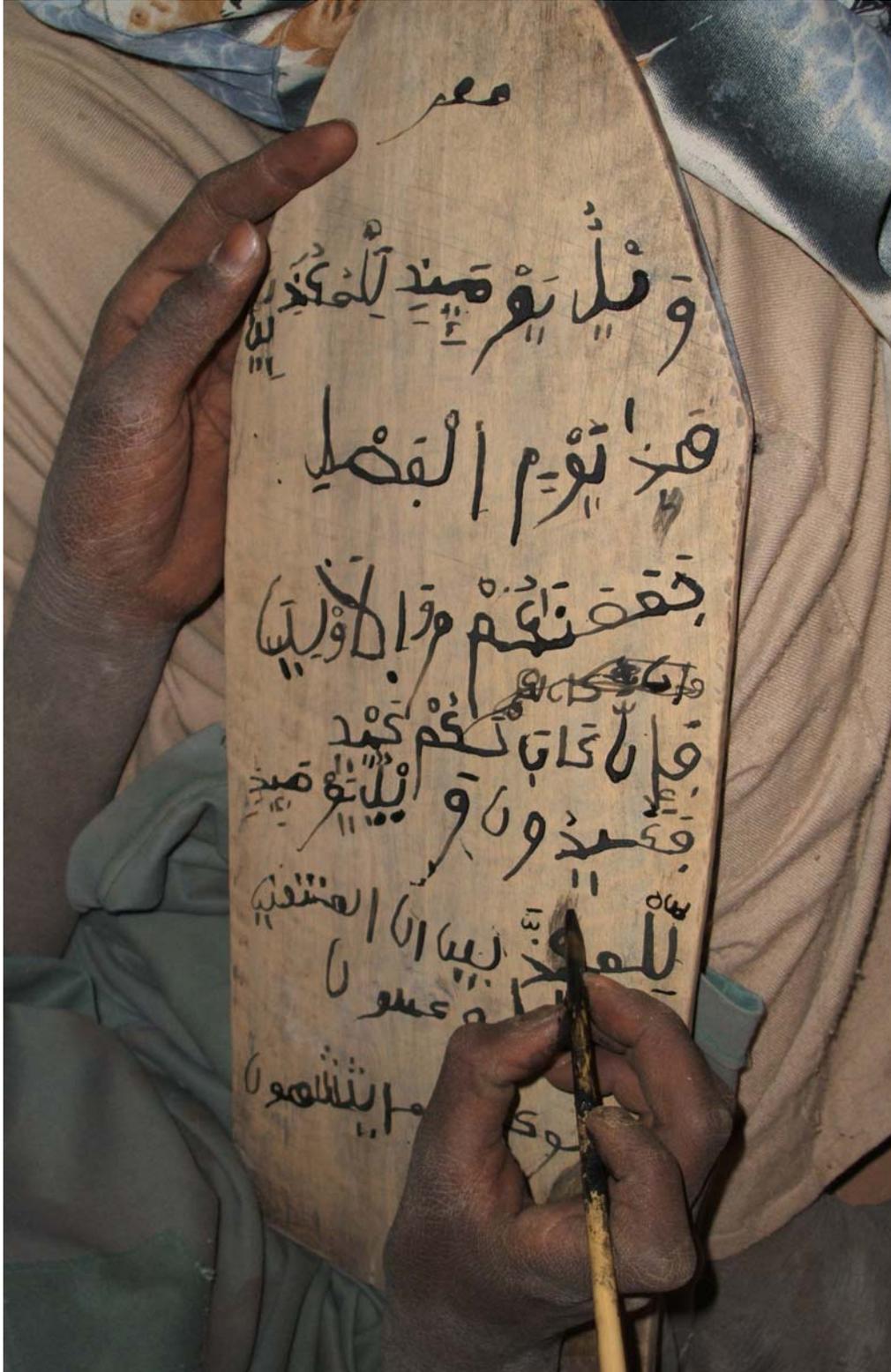
Photo 6   Coranic verses on a wooden writing surface

Talaata's story demonstrates not only the plurality in personal opinions among Islamic scholars but also underlines the paradoxes generated by the different legal contexts for slave descendants themselves. For some, being freed is something only God can provide. Only the religious realm enables them to be freed with dignity in the eyes of the community and God. They believe they can only be liberated before God and his Divine Law. Others accept liberty as being based on the secular ideas in the national constitution.

Islam has long been an instrumental excuse for freeborn warlords and religious scholars to conquer non-Muslim populations in the Sahel. Several FulBe kingdoms have been established on this basis: That of Fuuta Tooro by El Hajj Umar Tall, that of Sekou Amadou in Maacina in 1818 (Angenent *et al*. 1998: 11, 42-45) and so on. Sedentarized warlords and religious scholars among the Fulɓe in the Haayre region even claim to have converted to Islam before the arrival of Sekou Amadou and have a long tradition of emphasizing their religious zeal. Other social groups that converted upon conquest, such as pastoralists, slaves and their descendants, only joined the faith much later. Islam has become the only official ideological tool that is widely shared by all groups in Fulɓe society and by other ethnic groups in the region.

Being part of the community of Muslim believers (Arabic: *Umma*) became central to belonging to the Fulɓe community in the Haayre (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 92). The Haayre region is seen by outsiders as being Islamic although there is no one central leader. Dalla is a renowned old Islamic centre in the Haayre region. Nevertheless, the imam who died in 2007 was an important figure for many inhabitants in the region: He was the great-grandson of Moodi Tawhiidi, whose father is considered to have been an almost holy person.

Islam was the elite's ideology for a long time. Slaves used to do the work and had no time to study the Koran, which set the elite free to do so. Pastoralists and slaves in the bush only converted to Islam in the twentieth century and a mass of non-believing illiterates suited the elite well: Islam provided them with a high status and power (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a). While slaves were not allowed to establish their own family or to study, they contributed to underlining the authority and nobility of others.

Another reason why slaves in the Haayre region were not allowed to convert to Islam was that they would then have had to be liberated (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 172). Slave descendants consequently only became part of the religious realm quite late on, which has been an added reason for stigmatization. In fact, the political elite closely guard their primacy in Islam and do not accept others as strong Islamic scholars (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 173). They encourage difference and discourage demonstrations of piety by their Riimaayɓe. When observing the behaviour of people in Wuro Maccuɓe, it is clear that they, and especially women of the slave-descending Kau family, do not show signs of piety. They forget to veil themselves when leaving their compounds for the market and most do not pray regularly. This was in sharp contract with the behaviour of my pious interpreter Umu, who prayed five times a day, but was never accompanied by our neighbours in Dalla. The stereotype that slaves are not cultivated and are less pious is reinforced and Kau's descendants are ridiculed by freeborn Fulɓe if they demonstrably display religious zeal.

Slave status constrained access to certain social realms, and piety and religious status became the most common denominators for all status groups in Fulɓe society. This chapter focuses on social exclusion in the legal and religious realm. According to national jurisprudence, unequal status does not exist but Islamic ideology recognizes the unequal social relations that underpinned the institution of slavery. Islam reinforces 'stereostyling' by encouraging a system of begging (French: *quemandage*) and alms giving (Arabic: *zakat)*. In effect, Islamic ideology underscores aspects of the cultural field of hierarchy and, in addition, the passing on of descent and the inheritance of property are considered the prerogative of freemen. Inequalities in society are explicitly recognized.

This chapter addresses the centrality of religious ideology and practice in Fulɓe society. It starts with an explanation of slave status as it is interpreted in Malikite Islamic legislation, which is generally applied in the Haayre region. The second section explains how legal pluralism has blurred and sometimes reinforced the legal categories of freeborn versus slaves (and/or their descendants) and the third section deals with the religious trajectories of social promotion for slave descendants as officially recognized in Islamic legislation. The final section describes one of these trajectories in more detail, namely (self-)manumissions by slave descendants today. Reference is made to two manumission documents issued in the 1990s by the imams of Dalla and Booni. The central theme throughout the chapter is that legal pluralism generates paradoxes for all the parties involved and that the rigid ideological opposition between freeborn and non-freeborn is untenable when considering legal status in practice.

Interpretations of slavery in (Malikite) Islamic jurisprudence

> Islamic law insists that all slave owners have to take good care of their slaves,
> by giving them good food, dress them in quality clothes and give them good
> living spaces. Islamic law prohibits minimizing or torturing slaves.
> (Hunwick cited in Klein 1993a: 15)

Slaves had certain, although limited, rights in relation to their masters. They had for example the right to be given food and clothing, and were legally considered part of the Muslim community and so were allowed to pray and be Muslim. However, enforcing their rights sometimes conflicted with individual masters' decisions. Some for example never taught their slaves the most basic praying verses (Arabic: *Surat*) and as such were excluded from practicing religion. My interpreter could barely hide her shock at being the only pious woman who prayed regularly in the ward were we were hosted in Dalla (Wuro Maccuɓe).

'The justifications for enslavement, and the institutions were those given by Muslim law and ideology, so we may label this as Muslim slavery in Africa' (Manning 1990: 128). This 'Muslim Slavery' was described extensively in Islamic texts and there are texts by several scholars in the Malian Sahel region who specialised in legal prescriptions from the 15th century onwards.[3] In the Sahara in the nineteenth century, the

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[3] Lovejoy (2006) describes Ahmed Baaba, a scholar from (Mali) who wrote on the 'ethics of slavery in Islam'. Lofkrantz (2008: 27-43) describes scholars in the 19th-century Sokoto Empire (in present-day Nigeria) debating ransoming in the legal tradition of West African Islam. Lydon (2007) documents

sayings of the prophet (Arabic: *Hadith*) were interpreted in various ways. The Malikite doctrine of Islamic Law maintained the most elaborate body of rules concerning the rights of slaves (Lydon 2007: 391) and Malikite Law distinguishes between two categories of persons: The free and those who are not free (Hurault 1994: 91; Brunschwig 1960: 30). Unlike European legislation, which is based on Christian morality, and where inequality is unacceptable, this body of Islamic legislation institutionalizes inequality as a legal status and certain groups of people (slaves, migrants) are excluded as they are considered second-class citizens.[4] In the Sahelian interpretation of Malikite Islamic legislation, inequality is not problematized but is even prioritized. Slaves are legally denied the same rights as the freeborn, although this does not mean that they have no rights. While State Law is organized according to a mono-status ideology, Islamic Law is based on multi-statuses.

Islamic ideology and Malikite legislation profoundly marked Fulɓe society. Islamic Fulɓe scholars (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*) in the Haayre region mainly use legal texts based on Malikite Law but customary traditions have intermingled with this body of legislation over time. It is not the aim here to disentangle the sphere of customary from Islamic legislation, suffice to say that it is a particular mix with its own dynamics as interpreted, directed and applied by hereditary lineages of people with the status of Islamic scholars in the Haayre. I use the term Islamic Customary Law to refer to this particular hybrid mix.

Talaata's story indicates how imams preach different ideologies and have differing opinions on the legal status of slave descendants. Several scholars in the Haayre[5] today maintain that, legally, only free people can be fully practising Muslims, arguing that the legal category of 'slave' is recognized in Islam and should be maintained. Others contest such readings and emphasize that the prophet preached for slaves to be treated with great respect as if they had already been liberated.

Much therefore depends on the way in which Islamic legislation is interpreted, with interpretations ranging from dogmatic to liberal. Both extremes of the same religious continuum are described here but more attention will be paid to the more orthodox interpretations of Malikite Law because this is most widely practised in the Haayre.

According to the dogmatic interpretations of the legal body of Malikite legislation, the opposition between slave and freeborn could not be overcome. A slave could not obtain freeborn status but could free himself from aspects of slavery. Descendants of non-freed slaves are legally still treated as slaves but a slave could improve his position within the legal category of non-freeborn slave status. Often these legal improvements allowed slaves to come close to having the rights and duties of freeborn members of

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    Islamic legal culture and slave-ownership contests in the nineteenth-century Sahara (Mauritania) and Hall (2005a) describes debates on race and hierarchy, based on Islamic text written in eighteenth-century Mali.

[4]   The European legal system introduced a system of second-class citizenship that is external to society. As such, the idea of an equal society can be maintained. However, second-class citizenship came into existence, especially regarding refugees and migrants. See Fassin (2008) on illegal immigrants in France and Geschiere (2009).

[5]   But also among Fulɓe groups elsewhere in the Sahel. See Botte (1999a: 13-14) on Guinea; N'Gaide (2003) and Schmitz (2006/2009) on the Senegal River Valley, and Vereecke (1994) on Niger.

society because they could, for example, acquire the rights to own slaves themselves, buy their freedom and have access to a religious community. Nevertheless, they remain categorized as non-freeborn and slave status continues to be stigmatized and hereditary regardless of any improvements in one's (individual) condition.

Even for those who have improved their condition legally, the legal aspects of marginal slave status are not evident on a daily basis and it is only at times of conflict and crisis and at ritualized life-cycle moments that formal rights are considered. When someone of slave descent, for example, comes into conflict with a freeborn family over land rights, he will probably be told that he has no rights over land. And when choosing a marriage partner, a person may be reminded that they are of slave descent and are not allowed to marry a freeborn because legally they are still categorized as being of slave status.

Scholars at the liberal end of Islamic jurisprudence, like the imam from Nokara, are nuanced and do not take the existence of slave status as a given. As Saibou (2005: 863) observes for Fulɓe imams in northern Cameroon, these are often Islamic scholars who have studied abroad and they do not accept slavery as an institution today. Attempts by slave descendants in Malian Fulɓe society (Berndt 2008) to deconstruct slave status as a legal category have remained complex. In Mali, as in other countries in the sub-region, those scholars who criticize legacies of slavery by deconstructing religious arguments are often of slave descent themselves (*Ibid*.). Their credibility therefore remains problematic in the eyes of freeborn members of society.[6] This is a universal paradox: To efficiently criticize a system, one must (have been) fully part of it.

At the other end of the scale are the Islamic scholars who dogmatically interpret the Koran to reinforce the cultural field of hierarchy to their own benefit. N'Gaide (2003: 709), describing Fulɓe society in the Senegal River Valley, indicates how 'Islam transforms itself in an element of identification and in a pretext for the re-hierarchization of society.'[7] In this view, Islam is being instrumentalized by the elite to conserve their hegemony on nobility.

It is important to consider not only by whom and how rights are implemented but also *when* they are applied in order to understand how legal entitlements of different status groups do or do not work (cf. Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 52).[8] Chapter 1 discussed how, even though some slaves have enjoyed fair treatment in times of abundance, in years of crisis and drought they could no longer depend on their masters or rely on their legal bond of care and protection. Mauritanian scholar Ould Ahmed Salem (2003: 38) emphasizes that if the question of slavery is still recognized today in Islamic law, 'it is because some have a certain interpretation of the Sharia, an interpretation that does not recognize the abolition of slavery and contests it in the heart of the courts of modern law.' It is this tension that is addressed in the following section.

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[6]   Humery-Dieng (2010) describes how Senegalese novelists of slave descent are trying to get their stories legitimized.

[7]   In French: 'L'Islam se transforme en un élément d'identification et en un prétexte pour la ré-hiérarchisation de la société.'

[8]   As Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 52) see it: 'Too much emphasis on legal rules is dangerous because reliance on what happens or happened on one moment in time can obscure absolute legal entitlements which are only apparent in times of crisis.'

Legal pluralism: Islamic customary versus secular State Law

Talaata's case in the introduction to this chapter highlighted how multiple layers of legal interpretation have coexisted in the Haayre region. Slave descendants who 'pay' to be freed (manumitted) are a concrete example of a hybrid practice that, according to state law, does not exist. Reliance on Islamic Law is seen as a premise for some citizens to gain access to rights accorded by State Law, such as the right to perform the *Hajj* or the right to marry freeborn women.

The hybrid nature of legal cultures as it is applied in practice is known as 'legal pluralism' (Tamanaha 1993; Hesseling *et al*. 2005). Berman (2007: 1155) defines legal pluralism as: 'The complexities of law in a world of hybrid legal spaces, where a single actor is potentially regulated by multiple legal or quasi legal regimes'. Legal pluralism is almost synonymous with legal anthropology (Hesseling *et al*. 2005: 9) as it deals with the coexistence of law systems for a variety of plural social groups within one sociological unit.

Legal pluralism challenges monolithic conceptions of State Law and points to the simultaneity of existing systems, practices and interpretations of the law in social practice. Rights are thus not given entities but are culturally constructed things that cannot be essentialized (Tamanaha 2000). In legal anthropology, legal pluralism is considered to be the rule, not the exception. Likewise, in this chapter I indicate how the two legal systems are juxtaposed, overlap or even interfere in terms of the rights and social status of slave descendants.

The legal realms that currently coexist in the Haayre region are Islamic Customary Law and State Law. A realm that so far has not had any concrete application in the Haayre region is that of international bodies such as ECOWAS or Slavery International (see below). The potential conflictual nature of legal pluralism has been a topical issue in Mali's public sphere over the past two years. About 90% of all Malians identify themselves as Muslims and tensions over Islam in the 'neoliberal era' (Soares 2005) of the Malian nation are rising. The first draft of the '*Code Familiale*', which is part of the national and secular constitution that deals with family legislation, was rejected for a first time in August 2009 by important Islamic scholars and their followers for being too secular. Since then, there have been repeated demonstrations against the proposed new legislation as it does not include sufficient reference to Islamic ideology.[9]

To understand how the multiple legal regimes intersect and can even regulate the cultural field of hierarchy in the Haayre region, the historical legacy of each of the co-existing legal realms in the Haayre region will be considered in what follows.

Customary Islamic Legislation is a legacy of practices in pre-colonial Muslim West Africa, where religious practices used to be the responsibility of hereditary social groups with a certain economic standing (Soares 2005: 25). In the Haayre region in the nineteenth century, much of the superior justice was performed by religious scholars, such as Kadi (FF: A*lkaali*), who regulated conflict, inheritance and marriage. These religious specialists (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*) were almost always from freeborn lineages with a monopoly on Islamic religious knowledge. They were rewarded by other politically

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[9] As described at: http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85960. Accessed December 2010.

powerful groups for their services by means ranging from patronage to valuable commodities such as slaves (Soares 2005: 28). To date, most of these religious family lineages (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*) in villages like Dalla are healers, notaries and mediators.

Over time, the categories of Muslims and non-Muslims have been subject to change. In pre-colonial Central Mali, lineages of slaves and caste groups – some of whom called themselves Muslims – did not adhere strictly to religious norms (FF: *Juulde*) and did not have strong traditions of Islamic practice. Some of these lineages of slaves and caste groups engaged in new social and economic activities and converted to Islam, adopting religious practices such as daily prayers, alms giving and fasting during Ramadan. Being a successful Muslim scholar or healer depends on a person's reputation in scholarship, piety and communication, their prodigious powers and the divine force of Allah (FF: *Barke*) (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 175). Having recognized strengths in one or more of these areas meant it was possible for an individual to become a renowned scholar (Berndt 2008) but, in general, descent from (freeborn) Muslims remained important and is valued over a hereditary marginal (servile or caste) social status (Soares 2005: 31).[10] It was thus possible but at the same time very difficult for those of marginal status to insert themselves progressively into the religious sphere.

Pre-colonial Customary Islamic Law allowed for different forms of liberation. By abolishing slave status legally, the colonial administrators juxtaposed their secular legal realm next to the religious interpretations of slave status in Islamic Law. The French colonial administration did not manage to change the Customary Islamic judiciary system[11] and focused on abolishing slavery in the economic realm (Klein 1998, 1999; Kopytoff & Miers 1977). In fact, colonial policy paradoxically encouraged the spread of Islam (Soares 2005: 66-68) and contributed to a more uniform standardization of Islamic practices and ideologies in the Sahel (Launay & Soares 1999).

Under the colonial regime, the administration of law was concentrated in the courts of justice at the level of administrative units (French: *Cercle*). In these courts of justice, everyone was judged in accordance with the body of law s/he recognized, be it French Secular Law, Islamic Malikite Law or Customary Law. Islamic scholars were appointed to administer the law for Muslims who appeared before the court.

Some of the most profound changes during colonial rule were to the distinctions between the free and the servile. The legal and formalized end of slavery, as initiated by the French colonial regime, accelerated renegotiations over relations between slaves and freeborn and distinctions that had existed between 'slave' and 'free' became more fluid (Soares 2005: 63; Pollet & Winter 1971: 371). Juridically speaking however, slave descendants continued to be excluded and fluidity was not considered by the Islamic scholars who implemented the law. For them, slave descendants maintained their hereditary servile status and thus remained the property of their owners. Even if slave descendants were no longer considered servile according to French or national Malian state legislation, their servile, marginal status persisted in Islamic jurisprudence.

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[10] There are few Islamic scholars of slave descent in the Haayre region.

[11] Although there are similarities between Mali and Mauritania in terms of social organization, there are significant differences in terms of judicial organization. Mauritania has a much stronger tradition of incorporating elements of *Sharia* Law into Constitutional Law (Ould Ahmed Salem 2003: 42-43).

After independence, only Secular Law was allowed in state courts. The last vestiges of Muslim Law, which had already been marginalized during colonial occupation, were removed although people continued to consult Islamic scholars for they were cheap and easily accessible. Most villagers of the Haayre region only opt for the secular state courts as a kind of 'last resort option'. In Dalla and Booni, most lineages of Islamic scholars continue to study Islamic law and advise people in accordance with Malikite Law. De Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 187) underlined how they no longer have the power to impose their judgement and the police keeps a close eye on what happens in Dalla. Since Dalla is relatively close to Douentza, this control is effective and conflicts over land or tax payments are generally dealt with in a secular court in Douentza. For some Islamic scholars, this loss of power was seen as a denial of their expertise.

French colonial legislation was the basis of Malian State Law and prohibited references to slavery and slave status from 1910 onwards. These are absent too from the Malian constitution, which is an almost exact copy of the French one.[12] Malian State Law denies the existence of any legacy of traditional or modern forms of slavery[13] and it is premised on the equality of all citizens before the law. Unlike the constitutions of Niger and Mauritania, which are also based on French legislation, the Malian constitution does not penalize or criminalize slavery.

Malian State Law is clearly at odds with Islamic Law in its non-recognition of inequality in general, and slave status more specifically. It was only after independence that Malian national administrators, who were of slave descent themselves (Lecocq 2005: 53-57), tried to change the preponderant influence of Islamic ideas about liberation. Not only politicians but also intellectuals of slave descent (Berndt 2008) tried to raise awareness among slave descendants that they no longer needed to pay for or claim their freedom in the religious realm.

Today, most Islamic Fulɓe scholars (FF-*Moodibaaɓe)* in the Haayre know that Islamic Law (Arabic: *Sharia*) is not recognized in the secular Malian constitution and decentralization politics have diminished the preponderance of Islamic legislation slightly. Islamic scholar Burra Moodi from Booni for example reported that over the past decade he became increasingly aware of the illegal nature of issuing manumission documents[14]:

> There are people who speak negatively about those who write the manumission documents. They can even issue complaints at the level of administration, especially since the decentralization policy was implemented in the 1990s. I am scared of the administration, I am afraid of those people in Booni who think they are 'advanced': They prohibit me from doing my job, are badly educated and feel frustrated.[15]

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[12] The French constitution did not penalize slavery either, as opposed to, for example, Belgium and Italy that did (Botte 2003: 131).

[13] The Mauritanian constitution criminalized all forms of slavery in 2007 and Niger did so in 2003 (Botte 2003: 129).

[14] For more on the issuing of manumission documents in the Haayre region, see Pelckmans 2011a forthcoming.

[15] In French: 'Il y a des gens qui parlent mal sur ceux qui rédigent les textes de libération, ils peuvent même porter plainte au niveau de l'administration, surtout depuis la décentralisation dans les années 1990. J'ai peur de l'administration, j'ai peur des gens de Booni qui se croient évoluée: Ils m'interdisent de faire ce que je fais et ils ne sont pas très bien éduquée, ils se sentent frustrées.'

The third area of legislation is the body of law on international human rights and regulations. As a result of the ECOWAS international legal agreements, the Malian government can be held accountable for violations regarding slavery, especially now that there has been a precedent set in Niger (Duffy 2009). However, international interventions in legislation concerning slave status in the Haayre region have, to my knowledge, not yet arisen.

To understand why people prefer a certain legal sphere, not only historical but also practical considerations need to be taken into account. Access to legal spheres is not equal and practical concerns today may prioritize customary Islamic Law over national State Law in the Haayre region for some people. Firstly, an important aspect that motivates people to gain access to specific institutions is so obvious that one is likely to omit it: Knowledge. People need to know not only about the existence of a court, but also about the rights they can claim there. In general, State Law is not well known and is not a resource or social capital that villagers in Dalla will apply in negotiations with their former masters or Islamic scholars.

Secondly, knowledge goes hand in hand with degrees of literacy. The Haayre has one of the highest rates of illiteracy in Mali. For those who have limited literacy, national courts are intimidating with their emphasis on the French language and the written word. Thirdly, access to state courts is costly and demands the right social relations. Marginalized groups lack the social networks needed to access magistrates and may often lack the money required as well.

A final practical aspect in terms of access to specific legal realms is the fact that national courts are physically and socially less accessible for Fulɓe in the Haayre region than for those in urban areas where State Law is better rooted. Tribunal courts are difficult to reach due to physical distance: There is only one tribunal per 141,176 citizens (Keita 2007: 162). All these factors contribute, as one Malian lawyer[16] explained, to a general dislike of *la justice*. If possible, conflicts are resolved within the community on the basis of Customary Islamic Law and settling a dispute in court under State Law is likely to be a very last resort. As a result of its accessibility, Islamic jurisprudence is more efficiently implemented than State Law.

Talaata's story at the start of the chapter indicates how not only the coexistence but also the intermingling of these two legal realms is confusing for all parties. The majority of the inhabitants of Dalla are freeborn, illiterate and pious Muslims. When someone comes to make the purchase of land official or asks for legal recognition of his marriage to a freeborn woman, he may well encounter resistance. There are numerous examples In Niger and Mauritania of how Islamic Law has been implemented by judges who are supposed to apply secular Constitutional Law in state courts (Ould Ahmed Salem 2003; Botte 2003: 133-134).[17] The widely reported case in Niger of Hadijatou Mani Koroua in 2008 (Duffy 2009) demonstrated how problematic and complex this entanglement of

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[16] Amadou Keita, Malian lawyer and scholar, personal communication, Bamako, 2007.

[17] Ould Ahmed Salem (2003) describes how some judges interpret the legal categories of 'personal status' and 'equality of citizens' on the basis of Islamic legislation, which goes against the national constitution of Mauritania. Botte (2003) also details how the political interferes with legal realms in his analysis of the research conducted by the anti-slavery organization Timidria in Niger in 2003.

different legal realms has become.[18] In Mali, the influence of Islam in areas of social life is increasing, as is shown by the demonstrations against the proposed new secular Family Law.[19]

Multiple claims to legal status in Dalla

Slaves in the Haayre region could convert to Islam and profess Islamic faith much later than freeborn Fulɓe but after Malian independence in 1960, all five pillars of Islam[20] were accessible to slave descendants. Their religious conversion contributed to increased social esteem (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1994: 99) and their desire to go on pilgrimage to Mecca was huge (Klein 1998: 246-247), but to conduct the *Hajj*, one had to manumit first.

Manumission, or liberation according to Islamic legislation, remained a precondition for slaves and their descendants to be accepted as fully fledged members of the religious community.[21] Only freed slaves could become true Muslims (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1994: 99/103). 'One could redeem oneself with money; legal freedom did not necessitate the Hajj. But one could not make the Hajj without being legally free. It was in this act that Islam and freedom intersected, and one came to define the other' (McDougall 2007: 175).

In general, slave descendants who freed themselves went to Mecca. The current imam of Dalla[22] remembers how the first manumitted slave descendants in the village who went to Mecca, only did so after Mali's independence. This was probably because the 'Muslim policy' (French: *Politique Musulmane*) under French colonial rule restricted even the movements of freeborns (Soares 2005: 56). Conducting the *Hajj* under colonial occupation was problematic due to colonial border controls and the French colonial government prohibited its subjects from entering British colonial territories on the road to Mecca.

The current imam of Dalla names the following people as freed slave descendants who went to Mecca independently of their masters: AlHajji Belco from Aoussi and AlHajji Malick from Bounti who went on foot in 1969. (Both were Riimaayɓe.) Of the former domestic slaves in Dalla, only Maman Abidjan has conducted the *Hajj*. The first slave descendants from the region who left for Mecca by plane in 1978 were AlHajji Belco Yero from Douentza and AlHajji Issiyaka from Guitiram (Map 5).

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[18] In 2008 a woman of slave descent in Niger was refused the rights of a freeborn on the basis of her slave status in all the legal courts and bodies of national legislation. Backed by Anti-Slavery International, she proceeded to win her rights as guaranteed by the interregional ECOWAS agreements (Duffy 2009) from the Nigerian government. Her case was successful: she has received excuses and financial reparation. See: http://www.interights.org/niger-slavery; also
http://static.rnw.nl/migratie/www.radionetherlands.nl/currentaffairs/region/africa/081028-slavery-africa-niger-redirected. Accessed December 2010.

[19] See: http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85960.

[20] The five pillars of (Sunni) Islam are duties every Muslim has: (i) the profession of faith; (ii) ritual prayers; (iii) paying alms; (iv) fasting during Ramadan; and (v) conducting a pilgrimage to Mecca.

[21] However slave descendants are not allowed to make their own animal sacrifice at *Tabaski*. Only those who have liberated themselves, such as Diougal (Certificate no. III) are allowed to make their own sacrifice on this occasion.

[22] Interview by Amadu Amiiru Dicko with imam of Dalla, email, May 2009.

Today slave descendants have access to Islamic education.[23] The first student of slave origin, N'gori, started studying in 1930 with Dalla's former imam Alpha Hamada (+2007). He then became an important teacher himself and is the only person of slave descent in Dalla to have mastered the *Hadith*, the Islamic legal textbook. Chapter 8 describes other slave descendants who finished their higher religious studies in the rural community of Dalla (see Berndt 2008). In general they did not acquire much fame but taught Riimaayɓe or Dogon pupils (Griep 2005: 129, footnote 3). Slave descendants have tended to consult freeborn Islamic scholars for advice and have participated in the same religious ceremonies as their masters (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 77-78).

It has remained almost impossible to become an imam in Dalla if one's ancestors were slaves. Even for the former domestic slaves of an imam family who were socialized with Islamic learning, it is still difficult 'because of religious principles' as the imam put it. It is, he explains, unthinkable for the Koran to have someone of lesser status taking the lead over people of higher status, which would be the case if a slave descendant 'directs' other freeborn in prayers. Several authors also describe how the profession of imam remained impenetrable for slave descendants for a long time (Clark 1999: 103; Soares 2005: 65; Riesman 1992: 51). This doesn't mean that slave descendants never become imams: Several villages of Riimaayɓe slave descendants in Haayre hamlets have imams of slave descent but most have a freeborn imam (Griep 2005: 129). It has certainly been impossible for slave-descending scholars to become imams in their masters' communities.

Instrumentalizing legal pluralism by slaves and masters

Paradoxically, Islamic legislation underscores the legal inclusion and exclusion of slaves. Since slave descendants have difficulties in asserting their authority in the religious realm, they have created a tradition of filling niches with a spiritual character outside the immediate Islamic realm. Slave descendants have not managed to instrumentalize Islamic ideology but have carved out specific occupations that offer them a more respectable position. Freeborn religious elites have also had many ways of instrumentalizing Islamic legislation and ideology to their own benefit.

Although persistent discrimination still exists in legal entitlements for slave descendants, some have carved out a spiritual space that has challenged the dominant Islamic religious realm from the margins. They are healers with different kinds of (secret) knowledge (FF: *Anndal*): They are those religious scholars who make charms (FF: *Talkuru*) and can protect people from jealousy (FF: *Haasidaare*), and even from witches (FF: *Sukunyaabe*). Those healers who specialized in herbal medicine are called *bonngobi* in Fulfulde language. These *bonngobi* healers are knowledgeable about plants and herbs and are linked to black magic (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 175, 181).

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[23] Modern education was a road to freedom for some slave-descending Riimaayɓe who could compete with their master of higher status. Often their careers made them move out of the orbit of their masters. Chapter 8 describes how for those who stayed in the village, a possible way to change their condition, but not their legal status, was to compete with their masters in Islamic religious education.

In Dalla the best-known *bonngobis* are descendants of slaves that never obtained public functions like Islamic *Moodibaaɓe* scholars but are consulted for minor diseases, especially among children. In the first week of my stay in Dalla, my interpreter's baby was crying all night and everyone insisted we consult Samba, a *bonngobi* healer of slave descent in Wuro Burram. The old man was shockingly thin and rather unkempt, with extremely long dirty nails. He was blind so the baby had to be given to him and we directed his hands to the child's head. Samba treated the baby with his own saliva (FF: *Tutu*) while whispering special phrases. From now on, the child would be protected against the owl, a bird that is believed to 'steal' the spirits of young babies. This form of healing with saliva and words is widespread among Fulɓe in the Sahel.[24] *Bonngobi* healer Samba had quite a name as a healer in Dalla but from his appearance and his compound, it would seem that it had not allowed him to accumulate much wealth. This might partly be explained by the fact that esoteric practices have become undervalued with the increasing influence of Islam (Soares 2005: 67).

Another important child healer in Dalla was one of the slave concubines married to King Yerowal. Faata Legal treated children in Dalla against evil eyes and spirits for many years but also never became wealthy although she was well respected. This niche of spiritual healing is one that is frequently adopted by slave descendants. In fact, many people fear their power, which is contingent on the secrets (FF: *Siiri*) they posses (Soares 2005: 134; de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 174). Their often foreign origin is associated with other spirit worlds that they have mastered. Informants reported going to a *bonngobi* healer first and if that does not work, they will then turn to Islamic scholars for treatment and, in very exceptional cases, to Western medicine.

In addition to *bonngobi* healers, Riimaayɓe women are responsible for tattooing freeborn Fulɓe girls' mouths and gums, others for cutting and plaiting hair. These are specialist jobs that give them a form of prestige and respectability. Other tasks that are outsourced to people of slave descent and that give them social indispensability are those involving powerful emotions such as crying, singing and expressions of the body, such as dance. When someone dies, it is slave descendants who will carry the corpse, bury it and lead the mourning by crying loudly. They are the music makers and are specialized in dance, but also in fights. In all these activities, slave descendants have power and respectability that are beyond the realm of nobility, and of respectability in Islam more specifically. These are all specializations that are potential niches on the margins of the cultural field of hierarchy, where slave descendants can earn respectability. To call it a source of rebellion or to see these specializations as resistance to the status quo would be an exaggeration. However, it is likely that some forms of healing and dance have been performed as an implicit critique of the dominant cultural field of hierarchy, but this requires further (historical) research that is beyond the scope of this thesis.

In conclusion, the hegemony of the freeborn in the religious realm remains important, even though slave descendants have niches of influence outside the religious realm.

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[24]　Soares (2005: 134-135) also mentions it as one of the many forms of esoteric healing practices in northwestern Mali.

Power and authority of Islamic scholars in the legal realm

The case of Talaata demonstrated how the coexistence of plural legal systems generates paradoxes. These paradoxes and the leeway that exists between the two realms are an ideal breeding ground for manipulation. Multiple coexisting layers of law are easily manipulated by the most powerful actors in society and those who render jurisprudence, such as the imams, have the power to define the way Islamic customary law is interpreted and applied. The imams in Dalla and Booni, for example, accept the (self-)manumission of slave descendants, although they are well aware of the illegal nature of manumission *vis-à-vis* the nation state. They explain that 'it are our slave descendants who insist on it', and claim that they cannot but continue to manumit slave descendants. Their self-proclaimed altruism and blunt openness about the (self-)manumissions they contract almost 'naturalizes' manumissions for the benefit of all.[25]

The hegemony of their discourse once again demonstrates the limited impact of State Law. It is not within the reach of those it is supposed to protect and Islamic scholars, as guardians of Islamic Law, have room to manoeuvre, manipulate and explain issues to their own advantage (Cf. Chebel 2007). An example is the way in which fines are not issued to Fulɓe herdsmen whose cattle have destroyed the harvests of people with stigmatized slave status. As one informant put it:[26] 'When people find out that they are dealing with a herdsman who works for the imam, they will not dare to fine or tax them because there is God and you have to accept it. However, if the cattle do not belong to the imam, we will fine the owners of the cows.' Herdsmen taking care of the cattle of the ruling elite or an imam's family will not be fined by Islamic scholars because they will want to maintain good relations with them.

Religious scholars and religious ideology have a major impact on power relations and the cultural field of hierarchy. There are definitely asymmetries in rights and obligations related to one's status in the local hierarchy. Islamic scholars and freemen in Fulɓe society generally use the argument that it is not man but religion that permitted slavery and claim that since the Koran has mentioned these issues, it is impossible to change them (Mahamat 2009: 355).

Obtaining social promotion in Islamic Customary Law

Conversion to Islam after having been captured or bought was not enough for slaves to become liberated. According to believers, the Prophet Mohammed introduced reforms aimed at relieving the pain of slaves but never advocated abolishing the institution. Instead, he introduced legal ways for slaves to emancipate (Murray Gordon 1989: 24-25). For slaves and their descendants, there were several legal arrangements in Islamic legislation to change their condition and liberate them. In fact, in Muslim jurisprudence,

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[25] Saibou (2005: 873) working among Fulɓe in northern Cameroon indicated how because liberations are so informal, they are extremely easy to manipulate. Freeborn masters will only accept self-manumission if it is to their own financial advantage.

[26] In French: 'Quand les gens qui ont garde les animaux du voleur sachent que se sont les animaux du imam, ils ne vont pas amender les animaux du chef parce qu'il y a dieu et tu va accepter. Mais si c'est pas les animaux du imam, on va amender les propriétaires de ces vaches.'

slavery and liberation are important topics that are described in detail in many textbooks (Addoun 2005), of which Ahmed Baaba's writings (see Lovejoy 2006) are, for Mali, probably one of the largest bodies.

In Fulɓe customary Islamic legislation, a typical 'career' in which a slave could legally upgrade aspects of his condition without altering his slave status *per se* ranged from captive (FF: *nangaaɗo*) or bought slave (FF: *Soodaaɓe*) to property (FF: *Maraaɗo, jeyaaɗo*) to house slave (FF: *Maccuɗo*)[27] to client (Arabic: *Murgu/mawla*) or manumitted slave (FF: *Dimdinaaɗo*) or descendant of a manumitted slave (FF: *Diimaajo*).[28] None of these legal upgrades in the position of slaves however guaranteed access to the rights or duties of freeborn.

There is a wide variety in rules and contextual conditions described for each of these 'upgrades' in Islamic legal textbooks (Arabic: *Fiqh*) and the sayings and doings of the prophet (Arabic: *Hadith*). Three main legal arrangements accorded some agency to the slave (or his family) to change his condition by himself (thus without depending on his master): Clientship (Arabic: *Murgu*), self-manumission (Arabic: *Mukataba*)[29] and ransom (Arabic: *Fida*). All three procedures allowed people to officially engage in the patriarchal style *vis-à-vis* legal minors.

The legal arrangement of *murgu*[30] secured the 'intentional integration' of slaves (Lovejoy 2009: 159). It enabled slaves with skills to work for themselves and, in exchange for their relative autonomy; they paid their owners regular, set fees. In a way, they became incorporated in their host societies through wage employment and increased independence, as they could live on their own. Nevertheless, the fact that they were legally entitled to set aside money for their liberation indicates that this was a lesser improvement in their condition than manumission itself. In short, *murgu* 'provided income for slave-owners and incentives for slaves' (*Ibid.*).

Examples of the two other legal options for slaves to upgrade their status are ransom[31] and manumission.[32] Ransoming is the buying out of someone enslaved or cap-

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[27] As Pageard (1987: 144) mentions, Riimayɓe were the slaves who were in a servile position, often descendants of those slaves bought or captured in raids (FF: *Maccuɓe*). However, Maccuɓe were used to denote Riimayɓe of lower status.

[28] Sehou (2009: 11-12) reports a similar trajectory with the same vocabulary for Fulɓe in northern Cameroon. In Senegal and Mauritania, those who were freed by their masters according to Islamic procedures are called *Daccanaaɓe Allaa* (Dacc-an = leave to, to the benefit of). Translated literally, this means 'slave liberated by the will of his master, conform Islamic recommendations' (Ciavolella 2008; Pouget 2000: 90).

[29] Reasons for the manumission of a slave on the initiative of the master are described in the Koran (Addoun 1998, 2005). There is only a short reference to the possibility of self-manumission.

[30] Defined by Lovejoy (2009: 150) as 'part of the official and religious policies of assimilation and various methods of emancipation, *murgu* allowed slaves to work on their own account in exchange for a payment'.

[31] Lovejoy (2009: 162-163) argues that 'a system of ransoming effectively enabled those who could afford it to achieve their redemption should they be unlucky and have been enslaved'. See also Lofkrantz (2008) on ransoming in the Sokoto Caliphate.

[32] Some authors use the term 'redemption' (Lovejoy, 2009; Lofkrantz 2008, Akurang-Parry 1998). Redemption can be defined as all the actions taken by a slave in an effort to get released. I prefer the term (self-)manumission as a specific legal Islamic procedure of redemption. Redemption and manumission are different from enfranchisement, which is defined by Meillassoux (1991: 120) as the process by which the slave acquires all the prerogatives and honour of the freeborn.

tured by that person's kin or acquaintances. The difference with manumission is that the ransomed slave returns to his original freeborn status and home society (Lofkrantz 2008: 1, 116).[33] Ransoming was mainly practised when there were raids going on in the war economies in the pre-colonial period. Historians working on pre-colonial Sahelian society describe numerous cases of ransoming but point out how manumission was relatively 'scarce' (Lofkrantz 2008; Lovejoy 2009).

Derived from Latin and used in ancient Rome to describe the liberation of slaves (Testart 1998: 53), manumission is literally the taking away of the hand of the master from his slave. There are two main actors in manumissions: Manumission as initiated and paid for by the master versus self-manumission that is paid by the slave (descendant). Some argue that the ambiguous policy of the colonial rulers (and missionaries) *vis-à-vis* the buying of freedom reinforced rather than abolished the cultural boundary between the free and non-freeborn (McDougall 2007: 161-165). Also, the fact that French colonial policy stimulated the emancipation of slaves and had its own liberation procedures and documents is likely to have prevented former masters from allowing their slaves to engage in existing Islamic emancipation procedures as a form of revenge (Soares 2005: 66).

Although most legal descriptions focus on the reasons for masters to initiate the manumission of their slaves, there was an option for slaves to liberate themselves (self-manumission). In the Haayre region, the majority of current manumissions are self-manumissions, whereby the slave descendant pays.[34] (Self-)manumission is an upgrade within the confines of the legal and immobile category of slave status and was a reconfiguration in which an individual moved out of extreme dependency into a recognized client status. (Self-)manumission confirms the client's loyalty style and deference to his patron and/or God. In turn, he is rewarded with a more privileged position *vis-à-vis* other slave descendants and has the possibility to engage in the patriarchal style by founding a family and owning slaves himself. Other privileges are freedom of movement (Yacono 1974) and access to basic Muslim rights, such as the *Hajj* pilgrimage.[35] However besides these new rights, their rights were different from those of the freeborn members of society who maintained the exclusive right to marry freeborn women.

Addoun (2005) indicates how a manumission contract legally turns the master-slave relationship into a patron-client one called *mawla* (Arabic). He adds that the manumission contract is in fact a contract between three parties: Between a master and a slave; between a former master and a new manumitted slave; and between a master and God.

Meillassoux (1991: 12) concluded that manumission 'is only designed to serve the master's own interests. A slave was redeemed to make of him a devoted servant, whose

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[33] Various concepts are used in the literature to designate this procedure, ranging from buying freedom (Appiah & Bunzl 2007) to liberating, redemption and manumission (Sikainga 1995). In Fulfulde, the only verbal root to denote liberation is rimdin-, but informants mostly used annoblissement or simply liberation in French to talk about the procedure. In the French literature, the concepts of anoblissement, manumission, affranchissement (Saibou 2005; Bourgeot 1975), liberation (Renault 1976) and rachat (McDougalll 2007; Renault 1976; Zuccarelli 1962) are used.

[34] Lofkranz (2008: 3) gives a possible explanation by arguing how 'colonial reforms ... took the power to allow for redemption away from the owners and put it into the hands of the slaves'.

[35] These basic Muslim rights or pillars of Islamic belief and practice are: slaughtering one's personal sacrificial animal at *Tabaski* and going on pilgrimage.

privileges attached him to his master; or he was redeemed because he was too old to be kept on.' This is why Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 26-27) called Islamic manumission 'incomplete', arguing that 'the freed slave and his descendants became, in perpetuity, the clients of their former master'.

As early as 1894, French colonial administrators were grappling with Islamic liberation procedures. As indicated in the following excerpt, they did not distinguish between clientship, ransoming and (self-)manumission:[36]

> Slavery (French: *Servage*) is inherited; there are few exceptions to this rule. The Riimaayɓe that were the domestic slaves (French: *Captives de case*) of the first dynasty Fulɓe, '*les ardo*', have become the property of all the kings that have successively reigned in Bandiagara. Not one of them has been liberated. The domestic slaves (French: *Captifs de case*) never freed themselves in Fulɓe society. The Bambara, on the contrary, have freed some of them who re-bought themselves, while leaving all their possessions (which were considerable) to their master. A very small number of them have been freed for having given their master exceptional services. The bought slaves (French: *Captifs de vente*) could free themselves by refunding their masters the price they were paid when acquired, or they tried to gain the necessary sum of money for the price of their free days of working for themselves (Arabic: *Murgu*) or they are re-bought by their parents (ransoming). The slaves captured during wars (French: *Captifs de guerre*) are sometimes re-bought by their family after some years (ransoming).

