DEEPENING DEMOCRACY AND CULTURAL CONTEXT
IN THE REPUBLIC OF MALI, 1992-2002

by

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Abstract

This thesis challenges the view that the Republic of Mali is a model of democratization in Africa with the aim of opening the conceptual framework of democratic citizenship inherent in the democratization discourse to greater critical scrutiny. The ‘enthusiastic’ view is held and set forth by various segments of the unity-seeking ruling class (local and foreign, State and NGO) of bringing to Mali a Western-oriented, procedurally minimal democracy, and citizen identity commensurate with international financial institutions’ and donor countries’ vision of democratization as political and economic liberalization. Consequently, this hegemonic project co-opts selected indigenous and Islamic idioms of political and social identity, to reinvent democratization as ‘moral governance.’ Cosmopolitan upper and upper-middle class actors thus apologize for highly personalized politics at the national and local levels, and articulate these more broadly with idioms of recovering rectitude and social cohesion that preserve and reproduce hierarchical social norms.

In Malian political culture and in the scholarship of Malian political change, the hegemonic project of citizen identity formation becomes more evident as a construction, as discourses, norms, and practices produced and reproduced by privileged actors. Moreover, the contested character of these constructions becomes evident only as we address the development and deployment of selectively synthesized indigenous, Islamic, and Western-democratic norms, practices, and institutions of citizenship in contemporary Mali. Without a more embedded sense of political membership and identity, the merely procedural democratic project remains vulnerable to challenges from multiple, alternative sites of moral, social, and political authority.
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More people than can be named here deserve thanks. My name may be on the title page, theirs I see on almost every other page. I have been accumulating debts related to this project, directly and indirectly, for at least fourteen years. For hospitality, patience, generosity, warning, healing, and laughter; for guidance, encouragement, teaching, commiseration, competition, love, trial, listening, and forgiveness

Thanks to my adoptive Malian family from 1994 to the present,$^1$

Thanks to my family, friends, colleagues, and mentors.$^2$

Thanks to those who have so faithfully supported my life and this part in it.$^3$

Dédicace

With a special thanks to Heather (AKA Hawa Diop) for 2002, I dedicate this to

her son and my friend Sékouba Traoré. Cette oeuvre, Sékouba, s’est achevé grâce à Dieu Tout-Puissant et grâce à toi, qui m’inspire par ton courage, amour, et joie de vivre. Mille et une fois merci.

( Jon dit Moctar)


$^3$ MUM, DAD, and JACINTHE
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CHAPTER 1: Theoretical Introduction

General Introduction

The Republic of Mali is considered by many Malian and non-Malian observers to be a model of democratization in Africa. This thesis approaches the issue by asking what is meant by a model democracy, by whom, and to whom, in order to challenge the procedurally minimal democracy inherent to the conceptualization and implementation of Continental democratization processes. Moreover, rather than a linear process suggested by the image of a democratic ‘wave’ there are particular linkages at local, national and international levels that qualify the ostensible universalization of Western-democratic norms, practices, institutions and identities. Democratization is a multiform historical process in which state-making and cultural change occur in the context of the transformation of political and economic norms and practices, and reactions to these transformations.

Mali’s relatively peaceful transition from dictatorship to electoral politics in 1991-92, institutional consolidation in State and civil society arenas, changes in political elites’ behaviour and the transformation of political culture and citizen identity since then have occurred in tandem with managing a ‘low-intensity’ internal conflict through the 1990s and promoting modest economic growth (albeit unevenly shared). On its face, then, Mali’s success story seems to invite little exploration other than to chronicle its achievements, already done well by existing research, and to draw some general conclusions about the potential for political change in Africa. The enthusiastic recognition of Mali’s success, while focussing on its institutional and procedural aspects, also attends to certain ‘cultural advantages’ for democratic consolidation.

By taking seriously the success story and ostensible ‘cultural advantages,’ this thesis explores the broad convergence of scholarly and non-scholarly opinion about Malian democratization as evidence of a succeeding hegemonic drive by relatively cosmopolitan
(domestic and foreign) upper and upper-middle class actors seeking consolidation and unification of *their* collective interests, to make their understanding the common sense view of Mali’s post-1992 political development.