During colonial occupation, ransoming lost its significance because raids decreased significantly. Manumission still remained possible though and self-manumission was encouraged and even increased during French colonial rule (Lofkrantz 2008: 3; Hogendorn & Lovejoy 1989; Klein 1988: 209-211).[37] To add to the confusion, French colonizers themselves started to issue 'freedom certificates', often written in Arabic by religious scholars.[38] But unlike manumission documents, the French certificates did not establish a legal agreement between the three parties central to the Islamic manumission contract,[39] namely the master, the slave and God (Addoun 2005). Bouche (1968: 156, 159) describes how the inhabitants of the liberty villages did not gain anything from their freedom certificates as their freedom was not recognized by their home communities because it was not done according to Islamic moral standards. Secondly, they lacked the moral power to enforce their new status in the socio-cultural realm of their societies.

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[36] ANM, FA: 1E-156/August 1894.

[37] Hogendorn & Lovejoy (1989) describe it as a means of compensating owners for the loss of slave labour in the British colonies. Klein (1988: 209-211) describes how (self-)manumission was related to slave resistance and contradicted French colonial abolitionist legislation.

[38] The majority of French freedom certificates were issued between 1905 and 1908 (Klein 1988: 211) after a minimum period of three months' residence in a so-called liberty village (Bouche 1968; McDougall 2007). Some of the reasons for being liberated by the French colonial administrators were (i) bad treatment of a slave by his/her master (example in: ANM, FA-1E-156: Nioro/1895 letter); (ii) victims of trade in persons that were discovered by the French administrators were given their freedom (example in: ANM, FA-1E-156: Bamako/April 1895); (iii) a stay of minimum three months in a village of liberty, automatically resulted in freedom granted on paper by the French; and (iv) (widows of) slave soldiers who fought in Europe (French: *tirailleurs*) obtained a certificate (see example: ANM, FA-1E-165/1895/Tombouctou).

[39] Sometimes the French validated their manumissions according to Islamic legal principle. Yacono (1974) described such a case of the French ordering an Islamic manumission in Algeria, which was both legally and morally accepted.

McDougall (2007: 164) concludes that French freedom certificates did not have the same socio-cultural validity because they lacked both material advantage and moral prestige, and indicates how 'a culturally "freed slave" still had a role in society, while a "free slave" according to French law, did not' (*Ibid*.: 176, footnote 13). Several descriptions in the colonial archives confirm that French freedom certificates were not accepted by freeborn Fulɓe in the Haayre area. They did not accept the change in the legal status of slaves who obtained colonial certificates.[40]

The three above-mentioned legal procedures were available to slaves depending on the timeframe. Ransoming disappeared with the suppression of slave raids by colonial rulers. Manumission was relatively unpractised because there were many other less expensive ways for masters to achieve the same religious recognition. Near the end of colonial occupation, masters refused to free their slaves, fearing the increased emancipation of their former dependants and possible revenge. This also explains why, after independence, it was mainly self-manumissions that were contracted by slave descendants themselves. Often self-manumissions were only accepted if considerable wealth was given to their former masters, who would thus make some profit themselves.

In short, various legal arrangements gave slave descendants new entitlements, although they were excluded from entitlements preserved for the freeborn community (FF: *ndimaaku*). Research assistant Burra Yero reflected that[41] 'even when liberated, it is impossible to become as noble as those born free (FF: Riimɓe). When a slave descendant (FF: *Diimaajo*) buys his freedom, he becomes a kind of "in between" (French: *Entre les deux*)'. The freed slave is called *dimɗinaaɗo*,[42] while the freeborn person is called *Diimo*. To date, manumitted slaves are not included in freeborn lineages by marriage and do not have access to high political or religious freeborn functions as long as they remain in their host society. Also in terms of property, discrimination remained because a freeborn master inherits from a childless freed slave, but not vice versa. The only way to change slave status into freeborn status was to engage in legally accepted marriages in freeborn lineages of one's host society. Chapter 3 explained how this was almost impossible with the exception of semi-freeborn children of slave concubines who obtained full liberty.

Instead of being legal arrangements geared at emancipation, these possibilities to upgrade one's condition, as described in Islamic textbooks (Arabic: *Hadith* and *Fiqh*), thus tied emancipated slaves to their former masters as clients in perpetuity. Manumission became so engrained in Islamic legislation and culture that other forms of social promotion became difficult to envisage (Addoun 2005: 18). Although the legal condi-

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[40] For example: 'A *dioula* does not accept that one of his former *captifs* married and no longer belongs to him as she obtained her certificate of freedom. He threatened to take this case to court in Kayes or even St Louis. We imprisoned him for 6 days.' (ANM, FA-1E-96/1903/Bandiagara/July). A second example is that of a former slave (Saidou Mayetake) who was freed by the French because he had served them very well as a guide when the French conquered Djenne. This slave came to complain with French officers about the fact that since he was now freed, he refused to pay the slave tax (FF: *Diamgal*). He did however pay the tax of the freeborn (FF: *Diaka*), but this was not accepted by the ruler of Maacina (FF: *Amiiru*).' (ANM, FA-1E-30/1909/A.5/Djenne).

[41] Burra Yero Cisse, Born in Douentza in 1955, interview in May 2007 in Douentza.

[42] In Fulfulde *dimɗinaaɗo* (sing.): 'The one who has been liberated'; *Rimɗinaaɓe* (plural): 'Those who have been made noble/free'.

tion of slaves could change, it was only possible within the confines of non-freeborn citizenship, not out of slave status (Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 20). Slaves thus had several legal ways to become *freed*, but they never became *free,* they could *liberate* themselves but never obtained *liberty* in Islamic legislation.

It is important to note that not all slaves or their descendants looked for such forms of manumission as neither they nor their descendants could see any benefits. They preferred a stereo-style relationship than to face the uncertainties of the future without a back-up option of their wealthier master to rely on as a form of social security. Perbi (2004) described how liberated slaves in Ghana returned to their masters when they needed social security in times of crisis. Yaaya, a 55-year-old descendant of domestic slaves who worked at the compound of the Islamic scholars in Dalla, analyzed his situation quite clearly, indicating how being 'attached' to his master's family is an obligation. He had no other choice. He knew very well the history of slavery experienced by his parents and grandparents but did not see how he could rid himself of the situation of bondage in which he found himself. He works his master's land and lives in his father's house, which virtually belongs to this master. He does not like to be called a *Maccudo*, or even *Diimaajo*, but explains that he is not a *Diimaajo* because he did not *diimaay* (i.e. he did not free himself). As a domestic slave, he will never be freed although he realizes he could claim the rights of a freeman under modern legislation but does not see any point in doing so. The old norms and rules will not change if he does and, in practice, he will always bear the social stigma of being a former slave. He says:

> Yes indeed I am free in the eyes of modern law (national constitution) but that does not help me. The land I work belongs to the master of my father[43] who has become my master, and if he takes back the land this will be a disaster for me. As long as I do not upset our relationship, he will not withdraw the land, but leave me to live my life. I really hope that my children will marry a *Diimaajo,* and I hope they will have respect for their master. Do we have another choice?"

This section has demonstrated how although slave descendants are today legally considered free under national constitutional legislation, they are not considered freed in Customary Islamic Law where slave status is perpetual and hereditary. The section below considers why and how self-manumissions, as legal procedures of liberation, continue to be practised today and why some slave descendants who, according to the national constitution are no longer considered slaves, continue to self-manumit.

Documenting (self-)manumission in the Haayre region

Religion is important for identification, status and social recognition in Fulɓe society.[44] Legal abolition by the French colonizers in 1905 (Klein 1998) and later also the application of the national Malian constitution (Lecocq 2005: 53-57) did not result in the real emancipation of former slave populations. Legacies of slavery exist psychologically and socially (Botte 2000b) in what I described in the introduction of this thesis as 'the cultural field of hierarchy'. Non-freeborn ancestry legally classifies slave descendants as being of non-freeborn, slave status.

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[43] Exceptionally Yaaya Gaalil remained dependent on his father's master, not his mother's.

[44] On the central entanglement of Islam and the ideology of slavery in Fulɓe society, see Botte (1990, 1994, 1999b, 2000a) and Schmitz (2009).

Post-colonial self-manumissions are one of several strategies that slave descendants use today to overcome the stigma attached to slavery. The manumission ceremony actually resembles that of a baptism in some ways.[45] Apart from a new name,[46] the manumitted slave descendant receives a new outfit (clothes and shoes) that confirms his new status and dignity. Lastly, the manumitted person gains entitlements over the land on which his house is built[47] and can make a will (Addoun 2005: 15). Manumission is thus a kind of rite of passage in which new entitlements are obtained. It turns the slave into a client with subservient rather than freeborn status (Lofkrantz 2008: 1).

Reasons for the legal (self-) manumission of slaves are described in the *hadith*, the sayings and doings of the Prophet and in Islamic legal books (Arabic: *Fiqh*). Those for masters to liberate a slave range from rewarding a loyal slave to demonstrating resentment over a wrongdoing by a freeborn. Manumission, for example, may be implemented in relation to specific conditions (Addoun 1998, 2005), as a result of a testamentary demand by a master or as a post-mortem inheritance.[48] In addition, manumission can be contracted as a reward for merit on the initiative of the master, as a way of ensuring legal alliances (with a slave concubine) or on the slave's personal initiative (self-manumission). For slaves, claiming proof of descent from a slave mother's union with a freeman can be a reason to request a manumission certificate (Document II, Image 3).[49]

A French archival document from 1894 describes the procedure followed for issuing a manumission document according to Islamic procedures:[50]

> The freeing of a captive is sealed with an act (French: *Certificate de liberté*) that is given to the person by the *cadi* (Islamic scholar/scribe) in the presence of the masters of the slave and 7 witnesses taken amidst the eldest of the village. After that the freeing is announced in loud voice by an Islamic scholar at the time of the evening prayer.

Current procedures of manumission (FF: *Rimɗineede)*[51] in the Haayre diverge slightly from this colonial observation. On the day of liberation, the slave (descendant), his (former) master and witnesses gather[52] and an Islamic scholar, preferably the imam, writes out a contract, a 'paper of confidence' (FF: *Wassigatu*; Arabic: A*lmouktaba*).

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[45] Sehou (2009: 18-19) makes the same comparison for manumissions of FulBe slave descendants in northern Cameroon.

[46] A specific advantage of manumission is that it legally entitles one to take on one's master's first and family name. See Schmitz (2009: 96) and Baier (1980: 83) quoted by Hall (2009: 13). On surnames and renaming by slave descendants, see Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming).

[47] The manumission certificate shown by one of the slave descendants in Dalla turned out, after translation, to be literally a description of a gift of land by his master.

[48] This footnote gives the Arabic names and the exact references to these various forms of manumission: Testamentary or post-mortem manumission (Arabic: *Tadbir*) (Addoun 2005: 9); homologation (Arabic: *Iktifa*) (*Ibid.*: 7), ransoming (*Fida*), conditional manumission (Arabic: *Itq li'agal*) (*Ibid.*: 9-10, (Addoun, 1998: 11), simple manumission (*Ibid.*: 17) (Arabic: *Kaffara*), manumission of a slave woman (Arabic*: Umm walad*) and self-manumission (Arabic: *Mukataba*).

[49] Both Addoun (2005) and Sehou (2009) mention different forms, reasons and terminology for the various forms of (self-)manumission in Arabic and Fulfulde.

[50] ANM, FA: 1E-156/August 1894/Pression traite esclavage Haute Senegal Niger.

[51] In local Fulfulde dialect, the liberation procedure is called *Rimɗineede* (informal): 'To be made noble/free'. Some use the verb *joppude* meaning 'to let go, to drop'. An informant describes how a master lets go of his slave through manumission, saying *kanko joppan* (he drops it), but here meaning that 'he (the master) lets go of him (the slave).

[52] The place of gathering is ideally the mosque but can also be the imam or chief's compound.

Various books stipulate the precise formulations that are used on the manumission document.[53] In the Haayre region, convention has it that the (reason for) liberation (FF: A*sahaada*), the name of the person to be liberated (FF: *Dimɗinaaɗo*), the date (day, month, year) and the names of the witnesses (at least four freeborn persons) are all mentioned.
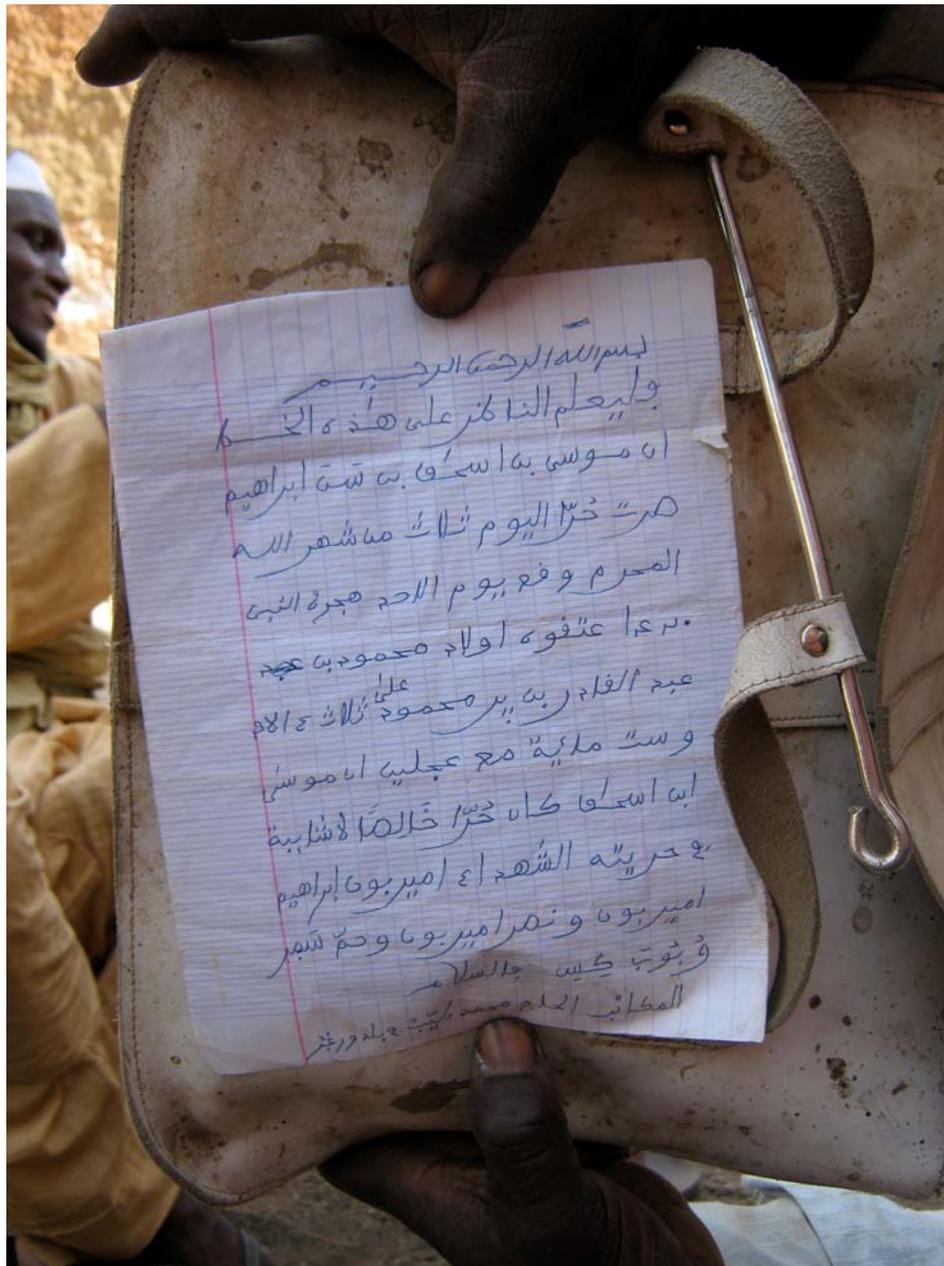
Image 2   Manumission document I - Musa Issiaka

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[53] Addoun (2005) refers to several standard Arab formulations that can be used for contracts: *Shurut*, *khutut* or *watha'iq*.
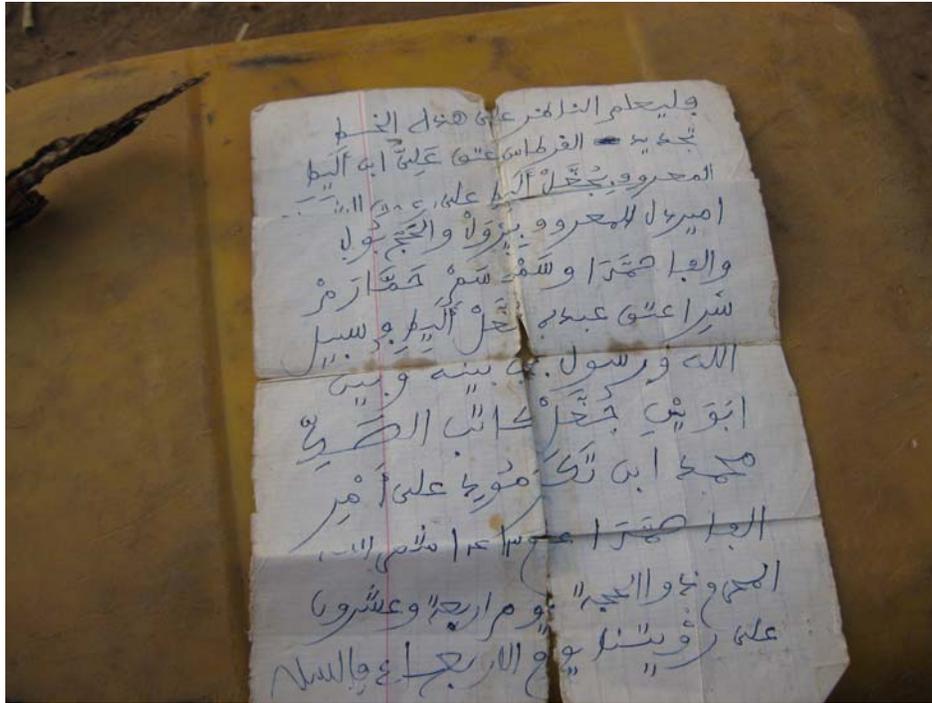
Image 3   Manumission document II - Diougal Allayidi

To illustrate (self-)manumission as practised in the Haayre in more detail, the Islamic manumission documents[54] issued to two slave descendants, who I will call Diougal Issiaka and Bilaali Allayidi, are included as images to this text. They were written in the 1990s by the imams of Dalla and Booni. (The Imam of Dalla as well as the manumitted slave descendant Bilaali central to document II (Image 3) have since passed away.) These documents (see Images 2 & 3) are examples of self-manumission and are written in Fulfulde but using the Arabic alphabet (FF: *Adjami*). Islamic Fulɓe scholars thus 'certify' the liberation of a slave according to Islamic Law and each document mentions 7 witnesses. Diougal self-manumitted and so the price he paid is mentioned in Document I (Image 2). Bilaali, on the other hand, was manumitted by his master and no price is mentioned in his manumission document.

The self-manumission document (Image 2) of Diougal Issiaka specifies that he paid two calves and FCFA 3600.[55] Diougal explained how he discussed the price, which typically consisted of animals and money, with his former master.[56] In general, the price

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[54]   I obtained these documents by consulting two imams in Fulfulde villages near Douentza. Diougal Issiaka and Bilal Allayidi's family were willing to show me their manumission documents. I have changed their names to guarantee their privacy.

[55]   Manumission Document I spells out that 3600 units of something were given. The unmentioned unit is most likely Francs, which in Fulfulde has to be multiplied by 5 = FCFA 18,000, which is the equivalent of about €27.

[56]   Prices are high and comparable to the amount paid for women in marriage. Other examples of prices for liberation in the Haayre region in the 1990s are: 1 bull + FCFA 10,000; 3 goats + FCFA 10,000 +

Translation of two manumission documents

Below the reader finds a translation[1] of the texts of the two manumission documents referred to in Chapter 5. The documents are written in Arab written with the Fulfulde alphabet (FF: *Adjami*). Words between brackets hold explanations and/or fake names (in order to respect privacy of the people involved).

Image 4- Document I: Liberation of [Diougal] Issiaka

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious Most Merciful

Let the reader of this writing know that [Diougal] son of Ishaaq son of Sana Ibraahiim has today become a free man, on the 3th of the month of Muharram 1420 of the Hijri calendar [1999].

The children of Muhammad son of Abdulaye Qaadir son of Yero Mahmuud [who where his masters] have freed him for 3600 and two calves.

Surely [Diougal] son of Ishaaq has purely become a free man, there is no doubt in his freedom.

Witnesses: Amiirii Booni Ibraahiima [Ibrahim Dicko, actual chief of Booni], Amiirii Booni, Amiiri Booni's Nassourou [assistant], Hamma Samere and Buuba Kisi.

Peace.

Writer: Alhajji Muhammadu in the town of [Wuro Ngeru]

Image 5 - Document II: Renewal of certificate of [Bilal]Alla yiɗi

Let the reader of this writing know that this paper certifies the renewal of the freedom of [Bilal]Alla Yiɗi who is known as [Bilal] Alla Yiɗi, in the presence of (witnesses to this are:) Amiiru Dalla who is known as Yerowal, Alhajji MBouli, Alfaa Hammadaa and Sammba Sam.

Hamare Sory has freed his slave, [Bilal] Alla Yiɗi, for the sake of Allah and his Prophet to the parents of [Bilal] Alla Yiɗi.

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Image 4   Censored translation of both manumission documents

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5 cotton strips; 1 bull + FCFA 30,000. The money is for the cola nuts that are distributed among the witnesses at the liberation.

that has been paid by the slave descendant to manumit himself remains a secret if possible. In general, however, the amounts paid are quite high, with some informants indicating that a minimum of FCFA 150,000 (€229 in 2006) is standard. Belco, an intellectual of slave descent,[57] describes these payments as 'moral bribery' by a dominant elite who are 'abusing religious arguments'.[58]

Document II (Image 3) is a copied contract of manumission by a master, who manumitted the person's family in the 1960s and describes the renewal[59] of Bilaali Allayidi's former manumission document. Although the document does not clearly mention it, Bilaali was manumitted by his master as a reward for his and his parents' loyalty. The document mentions: 'For the sake of Allah and his Prophet to the parents of Bilaali'. A co-villager claims that Bilaali's master was exceptionally courageous to free Bilaali although it was Bilaali who in fact requested the corresponding manumission document. He needed it to be allowed to marry an already manumitted woman called Dikel.[60] Since manumitted slave descendants became a separate endogamous group, Bilaali was only allowed to marry Dikel if he could manumit himself. He had to make sure that legally he enjoyed the same status as Dikel otherwise their marriage would be unacceptable. So at his request, Bilaali received 'proof' of the fact that his parents had been manumitted by their master as a result of their loyal behaviour sometime in the 1960s.

Copying documents is common and there are usually two copies: one is kept by the imam, the other by the manumitted person/family. The fact that the document was important to Bilaali was obvious from the way in which he had recopied it from time to time to ensure it remained legible. The document shown in Image 3 is a copy that was issued in 1992. It is not a copy of the 1960 original but of another copy (issued in 1984), since this document was in poor condition.[61] In the last decade of his life,[62] Bilaali's seniority made him chief of the slave descendants (FF: *Amiiru maccuɓe*) in his home village. During *Tabaski* he was the only one of the slave descendants of the ruling elite to have his own sacrificial animal slaughtered.

The manumission documents of Bilaali and Diougal show how a small number of slave descendants continue to look for redemption in formal Islamic legislation. It is only a minority of slave descendants in the Haayre region who are concerned with manumission today.[63] To estimate the frequency of self-manumissions today is quite complex, not least because informants are aware of their illegal nature *vis-à-vis* State

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57 Belco Tambura, of slave descent from Mopti, living in Bamako, interviews 2007.

58 Cameroonian scholars Saibou (2005; 869 and 873, footnote 30), Sehou (2009; 2010) and Mahamat (2009) share this position by describing how the payments for liberation asked by freeborn Fulɓe in northern Cameroon are swindlers (French: *Escrocs*).

59 Renewal of a document is called homologation and is described in Islamic legislation as *Iktifa*. See Addoun (2005: 7).

60 Dikel is the daughter of a manumitted slave woman who had been married to her noble pastoralist master. Due to her mother's manumission, Dikel also enjoys manumitted status.

61 By issuing liberty certificates, the French colonial administration may have encouraged the perceived importance of paper manumission documents. Informants believe that if the paper goes missing, one becomes owned (FF: *Jeyaaɗo*) again.

62 Bilal went blind and died in 2007.

63 Meillassoux (1991: 12) counted 53 manumitted versus 1,040 slaves born in captivity in Gumbu. While manumission was relatively scarce, ransoming took place on a much bigger scale (Lofkrantz 2008; Lovejoy 2009).

Law. Both scholars and informants agree that manumissions were more frequent during colonial occupation[64] and I have not come across any other study on manumission and how it is practised in the region today. Even a recently issued research report by Anti-slavery International (Keita, 2011 forthcoming) does not mention the existence of this practice in the region. I did, however, encounter references to the practice today in northern Cameroon by Cameroonian scholars Sehou (2009), Saibou (2005) and Maha-mat (2009). Through self-manumission, slave descendants are trying to gain social pro-motion within the socio-cultural boundaries of their community (see Pelckmans 2011a forthcoming).

Although orally contracted (self-)manumissions continue to take place, the use of Islamic and French manumission documents has become rare. If my main informants are to be believed, paradoxically, oral manumission agreements[65] increased in Booni rather than in Dalla. This is strange because Dalla is renowned for its strong emphasis on Islamic practice and Booni was one of the first villages in the region to be incor-porated in post-colonial nation-state politics and is considered to be more 'advanced'.

Many rich slave descendants (both male and female) in Booni have self-manumitted to be legally allowed to marry other manumitted slave descendants and/or freeborn. However these manumissions are effectuated orally because most imams do not feel comfortable issuing certificates, which are illegal under State Law. Oral manumissions are obviously more difficult to prove and sometimes a document was deemed necessary to prove the higher legal status. The liberated person keeps the manumission document, which can be requested at the time of marriage (to another liberated slave descendant) or in the case of conflict over land or inheritance.

Cutting the rope from round one's neck

> In my home village, those who butcher meat at the market
> are ennobled slave descendants; they no longer have a rope
> around their neck.[66] They have become like their masters.
> (Beidary Tambura, interview, Bamako, 2006)

Beidary is a slave descendant from the Kau family in Dalla and the butchers he des-cribes are slave descendants who have self-manumitted. Several informants compared manumission to the cutting of the rope from one's neck and the Fulɓe often use the image of a rope around one's neck to discuss legacies of slavery. The rope that used to keep slaves from running away became a metaphor for the stereostyled patron-client relationship between former slaves and their masters. To cut the rope from one's neck thus symbolizes a break in this relation. This section focuses on the motivation behind

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[64] Most informants agree that manumissions were frequent during French colonial occupation (FF: *Laamu tuubaakooBe*) and declined after independence.

[65] Such oral agreements have a long tradition of establishing legal contracts in customary tradition (FF: *Al'aada*). Pageard (1987: 142) indicated how Arabic and French written documents and traditional oral agreements challenged each other but all of them had to be agreed in the presence of the highest possible number of witnesses.

[66] In Fulfulde: A *tayɣi* (cut) *ɓoggol* (rope) *e daande ma* (neck): You cut the rope from your neck.

(self-)manumission and why those who do so believe it to be a liberating and ennobling strategy.[67]

A first and often-mentioned motivation for liberating was access to full membership of the religious community. Especially older informants believe that only manumitted slaves can become 'true' Muslims.[68] Manumission for some is geared towards legal entitlements to practise and access the five pillars of Islam. Such is for example the case for Allay, one of the latecomers in the Kau family in Wuro Maccube, who was the chief of slaves (see Chapter 4).

Allay always dreamed of going on pilgrimage to Mecca[69] and when he proposed manumitting himself, both the imam and his former Dicko master refused, saying that, in the eyes of God, it was more worthwhile for Allay to remain in the position of loyal slave than to self-manumit. The benediction of the master is crucial and manumitting independently of one's master is impossible. Instead they advised Allay to give the money (his manumission price) to his former Dicko master who around that time was leaving for Mecca. Allay was told that God would reward him for this demonstration of loyalty to his former master. Years later, in 2005, Allay still expressed his desire to be manumitted, not so he could go on the *Hajj* (as he was too old by then) but to be able to travel on horseback instead of on foot in his afterlife. He died in 2008 without being manumitted.

Diougal was luckier as his self-manumission was accepted by his master. For both Diougal Issiaka and Allay, the main motivation for liberating themselves was to gain full access to the Muslim community without any legal restrictions on access to the five pillars of Islam. Allay indicated that he no longer wanted to follow two masters (Allah and his former Dicko master) but to be more autonomous and to devote himself entirely to Allah in order to be accepted as a full member of the community of Muslim believers (Arabic: *Umma*; FF: *Alsilaamaaku*). Diougal Issiaka, the liberated slave descendant central to document I, is currently the *muezzin* at the village mosque and takes pride in actively demonstrating his piety. Self-manumission was a precondition for him to be able to do so. For women, manumission allows them more room to express their piety, for example, by wearing a veil. Women of slave descent who wear a veil and display piety are insulted and ridiculed by freeborn women, while those who have manumitted do not suffer in this way as they are legally part of the community of Muslim believers.

Besides piety, there are those who manumit for practical considerations related to inheritance. According to Islamic Law, there are free versus non-freeborn rights and duties. Some slave descendants self-manumit to become a partner who is legally considered entitled to inherit. In 2007 the chief of Dalla described how, just three days earlier, he had allowed a woman of slave descent (who he referred to by the anachronism female slave: *kordo*) called Lobooru to self-manumit to facilitate inheritance procedures. Since her husband's first wife had been manumitted, not manumitting would have resulted in her losing her entitlement to her husband's possessions. Another

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[67]   In French, many informants used the word *anoblissement*.
[68]   De Bruijn & van Dijk (1994: 99, 103).
[69]   The desire to make the pilgrimage after being liberated used to be widespread among slave descendants in the Sahel (Klein 1998: 246-247).

practical consideration, which might have been important in the past, was the right of manumitted slaves to own slaves themselves (McDougall 2007: 172).

Other motivations for manumission are related to economic status (wealth). Manumission by rich slave descendants seems to be primarily geared to underlining wealth *vis-à-vis* less wealthy slave descendants. Some of the rich emigrants who have manumitted however expressed the fact that they no longer wanted to feel any obligations towards their former masters' families. Burra Moodi, the imam in Booni who issued Document I (Image 2), said that most of the self-manumission requests he receives are from rich slave descendants because since they have become wealthier than their former masters' families, they no longer benefit from their historical bond. They are no longer dependent on the social security that the hierarchical relation used to guarantee and want to remove the legal bond with their former freeborn masters by freeing themselves.

Self-manumission thus helps to emphasize one's social promotion and independence *vis-à-vis* those slave descendants who remained clients and less wealthy. Self-manumission allows them to climb in status and such social promotion crystallizes in the establishment of their own endogamous group. Manumitted slaves are only allowed to marry other manumitted slaves and his wish to marry another manumitted woman was the main motivation behind Bilal's manumission. The social promotion of manumitted slave descendants also results in their increased respectability. Liberated men indicate how their voice becomes heard and their participation in freeborn associations is respected. Manumitted slave-descending women claim their liberation allows them to partake in saving groups organized by freeborn women.

A specific motivation in the Haayre region for manumission, which is not related to any of the legal Islamic prescriptions,[70] is the manumission of women who have problems giving birth. Local folk beliefs have it that a child will be more willing to be born if it knows it will be born free.[71] This shows how customary practices intermingle with Islamic legislative arrangements. Fanta's mother was manumitted by her master who pitied her because her first three babies had died. After she had been manumitted (she had already turned 30), her fourth child survived. Three more cases of such children of manumitted mothers in Dalla[72] were mentioned by both Musa Gaalil,[73] himself the son of liberated parents, and my research assistant Amadu.[74] Manumission can thus be undertaken to become more fertile and to please the spirit world.

A final motivation for slave descendants to engage in self-manumissions is to rid themselves of certain visible aspects of slave status. They are visibly stigmatized on a daily basis and do not enjoy full citizenship, remaining recognizable through their

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[70] Personal communication with two researchers who specialize in ransoming (Lofkrantz 2008) and manumission (Addoun 1998, 2005). Both confirmed never having encountered (references to) this practice either.

[71] Riesman (1992: 110) described the importance of manumission for children to be born alive as practised among FulBe in northern Burkina Faso.

[72] Examples given are Hawa (Wuro Burram, 1994), Takkel Tambura (child = Djadji Afel) and Weloore Toufado Tambura. They all took the name of their master after liberation. Takkel Tambura became Takkel Dicko and Welloore Toufado Tambura became Welloore Toufado Diallo.

[73] Moussa Gaalil, born in 1977, is a slave descendant living in Wuro Burram in Dalla. Interview, Dalla, May 2007.

[74] Research assistant Amadu Amiiru Dicko, interview, Mopti, 2007.

family names.[75] A specific advantage of manumission is that it legally entitles them to take on one's master's first and family name.[76] This is how Allayidi Tambura of the Kau family became Ali Allayidi Diallo and Welloore Tufado Tambura was renamed Welloore Tufado Dicko. In this sense, manumission comes close to a renewed social birth or a rite of passage (van Gennep 1960). Camara (1995: 23) even compares manumission to a form of 'patriarchal adoption'.

Apart from these changes, both freeborn and slave descendants realize that manumission does not eradicate the stigma of slave status. Informants indicated that those who liberate themselves continue to be insulted and addressed in the language of slavery.[77] In this case, the advantage of manumission is real only for one's children who are truly free of obligations *vis-à-vis* their parents' former master.

Finally, it should be stressed that the majority of slave descendants do not want to engage in (self-)manumission. The younger generation refers to personal choice more than wealth for explaining why certain people liberate themselves and others do not. In general, it is the rich slave descendants who are more likely to obtain their liberty than poor ones, especially if their master is himself poor. Economic emancipation is an important prerequisite for self-manumission and some former masters ask exorbitant prices that have to be paid over a long period of time (Saibou 2005).

The plurality of reality: Evaluating (self-)manumissions

> Even liberation is no dimension of liberty but is,
> on the contrary, a dimension of slavery.
> (Botte 2000a: 12)[78]

Liberating someone is confirmation of his imprisonment, not in a literal but in a psychological sense. One could see servility (the cultural field of hierarchy) and the quest for liberation as both sides of the same coin (Saibou 2005: 868). In addition to such moral and philosophical evaluations, actors in Fulɓe society in Central Mali have attributed various meanings to (self-)manumissions. Talaata's case demonstrated how some religious scholars adhere to Islamic Law, while others stick to State Law. However for magistrates but also slave descendants themselves, the practice of liberation is measured in contradictory ways.

Slave descendants' opinions on manumission are multiple and differences in opinion depend on the legal frame of reference one adheres to. There are those who consider themselves free according to Islamic Law and those who consider themselves free according to State Law. Those who feel free according to State Law describe those resort-

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[75] For more on naming, see Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming). Hurault (1994: 99-100: Footnote 11, 106) indicates that only upon manumission could the master change a slave's (sur)name.

[76] Most slave descendants use the surname Tambura in Dalla. See Schmitz (2009: 96) and Baier (1980: 83) quoted by Hall (2009: 13).

[77] Hall (2009: 19) also describes how Anjay, a slave who had been liberated in the nineteenth century and who enjoyed considerable wealth, continued to be addressed in the language and titles reserved for slaves.

[78] In French: 'Même l'affranchissement n'est pas une dimension de liberté, mais au contraire une dimension de l'esclavage'.

ing to manumission as still being caught up in 'mental slavery'. As one informant put it: 'Slavery may be finished, but mental slavery still exists'.

Hama Adja, who is of slave descent and from Kikara, indicates how 'status is more powerful than money in the village'.[79] This reflects the views of the majority of slave descendants in the Haayre region. He believes that manumission makes no sense because:

> ... wealth is not the only thing, people know your descent and respect you for that, not for your money. Even if Riimaayɓe (slave descendants) have a lot of money, they will not glorify themselves like Riimɓe (freeborn) do. They might change their dress, but this doesn't mean that they obtain more power. You know, Amadou Hampâté Bâ was right when he said: 'No matter how long a piece of wood stays in a stream, it will never become an alligator.'[80]

It is mostly youth and migrants who look down upon those who manumit themselves back home, reproaching them for being 'stuck in the Middle Ages' and naïve. Naïve because those manumitting believe that the only way to really be free is in the eyes of God, while according to these youngsters, one should first free oneself in one's own mind. Rich slave descendants who self-manumit after resettlement in their home community are critiqued for their motives. Fanta explains:[81]

> We insult those rich slave descending Riimaayɓe who self-manumit by reminding them of how they never will become 'really' noble or freeborn. We gossip about them only 'pretending' to have become freeborn. I would never liberate myself, I am proud of whom I am. If you free yourself, you are neither this nor that kind of person.

Her assertion underlines the fact that there is honour in knowing yourself and in accepting your social position, which I call the loyalty style (see Chapter 4). They stress the importance of not underestimating oneself and liking who you are (FF: *Yiidude ko o woni*) and knowing oneself (FF: *Anndude hoore makko*). According to them, those who manumit pretend to be superior to who they actually are. To be superior is expressed by the Fulfulde concept of *mangu*, which is used to denote someone who feels better than others and is a moralizing notion used to incite people to be more humble.

Those who believe in manumission reproach those who do not for adhering to the secular constitution. In the eyes of this small group of demonstrably pious slave descendants, God does not approve of the prayers, pilgrimages and other religious obligations of those who have not manumitted. Some, like Allay, are even more orthodox and do not believe in self-manumission. For them, the (former) master should take the initiative to manumit, otherwise it is not valid. Often these are older, widowed, slave-descending women like Kumba[82] who has benefitted from her relationship with her former master because she is regularly offered paid jobs. Kumba is very critical of self-manumission:

> According to my religion, if you don't obey your master (FF: *kalfaaɗo*), you go to hell. This is why people are scared to change their identity. Only if your master blesses or damns you, you are sure that God does so too. It is only if your master frees you that God agrees. This is the religious path, but

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[79] In Fulfulde: Ley wuro, sy burri semde mbuudu.
[80] In French: '*Quelque soit la durée d'un tronc d'arbre dans un marigot, ca ne serait jamais un caïman*'. Amadou Hampâté Bâ (1979) is a renowned Malian writer with a Fulɓe background.
[81] Fanta Tambura, born about 1950 in Joona, interview, Bamako, 2007.
[82] Kumba is one of Souleymane's paternal aunts and both belong to the Kau family.

some are too blinded by money, which makes them ignore their religion. They do things the other way around: They pay their masters.

Kumba does not agree with those who self-manumit. Although the rope is not there in practice, it is clearly inscribed in their minds and morality. She represents a commonly held view that manumissions are not worthwhile and do not count without the consent of the master. If not, the anger of God will be upon the slave (Saibou 2005: 868).

Hardly any young slave descendant today dreams of manumission so that they can go on pilgrimage in the way Allay and Diougal Issiaka did. Most of them identify with different interpretations of Islam that allow them to conduct the *Hajj* without resorting to manumission first. For this generation, it seems that mobility is the main precondition for emancipation from 'mental slavery'.[83] Paradoxically, those slave descendants who obtained enfranchisement in the fullest sense of the word[84] are impossible to trace as they cannot be named, traced through documents or even referred to as such. Anonymity is the only way to obscure any reference to one's former status and past.

Many never return to their hometowns but settle elsewhere in cities and other countries, which makes getting rid of their social stigma easier. It allows them to bypass the social control of their village community and marry freeborn women in other ethnic (status) groups, and some have changed ethnic affiliation through marriage and/or name changes (Rossi 2009a: 4; Pelckmans 2011b forthcoming).

Conclusions: Legal pluralism (en-)countering social stigma

Even in the formal sphere, such as legislation, the status of slave descendants is ambiguous and open to various interpretations. Islam is of central importance for belonging and identification for all members in Fulɓe society in the Haayre. Religious piety has become a shared ideology that has fed into the cultural field of hierarchy.

Different legal systems exist and allow leeway in the interpretation and implementation of Islamic jurisprudence. A recurring argument in this chapter has been that legal pluralism generates paradoxes for all the parties involved and that the difference between freeborn and non-freeborn is untenable when considering the variety in the two legal arrangements and statuses.

The section on legal pluralism pointed out how Malians are likely to be judged according to different normative systems, the national constitution that criminalizes slave status, and Customary Islamic Law that upholds it. The religious liberation procedure was the only one that could give legitimacy to someone's liberty in the cultural context of one's community. By emphasizing legalization, the French colonial apparatus overlooked the much more important aspect of legitimacy.

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[83] Other strategies involving mobility that became available to (Fulɓe) slave descendants in the Sahel as in the Haayre region are French education (Jezequel 2003; N'Gaide 1999), Islamic schooling (Berndt 2008; Schmitz 2009), decentralization politics (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005; Leservoisier 2005b; Hahonou 2009), development aid (Giuffrida 2005; Mauxion 2008) and emigration (Manchuelle 1997; Boyer 2005; Rossi 2009b).

[84] Enfranchisement is defined by Meillassoux (1991: 120) as the process by which the slave acquires all the prerogatives and honour of the freeborn.

Various factors, such as socio-cultural beliefs, wealth, knowledge, access, distance and social networks are practical factors that explain why some aspects of a slave past that were considered non-existent and illegal under national State Law for decades now live on today. This was demonstrated here with reference to manumission documents that continue to be issued in the Haayre region. Slave descendants who want to change their position have the option of resorting to manumission before Divine Law. Those who liberate themselves outside the religious realm, and even those who do so on their own initiative, risk the wrath of God. Islamic jurisprudence describes several legal procedures for slave descendants to liberate themselves. These do not result in liberty but in the liberation of people who are supposedly free citizens according to their national constitution.

Under Customary Islamic Malikite Law, slave descendants can be freed from certain aspects of their condition but cannot become free in the way the freeborn are. For informants themselves, the causalities of what leads to what seem sometimes to be blurred: Explanations contradict each other and underscore the importance of contextual details such as timeframe, discourse and generational perspectives.

In general, it is the religious elites who have access to the powerful ideological tools of Islamic knowledge and legislation that legitimizes and reproduces the cultural field of hierarchy. Over time, some slave descendants have turned this ideological tool to their own advantage. By manumitting or educating themselves, some have managed to achieve social recognition based on their religious piety. However, slave descendants have usually specialized in other forms of social recognition through (secret) knowledge (FF: A*nndal*) related to herbs and plants as *bonngobi* healers, tattooing or music making. Legal pluralism in the end seems to be most beneficial to the religious and political elite who are able to use it to their advantage.

Manumission documents issued by Islamic scholars formalize the new status of a slave (descendant) as a freed slave. Despite their legally acknowledged freedom according to national legislation, a minority of older slave descendants continue to liberate themselves to gain full recognition in close-knit religious communities. Manumission for them is a culturally accepted strategy of inclusion and social promotion from within. Others view manumission as being instrumental to gaining access to fertility, property, inheritance, renaming, land, social authority and recognition, manumitted marriage partners and the *Hajj*.

To be freed does not equate with being free. Those who engage in manumission are freed but they are not free and are still likely to be stigmatized as 'children of the rope'. Manumission does not result in full enfranchisement. In local interpretations of Islamic legislation, systematic suppression of the stigma of slavery and dependency does not exist.

(Self-)manumission is a powerful ideological tool to legitimize and reproduce the cultural field of hierarchy. In short, the liberation procedure appears to confirm the impossibility of complete freedom and independence. The promise of upward social mobility by liberation is only partial and a freed status does not equal free status. Manumission is all but helpful in obscuring the stigma of the rope and instead reframes slave

stigma by optimizing the relative inclusion of slave descendants in the freeborn community.

Why is manumission for some slave descendants considered a culturally recognized strategy for obtaining social promotion within their home community? As demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 4, wealth in many cases is not perceived as a way of obtaining access to relatedness or the patriarchal mode in the way freeborn do. This chapter has underlined how, legally, wealth can enable one to buy freedom but not nobility. Self-manumission does not result in gain in an economic or material realm but leads to social recognition in a cultural context where religious identification is central. Besides obtaining religious inclusion and cultural prestige, self-manumissions are about renegotiating social distances *from within* the cultural field of hierarchy.

Finally the reasons why the majority of slave descendants do not engage in self-manumission were considered. They have other strategies for obtaining social recognition and, unlike those who liberated themselves, they were able to rid themselves of stigma not by challenging existing religious boundaries but by bypassing and ignoring them. For some, especially the younger generation, mobility has enabled them to distance themselves from the cultural field of hierarchy. They have made money from engaging in seasonal or long-term (international) migration and this wealth automatically makes them less dependant on interaction with the freeborn elite and a stigmatized identity in their home community (cf. Boyer 2005). They obtain their social promotion from *outside* the cultural field of hierarchy. Others, especially the older generation, have specialized in niches such as healing, dancing and music-making.

These groups are not interested in (self-)manumission because they have accessed a much broader array of alternatives for social promotion and have bypassed rather than renegotiated patron-client relations based on a slave past. They have other strategies for obtaining social recognition and, unlike those who liberated themselves, they have been able to rid themselves of stigma, not by challenging existing social boundaries but by distancing themselves from them or by challenging them. These renegotiations and the social promotion obtained from outside the logic of the cultural field of hierarchy will be central in the following chapters.

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'Having a road' to mobility:
Options to master one's own mobility

'Moving is as commonplace as eating, those who move are no more remarkable and commonplace than those who eat' (Rain 1999: 4). But however normal eating may be, it may be organized differently and can have different ingredients, ways of preparation, and it depends on environmental and economic resources available to different groups of people. What you eat demonstrates who you are, and mobility is no more natural or less cultural than cooking. Moving is a cultural process and when describing the movement of different social groups in Niger, Rossi (2009b: 182) points out that: 'How one moves is an indicator of who one is'.

That mobility is embedded in hierarchical power relations in the Sahel was already acknowledged by scholars who worked on migration in the 1970s. Tardits (1973) described how elites in the pre-colonial Grassfields region in Cameroon often had better and easier access to mobility than commoners who stayed in one place to work the land and, if necessary, changed their master rather than their place of residence. Later studies continued this line of reasoning. Manchuelle (1997: 186) described how Soninke elites in the west of Mali were often the first to enter new niches and careers that required movement and mobility.[1] Only later on did their clients and slaves follow. Rossi (2009b: 183) demonstrated how in Niger too, clients and commoners had intersecting patterns of movement whereby clients engaged in 'subordinate movement' *vis-à-vis* elite groups.

Mobility is thus part of the cultural field of hierarchy. This is an interesting insight related to the central question of this thesis, namely, how hierarchies travel and whether movement by slave descendants is dominated by the same power relations and stigmatizations they are subject to at 'home'.

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[1]   Manchuelle (1997: 186) describes how Soninke youngsters used to migrate from rural to rural areas on an individual basis and later moved to urban centres such as Dakar and Kayes where they engaged in wage labour, mostly in harbours (Saint Louis) and on railway-building projects. These connections eventually opened up opportunities for moving to France.

Photo 7   Humoristic painting about the difficulties on the road, handpainted by Bamako
              based artist L. Kante

Since mobility is central to understanding the livelihoods and trajectories of groups
of people in Africa (de Bruijn *et al.* 2001b) and in the Haayre region more specifically
(de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001b & 2003a; de Bruijn *et al.* 2001a), it is vital to address it
when analyzing social change. The introduction focussed on the Fulfulde concept of
'having a road' (FF: *Hebbude laawol*) with the road as a metaphor for having access,
being given opportunities or experiencing possibility and agency. Put simply 'having a
road' underscores both the metaphoric road to (social) promotion and the literal road or
having access to movement. It underlines how advancement in life can correspond with
mobility to other places: The road is a possible way out of an existing constraint.

This chapter analyzes who has access to mobility. What are the power relations that
(used to) define the mobility of different status groups of Fulɓe? I demonstrate that the
spatial and social mobility of former domestic slaves often remained 'tied' to that of
their former Dicko masters in the municipalities of Joona, Booni and Dalla (Map 3).

In the first section, I address the historical interrelations between power and mobility
with a focus on the post-independence period. Then I move on to describe hosting to
fully understand the linkages between status and movement. This is an institution that
explains not only how status groups move but also towards whom people move. This
will allow us to understand the conditionality of people's mobility.

The subsequent sections provide more concrete case material on the mobility of the
freeborn, royal branches of the Dicko family in Dalla, Joona and Booni, and the mo-

bility of their slave descendants. Although many Dicko family members in their home village remained relatively immobile, the descendants of some members of the Dicko families in each kingdom (Musa, Hamadoun and Mustaphe) have been extremely mobile. Their independent itineraries ('roads') were possible thanks to education and politics. After addressing the roads of the Dicko family, a next section will zoom in on the itineraries travelled by the Kau family, the former royal slave descendants of the Dicko family in Dalla whose independent roads are mainly based on labour migration. And in a final section I describe how the spatial insertion of both groups of migrants in Bamako, i.e. their access to housing and hosting, reproduces the power relations between them. This chapter thus mainly focuses on the mobility of first-generation immigrants in the Kau-Dicko network who have settled in Bamako.[2]

And last but not least, the final section describes how the mobility of the Kau family depends on the Dicko elites who settled in Bamako, firstly because they have the power to control access to their network by hosting, and secondly because they are wealthy enough to make others move to assist them. This last section underlines how it is indeed 'subordinate movement' that is predominant in the Kau family as most of them only manage to move as the dependent clients of the more powerful Dicko elites.

Contextualizing mobility:
Histories of control over mobility in a stratified Fulɓe network

This section analyzes the history of control over mobility by the freeborn families in the Haayre over their (former) slaves. An important aspect of the power of the ruling elites was that they had the monopoly on moral, bureaucratic and physical access to mobility for a long time. However new and controlling institutions, elites and political players, such as colonial and national governments, began to take over part of that control. Apart from permission and/or access to institutions regulating mobility, there were changes in the ways in which one could obtain resources to pay for transport, food and housing.[3]

In the Central Malian Sahel in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Fulɓe wealth consisted of people and cattle rather than fixed assets or land. Cattle and people were obtained through raids, which necessarily demanded a mobile lifestyle. Wealth in people meant the wealth to delegate degrading tasks and this increased social status. Chapter 1 indicated how the power of the Dicko family was established thanks to their control of the mobilities of several client groups, for example slaves who cultivated their fields and prepared food.

Each status group had access to specific forms of mobility in pre-colonial Mali. The nomadic groups clearly moved around with their cattle (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 111-166, 223-330) and, for them, mobility was the norm rather than the exception (de Bruijn *et al.* 2001a). Before the arrival of the French, the freeborn Dicko family specialized in immobility rather than mobility. They were only mobile in order to engage in raids or tax collection on their territories, looking down on trade and physical

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[2] Chapter 7 focuses on second-generation Kau and Dicko immigrants in Bamako.
[3] The amount of money needed for transport has rapidly decreased over the last few decades and the remittances of those on the move have generated the chance for co-villagers to leave too.

labour such as cultivation and construction and outsourcing these forms of mobile labour to clients and other dependants. They 'mastered' the mobility of their clients.

A concrete example is that of the *Hajj*. According to Islam, a slave's pilgrimage is only valid on two conditions. The first condition is the manumission of the former slave and the second one is the official permission of the master. The freeborn Dicko family could officially control their slaves' pilgrimages, which meant that mobility was thus embedded in power relations. In terms of mobility, specializing in the patriarchal style means controlling one's own and other people's mobility. To varying degrees, the ruling freeborn Dicko elites controlled the mobility of other social status groups, such as the pastoralist *Jalluuɓe* who herded their cows, the *Jawaamɓe* who traded their slaves and cattle, and the slaves who provided them with labour. After forced movement following capture by Fulɓe warlords, slaves initially underwent a form of forced 'immobilization' in their new host society. Forced immobility or 'involuntary immobility' (Carling 2002) means a lack of roads to access social, economic or political capitals.

Due to newly emerging powerful movements, such as El Hajj Omar Tall's Fuutanke Empire (Klein 1998: 49-52) and international governance under French colonial occupation (Klein 1999), the Dicko families in the Haayre region lost some of their power to master the movement of their slaves and clients. Most freeborn reacted conservatively to the introduction of schooling, national policies and the secular rule of law by the French.

The relative peace resulting from under French colonial occupation was important so that people of all status groups could travel more safely. In certain urban areas of Mali, for example in Bamako and its surroundings, French colonial interventions directly loosened the control of the elites over their clients' mobility.

This was less so in Central Mali as the region was relatively unimportant and under-equipped and was only governed by a few colonial officers. It was mostly the less powerful elites, such as *Jawaamɓe* traders and impoverished *Jalluuɓe* herdsmen, who lost considerable power over their domestic slaves from colonial occupation onwards. Their slave descendants decided to detach themselves from their masters, 'voting with their feet' for more freedom and moving out of the orbit of their masters' power. Some moved only a short distance, while others left the country or tried their luck in the capital, Bamako.

In contrast, the control of the ruling elites over their domestic slaves was criticized but accepted by the colonizers. The French prohibited the accumulation of new slaves and curbed the mobility of the elites[4] but, due to indirect rule, felt obliged to accept domestic slavery in this under-developed region. This explains why the oldest generation of domestic slaves in Dalla recall their emancipation as slaves at the royal court only starting in the 1950s.

Colonial governments did however offer their subjects new roads or options for movement. The harshness of French forced labour (Cooper 1996; Fall 1993) combined with several plagues and droughts led to the migration of the inhabitants of the French

[4] The colonial regime reduced existing flexibilities and pluralities of movement due to border policies (de Bruijn 2007: 118). The freedom of freeborn to conduct the *Hajj* was curbed because of increased border controls between the French and British colonies.

colonial Sudan to the British colonies.[5] Demands for taxes also encouraged labour migration.[6] The French colonial government created large-scale plantations with single crops, such as the 'Peanut Basin'[7] in Senegal and rice in the 'Office du Niger' in Mali.[8] The demand for labour was high on these plantations and offered immigrants the chance to earn the money they needed to pay their taxes back home. Labour migration could range from permanent to circular or was seasonal.

Since labour has always been a slave's main capital, labour migration was an important alternative road for slaves if they wanted to leave hierarchical master-slave relationships behind.[9] Manchuelle (1997: 129) argues that about 75% of the migrants to West African cities from the 1930s onwards were slaves.

Another road to (social) mobility created by the colonial government was education. Some of the freeborn elite families were initially wary of sending their own children to the French colonial schools and sent their slaves' children instead. However they came to realize that these slave children had gained a 'double advantage' (Cf. Mauxion 2008) by becoming part of the national administration as a result of having had a good education.

'Having a road' from independence onwards

After independence from France, the national Malian government mastered the mobility of the Dicko family. The life history of Hamadoun Dicko is taken here as a starting point to explain post-colonial developments in the national government's mobility policies.

Hamadoun[10] *Dicko: Royal intellectual at Mali's independence*
As a freeborn prince from the royal Dicko family in the former Fulɓe kingdom of Joona, Hamadoun had the privilege of being involved early in a new niche for social mobility created by the colonial state through education in French. In the years preceding Malian independence, Hamadoun Dicko, who was born in 1924 as the oldest son of the ten children of the chief of the Fulɓe Kingdom of Joona, had become an important national politician. His career started off with a French education at the Lycée de Terrasson de

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5   Dougnon (2007) describes how Dogon farmers from Douentza province (Map 2, see introductory chapter) migrated to the Gold Coast (now Ghana).
6   Manchuelle (1997: 4-8) gives an overview of the literature on labour migration in West Africa.
7   See Moitt (1989) on the slavery and emancipation in the Senegal's peanut basin.
8   This project was initiated by the French colonizers in 1939 and taken over by the socialist Malian state. For more detailed information on *L'Office du Niger*, see Dougnon (2007: 75-83).
9   Mobility resulting from droughts and labour migration has been analyzed by various academics as an important incentive for the (further) emancipation of former slave groups in different regions. See for example, Georg-Deutsch (2003: 186; 2006) for East Africa; Klein (1998) for West Africa; Ruf (2000) for Mauritania; Manchuelle (1997) and Pollet & Winter (1971, 1978) for West Mali; and de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a) for Central Mali.
10 Although in other personal names I opt for using the Fulfulde spelling which would be "Hamadun", in this case I opt for using the French spelling, because Hamadoun Dicko is a public figure after whom several buildings are named in French spelling. Same goes for his son, who is called Umar in Fulfulde, but Oumar in French spelling. Since he was an important national politician I also stick to French spelling for his name.

Fougères à Bamako[11] (L'Echo du Mali 2006: 18). After teaching in Bafoulabe (Kolokani),[12] he was asked by PSP, one of the first political parties, to be Député du Sudan. In 1951 at the age of 27, he moved to France where he had several positions as secretary and deputy minister of different departments, reflecting his personal preference for education and research.[13] Hamadoun Dicko's move to France to pursue his educational and political career was not an isolated case. Although Hamadoun and his fellow students only stayed in France temporarily, many Malian labourers, soldiers and colonial assistants stayed permanently.

Back in Mali, conflicts over positions of power and political agendas were hotting up. The socialist regime of Moodibo Keita and the ruling USRDA[14] party were serious about ending slave status, not least because many of the administrators knew the legacies of slavery personally, being of slave descent themselves.[15] Hamadoun's PSP party was conservative on these issues as it was made up of many prominent traditional elites who were generally not keen to let their clients go. Mawludu Dicko, one of Hamadoun's paternal cousins, remembers how the PSP was considered as 'the party of the slave traders and collaborators of the colonial regime' between 1946 and 1958. As demonstrated in Chapter 8, it was the party of some Dickos and their slave descendants from Dalla (see also de Bruijn & Pelckmans, 2005).

By taking part in demonstrations against the new Malian currency[16] Hamadoun and other PSP party leaders were accused of acting against the national government's interests (*Le Monde*, 21 July 1962). They were seen as a threat because of their loyalty to France around the time of independence. After being condemned to death by the popular court in Bamako (*Le Monde*, 24 July 1962), the PSP leaders were sent to work camps in Kidal, which is where Hamadoun Dicko was killed by the governing USRDA party in 1964.[17]

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[11] Another source (archives M162 (23.11.57) referred to by anonymous author in: L'Echo du Mali (2006: 16) suggests he attended the Ecole Normale de William Ponty in Dakar, but this has not been confirmed by his family members.

[12] Kolokani is the hometown of Fily Drabo Cissoko, where Hamadoun and Fily Drabo met.

[13] He was secretary of the national assembly and became Deputy Minister (French: *Sous-sécretaire d'état*) of Industry and Commerce. In 1956 he became Deputy Minister in charge of the Advisory Board of Scientific Research and Technical Progress (French: *Sous-sécretaire d'état à la présidence du conseil*). From 1957 onwards, he was State Secretary of French Overseas Territories (French: *Sécretaire d'état à la France d'Outre-Mer*) and in 1958 he was State Secretary of National Education (archives M162 (23.11.57)/archives Paul Dehème, 9.XII.19 (D.B.-A.N.) referred to by anonymous author in: L'Echo du Mali (2006: 16).

[14] US-RDA = Union Soudanaise - Rassemblement Démocratique du Peuple. Part of the URDA became ADEMA (Alliance pour la Démocratie du Mali).

[15] Since many slaves were sent to French schools by their masters. A concrete example of their attempts to end slave status is their downplaying of the legacy of Islamic laws that forbid slaves to inherit from their kin, as slave property supposedly belonged to their masters (Berndt 2008: 290-291). See Lecocq (2005) for an overview of Malian politics at independence in the context of legacies of slavery.

[16] The USRDA and PSP disagreed over the introduction of a Malian Franc in 1962. The USRDA wanted an independent Malian currency (*Franc Malien*) but the PSP pleaded for gradual independence by remaining within West African monetary union (FCFA) (Diallo 2005; Diallo *et al*. 2005).

[17] Various sources: Interviews with Dicko family members (Mawludu, Bamako 2005; Musa Dicko, 2001-2007; Samba Dicko 2005-2008). Anonymous author in 'L'écho du Mali' 2006 (20): 18-19; Malian newspaper *L'Essor*, special issue Mali 2000 (1999: 23) with a picture of Hamadoun Dicko.

The injustice done to Hamadoun Dicko and his family by Moodibo Keita's regime is still vivid in the memories of the Dicko family.[18] The first Malian Republic severely restricted the mobility of the Dickos. Hamadoun Dicko's brother-in-law Musa Dicko (an educated semi-freeborn) was, for example, sent out by the USRDA government to teach in villages in Mali's remotest regions.[19] These forced short-term transfers were the fate that many Dickos faced in their position as teaching functionaries (French: *Cadres*) in this period.[20]

A first and second Malian Republic
While the French improved security and thus the mobility of their subjects, socialist President Moodibo Keita (1960-1968) actively curbed certain forms of mobility by reintroducing *laisser-passers*, these travel documents were much more difficult to obtain than the former French colonial ID cards (Gary-Tounkara 2003). Moodibo wanted to prevent any further rural exodus and incited Malian emigrants to return to the land. The Segou-based *Office du Niger*[21] attracted a lot of rice cultivators on the banks of the River Niger. Access to French education was soon discouraged by the socialist regime, which was much more oriented towards Russia, China and Libya.[22]

Hamadoun's son Oumar remembers how he never felt safe during the First Malian Republic and only started to relax after the coup by Musa Traore in 1968. Traore then prosecuted prominent USRDA members who could no longer upset the Dickos. In short, the first years of independence were turbulent for the Dicko family; they lost significant control over thei clients, not only due to their absence but also due to their own powerlessness *vis-à-vis* the Malian government.

Dictator Traore's repressive regime (1968-1991) impeded mobility outside Mali and favoured movement towards the capital city (Brand 2001: 39-40) as it needed urban labourers for its industrialization projects. The small-scale, cross-border trade between Central Mali and Burkina Faso decreased, while migration to urban centres increased. Economic decline coincided with major droughts during much of the 1970s and 1980s[23] and for many inhabitants of the Haayre, these were the symbolic straw that broke the camel's back. Poor villagers moved to small cities, such as Bandiagara and Douentza.

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[18] A first step towards reconciliation was a meeting in December 2005 organized by the French Embassy. Hamadoun Dicko's son, Oumar, obtained a medal of honour but was frustrated because the former RDA (current URD) refused full acknowledgement of murder, suggesting instead that their political opponents died accidentally.

[19] Musa Dicko described his life history in a letter to de Bruijn & van Dijk in the 1990s.

[20] Mawludu from Joona (Bamako 2005) was forced to move in five years' time from Bankas to Mopti (two months) to Sevare, to Djenne and finally to Djah when the coup took place in 1968. After the coup, he was transferred to Bamako where he has stayed ever since. Also Usmane from Joona (currently living with Hamadoun Dicko's son Oumar in Bamako, described on following page) was transferred to work in a different place each six months. Ibrahim Dicko, a direct family member of Hamadoun Dicko, was killed by the RDA opposition party on his return to Mali because he fought on the side of the French, which the RDA still considered 'the enemy', in the Algerian war.

[21] This project was initiated by French colonizers in 1939 and taken over by the socialist Malian state. For more information on *L'Office du Niger*, see Dougnon (2007: 75-83).

[22] All three countries made bursaries available to Malian students. Many Malians in their forties and fifties today enjoyed an education in Libya, Russia or China.

[23] The severe droughts of the 1970s (1972-1973) and 1980s (1984-1986) led to a profound crisis in many Sahelian countries and in the already arid Haayre region.

Dikoore, a slave-descending women from Dalla,[24] for example, went to Douentza to get food from the international NGOs there and, in 1985, barely managing to survive, decided to travel on with her two-year-old twins to Mopti to beg. Giving alms to twins in Mali is considered to bring good luck but when one of the twin girls died of malnutrition, Dikoore had to return to her village empty-handed.

The droughts and Moussa Traore's regime accelerated urbanization on a national scale.[25] The droughts brought new NGO money and administrative functions to towns like Douentza[26] that attracted the destitute (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a). The majority of those who settled in the cities were slave descendants of impoverished noble families who could no longer sustain themselves as a result of the droughts. In Dalla and Joona, those freeborn, for example the ruling Dicko families, who managed to lean on their slaves remained relatively immobile, even in times of droughts.[27]

Several status groups in Fulɓe society opted to settle in urban centres: Pastoralists, traders, praise singers, slave-descending cultivators and weavers. Many weaving slave descendants from Joona settled in Bamako where their products were valued by other ethnic groups and colonial officers. Other slave descendants from Booni, Dalla and Joona moved to Segou where they worked, for example, as painters or cultivators in the *Office du Niger*.

The colonial period and independence allowed much more leeway for slave descendants to conduct the *Hajj* both with or without their masters' consent. The imam of Dalla describes how the first slaves who left for Mecca were slaves from the estates who had become relatively rich and manumitted themselves from their impoverished pastoralist Fulɓe masters in the 1980s.[28] So although some groups of slave descendants 'had a road' to Mecca, tellingly none of the Kau descendants to date has ever conducted the *Hajj*.

Increased mobilities after independence

Pastoralist mobility with cattle in the Fulfulde dialect of Central Malian is called *Eggude* (to move and resettle).[29] For (labour) migration in a much broader sense and as

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[24] Dikoore Tambura, married to Seydu (one of the Kau descendants), interview with interpreter Umu Sangare, Dalla, 2001-2002.

[25] Zondag (2005: 170-172) describes the dynamics behind the growth of rural towns in Mali.

[26] Today, people from the surrounding areas are settling in Douentza, not only for economic reasons but also due to the presence of schools, healthcare facilities and employment possibilities (Zondag 2005: 174-176).

[27] The exceptions were however those Dicko's who pursued their educational careers, obtained degrees and became teachers or politicians.

[28] He mentions El Hajj Bucary Padjo from the village of Torbani who left on foot in 1936, just like El Hajj Arsuke from the village of Bara-Aoussi who went in 1938.

[29] According to Ciavolella (2008), most studies on pastoralist Fulɓe focus on the classification of mobility in terms of the distances that Fulɓe undertake. Stenning (1959: 142) in his study on Wodaaɓe Fulɓe of Niger notes how transhumance ('regular seasonal movements') are translated as *Kodol*. Migratory drift, defined as 'the gradual displacement of transhumance orbits' is rendered in Fulfulde as *eggol* (*Egga*: To wonder). Migration defined as the 'assumption of new transhumance orbits by a sudden and often lengthy movement is translated as *perol* (*fera*: to flee). However, the focus here is on sedentarized Fulɓe and attention to detailed vocabularies of movement is not required.

related to youngsters going on adventure, three notions are central: *Yuultoyde* (FF) or leaving for somewhere else or emigrating,[30] *ferrude* (FF) which is leaving in search for a better life, and the third notion is *fagoaade* (FF) which puts more emphasis on leaving in search of money and good luck. The most all-encompassing notion that is used and seems to apply to any category of moving people is *dawde* (FF), which was translated as 'travelling' by my informants.

Mobility in the Sahel has often been explained as historical adaptation to the climate and the environment but the plurality of forms of mobility in this region can no longer be denied (de Bruijn 2007: 110-111). Reasons for migrating, often to towns like Douentza and cities like Bamako, are not only drought, poverty and disdain for heavy manual labour in the fields but also work, education, curiosity, religion, trade, governance and youth culture.

Most informants indicate that the 1980s, and especially the 1990s, saw a rapid increase in emigrants in the Haayre region. Some mention the 1991 military coup that finally brought Traore's dictatorial regime to an end as an important incentive for new forms of migration. Following the elections, Alpha Oumar Konare became president and agreed to decentralize politics. By the end of the 1990s, this had generated new hopes, reinvigorated the participation of young intellectuals in their country's future and opened Mali up to new international opportunities.[31]

The majority of Fulɓe labour migrants from the Haayre region living in Bamako are slave-descending *Riimaayɓe* who formerly belonged to (impoverished) freeborn *Jawaamɓe* traders or pastoralist *Jalluuɓe* families. There are two main forms of mobility for slave descendants in Fulɓe society: Dependent and independent mobility. The main incentive for the independent movement of slave descendants is labour. Keleere's story below indicates how a slave descendant of *Jawaamɓe* traders accumulated enough wealth to move independently of his master. He is also an example of how a temporal seasonal labour immigrant in Bamako can become a more permanent resident in the city.

Keleere indicates how, historically, it was his master's social group, that of the trading Jawaamɓe, who were always mobile. They were a specialized group who visited new destinations to barter goods over long distances. Today, trade has become an accepted activity for various status groups, even for freeborn noblemen who used to look down on trade and traders. Keleere started moving to Bamako for seasonal labour in 1992 and since 1999 has been living there permanently with his wife, her brother and his own brother. He pays employers back home to cultivate his land and in Bamako he has become an important host for co-villagers from Dalla.

Keleere was born in 1964 as the son of a well-to-do family of former slaves who used to belong to traders (FF: *Maccuɓe Jawaamɓe*). He stresses that he never worked in the service of someone else and his family became independent quite early on, earning

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[30] I discussed these notions with Amadu Amiiru Dicko by email in November 2008. In his French translations, the notions are translated as follows: *Dawde = voyager*; *eggude = déménager*; *juultoyde = aller en exode, émigrer*; *fagowade = aller chercher fortune*; *ferude = aller en exile*.

[31] De Bruijn (2007: 118-119) also mentions various reasons why both rural-rural and rural-urban migration of Fulɓe in the Malian Sahel region increased.

money from the Burkina-Mali cross-border trade. As a youngster, Keleere used to sell sugar, tea and cigarettes walking from hamlet to hamlet and managed to save enough to go to Burkina Faso where he continued with petty trade and made good money. Dictator Mousa Traore's regime however controlled border trade much more closely and many traders lost all their goods to corrupt customs officials. This is when Keleere decided to make seasonal labour trips to Bamako. Today he pasteurizes the fresh milk of *Jawaamɓe* traders from Nioro du Sahel and sells it by riding from compound to compound on his bicycle.

Apart from political changes, the 1990s heralded the unprecedented emergence of several new technologies in the Haayre region, many of which have in some way democratized access to mobility.[32] The tarred road between Bamako and Gao was completed in 1986 and faster, easier and cheaper travel came within the reach of many.[33] Bard Baa Digi describes how when the road was still untarred, it took three days to get from Douentza to Dalla (35 km), especially during the rainy season (Angenent *et al*. 1998).

An informant of slave descent[34] explains the increase in labour migrants over the past decades as a need for cash: 'In Dalla life is difficult (FF: A*na tiidi*) since cultivation is not lucrative enough these days (FF: *Demal wanaa nafal hannde*) and one needs money to pay for food and invest in animals. Youngsters feel forced to leave their villages to work in the cities.' The consumer goods that migrants bring back encourage others to leave.

Slave-descending youngsters are increasingly engaging in seasonal migration to the bigger cities, especially Bamako. They migrate in the dry season but come back in May to assist with cultivating their family's lands and in October or November, when the harvest is in, they leave again for the urban areas.

The labour migrants today are younger than before and sometimes children as young as ten are leaving. A decade ago, the minimum age was about fifteen. They have various reasons for leaving (de Bruijn & van Dijk 2000b: 41-62) but most consider the sense of adventure (*partir en aventure*) as most central to the (seasonal) migration of male youngsters. Their migration is a metaphor for initiation into the world and one which entails accessing new sources of knowledge such as languages, consumer goods and ideas.[35] The worldly orientation of Haayre's youth today is well illustrated by the way youngsters from Dalla have rebaptized their home village 'Dallas'.[36] The setting up of

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[32] Connection to the cell-phone network in the Haayre region from 2004 onwards has minimized the distance between 'home' and 'away'. Television and cameras contribute to local imaginaries of 'elsewhere' and generate the desire to 'see with one's own eyes'.

[33] Alu Paate Tambura (interview, Segou, 2007) said: 'Before people migrated less, they were afraid of being killed. There was no road to Douentza before 1945 and thus it was ... dangerous to undertake a trip elsewhere.' With the tarred road from Bamako to Gao finished (during Traore's rule), people started travelling more.

[34] Amadu Hama Dauda, interview, Bamako, 2005.

[35] Male Riimaayɓe seasonal labourers interviewed in Bamako explained how they learn a lot about the real world as they face the hardships of coping with a different language, the difficulties of establishing new contacts and finding a job, the dangers of being robbed or misled by others and the problem of not having anywhere to sleep but the streets.

[36] Also, during their campaign in the municipal elections in April-May 2009, some Dicko youngsters in Dalla compared their efforts and dedication to politics with Obama's. They described themselves as

an association of emigrants from Dalla in Bamako in 1998 testified to the increased number settling there.

The majority of the international migrants from the Haayre region today go to Malabo, the capital of Equatorial Guinea.[37] Any youngster in Dalla knows the exact costs and various hosts on the road to Equatorial Guinea by heart. Malians from the Kayes region also moved to France before and after independence (Daum 1998; Manchuelle 1997), and two-thirds of the West African migrants who went 'all the way to France' (FF: *Faa Leydi Franci*) are from the Senegal River region (Fiévet 1999: 22).[38]

Very few emigrants from the Haayre region went to France.[39] One of the reasons for this is that there are no existing networks for them to rely on when moving abroad[40] and where people go is defined by their social networks, the experience of co-villagers and family and the information available. Hosting is central in defining people's destinations and possibilities for migration.

The *njaatigiya* principle: Moving towards hosts

Hosting is an important aspect of mobility and is a central institution for ethnic groups in the West African context who share the same terminology. *Njaatigi* literally means 'to host'[41] and is someone who makes a visitor's stay possible. The word as it is used in Fulfulde is borrowed from the Bambara language (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1997: 255) and its linguistic hybridity indicates in itself the interethnic aspect of most host-guest relations. Fulɓe pastoralists in the Haayre region, for example, tend to have hosts among Dogon, Riimaayɓe, Songhay and Humbeeɓe in the plains of Seeno down south (Map 3).

One of the main reasons why hosts preferably need to be from another social group is the ideology of shame (FF: *Yaage*) (de Bruijn 2000: 20, 24).[42] To avoid activities that might lead to feelings of shame (eating, sleeping, defecating), it is important to have a fixed host from an ethnic group where shame is not an issue or is less pronounced. Another source of shame can be poverty, which is why poor people prefer to be hosted

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'young Obamas', who give hope for a better future for the citizens of 'Dallas'. Phone conversations from The Netherlands with Demba Dicko, Bamako, 2009 and Amadu Amiiru Dicko, Douentza, 2009.

[37] Dougnon (2007) explains how Congo and Angola that were popular destinations throughout the 1960s and 1970s have declined in importance because of civil wars and an oversaturation of immigrants in Angola's lucrative diamond mines. Equatorial Guinea started to attract a lot of migrants in the mid 1990s because of its newly discovered oil and gas fields. See: http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/7221.htm, accessed March 2009.

[38] This is according to Tribalat in his study *De l'immigration à l'assimilation* quoted by Fiévet (1999: 17-18) on the official numbers of African immigrants in France. Population censuses indicate a strong increase per decade from 9,000 in 1964 to over 43,000 in 1974 and 178,000 in 1980-1984.

[39] As will be demonstrated, those who did are mainly freeborn Dickos. Hamadoun Dicko and Musa Dicko both have daughters who have settled more permanently in France.

[40] As opposed to Soninke and ethnic groups in West Mali who had a much longer history of travel to the French colonial motherland (Manchuelle 1997).

[41] A host is someone who receives a traveller in a place far from home. Feeding and housing the traveller are the obligations of the host.

[42] For a more general description of shame relations as interpreted by the various ethnic groups in the sub-region, see Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996). Shame is strongest within one's own social group and is then referred to as *ndewru* (FF).

by another social group towards whom shame will be less strongly felt rather than their own close kin (brother or sisters).

There are elaborate networks of *njaatigi*-hood in the Haayre region. In every major village that a person regularly visits, he needs a *njaatigi* to be able to stay. This is a relationship between male heads of families that last over several generations and are passed on from father to son (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1995a: 161; de Bruijn 1998: 24). Being married is an important criterion to becoming a host. Hosts contribute to feelings of belonging, which are based on social relations rather than on fixed entities, such as land (de Bruijn 2007: 125). Most people will have a host in every village they visit regularly. In order to be able to study at the school in Booni in the 1970's, several members of the Dicko family in Dalla were, for example, hosted by a family of praise singers from Booni.

The host-guest relationship has material and social advantages (de Bruijn & van Dijk 1997: 255). First it is an institutionalization of the complementary, reciprocal cultivator-pastoralist exchange of products whereby the cows and milk of Fulɓe pastoralists are exchanged for millet and other agricultural products. The cultivator-pastoralist couple can span interethnic relations (Dogon hosting Fulɓe)[43] or intra-ethnic relations, with cultivating slave populations hosting freeborn masters.[44] Often people eat and stay with their *njaatigi* when visiting a market or when on business in another town and some-times poor people will look for work with their wealthier host. The material advantages of staying with a host are, however, less pronounced or even non-existent in cities. There the *njaatigi* relationship is much less an exchange or economic relationship (de Bruijn & van Dijk, 1995a: 161) but is instead social and secures the identity and status of the visitor. Thanks to one's *njaatigi* relationship, a person is not a complete outsider or stranger.

When travelling, having a *njaatigi* host reduces the risks of downward social mo-bility related to strangerhood. The host takes care of his visitor's respectability and social needs, and maintaining respectability avoids shame in the new environment. Since shame relations exist between same-status group members, one is preferably hosted by a different social status group to avoid shame. For example, slave descendants and/or pastoralists host religious and political elites, and vice versa. The less shame there is between host and guest, the more freedom there is for the guest involved.[45]

Only if one has parental relations is being hosted by kin of the same social status group possible. For example, if a slave descendant who lives in the hamlet of Aoussi (Map 5) goes to the market in Dalla, he will not be hosted by his sister because after she

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[43] Since Dogon cultivators were the first to move to Equatorial Guinea, most Fulɓe who came later are hosted by Dogon. This is thus a typical interethnic *njaatigi* network.

[44] During tax collections, it is typically the Dicko elite who are hosted by 'their' slaves who host them in the most superb conditions, spoiling their former masters with lavish meals and a lot of milk in the hope of their loyalty being rewarded with lower official community tax payments and bureaucratic assistance in times of need.

[45] The son of the chief of Dalla, Amadu Amiiru, was hosted by a trading family in Booni. In this family, Amadu had many fewer rules to observe than his host's own children. Since he is from a higher social group and from Dalla, which is higher in rank than the village of Booni, people had to respect him and he was allowed to say and do whatever he wanted. No one would reproach him and he had no shame (FF: *Yaage*).

got married she will have settled with her husband's family (virilocal) who are people towards whom he might have feelings of shame. Instead he will prefer to go to his former masters (FF: *Weheeɓe*) or his male kin members.

The people central to one's network of potential hosts are, in principle, hereditary and established *njaatigi* relations need to be respected. Even if your best friend lives in Douentza or New York and you travel to visit him, it would be considered a grave insult if you slept at this friend's house rather than at your family's traditional host's home. One does not have to have dinner with one's *njaatigi* host but not spending the night there would be an offence.

The historical host-visitor relationships between specific families can be stretched to the cities and other places. Most households in Bamako host relatives and neighbours from their home region, often youngsters who are studying or working (Brandt 2001: 42). Most migrants who leave for Bamako opt for hosts among close family members (brothers and sisters) for lack of existing inter- or intra-ethnic *njaatigi* relations.

In summary, people do not move randomly and hardly ever settle on their own without pre-existing social ties in their new place of residence. They move within a network of hosts to reduce vulnerability and any risk of downward social mobility.

Roads to mobility for the Kau and Dicko families

This section considers the historical appreciation of mobility and immobility, and the new mobility created by regime change and its effect on the Dicko and Kau families in Dalla. Colonial governance provided citizens with alternative 'roads' for mobility by building actual roads and increasing security. Colonial officers also introduced education and labour migration, which prompted more mobility. As the descriptions of each family network illustrate, the Dicko family specialized in educational mobility, while the Kau family focused on labour migration.

Itineraries travelled by the Dicko family
The fact that hierarchy is 'expressed in relative control over one's own and other people's mobility' (Rossi 2009: 182) is evident in the history of the Dicko family who ruled over the rural communities of the Haayre region. Their settlement required control over the mobility and labour of others and during French colonial occupation, the Dicko elites stayed largely in one area, controlling the movement of their clients and domestic slaves.

Those among the freeborn political elite (FF: *Weheeɓe*) who did become mobile were the semi-noble sons of slave concubines (see Chapter 3) who were sent to French schools.[46] The most conservative rulers in the Haayre region thus sent their slave children instead of their own noble sons to school (Angenent *et al*. 1998: 100). In Dalla, King Yerowal decided to send a Dogon called Sambo Ongoiba from one of his slave estates plus two of his semi-freeborn children, Musa and Nassuru, which he had with a slave concubine, to school. Booni's king also opted to send the semi-freeborn children

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[46] The example of Hamadoun Dicko from Joona shows that there were exceptions to this rule. The King of Joona did not see the French colonizers as an enemy.

he had with slave concubines to the French schools. One of the semi-freeborn children he sent to school was Mustaphe Dicko. Joona's king was much more positively inclined towards the French colonial rulers and trusted his own freeborn children to French schools. Two of these children are Hamadoun Dicko and Mawludu Dicko. Thanks to the French education of their semi-freeborn children, the royal Dicko family managed to maintain their precious stability and political power. Education was for these semi-freeborn Dicko family members a way to claim a more central position in the royal Dicko family. Over time it even allowed these intellectuals to control the mobility of their own clients.

The remainder of this section focuses on the itineraries of the mobile members and their children.[47] In retrospect, the major source of power for the semi-freeborn Dicko family members was the fact that they had taken roads out of the village into education as it was through education that they managed to accumulate wealth in and control over people (see Chapter 8). French education turned out to have a double advantage as it reinforced the power of the Dicko family over their dependents, politics and land.[48]

The fact that it was mainly the political Fulɓe elites (the Dicko family) who mono-polized access to schooling in the Haayre region is reflected in the board of DEENTAL, the students' association of Douentza, where seven of the fourteen members were from the Dicko family in 2007. In short, the majority of the descendants of the semi-freeborn sons of the Dicko kings of Joona, Dalla and Booni continue to specialise in French education.

All the educated Dickos who went to school in colonial times have become important politicians. Semi-freeborn Mustaphe Dicko from Booni first moved to Burkina Faso as Mali's ambassador and later became a Member of Parliament for the Douentza region for much of the 1980s and 1990s. He founded a secondary school in Douentza and primary schools in the smaller villages in the Haayre were built in the late 1980s.[49] Possibilities for schooling arrived quite late in Dalla, which explains why most of its inhabitants are still illiterate today. Even the mayor nominated in 2009 is almost illi-terate.

Sambo Ongoiba became a deputy MP for the Douentza region from 1978 to 1988. Nassuru died young but Musa Dicko had a very successful career as a teacher and later as the director of several schools, ending his career as the (elected) mayor of Dalla. He broke away from his father's traditional political party (ADEMA), much to the regret and anger of his father, King Yerowal. This caused much gossip but Musa was always active in the PSP, inspired from the outset by the successful career of his brother-in-law Hamadoun Dicko. In 2002, Musa became mayor of Dalla by managing to get the support of the majority of the Kau slave descendants who, out of loyalty as maternal family members, voted for the party. Although at independence the PSP was considered to be the political party of the conservative elite who wanted to keep their slaves, semi-

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[47] These early intellectuals are a product of the colonial administration and remain exceptions among the freeborn in their village of origin. A lot of freeborn villagers have never been to school and will never obtain a primary-school certificate.

[48] Mauxion (2008: 158) describes the same advantages for the educated Songhay elites near Gao.

[49] As indicated in Chapter 2, a primary school was established in Booni in the 1950s, while the first school in Dalla was only built in 1986 and even later in Joona.

freeborn Musa Dicko in Dalla turned this image upside down and democratized access to the party for many of his slave-descending family members.

In Joona, Prince Hamadoun Dicko went on to be a successful minister for the PSP and one of his sons, Oumar Dicko, continued his father's PSP political tradition and became a minister in Amadou Toumani Toure's government from 2002-2007.

The Dicko family gained prestige in President Amadou Toumani Toure's regime (2002-now). Musa Dicko's royal family of Dalla related to the royal family of Joona through Musa's first wife (a freeborn woman from there) and when she died, the president himself was in the private airplane that repatriated her body. During the 2007 campaigns, President Amadou Toumani Toure visited Dalla to express his condolences to the deceased imam in person. Madame Dicko, Musa's eldest daughter became the MP for the Douentza region in 2007. A year later, in 2008, the president visited Dalla to pay tribute to Madame Dicko's deceased father and Dalla's mayor, Musa Dicko.

So far only the mobility and education of male Dickos have been discussed, partly because studies that trace the history of migration are often male biased. Contemporary studies increasingly show that women have always migrated just as much as men.[50] Thanks to their privileged position, noble Dicko women have been able to outsource their mobility and work to others.[51] Today they see the importance of their lack of mobility as being based on Islamic prescriptions and insist that they would never allow their daughters to move out of the village, work in the service of others or live by themselves. Only in the context of marriage are noble women allowed to move. The strong discourse on female nobility discourages female migration in the Dicko network. The French notion of *partir en aventure* is never used to describe female migration.

Here again, the exceptions are the children of (semi-freeborn) Dickos who moved. The daughters of the educated Dicko families of Musa (Dalla), Hamadoun (Joona) and Mustaphe (Booni) all now live in cities. Musa Dicko's children settled in Bamako and Segou, and one of his daughters, called Kadji Musa Dicko has been living and working in France for about fifteen years. If he were still alive, Hamadoun Dicko could have met up with his own daughter, Kadji Hamadoun Dicko, in Paris who has also been living with her husband Mamadu Dicko and their three children in a Parisian suburb for over thirty years now. Most of these freeborn women moved out of their hometowns in pursuit of their higher education.

In conclusion, this particular branch of semi-freeborn sons of the Dicko family became mobile thanks to their early involvement in French colonial education. The noble Dicko family members who have remained in Dalla looked down on French education for a long time and, paradoxically, the fact that they sent the semi-freeborn children in their midst to French schools in the end turned out to lead to the inverse of what the freeborn Dicko family members would have envisaged. Instead of excluding the semi-freeborn from positions of power back home by sending them off to study with the French, the effect has been precisely the opposite.

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[50] For examples of the historical mobility of women in West Mali, see Rodet (2009). The recent trend has been for an increased 'feminization of migration' (Castles & Miller 2009: 12).

[51] This is still reflected in the restricted movement of noble *Weheɓe* women who ideally should not be seen in public locations, such as markets.

The semi-freeborn Dickos have become mayors, chiefs and MPs in their home villages and regions. Musa and Mustaphe have benefitted from their education and their double descent enlarged their social network on the paternal side of the family through their royal father and on their maternal side of slave descendants.[52]

The descendants of Hamadoun (and Mawludu) Dicko in Joona have all completed a French education. In Dalla, all twelve sons and daughters of Musa Dicko graduated from university and are living in cities around the world. The children of this avant-garde elite have gained a monopoly on educational mobility for themselves, their free-born Dicko family members and those of the Kau family.

Itineraries travelled by the slave-descending Kau family
Colonialism diminished the control of the Dicko family over the (mobility of) their domestic slaves (Kau family). The Kau family and other former domestic slaves closely related to their powerful masters generally remained immobile. Former estate slaves (FF: *Riimaayɓe Haayre*) always enjoyed more freedom of movement because they lived in independent settlements at some distance from their masters and cultivation is only possible for four months of the year, which leaves them time for other (seasonal) occupations. These slaves, who belonged to impoverished pastoralists and tradesmen, engaged in (forced) labour migration and others became soldiers in the French army (French: *Tirailleurs*).

The (im-)mobility of these former domestic slaves (FF: *Maccuɓe Weheebe*) of the royal court was controlled by the ruling Dicko elite. Ancestor Kau never left Dalla and always worked in the service of the royal Dicko family. This is no longer the case for his descendants who frequently migrate and move with much more freedom today. Various reconfigurations in the power of the masters to control and thus 'master' the mobility of their clients have taken place over the past century.

Within the category of former domestic slaves, the Kau family acquired the freedom to move later than other domestic slave groups. As privileged domestic slaves of the king, they lived in relative isolation and under the close control of their masters. They started migrating independently only late on and some still move in subordinate ways as stereo partners.

For slave-descending groups in the Haayre region however, their own control over their mobility and labour increased significantly. More and more youngsters from the Kau family engage in independent labour migration to Bamako but in general the Kau family have engaged more in dependent than independent mobility.

A minority of Kau slave descendants belonging to the semi-freeborn educated Dicko of Dalla left for Segu and Bamako during the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s. After some years of seasonal emigration, some of them stayed there permanently. One of the Kau family members became a painter for the colonial buildings in Segu and Amadu,

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[52] Historian Valsecchi (2009) raised this 'double advantage' argument for semi-freeborn children in Ghanaian chieftaincies.

who arrived in Bamako in 1984, started as a weaver.[53] His elder brothers Beidary Kau and Hamadu Kau have been living in Bamako since the 1970s.

Beidary Kau started off as a seasonal labour migrant thanks to his elder brother Hamadu who could host him in Bamako in the 1970s. Beidary's decision to marry a slave descendant who formerly belonged to a trader's family was looked down upon by his fellow royal slave descendants. Although he never explicitly said so, this was probably an additional reason for him and his wife to permanently settle elsewhere. When he arrived in Bamako, he was first hosted by his elder brother Hamadu and he now lives in the compound of a rich migrant who is living abroad. Beidary has nine children, works as a guard at the migrant's compound and engages in small-scale cultivation.

The main reason for migration among the Kau family is labour. This form of mobility has been much more common for them than for their noble Dicko counterparts. They have more experience and no moral impediments in different sectors and engage in jobs related to the skills they developed at home. Slave-descendants of Joona who settled in Bamako in the 1980s have continued weaving[54] and those from Dalla typically work as construction workers or as petty traders in the informal sector selling cigarettes, cloth, ice-cream, powdered milk, cassettes and medicines (see picture 6.1 beginning of this chapter).[55] However their destinations tend to be restricted to the African continent as they lack the right political and administrative contacts to travel to Europe or the US. In France I only met one slave-descendant (FF-*Diimaajo*) from Booni, while there were several Dicko's living there.