The broadest context of this deconstruction of Mali’s success story is that of international financial institutions and donor countries imposing their neoliberal project on contemporary Mali, and promoting a vision of democratization commensurate with this project. Moreover, mainstream democratization literature offers scholarly support to that policy agenda with relatively simplistic conceptualizations of state-society relations, uncritically based on liberal political and economic assumptions.

In addressing the Malian case specifically, the cultural advantages discourse becomes even more fascinating, linking as it does the donor and IFI led enthusiasm for neoliberal democratization to the more qualified enthusiasm of relatively prosperous domestic actors. These actors’ qualified enthusiasm refers to indigenous and Islamic norms, practices, and institutions of political economy and community, specifically around citizen identity formation. In the domestic context, in Malian political culture and in the scholarship of Malian political change, the constructions at the core of the success story, and the hegemonic project of citizen identity formation become more evident as *constructions*, as discourses, norms and practices produced and reproduced by privileged actors. Moreover, the *contested* character of these constructions becomes evident only as we address the development and deployment of selectively synthesized indigenous, Islamic, and Western-democratic norms, practices, and institutions of citizenship in contemporary Mali.

Consequently, the limited neoliberal democratization concepts inform the sometimes blithe enthusiasm mentioned above, but also occlude the contests over the processes and discourses, and among the actors involved. Certainly, a minimal, procedural, and neoliberal political transformation is preferable to decades of tyrannical violence and corruption. Are there more alternatives? To understand more clearly the possibilities of *sustainable* and *deepening*
democratic transformation in Mali, the mechanisms of a succeeding, albeit contested, hegemony of neoliberal democratization in the processes of democratic legitimation of political authority must be set forth and critically challenged.

REVIEW OF MAINSTREAM LITERATURE ON DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA

As early as 1990, observers such as Timothy M. Shaw noted that the democratization literature was "overly orthodox" in conceptualizing democracy institutionally and formally, and by focussing on rights rather than needs. Indeed, much research depends on accepting electoral transition and subsequent institutional consolidation as sufficient to democratization. This 'stages of political development' analysis follows transition from dictatorship (leadership without mechanisms of elite circulation) to elections (emerging electoral mechanisms of elite circulation). Democratic deepening, however, is seldom part of the equation, and consolidation is instead the focus of inquiry into sustainable democratization.

Mainstream literature on democratization, researching consolidation in this way emphasizes certain benchmarks: democracy as the “only game in town,” popular demand and support for democracy, and rejection of authoritarian rule. Furthermore, political institutionalization is assessed in terms of the ‘delivery’ of political goods by measures of freedom, equality, and representation to quantify the perceived supply of democracy, including satisfaction with and the extent of democracy. Existing literature has various objects of analysis and explanation: social structure, cultural values, institutional affiliations and practices,

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5 R. Sandbrook, Closing the circle: democratization and development in Africa. Toronto : Between the Lines, 2000 2000: 4-5. Even when using the term ‘deepening,’ mainstream democratization research remains focused exclusively on institutions in its conceptualization of sustainable democratic transformation (e.g. R. Luckham and G. White, ed. Democratization in the South: the jagged wave, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1997: 7-8)
6 Indicators include, constitutional separation of powers, speed of judicial processes, legislative effectiveness, criteria for founding political parties, number of national parties, transparent and peaceful elections, media freedom (number of newspapers, radio stations, journalist arrests), executive respect for the rule of law, and progress of administrative decentralization. Separating the official texts from existing conditions needs careful and critical interpretation of these as indicators of the phenomena they purport to describe. E Sborghi, "Assessing democracy in Mali: a procedural analysis" Il Politico (University Pavia, Italy) anno LXIII, no. 3, 1998 (449–477): 453, 459, 468-474.
performance evaluations, and political learning. Such categorization gives a clear sense of the relatively small importance granted to approaches from sociology, geography, and anthropology and the degree to which political culture concepts and approaches remain dominated by those from Almond and Verba, and Inglehart (and their pre-set lists of 'cultural values,' including individualism, risk tolerance, modern identity (e.g. class vs. ethnicity), national identity, and interpersonal trust) in preference to the more micro-level work by area expert scholars. Furthermore, policy-relevance goals demand acceptance of assumptions in primarily institutional approaches, such as Lijphart, Hadenius, and Cohen and Rogers, whose work emphasizes political party identification, being a political “winner,” membership in voluntary associations, participation in formal political acts, such as voting, attending community meetings, forming action groups, and contacting a leader. Another indicator of mainstream research and thinking is the influence of the “rational choice” approach to people's performance evaluations of economic goods. Drawing on Elster and Przeworski, this focuses on the national economy (past, present and future), on one's own living standards (past, present and future), perceptions of relative deprivation, the government’s policy performance, and the effects of economic policy on equity.