Conclusions: To be or not to be … elsewhere[56]

The ability to move reflects social status and this in turn offers different ways to move. This chapter has demonstrated how the emic idea of 'having roads' is often an illusion and how the ways in which people move, the places they are hosted and the places they are able to settle are defined to a large extent by the cultural field of hierarchy. The roads along which people move are embedded in hierarchical power structures.

The first section described how, depending on historical conjuncture, the power of the Dicko family over the mobility of their clients was reinforced or released. Successive forms of government curbed or reinforced the control of the Dickos over the movements of their slaves. Several 'roads' opened up in the post-independence period to both groups and, in the 1960s, the Dicko family lost control over the mobility of their clients because their own movement was now controlled by the national government, which favoured different political parties.

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[53] Later he engaged in woodcarving and heavy physical labour in the construction sector and today distributes bread for a bakery on his motorcycle.

[54] The majority of these Joona weavers set themselves up in front of the Moodibo Keita football stadium in Bamako.

[55] Chapter 7 describes how most of them obtain jobs via earlier migrants and/or their hosts, which explains why many of them work for the same patrons and do the same things.

[56] *Joolare* is the verb expressing in Fulfulde 'to be elsewhere, to be abroad'.

By the 1990s, this control over others increased considerably as a result of their entry into well-paid jobs and power in national politics. The Malian government under President Amadou Toumani Toure was however much more favourably inclined towards the Dicko family and, thanks to their education, it was the semi-freeborn Dicko family members in Dalla who restored the political power of the royal Dicko family.

Although the control of the Dickos over the movement of their clients in an absolute sense has diminished, new forms of 'making people move' (dependent mobility) have appeared. Hamadoun's and Musa's educational and political careers opened up important hosting networks through which they gave access to roads of social mobility to both their noble descendants as well as their slave-descending clients. In short, the Dickos reinforced their patriarchal style by strategic hosting, by arranging ritual and domestic assistance and the (temporary or permanent) transfer of stereo partners of slave descent.

The Dicko family have tended to migrate to pursue higher education abroad. Slave descendants, however, have engaged in labour migration. The Kau family engaged both in dependent and independent mobility. Those who engaged in dependent mobility often worked for their masters' families, even abroad. Furthermore the temporalities of their mobility are different. While most youngsters of the educated Dicko family members live in permanent settlement in cities, Kau youngsters engage in temporary seasonal labour migration.

In short, education has led to significant internal power shifts within the Dicko family but not between the Dicko and Kau families. Describing the mobility of people in this interconnected stratified network has shown how mobility among both families has been organized top down (Manchuelle 1997: 186) or as a subordinate movement (Rossi 2009: 183). Freeborn status groups moved first and lower status groups followed later. The Dickos were often the first to access certain areas (Bamako/education) after which their clients followed. This indeed corresponds to the 'downward social spread of migration' (Manchuelle 1997: 144).

It is ironic that Musa Dicko's children are doing everything to reproduce the cultural field of hierarchy. Samba has chosen for the safe option of existing hierarchical relations. The semi-freeborn Dickos are also engaged in stereostyling as an institutionalized form of perpetuating the cultural field of hierarchy.

The network of the Kau family formerly in the service of the royal Dicko families in Dalla, as well as other families of royal slave descendants in Booni and Joona still mainly engage in forms of dependent mobility. Most of those Kau family members who engaged in mobility did so as dependents of the Dicko family. Their access to mobility for higher education is dependent on wealthy and/or intellectual hosts. Most slave descendants lack such hosts and are thus disadvantaged in terms of educational trajectories.

In conclusion, the way the Dicko family 'masters' the mobility of their stereo partners, domestic workers and ritual assistants reflects the way their ancestors controlled the mobility of their domestic slaves. The difference is that most slave descendants (Sali's father and Adama) see it as a privilege today to be invited to go to the city. Within their structural context, it is advantageous relatively speaking to engage in the loyalty style and most of them claim that they benefit rather than suffer from this relationship.

Their mobility depends on hosting, domestic and ritual assistance and access to long-distance destinations, and is to a greater or lesser extent regulated by the Dicko family. Even if they engage in independent mobility, there are other areas where they remain dependent on (their former) patrons. It is no longer one's ability to move but certain aspects of mobility (form, length and profitability of movements) that remain linked to social status.

The central question in this chapter was the extent to which people of slave descent 'have a road' and manage to master their own mobility. Although this underlines how people believe in the link between mobility and opportunity, this chapter has demonstrated that the structural context of the cultural field of hierarchy nevertheless restrains both. The roads of the Kau and Dicko family are gendered and structurally embedded in a shared history of hierarchical interdependence.

Photo 8 Roadsign, direction Bamako

Placing the cultural field of hierarchy in urban Bamako

As in the rural context described in Chapter 2, hierarchical social relations in the urban context are also expressed in spatial arrangements. This chapter discusses the organization of migrants in Bamako and focuses on the occupation of space by the Kau and Dicko families and the way Bamako is emerging as an immigrant town. The housing and spatial organization of Haayre immigrants in Bamako will then be considered with special reference to the living conditions of two persons in the Dicko-Kau network: Madame Dicko, a descendant of Musa Yerowal Dicko, and Hama Dauda, a descendant of Dauda Kau.

I Bismila! Welcome to Bamako city

Bamako, like many other cities, has been characterized by mobility and migration, which has clearly had an impact on its social organization. With over one million inhabitants, Bamako is home to one out of ten Malians.[1]

   The remarkable increase of the amount of traffic in Bamako City is perhaps the best illustration of the city's rapid expansion. During my first stay in 2001 there were hardly any motorcycles or traffic jams but in 2007, I found myself among thousands of other Jakarta motorcycle users all focusing on surviving the complete chaos of the crowded roads full of every possible kind of traffic on wheels: Whole families on motorcycles, packed cars, overloaded trucks, bicycles transporting 10,000 eggs or balancing bundles of straw, jammed busses with people hanging on the outside, wheelchairs and impatient taxi drivers wanting to deliver their clients as soon as possible to earn back the money they owe their patrons. Everyone invents their own rule of thumb, traffic courtesy and police control are hard to find and I personally witnessed more traffic accidents in

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[1]   For more detailed demographic figures of population growth and urbanization in Mali, see Ballo *et al.* (2003: 8, 14) and for Bamako in particular (*Ibid.*: 25-29) and Brand (2001: 41).

twelve months in Bamako than in almost thirty years in Europe.[2] Although the increase in traffic does not say anything about the influx of people, it demonstrates the scale of urbanization Bamako is undergoing.

The meaning of the word 'Bamako' is either 'river of caimans'[3] or 'river of Bemba', although the 'caiman' interpretation is more common (Ballo *et al*. 2003: 16, Footnote 12). Towards the end of the seventeenth century, a Bamana clan, the Niare, settled on the left bank of the River Niger in what later was to become Bamako. The European explorer Mungo Park described it as a wealthy town involved in trade between the north (salt and cattle) and the south (gold, ivory, slaves and kola nuts) and later on also in European goods imported up the river. Apart from the Bamana Niare peasants, Bamako was also inhabited by Moorish traders (Drave & Touati) and Bozo fishermen (Meillassoux 1986: 4-9; Brand 2001: 36). These groups had their corresponding wards and today most are still named after them: Niarela, Dravela, Tourela (present-day Bagadadji) and Bozola.

French colonizers were attracted by Bamako's strategic position connecting the Senegal River Basin (a French stronghold) and the West African interior. They set up a military fort in 1883 and a railway was built to connect Bamako with the River Senegal and Saint Louis (Meillassoux 1986: 6-7). In 1908 the government of the French Sudan[4] was transferred from Kayes to Bamako. Administrative functions and buildings were moved to Koulouba (the plateau within the city) and Bamako was officially recognized as a town in 1918 (Ballo *et al*. 2003: 20). However, it was only after the First World War that increased investment was made, such as extending the railway from Bamako to Dakar. Income in Bamako was mostly related to trade and wage labour.

From 1945 onwards, Governor Louveau invested in Bamako's infrastructure and created the wards of Medina-Coura, Quinzambougou, N'tomicorobougou, Hamdallaye, Missira, the three Badialans and Niomirambougou, north of the River Niger.[5] The period after the Second World War witnessed increased investment in services for the African population including education and health, and not only economic infrastructure. Bamako's population increased rapidly at this time.[6] Plots were no longer allocated on the basis of ethnicity, and expansion on the right bank of the river started after the construction of the first bridge in 1957.[7] In that same year, Islam was acknowledged as

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[2] Almost every family in Bamako has a family member that has had a serious traffic accident resulting in death or serious injury. Since the death rate was becoming so high, helmets and an official registration system for motorcycles and drivers licences was finally introduced in 2007. Nevertheless from 2007 to 2009 traffic jams increased significantly and the number of vehicles doubled (again). There are now plans to have minibuses (*sotramas*) on a separated ring road and to introduce trams (van Vliet 2009).

[3] A caiman is a kind of alligator.

[4] Present-day Mali was part of the French Sudan during French colonial occupation.

[5] See: http://mairiebamako.africa-web.org/histoire.htm. Accessed February 2009. See Map 7, wards No. 2, 15, 16, 33, 15, 27, 28, 29, 30.

[6] From 1945 to 1951, numbers rose from 37,000 to 85,000 inhabitants, which included 600 Lebanese traders and 5000 French colonizers. The local immigrants were mostly from Mande (over 50% versus 4.2% Fulɓe from central east Mali and 3.1% Soninke from northwest Mali (Meillassoux 1986: 12).

[7] This bridge was renamed *Pont des Martyrs* to commemorate the bloody student demonstrations of 26 March 1991.

the main religion of Bamako with the construction of an impressive mosque in the heart of the city (Meillassoux 1986: 13).

Bamako is quite a green city, with big trees planted after 1945 by colonial officers still giving shade along the roads. From above, the greener areas indicate the limits of the former colonial wards,[8] which are still best provided for in terms of electricity, sewers and other important services.[9] At independence in 1960, Bamako became the official capital and new wards were created to cope with the massive increase in population. According to Ouedraogo *et al*. (1995: 16), this increase was due to the disintegration of the Sudanese Federation, which led to the return of many Malian civil servants, workers and soldiers who had been stationed in Senegal. These often older return migrants settled mainly in the ward of Lafia-bougou (Village of Rest) to the west of the existing ward of Hamdallaye (Brand 2001: 39). A second reason for the increase in immigrants in Bamako was optimism. Mali's independence brought with it the belief of a better life in the city. The new wards created in this period included Korofina, Djicoroni-Para, Badalabougou, Quartier Mali, Quinzambougou and the so-called *Zone industrielle* (Map 7).

After independence, Bamako boomed and the area of parcelled land doubled or even tripled with every decade as concentric movements around the older wards north of the River Niger,[10] expanding in all directions and only halted by natural boundaries.[11] Often the furthest wards were less well developed (with notable exceptions) and 'spontaneous wards'[12] only appeared at a certain distance off the main road axes, marginalizing these wards and making them difficult to access, and thus more dangerous.

From the 1980s onwards, population growth declined due to structural adjustment programmes in rural areas but in the 1990s a second bridge was constructed by, and named after, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. It improved connections with the southern parts of the city dramatically but it was only with the arrival of Alpha Oumar Konare's first democratically elected government in 1991 that urban planning was back on the agenda. This resulted in better access to water, electricity and public services for the majority of inhabitants, which had been badly neglected in the previous decades (Ouédraogo *et al*. 1995: 19). The bridge enabled southward expansion and these days the areas north and south of the river seem to be equal in size. Nevertheless, the core of the commercial and political activity remained north of the river. The big Suguba market today connects the post office with the house of the artisans and the big mosque, which is of origin the main bustling downtown area.[13]

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[8] Ballo *et al*. (2003) describe how the Koulikouro road is only lined with trees to a certain point, which corresponds with the limits of former colonial occupation.

[9] Such crucial services include hospitals, high schools, ministries, embassies and a commercial hub.

[10] The colonial inner city wards in existence before 1940 were Bozola, Bagadadji, Niarela and Medina-Koura.

[11] The Manding Hills prevented expansion of Bamako city to the north and channelled its expansion to the east and west instead.

[12] Brand (2001: 40) mentions Bankoni, Fadjiguila, Balibougou, Missabougou and Nyamakoro as examples of early impromptu wards (French*: Quartiers spontanés*) in the mid 1970s.

[13] Initiatives to create new market spaces, for example by constructing a completely new market in Kalaban Koura, failed.

Map 7   Subdivision of the capital city of Bamako in wards

| | Kau family |
| | Dicko family |

Manding Hills

Presidential Palace

Niger

0   2 km

Main road
❶ Pont Roi Ibn Fadh, built 1990's
❷ Pont des martyrs (1991), built 1957
❸ Bridge under construction

to Bamako Senou Airport

to Bamako Senou Airport

1 Boulkasoumbougou
2 Djoumanzana-Fadjigui
3 Djélibougou
4 Korofina-Nord
5 Banconi
6 Sikoroni
7 Hippodrome
8 Korofina-Sud
9 Cite du Niger
10 Zone Industrielle
11 Sans Fil (TSF
12 Quinzambougou
13 Niaréla
14 Bagadadji
15 Missira
16 Médina Coura
17 Bozola
18 Ex ville coloniale
19 Quartier de Fleuve
20 Bamako Coura

21 Dravéla-Bolibana
22 Dravéla
23 Bamako coura-Bolibana
24 Ouolofobougou
25 Ouolofobugu Bolibana
26 Sebeninkoro
27 Badialan 1
28 Badialan 2
29 Badialan 3
30 Niomiriambougou
31 Dar-es-Salaam
32 N'Tominkorobougou
33 Hamdallaye
34 Lafiabougou
35 Bako-Djikoroni

36 Sabalibougou
37 Torokorobougou
38 Quartier-Mali
39 Badala
40 Daoudabougou
41 Sogoniko
42 Niamakoro
43 Faladjé
44 Banankabougou
45 Sokorodje
46 Missabougou
47 Djanèguèla
48 Magnambougou
49 Kalaban Coura
50 Djikoroni-Para
51 Bakaribougou
52 Kalabankoro
53 ACI 2000
54 Sotuba

Over the last ten years, Bamako has seen profound changes with prestigious improvements prior to hosting international visitors at the 2002 *Coupe d'Afrique* (CAN), the 23rd France-Afrique top in December 2005, the first African edition of the World Social Forum (WSF) in January 2006 and the 24th regional FAO conference for Africa in February 2006. And by the end of 2010 all the ministries will have moved to one big complex near the *Place de la Paix*. In addition, the Chinese began constructing a third bridge over the River Niger in 2008 (van Vliet 2011 forthcoming). Bamako has become a city that never sleeps and even when I got a flat tyre in some sleepy neighbourhood at

4 am, I found help and the tools to change it in less than 10 minutes. There are always people around. Who are they? And where and how do they live?

Where Kau and Dicko immigrants settle

Bamako's expansion has mostly been based on in-migration and more than two-thirds of its current inhabitants were born elsewhere. Manchuelle (1997: 129) argues that three-quarters of the migrants to West African cities from the 1930s onwards were slaves. Two-thirds of the seasonal labourers and two-thirds of the permanent settlers in Bamako originate from the nearby regions of Segou, Koutiala and Kayes. Only about 17% of the immigrants in Bamako are from the arid north (of which Douentza Province and the Haayre region are a part). Another 10% are international migrants from other African countries.[14] Men and women have arrived in equal numbers,[15] and the Dicko and Kau families were part of these flows. Musa Dicko's twelve children all studied in Bamako and the majority have since settled there as well. Some Kau family members, like Beidary, Hama and Amadu, have also settled there permanently since the 1980s and 1990s.

Where one settles in the urban context is an important indicator of one's relative wealth and status. Most of Bamako's wards are very heterogeneous, both ethnically as well as in terms of income level. Bamako today consists of six municipalities (French: *Communes*), which are then subdivided into 62 wards (French: *Quartiers*) and sub-wards (French: *Sous-quartiers*), the boundaries of which tend to be rather vague (Ballo *et al.* 2003: 127). Each municipality has its own town hall where identity cards are issued, births and deaths are registered and civil marriages celebrated. How easy it is to reach where one lives is often directly linked to class and status and is thus an important criterion for distinction in an urban context. Whether or not a neighbourhood is easily accessible by local transport, such as taxis and the Sotrama bus system, is an indicator of a neighbourhood's status. The majority of the educated Dicko elite from the Haayre region who are in Bamako live in officially recognized wards near tarred roads (see Dicko wards indicated on Map 7, supra).[16] The majority of the Kau immigrants, by contrast, live in small rooms in slum-like and less-accessible neighbourhoods[17] with bad sanitation and untarred roads with no gutters. One of Musa Dicko's sons, Samba Musa Dicko, lived in Kalaban Coura (Map 7 supra, ward No. 49) 700 m off the main road.[18] In contrast, Beidary, one of the Kau slave descendants, lives in an untarred part of

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[14] Sanogo (1994: 15) in Brand (2001: 43).

[15] Findley (1990: 4) in Brand (2001: 43).

[16] In 2007 there were some children of Musa Dicko from Dalla which I frequented regularly. I weekly had at least one lunch at Samba Dicko's rented villa in Kalaban Coura (Map 7, ward No. 49), I passed at least every three days at Nassuru Musa Dicko's house in Hamdallaye (Map 7, ward No. 33) until he moved to his own house in Baco Djikoroni (Map 7, ward No. 35), I only visited Busi twice in Bul-kaasumbougou because it is rather out of the way (Map 7, ward 1) and since I lived next to Madame Dicko in Lafiabougou (Map 7, ward No. 34) I participated in her household on a dialy basis.

[17] Keleere Tambura in Falladie (Map 7, ward No. 43), Beidary and Amadu Dauda in Kalaban Koro (Map 7, ward No. 52) and Belco Tambura in the hamlet of Ghana near Senou airport south of Bamako (not on Map 7).

[18] He moved to his own house in a new ward called ATT-bougou in 2008 (not on Map 7).

Kalaban Koro, 5 km off the same main road that does not even feature on Map 7 because it is a new slum area.[19] The hierarchy between the Kau and Dicko families is therefore visible in their housing and proximity to the city.

Access to transport is a way of distinguishing richer and poorer citizens. Paradoxically, those in poorer neighbourhoods and settlements pay more (both in money and in time) to be mobile in the urban context. Beidary, who lives in the slum 5 km off the main road, either pays an expensive taxi fare to get somewhere or he has to cycle for at least an hour in order to get access to public transport. Samba Dicko, on the other hand, only needs to walk 700 m to the main road where he can choose to stop a bus or taxi. How one moves about is an important 'style' of distinction too. Most Kau descendants walk, take local transport or use a bike, all of which are means of transport used by the poor underclass. The better-educated Dickos in Bamako all use their own motorcycles or cars and over longer distances will take air-conditioned cars or even fly. Madame and her Dicko siblings regularly fly from Bamako to Mopti.

The type of housing a person lives in is another way of distinguishing between the immigrants of the Haayre region. I visited many Haayre migrant families of both noble and slave descent in Bamako[20] and there were undeniable differences in living standards between the two groups.[21] The majority of the elite families live in much more expensive and spacious detached houses, while both temporary and permanent labour migrants continue to live in small rooms or in the unfinished houses of transnational emigrants.

Housing of the Dickos

Most residential homes in Bamako consist of a compound with several rooms opening onto a central compound, with an area (an open room or corridor) for cooking and open-air bathrooms with toilets. Some of these compounds have an untarred communal space, others have mud walls with corrugated-iron roofs, while still others are made of brick. Most compounds have access to their own well and some have running water.[22] How the rooms are used is organized according to gender and varies considerably in relation to the number of inhabitants, income levels and the space available. Bertrand (1999: 136) distinguishes three important factors: Demographic (there is a limit to the number of people who can live in each compound), economic (salary and the housing market) and social (social class and preferences of the compound head). Most compounds are inhabited by multi-generational families whose composition shifts constantly, not least because of the constant arrival and departure of visitors from the rural areas. Since many houses become overpopulated, young unmarried men are asked to look for a room (French: *Chambre*)[23] in a nearby compound, either on their own or with friends.

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[19] Comparable to descriptions of *nouveau riches* in Jakarta, Indonesia who have clear preferences for certain neighborhoods. See van Leeuwen (2005: 59).

[20] And also, but less intensively and over shorter periods of time, in Kayes (3 weeks), Mopti (several separate weeks and shorter visits) and Segou (2 x 2 weeks and shorter visits).

[21] However the invisibility of some successful Riimaayɓe families may present a distorted image here.

[22] In that case, the water is often shared with neighbours who fill up their drums for a small fee.

[23] For a description of rooms in other cities: See Timera (1996) and Manchuelle (1997: 123).

The rich reside in bigger houses, often with fewer communal structures, for example with private bathrooms with running water. These houses are usually well hidden from the street and enclosed by walls and gates. In addition to the open-air compound, a big living room displays wealth by way of pictures of trips to Mecca and lavish wedding ceremonies. Plastic flowers, tapestries, a fan or air-conditioning and a big television set (which is usually turned on) are also part of the interior design. Most villas are built of brick, while the compounds can be either brick or mud. Most of Musa Dicko's children live in such houses in Bamako. Musa's eldest daughter's house is a typical example.

Madame Dicko, born around 1965, moved every two to three years when she was growing up because of her father's job as a teacher. Once she was enrolled in a secondary school in Bamako, she was lucky to have her maternal uncle Mawludu, a Dicko of the royal family of Joona, to host her. Mawludu studied in France and has worked for the Ministry of Education in Bamako ever since. Madame married, had three children, got divorced and started working in an important state company, which enabled her to host brothers and sisters who came to Bamako to pursue their studies. Just like her mother, Madame Dicko is a beautiful woman and is always dressed in the latest outfits from the Sublime Couture tailor. She likes to be called 'Madame Dicko'. Since 2007 Madame has been an MP, some say thanks to her close ties with President Amadou Toumani Toure. Apart from her Rotary Club membership, she has also been actively engaged with Taabital Pulaaku, an international organization that promotes Fulɓe culture.[24]

The fact that she is a wealthy woman is clear from the house and the way she lives. Madame's house is on the edge of Hamdallaye and Lafiabougou (see Map 7 (supra), ward No. 33-34). The house is situated on the corner of a dead-end street near the Manding Hills, the rocky plateau that forms the natural boundary of Bamako City and which remind her of the typical rocky Haayre landscape of Douentza. Hamdallaye used to be one of the older ethnic neighbourhoods where Fulɓe settled. Hamdallaye is also a village near Djenne (see Map 3, Introduction), which was of historical importance in reconciling two different Fulɓe clans. Until 2010 Madame rented a big house for FCFA 100,000 per month and as it is too big for her and her visitors, she used to rent out three rooms: one to a photographer, one to a tailor and one to a small shop owner.[25] After going through the garage, the open-air part of the compound is a communal space where dinner is prepared and served and where the young students, visitors and domestic workers watch television in the evening.

Madame's living room is more private and only used for important visitors. During the hot season, the women living with Madame usually have lunch with her in this part of the house, which has a fan and so is cooler. Madame has decorated it with pictures of her eldest daughter's wedding, the *Hajj* her parents made and some self-portraits, one of which shows Madame with her hair plaited according to Fulɓe tradition and embroidered with a lot of gold. The picture was taken during a big Taalibal Pulaaku

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[24]   See: http://www.tabitalpulaaku-international.org/. Accessed August 2009.
[25]   Just before this thesis goes to the presses (December 2010), Madame moved to her own house, which she had constructed nearby in Hamdallaye (Map 7, ward No. 33).

conference in Bamako in 2002 and shows the pride she takes in her ethnic status as a real *Pullo*.

Madame Dicko has all the luxuries of modern life – telephones, televisions, air-conditioning in her bedroom, fridges and a kettle – and her furniture reflects that of one of Bamako's well-to-do inhabitants: Local handmade furniture decorated with a lot of white lace, velvet couches with tiger prints and small side tables with plastic flowers in Asian vases standing beside porcelain statues. The curtains (decorated with flower prints) and the carpet on the floor need to be cleaned every once in a while by her domestic staff to get the red Bamako dust out. In the corridor behind the living room there are several bedrooms.

Madame is an important host (FF: *njaatigi*) who provides accommodation for co-villagers and (female) family members. Since she is the oldest daughter of Musa Dicko and married young she was also an important host for all her younger brothers and sisters for more than a decade. During the 1980s she was one of the very few permanent residents of Dalla to be living in Bamako. Now that her brothers and sister have graduated and married, they too host students.

She is wealthy enough to have staff to assist her: A driver and domestic workers who do all the household chores. A picture of President Amadou Toumani Toure seems to 'survey' the domestic workers from his gold frame high up on the wall in the corridor as they sleep under the staircase.

Madame used to live two blocks away in Hamdallaye where she rented a corner of a square compound with four rooms. When she moved to her current place in 1995, her old house was taken over by her recently married brother Nassuru (an MP), his wife, their domestic worker and between five and seven youngsters (brothers, cousins). In 2007 he moved to his self-built detached house in Baco-Djicoroni (Map 7, ward No. 35). The youngsters Demba and Papa Dicko who used to be hosted in Madame's compound started renting the place together although they continue to eat at Madame's place.

Like Madame Dicko, the majority of her family members all live in big houses in good neighbourhoods, as do the Dickos of Joona. Oumar's compound is one of the largest and most luxurious compounds I ever visited in Bamako (apart from the Dutch Embassy and some other expatriates' homes). The house, situated in the old colonial ward of Quinzambougou, was bought by his father and politician Hamadoun Dicko[26] in the 1950s and his son Oumar Hamadoun has lived there since his father's death. Oumar Hamadoun lives with his mother, his wife and their three children and whenever I visited the compound, Oumar was never around: He travelled a lot in his position as Minister of Malians Abroad. However just as at Madame's place, there were always a lot of people around: Students, maids, seasonal labourers, temporary visitors and family members.

Housing of the Kau family
For the Kau family too, their status as stigmatized slave descendants seems to have been translated into the houses and neighbourhoods they inhabit. Unlike the Dickos though,

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[26]   See his life history in Chapter 5.

they tend not to rent parts of compounds or live in detached houses and most of them rent a single room with their families. Others guard and/or squat in houses of immigrants who are abroad and/or which are still under construction.

Those Kau family members who have settled permanently in Bamako live in the slum areas of Bamako. Amadu Hama and Keleere live in the overpopulated Falladie (Map 7, supra, ward No. 43), while Beidary and Amadu live in the slums of Kalaban Koro (which is not even marked on Map 7) in a single room with their wives and children. This is the story of Amadu Hama, a descendant of Kau from Dalla. Amadu Hama was born around 1970 and left Dalla for the first time in 1984 during the drought to earn money (FF: *Teutude buudu*). Over the years he decided to stay in Bamako, engaging in various jobs such as weaving and wood carving.

First Amadu Hama was hosted by Beidary, a paternal uncle (Kau family) who was already living in Bamako. Amadu Hama married a manumitted woman of slave descent called Oumou Aafe and since 2005 she has lived with him in Bamako where they rent a room (FCFA 15,000) of 20 m^2 in a compound in the ward of Falladie (Map 7, ward No. 43). They share the bathroom and well with two other families. Their four children all live with Amadu's parents in Wuro Maccudo in Dalla. When they are old enough, Amadu wants them to go to school in Bamako. At present though he visits his native village each year for *Tabaski* and his wife only goes for a month every two years. For four years Amadu has delivered bread for a local bakery where he earns an average salary and, according to him, manages to live quite well. Nevertheless, the contrast between his 20 m^2 room and Madame's spacious compound is big.

Other members of the Kau family who have moved to Bamako permanently either squat or guard compounds and construction sites. Such is the case for Beidary Dauda and Belco Musa Tambura, a slave descendant from Nokara. Belco Musa guards the cows and the chicken farm of a rich Bambara trader who is working in Europe. Belco and his wife live on this isolated farm outside Bamako city in a hamlet near a small airport slum called Ghana. Belco, his wife and their two children hope to earn enough money to be able to return home in some years and to have their own cows and chickens. By that time, the farm will probably be part of the urban agglomeration of Bamako, which is constantly expanding.

How you move affects who you become

There are interdependencies and interactions between the Kau and Dicko networks in Bamako in terms of movement from the Haayre to Bamako and back. This is considered here by looking at how hosting works in Bamako and the way in which most Dickos in Bamako recruit assistants from their home village, who thus engage in a form of dependent mobility.

Most Dickos in Bamako have managed to restore their positions of political power through the double advantage of education, which allowed them to accumulate wealth in people. Most of them have recruited various, usually female, assistants in their home village to assist them on ritual occasions as domestic labourers. As will be described in the last section, the Kau family is willing and keen to engage in the loyalty style with

these wealthy patrons in Bamako. But first let us look at the networks of those who have settled more or less permanently in Bamako and host others.

To be hosted

Hosting is related to housing, and access to the city (and to other faraway destinations) depends on access to hosts. They are the gatekeepers and, to a greater or lesser extent, define where people end up and how they live. Hosting (FF: *njaatigi*) enables people to move to a specific destination without being a complete outsider or stranger there. Since there are no pre-existing *njaatigi* relations in Bamako, most people end up with their parents, which means that status differences are maintained. In Bamako most slave-descending Riimaayɓe youngsters are hosted by fellow Riimaayɓe immigrants, while the majority of Dicko youngsters are hosted by Dicko family members or rent their own rooms.

Dickos as hosts

In his maternal slave-descending family, only Musa's own children, those of his deceased brother Nassuru and a few slave-descending youngsters he has hosted have obtained a degree. Musa Dicko tried to educate his maternal Kau family members and attempted to change some of the rigid status boundaries between his maternal and paternal family. His eldest daughter, Madame Dicko, is less charmed by her maternal family and presents herself today as 100% noble. She has refused to host some of the students of slave descent proposed by her father.

However, it was Musa Dicko who hosted Suleymane's eldest daughter Aafi when she had to attend secondary school in Douentza. To 'pay' for her stay, Aafi does domestic work in the Dicko compound. Similarly Alu, also a Kau descendant, owes his educational career to Aba Kadji, one of Musa Dicko's children in Segou. Although Alu sleeps at the house of fellow Riimaayɓe who are permanent labour migrants in Segou, he gets the money he needs for books and transport from his former master, Aba Kadji Dicko. In return, he does small clientelistic jobs, such as making tea, cleaning, butchering for the sacrificial feast and driving to arrange things for his host or his wife.

Aafi and Alu are lucky because most parents of slave descent who support their children in higher education lack hosts who are able and willing to feed an extra student mouth. Finding a (reliable) host in Douentza for secondary school is problematic for many: If they don't find a host this means the end of their education and any chance of a good career. Many slave-descending Riimaayɓe clients who want to proceed with their studies in other cities depend on the generosity of wealthy hosts. The 'roads' of the Kau family into higher education today are dependent on the loyalty style *vis-à-vis* the Dicko family.

If being accepted by a richer family does not work out, youngsters try to be hosted by other (mostly Riimaayɓe) co-villagers who are often less well off. In all, most Dicko families in Bamako host on average between three and seven students and/or migrants from their home town, while Riimaayɓe, like the Kau family, host between six and fifteen.

Kau hosts

The young seasonal labour migrants are mostly hosted by other slave-descending labour migrants who have settled permanently in Bamako but as few slave-descending Rii-maayɓe did so, those (like Keleere) who did, tend to receive between 10 and 25 young-sters in the dry season. And even though they are poorly hosted, most of them know where to go for temporary shelter.

The slave-descending Kau families I visited in Bamako hardly ever refuse the de-mands of young seasonal labour migrants wanting to be hosted. Especially Amadu Hama and Keleere end up hosting numerous youngsters because they live in Falladie, the ward where a lot of petty trade can be done near the long-distance bus stations. Beidary and Amadu Kau, who live in Bamako Koro, hosted no one at all but this can be explained by the fact that both live in places that are so difficult to reach that if youngsters went there they would have to walk two or three hours a day to get to their jobs. And Beidary squats in a house and cannot afford to invite others.

Amadu Hama and Keleere[27] host the majority of the seasonal labour migrants in Bamako who sleep in the open air in the public space of the shared compounds of their hosts. They are exposed to the elements and get wet in the rainy season. When I visited him in 2005, Amadu Hama was hosting four students (one girl who had obtained her DEF and was preparing his lunch) and ten seasonal migrants. In 2007 he hosted seven seasonal migrants from Dalla[28] plus one student, Saajo Tambura. Most seasonal mi-grants of slave descent from Booni end up with an Islamic scholar host but also in rather basic conditions.

The more successful and experienced among the migrants that have worked in Bamako for several years get tired of being poorly housed. They try to be independent and look for their own living quarters and often look for collective shelter and share a room with up to ten others. Such is the case for Litri and his friends[29] who I met at the bus station in the Falladie ward in 2005.[30] They had decided to rent a room in the unfinished house of a rich emigrant in Falladie (Map 7 (supra) ward No. 43). They were renting this room permanently even over the summer months when most of them would go home to cultivate.[31] They do not have domestic workers to clean or cook for them so they buy cheap food on the streets.[32] Since neither water nor electricity are available in the compound, they regularly fill a big container with water from the tap further down the street.

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[27] Keleere is a slave descendant who used to belong to Jawaamɓe traders.

[28] Examples of the seasonal migrants he was hosting in 2007 were: Usmane Waygallo nick named 'Beja' (*Jawaanðo*); Djuballu Dicko (*Beweejo*); Saidu Tambura (*Maccuðo*); Usmane Tambura (*Mac-cuðo Jalluuɓe*); Baa Yero Waygallo (*Maccuðo Jawaamɓe*), nick named 'big head' (*ko-iri*).

[29] Hama Alu, Bucary Hamadun Tambura (*Diimaajo Jawaanðo*), Hamadun Nu Dicko (*beweejo*), Umaru Hamedi Dikko (*Beweejo*), Yero Burra Dikko (*Beweejo*); Amadu Umar Waygallo (*Jawaanðo*). Sekuba is the guard.

[30] My interpreter and I arranged a day to have a focus-group discussion with them for which they all took a day off. They only take half a day off on the traditional market day in their home village (Tuesday) to meet up with each other and exchange news from the village (FF: *Kabaaru wuro*).

[31] The rent of the period of absence is added to the monthly rent when they do reside there. This is the way they guarantee their place year after year.

[32] They always try to buy from the same person to ensure optimal service, hygiene and low costs.

The unluckiest (Riimaayɓe) youngsters lack a host altogether and try to protect themselves by joining other street kids who spend the night near big public spaces such as the post office, the border control post or bus stations. Those who have the energy and money visit better-off families they know from time to time in the hope of getting some food from them.

There is a relationship between the spatial insertion of certain social status groups in Bamako and their options for hosting people through the *njaatigi* system. In fact, hosting has proven to be an institution through which the Dickos in Bamako have managed to reinforce their patriarchal style.

Dependent mobility

This section addresses three main ways in which the movement of the Kau family to Bamako has depended on their former Dicko masters. Domestic workers and ritual assistants in the Dicko families who have settled in urban areas are often of slave descent and female Kau descendants' mobility in particular has remained 'dependent' on Dicko family invitations. Being hosted by Dicko family members in Bamako in 2005, 2006 and 2007 myself, I observed many members of the Kau family from Dalla who either temporarily or permanently lived with the Dicko family to render service. Some did so as domestic workers, while others were temporary assistants during the crucial life-cycle stages (birth, marriage, death) of freeborn Dicko women who lived in Bamako. [33]

Chapter 4 discussed how freeborn Fulɓe in the Haayre region either at birth, circumcision or marriage are given a stereo partner. When moving to the city as a result of marriage, some freeborn Fulɓe bring along their unmarried stereo partners as domestic assistants. Three examples of male stereo partners from different generations are presented here before moving on to descriptions of female stereo partners who operate as domestic workers.

The first example is that of my host Suleymane who accompanied his stereo partner Samba Dicko, an educated son of Musa Dicko for much of his childhood. Samba left Mali to study in Niamey at the end of the 1970s and. Suleymane joined him there for some time in loyalty style. Samba studied and Suleymane made his tea and food. As he could not find a rewarding job, Suleymane continued to move and engage in all kinds of labour within the West African sub-region (Burkina Faso, Benin and Togo). For some years he was a cultivator in Burkina with his wife and family and sometime in 1995, four years after the fall of Musa Traore's regime, he and his wife decided to return to Dalla 'to educate our children according to our own traditions'.

Another example of stereo partners who moved together are Oumar and Hassan. Oumar Dicko is the son of politician Hamadoun Dicko (see Chapter 1) and he has been living in Bamako since the 1960s. On his move to town, Oumar brought his stereo partner with him and ever since, Hassan[34] and his wife Kumba,[35] both descendants of

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[33] Chapter 8 gives the example of such a temporary assistant, Kumbel Dauda Tambura, the mother of my host Suleymane.

[34] Hassan is part of the group of slave descendants belonging to Oumar Dicko's royal family. His wife Kumba describes her husband as '*l'esclave directe de Oumar*', referring to their stereo partnership.

[35] Kumba visits her home village Joona every year during the dry season (FF: *Ndungu fuu*). Kumba is no longer in touch with her personal master and defers to her husband's master Oumar and her children

slaves from Oumar's home town of Joona, have assisted him. For two decades now they have lived in Oumar's compound in Bamako, but since their house burned down they have settled on a shared compound with others a bit further down the street. Hassan currently works in the construction sector.

One of their sons, typically called Bilal,[36] is the personal Diimaajo of Oumar's son Usmane. Bilal and Usmane are inseparable. The boys share their teenage adventures together in an urban context as stereo partners, much like their parents did in their villages of origin (see Chapter 4). The two boys now aged 14 always hang out together. People comment that there is a part missing if one of them shows up alone. Kumba explains that although their friendship (FF: *Igiraabe*) is genuine, it is based on the fact that Usmane as a freeborn can ask Bilaali to do things for him (French: *lui faire travailler*) and Bilaali is not allowed to refuse. She thus emphasizes how their friendship is embedded in structural differences. These differences also translate in appearances and activities: Usmane Dicko is studying and wears smart clothes, while Bilal does domestic work in the service of Usmane's family (like his parents) and has older less trendy clothers. Furthermore, mother Kumba explains that 'if Usmane marries in the future, Bilal will be given as a kind of wedding present to him'.[37]

Like his parents, son Bilal will probably have chances of a successful career by rendering service to Usmane Dicko for the rest of his life. This means his mobility in the future will continue to depend on and probably be subordinate to that of Usmane Dicko. In short, the stereo partnership between the Dicko and Kau family continues to be attributed a lot of importance. Ironically, the sons of the semi-freeborn, like Samba as the son of Musa Dicko, behave as patrons *vis-à-vis* their maternal family.

Dependent mobility of domestic workers

The majority of Dicko immigrant families in cities like Bamako recruit domestic workers from among their co-villagers.[38] Even families with relatively low incomes contract at least one domestic worker to assist with household chores in the overcrowded city compounds.[39] This can be done either on the basis of regional (ethnic, familial) ties

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do too. Last year she accompanied Oumar for the New Year's festivities in Joona. I got to know her as one of the most energetic Riimaayɓe women.

[36] Bilal was the name of one of the most loyal slaves of the Prophet Mohammed. For more about names, see Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming).

[37] She refers to stereo partners who are often linked either at the time of circumcision or marriage.

[38] For the case of Riimaayɓe domestic workers recruited by Weheeɓe in Bamako, see Pelckmans (2011d forthcoming).

[39] It is surprising to find so few scientific contributions on domestic workers in Sub-Saharan Africa. The existing studies tend to focus on (Abidjan) Ivory Coast: Jacquemin (2000) and Deshusses (2005). According to Deshusses (2005: 737), based on a survey in Sub-Saharan Africa in 1991, Ivory Coast is, after Senegal, the country in which most children under 15 years old are entrusted to other families. For the Malian context, studies focusing exclusively on domestic workers are rare, with the exception of Bouju's recent study (2007) and a report by Coumare *et al.* (1994) on 'aides menagères, bonnes in Bamako'. Lastly, there is a Save the Children UK-UNICEF report by Delay (1999) on domestic girls in Sévaré and Mopti.

among 'relatives' or on a contract basis with strangers who are available on the urban market.[40]

The Dicko family's domestic workers are often from families with a slave background, which contributes to the employer's social prestige in the eyes of the Fulɓe community in Bamako. On marriage, a freeborn woman from the Haayre region takes her domestic worker (FF: *kordo*) with her when she moves to settle with her husband. Most freeborn women in Bamako thus 'receive' rather than 'recruit' their first domestic worker from their parents when they get married.

Such was the case for Madame's brother Nassuru and his freeborn wife Assi.[41] Nassuru had spent seven years studying in Bamako and by the time he got married in 2003, he had a well-paid job in a travel agency. Assi moved to Bamako to live with him and her mother 'gave' her Maya (one of the slave-descending girls belonging to her family) to assist Assi with household chores. Maya is an orphan from a very poor family and moved to Bamako in a form of subordinate mobility.

Often however, once stereo partners get married, they cannot be employed fulltime on their patron's compound anymore. When Maya gets married, Nassuru and Assi can opt to recruit salaried domestic workers. Especially older Dickos, like Madame Dicko, continue to actively recruit among their slave descendants for urban assistants.[42] As I will describe with examples of Madame's domestic workers in the period 2005-2007, not all of the slave-descending domestic workers she recruited were made to move to Bamako. During my first stay in 2005, she only had one domestic worker, Adama, who was one of the slave-descending children belonging to her paternal family. Adama was promised as a second wife to a man she did not want to marry and left for Bamako in the hope of making money and escaping parental pressure to marry. She was hosted by Amadu Hama, who asked Madame to recruit Adama as a domestic worker in 2001. Madame recalls how 'I could not refuse because after all Adama is a niece.' In this case it was Adama who had made the initial move and only on arrival engaged in the loyalty style *vis-à-vis* Madame within the cultural field of hierarchy.

When Adama left her, [43] Madame says Sali's father approached her and asked her to take on his daughter. She explains that it was impossible for her to refuse: 'She is one of our slaves, I don't know if you understand.'[44] Madame points to the moral obligation she feels she has due to her patriarchal position in the cultural field of hierarchy *vis-à-*

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[40] The main difference between the two groups is the way in which they are remunerated: Market domestic workers are paid in cash, while co-villagers get payment in kind. Jacquemin (2000: 111) describes how in the Ivory Coast capital of Abidjan young nieces (French: *Petites nieces)* are remunerated in kind, as opposed to young salaried domestic workers (French: *Petites domestiques salaries*) who get a fixed salary each month.

[41] Assi is a young woman from the religious elite (FF-*Moodibaaɓe)* in her husband's neighbouring village.

[42] See Chapter 7 on how the younger generation recruits unknown domestic workers on the urban market in Bamako.

[43] The rainy season is a time when some domestic workers return home to assist their families in the fields. Most families prefer domestic workers who live with them but there are also girls who migrate to cities in groups, sleep together at night and spend the day working in families, see Bouju (2007: 31-32).

[44] Literally in French: 'C'est un de nos captifs, je ne sais pas si tu comprends.' Interview in Bamako, November 2006.

vis her demanding clients. A close family member however rejects this view and explains how Madame herself asked this slave-descending Riimaayɓe family to give her a girl. This informant insists that 'it was not Sali's parents who offered to send their girl to assist her. Madame sent her sister to Dalla to find a domestic worker. Sali's father accepted since he sees it as an advantage that his daughter is recruited by a wealthy family member in Bamako. Domestic workers in Bamako get better paid than those working in Mopti or Douentza.'[45]

From the various domestic workers that Madame had over the years, it is clear that access to mobility is not necessarily initiated at the request of the noble families. Both Maya as a stereo partner and Sali as domestic worker moved to Bamako at the request of the Dicko family. Domestic worker Adama left her home village by herself. For her, mobility was an exit option from the constraining demands of her family back home and she preferred Madame's authority over that of her parents.

Temporal dependent mobility through ritual assistance
Not only for daily domestic assistance but also for more temporary tasks such as ritual assistance during marriages and baptisms, the Dicko family in Dalla invests significant sums of money in transport to have Kau descendants assist them. They continue to engage in stereo styles in their new destinations: The Dickos pay the bus tickets of their stereo partners and other slave descendants so that they can assist on important ritual occasions. The Dicko elite derive prestige from making their slave descendants move towards them: It underlines their wealth in people.

These temporary assistants are recruited at crucial life stages (birth, marriage, death) of freeborn Dicko women residing in Bamako. An example is the recruitment of Kumbel to assist a freeborn widow. As Papa Dicko died and left a pregnant, illiterate and Fulfulde-speaking wife living with his brother in Bamako, this freeborn wife needed an assistant. Musa Dicko decided that Kumbel Kau, a widow herself but much older and thus experienced in raising children would be the perfect candidate. Kumbel was given a bus ticket from Dalla to go to Bamako where she spent six months assisting the noble widowed and pregnant wife. Well in her fifties, Kumbel Kau was anxious during her stay in Bamako: She did not speak the *lingua franca* (Bambara) and never left the house of her hosts. She was extremely humble in her behaviour and her presence was almost ghostly.

The major advantage of this 'road' to Bamako for Kumbel Kau was that she got rewards in the form of clothes and money when she returned to Dalla. For Kumbel and many other (ritual) assistants, being chosen to assist wealthy Dicko families in Bamako

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[45] Salaries for domestic workers differ from region to region, are regulated by demand and vary according to experience, the time of year, the employer, etc. According to several informants in 2007, the following salaries were average for domestic workers in different regions of Mali. Many mention Kidal as the place where domestic workers are best paid (FCFA 12,500) because there are a lot of civil servants living there who give their domestic workers weekends off. In Kayes, salaries were around FCFA 10,000 because domestic workers are difficult to come by; in Bamako average salaries range between FCFA 6,000 and FCFA 7,500; in Douentza a domestic worker is paid FCFA 3,500 and in Djenne between FCFA 3,000 and FCFA 5,000. (1€ = about 656 FCFA in December 2010)

is seen as a privilege. Thanks to their loyalty style, they have managed to become mobile over distance by moving in a form of dependent mobility.