The influential Afrobarometer public opinion studies reproduce the contours of the mainstream democratization literature as it relates to Africa, as well as and its broadly liberal biases, especially the separation of politics–economics, and state–society, to ground its own “Political Learning Approach” to democratic consolidation. To the analyses of broader performance criteria, including "political goods" such as free speech, free and fair elections, and

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trustworthy institutions, the Afrobarometer combines regime comparisons on indicators of increased rights, improved living standards, and decreased corruption. From these, Afrobarometer develops the centrepiece of its synthesis of mainstream approaches to democratization in Africa: “cognitive awareness,” which includes formal education, exposure to news media, political interest, discussion, and information (e.g., knowledge of leaders) with awareness and understanding of democracy.

Mainstream research on democratization in Africa, then, has been relatively satisfied with assessing electoral transition and institutional consolidation, not only as the only appropriate objects of comparative study, but also as those objects that follow from established typologies and definitions (minimal and procedural this thesis will argue) of democracy's essentials. Nicholas Van de Walle and Michael Bratton's important work, including Democratic experiments in Africa: regime transitions in comparative perspective, while limited by the concepts they think most suitable for comparative research, lays the foundation for research into democratic deepening. By articulating the consensus in the comparative politics literature on the procedurally minimal democracy inherent to democratization processes and projects, they emphasize the importance of civil liberties to provide the framework in which elite competition is genuine and meaningful for the citizen-voters.

By studying transition more than consolidation and durability of democracy, the literature analyzes potential durability (called 'deepening' throughout this thesis) guided by approaches and assumptions to study transition, i.e., amenable to minimalist perspectives on electoral government turnover. Given that the “survival and consolidation, which concern the durability of democracy,

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[...] are analytically separate questions,”13 from those of transition, the mainstream literature cannot adequately consider aspects beyond those commensurate with electoral power transfer. The core claim of the minimal-procedural model to be democratic is largely reducible to that of buffer protection against tyranny through expert technocratic bureaucracy, competition between rival elites and parties, and the relative autonomy of decision-makers from constraints external to the State.14

Moreover, by remaining largely fixated on the official and formal, as well as multiparty elections, and by being convinced that non-formal norms and practices can only compromise legitimacy,15 the mainstream literature reproduces a concept of formal-modern-institutional politics imposed as an improvement upon informal-backward-ad hoc modes and orders in local contexts: neo-modernization theory applied to democratic change, i.e. democracy plus modernization equals democratization.16 Such a restricted conception of democracy is in part a colonial legacy: the attempt to stifle, limit and control social movements, which anchor popular political parties and infuse them with their legitimacy from the grassroots. Such narrow conceptions are reproduced in the mainstream literature even to the point of influencing activism in Africa, whereby electoral multi-partyism is simplistically equated with democracy as the converse of the historical experience of single-party politics commensurate with dictatorship.17

13 Ibid, 13
Literature on democratization in Africa is gathered around the approaches (e.g. surveys), objects of study (e.g. public opinion, regime transition, institutional reform), and concepts of democracy's essential features (e.g. separation of economic and political 'goods'). Indeed, among the mainstream literature's key weaknesses is the simplistic conceptualization of state-society relations that is especially important in distinguishing mainstream from other literature that conceptualizes society in relation to the State and focuses on the recycling and interpenetration (mutual colonizing) of elites in political and economic life.\textsuperscript{18} These elites' struggles for moral accountability across social divisions occur in the context of ongoing State-making and nation-building projects. Their 'hegemonic drive' is a “process of reciprocal assimilation and fusion of the old dominant groups and the new elites, born of colonization and decolonization.”\textsuperscript{19} Further, the “creation and crystallization of relatively stable relationships among different dominant groups, old and new” includes the “elaboration of an ethic or a common [shared] sense that lends its coherence to the whole and cements the new system of inequality and domination all the while camouflaging it.”\textsuperscript{20} And so, “[t]he contemporary lines of inequality and domination thus seem to inscribe themselves in the direct prolongation of pre-colonial social structures, with the dominated of yesterday constituting the mass of the dominated of today.”\textsuperscript{21}

Notwithstanding its limitations, mainstream literature on democratization in Africa does favour “contingent explanations for regime transitions and structural explanations for regime consolidation.”\textsuperscript{22} Placing democratic deepening in this research context recommends a structured agency approach at a case-study level of analysis, in order to complement domestically-focused formal and institutional approaches, and to focus on the political norms and practices that circumscribe consolidation, embedding it in social relations, rather than simply securing and

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid
\textsuperscript{22} Bratton and van de Walle, 1997: 47.
reproducing processes and institutions. This site of inquiry and theory building recognizes, on the one hand, path dependencies and, on the other hand, political actors’ creative capacity to plot alternative paths at key moments of political crisis and opportunity.23

Since the 1970’s, the analytical precision of the procedural definition has dominated, and has focussed on “that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote.”24 Thus Huntington, the standard-bearer for minimal-proceduralism, reduces democracy to electoral competition by elites and electoral participation by rights-bearing voters, and from this standpoint appraises electoral transition in Africa.25 Thus, the minimal definition of citizen identity and formalized participation fits the model for comparative analysis among nation-states. Nevertheless, influential researchers such as Larry Diamond note that ending dictatorship is not identical to promoting robust, participatory democracy, even though it may allow for minimal procedural democratization. Indeed, “[t]o rid a country of an authoritarian regime or dictator is not necessarily to move it fundamentally beyond authoritarianism.”26

Furthermore, the ambiguities of external support for democratization operate in "a relatively larger realm of unoccupied political space in Africa than anywhere else in the world."27 Indeed, as the concept of democratic development shifted from survival to sustainability in the 1990s, facing the combined continental crisis and state decay under structural adjustment programs gave renewed impetus to informal, pragmatic reactions through which patron-clientelism in crisis reacted against popular participation.28 In the subsequent context of democratization, an analysis of hegemony and ideology are key in understanding “new political

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23 Ibid: 45-46
25 Huntington, 1991: 9
28 Shaw, 1990: 18
formations, institutions, arrangements and patterns of domination and participation emerging in the non-state sphere, and on the quality of state-society relations that may result from them — neo-corporatist, anarchic, or civic.”

Attending to some of these dynamics demands attending to local and micro levels, and to the customary social and political norms that legitimize authority and that intersect emerging democratic institutions and practices, contradicting some, reinforcing others, including contests of interests mediated by non-formal norms and practices. Because relatively invisible political actors at the level of clans and village associations play important roles in informal political space, analyses fixated on politics mediated officially by formal institutions fail to recognize such actors.