Conclusions: Mastering mobilities as 'memoryscapes' of slavery

This chapter described how the city of Bamako has grown historically and then moved on to how immigrants from the Haayre region have settled there. Although in the urban context of Bamako there are no clear-cut spatial neighbourhoods that discipline or testify to a slave past between Kau or Dicko in ways described for the rural context of the Haayre, there are other ways in which hierarchy and 'distinction' are maintained along status lines in the urban context. There are huge differences in comfort, the accessibility of a neighbourhood and its sanitation, which implicitly recreate the cultural field of hierarchy in the city context.

The living conditions of Haayre migrants in Bamako differ significantly. The majority of educated Dicko family members live in detached houses where they can enjoy privacy. By contrast, seasonal and permanent labour migrants of the Kau family tend to inhabit the poorest neighbourhoods in small spaces (rooms or squats). The spatial organization of Bamako demonstrates how hierarchy is inscribed in the use of place. For this particular family network, differences in status back home converge with differences of education, income, housing, surroundings and wealth in people in the urban context.

The emic idea of 'having a road' is thus an illusion in that both Kau and Dicko have fewer agency in their movements than the expression might suggest. People cannot go anywhere they would want to and, in the end, their movement is (re-)embedded in the structural conditions of the cultural field of hierarchy. They do not 'master' their roads because these roads are defined by pre-existing institutions such as schools, *njaatigi* relations, knowledge and established spatial networks.

This brings us to a final conclusion linking mobility and slavery. The way in which slave descendants have moved is a form of 'embodied memory of slavery'. Slave descendants' mobility represents a 'memoryscape' of slavery (Argenti & Röschenthaler 2006: 40). The way in which domestic workers are recruited recalls cultural memories of domestic slavery transposed through space and place as part of a 'memoryscape' of West African slavery. The past is shaped according to existing power relations in the present and these power relations define people's possibilities to reflect on and/or change their positions today.

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Travelling cultural fields of hierarchy in urban interactions

Street life in Bamako today testifies to the high level of unemployment among West African youngsters. This has become a social problem facing even those who graduated with good grades. Young people gather with their so-called *grins* (French)[1] or groups of friends to drink tea, exchange phone numbers and airtime while gossiping about girls and dreaming of marriage and the homes they will have in the future when they start earning. This chapter describes the activities of the different groups of migrants described in earlier chapters. The focus is on the different options available to slave descendants (for example those of the Kau family) on a gliding scale ranging from those who make use of their social status as slave descendants, to those who ignore or explicitly deny it in the urban context of Bamako. Also, attention is paid to how the cultural field of hierarchy travels with migrants to urban contexts and influences ritual interactions there.

A donkey among princes?

The *grin* of the youngsters hosted by Madame is made up of freeborn Dicko youngsters and Hama Adja, a slave descendant (FF-*Diimaajo Haayre*) who works as a seasonal labourer working in construction. Hama Adja and the other youngsters spend endless nights sitting outside the compound on the street talking at weekends and late at night during the hot season, exchanging stories and jokes. Hama Adja is much older than the students and is mostly out at work but when he was there, I was amazed by the position he was given in the *grin*. He was the ideal scapegoat, or in the words of the youngsters themselves 'he is the compound's donkey (FF: A*raanu galle*)'. No one would ever

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[1] The French word *grin* refers to groups of youngsters who sit around discussing things together. See Gerard (1991).

Photo 9   Youngsters from Douentza region working as petty traders in Bamako (2007)

hesitate about insulting or making fun of Hama Adja and he, in turn, never showed offence and joined in the jokes about his weight, his nose, his stupidity and so on. At first I interpreted the teasing as a joking relationship (FF: D*endiraaku*) but since virtually everyone laughed with him, classificatory cousin or not, this was no explanation. The simple fact that he is of slave descent explained everything.

Hama Adja would do everything without complaining and was always the first to offer his chair to visitors. He was always asked to do whatever was necessary and never appeared to refuse anything that was asked of him. Female visitors commissioned him to go buy an ice cream, milk or breakfast and the students (in their twenties and thirties) asked Hama (who was in his forties) for massages, to pass on a message to a girl and so on. Madame asked him to do all the heavy physical jobs in the household, such as carrying the cooking coals and the bags of rice, feeding the goats at the back of the compound and butchering an animal on festive occasions. Hama Adja was the only one I ever saw dancing as the other freeborn youngsters felt too shy to do so and insisted that the rules of conduct for noble freeborn (FF: *ndimaaku*) did not permit them to dance.

Hama Adja was the one who did not have a cell phone, did not speak a word of French and was never given a proper chair. Even though he was the oldest, worked the hardest and got up earliest, he was given the worse spot on the floor in the boys' overcrowded bedroom.

Memories of slavery are embodied in the figure of Hama Adja in several ways: Firstly by the activities he was expected to undertake; secondly by the stereotypical jokes and insults he was the subject to. Thirdly Hama Adja literally 'embodies' his marginal status in subtle introvert bodily acts of deference and at the same time extrovert explosions of energy in his dancing and unhindered expression of joy. Finally, Hama Adja also embodies his status in the cultural field of hierarchy by the places he occupies or is not allowed to occupy (see example of taking a seat).

Despite his age and move to an urban area, these descriptions of Hama Adja's interactions with the Dicko family illustrate how the cultural field of hierarchy, even in Bamako, operates in an uncontested sphere of hegemony rather than in contestable ideology. Hama Adja's former slave status is constantly confirmed in subtle expectations by the Dicko family. He himself has no problem with his self-imposed loyalty style and considers himself lucky to be hosted by one of the most influential members of the Dicko family.

This chapter outlines the cultural field of hierarchy in the Kau-Dicko network and the ways in which it has been 'transferred' to the urban context of Bamako. To what extent did the mobility of slave descendants, like Hama Adja, help to turn hegemonous aspects of the cultural field of hierarchy into contested ideology? Hama Adja's case is a clear demonstration of how also in other places like cities, the cultural field of hierarchy is 'transferred': I will demonstrate how some aspects of it travel with the main actors in the Kau-Dicko network to other places.

Urban contexts however offer variations in relations. There are also slave descendants whose mobility elsewhere allowed them to move up and specialize in the patriarchal style themselves. Existing hegemony are likely to clash in contexts where other ideologies of how social relations should be designed are accessible and present. New places challenge the cultural field of hierarchy, eventually transforming it. When people move, their styles and expectations are explored in new contexts. New environments are likely to test their original roles and behaviour and every migration process involves a major reorientation of social perspectives and categories over time. 'Cosmopolitanism,

in other words, does not necessarily imply an absence of belonging but the possibility of belonging to more than one ethnic and cultural localism simultaneously' (Werbner 1999: 34). And according to Geschiere *et al.* (2006: 1):[2]

> One can argue that the separation of ideas from the places and circumstances that have generated them may have created a fissure between reality and discourse: As people attempt to comprehend reality with ideas, which have been generated without any heed to local particularities, they may confuse discourse with reality and gradually replace the reality with discourse ... the priorities of 'here' may be determined by the dynamics of 'there', while the only connection between here and there remains an imagined one.

In short, some migrant communities are more conservative than others, depending on their investment in reproducing the cultural field of hierarchy in which they were socialized back home. Some groups of migrants in new (urban, transnational) contexts have maintained or reinvigorated the cultural field of hierarchy. Sy (2000) mentions an example of a mixed-status marriage between a freeborn woman and a man of slave descent among Malian Soninke migrants who had been living in Paris for decades and who were violently sanctioned in both the migrant and in the home community.

Other recent studies have focused on how emigration for (Fulɓe) slave descendants can be an emancipatory process or, at least, is likely to influence social transformations. Saibou (2005: 869-870) in his study of the legacies of slavery among Fulɓe in northern Cameroon, for example, indicates how young Riimaayɓe benefit from emigration and their act of moving away from constraining or stigmatizing hierarchies at home allows them to start reflecting on them. Their movement is likely to result in a contestation of the cultural field of hierarchy upon their return. Boyer (2005) demonstrated how Nigerian Tuareg migrants of slave descent increasingly expressed a sense of emancipation from their masters after they had lived elsewhere. Thus, by moving into urban contexts and distancing themselves from their rural homes, slave-descending Riimaayɓe obtain more freedom and feel freer regarding not only their rural villages as places but also the hierarchical ideas inscribed in the landscapes of these villages. Taking a distance in space does not automatically lead to an increased ability to disconnect socially. Sometimes the opposite is true. Besides change, conservatism can also be a characteristic feature of migrant communities.

The following sections describe five different, sometimes intersecting, ways of engaging with the cultural field of hierarchy resulting from mobility in an urban context: Moving on, moving back in, moving up, moving against and moving out of the cultural field of hierarchy. The focus is on how the cultural field of hierarchy 'travels' and is even transferred to Bamako. It analyzes interactions of 'move on' ritual occasions and greeting and how migrants 'move on or back into' stereostyling in the urban context. Mobility is considered for some as an interesting strategy to move against, to move up or even to move out of the existing cultural field of hierarchy. The main argument of the chapter is that people in the specific Kau-Dicko network in general 'move on with' or 'move back into' the cultural field of hierarchy rather than leaving it behind (by moving up or out).

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[2] Geschiere, Rath & Meyer (2006) requested papers for a conference on mobilities in honour of Abram de Swaan at the Amsterdam School for Social Science Research, 25-26 January 2007. See: http://www.h-net.org/announce/show.cgi?ID=149202. Accessed June 2009.

'Moving on': Travelling hierarchies and villagization in an urban context

The anonymity and distances of urban territories restrain social control and close inter-action. This section considers some of the times when villagers of various status groups meet in the urban context. In Bamako, the stigma of slave status is maintained through social boundaries between the different groups in Fulɓe society and when moving out of the village, slave descendants continue to 'move on' in the cultural field of hierarchy in Bamako.

Whether they move on or not depends on how big the communities of the home region or village are, and the extent to which the moral community is regulated and controlled. Those who live in urban centres with fellow villagers nearby (or compat-riots, as in Abidjan or Paris for example) may *feel* and also practically *be* locked into their translocal village and its social network.

In addition to multiple opportunities for relating because of its scale, the city po-tentially (re)qualifies ways (forms) of relating when *away* (from the home village). Especially compared to the closeness of the rural village, there are not many occasions in which the cultural field of hierarchies is explicitly evoked among Haayre migrants in Bamako. There are specific times and places when stereo styles are played out and reinforce the existing cultural field of hierarchy. Greetings and ritual events are im-portant moments when people are expected to know their place.

Greeting in urban stereo style
Chapter 2 described how greeting practices are an important way of demonstrating respect and of underlining stereo styles according to the cultural field of hierarchy. In Bamako, daily greetings have become impossible for the villagers of Dalla. Neverthe-less, it is important to show one's involvement with others, and Kau family members in particular are expected to invest time and money in greeting Dicko family members. However, most Kau descendants live in faraway places and may spend more than two hours getting to one of the central neighbourhoods where they can visit a Dicko. Interacting with each other on an urban scale is hard work and demands significant investment. Greeting is part and parcel of demonstrating and engaging in the loyalty style. Every week Beidary visits Samba Musa Dicko and Nassuru Vieux Dicko who live nearby.

Amadu Kau, Beidary's eldest brother, has been reproached for not investing enough in the loyalty style in the urban context. Since Amadu was raised by the Dicko family and studied with most of Musa Dicko's children, he became a close family member but has been excluded from the family for not visiting and constantly demonstrating his loyalty. Some say the height of his arrogance is the fact that he no longer accepts being called Tambura (a slave surname) and only wants to be addressed as Dicko (a freeborn surname) (Pelckmans 2011 forthcoming). Today he is never present at Dicko family events or ritual occasions.

In contrast, his younger cousin, Amadu Hama, gets on well with the members of the Dicko family in Bamako. He confidently considers himself part of the Dicko family, saying: 'We (Kau descendants) are one family with the Dickos!' He maintains close ties with the Dicko family and freeborn Dicko youngsters visit him regularly. Madame and

her brothers ask for his assistance if things need to be arranged and engaged Amadu Hama in Madame's political campaign.[3] The interaction between freeborn Dicko youngsters and the Kau- Riimaayɓe living in Bamako is imbued with the quest for influence. Amadu, Papa and Moustique Dicko from Dalla and Saajo from Joona regularly visit the slave-descending Riimaayɓe from their home village. They maintain that keeping relations intact and showing interest will win them votes.

Elder Dicko family members also try to involve the labour immigrants of Dalla in their political campaigns. In December 2006, Oumar organized a big meeting for all Dalla inhabitants who are part of the village association of Dalla to inform them about the PSP's ideas, progress and campaign.

Ritual events as 'villagization'
Devish (1996) in his article on charismatic healing churches in Kinshasa describes how the lack of authority in the city context is filled by churches that remobilize and reinforce interpersonal links with the village. This process, which he calls 'villagization', fills the desire for moral integrity and sharing but I argue that in the Kau-Dicko network it is especially ritual occasions that allow for villagization.

Ritual occasions generate interaction between villagers from different groups. There is however a clear unidirectionality in the reciprocity between groups. Kau family members and other slave-descending Riimaayɓe assist with ritual occasions in the Dicko family, but not vice versa. Ritual events in the Kau family are never attended by the Dicko elite in Bamako. Just as on ritual occasions in the village the noblemen send money or presents but do not participate in person in slave-descending Riimaayɓe rituals. It would be unthinkable for them to ever undertake physical labour for the Kau family.

The ritual occasions that bring together Haayre villagers are thus organized by the Dicko family, who even pay for the transport of the slave-descending Riimaayɓe who, in turn, assist with labour.[4] I will describe the 2005 baptism (FF: *laamuru*) and naming ceremony (FF: *Inde*) of a newborn Dicko baby called Ina, as a concrete example of ritual events recreating the cultural field of hierarchy in Bamako. Ina is the firstborn daughter of Assi Cisse and Nassuru Dicko.[5] Mother Assi Cisse is a member of the religious elite of Booni, while Nassuru Dicko is a member of the royal family of Dalla. Nassuru is the son of Musa Dicko and a younger brother of Madame Dicko.

Ina's baptism was celebrated in the compound of Nassuru's elder brother Samba Dicko because contrary to Nassuru's compound, Samba's compound at the time was bigger and therefore more suitable to host the many visitors. In order to assist, some villagers invited themselves by buying a bus ticket on credit from the bus driver in the

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[3] In the parliamentary elections in June 2007 and the municipal elections in April 2009. Personal communication, Amadu Amiiru Dicko, April 2009.

[4] In contrast, praise singers often invite themselves in the hope of getting money by singing the praise of elite members. Many persons of noble descent complain about the aggressive actions of praise singers during their ritual events in Bamako and claim that they try to avoid them as much as possible as they are too expensive.

[5] I attended five baptisms among the Dicko family members in 2005-2006. Since I have known Assi best (she lived near to my host), I describe her baptism here.

hope that their host in Bamako would reimburse their costs. For Ina's baptism, her mother and her husband's mother paid for their stereo partners to take the bus from Dalla/Booni/Douentza to Bamako to attend the event and young father Nassuru and his brother Samba paid for the transport back. A one-way ticket Douentza-Bamako costs about FCFA 10,000. So the freeborn Dicko family in Bamako will try not to invite too many villagers because of the expense. I heard the Dickos complain about their many clients who need food, compensation, drinks and so on. This is however a double-edged sword: It enhances their prestige and the 'village context' is recreated if a lot of villagers are present. It allows them to excel in the patriarchal style and corresponding prestige. It is thus a discourse in which the elite 'victimizes' itself for ending up in the position of the patronizing style, which they are 'forced back into' by their clients.

In addition to villagers travelling more than 800 km, Samba also invited the slave-descending Riimaayɓe youngsters he regularly sees in Bamako[6] and asked them to invite other villagers and the Kau family. For many of the younger labour migrants of slave descent, such ritual celebrations are an occasion to eat well and catch up with fellow villagers so the majority of youngsters in Bamako would not hesitate to attend.

Baptisms (FF: *laamuru)* in Bamako are organized in much the same way as in the rural context. It is mainly the quality and amount of food, the presents and the visitors that have changed due to increased wealth and social networks. A bull is slaughtered for a first-born baby like Ina but, unlike in the village, the meat is served to the visitors with potatoes, and lemonade is also offered. For Ina's baptism in Bamako, Samba and Nassuru Dicko were helped with the butchering by slave descendants living in Bamako (called Hama Alu and Amadu Hama) and not by their stereo partners who live in Dalla. Although Samba often paid for his stereo partner Suleymane to come over, he did not always manage to do so. Moreover, he disposed of an extra stereo partner in Bamako, with the name of Belco Tambura. Belco is a poor man of freeborn descent from the village of Nokara, who sells the milk of his animals on a weekly basis to Samba in Bamako. My interpreter Musa Dicko once called Belco a 'Dogon' and another time referred to him as a 'former slave of the Islamic scholars from the village of Nokara' (FF: *Maccuɗo Moodibaaɓe Nokara*). Belco considers Samba Dicko as a friend and patron:

> I am poor so on every ritual occasion I go to Samba, I do my job and afterwards he gives me meat and money, which I will divide with my family. I got to know Samba because I was the driver of Dikoore Hamadoun (a daughter of Hamadoun Dicko living in Bamako) at that time. Although before we never met in person, my parents have been hosted by Samba's family for some time. Here in Bamako I work in the service of a Bambara migrant. With regard to my home region, it is Samba who lives nearby and buys the fresh milk of my cows. So we are now 'friends' (FF: *Guide)*, I even named my last son after Samba.[7]

Belco thus became a newly acquired stereo partner for Samba, replacing Suleymane if necessary. Despite the fact that Suleymane is Samba's ascribed stereo partner, Samba did not invite him to come from Dalla to Bamako for the baptism of his brother as it was

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[6] Samba explains that his choice is not focused on inviting those Riimaayɓe officially belonging to his family but to all slave descendants belonging to whatever social group.

[7] Naming one's child after someone is done in the hope that the child will be taken extra care of by his homonym. See also Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming).

deemed too expensive for Samba to pay transportation costs.[8] Since Suleymane is living in Dalla, he is often not available for Samba who lives in Bamako, so Samba turns to other clients such as Belco. Here it is clear that distance influences the cultural field of hierarchy in many ways. This time, it was Belco, Hama and Amadu who were given the heads, feet and intestines of the slaughtered bull as a reward for their assistance with butchering.

The work of the various clients assisting the baptism is rewarded differently. The male youngsters (who butchered animals and arranged chairs) get food, parts of the meat and some money. Depending on what they did, they are likely to get paid between FCFA 500 and FCFA 1000. This is about half what they earn on average for a full day's work, not including the extra food that they are given on ritual occasions. There is thus a monetization of the work they do, which is labelled 'slave labour' (FF: *Golle Maccuɓe*) by the Dickos. The women are paid collectively as is described below.

A final difference that clearly points to differences in wealth of the families cele-brating a newborn in urban versus rural contexts, is the fact that cameramen and photographers are hired to make professional reports in Bamako. These include a section in which the close family members direct their speech in the form of wishes to the newborn baby. Among the visitors are not only co-villagers, family members and slave-descending assistants but also friends, colleagues and neighbours – often from other ethnic groups – who do not spend the whole day there but drop in to greet people and profess their affection.

Ina's baptism starts early in the morning with a male gathering when father Nassuru, his brothers Samba and Aba Kadji (see genealogy Dicko family, Figure 2, Chapter 2) and other male friends and cousins meet with an Islamic scholar. Nassuru chose the name Ina as it renders homage to his father's first wife 'Ina Wuro' (literally: Mother of the village). After Nassuru pronounced the name (FF: *Inde*) of his child, a bull is slaughtered and the men sit together discussing life while listening to a *Ŋeeŋo* singer praising the history and genealogy of the newborn's respective paternal and maternal lineages. Nassuru and his friends spend all day outside the compound proper, sitting on rented chairs on the unpaved street in front of the house.

Even while sitting and talking or playing cards, a keen observer might notice subtle differences among the social categories by paying attention not only to their outward appearance (dress, vehicles) and styles of behaviour (who does the dirty work) but also to the use of space. Among age mates who are sitting together drinking their tea, it is the slave-descending *Diimaajo* who will give up his chair if a freeborn person arrives. It is the young male slave-descending youngsters who will remain standing. In general how-ever, status differences in the interaction between the male slave descendants and their freeborn counterparts are less marked than among women.

In the afternoon, it is the women who meet up during the *joonde* when they sit with the beautifully adorned mother and her baby and give them presents. The mother and important female members of the family are seated together and all the other women

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8   On important ritual occasions in Samba's family in Bamako, such as Samba's children's baptisms and Samba's marriage, Suleymane will be given a ticket by Samba. When Suleymane is there, he will perform typical Riimaayɓe tasks for his stereo partner.

join in and add their gifts, which are piled up in a central spot in the middle of the space where they are seated.[9] The important female members of the family are the ones who decide who gives what and whether the amounts are according to the cumulative reciprocal logic.

The display of wealth is an important aspect of the *joonde*. Firstly the assisting women are all dressed in expensive clothes, exclusive and sophisticated hairdos and jewellery. As in their home village, most of the slave-descending women do not wear expensive cloth (French: *Bazin*) but use the much cheaper wax cloths. They are not embroidered with gold and their hairstyles are not as sophisticated as those of the elite women. These slave-descending Riimaayɓe women help on such occasions by offering assistance (taking out a crying baby of a noble woman, arranging gifts and cooking). Displays of wealth are done through gift giving. All the women sit together to witness the presents given which, in addition to traditional presents such as cloth, silver bracelets, soap and money, include plastic baby baths, teats and feeding bottles from the urban residents. Unlike in the rural context where many women are illiterate, the gifts of the urban *joonde* are noted down (Image 5).[10]

People with different backgrounds have different roles to fulfil on such ritual occasions. Assisting clients demonstratively engage in the loyalty style and are not supposed to give presents like other visitors. They are thus excluded from establishing long-lasting ties of gifts that are established between freeborn Dicko women. Back home, slave-descending women would never give gifts to the Dicko family as they only do so among themselves. At the end of the day, the pile of presents and money bear witness to the mother's solid network of wealth in people.

Ideally the gifts are for the mother and her baby although some are redistributed among clients for services rendered such as to the praise singers, who might have made the mother cry with their compliments about her family ancestors, and to the slave-descending Riimaayɓe through their labour such as cooking and carrying things.[11] Seydou explains that:

> They (slave descendants) want their social status group to be cited (as a way of thanking them) when there is a distribution during a ritual occasion. Our efforts (of the Dicko family) towards our Maccuɓe are a bit superficial but we will always give some extra to those who actually worked and they earn good money like this.

Slave descendants in general do not contribute to these ritual occasions but, on the contrary, will be paid money or given cloth for their assistance. In general, it is not only the father and mother who pay the assisting Riimaayɓe, it is also several members of the Dicko family who give their money to compensate for the services rendered. This is again a clear example of how stereo styles are perpetuated in the urban context.

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[9]   The verb 'to sit' in Fulfulde is *Joodaade*; hence this part of the ritual event is called *joonde.*

[10] This inventory of who gives what to the mother of the newborn baby is important since the young mother when visiting the baptism of one of her visitors in the future will have to give the same amount plus 25% extra, which inevitably leads to more expensive gifts.

[11] Male slave-descending Riimaayɓe slaughtered the bull or sheep and distributed the usual cola nuts. The female slave-descending Riimaayɓe provided the cooking and other coordination, such as the stapling, counting and carrying the presents during the ceremony.

Image 5 Baptism - Detail of gifts as registered during a 2003 baptism in Dicko family
(personal archives of Thiomo Dicko)

When comparing the redistribution of the money in the personal administrative notes of Ina's mother Assi Cisse (Nassuru Dicko's wife who was born in Booni) and that of Dioro's mother Thiomo Dicko (Samba Dicko's wife who was born in Joona), it is interesting to note how different status groups are discerned in different village contexts.

When looking at this table, one can see that there are differences in the way social status groups are valued differently for Dicko families with different village contexts. The differentiation of social groups can be accounted for because both women are from different native villages: Thiomo is the daughter of the political elite (FF: *Weheeɓe*) from Joona, and in Booni Assi is the daughter of the religious elite (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*). Their respective home villages have a different status group composition. In Joona there is a group of traders who receives money, while in Joona there are no traders but woodworkers to be rewarded. Each of the above mentioned social status groups *(*FF: *Sy)* has a representative who receives the money in name of the group and will later on redistribute it.[12] The table below indicates how also the group of slave descendants is in turn subdivided in various categories at both baptisms. The perception of subdivisions in the group of slave descendants differs quite significantly when comparing what has been noted down in the personal administrative notes of both women.

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[12] During the baptism of Assi Cisse and that of Mariam Dicko in Bamako (2005-2006) I observed many quarrels - among praise singing Ɲeeŋɓe about the division of money among themselves and in relation to status groups.

In Thiomo's administration, there are slave descendants in three groups: Those who worked (female cooks versus male butchers) and the more general category of other slave descendants that did not work but were present (slaves). According to Assi, the social status group of the slaves was divided differently, making a difference between female cooks, men, cousins and Riimaayɓe. The amount of money given to each of the status groups and their subdivisions differ because the total amounts to be divided were different from the outset. It is not the aim here to discuss the earnings of each group and the individuals that benefitted.[13] Rather in these written accounts of freeborn mothers Assi and Thiomo, slave descendants obtained more money than the caste groups of weavers, woodworkers, dancers, praise singers and smiths.

The different appreciations of the different status groups come to the fore in Table 2. The slave-descending Riimaayɓe are put into the loyalty style position, while the Dickos through their ostentatious gift giving confirm their patriarchal style. Villagization is a process of sociality, and interaction thus creates recognizable parallels between the urban and rural socio-spatial organization.[14] These moments of villagization confirm the transfer or rather the 'travelling' of hierarchies.

Table 2   Redistribution of gifts in personal administrative notes by young mothers Assi and Thiomo

Ritual Occasion:	*Baptism Ina, first-born of Assi Cisse (2005)*	*Baptism Dioro, third-born of Thiomo Dicko (2004)*
Village of origin:	Booni	Joona
Assisting social status groups:	Rewards:	Rewards:
- Slave descendants	33,000	12,000
- Arts & crafts groups	6,000	6,000
- Traders	3,000	not mentioned
- Woodworkers	not mentioned	1,500

Table 3   Subdivision of slave descendants as noted in the personal administration of baptisms of child Ina (mother Assi) and child Dioro (mother Thiomo)

Personal administrative notes of:	*Assi Cisse (Booni)*	*Thiomo Dicko (Joona)*
Subdivision of slave descendants:	Female cooks	Female cooks
	Men	Male butchers
	Cousins	Slaves
	Riimaayɓe	

Occupying place during the Joonde

Chapter 2 demonstrated how the landscape is organized and shapes people's inter-actions. In the urban context of Bamako, (the use of) place reflects the cultural field of

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[13] It is impossible to know what the net amounts of money and gifts received per person are. During all the baptisms I went to in Bamako, the praise-singers were given extras by individual visitors as a reward for singing praise to their hosts.

[14] I take up the main argument of Chapter 2 on mapping again: The cultural field of hierarchy is embedded in the places where people live and interact.

hierarchy. This section gives an overview of the women's *joonde*,[15] where one can read a certain hierarchy of importance from the spatial occupations of those involved. At ritual events, such as the baptism of Ina (mother Assi), places are allocated to specific social groups and these are maintained in a disciplined manner throughout the event.

Image 6   Spatial organisation during a baptism in a Dicko family in Bamako

Couch 1:   ✳ Freeborn mother Assi Dicko and baby Ina plus Assi's
             closest friends
Couch 2:   Elder women: Madame Dicko, Dicko Ousou, Ina wuro
             and so on
Couch 3:   Women of slave descent: Kumba Tamboura (joona),
             Kumba Tamboura (Dalla), and so on
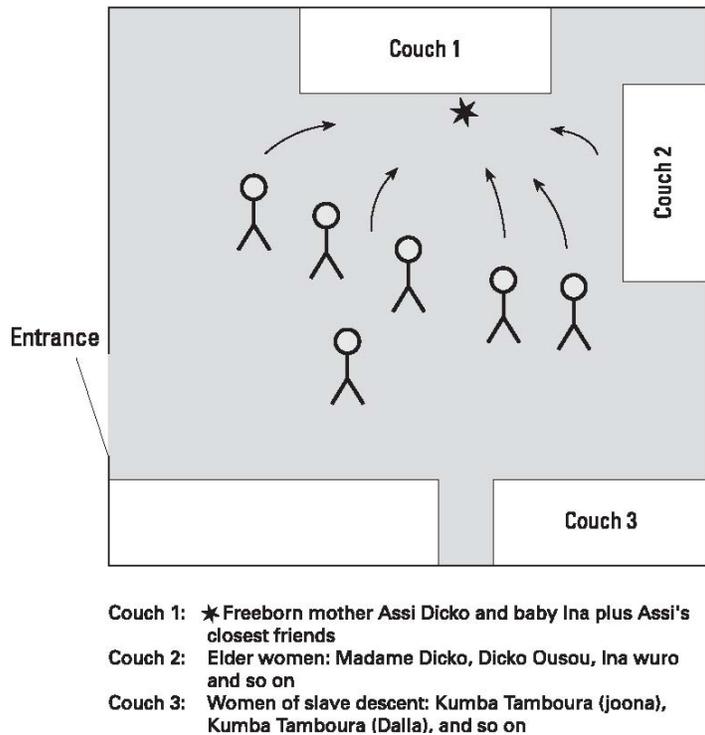
The drawing (Image 6) of Ina's baptism in Bamako shows how the places of the female visitors at the *joonde* are arranged hierarchically. In the most central spot of the living room on a central couch was Assi with baby Ina on her lap. Next to her were her closest friends on the couch. Important elderly women in her and/or her husband's family are seated on the couch next to this one. Both couches define the central spots in the living room of the house. All visiting female family members and friends surround mother Assi, baby In and the pile of presents (see * in drawing of Image 6). On the edge of the circle (Couch 3), slave-descending women are far from the actual gift giving, both physically and in reciprocal practice. Having worked all day, the slave-descending women have changed their outfits and assist from afar. One of them, Kumba Tambura[16]

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moved into the circle of seated freeborn women to arrange the presents, put them in baskets and finally carry them away.

The slave-descending women are seated at the back and, in terms of dress, never show off the way the elite women do, underlining how slave-descending women will never be centre stage but are constantly reminded of their 'lower ranking' that forces them into the loyalty style.

'Moving back' into stereo-styles in Bamako

While for some stereostyling is a permanent way of moving on in the cultural field of hierarchy in the urban context, for others it is a (temporary) way to 'move back in'. This section discusses how most slave descendants sooner or later move back into the cultural field of hierarchy, for example in times of crisis, such as unemployment, illness of a family member or problems with the police. Secondly, it demonstrates how the Dicko family does not necessarily rely on those who 'move back into' loyalty style with their former patrons. Instead, other slave descendants or people marginalized from their home region are also willing to engage in stereostyling with them and thus 'move in' but not 'back in' to that particular stereo relation.

Those who moved to the city enjoy different degrees of socio-economic emancipation. It was argued in Chapter 6 that the ways in which people move and access mobility are gender specific. Women are less encouraged (or even discouraged) to move than men. This section demonstrates that gender also defines access to different niches in the job market and options to engage in stereo styles in the urban context. Female migrants from the Haayre region depend on existing social networks to obtain work more than men. Their dependence on networks is a vicious circle: The fact that they engage in domestic work for patrons who speak the same language makes them less likely to learn Bambara, Bamako's *lingua franca*, than their male counterparts. Women therefore tend to remain more dependent on existing social networks and generally stereostyle more than their male counterparts.

Overall, young male Riimaayɓe labour migrants in Bamako benefit more from the emancipatory effects of their mobility and individual incomes than their female counterparts. For example, Hassan, Kumba's husband, works for himself in the construction sector and although he is the stereo partner of Oumar Dicko, his daily activities are quite independent of those of his stereo partner. This can be explained by the fact that from the outset most female migrants move on demand either with their husbands or patrons. They not only engage in so-called dependent movement[17] but also have to accept 'dependent rewards'.

The organization of ritual assistance
Female assistance in Bamako and domestic labour in the city context echoes the rural divisions of labour and social status. About 90% of the noble Weheeɓe families from

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[17] See Chapter 6. This 'dependent mobility' has also been called 'subordinate movement' by Rossi (2009b: 183).

the Haayre region in Bamako have a maid of slave descent.[18] This contrasts sharply with the lack of domestic workers among slave-descending Riimaayɓe families from the same village living in Bamako.[19] However, there are some exceptions. Belco, who is of slave descent but was one of the first students in his home village to graduate, has been living and working in Bamako for decades. He takes pride in mentioning that his maid is of noble Fulɓe descent and his case shows how social status can be reversed through wealth.

Chapters 4 and 6 demonstrated that the elite's control over their female clients' work and mobility remained much stronger than that over their male clients. However, even those female slave descendants who did not migrate to the city at the request of a patron often end up working for families from their home region, because they are often the first ones to offer them a job. To illustrate this, I will describe the female slave descendants that assisted Assi when she gave birth to her first child.

When living in cities, noble women no longer return to their parents or family of origin to give birth as is the case in rural areas. Kin members who live in town generally host them. Assi, for example, stayed in Bamako to give birth because the healthcare facilities in her home village are not considered good enough. In contrast to such arrangements among elite women, most slave-descending women in Bamako did return to their home village to give birth. Amadu Hama's wife, for example, gave birth to each of her children in Dalla. As explained in Chapter 4, slave-descending women only have a friend or sister to assist for about a week when their first child is born.

Freeborn women receive help for at least forty days from one or even two slave-descending women who make their food, help them with breastfeeding and generally take care of the baby. The choice of an older woman of slave descent is common as they have experience bringing up children. Moreover, some slave-descending Riimaayɓe women are believed to have special skills in handling children.[20] In Bamako, freeborn Dicko families look for older women among their slave descendants, either among those already living in Bamako or they recruit them from the home village and pay for their transport to Bamako.

Freeborn mother Assi was assisted by two women for forty days. The first girl was her stereo partner and the same time her domestic worker Maya, and the second was Aminata, an older woman in her fifties and of slave descent from Booni. Aminata had already been working as a trader at the market in Bamako when she was asked to assist Assi who was having difficulties breastfeeding even though this exceeded the obligatory forty-day period described in the Koran. Maya continued to do the general household shores.

Since Assi lived near my compound in Lafiabougou, I regularly visited her and the newborn and tried to talk to Aminata, who explained that she is married and trades in

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[18] According to my observations, the large majority of noblemen in the villages of Dalla, Booni and Joona who live in Bamako have maids of slave descent. Camara (1995: 15), describing slave-descending maids among the *Torooɓe* (Fulɓe religious nobility) in Kaedi (Mauritania), indicates how this is a general trend.

[19] I conducted a quantitative survey among the Riimaayɓe families with historical links as slaves to the royal Weheeɓe nobility in the Fulɓe village of Dalla (Central Mali).

[20] See Chapter 5.

cloth on the big market of Bamako. Because she was asked to assist Assi, she temporarily stopped her trading and although she was unhappy about this, she asked me rhetorically what else she could have done. She would have earned much more from her trading activities but could not ignore the ties of reciprocation with her co-villagers.

The assistance that was given to freeborn Assi in Bamako demonstrates that although some stereo partners are more permanent, others are only engaged temporally. Aminata was reminded of her reciprocal plight and loyalty style by her former patrons. This is why she moved back into the cultural field of hierarchy by engaging in stereostyling. In contrast, others, such as Kumbel who assisted widowed Kumba Dicko, are happy to be able to temporarily opt for the loyalty style *vis-à-vis* their former patrons (see Chapter 6) because they depend on the rewards.

Baptism, marriage ceremonies and widowed female elite women in the city context are assisted by female slave descendants. Not only slave-descending women but also men assist the freeborn Dicko family in Bamako 'just like we do in the village'. Ritual events demand simple and short-term assistance from men. The main difference is that in general men only 'move back into' stereostyling relationships for very short periods of time.

Time and geographical distance from one's stereo partner are important elements in stereo styles within the urban Kau-Dicko network. When talking about the future of their status as married persons, freeborn Aai Musa Dicko explained that she knew her personal stereo partner in Booni. Nevertheless since she was only 18 in 2007 and living in Bamako, she will only request help from her stereo partner for personal ritual events such as her wedding. Contrary to those of slave descent who grow up with their stereo partner, Aai does not have very close ties with her stereo partner because she moved away and the binding ties became less binding.

In contrast, Bilal, the son of slave descending Kumba and her husband who assist Oumar Dicko in Bamako, is very close to his stereo partner Usmane, who is about the same age as one of Oumar's children. Both boys developed a strong stereo partnership in Bamako.

Reward through generous reciprocity
Although noble Fulɓe families living in urban areas could easily afford a salaried maid, the majority recruit one among slave descendants who are considered to belong to their family. When this maid returns home to get married, her employer is supposed to pay for her trousseau. However the most obvious advantage, apart from social prestige and social cohesion,[21] is that the payment of a trousseau is lower (FCFA 150,000 max) than a monthly salary over several years (FCFA 90,000/year).

In addition to the domestic labour of 'niece' Maya, employer Assi and her husband Nassuru also pay for a salaried maid from the San region who works for the three families they share a compound with.[22] Unlike this maid, who is paid FCFA 6,500/

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[21] Most maids in the Dicko family are recruited among the slave-descending Riimaayɓe to ensure 'social cohesion', as one of my research assistants has it (Personal conversation, 4 March 2009).

[22] During my regular visits in 2006, people gossiped about this salaried maid because she was pregnant and had to be replaced. For more about the commonalities of pregnancies and sexual abuse of maids

month), Maya's reward will be at her marriage in the form of a trousseau. Whether the decoration of her house or furniture, jewellery and her dress will be paid for depends on the number of years she has worked and on the goodwill and respect of her employers. Maya has an interest in working hard because if she does not succeed in Bamako, she will ruin the status of her future marriage partner. Maya's dependence on receiving a trousseau is even higher than that of other slave-descending girls in her situation because she is an orphan and has no one who will give her additional gifts when she marries. Maya's future seems to be assured for the moment but she is likely to continue to rely on her former employer once married and settled in her home village. Her employers' family will probably be her future host (FF: *njaatigi*) in Bamako for her and her family members.

Maya no longer lives in poverty in her home village and is hosted in relative luxury in Bamako. Whether this will eventually result in social mobility remains to be seen and much depends on the way she is married off by her employers. Only time will tell how things turn out and as Maya says herself 'it is in Gods hands, God willing I will be fine'.

Having one's trousseau paid for is considered a good reward and is not necessarily any less well perceived than monetary reward, i.e. a salary. Madame Dicko and one of her nieces who organized a smart wedding to remunerate her maid of slave descent are seen as good employers by many. Although Madame's domestic staff works hard, she takes good care of them and does not abuse them physically. Nevertheless, like so many domestic workers, the girls wore dirty old clothes and if their flip-flops broke, they spent weeks walking around barefoot. Madame allowed her domestic workers Umu and Adama to go out dancing with the other domestic workers in the neighbourhood[23] and even helped the girls to recycle hair extensions that her daughters had used and lent them clothes and make-up. Madame pays her domestic workers in goods rather than in money and non-monetary gifts are often considered advantageous for the giver because they have extra value on top of their monetary cost: They 'remind' the receiver of the gift. Madame can claim to have married the girl off and this reinforces her patriarchal style. A monetary reward would evaporate more quickly and provide no extras in the relationship between giver and receiver.

According to informants in the Kau family however, the majority of the girls from Dalla who worked as domestic workers for the Dicko family have been exploited and some have never been paid. Freeborn Dicko families stress their benevolence and generosity but admit that some freeborn who 'still have a village mentality sometimes exploit their maid (who they don't hesitate to call their slave)'. The example mentioned by most Kau family members is Nafoore, the daughter of Macca, who had worked in the service of a freeborn Dicko family in Bamako but had never been paid for years of hard work (see Chapter 3). Nafoore had worked for her mother's master's family in Bamako for seven years and one day suddenly returned home empty-handed. Her employer reproached her for flirting too much but to avoid the shame of sending her

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in Djenne, see Bouju (2007). The commonality of sexual intercourse with one's maid (FF: *Kordo*) in Fulɓe society is mentioned by N'Gaide (2003: 715-716).

[23] Late at night the young maids meet up to have fun at their own music and dance evenings, known as *balani* in Bambara language.

home immediately, her employer first sent her on to her brother in Bamako but he feared Nafoore would become pregnant so sent her home against her will. Employers feel responsible for protecting their girls' virginity but he used the excuse that she was disobedient to dismiss her. This was not acceptable as a reason for not paying her for seven years of work and resulted in a mayor conflict between her parents and her employer. Nafoore's father Macca (see Chapter 4) is the stereo partner of the village chief, who was a close relative of Nafoore's employer, but even in this privileged position, the girl's return only increased the stigma and shame on his family's honour and not on the freeborn family who had exploited her.[24]

Last year Nafoore found herself a marriage partner and since then pressure on her former employer has been mounting to pay for her trousseau. It remains to be seen whether her parents have enough influence or authority to convince her former noble employer to do so. The timing and choice of a marriage partner has become dependant on the employer's permission and appraisal and Nafoore will have to wait for the conflict to be settled before receiving her trousseau. Even if the employer agrees to the girl's marriage, there are no minimum requirements for this kind of payment and the cultural field of hierarchy reproduces matrimonial control by freeborn elites over their former slaves. In addition to their mobility being dependent, the salary of most Kau domestic workers is dependent on the generosity of the Dicko family.

Generational perceptions: Slave-descending nieces or salaried domestic workers
Whether noble Fulɓe opt for recruiting a related maid of slave descent or a salaried maid depends not on their wealth *per se* but on the character and age of the employer and his/her connections with the home community. Madame preferred domestic workers of slave descent because of the social prestige it brings, but the younger generation in their thirties are increasingly switching to salaried domestic workers. The majority start off with a slave-descending maid who is 'given' to them as part of their trousseau but later recruit a salaried maid. The shift is seen to avoid trouble and social control by the maid's families. The case of Madame's younger brother Samba demonstrates why he switched to salaried domestic workers.

Samba and his brother Papa married in Douentza on the same day in 2003 and settled together in a rented house in Bamako. Both wives brought their own 'given' maid of slave descent[25] from their respective home villages. Samba explains that, after two years, one of these domestic workers went home to get married, although others in the family claim that the girl was extremely wilful and Samba wanted to avoid conflict with her family. In the end, he decided to marry her off as soon as possible as this would be an acceptable reason for sending her home.

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[24] I was living in Dalla when Nafoore returned home. Her mother was ridiculed for having such a disobedient daughter and fell ill. As indicated in a former chapter she was also socially sanctioned: At *Tabaski*, she was given an insulting small piece of meat by her neighbouring Riimaayɓe. This made her lose her temper and, while crying loudly, she threw it away in front of me and my interpreter. Crying is not something people in Central Mali do easily and underlined the mother's severe emotional stress.

[25] Aai Musa Dicko, interview in French, Bamako, 2007. She uses the French word *captive* to talk about slave descendants today.

By 2006 Samba and his wife were living on their own[26] and recruited another Riimaayɓe girl, this time from the slave descendants of Samba's patriliny. Samba explains how this girl was impossible to teach.[27] He was irritated with having to employ Riimaayɓe domestic workers, claiming that 'anything is better than these girls who are disobedient and talk too much about us in the village'. A young niece hosted by Samba and his wife felt that there was nothing wrong with the girls but that 'when something goes wrong and they no longer like their maid, they invent stories and say they do not work well'. Nevertheless by 2007 Samba had opted to employ a salaried maid and, to date, is happy with the Christian girl from San who he pays FCFA 6,000 a month. Biba, a young Dogon woman from the Haayre region who squats in an unfinished house just opposite Samba's house, does the family's laundry.[28]

Samba's case demonstrates how the younger generations have different ideas about employing domestic workers. Interviews with several unmarried Fulɓe youngsters in Bamako highlighted how some increasingly value their urban social networks over their rural ones. Samba's younger brother Seydu explained that since he had never lived in his home village or invested time and effort in relations with slave descendants there, he did not count on their assistance when he gets married in Bamako either. His current girlfriend is *bamakoise* and he expects to get married in the city without any help from his parents' slave descendants and to pay people in Bamako if he needs help. Two years later Seydu married a girl from Mopti in Douentza and the Kau family were responsible for several arrangements. Although Seydu, who speaks better Bambara than Fulfulde (his mother tongue) predicted he would become a real *bamakois*, he now lives in Douentza. His wedding and way of life seem not to be all that different from that of his older brothers, whose traditional lifestyle he used to criticize.

Some of his unmarried second-generation urban Dicko peers who had similar trajectories with moving from one Malian town to another to pursue their studies indicate how, even when living in Bamako, they consciously maintain their relations with the Kau family by visiting seasonal and permanent labour migrants from Dalla regularly. Also, they spend as much time as possible in their home village each vacation and are active in village associations. They identify with their home village because they hope to one day become politicians (the mayor or chief). They aspire to marry a girl from their home village and expect to have girls of slave descent as domestic workers.

Being employed by a freeborn family can be advantageous for young girls with a precarious position back home although the reward they receive for their work is not always guaranteed. Having slave descendants 'moving back into' the cultural field of hierarchy as domestic workers contributes to the Dicko's prestige. They also have more

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[26] Papa Musa Dicko died in a motorcycle accident in 2005 and his wife was sent back to Dalla in 2006. Her oldest boy remained in Bamako with Samba who is paying for his education.

[27] Maid Aai married but stayed in Bamako, occasionally washing clothes for Samba's sister Madame Dicko.

[28] Biba and her husband are poor urban dwellers who have deferred to Samba's family ever since Samba paid for Biba's hospitalization when she was ill. Their aspirations for securing a lasting bond with Samba became more pronounced when Biba named her child after him.

authority over these girls as they decide her income, her marriage, her contact with her family and, as the section below will show, her behaviour and identity.

Imposing authority and maintaining social boundaries by recalling slave origins
A taxi drops me at the compound of Fanta's family, who are first-generation Dicko emigrants from Central Mali who have moved to Bamako. During lunch, Anta, a young girl of about five, shyly approaches those of us having lunch, carrying a small stool. Before she can put it on the floor and sit down, my host insults her: 'Anta, what do you think you are doing? Have you forgotten to bring us water?' The girl, naked apart from an old, colourless man's shirt runs off to bring us water. As she hands it over to her boss, she whispers that she is hungry. Her remark meets with mockery: 'Are you out of your mind?[29] Can't you see we haven't even finished eating yet? Go and take this food to the Koranic students first!'

Little Anta takes the food to the entrance of the compound where the young students are shouting their typical begging phrases: '*Allaah garibu*!' While crossing the compound, Anta's employer Fanta shouts after her: 'Walk quickly, they don't have all day! Keep the plate horizontal, you fool!' She makes a disapproving sound to indicate her dissatisfaction: 'We really have to train her like a dog, she doesn't know a thing. She is so stupid that she is going to forget her own name one day!' While Anta's mother brings around the water and soap and assists each of us by pouring water to wash our hands after dinner, with a one-year-old baby on her back, my hosts continue making fun of the girl: 'She isn't coming back very quickly, she probably fell in love with one of the student beggars! Does she actually think they will even bother to take a proper look at her? She's so ugly!'

While I was happy to have arrived and had felt welcomed by Fanta's family, the incident made me feel very sorry for the girl and provoked some questions. Should I interpret these remarks as normal West African jokes? Were these really discriminatory remarks? When I inquire about Anta's mother and the relationship between her and Fanta's mother (Where is she from? How long has she been working in the compound?), Fanta explains that they are just poor fellow villagers that asked then for work and constantly give birth to children. Upon her second pregnancy Fanta's family considered sending Anta's mother away, but 'since these people don't have anything and her mother's mother also worked as a slave for my father's father, king Yerowal, we decided they could stay'. She sighs and says it is not easy to be of royal descent because they have so many obligation *vis-à-vis* former slave groups: *noblesse oblige*.

Anta's case demonstrates how besides economic advantages, recruiting slave-descending girls from the home region offers noble Fulɓe other advantages too. Firstly, most of these girls are young and inexperienced, and therefore cheap and malleable. And for the illiterate, non-Bambara-speaking female freeborn Dicko employers[30] in

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[29] In Fulfulde she says: '*A anndaa hoore ma jaati*', which literally means 'you are really losing your head'. This expression has been explained in more detail in the preface of this thesis.

[30] Many of Madame Dicko's younger brothers have married a noble wife in their home village according to customary alliance preferences and have settled in Bamako with their illiterate wives. Some wives try hard to adapt to the city by learning Bambara and the local way of life but assistance from and the possibility to communicate in their mother tongue with co-villagers is important to them.

Bamako, domestic workers who speak Fulfulde have a twofold advantage: The employer can communicate with them easily inside the compound and outside the compound the maids are not likely to engage with others as they do not speak much, if any, Bambara. Some employers mentioned a preference for employing slave-descending co-villagers as domestic workers because they show more respect and would never even think of seducing their husbands.

There is an awkward ambiguity in the relationship between domestic workers and their employers that can be overcome by setting clear-cut social boundaries. The ambiguity of domestic workers being allowed in the most intimate spaces of their employer's house and family life probably explains the need to 'separate' them by constantly referring to how different they are. All over the world, domestic workers are considered different because of the specific rules and roles that only apply to them, such as eating after or at a distance from their employer, waking up early to arrange everything and so on. Such measures are thus not specific to the case here of a shared history of stereostyling and slavery between freeborn Dicko employers and their slave-descending domestic workers.

However, the moral authority of the Dicko family is higher and more constraining for domestic workers of slave descent from the Haayre region than for unrelated domestic workers. Firstly, slave-descending domestic workers often have a close, pre-established relationship with their freeborn Fulɓe hosts due to their common background and social networks. Secondly, even the parents of these domestic workers in freeborn Fulɓe families engaged in loyalty-style relations based on the shared historical legacies of slavery. The parents of domestic workers of slave descent cannot criticize or challenge Dicko decisions and if they do, they are likely to lose access to land, their mosque, politics and administrative protection.

Thirdly, the considerable distance between these slave-descending domestic workers and their families (Douentza is more than 800 km from Bamako) and the fact that permission is needed to visit them makes them dependent on their employers' goodwill.[31] It is the physical distance of domestic workers from their own families that is felt to increase their vulnerability[32] and their precarious position is aggravated by the fact that they are socially isolated and lack skills in Bambara. Their isolation from emancipative interaction with peers forces them to socialize within their host family and makes them feel more cut off that other domestic workers.

These reasons ensure the continuation or moving on of the cultural field of hierarchy between the social groups. Under the guise of generosity and a win-win situation for both parents and employer, noblemen are likely to veil the fact that they recruit girls from lower social categories because they have more moral authority over them. The

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[31] Even if permission is granted, their lack of cash makes it impossible for them to leave. From my interviews, it appeared that the maids of Fulɓe noblemen in Bamako were allowed to visit their home village in Central Mali only every two or three years.

[32] The greater the distance, the less social control parents will exert over the employer. Deshusses (2005) makes this case for maids in Ivory Coast who are employed by family in France and who end up in social isolation. Camara (1995: 14) describes how maids in Kaedi, Mauritania whose parents live in the same village as their employers are less likely to be exploited.

following section considers how young domestic workers of slave descent are more likely to embody and internalize their stigmatised status.

There are several reasons why the relationship between Freeborn Fulɓe employers and their slave-descending domestic workers is more morally loaded than that between the same employer and an unknown maid who has been hired in Bamako. Freeborn Fulɓe necessarily have more authority in relation to 'their' slave-descending domestic workers than other employers. The additional authority of the Dicko family resides in the reproduction of a stereostyled relationship through subtle and cultural details of language, behaviour and interaction that can only be read by cultural insiders.[33]

Dicko employers engage in continuous but subtle forms of symbolic violence towards their slave-descending domestic workers in their use of language (the way they talk to and about their domestic workers), moral projections (what the employers deem appropriate behaviour for a maid) and jokes (stigmatizing their domestic workers' behaviour by connecting it to their social status).

When it comes to language, the language of kinship allows employers to cover up status differences to outsiders who do not comply with the cultural field of hierarchy. Such metaphorical use of the kinship idiom is common in Africa, where kinship expresses hierarchy rather than sentiment in non-kinship relations (Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 25). Furthermore, most studies on domestic workers indicate how kinship terms are strategically used both by employers (Anderson 2000: 124; Jones 2004) and employees (Parreñas 2001: 180) and uphold a kind of 'illusion of affection' (Anderson 2000: 124). This intimacy becomes a form of authority (Parreñas 2001: 153) and work becomes part of so-called family duties that are considered as a more or less natural 'labour of love' (Parreñas 2001: 179-180). Nevertheless, such metaphorical use of kin terms should not obscure the fact that employees and the broader cultural field of hierarchy in society are powerful social boundaries in this relationship (Rollins 1985: 92, 151).

The Dickos consciously choose certain words over others, depending on the context and audience. Although freeborn women in the village context do not hesitate to refer to their personal female assistants of slave descent as 'our slaves' (FF: *Horɓe amin*),[34] this term is less used in Bamako. Employers tend to, for example, present their domestic workers as related cousins to outsiders but use the term of *golloowo kordo* with insiders. The Fulfulde term *golloowo* is neutral and frequently used and is derived from the verb *golluude*, which means 'to work'. It is a gender-neutral term and does not explicitly refer to slave status or the slave past in the way *kordo* does. Those intellectual members of the Dicko family who are aware of the ideologies of others, refer to their domestic worker with the word *golloowo* rather than with the term *kordo*. Nevertheless, to their own peers or within their own community, they might add that maid X is not only a worker (FF: *Golloowo)* but also a 'slave' (FF: *Golloowo kordo*). They take pride in specifying the origin of their maid and the specific reference to slave status in this

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[33] Both Camara (1995) and N'Gaide (2003: 716-717) wrote on domestic workers, being cultural insiders in Mauritanian Fulɓe (Haalpulaar) society.

[34] Plural horɓe; singular *korɗo* meaning slave woman.

context underlines one's wealth in people and highlights the employer's prestige within his/her group.

When it comes to behaviour, the employer's expectations of their slave-descending domestic workers are different from those of their own children. It is deemed normal, or even typical, that slave-descending domestic workers may say shameful things, are overtly impolite, voracious and rude. And some employers may even abuse their maid by instructing her to insult a guest who is no longer welcome in the house. This is a more general role that used to be delegated to slaves before: Slaves did all things that noble freeborn were unable to do because of their status that requires honour (FF: *ndimaaku*). Insults are constantly used to remind the girls of their lowly origins: When eating they are insulted for being greedy, if they talk they are told they are being as loud and talkative as slaves, if they do something stupid they are compared to a donkey or a fool (FF: *kangaaɗo*).[35]

In terms of behaviour, girls of slave descent are not expected to pray and if an employer remarks that the girl does not pray five times a day,[36] she will ignore the fact as 'these people don't need to pray anyhow'.[37] The only area in which the maid is expected to excel is in manual labour. Intelligence is not encouraged and taking initiatives is definitely discouraged. One day Adama was anticipating Madame's call for water and soap to wash her hands after dinner and brought it to the table. Madame got angry with her because she had not asked for it. The girls quickly learn that only silent obedience will not be reproached.

The girls are not encouraged, in fact they are often even actively discouraged, to take an interest in making themselves beautiful and competing with their peers, although beauty is central in the lives of their better-off freeborn peers. In general domestic workers are given their employers' old dresses and used hair extensions. Freeborn family members, even children, learn to constantly remind the maid of her inferior position. When I showed some youngsters living with Madame a picture of Umu and Adama (domestic workers) who had dressed up to go out, the only comment they had were cynical jokes about their 'vanity'.

Through reminders, the Dicko family ensures that their domestic workers do not value and certainly do not overestimate themselves. I observed how maid Sali on a lazy Sunday afternoon asked Madame's sister Hadiata to plait her hair with (already used) extensions. Hadiata agreed to do so but hastily plaited the most basic model. When she was finished, she laughed about the ugliness of the plait and the Fulɓe youngsters hanging around joined in, agreeing that it was more than sufficient for a maid.

The jokes made about domestic workers are not only related to their status as minors (reproaching their irresponsibility),[38] but also to their stereotypical social status (comparing them to donkeys, as stubborn hard workers). When maid Aai reminded me that I

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[35] As N'Gaide (2003: 722) underlines, the fool (FF: *Kangaaɗo)* is the one who defies society's norms and is therefore considered foolish.

[36] Although a maid is employed by a compound or nuclear family, it is the female head of the household who trains her and gives orders. With regard to domestic affairs, the woman is considered the 'employer' rather than her husband (who is however likely to pay the maid's salary or *trousseau*).

[37] Aai Musa Dicko, interview with interpreter Amadu Amiiru Dicko, Sevare, 2007.

[38] Anta, was reproached for not taking responsibility.

had promised to buy new flip-flops on the day her old ones broke, there was general laughter among the other youngsters about how it was 'typical for a Diimaajo to beg (French: *Quemander*) like that'. When Madame announced that all the youngsters living with her had to go and get vaccinated by her sister Hadiata who works as a nurse, she did not send the domestic workers. When I ask her why they were not getting the vaccination, she replied that they were but slaves (FF: *ɓe horɓe tan*). Camara (1995: 10-11), writing about domestic workers in freeborn Fulɓe families in Mauritania, also commented on attributed roles and domestic workers' ways of behaving being invariably reduced to the stereotypical 'native brutality of slaves'.

Coercion in this hierarchical context is not necessarily related to physical but rather socio-cultural (symbolic) violence. Religious threats are common to keep the slave-descending maid in her place. She is threatened with not going to paradise but to hell if she is not obedient. As the Dicko family is closely related to the religious elite families (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*), their curses are considered powerful.

Such non-physical, but nevertheless stigmatizing, interactions help separate the employer morally and physically from the slave-descending maid. The domestic workers of slave descent underline the social position and prestige of their Fulɓe employers in an urban context. Distinction is difficult and expensive in Bamako and to be noticed is an art. Being able to employ a domestic worker from one's home village helps to confirm the patriarchal style and nobility of the employer. Within the Dicko family, assistance is mostly not recruited on the anonymous labour market of Bamako but instead through existing stereo styles where hierarchical relations are constantly reinvented.

This 'reinvention' of stereo was demonstrated by Belco's description of how he came to defer to Samba. Although Samba has his personal assistant Suleymane, based on legacies of slavery, Belco replaces Suleymane when he is not around. Due to increased distances, other people thus get the chance to defer and develop a clientelistic relationship. Nevertheless, ethnic background and a person's home region seem to remain important elements in all these relations in order to have access to the Dicko's network. Madame's drivers, for example, were for a long time exclusively of Fulɓe origin,[39] her domestic workers are mostly Riimaayɓe or Dogon girls from Douentza Province and the students and seasonal labourers she hosts are without exception co-villagers.

'Moving up': Social promotion in the urban context

Cities are specific places that offer a multiplicity of options and access to alternative social relations and hierarchies. People from all the major ethnic groups are to be found in Malian towns, each with a history of assigning some of its members to a slave category. Although hierarchical distinctions between freeborn nobles and slaves have remained important for situating people socially, their actual achieved status often no longer corresponds with their ascribed status. Among other ethnic groups such as Bambara urban areas such as in Bamako, the cultural field of hierarchy is often less

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[39] Only since 2007 has she been driven by a Bambara boy.

pronounced compared to in Fulɓe society. The more fluid definitions of social status in urban contexts are likely to influence the cultural field of hierarchy of Fulɓe migrants.

The economic diversification that has accompanied the steady growth of Malian towns has created new options for people of slave descent, many of whom have left their former masters. In the new urban environment, slave descendants encounter more fluidity and flexibility in social positions. Most of them however have continued to engage in occupations stereotypically assigned to slaves and their descendants, such as brick making, butchering, domestic work and catering.

The majority of the slave-descending Kau family members who have settled permanently in Bamako are engaged in physical labour ranging from delivering bread by motorbike (Amadu Hama) to selling fresh milk (Keleere), working in the security sector guarding empty houses, cattle farming (Belco, Beidary) and construction labour (Hama Adja). Young seasonal labour migrants arrange a loan from their host when they arrive in the city and while some start up as petty traders, for example selling clothes, others engage in selling ice cream or cleaning.

In contrast to the activities of slave descendants in Bamako, the majority of Dickos in Bamako are, with varying degrees of success, engaged as public servants (French: *Cadres*) and are working for travel agencies (Aissata Dicko, Nassuru Dicko), NGOs (Samba Dicko), national companies such as SODAGAZ and EDM (Ali Dicko, Demba Dicko), politics (Madame Dicko, Musa Dicko, Oumar Dicko, Mustaphe Dicko) and educational institutions (Mawludu Dicko, Nuhun Mbaabi Dicko, Amadu Dicko). Most owe their jobs to the good networks and political positions of their predecessors. The fact that 90% of the Dicko family members have a maid, while none of the Kau family members I visited do, underlines the differences in wealth between the two families in Bamako.

Nevertheless, the arrival of slave descendants in the cities has created new opportunities for them to work and to earn money. For example, Daandiire (the wife of Beidary Kau), turned her skills and experience with catering for large groups on ritual occasions in her master's family into an asset in Bamako where she now caters for big parties for urban families. Not only did Daandiire manage to get paid for her labour skills, but at the same time the city of Bamako made new social networks available to her and Daandiire now socializes mostly with the members of her women's saving group (French: *Tontine*). Beidary himself goes on the road to greet some of the Dicko family members on a weekly basis, but he has also developed a daily social network with his neighbours. In these new social networks, Beidary and Daandiire are no longer stigmatized on the basis of their descent.

Dicko youngsters: Later labour migration
Most Dicko youngsters have either stayed in Dalla or continued their education. However freeborn Dicko children are increasingly trying to engage in wage labour as well, especially now that other emigrants who have made money elsewhere are threatening their monopoly on power as a result of their achieved wealth.[40]

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[40] Some migrants challenge the ascribed dominant position of the Dicko elite back home by buying land from impoverished freeborn.

Noble Dicko youngsters willing to engage in labour migration are limited to finding a job that corresponds to their status and have fewer opportunities. They fear engaging in jobs that are associated with slave status and are expected to avoid manual labour,[41] especially if it is for someone else because this does not correspond to the rules of nobility (FF: *ndimaaku*).[42] Most freeborn prefer to engage in petty trade (cf. Soares 2005: 65) selling items like cigarettes, pencils and CDs, unlike their slave-descending counterparts who trade in much heavier items (second-hand clothes) or do physical labour, like pushing heavy loaded carts or construction labour.

In general the Dicko family youngsters engages less in physical labour migration than youngsters with slave descending status. Due to the difficulty of upholding their status, most freeborn Dicko youngsters from Dalla, Joona and Booni who engage in labour migration move not to Bamako but further away for example to Equatorial Guinea or France. Engaging in degrading jobs below their status is less shameful when one is at a safe distance from the social control of relatives. Guro Dicko is an example of a noble Dicko labour migrant who managed to get to France by selling his cattle and thanks to the help of a successful family member. Thanks to his connections in administration, he obtained the papers required to go to Europe and is now living and working in Clichy-sous-Bois.[43] His job is rather degrading to him, but at least no one in his family knows about it and it allows him to earn quite some money.

Guro's case shows how wealth, the first prerequisite for intercontinental travel, is within the reach of noble youngsters who can always sell their family cattle. Secondly, thanks to the Dicko family's long-standing networks in national administration and politics, access to visas and other government administrative requirements is guaranteed. Selling family cattle and having contacts in the embassies are generally not an option for the slave-descending Kau family who lack the necessary contacts, position and wealth. This explains why they specialized in seasonal migration to towns nearby.

Being a labour migrant has another disadvantage for freeborn Dicko youngsters who want to uphold their honourability in terms of hosts and living conditions. Although many freeborn Dicko youngsters have family members living in cities, when it comes to hosting, they privilege students over labour migrants. Freeborn labour migrants who want to avoid being hosted in poor circumstances by co-villagers of slave descent therefore need to rent their own room. Although this is rather costly, several of them do so to maintain their independence and feelings of nobility. Some Dicko youngsters from the village of Joona installed themselves in Bamako's ward Banankabougou (Map 7 (supra), ward No. 44), where they cohabit with their slave descending stereo partners. Hama Alu for example has a social status as *Maccuɗo Weheeɓe* (FF) and cohabits with his stereo partner Hamadun Nu Dicko, who belongs to the freeborn elite and is *Beweejo*

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[41] Several authors point to this disdain of freeborn Fulɓe to work in the service of others or to engage in hard physical labour (Grayzel 1990: 45q). De Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 306) describe this reluctance and/or unwillingness among pastoralist Fulɓe youngsters. Similarly, but in a different context, Brettell (2003: 63) describes how many forms of manual labour (in the service of others) among Portuguese migrants in the 1970s were deemed dirty work by wealthier students who preferred to earn no money than to engage in such jobs.

[42] See also Breedveld & de Bruijn (1996).

[43] Renowned for the riots that broke out there in November and December 2005.

(FF). Likewise, Bucary Hamadun Tambura who has a social status as *Maccuɗo Jawaanɗo (FF)* cohabits with his stereo partner Amadu Umar Waygallo, who belongs to a family of freeborn traders and classifies himself as *Jawaanɗo* (FF).

'Moving against':
Slave descendants against their position in the cultural field of hierarchy

It is through interaction with different social and ethnic groups in new places that migrants are likely to become conscious of their position and identity. Daum (1998: 72) gives the example of two Malian migrants from different regions and ethnic groups but with a similar surname who meet in Paris. Sharing a room, they soon find out that the same surname signals slave status for the one and noble status for the other in their respective regions. Their meeting in France makes them realize that not everything is in a name and they wonder: 'Why am I considered of slave descent, while my neighbour with the same name can claim to be a nobleman? What is the legitimacy of such ascribed social status here in Paris?' In short, both men become much more conscious of the existing cultural field of hierarchy thanks to the literal distance from their home country.

When discussing the ways in which slave descendants try to opt out of Fulɓe society, informants mention the manipulation of surnames as an important strategy. By changing their surname, slave descendants hope to become less stigmatized and recognizable as being of slave descent. This is an important strategy in climbing the social ladder. Seydu, a member of the Fulɓe *Taabital Pulaaku*, pointed out this strategy as a 'problem' for Fulɓe society today, describing how there are decreasing numbers of people who identify themselves as Fulɓe. Many slave descendants are opting out of Fulɓe society by using the surnames of other ethnic groups, thereby changing their ethnic affiliation. Seydu has tried to deal with this problem by radio broadcasts on discrimination in Fulɓe society, seeing discrimination and stigmatization as the root cause behind slave descendants' tendency to change their names.

When I inquired about how name changes work, he advised me to check the national administrative files: It is indeed possible in Mali to change one's surname. Nevertheless, the civil servants at the Ministry of Territorial Administration and the tribunal court in Bamako informed me that official registrations of name change are rare because migrants do not need official institutions to change their names. Instead, their mobility and wealth can guarantee the secrecy needed for a successful change of surname. If changing one's surname (and ethnic affiliation) is not about obtaining access to legal administrative claims, what does a surname mean? Why would slave descendants bother to change their surnames? How are surnames related to memories of slavery? What kind of procedures are there for changing one's surname? These questions are addressed in a forthcoming publication (Pelckmans 2011b forthcoming).

The case in the epilogue to Chapter 9 describes how an emigrant in Bamako moves against the cultural field of hierarchy practised by people in his hometown and illustrates how, although he as an individual turned himself against and contests the hege-

monic aspects of the cultural field of hierarchy, his kin back home do not participate in the same ideological framework and finally prevented him from implementing his ideas.

'Moving out': Opting out through exit mobility

Cities are relatively neutral in their potential for disconnection and anonymity. In keeping with the more fluid social positions of the new urban environment, some have tried to evade their slave origins and status altogether or have passed as members of other ethnic groups whose language they speak. Although they are often the subject of gossip as co-villagers know their slave origins, they uphold their pretence of belonging to another ethnic group. Some manage to do this more successfully than others. The real key to social promotion and moving out of the cultural field of hierarchy seems to be avoiding all contact with family and friends.

Abdulaye is an example of someone who passes himself off as a 'non-slave' (Rossi 2009a: 19). He is a descendant of the former domestic slaves of the royal family in Booni but as the king sent Abdulaye to a French school, he benefitted from higher education and became the director of a communications business in Douentza. People claim that it is thanks to his wealth and because he lives in town that Abdulaye managed to marry a freeborn woman from his home village. The couple have established a good social network and live well but their families have, to date, refused to visit them and say they will never accept any children they may have.

Another example of a man who tried to gain recognition for his social promotion is Hamadun Dauda. This royal slave descendant from the Kau family was adopted by Musa Dicko as a child, which meant that Hamadun Dauda studied and moved with Musa Dicko's family until he had finished studying. Hamadun Dauda takes pride in his career and has managed to build his own house, even though it is situated in a distant neighbourhood in Bamako (Kalaban Koro, see Map 7, supra). The Dicko family accuses him of being vain and reproaches him for not demonstrating his gratitude towards them for the chances he has been given.

Hamadun Dauda, however, claims he no longer visits the Dickos because they do not accept his new social position. He considers himself a free person, which is reflected in his use of the noble patronym Dicko instead of the slave patronym Tambura when he introduces himself.[44] The Dicko family continues to call him Tambura and exclude him from their network because he does not respect his place in society. As Hamadun Dauda passes himself off as a non-slave and this is not accepted in his village community, he prefers to live in town and does not plan to ever return to Dalla. His network consists of colleagues, his brother Beidary who lives nearby and his immediate neighbours. Hamadun Dauda's story demonstrates how, even when mobile, it is impossible – or at least difficult – to shake off one's past social status.

Similar situations can occur for women of slave descent who try to pass themselves off as non-slaves. Mariam Nassuru Dicko (Madame's daughter's cousin)[45] describes

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[44] Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming) describes how the choice for certain patronyms reflects attempts to 'pass as non slaves' (Rossi 2009a: 19) by slave-descending Riimaayɓe.

[45] Mariam Nassuru is the daughter of the brother of Musa Dicko, who had a French colonial education but died young. Interview without interpreter, Sevare, February 2007.

how she attended a baptism in Mopti and was upset when the young mother who had just given birth insisted on her freeborn status, 'although she was only a slave' (FF: *kanko woni korɗo tan*). It was the baptism of a child of a very rich woman with the patronym Tambura, a typical patronym for slave descendants.[46] Mariam was indignant about this woman's behaviour and publicly alluded to her lowly patronym of Tambura. The young mother responded that Tambura was also a common patronym for noble Fulɓe. Mariam explained why this angered her so much that she retorted: 'You can have your money, but you will never be noble![47] No matter how much money it is impossible for someone with the patronym Tambura to be noble!' When the young mother still did not give in, Mariam felt so offended that she left the party. The young mother might have succeeded in obtaining a higher status thanks to her wealth but had, in this case, met resistance from traditional nobility, like Mariam.

These cases demonstrate how it is possible to move up in the hierarchy and become a patriarch oneself but the stigma of one's slave origins remains. Those who are determined to move out completely are more or less obliged to leave behind all their social relations and their wealth in people. When asking for cases of successful and wealthy descendants of slaves who pass themselves off as non-slaves, most informants agree that there are many executives (French: *Cadres*) who are working in national politics, the civil service, universities or NGOs. However, when asked for concrete examples, names or even phone numbers of the persons they are referring to, informants show unease. Since successful individuals of low-status origin who have done well for themselves in the national administration prefer to conceal their roots and want to be appreciated for their achievements. Research assistant Amadu Dicko comments:

> Their parents have been treated as inferior people, like slaves [FF-Maccuɓe]. These days these executives [FR: *cadres*] who descend from slaves have worked hard to obtain what they have. They will no longer accept someone calling them *Diimaajo [connoting slave status]*. They will change their name and their birth certificates and only compete with the children of important families. Some who have become rich will not even visit their parents anymore because they are ashamed of presenting their parents to their friends. It depends on the personal conscience of each and everyone.[48]

Nevertheless, if a successful Diimaajo meets a freeborn Pullo whose parents used to own his parents, the Diimaajo will (have to) respect him, even if the Pullo is poor. He can try to avoid doing what is asked of him by delegating the task to a small kid for example, but he will avoid open opposition.

If one wants not to be reminded of one's slave status, the only way is to make a clean break with all existing relations and start from scratch somewhere else. Historical studies (Klein 1989; Georg-Deutsch 2006) have pointed out how migrants of slave

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[46] In Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming) I describe the links between patronyms and social positioning. The patronym Tambura is in the Maasina and Haayre region known as the patronym of the former noble slave soldiers (FF: *Maccuɓe arɗooɓe*). These Maccuɓe were highest in rank and value.

[47] In French: 'Tu n'as qu'a garder ton argent, mais tu ne seras jamais noble'.

[48] In French: 'Leurs parents ont été traite comme des sous-hommes, des Maccuɓe. Actuellement les cadres Riimaayɓe ils ont bosse jusqu'a ce qu'ils ont tout. Ils ne vont pas accepter ça, qu'on les appelle de diimaajo. Ils vont changer leurs noms et ils vont changer les actes de naissance, et ils se comparent uniquement aux enfants des grandes familles. Certains même, s'ils trouvent des moyens, ils ne vont plus voir leurs propre parents, ils ont même honte de montrer leurs propre parents à leurs camarades. Ca dépend de la conscience de tout un chacun.'

descent tend not to return to their villages and have severed all ties with any family who stayed behind. Some disappear because they consciously chose to, others because they lacked the funds to return, still others probably died. Life histories in the Haayre are replete with mothers[49] who went looking for their sons as far away as Ivory Coast or Nigeria. Keleere's mother, for example, found his brother Hama Tile in Abidjan, while other families have never succeeded in finding their loved ones. Those who completely disappear become 'lost; not only for their relatives but also administratively' (de Bruijn & van Dijk 2001b: 270-272).

Although it is impossible to write their story or to quantify their numbers,[50] these 'lost ones' do merit a mention because oral traditions and interviews suggest their numbers are quite high. It should be stressed that these are slave descendants who have completely 'moved out' of the cultural field of hierarchy and migrated without ever returning or keeping in touch and who may have obtained a better status position elsewhere. Despite their invisibility, it is likely that some have made it and successfully opted out of existing hierarchies forever. Moving out of hierarchies and making a new start is probably the highest degree of social promotion one could reach.

Methodologically, these stories necessarily remain invisible and hidden: Their story of social promotion is untraceable to all – this researcher, their family members and co-villagers. The only source of information is village gossip (French: *Radio trottoir*), which comes up with stories of successful public figures with unclear, and therefore probably slave, origins. Mali's President Amadou Toumani Toure's 'impure' roots are discussed in the Malian public sphere and his political opponents have even published on it (Le Sphinx 2007: 1-2).

In my reconstruction of the genealogy of the Kau family (Figure 2), nobody mentioned people who had disappeared forever, which confirms how, for these former royal slaves at least, the loyalty style remains the most rewarding strategy. Those Kau members who did migrate have stayed in touch with their family and former masters' family to ensure some degree of social security on their return. Taking the risk of opting out and remaining excluded forever was a step too far for most of them. They had been socialized with the idea that it is from loyalty that one benefits most. Since their former masters have remained powerful and wealthy in most cases, this is indeed often the most rewarding trajectory.

Conclusion: Options to move in, out, on, up or against slave status?

This chapter has explored the extent to which migrants who settled in urban contexts obtained new options to engage in alternative social relations and ideologies. The first two sections demonstrated how the cultural field of hierarchy 'travels' with the migrant to the urban context and is actively reproduced there (moving on and back in), while the

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[49] Keleere's mother, Fatumata Koira Tambura (nicknamed Pico), was born 1921 and applied for a passport in Douentza on 9 September 1958 to travel to Ivory Coast to look for her son who migrated there but had never been heard of again. Luckily she finally found him working as a guard and took him home.

[50] An attempt to trace some of the 'lost' Fulɓe herdsmen was made by de Bruijn & van Dijk (2000b).

last three sections (moving out, up and against) described the alternatives and changing attitudes of slave descendants *vis-à-vis* the cultural field of hierarchy.

The description of 'moving on' with the existing cultural field of hierarchy considered how anonymity and distanced urban contexts generally offer proximity between the Kau and Dicko families and this is recreated through access to already existing social networks of assistance. In a process of 'villagization' (Devish 1996), these hierarchical encounters between the Kau and Dicko families are the main events reproducing social control and stereo styles among Fulɓe migrants. A baptism is, for example, a typical ritual event organized by noble elites where social boundaries display the cultural field of hierarchy. The Dicko elite interacts with the Kau family according to historical social roles, which are often explained as belonging to 'that what we found with our ancestors' (FF: *Tawaangal*).

The second section described the ways some have moved out but then moved back into the cultural field of hierarchy. Both male and female slave descendants in the Kau family still assist the Dickos. Elite women take their stereo partners of slave descend as domestic workers with them after marriage and freeborn Dicko men demand assistance from those slave-descending Kau men already resident in the city. This section on stereostyling demonstrated that it is not necessarily slave descendants (of the Kau family) who stereostyle with the Dicko family. Some stereo partners have been replaced by other clients who 'move into' this vacant position in the cultural field of hierarchy. A concrete example was Belco who assisted Samba during a baptism (see Chapter 8) in Bamako instead of Samba's 'original' personal stereo partner Suleymane Dauda. Most Dicko family members continue to engage in a firm patriarchal style, always managing to find other marginalized people from the Haayre region to defer to them in loyalty style in the urban context of Bamako.

In the third section, the rural-urban mobility of domestic workers freed from the stigma of slave status and given access to better status positions was analyzed. Although domestic workers may be well taken care of, at a more symbolic level, they were constantly reminded of their inferiority and slave status and girls are only talked to in the form of commands. Insults are related to stereotypes associated with slaves and only silent obedience was not reproached. The interaction between domestic workers and their employer remains imbued with status ideology and related (embodied) behaviour. The maid of slave descent is today certainly not wearing shackles but in the socio-cultural realm she is nevertheless constrained by discourse and practices that link her to her slave past.

Through their work, these girls are reaffirming and reactivating collective memories of their historical link of subordination with the now urbanizing semi-freeborn Dicko elite. And they are resorting to the loyalty style based on memories of belonging as slaves to local masters themselves. By engaging explicitly in the loyalty style, they manage to assure an income for themselves.

Slave descendants other than Kau family members have achieved social promotion in areas such as education, religious piety, trade and commerce. Some people of slave descent actively engage in moving against the cultural field of hierarchy by organizing

radio broadcasts and distributing cassettes on which they preach for change and against various forms of discrimination in Fulɓe society.

The only way to significantly change social status is by 'moving out'. By becoming completely detached from existing social relations, the Kau family could succeed in having 'a road', which is what I called 'exit mobility'. This is a form of radical social mobility for slave descendants, and completely detaches them from a hierarchically mastered past. I discussed the paradox that those slave descendants who succeeded in life necessarily became invisible and this poses a methodological challenge that is almost insurmountable. Those who have successfully changed social status continuously invest in invisibility *vis-à-vis* their own network.

Mobility allows slave descendants to move away from existing hierarchical relations, which are likely to change. However, I demonstrated how in the urban hub of Bamako, the close ties and density of the social network central to my analysis ensured a re-production of the cultural field of hierarchy. For migrants in Bamako it is difficult, or almost impossible, to disconnect from the cultural field of hierarchy because it is so omnipresent and unquestioned in all realms of social life, even in the city context of Bamako. Through engaging in what I call exit mobility, some have managed to carve out a niche and make themselves, by definition, untraceable.

Photo 10   Roadsign 'Bienvenue à Dalla (PSP)', 2006.

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Returning home:
Having weight versus belonging

Bamako, 10 March 2006

Today my host Madame Dicko comes home with a television set, a DVD player and 20 DVDs (typically Asian martial art and action movies) to send to Dalla. She enthusiastically indicates how Bucary, who works for Bittar, one of the bus companies that travels between Bamako and Douentza, will take everything to Dalla for her next Thursday. Madame decided it was important for her co-villagers to be connected (French: *Branchée*) and informed about the wider world. She is convinced this will make people in Dalla more 'worldwise'.

   Obviously, the fact that there will soon be a television set in Dalla is very exciting. And, as is often the case with exciting things, disagreement soon arises. Madame decided that the television set should be put in her father's house in the royal court. In Dalla, several youngsters protested and wanted to have it in a much more neutral space of the village, for example the townshall. They argued that with the television in the royal court, a lot of youngsters will be reluctant to go and watch it, for example their friends from Wuro Burram are supposed to show reserve (FF- *yaage*) when they visit the royal court and might not even dare to come and watch there. This short description of the television set shows how migrants like Madame even when they are not present have an impact on what happens back home.

   Increasingly, migration and mobility studies are including 'return' as an integral part of any analysis to understand people's mobility projects (Brettell 2003: 47-100). This is why this chapter moves back to the Haayre region and focuses on what has happened to returned migrants in Douentza, Dalla and Booni. It is an exploration of the comings and goings on the Bamako-Douentza road as it has been travelled so far by the informants in the network described in the previous chapters. This is the last chapter and brings the story full circle, ending where the book started, i.e. in Central Mali. This chapter describes the changes and continuities in relations back home and with home after mo-

bility.This chapter thus describes what happens to hierarchical relations if they travel back home upon return of a migrant.

Those who have settled in urban contexts, like Madame Dicko, continue to influence and interact with their home village, but at a distance. In the first section of this chapter, I describe the ways these interactions (varying from remittances, to visits and the recruitment of labour) have contributed to the social position of the Dicko and Kau families respectively. For the Kau family as the former royal slaves of the political elite, their main way to social promotion would be by obtaining access to politics. The itineraries of Suleymane and Musa Dicko will be followed throughout this chapter.

In the next section, the focus is on the home context of Dalla, Douentza and Booni. The trajectories back home and/or the situation of some of the informants once they have settled back home are described. The social promotion of returnees remains relative to that of their former masters and therefore the Kau family have continued to parallel but not to outdo the economic and social status of the Dickos.

In a final section, which comes after the conclusions because it serves at the same time as an introduction to the final conclusions of the thesis, I describe an attempt by Saajo* Tambura to change the vision of his family members back home. He tried to bring home social remittances based on his transformed worldview but, as will be demonstrated, did not manage to convince his family members.

Roads between the urban and the rural

> Migrants still use their sending community as the reference
> group against which they gauge their status.
> (Levitt 2001: 11)

The road described in the introduction to this thesis is travelled to and fro, for longer and shorter periods. Roads go in several directions and temporalities. Various scholars have pointed out that return is an integral part of mobility (Brettell 2003: 47-100) and returning is part of the process of reinsertion of both people and their ideas back home. The assumption that migrants transfer their loyalty and community membership over time from one place (country) to another has been abandoned in transnationalism studies. Instead, there is a focus on the fact that migrants keep a foot in both worlds: They do not automatically trade in their membership and network of one community for another but capitalize on both, depending on their situation. They use political, religious and civic arenas to forge social relations and livelihoods, and to exercise their rights across borders (Levitt 1998: 3). Migrants remain attached to their homeland through intense contacts and social bonds (Brettell 2003: 75-100). Marriage arrangements, remittances and religious affiliations keep many migrants well linked to their places of origin (Patel & Rutten 2003). This linkedness is recreated through the so-called 'moral economy' (Lonsdale 1992). Velayutham & Wise (2008: 115) use the term 'moral communities' to indicate how translocal villagers are influenced by or in their words even the 'product of a sense of responsibility for others' back home.

Few Africanist studies on post-slavery societies describe how ideological struggle to reconfigure cultural fields of hierarchy is initiated by migrants.[1] In a study on Malian associations, Daum (1998: 109-111, 167-178) described how Malian Soninke migrants of slave descent in Paris manage to obtain higher positions in village associations, thereby influencing or even turning upside down existing status and generational hierarchies in their home region. Boyer (2005) described how the actual distance in space allows slave-descending Iklan in Niger to observe their own position and identity from a distance. Being away allows them to temporarily disconnect from their identity as clients *vis-à-vis* the freeborn in their home community. Leservoisier (2005b: 1011-1012, 2009: 146-149) demonstrates how revolutionary the first attempts to claim political participation by Fulɓe slave descendants in a rural Mauritanian village were, attributing these changes to the democratic ideas that the emigrants obtained in France.

Often slave descendants who moved out obtained the necessary economic resources needed to 'buy' their social promotion (land, manumission, higher status wives). In Dalla, slave-descendant migrants formerly belonging to Jawaamɓe elites have so far proved to be the wealthiest. Many have become wealthier than their masters who lost power over their domestic slaves decades ago.[2] Their mobility has also provided them with relative social promotion. In contrast, social promotion for the Kau family has remained to a large extent related to the social promotion of their master. In most cases, the social promotion of slave descendants has only proved to be a temporary escape from slave status. On return, the majority are put back 'in their place'.[3] The case of Maman Abidjan (see Chapter 2) demonstrates how, for individuals belonging to stigmatized social status groups, wealth can change their situation but not their social position. In other words, while wealth has helped many former slave groups to mitigate, it has not erased their marginalized social status (cf. Soares 2005: 66).

Migrants who return home have a wider view of the world and are likely to engage in relations with new, wealthier patrons. They can afford to do so because their knowledge of language, professional skills and economic status make them more attractive as clients for certain patriarchs. Secondly, the fact that they moved away and encountered new ideas in cultural fields of hierarchy has made it possible for some of them to convert certain hegemonic aspects of that field into a contestable ideology. Some of the slave-descending migrants have become aware of existing axioms and unspoken rules. This, in turn, is likely to allow them to contest the hegemony more actively. They can

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[1] They focus on how migration contributes to the upward social mobility of slave descendants. The other side of the coin is downward social mobility in the place of destination. Such (temporary) downward mobility seems to be something many are willing to accept to gain status in their home communities on their (temporary) return (Brettell 2003).

[2] This can be partly explained by their early emancipation from their trading Jawaamɓe masters, as opposed to the Kau family who remained domestic slaves well into the 1950s. Today those slave descendants who sell meat at the market or clothes and kitchen utensils are often former slave-descending clients of Jawaamɓe traders who have made good money. Some have used their wealth to acquire land, others to manumit themselves. For more on the manumission by slave descendants today, see Pelckmans (2011a forthcoming).

[3] See also Boyer (2005) who makes a similar point about Iklan in Niger who temporarily distance themselves from their ascribed slave status through migration.

do so, for example, by refusing to engage in the loyalty style *vis-à-vis* former patrons and/or by specializing in patriarchal style themselves.

Remittances and social remittances in the Dicko–Kau network

That Madame is sending a TV as a kind of collective remittance for the village is not uncommon. The association in Bamako of villagers from Dalla sometimes contributes football outfits for the local team there, and most emigrants regularly send money to important families (of the mayor, the chief and the imam) and their own network. Musa Dicko's children in Bamako collect money annually and send it to all the old men in the royal compound to share.

Madame's willingness to connect with her home village through a television set at the same time establishes her image as the village benefactress and allows her to demonstrate a patriarchal style *vis-à-vis* her home community. Obviously some emigrants have more of an interest in belonging to and engaging with (the moral economy of) their home village than others. For those who try to pass as non-slaves elsewhere or have engaged in exit migration, contact with family or friends back home is avoided. At the other end of the spectrum are those who have most interest in investing in contact with their home village: Those with political ambitions or positions (Amadu and Madame Dicko for example), those whose children are hosted by family members (Amadu Hama), those who have fields to cultivate (Hama Adja), and youngsters who are looking for a wife (Demba and Papa Dicko).

The majority of the youngsters in the Haayre region, and in Dalla more particularly, start off as seasonal labour migrants. Compared with the possibilities in South-North migration, the 'development potential' (Schapendonck & Smith 2008: 128) of South-South migration is often limited.[4] Most young people migrate on a temporary basis to earn extra income for their expensive marriages or to overcome a crisis. Although the Kau and the Dicko families send home substantial remittances, the relative impact of these differ and diverge significantly. As Schapendonck & Smith (2008: 128) remark: 'First of all, remittances are channelled within migrant's private spheres which includes only relatives and people in the "inner circle" of their social network.' This inner network in the case of the Dicko family has remained restricted to the descendants of Musa Dicko and has not included his slave-descending maternal kin (Kau family). The social promotion of one member of the family did not, therefore, necessarily lead to the social promotion of his kin. Remittances only serve a core, indeed an inner circle, of one specific branch of the Dicko family, thus excluding the Kau branch of the network.

In the Haayre region, those former slave groups who acquired wealth – often thanks to emigration and through the remittances of family members – have appropriated things formerly inaccessible to them. They mark their economic emancipation in the same way as their masters, namely by investing in cattle or land, by conducting the *Hajj* and so on (Botte *et al.* 1999: 18). Saibou (2005: 869-871) mentions how, also in

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4 As outlined in Chapter 6, the youngsters who manage to gather the money to move on generally engage in interregional migration to Ivory Coast, Ghana, Burkina, Senegal and Equatorial Guinea. Regional (south-south) migration is the dominant form of international migration from the Haayre region.

northern Cameroon it is especially slave-descending Riimaayɓe who benefit from migration since they are hard-working and manage to earn money, which makes them less dependant on the local elites in their home region.

Lastly, as I will demonstrate with cases from each family, the social promotion that individuals are likely to achieve thanks to remittances often run parallel to that of their stereo partners. In other words, as long as both Dicko and Kau family members both gain more wealth and social promotion as a result of their mobility, their social promotion *vis-à-vis* each other will remain the same. To illustrate the point of 'relative' social promotion of migrants who might be getting wealthier but do not necessarily have more room for reconfiguring their relations, I describe the trajectories of Suleymane, my host (see Chapter 2) and that of Musa Dicko, the first elected mayor of Dalla, who died in 2007.