**Place of Mali in the democratization literature**

Mali’s place in the democratization literature, which is one of enthusiastic recognition, centres on institutional and procedural success with certain ‘cultural advantages.’ Since the 1992 elections, and especially in light of the 2002 elections, Mali has developed a reputation as a ‘model democracy’ in Africa. This reputation is based on the consolidation of political institutions, the behaviour of political elites, and the transformation of political culture and citizen identity: through domestic and foreign forms of socio-political organization and their commensurate forms of membership. The United Nations Development Programme exemplifies the enthusiasm of international NGOs and the senior officers among their Malian counterparts:

[Mali’s era of democratic politics] is progressively consolidating thanks to the establishment of multipartyism in the 1992 constitution of the 3rd Republic. After more than ten years of democratic republican participation, Mali –strong in its social capital– today constitutes a good reference point, recognized by the international community and confirmed by the successful organization of the presidential and legislative elections of 2002.

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29 M.R. Doornbos cited in Shaw, 1990: 21
30 Interview, political consultant and former ADEMA executive member, Bamako 1/12/2002
The new political institutions that reinforce democracy in Mali are increasing in capacity, and yet still tend to personalize politics. As set forth by Secretary-General of the ruling party Democratic Association of Mali (ADEMA), this consolidation, not surprisingly, receives a sympathetic assessment of institutional change since 1991. Indeed, certain analyses amount to apologies for the "presidentialized presidential" regime. The president dominates the executive and appoints the prime minister for the government’s daily activities. Despite the textual provisions for a semi-parliamentary–semi-presidential regime, or a parliamentary-presidential regime, the Third Republic has proved increasingly more presidentialized than parliamentary during its first fifteen years. Granted that the institutions’ development continues, and their strength grows, there nevertheless remains a persistent divide between the constitutionally defined structures of the regime, on the one hand, and the larger ‘system’ (of State and society) that encourages people’s adherence to the regime, a larger notion that includes political culture, citizen identity formation, parties, media, and more than nominal political rights.

In all, however, the regime’s remarkable resistance to backsliding towards dictatorship “presents a happy contrast with many neighbouring countries (Ivory Coast, Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone), where democracy is given lip service while conflict and authoritarianism seem to have the upper hand.”

The consolidation of political institutions was indeed given an important boost in the generally credible 2002 elections, and was furthered in the 2004 local-level elections. Mali’s first post-dictatorship president, Alpha Oumar Konaré, was a savvy leader and politician from 1992 to


33 Ibid

2002; Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) President since 2002 has been the beacon for changes in how middle and upper class actors ‘do politics.’ Though far from unequivocal, there are clearly positive signs in elite political behaviour. There is, since 1991, certainly a larger level of consensus among a broader group of political actors, which is perceived as a definite improvement over dictators and their cadres. Political elites have worked together to further entrench democratic politics in Mali, by respecting the Republican Pact and the ‘rules of the game’ in multiparty competitive politics.

Furthermore, Mali’s ostensible ‘cultural advantage’ for democratic consolidation highlights key elements from a perspective that takes for granted the norms and practices of Western, liberal democracy even as it seeks to understand better the local norms, practices and institutions that articulate these principles. Enthusiastic assessments of the gains in formalized political participation in Mali are common, and based in large part on comparative indicators as starting points for further enthusiasm, rather than critique asserting “Mali has maintained its standing as a model of democratic change in the region. Its approach to democracy rests on the broadening of popular participation through various innovative institutions.”

Given this orthodoxy of enthusiasm, international NGOs and their local client (governmental and non-governmental) organizations are ‘reinforcing civil society’ or the ‘democratic process’ or the ‘rule of law,’ or ‘freedom of expression and conscience.’ This donor-led consensus and thrust of capacity building aid, on which Mali is heavily dependent, is particularly interesting given that Malians in opinion surveys respond counter to the general African trend noted, and against the generally liberal theoretical orientation of the mainstream

37 S. Wing “Questioning the State: Constitutionalism and the Malian Éspace d’Interpellation Démocratique” Democratization 9.2 121-147: Abstract; While these have been an innovative interface between a few citizens and their government, they remain highly formalized, individualizing, and whose sustainability is under increasing suspicion. (Quiescent from 2002-2004, still under critical scrutiny since beginning again.) See Chapter Six, “l’EID.”
studies and interventions that separates political and economic ‘baskets of goods.’ The public
"preference for economic democracy," that “satisfies the basic economic needs of all citizens,”
challenges the general survey findings and their liberal assumptions. This further challenges the
merely procedural-electoral conception of democracy and qualifies Malians’ assessment of even a
well-functioning regime. 38