Remittances and status of the Dicko family: The social promotion of Musa Dicko
'... many descendants of families that pretend to belong to nobility, try to reactualise their former positions in order to get themselves to (the summon of) power and above all to impede others from the ambition to insert themselves in the local, regional and national political tissue.' (N'Gaide, 2003: 718)[5]

In Dalla it has been the semi-freeborn Dicko elite who have managed to claim the main political positions in the decentralized municipality of Dalla's 'democracy'. Other social groups are not supposed to even think of presenting a candidate and the Dickos do everything to ensure their monopoly on power. The son of the chief explains how, since decentralization in 1999, the order that has been respected in Dalla is that the first and second positions are for the nobility (Dickos of the Weheeɓe group). Third position is for Jawaamɓe traders, then two administrators from Douentza and only after that (i.e. from seventh position onwards) is there a possibility for slave descendants to stand. The religious scholars (FF: *Moodibaaɓe*) are neutral and are not involved in politics. In March 2009, the municipal positions were indeed divided in the above-mentioned manner, with the first four being occupied only by the freeborn.[6]

In the last years of his life, Musa Dicko enjoyed the fruits of his (educated) children's well-paid jobs. While he was still alive (he died in the January 2008), he only needed to phone his children in Bamako to ask for any money he needed. And when there was a wedding or a circumcision in the Dicko family, he could count on the input of Bamako migrants who sent money that enabled him and his family members in Dalla to excel in the patriarchal style to the fullest.

Musa's children send remittances and pay for the trips to Mecca of their elders because such forms of contact with the home village reinforce the family's powerful

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[5] Author's translation of: "Beaucoup de descendants des familles prétendues nobles, tentes de réactualiser leurs anciennes postions pour se hisser au sommet du pouvoir et surtout contester aux autres l'ambition de vouloir s'insérer dans le tissu politique local, régional et national. (…).

[6] These are: (1) Mayor = temporarily replaced by (3) because Musa Dicko died in January 2008; (2) First deputy = Samba Bundu Dicko (freeborn Moodibo, Wuro Burram); (3) Second deputy = Amadu Buraima Dicko (freeborn Beweejo, Wuro Galbal); (4) Third deputy = Allah Amedu Bocum (freeborn Jawaanδo loyal to Wuro Galbal) and (5) and (6) administrative staff members who live in Douentza and who visit Dalla weekly on market days.

position in politics. This is why Madame and her brothers and sister send about FCFA 250,000 every year to be divided between the eldest members of the ruling Dicko family and the imam's family. In this way they hope to maintain the imam's bene-dictions and favour. It is by demonstrating how they continue to engage with their home village as specialists in the patriarchal style, that they maintain social and political relations between the village and the city. These villages are in many ways the main place in which political legitimacy is inscribed (Gugler 2002; Ferguson 1999). Through her remittances Madame Dicko engages perfectly in the globalized world as a cos-mopolitan citizen preoccupied with democratization while at the same time recreating belonging and feeding her position of power in a localized community (Geschiere & Nyamnjoh 2000; Ferguson 1999; Comaroff & Comaroff 2001).

Not only did Musa Dicko promote socially in politics, he also managed to remove the stigma of his slave ancestors socially. In short, the trajectory of semi-freeborn Musa Dicko is a success story. From a stigmatized semi-freeborn child of the king, he became an educated, wealthy patriarch. Although he started off as a 'legal minor' with a serious disability, he managed to get the fullest form of recognition from his former freeborn masters. Mayor Musa Dicko died in the middle of his term in office, in January 2008, so was replaced by his deputy, a freeborn Beweejo from the same family and royal compound (FF: *Wuro galbal*). His own and his children's inclusion in the royal group of the Dicko family was officially confirmed with the burial of Musa Dicko's body within the royal compound, next to the body of his father, King Yerowal. In the past, only kings were buried in the royal Dicko family's compound. As Kopytoff & Miers (1977: 30) described, becoming a remembered ancestor is a strongly desired form of self-fulfilment, especially for descendants of slaves.[7]

Since the death of Musa Dicko left a sudden political void, the municipal elections in April 2009 generated heated discussion over who was to stand as a candidate for mayor among the Dicko family. In the end, Burra Seydu, the son of Musa's deceased brother Seydu (†2000) was announced as a candidate. At the elections, his party won six of the eleven seats. Burra Seydu is currently the mayor of Dalla. He was Musa Dicko's personal driver for many years and although he went to school and can read and write, he never obtained a diploma. But what is most surprising is that Burra was elected mayor at the age of only 32 and that he not finished any degree in education.

Madame Dicko had become a prominent member of Malian politics due to her election as Member of Parliament in 2007. Typically, Madame was assisted by her stereo partner Amadu Hama Kau[8] during the parliamentary election campaigns of 2007. None of Muusa Dicko's children wanted to be elected as a mayor, because they wished to continue living in Bamako where they all have good jobs. In order to keep power close to themselves, the family decided to propose a youngster who had been living in Douentza with Musa Dicko as a candidate for the position of mayor on the list of the

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[7] In other post-slavery societies too, the establishment of tombs in honour of one's ancestors is des-cribed as the crowning glory on careers of emancipation. For Benin, see Ologoudou (2008) and for Madagascar, see Evers (2002).

[8] Amadu Hama is a young slave descendant of the Kau family who has been living in Bamako for more than a decade. He has never been to school but he is an entrepreneur and always joins Madame on her visits to Dalla to assist her.

political party of PSP in 2009. They opted for Burra Dicko in the hope that their father's lineage would maintain political power. Because he is close family and manipulable, Burra, who is from the same paternal lineage as Musa Dicko was prioritized over an older, better-educated candidate from a more distant Dicko lineage. Finally, the municipal elections in May 2009 brought victory to Burra, the PSP candidate proposed by Madame Dicko. This guaranteed Musa Dicko's heritage and reinforced the prominence of the PSP party in Dalla. The billboard indicating that Dalla is a PSP municipality (See Photo 10 at the beginning of chapter), which had been installed by her father Musa Dicko, is likely to testify to this loyalty for many years to come.

Remittances and the status of the Kau family: The social promotion of Suleymane
Chapter 6 described how various Kau family members also live in Bamako and make money there but their jobs are less well paid and their remittances tend to be much lower. Most slave-descending return migrants try to use their remittances and relative emancipation acquired elsewhere to renegotiate their position and possibilities back home. However, let me illustrate the fact that remittances often only contribute to 'relative' reconfigurations of the cultural field of hierarchy for the Kau family by analyzing the case of Suleymane.

Suleymane's first migration consisted of moving with his stereo partner, Samba to Niger (see Chapter 6). When Samba finished studying, he decided to return home and married. Suleymane however continued travelling and moved to work in agriculture in Burkina Faso. His wife joined him there for some years and although they did well, they decided to return home in the mid-1990s. Their main reason for returning to Dalla was to have their children educated at home so that they would know their roots. On his return, Suleymane invested his earnings in a camera and made some (extra) money as the village photographer. He also invested in a motorcycle and animals. Visiting his compound, one notices that it is much cleaner than average and the chickens, goats, bicycle and even motorcycle show his relative wealth. Suleymane and his wife obtained new visions on how to deal with certain issues in life. This comes to the fore in the way their attitude to education contrasts sharply with that of their family members and neighbours. Suleymane's children are all vaccinated against all possible diseases, they all go to school, even the girls and Suleymane's wife Hadiata washes the children with soap on a daily basis, even in wintertime. All this says something about their different attitude towards hygiene and education.

Besides material investments, Suleymane tried to reconnect socially upon his return home. Since his stereo partner Samba Dicko lives in Bamako and only occasionally pays for Suleymane's transport to assist him in Bamako, Suleymane started to defer to Samba's father Musa instead. The fact that he speaks some French and is hard-working made Suleymane an interesting assistant for Mayor Musa Dicko and he was entrusted with the practical organization of the 2002 and 2006 municipal elections. Suleymane campaigned on the mayor's behalf in the small hamlets around Dalla and was paid for distributing voting cards. One of the ways in which he expressed his gratitude and deference to Musa was by naming his son after him. In short, it was thanks to his

relative wealth and the knowledge he had acquired by emigrating that Suleymane was able to access a paid job.

Relatively speaking, Suleymane's economic promotion as a result of his mobility was no higher or more beneficial than that of his peers in the Dicko family. So although Suleymane may have obtained more wealth, most of his Dicko peers, like his stereo partner Samba (and Samba's siblings) accumulated more wealth and owned real estate in Bamako and drove cars. Suleymane rides a motorcycle and his mud-brick house is built on land belonging to the Dicko family. This demonstrates the relative economic impact of wealth: Although it allowed slave descendants like Suleymane to reconfigure their position, these reconfigurations often do not result in a reversal of styles. Suleymane continues to engage in the loyalty style vis-à-vis his former patrons and stereo partners who migrated too and became even more wealthy than he did.

Suleymane's progressive ideas have often caused him trouble: He is a proud man who knows what he wants and from time to time tries to engage in the patriarchal style, which is not appreciated by his former masters or by his kin. His Dicko stereo-partners have an interest in maintaining their privileged positions and therefore Suleymane's attempts to patronise are not accepted by the Dicko elite who for example forced him to assist them and forbade him to butcher his own animal (FF: *layyaare)* on the first day of *Tabaski* (as described in Chapter 4). In so doing they actively reminded Suleymane of his obligation to work in the service of his former patrons. Suleymane says that at least he managed to minimise the obligations of his children towards the freeborn elite families in Dalla. Since he married the daughter of a manumitted mother, his children will be completely free of expectations of loyalty *vis-à-vis* his former masters (as explained in Chapter 3). Suleymane has certainly obtained better living conditions and more political influence, but in the end he did not manage to change his stigmatized social status nor style.

Over the last ten years, I have witnessed how Suleymane has increasingly started to give in to the expectations of his older family members and co-villagers. He has become more modest, realizing that the loyalty style could yield more results than sticking to his deviant principles and attempts to become a patron himself. On the one hand, he has experienced pressure from the Dicko family who reproached him for not sticking to the loyalty style, while on the other hand he has also experienced constant pressure from his own family and peers. Two examples illustrate this: First, the fact that he agreed, under pressure, to let his daughter get married before she finished school, and secondly, the fact that he did not dare to put himself forward as a candidate at the municipal elections.

Why did Suleymane, who always took pride in having his children educated, agree to let his daughter being married before finishing the most basic educational degree? Thanks to his close ties with Musa Dicko, the educated mayor of Dalla, Suleymane managed to have Aafi hosted in Douentza so that she could continue studying and get her degree (French: *DEF*). In 2010 I learned that Suleymane had married her off to her cousin just a few months before she would have got her diploma. For a long time, Suleymane's family members had not approved of his efforts to have Aafi studying and they reproached him for investing in the education of a girl who was destined to get

married, have children and work in the household. Educating her would only make her proud and risk her 'losing her head'.

Aafi had been promised to the son of Suleymane's eldest brother Hama and for years Hama had been insisting that the marriage take place. In his eyes, the girl was getting too old to marry. In April 2010, Suleymane gave in to the pressure of his elder brother and in May 2010 Aafi was being married out to Hama's son. Once married, Aafi was not allowed to finish her degree.

A second way in which Suleymane could not get his envisaged access to social promotion was through municipal politics in Dalla. With the implementation of decentralization policy from the 1990s onwards, the theoretical possibility of former slaves and other lower-status groups developing a political career came closer. It became a potential new niche for slave descendants to get rid of their so-called 'clientelistic citizenship', which, as Hahonou (2009: 16) points out, is not peculiar to Africa but a common feature of any society where economic redistribution is organized along clientelistic lines. In Douentza province, several municipal districts were newly created for elections. As can bee seen on Map 8, Dalla became an independent voting district.

Map 8   The subdivision of Douentza province in rural municipalities
             (election districts)
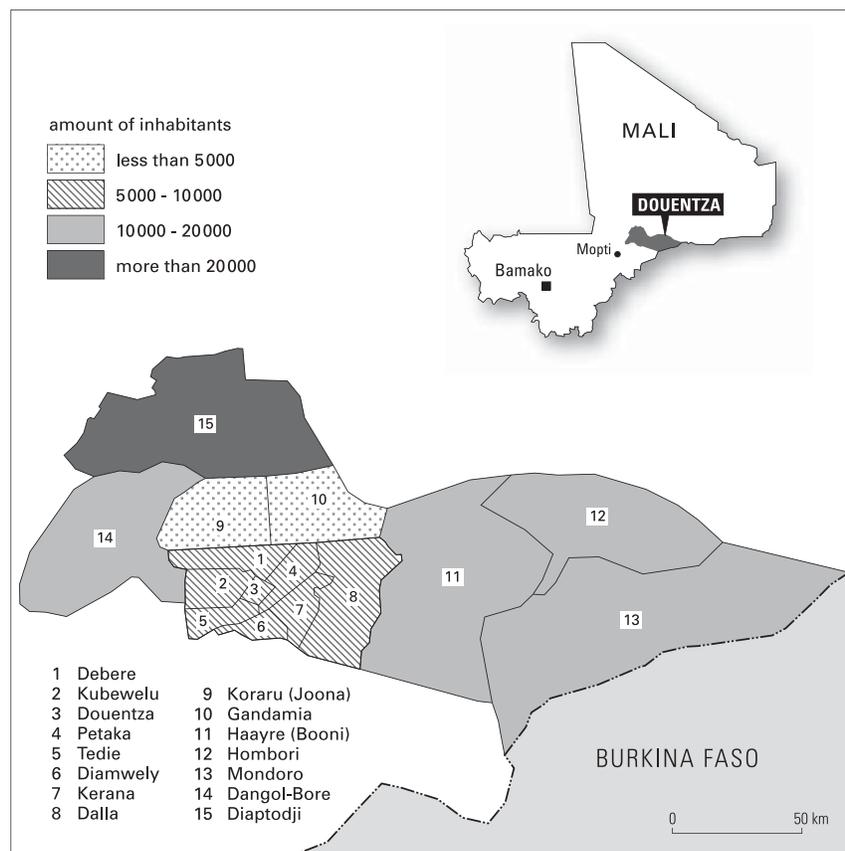
The 2009 municipal elections created a schism in the Dicko family. Typically the stereo partners of important politicians in Dalla vote for the same parties and assist them in their campaigns.[9] When it comes to politics the former royal Dicko family of Dalla is divided: on the one hand there is an elected mayor who is in favour of the PSP party and on the other hand there is the 'traditional' chief Haidu Dicko and his descendants who always have voted in favour of ADEMA. The Kau family mainly support Musa Dicko and his children who support the PSP. Since Suleymane is loyal to mayor Musa Dicko, he helped him with the distribution of voting cards and campaigned for PSP in 2002 and 2007 in the hamlets on the Gandamia Plateau.[10] Other slave descendants in Wuro Maccuɓe (Map 6, Chapter 2) are loyal to Chief Hamidu and his party ADEMA. The schisms and animosities within the Dicko family have spilt over into the descendants of slaves formerly belonging to them. The social status of the master thus continues to define social stratification and interrelations among former slave groups, recalling the way hierarchies among slaves used to mirror those of their freeborn masters.

Suleymane considered running as a candidate in the municipal elections of 2009. He knows many people thanks to his election campaigning in the hamlets and realized that slave descendants constitute the majority of potential voters as they make up between 30% and 50% of the municipality. Secondly, in terms of literacy he is just as qualified as the then-candidate and now mayor, Burra Seydu. Thirdly, since he used to campaign for Musa Dicko, he knows how to run an election campaign and has developed an extensive network. In short, he was potentially a strong candidate.

When I visited him in February 2007, Suleymane claimed to be too scared about damaging his position with the Dicko family to put himself forward as a candidate. He feared (FF: *Huulaade*) the power and witchcraft (FF: *Sukunja*) of the Dicko family who are close to the Islamic scholars and the imam's family and also the jealousy (FF: *Haasidaaku*) of his own family members. In the end, he decided to remain loyal to Musa's children, Madame and his stereo partner Samba. Suleymane ended up opting for the loyalty style.

Nevertheless, with the new municipal elections of 2009, Suleymane got a place on the list as an eligible candidate for the Kau family, thanks to his younger brother, Amadu Hama, who did a lot for the legislative campaign as Madame Dicko's stereo partner. Furthermore it was as a result of his own efforts in cooperation with Madame's brother Samba Musa Dicko, Suleymane's stereo partner. Samba and Madame thus decided to reward these Kau family members for their loyalty with a place on the list. Expectations were high and many, especially Suleymane and Amadu Hama, had hoped to be allocated third place on the list, which is still a place of influence as opposed to seventh, eighth or ninth position, which are more symbolic.

After the April 2009 elections however, the municipal council remained firmly in the hands of the Dicko families in Dalla. Suleymane and Amadu Hama did not get the place

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[9]   Likewise Macca (see Chapter 4) as stereo partner of the traditional Chief Hamidu is sent out from time to time to the surrounding Riimaayɓe villages to get animals or other 'gifts' from his 'citizens'.

[10] As Musa's assistant, Suleymane used to spend the two months in the run-up to each municipal election (2002, 2009) in the surrounding Haayre villages in the municipality of Dalla. Whenever Musa Dicko went to Bamako for his regular medical visits as a diabetic, Suleymane joined him, even answering Musa's mobile phone.

on the list they had hoped for in compensation for all their hard work. Suleymane ended up in the seventh place, which is traditionally a place reserved for former slaves living on the plateaus (FF: *Riimaayɓe Haayre*). This frustrated the Kau family who, as Mac-cuɓe Wuro, have always derived prestige from their close ties with the Dicko family. It was all the more frustrating because, in the end, the Kau family has the same ancestors and roots as the mayor and chief of the Dicko family that are now in power. For a while, Amadu Hama considered switching parties (from the PSP to ADEMA) to demonstrate his feelings of dissatisfaction but this would have meant an end to his being Madame's stereo partner. To date, Amadu Hama has decided that this would not be worthwhile and continues to assist her out of loyalty.

Once back home: Returnees from Bamako in their home villages

> In spite of economic dire straits, the village continues
> to be a point of reference for the diaspora.
> (Gaibazzi 2010: 34)

Macro-economic factors, international policy measures and the ideology of modern capitalism all contribute to a dislike of people who are 'out of place' and adrift. Several international (mostly European) policy measures have been geared specifically at controlling and managing the movement of African immigrants. This is done through development initiatives where potential emigrants are sent back to or kept in their countries of origin (Haas 2007). These and other measures (Geschiere & Nyamnjoh 2000) in combination with economic conjunctures (Ferguson 1999) are structural factors that have been introduced to influence the movement of people. In times of economic hardship, policy makers in receiving contexts often encourage migrants to return home.

Increasingly migration studies are paying attention to return as an integral part of mobility (Brettell 2003: 47-100). 'People are actively involved in their home society through economic remittances, the building of houses, and participation in the social and religious life of their native villages' (*Ibid.*: 49). Return is not only an outcome of mobility but the imagination of how they will materialise their return constantly influences the way people leave. Ideas and practices of return are thus just as much part of the mobility project as ideas and practices surrounding people's departure. It is on return that some migrants manage to convert their economic capital into social capital in cultural fields that are meaningful to them.

Although this chapter focuses on migrants, it should be pointed out that the percentage of those who move and settle elsewhere is much smaller than the number of those who stay. Those who stay behind (the immobile) in Dalla and the surrounding Haayre are important agents too (Gaibazzi 2010; Jonsson 2009) and they are a majority.

Back home in Dalla

The city youngsters who return home to Dalla sometimes no longer feel at home and are surprised at the way certain things are organized. Dalla is known to be an extremely conservative place, which some link to its Islamic legacy, others to the low literacy rate among its inhabitants. For whatever reason, outsiders who move to Dalla have difficulty

understanding why not only in politics but also in asserting authority more generally, slave descendants have problems claiming authority. I illustrate this with three cases. One is about the schism between the older and younger generations in their negotiations over rewards for construction labour, and two cases illustrate how professional 'outsiders' in the village of Dalla (a nurse and NGO worker) complain about the submissiveness of Dalla's slave descendants.

In the Fulɓe economy in the Haayre region, some aspects of work have been monetarized, while others have remained in the sphere of reciprocal exchange. According to informant Allay, being paid for labour is something that was introduced by the French colonizers who used cash payments for building houses and/or making mud bricks. Slave descendants in Dalla, especially the Kau family, take pride in the fact that it was they who constructed all the houses, granaries and walls in the village.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, slaves constructed houses for the sedentary Fulɓe elite without demanding payment. The influx of 'strangers' (civil servants, doctors, teachers) who settled in Dalla and the wider region was a first trigger of monetization. A second explanation is that Riimaayɓe emigration resulted in their increased knowledge of building practices. Migrants (often youngsters) have gained knowhow in other places, such as Djenne which is famous for its masons, and on their return their specialized knowledge of new and better building techniques were noticed. As they had got used to being paid in other areas and their skills were in demand, these youngsters demanded payment for their labour in their home villages as well.

The rewards for construction labour are increasingly negotiated, especially by the younger generation. These shifts are illustrated here with the case of Moodibal,[11] an intellectual emigrant from the Dicko family in Dalla who is currently living in Bamako. Moodibal, a nobleman is in his fifties, is constructing a house in Dalla and described the changes in remuneration and the expectations of the patriarchal versus the loyalty style for patrons and clients in Dalla. 'These days we no longer pay the taxes of our slaves, we do not clothe or feed them. If they work today, we need to pay them, even if it is only with a symbolic gift.'[12] Paradoxically he equates 'paying' with a 'symbolic gift' and this at the heart of the matter. There is a complex system that combines money and a gift in the local Haayre economy. For the construction of his own house, Moodibal considered various options:

> As you have your captives[13] next door, you will first try to get their help. I am not obliged to contract my own slave masons (French: *Esclaves maçons*) to construct my house. Only if I consider the traditions of my old man do I have to invite my own slaves to come and help me construct my house. Their chief (of the slave descendants) will gather them together and they decide among themselves who does what and when. They make bricks and in return you buy them cola nuts and food. They will construct the house as a group: Each family sends a representative. You reward them symbolically with cola nuts. That is the traditional scenario: You do not give them money for their work.

> Another scenario is that if you really want to build a beautiful house, you preferably look for those youngsters (or elders) who are renowned for their accurate work. In this case, you negotiate with them

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like with the big construction companies in Bamako; you discuss the price of labour, materials and so on. You even pay them just to get started. You do not ask the elders to construct your house if you really want quality. However the elders offer their labour voluntarily because traditionally we never asked them about or discussed money. They do not claim money (French: *Quemander*).

In Moodibal's view, Dicko family members today have two options: either they contract their older former slaves and have cheap labour but probably a less well-built house, or they have an official agreement with other younger slave descendants who are more experienced in building houses but then they have to pay the market price for their labour.

Building is a dry-season activity before work in the fields gets started. While living in Dalla, I observed how a freeborn Beweejo from the royal family compound requested neighbour Seydu, a fifty-year-old man from the Kau family, to bring the bricks needed for the construction of his house. For the rest of that day, Seydu and his son Samba were busy bringing mud bricks to the construction site and for the rest of the week about five of Seydu's family members helped with the construction. When I ask Seydu how they were compensated, he explained:

> Maybe you don't always get money. Sometimes it is only cigarettes and cola nuts. But you always get some kind of compensation relative to the kind and amount of work you do. Asking to be paid or even negotiating the amount of money is impossible. We (in the Kau family) would be ashamed to do so. I always accept what my master (FF: *kalfaaɗo*) decides to give me, out of respect for him. I do what they ask me and hope that I have built up enough credit with them to be well rewarded.

Older slave-descending Riimaayɓe insist that it is unthinkable for them to ask their former masters to pay them for work. Seydu explains this loyalty by pointing to the importance of 'walking in the footsteps of his ancestors' and feels it would be morally wrong to divert too much from their path. Seydu insisted that it would be unthinkable for him to ask his former masters to pay him for work. He explained this explicit demonstration of his loyalty by pointing to the importance of 'walking in the footsteps of his ancestors' and felt it would be morally wrong to divert too much from their path. At the same time, he indicated how his respect for his (former) masters makes him fearful of them.[14] Not respecting the bonds with one's former masters according to him always results in negative repercussions.

In Seydu's view, negotiating remuneration remained impossible (in 2002). There was no contract between himself and his former master's family. Collaboration remains asymmetric in that open discussions, let alone contesting reward and thus indirectly the monetary value of his work, were unacceptable. Seydu and his relatives worked for a week but ended up frustrated with their remuneration and the youngsters involved (Kodo and Samba) had hoped to get more than just the food and cola nuts they consumed during the construction period. Monetarization and paid labour are not easily separated from other forms of contract related to the cultural field of hierarchy. These days it is only influential freeborn who have their family houses built by their most loyal and/or indebted Riimaayɓe such as Seydu. They do not pay them but do provide the necessary food, cola nuts and cigarettes consumed during working hours. Seydu said

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[14] This fear sometimes came up during interviews when Maccuɓe lowered their voices when discussing sensitive information and were convinced that all that we were discussing could be heard by the free-born Fulɓe elite.

that they accept such agreements because the former masters provide Riimaayɓe with other services, such as intervening in court cases or conflicts with herdsmen at other times.

Expectations of remuneration are perceived differently by the younger generation. While for the older generation the non-negotiable remuneration in kind is still used, market logic has entered work relations for youngsters between the ages of 15 and 35. Increasingly, they are openly asking to be paid for specific tasks, which is in part due to their experiences with contract labour elsewhere. Rather than becoming a more general feature of intergenerational social mobility of the Kau family, the monetization of construction work has only led to individual lifetime promotions for some youngsters but not for their co-family members.

While for the older generation like Seydu the non-negotiable remuneration in kind remains, many of this generation's children are opting for remuneration according to market logic. Obviously within the generations there are differences. Macca's son Hamidu, for example, is a teacher and earns a salary. He would never do unpaid work and does not feel the need to engage in the loyalty style. His age-mate Samba, who did not finish his education or migrate, feels less secure and has no other options. He has thus internalized the loyalty style like his father, Seydu. Nevertheless, the fact that some youngsters explicitly negotiate payment for their labour is in part due to their increased experiences with contract labour in the urban areas.

Internalisation or passivity on the part of slave descendants in professional positions?
During my fieldwork in Dalla in 2001-2002, I tried several times to interview the male nurse called Usu, a slave descendant from Douentza. Although I had had close ties with both his brother who worked as a tailor and his uncle Burra Yero who was my research assistant Burra (see Chapter 2) in Douentza, Usu always had excuses for not being interviewed. He pretended to be too busy, which was often the case, because –as so many other administrators, he spend as few time as possible in Dalla, and as a consequence he always had a lot of patients waiting for him in Dalla. Nevertheless, my interpreter Umu sensed that the amount of attempts we made to get to talk to him and Usu refusing, clearly indicated he had an interest to avoid to be interviewed by us.

Years later in 2007, when talking to Guiro, the male nurse of Bambara origin who had replaced Usu in Dalla,[15] I realized why Usu felt uncomfortable discussing his position in Dalla with me. According to Guiro, Usu had had many difficulties enforcing his authority *vis-à-vis* the big families of Dalla (FF: *Weheeɓe* and *Moodibaaɓe*). Guiro indicated how, despite Usu's professional qualifications and position, he always obeyed the wishes of these families regardless of whether their requests made sense to him professionally. When there were vaccination campaigns, Usu used to treat these important families first and during office hours, they were given priority treatment, irrespective of the time they arrived. For Guiro, this was unacceptable but he had had a lot of difficulty changing these discriminatory practices and described how he faced opposition when he introduced queuing.

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[15]   Guiro replaced Usu in 2005 as these kinds of functions rotate.

According to Guiro, who is a relative outsider in Dalla, Usu was a typical illustration of the impotence of slave descendants changing existing hierarchies. They are unable to impose their authority due to their acquired status *vis-à-vis* the ascribed status of the important families. Usu could not separate his administrative status as a nurse from his ascribed status as a descendant of slaves. Over time, Usu developed clientelistic ties with the Dicko family and became the stereo partner of the chief's son, Nassuru. When visiting his brother Seydu Tambura in Douentza in 2007, I encountered both of them having tea. Usu introduced Nassuru as his best friend.

Another relative outsider, an administrator in charge of implementing a national NGO project in 2007, was relieved to be able to discuss his frustrations about Dalla. His wife had gone back to the city and refused to live in Dalla as she could not stand the fact that they were excluded as strangers. He complained that outsiders are not welcome in Dalla but, more importantly, he was indignant about what he called 'severe power abuse' by the Dicko elite there.

He describes how the cooking oil and cereals that had been given to Dalla by the World Bank[16] were stored in the municipal compound. The guardian appointed to watch the building was typically a loyal slave-descending youngster who would never refuse anything to the mayor's family as he realized how easily he could be replaced. When a Dicko from the royal family comes after dark to get some oil and grains for his own personal benefit, the boy keeps quiet and gives whatever is asked for. The young boy who guards the oil realized that he is better off engaging in a remunerated loyalty style.

These cases illustrate how slave descendants in Dalla who get paid for a professional position consider it better to be an ally than to assert authority see few reasons to contest the power of the Dicko and the imam's family. This does not mean that they are passively put in place without their consent. Given the structural context they find themselves in, they have calculated that it is better or more rewarding (and not only in economic terms) to respect the cultural field of hierarchy.

Back home in Douentza

As opposed to Dalla village, decentralization politics did challenge the power claims of traditional elites in some ways in the town of Douentza (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005). The former elite has desperately tried to hold on to its traditional spheres of influence and one of the ways they have managed to do so is through various forms of social and economic sanctioning, for example through their monopoly on land, which they re-inforced during the decentralization of land (French: *lotissements*) (de Langen 2004, 2005).

Place is also in Douentza symbolically loaded. Much as I described for Dalla, most slave descendants of freeborn Fulɓe live side by side in the 'fifth quarter' of Douentza. The majority work on their masters' land and still give their masters' part of their harvest. Other slave descendants live dispersed across town: Some are linked to Fulɓe originating from Douentza town, while others are connected with Fulɓe in different villages and hamlets in Douentza Province. In some cases, these slave descendants have

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[16] Through a world bank project on which Musa's son Samba works.

come to Douentza to escape the relations of subordination in the villages and to live in town in relative autonomy. Others have arrived in town to try their luck, and there are those who came as refugees after the droughts in the 1970s and 1980s.

Most slave descendants in Douentza are cultivators and may also be involved in the livestock trade, in cotton weaving, making mud bricks or in construction. Few slave descendants are big traders (Zondag 2005) nor do they play an important role in politics or in Islamic power structures. This does not mean that the slave descendants in town are poor. On the contrary, many slave descendants in town today are richer than their former masters because of the variety of activities they engage in.

However their wealth has not necessarily removed the stigma of their slave status. Many wealthy slave descendants continue to butcher for their former masters at *Tabaski*, thereby engaging in the loyalty style. The case of Bura Yero Cisse demonstrates how, even in the urban environment of Douentza, slave status remained a constraint for Burra (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005). Initially, Burra stated that being of slave descent did not influence his life since he was from a family where slavery was something in the past. But after going through his life history, he realized himself that indeed, even today, he visits his mother's master and takes him presents. Secondly, his social networks consist mainly of close ties to other slave descendants' families and/or his master's family in Douentza and Dalla.

Although he did not put it that way himself, the fact that he lives where he does in Douentza, which is typically the ward inhabited by the chief's former slaves, ties him in a spatially stigmatized place associated with a slave past. His activities are also stereotypically related to the history of slavery and in the course of his lifetime Burra has engaged in weaving, cultivation and construction work. Even as a research assistant,[17] he has the typical position of loyal intermediary. He fits into the cultural field of hierarchy through his loyalty style as the 'slave' of the researcher in question (de Bruijn & Pelckmans 2005: 88-90).[18] Burra thus came to realize that he did, indeed, still behave as he was expected to because of his position as a member of the former-slave group. He ended his life story by thinking out loud about his children's future: Would they escape their position? This is Burra's life history till 2005. I will now describe what happened after that.

In 2006 Burra was thrilled because his wife had given birth to their seventh child. In 2007 he had had a road accident and was hospitalized in Mopti. A month later when I was in Douentza we planned to do some interviewing and although his shoulder was better, he had become weak and was constantly having fevers. He put his weakness down to the fact that the harvests had been 'too good' and this had involved a lot of extra work. As always, he joked about it: 'I continue to think that I'm still a young man!' Three months later when I was back in Europe, I got a phone call from Burra's son informing me that his father Burra had died.

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[17] As explained in Chapter 2, Burra Yero Cisse was the main research assistant of de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a) who subsequently put him in touch with their student researchers.

[18] Examples mentioned are the fact that he always did the tasks typically done by slaves, such as butchering goats when they were offered. Informants sometimes literally called him 'slave' (FF: *Maccuɗo*) but in a friendly way.

Burra was not only responsible for his own family but also for the wife and children of his deceased brother. His eldest son of 12 now has to provide for both the families who depended on Burra's food production through cultivation and the money he earned as a research assistant. Now that he has gone, his children stand virtually no chance of becoming wealthy. None of them is likely to finish their education and the burden of being part of a big family will weigh heavily on their shoulders for many years to come. They will engage in all the possible existing ties of support and it is likely that deferring to the former master of their mother or father will be part of their survival strategies.

Burra's life history demonstrates the instability and often temporary nature of upward social promotion of slave descendants in town. For some time he had had a good income, which he also had to share it with a large network of people who did not. There is no sustainable alternative for his family members to turn to now. The vulnerability of these families is high. The alternative option of reengaging in loyalty styles with former patrons is often considered the only viable exit option from poverty.

Back home in Booni

Returning 'home' is obviously not the same process for everyone. Besides different trajectories of return, the home context itself can differ significantly in its possibilities and niches for return migrants. As the municipality of Booni invested in education earlier than most other areas, many more people received an education, and several informants saw this as an explanation as to why slave descendants in Booni are less loyal, less dependent and more assertive *vis-à-vis* their former masters.

When a freeborn asks them to do something, they emphasize that they have no obligation whatsoever towards those who have never been the owners of their ancestors. (There are no stereo partners here.) They often literally do so by saying: 'Neither my mother nor my father was in your possession. You never fed me or my family so you have no right to command me.' Not only in practice but also in the more symbolic domain of language, slave descendants in Booni openly refuse to be called *captif*, *maccuδo* or anything else that refers to a slave past. In Booni it is considered a terrible insult if a freeborn calls someone of slave descendant a *maccuδo* to his face.

This contrasts with the way the Kau family in Dalla, which enjoys high esteem *vis-à-vis* other slave groups, accept insults and reproaches from freeborn Dickos stoically and without overt defence. An example of this acceptance is as follows. When I was about to leave Dalla on a Tuesday in 2007, the mayor, with Musa Dicko, offered me a ride in his personal Mercedes. I still had to fetch my suitcase and say goodbye to my hosts in Wuro Maccuбe. My host Suleymane and I informed Musa that we would pick up my suitcase and say goodbye to people there. Musa Dicko however became angry and cynically insulted the people I was supposed to go and greet in that ward of slave descendants that they were not worth being greeted. He thus directly insulted Suleymane's family in his face and at the same time proposed for Suleymane to go and get my suitcase on his bicycle. I insisted on joining Suleymane to say goodbye to my hosts and neighbours but this made him incredibly nervous. I have never had such a quick set of goodbye. And I was shocked that Musa insulted Suleymane's family so overtly in public. It was even more puzzling to read from Suleymane's reaction that this was not a

joke, it had been a real insult, which Suleymane only replied to by engaging in the loyalty style. As my research assistant remarked, such an insult would never be accepted by slave descendants in Booni.

Chapter 7 described how maids of various ethnic backgrounds are hard-working in Bamako and live a life in which they make their own decisions. This is not necessarily seen as deprivation by the girls themselves. Many perceive this as the ideal opportunity to participate in city life and see something of the world,[19] which is why so many young girls from various ethnic groups in Mali eagerly leave their families to explore city life, dreaming of buying nice clothes and other items they cannot purchase where they come from.

A visit to the family of domestic worker Maya in her home village of Booni made me realize that although she works hard as a maid, her life in Bamako is much better than it could ever have been at home. In Booni Maya is an orphan and has a stigmatized position, in Bamako she is among the lucky few to have a generous and caring employer.[20] Thanks to her job as a maid in a wealthy family, she found a good marriage partner, who she would probably never had the chance to marry if she had stayed in her home village as an orphaned teenager living with a blind, poor grandfather. Her work experience in Bamako has had a positive effect on her social status. For her, the dependent mobility as a stereo partner provided her with a road to opportunity.

Even if several slave-descending families today explicitly refuse to engage in the loyalty style by sending their daughters to work as domestic workers for freeborn families in cities, others, like Maya's grandparents, continue to do so for they do not see any alternative. Maya's grandparents were responsible for a girl they could hardly feed and they were too old to make a living through cultivation. They thus depended on the goodwill of others. For these rural poor it is not necessarily a matter of deliberate choice to 'give' their daughters to wealthy freeborn families like the Dickos. Rather they depend on the favours of such wealthy families and are trapped by structural conditions. There will always be poor families – not necessarily of slave descent – who have no viable alternative and are prepared to 'give' their daughters to wealthy elite families, thus recalling legacies of slavery and engaging in corresponding loyalty styles.

Conclusions: Back home - Return as deception?

> The antithesis of being (a) slave was not freedom
> or autonomy but rather belonging
> (Kopytoff & Miers 1977: 17)

Migrants are believed to play a big role in processes of social transformation. They are expected to be the best-placed mediators between the village and the national administration, between the industrialized (urban) world and the village, and between village members and themselves. They create dynamics in social contexts (Daum 1998: 29).

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[19] See the documentary entitled *Le monologue de la muette,* translated as: *The silent monologue* by Charlie van Damme & Kady Sylla (2008). Jan Vrijman Fund.

[20] Maya is always well dressed, is hardly ever sick, gets money to plait her hair with extensions and is from time to time allowed to dance at wedding parties and watch television with the other youngsters if her day's work is done.

However, this chapter pointed out that not all migrants strive for change and transformation. Most of those who become mobile continue to move on in the existing cultural fields of hierarchy available to them. The few migrants who contest their slave status, like Suleymane, often do not manage to permanently reconfigure their marginalised status. Slave descendants thus experience some troubles in transforming their stigmatized slave status into respected citizenship. There is a strong belief by many groups in society, including most slave descendants themselves, that they lack authority and the skills to be in political office. There are various reasons for this, to a greater or lesser extent related to the internalization of the norms and values of the dominant cultural field of hierarchy.[21]

As slaves of the royal elite, politics is the field of social promotion that the most successful and mobile members of the Kau family aim at. The central argument in this chapter is that most attempts by the Kau family to reconfiguring the cultural field of hierarchy remained interlinked with that of their former masters. The social capital that the slave-descending Kau family gained through emigration has not led to fundamental reconfigurations in their hierarchical relations with the freeborn Dicko family. Mobility did not necessarily help the Kau family to radically emancipate from existing hierarchies. Instead, their mobility contributed to the active maintenance and reinforcement of their ascribed position in the existing political context of Dalla.

The Dicko family too accumulated significant resources by emigrating and can rely on the existing hegemonic aspects of the cultural field of hierarchy back home, which is especially strong when it comes to claiming a privileged history (Chapter 1) and associations of status with place (Chapter 2). The descendants of semi-freeborn members of the Dicko family managed to maintain their monopoly over politics and thus specialised in the patriarchal style. The Kau family, just like the Dicko family, has managed to reinforce their position as privileged clients of the Dicko family but at the same time this means they continue to specialise in the loyalty style.

On returning home, emigrant Suleymane has used his mobility capital to reinforce his ascribed position as a loyal, reliable and worldly client. Suleymane invested in connections with the most prominent members of the Dicko family, who also invested in their position as wealthy patrons back home. A lot thus depends on the relative status of one's master's family. The example of the Kau-Dicko network shows how the fact that the Dicko family is wealthy and influential, makes it more difficult for people like Suleymane to challenge or reconfigure their interrelation. Suleymane was unable to specialize in the patriarchal style as both the social pressure of the Dickos and his own family members continues to impose loyalty on him. This is not the case for slave descendants who used to belong to Fulɓe pastoralists and/or traders who impoverished by now. If former masters became poor, their former slaves often experience much more freedom and some have managed to invert their relations and have specialized in the patriarchal style *vis-à-vis* their patrons. Conversations among these groups of slave descendants who did manage to reconfigure the cultural field of hierarchy often are

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[21] See Chapter 3 on the lack of proper descent as a serious handicap for slave descendants because it stigmatizes them and impedes them from occupying prestigious jobs.

about emphasising their generosity vis-à-vis their master families and this indicates how they take pride in their newly acquired patriarchal style.

Social promotion through mobility is obtained not only by slave descendants but also by their former masters. The maintenance of the traditional position of the Dickos as the ruling elite would not have been feasible without their insertion in French education and their ensuing emigration. The semi-freeborn children of former mayor Musa Dicko (Madame and Samba Dicko for example) managed to overcome the stigma of slave status, and their wealth and intellectual careers have helped them to reinsert themselves into the heart of village politics and power relations. The social promotion of Musa Dicko's paternal family stands in sharp contrast to that of his maternal Kau family members who have not been freed from the rope through marriage to a freeborn woman (like Musa Dicko). Both Kau descendants, such as Suleymane, and Dicko descendants, such as Madame Dicko, have invested their mobility capital in the reinforcement of their authority and status back home.

The Dicko family, who have had an ascribed political mandate, still dominate the region's politics, even though it is the semi-freeborn branches that have taken over. The semi-freeborn Dickos have recreated a monopoly on political positions back home. The Kau family choose to remain loyal to this successful branch of the Dicko family in order not to lose the advantages as stereo partners who engage in the loyalty style as clients to the Dickos. For some their specializations in specific professions elsewhere have led to renegotiations over labour remuneration back home. Economically than, many slave descending families in Dalla today managed to better their positions. Socially however, it seems much more difficult to get rid of certain stigmatising ideologies. The case of Suleymane who finally allowed his daughter to marry before finishing her studies, already demonstrated that social remittances do not always have the desired effect. In the epilogue below, the case of Saajo* Tambura again underlines the difficulties that descendants of slaves face when they want to change the cultural field of hierarchy.

Saajo* describes how he was fighting against what he himself calls the 'mental slavery' of his co-villagers but, in the end, did not succeed. Often it are slave descendants who have themselves internalized the loyalty style and are afraid to distance themselves from it as that would make them socially vulnerable.

Epilogue: The case of Saajo* Tambura

Migrants reinvest skills and resources gained through movement (roads) back into their home context. The concept of 'social remittances' (Levitt 1998, 2003) explicitly focuses on what is brought back, not in terms of goods but in terms of ideas by migrants who spend (part of) their lives elsewhere. Social remittances are the ideas transferred between migrants and their home communities and possibly transform the social status of migrants and their families, such as differentiating existing power relations.

To illustrate why social remittances do not always have the desired impact and the fundamental dilemmas migrants' face, let us consider the case of Saajo* Tambura. His story[1] shows how Saajo*, an educated man with slave-descendant status, has tried to implement his newly acquired ideas on hierarchy in his kin network. Despite his own changing visions on aspects of hierarchy, he has been unsuccessful in negotiating change. Saajo* recounted this story in several interviews in Bamako in the spring of 2007. Having studied at university in Canada and Bamako, Saajo* works as a journalist and is the editor of a newspaper in Bamako. He is part of the generation that took part in the student protests that led to the overthrow of dictator Moussa Traore in 1991. Although he was born in Central Mali, Saajo* has turned into a Bamakois (an inhabitant of Bamako) but continues to actively engage with his family back home by regular phone contact, visits and remittances. He also hosts visitors and fosters some co-villagers' children in his compound in Bamako.

When discussing his life history, Saajo* recalls how as a child he was one of the first children of his village to go to school. He was among the brightest students and, looking back, he says that the competition with the youngsters of noble descent in his classroom was an exciting and important thing for him. For him, it was the start of his process of emancipation.

The first day I met him (through a mutual friend), he presented himself as Saajo* Tambura. Having explained about my research and knowing that the name Tambura often refers to slave descent in the Maacina region,[2] I asked him whether he was of slave descent himself. At first, he refused this definition of his name and status, explaining that it was when he first matriculated in his home village Konza that a local Jawaanδo gave him the patronym Tambura, much to his own surprise. He nevertheless did not engage in a discussion about this 'wrong attribution' and ended up using this patronym ever since. Saajo* explains that his real patronym is Toure, as his mother was a noble Songhay woman from Timbouctou and his father was a Bozo from Djenne and surroundings. However, since both his parents settled as strangers, their status as outsiders categorized them as part of the group of slave descent.

In practice, this meant that they were only allowed to marry within the status group of people of former slave descent. For a long time, Saajo*'s parents did not accept that

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[1] Saajo* Tambura, Diimaajo, Konna, several interviews in French without an interpreter, Bamako, Spring 2007. As indicated in the language and orthography section, Saajo has an * because his name has been changed in order to guarantee his anonymity.

[2] For an elaboration of patronyms and their (supposed) significance, see Pelckmans (2011b forthcoming).

their children had to marry other slave descendants in the village because they felt that, by doing so, this would acknowledge belonging to an inferior status group. One day however, Saajo*'s mother's youngest brother decided to marry a Diimaajo woman (see Figure 3).