Notwithstanding the critical picture painted above of the election and procedural focus,
there are some examples in this literature 39, when considering the global political-economic
context of elections as part of neo-liberal democratization and especially donors' indispensable
roles in it, that glimpse other realities. In this literature, a better balance is sought between the
enthusiasm of donors and foreign observers and the disappointments keenly felt by Malians from
many diverse backgrounds, and noted especially by Malian researchers with sociological or
anthropological sensibilities. 40

At such a level, observers see the complexities of the shortcomings, failed expectations of
democratization, and even the resistance that privileged members of society might bring to bear
against significant social change. Indeed, the gradual transformation of patriarchal relations,
norms and practices from indigenous histories and institutions, makes the patriarchs, as keepers
of tradition and local knowledge uneasy about ‘democracy’ that undermines their privileged
position relative to their historical domination over subordinate groups, including women, youth,
and the poor. This uneasiness about attenuated fundamental social ties (with their cultural,
economic and political dimensions) precisely reflects the generalized uncertainty subsequent to

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38 Coulibaly, Massa and Amadou Diarra, "Démocratie et légitimation du marché: Rapport d'enquête
40 Bagayoko: Cheminement du Mali vers un espace politique pluriel, [Mali on the way towards a plural
political space] Bamako, Mali, Association Djoliba and Konrad Adenauer Fondation, 1999
gains in political liberalization in tandem with persistent stagnation, unequal benefits, and crises of economic liberalization. 41

‘Thick description’ analyses of grassroots participation in decision-making at local levels is relatively divorced however from national dynamics at which level the political economy of democratization comes more fully into view. Moreover, this literature tends to juxtapose ‘the local’ as a context less tainted by the dynamics of national and partisan politics, and thus emphasizes the desirability of local, collective, ‘consensus’ decision-making. In doing so, such research obscures really existing grassroots authoritarianisms, and the potential for these to be further entrenched rather than mitigated by the direct participation of citizens in regulating the institutions, norms, and practices of society and political community. 42 Finally, and related to questions of hegemony, specific actors’ understanding and exploitation of uneasiness about attenuated social ties is occluded from view. Basically, this micro-level research provides the materials for a moral economy approach without undertaking an analysis itself of how local norms legitimate electoralism from a hierarchical paternalist perspective that is less authoritarian than the colonial and dictatorship periods, but less progressive than the activities of socialists in the early post-independence Keita government or social democrats in the movements against the Traoré dictatorship.

Moreover, the perception is relatively common in Mali that democracy tends towards erosion of the links of social capital under the pressures of labour market capitalism. These links include gender, age group, and inter-clan relationships, as well as those customary codes that related members of different ethnicities to one another. The widespread preoccupation with respect illustrates the perceived chaos of political transformation and the erosion of relations, norms, and values from indigenous histories and practices.

41 M. Konaté, Paule Simard, Claude Giles Sur les petites routes de la démocratie, Écosociété, Montréal, 1999
Relatively positive assessments of civil society building by foreign scholars are contrasted with those of local scholars. Civil society associations are a point of divergence. While CSAs abound, certainly, transformative capacity is often divided among them, not multiplied by their proliferation.\textsuperscript{43} Moreover, more critical, if still relatively enthusiastic assessments of democratization in Mali, emphasize the tensions and contradictions in civil society, for example, between popular and scholars’ and intellectuals’ democracy (Fr. des lettrés).\textsuperscript{44} A series of conferences in Bamako on Société et démocratie were sponsored by various configurations of NGOs under the auspices of the French-founded Centre Djoliba (1964). Funded by the German NGO Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Centre canadien d’études et de coopération internationale (CECI), among others, this series gathered local experts from the senior staff of NGOs, lawyers, magistrates, and journalists, and included participants with generally similar profiles as the presenters, as well as students, teachers, and academics, including retirees. These sessions were very instructive not only about the lead that the host organization wished to take on the issues, but also as representing one of many ‘educational moments / hegemonic interventions’ addressing the liberal preoccupations of mainstream democratization thinking and NGO interventions in similar fields, most notably the rule of law, citizenship, human rights, women’s rights, multipartyism, freedom of information, and accountability. Still more interesting, however, these documents include voices not usually heard on the issues around democratization, and so simultaneously reproduce and negotiate the democratization orthodoxy with different emphases, and reference to Malian and African specificities.