Figure 3   Schematic overview of Saajo* Tambura's case (genealogy)
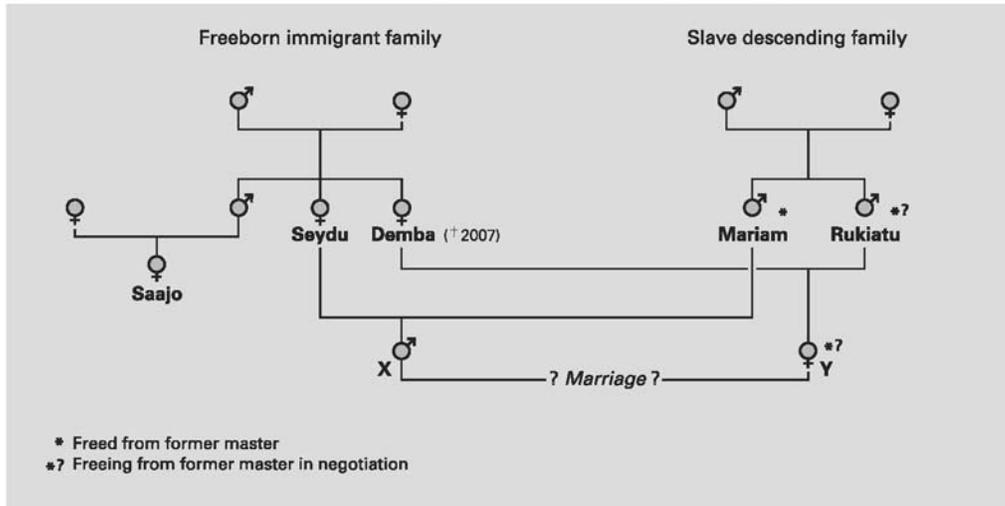
The whole family fiercely opposed this marriage because they risked forever being stigmatized as being of slave status. The brother however did not change his mind and Saajo*'s family had to give up trying to be part of a social status category that is not associated with slave status. Some years later, a brother of Saajo*'s mother married the sister of his younger brother's wife of slave descent.

As the marriage between the eldest brother (Seydu) and the Diimaajo woman never worked, Seydu decided to ask his Islamic scholar and teacher (FF: *Moodibo*) for advice. The scholar explained how the 'problems' were due to the fact that his wife had a slave status and was still enslaved by her master, a herdsmen. The *moodibo* explained that it would have been better if Seydu had freed his wife from her master before marrying her. This advice made Seydu decide to free his wife, even though they were already married. Saajo* never knew the exact amount of money that his uncle paid to free his wife from her master but he assures me it was a significant sum.

Both the younger and older brother who married the two slave-descendant sisters had children by these wives. The oldest brother, Seydu, has a son and his youngest brother has a daughter. In Fulɓe society, marriage between the son and daughter of brothers (cousins) is a desirable combination, so Seydu and his brother decided that their children would marry.[3]

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[3]   For a more elaborate description of this form of pre-arranged marriage between cross cousins (FF: *Cabbugal)*, see de Bruijn & van Dijk (1995a: 370).

When I discussed the matter with Saajo* in Bamako in 2007, he explained how both children were becoming to old to get married and this posed problems, such as the girl who was being discriminated against by her peers and faced insults from others in the village. So what went wrong? The troubles started about ten years ago. When the children reached marriageable age, Seydu tried to convince his youngest brother to free his wife, Rukiatu, who as a sister has the same Fulɓe master. The younger brother was not against it but had difficulty finding the huge amount of money needed (FCFA 400,000). The amount was high because the Pullo master of both sisters was not willing to let go of a second slave (FF: *korɗo*). The master felt under pressure from the rest of his family, who did not appreciate the first liberation (of Mariam). So they warned him not to liberate more of their slave-descending descendants since this would harm their prestige.

When Saajo*'s uncle Demba died in 2007, it was decided that Saajo* (who had the money) would financially support widowed Rukiatu and her daughter Y. Mother Rukiatu was willing to pay whatever it took for her to free herself so that her daughter Y could marry her cousin. Saajo* adds that his maternal uncles and aunts caused most trouble and incited Rukiatu to use her money to manumit herself. The maternal family feared going against the wisdom of the imam and the decision of their deceased elder brother. It is because they decided that it was necessary that Rukiatu freed herself from her former master, just like her older sister Mariam had done before, that the trouble-shooting started.

Saajo*, in his position as financial back-up for Rukiatu and her daughter felt he needed to intervene. As an intellectual emancipated from the 'conservative' perceptions of his kin back home, claimed to be explicitly against the idea of paying money for a liberation. For him all of his family members are free in the face of Secular Law. He argued that someone who, in 2007, still feels obliged to pay for his/her freedom is continuing the practice of slavery instead of being liberated from it. Nevertheless, Saajo* was also concerned about the marriage taking place as soon as possible, as it was his deceased brother's wish and both cousins had reached marriageable age.[4] Saajo*'s maternal uncle Seydu (aged 70+) is of an age that lends him a lot of authority over Saajo*, who was only 45. Seydu insisted on freeing Rukiatu and refused to marry his son to Rukiatu's daughter until she was freed. In his line of reasoning, such a marriage would affect his son's status and, more importantly, that of their children because the children would remain attached to Rukiatu's Pullo master.

Saajo* is thus caught up in a considerable dilemma. Disrespecting his uncle Seydu by marrying both children without freeing Rukiatu seemed impossible. If he proceeded along this route, he risked not only his uncle's anger but that of many more people in his village as well. Saajo* decided that the best option was to put pressure on the Fulɓe master of the widowed mother and force him to free her without payment. This would be the perfect solution: The astronomical sum of money due (FCFA 400,000 / €610) would be annulled and his uncle would also be satisfied. In December 2006, to put pressure on the Fulɓe master, Saajo* contacted the local reeve (French: Prefet) – who is of slave descent himself – and also called him from Bamako from time to time. Saajo*

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[4] The girl was at the centre of village gossip and was the only one in her age group not to be married.

asked him to pressurize the Pullo master into freeing the woman for nothing. In May 2007 I joined Saajo* to visit this reeve (whose patronym is Tambura as well). Much to Saajo*'s disappointment, the reeve told us he had not managed to talk to the Pullo master. Although they did not discuss the failure to contact him explicitly, Saajo* concluded that the reeve was clearly embarrassed and doubted his authority over a noble freeman (Pullo), being a Tambura of slave descent himself.

The legal framework which this reeve supposedly represented did not seem to give him enough weight to validate his position and exert his authority as a professional representative (French: *Cadre*) of the Malian state and Constitutional Law. In May that year I joined Saajo* (and his best friend) when he had decided to settle the case by visiting his kin in his home village Konza. As soon as our arrival in the village was announced, Rukiatu's freeborn *Pullo* master rushed into the bush. The *Pullo* master's sudden disappearance was not a coincidence and demonstrated his fear of being taken to court by Saajo*. The visit allowed us to discuss with the reeve and the judge the difficulties they face with people who want to liberate themselves. When we visited him, Saajo* again asked the reeve and later on a local judge to threaten the *Pullo* master with a case in the court of Mopti where Saajo* would accuse him of slavery practices. They indicated how difficult it is to fight against 'invisible' and 'mental slavery'.

Since things did not seem to change after his threats, the next step Saajo* took was inviting both the boy and the girl to his house in Bamako (the girl had lived there as a domestic worker since her father's death) and paid and arranged for their religious wedding that took place in Bamako in February 2008. He stressed that this religious marriage was only possible because it was not held in the village. However, a religious wedding is only a commitment, similar to an expression of intent to marry. The 'real' marriage ceremony will only be valid if held in the village itself (and therefore with the consent of everybody present) and the freeing of mother Rukiatu remained a huge obstacle for his uncle and other family members there.

Saajo* tried to convince the future groom that he was in the best position to change his father's mind, by insisting that liberation was not necessary for him. However the boy did not have the courage to stand up to his parents and the girl was angry with Saajo* and begged him to take all of their possessions and give them to her mother's master in order to free her and enable her to marry.

Saajo* and his uncle Seydu disagreed profoundly on how to proceed: The uncle had been trying to save up the money for years but had not yet saved enough and Saajo* who is relatively wealthy refused to help his uncle with the payment. He was severely criticized for this as he is a relatively rich *Bamakois* and is the only family member who could pay such an amount of money to liberate the women in question.

Finally the case came to an end with Saajo*'s withdrawal from anything to do with the *Pullo* master. The girl's family did pay the master and there was a ceremony involving the exchange of cola nuts, which Saajo* refused to attend. The girl's mother paid two heifers and one bull (total value, depending on season and age about FCFA 125,000-160,000 each, which came close to the master's original FCFA 400,000). Saajo* did not want to have anything to do with it. After the manumission, Saajo*'s cousins X & Y both got finally married in May 2008, about ten years after the dis-

cussions on this case started. Saajo* had been obliged to accept that he could not change the minds of his co-villagers on social hierarchies. He had tried hard but had to admit he had lost. This case illustrates how hierarchies travel to many places and that despite the fact that some people successfully manage to move out like Saajo* himself, others – like Saajo*'s family members, move (back) into the cultural field of hierarchy, time and again.

The case of Saajo* illustrates what can happen when a migrant who has moved out of the cultural field of hierarchy tries to negotiate change back home. He wanted to avoid his family's wealth being invested in buying someone's freedom but, at the same time, his case makes it painstakingly clear how he fails to implement his new world-view. The legal framework and his reliance on state administrators are not enough in his pursuit of 'justice'. Reflecting on his position, Saajo* indicates that his voice was not being heard by his family members. Not only Saajo* but all the parties involved faced dilemmas. Saajo*'s uncle did not see the advantage of taking on a worldview inherent in Secular Law. The dilemma for the former Pullo master was the pressure from his family who did not want him to liberate yet another of their former slaves (Rukiatu), because in their view that would make them loose influence as patrons over their clients. The major dilemma of the future bride was her need to marry as soon as possible to avoid stigmatization by her peers. On the other hand, she was hosted by her uncle Saajo* whose opinion she had to respect. The future groom wanted to respect his father's (Demba) last wish before he died but also needed to respect his older uncle Saajo*, who hosted him so generously. The fact that the family gathering did not result in a solution made the complexity of the case and the dilemmas of the people involved even more irreconcilable.

Similar dilemmas as in Saajo*'s case are central to the lives of most informants in the Kau-Dicko network. They are constantly navigating between their manifold loyalties that are triggered by specific moments in time and place. Dealing with these dilemmas is an inherently human and relational process of checks and balances, where both successes and failure contribute to change. Ultimately, the case demonstrates how difficult it is for an individual to challenge an entire system.

Conclusions

A relational approach to mobility in and out of slave status[1]

Although the official stance *vis-à-vis* slavery in the Malian public sphere is that slavery is something of the past, I have demonstrated how categorical slavery continues to be present in many people's lives. The history of indigenous slavery in Central Mali is so close in time that it cannot be considered as a belated trauma.[2] Rather, in the Sahelian context, the slave past manifests itself as a cultural field of hierarchy that is an intricate reality of the present, not a legacy of a past long gone.

This study only focused on reconfigurations of the cultural field of hierarchy in relation to mobility and the slave past. Where possible I indicated how this specific cultural field of hierarchy interacts with others, such as gender, age and economics. An informants aptly points to the importance of recognising other cultural fields of hierarchy when he said: 'We should be weary of ascribing all perceived differences solely to status and hierarchy. After all we are all first and foremost enslaved by money (FF: *Yimɓe fuu maccuɓe kaalice*).'

The originality of this study is that it takes a 'mobile approach' to the dilemma's of slave status for one specific hierarchical network of people in Central Mali. Although new niches of occupation and identification as a result of mobility have been addressed by scholars working on slave descendants in the Sahel and Ful e society, the focus on mobility *per se* as an agentive strategy of social promotion has not been given the central attention it merits. The main contribution of this study to post-slavery studies is therefore a methodological one: The angle of mobility to approach changes and continuities in the cultural field of hierarchy.

This 'mobile approach' demonstrated how mobility and spatial distance do not necessarily result in an unilinear emancipation from the stigma of slave status, because hierarchies often travel with people to the different places they go to. Most slavery studies indicate how the mobility of the masters is linked to that of the slaves and vice versa. I argued that not only mobility but also social mobility remains linked between both families. The short answer to the question what has changed in relations between the Kau and the Dicko families since the formal abolition of slavery, is that social

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[1] As indicated in the introduction to this thesis, my use of the term slave status refers to categorical slave status, defined by Rossi (2009: 5) as 'stigmatisation on the grounds of inherited or putative slave status', unless otherwise indicated.

[2] Argenti 2007 concludes that certain legacies of the slave trade in the Cameroonian Grassfields are belated traumas of the slave past.

change took multiple directions but most often hierarchy travelled along with the moving people in the network I described.

Secondly the focus and contribution of this study is that it takes a 'relational approach' to status in post-slavery societies in the Sahel. Most studies on post-slavery in the colonial period were influenced by views and interviews with influential (noble) freeborn members of society: The view from above. In the neo-Marxist studies of the 1970s and 1980s, there was a radical emphasis on the view from below: That of slaves and their descendants. Although I have tended to focus mostly on the identity and changes negotiated by slave descendants, I have demonstrated that changes in their social status can only be analysed when keeping both freeborn and slave descending groups in the picture.

The innovative point of the chosen family networks is that it describes the mobile trajectories of one and the same family, part of which obtained freeborn status and part of which maintained slave status. Some post-slavery studies emphasized how freeborn families over time have become disadvantaged because they stick to immobility, which in the past used to be a privileged position. This was not the case for the described Dicko family, precisely because they started of as semi-freeborn which had been excluded from this privileged position. Their mobility brought them various options for social promotion and resulted in their successful claims to freeborn status in the cultural field of hierarchy back home.

The fact that *both* the freeborn Dicko family as well as the slave descending Kau family moved, explains why mobility generated less options for social promotion for the Kau family. As Chapter 9 on return indicated, the political promotion of the former Kau slave group, remains overshadowed by the political promotion by that of the Dicko family.

In the introduction I have criticized the common assumption in modernization thinking that links mobility with downward social mobility *vis-à-vis* the host society, but with upward social mobility in the home society (Brettell 2003: 65-72). I agree with existing critiques that argue against such teleological expectations of mobility.[3] Mobility does not necessarily lead to social promotion of slave descendants who move in an unilineair process from A to B(-etter).

My argument is that it is precisely because of the modern assumptions that link mobility to teleological change that less obvious and subtle continuities as well as changes of the cultural field of hierarchy are dismissed in mobile contexts. Often domination becomes stronger when it can be implemented unnoticeably in implicit ways. This form of implicit power is what the Comaroffs (1991) called hegemony. Modern assumptions about the link between status and mobility often blind us for the power of hegemony in the cultural field of hierarchy.

A teleological description of mobility as social promotion does not explain why and how the cultural field of hierarchy is reproduced in the Kau-Dicko network. Various members within the described family network had very different roads into social promotion. For one part of this family, mobility did not bring teleological change in the form of unilinear emancipation as the cultural field of hierarchy 'travelled' with them.

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[3]   As formulated by for example Ferguson (1999: 38-48) and Levitt & Glick-Schiller (2004).

For another part of this family, who became Dickos, mobility brought such extreme social promotion that it seems today as if it is not a form of social promotion but rather an ascribed freeborn social status that they always had. Both the relational and mobile approach served as antidotes to such teleological thinking and allow for more nuance when describing the different trajectories in the cultural field of hierarchy in Sahelian post-slavery societies.

'Shortcuts' as silent social change in the cultural field of hierarchy

The introduction proposed analyzing social change through a model of power introduced by Comaroff & Comaroff (1991). Social changes are changes in the triadic power relations between a cultural field, ideology and hegemony. An existing cultural field can be actively contested (ideology) or it can work as a naturalized, uncontested form of power (hegemony). Change is the move from an unrecognized form of power (hegemony) to a recognized and thus contestable form of power (ideology). The cultural field of hierarchy changes when hegemony is recognised and thus becomes an ideology.

This model allows us to understand changes in the anachronic and stereotyped stigmatisation of people of slave descent in the Sahel. It explains why so few slave descendants actively engage in moving 'against' the stigma of slave status, like Saajo* (see Epilogue) did. The case of Saajo* highlighted how those who move against aspects of the cultural field of hierarchy often meet fierce opposition and/or incomprehension from those who do not benefit from or share the same worldview.

This incomprehension and paucity of protest can be explained by the fact that most individuals benefit from social promotion if it can be done in silence. So it is not necessarily so that the process whereby hegemony comes to be perceived as a challengeable ideology is loud and clear. Rather, such struggles to move from hegemony to ideology do take place but as silent as possible. The Comaroffs (1991: 27) explain how:

> ... once something leaves the domain of the hegemonic, it frequently becomes a mayor site of ideological struggle. Even when there is no well-formed opposing ideology, no clearly articulated collective consciousness among subordinate populations, such struggles may still occur. But they are liable to be heard in the genre of negation-refusal, reversals, the smashing of idols and icons- and not in the narrative voice of political argument.

So social change can take place as an ideological process that takes place rather silently, not in explicit ways. This struggle is thus not visible in the usual fields of protest such as narrative voice of political argument. When applying this to the Dicko family, we see that their move from hegemony to ideology was incredibly silent. Starting of as a slave family, marriage alliances have helped them to bypass their slave status. Instead of challenging the stigma related to slave status, they specialized in the 'patriarchal style' themselves.[4] They successfully bypassed their stigmatized slave status in a non-confrontational (silent) way and they crossed rather than contested the existing social boundaries of the cultural field of hierarchy. They did not challenge the stigma related to the slave status of their maternal kin. Rather they encompassed their

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[4] The patriarchal style is the behaviour categorically associated with freeborn status, as described in Chapter 4.

maternal kin as clients with slave status, thus perpetuating the existing cultural field of hierarchy. The Dicko family did not so much empower thanks to protest to obtain social change. Rather they obtained the possibilities to go from hegemony to ideology and back. They reversed their own move from hegemony to ideology, and instrumentalised their changes in social status to reinstaure existing hegemony.

The power model proposed by the Comaroffs lacks room for reversed struggles and changes. It does not account for active moves from ideology back into hegemony. So besides attention for 'silent ways' in which the move from hegemony to ideology takes place, I argue for more attention to 'reverse ways' in which social change ideologies are actively re-muted and delegated to the sphere of hegemony. Such reversals are also forms of social change and are often actively sought for to be able to benefit and/or instrumentalise a new status in the existing cultural field of hierarchy.

To refine the triadic relationship between the cultural field of hierarchy, ideology and hegemony, the silent and reversible process of change (from hegemony to ideology *and back*) needs a concept in its own right to give this process more visibility in analyses of post-slavery societies. To this end I propose the concept of the 'shortcut' as those forms of social change whereby social boundaries are crossed rather than defied and actively reproduced rather than displaced. Shortcuts are not only the silent reconfigurations of hegemony into ideology, but also give way to the reverse process: Silent reconfigurations of ideology back into hegemony. Shortcuts are characterised by an active interest in oblivion and forgetting, rather than in noisy claims to change. So the shortcut refers to 'less evident evidence' of social change that takes place in silence, through refusals, passiveness and reversals rather than actively voiced contestations, legal claims or political proclamation. The concept of shortcut refers to the silent, subtle and, at first sight, passive contestation of categorical slave status.

My central question was how mobility does or does not contribute to such social changes. The answer is that most shortcuts in post-slavery societies have become available to people thanks to mobility. It is thanks to their mobility, that the Dicko branch of the described network got access to education and created a shortcut to assert control over the resources needed to reproduce the cultural field of hierarchy in a hegemonic way. In the first chapter I demonstrated how they managed to become part of the heroic Dicko history as one such central resource, Chapters 2 and 7 described how place and ritual processes are resources that have been appropriated by this branch of the Dicko family. Chapters 4 and 8 described how the Dickos' specialisation in the patriarchal style mutes their own history in the loyalty style. In Chapter 5 the Dickos manipulation of legal procedures to recreate social boundaries were central. Chapter 6 demonstrated how mobility is a central resource they control in order to reclaim hegemony and finally Chapters 1 and 9 analysed how decentralisation politics are an area to reinforce their hegemonic power position.

Travelling hierarchies: Did Roads reconfigure heads and ropes?

The introduction to this thesis proposed three concepts as metaphors and at the same time analytical tools for addressing changes in cultural fields of hierarchy in the proposed social network of people. The central question in this thesis was how the

Roads (mobility as social change) have reconfigured the Ropes (change in relations and representations) and the Heads (identity and stylistic changes) in a well-defined Central Malian social network.

The notion of the 'Road' points to the chosen methodological zooming in on the role of mobility and movement as roads to change. This notion in my view encourages us to see status in the cultural field of hierarchy as a continuum: An itinerary that can be moved in, on, against or out of in a temporary way. The road can be travelled both back and forth and there are several shortcuts that some take and others don't. Social changes in categorical slavery are not about unidirectional, one-way itineraries that eventually lead to adopting a freeborn status, or not. That there are many more shades of grey on this continuum was shown in the discussion (Chapter 5) on the legal category of 'freed slave status', which comes between slave status and free status.

When saying that 'hierarchies travel', this does not sound as a process of social change whereby hegemony turns into ideology. However, examples of ways in which hegemony has been silently turned into ideology are those instances where slave descendants actively instrumentalize their loyalty style (like Suleymane of the Kau family), or *move out* to the opposite end of the spectrum to the patriarchal style (like Madame of the Dicko family).

The notion of the 'Rope' stands for the multiple (imagined) relations to the slave past. To fully underscore the relational aspect, this study focused on one specific network of people in which interactions between two status groups occur on a daily basis. Because these groups share such intense, sustained daily interactions, relations between other former slave groups and their freeborn masters necessarily travelled on different roads than the described relations in the Kau-Dicko network.

A central conclusion of this study is that a relational analysis of social promotion allows to fully apprehend the multiplicity of roads possibly travelled by slave descendants, without loosing out of sight how their mobility changes (or not) existing hierarchical relations back home. Social promotion of former domestic slave groups can only be understood in relation to that of their masters. Chapter 8 described how both the Dicko and the Kau families accumulated different forms of wealth and knowledge during their travels. The two families enjoyed considerable economic promotion *vis-à-vis* some of their immobile family members. If the analysis had not been based on a relational approach, the conclusion would have been that people part of this moving network, did indeed obtain better conditions (more wealth) and thus presumably a higher social status. The relational approach demonstrated that this would deny the way in which hierarchies travel and that the rope is still there.

Finally, the notion of the 'Head' symbolizes expectations based on performed identities that are linked to a past of enslavement. I did not analyze (social) status as either ascribed (by society) or achieved (by the individual) because when taking a performative perspective, status takes 'two to tango': It is relational and active and results both from achievement and (self-)ascription. An example is the way in which the semi-freeborn branch of the Dicko family managed to move from servile to freeborn status in only two generations. To do this, their claims to freeborn status had to be

actively self-ascribed by themselves, but also recognised as a (legitimate) achievement by others.

The slave descending Kau family's social promotion through mobility did not allow them to move up in the cultural field of hierarchy, rather stereo styles were reinforced. The Dickos obtained access to mobility through education, they became wealthy, settled in large houses in Bamako and continued their social promotion in national administration and/or politics. They engaged in patriarchal style *vis-à-vis* their maternal kin, who are of slave descent. Their maternal kinmembers -the Kau family- also moved to other destinations, but often only to engage temporarily mainly in physical labour, while living in the slums of Bamako and stereo styling in loyalty to their Dicko kinsmen. Upon their return home, most of the Kau family members continued to work as cultivators, while most of their former Dicko kinsmen did not return, but maintained their patriarchal position through their wealth and remittances.

Since status is performative, I argued for using the notion of 'stereo styles'. This notion to analyse changes of status as changes in the performance of relations of interdependence between different status groups. Chapter 4 demonstrated how people (depending on time, place and circumstances) can move on from loyal to patriarchal styles, but also vice versa. The reference to mobility in the title to this thesis ('moving in and out of') highlights the temporality of these values, styles and identities. People adopt a certain style at specific times and in certain spaces. And throughout the analysis I have stated that the adoption of a style is tied to one's embeddedness in social relations which in turn structure people's access to institutions such as politics, national administration, schools, courts, monetary economy and so on.

In the remainder of these conclusions I recapitulate how the different chapters addressed roads travelled and shortcuts taken by the Kau-Dicko network in the process of reconfiguring ideology and hegemony in the cultural field of hierarchy.

Of ties that bind:
Power as hegemony through invisible ropes and ancestral heads

The stigma of slavery has remained hegemonic when it comes to how it is embedded in (access to) history and place. Populations used to float (Chapter 1) and at different moment in time some have managed to contest their masters' interpretations of history. Nevertheless, the dominant version of history as a heroic conquest by the Dicko family in the Haayre region gained firm ground from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards. Becoming part of the freeborn Dicko family meant sharing this heroic version of history. Slave descending groups have difficulties to master their past due to their own internalization of shame about it. Here again there are internal differences among slave groups: slave descending Riimaayɓe Haayre did start to reformulate their history to their own advantage, while the Maccuɓe Wuro of the Kau family hardly did so.

The semi-freeborn Dicko family central to this thesis obtained a shortcut to become part of the ruling Dicko elite's history as a result of marriage alliances (Chapter 3). They did not obtain their new position by actively contesting the hegemony of the freeborn Dicko's. Rather their access to (French) education in the middle of the twentieth century gave them the chance to take a 'shortcut' and bypass the hegemony of freeborn families.

The niche to education allowed them to move out of the cultural field of hierarchy. Their mobility established a shortcut which offered them new roads (opportunities). Today, this branch of the Dicko family clearly has an interest in forgetting and silencing their (slave) past and managed to claim the freeborn history as theirs. However, their inclusion in freeborn history did not start out as a conscious and active ideological struggle, rather it was what became possible thanks to various circumstances throughout time.

A second hegemonic aspect of the cultural field of hierarchy is the muted and uncontested way in which the ritual organization of interactions and the spatial organization of both urban and rural areas tie inhabitants with a symbolic rope to certain social positions. Central to Chapters 2 and 7 is an analysis of how the places where people live tie them to stigmatized positions, irrespective of the actual lived experiences, competences and roads. Maman Abidjan was a migrant who moved back home after forty years and discovered that she was bodily manoeuvred into a place (a former royal slave ward) and position (slave descending status) she did no longer identify with. The fact that slave descending groups continue to be bound to certain marginalized geographical spaces sustains the argument that place is certainly an axiomatic – indeed hegemonic – aspect of power in the cultural field of hierarchy.

An implicit argument which I want to make more explicit here is that precisely because the discussed branch of the Dicko family in Dalla took shortcuts, the reproduction of the social boundaries they managed to cross is even more important for them than for their freeborn counterparts. Together with other reasons of political and economic insertion in the nation state, this explains the stronger need for maintenance of the cultural field of hierarchy by the ruling elite in Dalla when compared to Joona (where only freeborn ruled), or in Booni (which was founded by semi-freeborn slave descendants).

Saajo*'s case revealed how state administrators (such as the reeve) themselves internalized the stigma of slave status. Chapter 5 demonstrated how legal pluralism multiplied ideas on how to understand freedom and demonstrated how there is no single frame of reference. This makes interpretations over what is and what is not to be considered as social promotion and moving on from hegemony to ideology rather complex.

To conclude, spatial organization of the landscape and written claims to historical representation and legal status are important resources to reproduce the stigma of slave status in hegemonic ways. Although these resources seemingly remained uncontested by slave descendants in an active sense, the Dicko family bypassed them in silence and through reversal with the shortcuts available to them.

Of ropes untied: Power as ideologies on the road

The cultural field of hierarchy in the Kau-Dicko network is certainly not made up of uncontested hegemonic aspects of power alone. Several chapters pointed to the different possibilities for slave descendants to actively or passively contest the cultural field of hierarchy. Often it are migrants who went studying that defied existing marriage rules by engaging in exogamous marriages. I explained how endogamous marriage (Chapter

3) as control over wealth in people turned from hegemony in ideology for those who accumulated wealth thanks to movement.

Although they have not actively defied the legal confines of Islamic endogamous marriage rules (Chapter 3) the legal institution of slave concubine marriage in the Kau family created a shortcut that in the end led them so successfully to an appropriation of freeborn status. The semi-freeborn children that came out of these marriages managed to revert to the patriarchal style and were renamed Dicko. Their Kau uncles and aunts reinforced their family members' new Dicko status as freeborn by engaging in the loyalty style with them (Chapter 4).

Those who managed to move on to the patriarachal style (example of the Dickos) were replaced by new groups of marginalized people deferring in loyalty.[5] In Dalla for example, those migrants who settled as strangers in Konza they were given slave wives because their 'outsiderness' meant that, just like slaves, they had to be inserted into society by assigning them slave status. Slave categories and those of their descendants were thus constantly filled in by different actors. There have always been poor and marginalized people who filled positions that require the loyalty style in the lower echelons of society.

Chapter 9 demonstrated how to be successful in 'passing as a non slave' (Rossi 2009), it has been not only crucial to adopt a new identity but also to never return to one's home society. The road out of stigmatization is thus a road of no return, which is not taken by many slave descendants. Most of them do not move away to rid themselves of existing hierarchies and styles in their home societies. Rather the majority hopes to achieve promotion *within* existing hierarchies, because as the case of Maman Abidjan demonstrated, even if one makes a fortune and self-ascribes a new identity after living abroad for forty years, it is almost impossible to uphold a self-ascribed status on returning home. Also the case of Suleymane in Chapter 9 demonstrated how most migrants upon return are put under pressure to accept the existing status quo and they are discouraged when challenging existing hierarchies.

In short, the most radical and successful shortcut is what I proposed calling 'exit mobility'. This is the process whereby mobile actors moved out of their home societies to never return. Often these are the actors who potentially managed to do away with ascribed social status, but again those groups do not defy the status quo either as they wish to remain invisible. Not returning is their way of ensuring and protecting a newly achieved social status position elsewhere. Exit mobility is crucial to consider in any analysis of social change in cultural fields of hierarchy, because it is part of the full range of possible roads travelled by slave descendants. However interviewing those who have engaged in exit mobility is an empirical and methodological hurdle. Those who manage to upgrade their status by bypassing relations in their home society are an empirical blind spot. The only thing I managed to ascertain by discussing genealogies is that none of the Kau family members have disappeared mysteriously. So far 'exit mobility' has not been a road available for them to travel.

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[5]   I referred to this group as 'floating populations' in Chapter 1.

Exit mobility and other preconditions for 'having a road'

While what belongs to hegemony in the cultural field of hierarchy becomes contested as an ideology by people like Saajo* and Maman Abidjan, other slave descendants like the Dickos, could use shortcuts to recreate hegemony. The emic idea of 'having a road' is an illusion. Both the Kau and Dicko family members have less agency in their movements and style options than modernity thinking expected. Not only do the Kau family feel forced into deference and a loyalty style, the Dickos were equally forced into specializing in the patriarchal style if they wanted to acquire a respectable position in the royal family. Historically, both families' movements were (re-)embedded in structural conditions of the cultural field of hierarchy. People do not determine access to and the direction of their road, rather their options for travelling roads and taking 'shortcuts' are embedded in pre-existing institutions (such as schools, politics, laws) and established spatial networks (*njaatigi* hosts and stereo partners).

This brings us to a final conclusion linking mobility and slavery. The way domestic workers are recruited recalls cultural memories of domestic slavery transposed through space and place as part of a 'memoryscape' of slavery in the Sahel (Argenti & Röschenthaler 2006: 40). The ways in which certain members of the Kau family continue to move in loyalty style can be seen as a form of the 'embodied memory of slavery.' The past speaks through existing power relations that are inherent in mobility at present. The cultural field of hierarchy travels with the mobile people in the network described.

Categorical slavery is a situated relationship that can range from an active to passive and conscious to more unconscious maintenance of hierarchy. Individuals, like Saajo*, who actively contest stigmatization and reification of former slave status, have not managed to effectuate change in society at large. Saajo*'s family members do not see stigmatization as an obstacle to their livelihoods and organize their lives around it. So not everyone sees the stigma of slave status as an ideology, which one can actively identify with and/or deny at specific moments in time, in specific places and vis-à-vis specific others. Various more structural circumstances (conjuncture, education, place, economy) account for whether some identify with (slave) status, while others hardly ever do. One and the same person can instrumentalize his/her (slave) status while others silence it. The person who instrumentalizes his slave status, may at other times decide to move out of his/her (slave) status and leave the corresponding style and identity behind.

Dilemma, ambiguity, paradox and plurality of movements back and forth on the road to social promotion characterise the Heads of the Kau-Dicko network. The Rope is not strangling any one in the cases described but this doesn't mean that it is not there. Few are visibly untying the ropes to their slave past because to cut all the ties of belonging through exit mobility is an option too uncertain. Instead, the directions of the Roads travelled in the cultural field of hierarchy are winding: People move in, on, against or out of the stigma of slave status either in imagination, discourse or actual practice. Social change takes place in silence, is reversible and time- and space- bound. Nevertheless cultural fields of hierarchy in many ways travel along with the mobile livelihoods of people in the Central Malian Sahel and beyond.

Glossary

Arab

Note: I did not use the correct annotation of Arabic words with the various accents and instead chose to spell them out in roman scripture.

fida: ransom, ransoming
fiqh: Islamic legal textbooks
haratin: slave descendants among the Moor
hadith: sayings of the prophet (used as guidelines for Islamic legal textbooks)
hajj: the pilgrimage to Mecca
iktifa: renewal of a contractual document in Islamic legislation (homologation).
mawla: master slave relationship that became a client relationship (for example through Murgu).
murgu: legal arrangement of clientship. For slaves this 'policy of assimilation' could serve as an emancipatory arrangement as it allowed slaves to work on their own account in exchange for a payment.
mukataba: verses in the Koran summing up the possible reasons for self-manumission (most reasons are related to why masters should manumit slaves.
surat: a praying verse
sharia: Islamic law
shurut (also Khutut, watha'iq): standard Arab formulations used for contracts.
sunni: the five pillars of Islamic duties (profession of faith, ritual prayers, paying alms, fasting during Ramadan, conducting a pilgrimage to Mecca)
umma: Muslim believers
umm walad: manumission of a slave concubine (in order to marry her)
zakat: alms giving

Fulfulde

Note: in fulfulde language, the first letters of some words change in the plural. In those cases, I added both singular and plural forms in the list below.

ajami : Fulfulde written in Arab orthography
al'aada: customary (legal) traditions. (as opposed to Juulde: Islamic (legal) traditions)
alsilaamaaku: Islam
alsilaame'en: (knowledge of) the Muslim community
alkaali: Kadi, religious scholar who is in charge of justice
amiiru: mayor, leader, ruler (borrowed from Arab emir)
amiiru Maccuɓe: the leader of the slaves
anndal: knowledge, often connotation of 'secret' knowledge
araanu: donkey
ardo/ardooɓe: warlords or bandleaders

asahaada: the reason for liberation (written on the manumission document)

baaba/ baabiraaɓe: father

banndiraaɗo/ banndiraaɓe: siblings, parallel cousins

ɓaleejo/ ɓaleeɓe: those populations that are considered black by Fulɓe, who consider themselves to be white. This term either refers to their own descendants of slaves, or to other non Fulɓe populations that are considered less worthy (often ethnic groups like Dogon, Bozo, Bambara)

banngal: wedding ceremony

barke: divine blessings, prodigious holey power, divine force, blessings (from Arabic baraka/ al barka)

bellaajo/ bellaaɓe: former Tuareg slaves

beeweejo, pl. weeheeɓe

beweejo/ weheeɓe: lit. vulture, former warlords, nowadays political elite

bitiki: derived from French word for shop (*boutique*).

ɓii, ɓiɗɗo/ ɓiɓɓe: children

ɓoggol: rope

    Related expression: '*Mi haɓɓataa e ɓii ɓoggol'*: I refuse to discuss with a child of the rope.

    Related expression: '*A taɣɣi (cut) ɓoggol e daande (neck) ma'*: You cut the rope from your neck.

bonngobi: healers, knowledgeable about plants and herbs, often associated with black magic

cabbugal: betrothal, form of pre-arranged marriage (majoritarily between cross cousins)

caworɗi: engagement and marriage ceremony of independent former slave families (riimayɓe)

Dallanke: inhabitants of the village of Dalla

dammbaare: name of a year round water spring on Dalla's territory

dawde: to travel

debere/ debeeje: villages and/or land owned or appropriated by descendants of slaves. Since slaves and their descendants often specialized in agriculture, the term is often referring to cultivator districts, villages or hamlets (*Saare* in Maacina dialect and *Ruunde* in Fuuta Djallon dialect)

demal: cultivation (agricultural labour)

dendiraaku=> denndiraaku: joking relationships between cross-cousins

dimɗinaaɗo/ dimɗinaaɓe: freed slave

dimo/ rimɓe: he who has (self-)ascribed freeborn ancestry/ community of the freeborn; freeborn persons (as opposed to those whose ancestors have been enslaved)

direre: old slave songs

disaare: a length of printed cotton cloth (French: pagne)

duɗal: Koranic school

egga-hoɗaaɓe: semi-nomadic Fulɓe cattle herders

eggude: to move in search for pastures (transhumance)

esiraaɗo/esiraaɓe: affines

faggaade: (to move in order to) look for profit (money, material gains), to put aside for later, to save, to get rich

fanɗinkinaade: to make something/someone smaller

ferude: to leave on exile

fijo [derived from the verb fijude]: playing the flute, which is traditionally done by Fulɓe herdsmen, but also Riimayɓe. game, feast amusement and celebrations with a dance party and music, for example on the occasion of marriage.

Fulɓe: self-designation of an ethnic group. Also called *Fulani* in English and *Peuls* in French.

futte: matrimonial compensation, dowry

Fuutankooɓe: Fulɓe group who historically are said to have conquered parts of Malian territory led by El Hajj Omar Tall, who came from the West (Senegal)

gaaribu/ gaaribaaɓe: Koranic students

galbal: lit. "wall surrounding compound", term used to indicate the royal compound in Dalla village, see Map 6

galle: compound (sedentary)

gargasaajo/gargasaaɓe: leather workers

giɗiraaɗo / giɗiraaɓe: friends

goggo/goggiraaɓe: paternal aunts

golle: work

golloowo: worker, person who works

Gourma: territory north of Douentza, southern bank of the river Niger

guluro: old slave songs

haasidaaku: jealousy

haasidaare: jealousy, wrath, grudgery

Haayre: rock, stone, by extension designates the region of rocky plateaus north and east of Douentza (Map 8)

heeferɓe: people who do not pray (sg. keefeero)

henndu: wind (often hot and sandy dessert winds), sometimes connotation of illness caused by spirits

honnde Fulɓe: nomadic Fulɓe camps (sg. kogge)

hoore: head
> Related expression: *Anndude hoore ma*, lit. translated this is 'to know your head', but in practice used as the reflexive form of the verb 'to know' and thus means to know oneself.
> In the negative: maani aɗa anndaa hoore: not knowing oneself.

horɓe: female slaves (sg. korɗo)

huɗaaɗo: a cursed person

huɗeede: to be cursed

huɗude: to curse

hulaade: to be scared

Hummbeeɓe: subsection of the ethnic group of the Dogon

hurto: dowry or mothers gifts to the household

hururuy: bad mouths, tongue, gossip

innde: name, by extension also: naming ceremony
> Related expression: *bonude innde makko*: to make his name dirty, to spoil someone's reputation

Jaawannɗo / Jaawamɓe: traders, advisors

jakka: (French colonial) tax of the freeborn [from Arabic "zakat"]

Jallo/ Jalluɓe: semi-nomadic Fulɓe cattle herders

janngal: (French colonial) tax for slaves

jannginoowo: teacher

jawdi: wealth, all cattle owned by a family

jeyaaɗo/ jeyaaɓe: 'those we own', masters who speak about slaves that belong to them, also hosts speaking of guests that they feel responsible for.

joolaare: to be somewhere else, to be abroad.

joonde: place, seat, from jooɗaade; to sit. Points to the part of the baptism ceremony whereby the women sit together with the new mother and her child.

juulde: lit. to pray, also Islamic rules of orthodoxy

juultoyde: to go on exodus, to emigrate

kaaɗo/haaɓe: all non-Fulɓe, often with a rather negative connotation

kabaaru: news

kalfooɗo: the master

kangaaɗo=> kanngaaɗo: a fool, someone crazy

kau /kauiraaɓe [also: kaw, kaaw/ kaawiraaɓe): paternal uncle

kiitaanngal: lit. "not a big year' to refer to the droughts of 1912-1913

Kommongalluujo/ Kommongalluuɓe: social category of soldiers who used to work in service of Fulɓe warlords. Claims to have never been enslaved.

koorɗo/ hoorɓe: female slave

koreeji: family, but also in a larger sense: dependants, people one has responsibility and authority over. This can be family members, children, slaves. Only adults can have Koreeji.

kurtungal: actual wedding

kurtungu [also kurtungal]: celebration of the union between husband and wife

laamiiɗo/ laamiiɓe (sing.); those who hold political power (comparable to kings)

laamu: political power, ability to command (*laamu tuubaakooɓe*: French colonial regime)

lamuru [also: lamru]: ceremony for newborn babies, coinciding with the name giving, baptism

laawol: road

Related expression: heɓude laawol: to have a road (opportunities).

lenyol: clan, lineage

leydi: lit. land, ground, territory, often also used as pars-pro-toto: *leydi Faransi*: the country of France.

luumo: market

layyaaji/layyaari: he-goat or sheep to be slaughters at *juulde layya*

Maabo/Maabuuɓe: wood workers, part of endogamous social category of clients in Fulɓe society (see *Ŋeeyɓe*).

Maccuɓe Wuro: lit. 'slaves of the village', pointing to those slaves who were individually owned and lived in with their masters. In general they assisted their masters on a daily basis, for example taking care of the household.

Maccuɗo/ Maccuɓe: slaves. Mostly used to refer to all slaves, sometimes to point to male slaves (in opposition to female slaves called *hoorɓe*).

manngu: self-conscious, feeling better than others, pride (negative connotation)

Maraaɗo /Maraaɓe: lit. 'the ones who are attached'

mbuudu: money.

Related expression: *teutude=> tewtude mbuudu:* To find money.

Related expression: *Ley wuro, sii ɓuri semmbe mbuudu*: in the village, one's social status matters more than money.

miisiide: mosque

Moodibo/Moodibaaɓe: Islamic learned men/ social category of Islamic clergy in Fulbe society

muntari: virginity

nafaaji: among slave descendants refers to 'wedding ceremony' although in form it resembles the freeborn's 'engagement' (see *Safannde*).

nanngaaɗo/ nanngaaɓe: lit. 'the ones who have been taken (captured)', i.e. captive slaves

nayiraade; to take pride in something

ndimaaku: community of those people who stick to noble behaviour.

ndimu: mixture of customary and Islamic rules to behave like noble (honourable behaviour).

ndunngu: dry season

njaatigi (pl. njaatigaaɓe): host (someone who receives a traveler in a place far from home)

ŋeenyo/ŋeeyɓe: lit. 'those who transform'. Social category of endogamous arts- and craftsmen who offer their services as leather, iron, wood or jewelry workers and/or praise singers, who offer their services to other socials status groups (see also *Maabuuɓe, gargasaaɓe*).

Pulaaku: emic notion for Fulɓe behaviour, but in the Haayre also used to all those who identify as Fulɓe people

Pullo: sg. of *Fulɓe*

Riimaayɓe (sg. diimaajo): freed slaves, referring to those groups who formerly were slaves to local Fulɓe rulers [from Arabic dimma].

Riimayɓe Haayre: 'former slaves of the rocks', pointing to those slaves who were collectively owned by local rulers, but often did not live in with their masters. In general they worked the land and had to give part of their harvest to their masters (in contrast to Maccuɓe Wuro).

rimɓe (sg. dimo): those who have (self-)ascribed freeborn ancestry/ community of the freeborn

rimɗinde: adopt (a slave), make noble, to free (liberate/ manumission)

rimɗineede: lit. to be made noble/free/ procedure of manumission

safannde: freeborn engagement and more specifically referring to the gifts paid for the engagement by (the family of) the groom.

semteende: feelings of shame

sii: social status group

siiri: secrets

Sonhaykooɓe: people from the ethnic group called Songhay

soodtaaɓe: slaves who have been bought

sukunya/sukunyaaɓe: witch(-craft)

suudu/cuuɗi: house

taalibaaɓe: students of an Islamic scholar

taariki: history, often referring to family histories written in ajami and kept privately by big families [from Arabic Tarikh].

taarnaajo/ taarnaaɓe: a slave concubine who is legally married to a freeborn person. Sometimes also referred to as Taarnugol, from the verbal root 'to transform'. In this case the transformation is that of female slave to freed woman. In Adamawa dialect slave concubines are called *Soulaɗo*.

talkuru/ talki: charms, often consisting of Islamic secret texts (see *Anndal*) written on a paper that is wrapped in leather and attached on the body.

tawaangal: lit. 'that what we have found', traditions

teddungal: respect, respectability

tubaaku: white person.

tuubal/ tuube: drums in possession of those in power (see laamiiɓe), symbol of power.

wassigatu: verses in the Koran describing possible reasons for slaves to self-manumit (see also *mukataba* in Arabic).

wuro/gure: Fulɓe village. Often central village around which several nomadic camps and slave villages installed themselves. In Fuuta Djallon dialect called miisiide.

wuro: also used to point to a smaller unit within a Fulɓe settlement: ward (see discussion in Chapter two- sometimes the word d*aande* is used in this context).

Weeheeɓe (sg. Beweejo): Formerly the warrior groups among the Fulɓe. The word literally refers to vultures.

yaage: explicit respect for possible feelings of shame by public withdrawal from interacting with someone (speaking, eating) in a superior or rival (equal) position (within the same ethnic group and social category). Shame is strongest between people of one's proper social group, and is also referred to as *ndewru*.

yiidude => yiɗude ko o woni: to like who one is

yiiyaaɗo/ yiiyaaɓe: to see 'those we see', [from the verb yiide]: euphemism for masters to talk about slaves that belong to them (which they see as theirs).

yimɓe: people (undefined)

Related expression: Yimɓe fuu potti: all people are equal.

yolbere: 'the big hunger', famine, used to refer to the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s.

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Note on abbreviations:
ANM: Archives Nationales Mali
FA: Fonds Anciens
NUM: numérique
HSN: Haute Sénégal Niger

Chapter 1

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