Notwithstanding some sense of important particulars articulated by the polyvocal participants, however, the series reproduces the orthodox mainstream preoccupations with

\textsuperscript{44} M. S. Traoré, « L’avènement de la démocratie au Mali: analyse critique du role des intellectuels dans le processus démocratique, » Mémoire de Maitrise, Philo-Pêda-Psychologie, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Bamako, Mali 1999
institutional reform to improve formal, electoral politics, and ‘reinforcing civil society,’ with little
critical purchase on the issues involved. \(^{45}\) Indeed, even in circumstances where reproduction of
the orthodox position was clearly the object of a given NGO or government initiative, the results
are less predictable and less amenable to hegemonic control. Conferences and programs around
‘democracy’ in Mali through the 1990s produced a mix of textbook-type definitions of
democracy and citizenship ideas from the European and American traditions, as well as
interesting qualifications and reinterpretations of those dominant ideas, some with reference to
indigenous norms and practices, others with a social-democratic qualification of mainstream,
orthodox neoliberalism.

Also key to the literature of democratic enthusiasm as success with ‘cultural advantages,’
Mali’s contemporary society and politics are described as going through a difficult cultural
synthesis, depicted as a process while also being a project, an upper-middle and ruling class
project: “The marriage of the rabbit and the giraffe” characterizes a situation in which Malians
are “strongly influenced by ideas and attitudes from the modern communication media, but still
refer to the more or less active vestiges of traditional education.”\(^{46}\) In brief, “the Malian citizen is
continually pulled in opposite directions.”\(^{47}\) Nevertheless, a dialectical perspective supplements
the tradition-modernity dynamic in that “nothing in Malians’ daily life is spared from the
permanent conflict between the two tendencies. In fact, despite its tendency to embrace universal
canons our society continues with behaviour dominated by purely archaic taboos.”\(^{48}\) A key way,

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\(^{45}\) Panos Institute (Bamako chapter) « Démocratie et citoyenneté » Societe et democratie #4 Text of public
debate, December 1995 Bamako, Mali; « Droits humains des femmes et démocratie au Mali » (S&D #2);
« Démocratie et multipartisme » (S&D#7), « Quel etat de droit au Mali » (S&D#1), « Devoir de rendre
compte et droit a l'information en democratie » (S&D#3). C.f. « Radio démocratie, et culture,” recorded
radio program 1997 Panos Institute, Bamako Mali.

NB See below socio-economic change under colonial rule re: so-called 'detribalization' and what I call the
real and envisioned 'citification' of political and social orientations, identities, norms and practices. The
conceptual links between urbanization as a combination of geographic, political and social phenomena, and
as transformations --developments-- in political culture, are thus framed by this literature, relatively
uncritically, in neo-modernization terms.

\(^{47}\) Ibid.

\(^{48}\) Ibid.
however, that official texts and scripts become part of a more popular consciousness is through media agents; radio and written press use these texts to address and raise issues, to challenge leaders, and to inform the public. Moreover, these media agents *buy into* if not fully *believe in* the content of these texts, by virtue of the roles such documents play in their daily work. These become part of the unofficial repetitions and reinterpretations of the official texts of the nation, and within them the unofficial contemporary reinterpretations of the citizen tradition in Mali.

In a more official vein, the concepts of democracy in Mali are linked to “Our cultural values” in published retrospectives situating these in social and political context. Mali’s reputation as a land of “meeting, welcome, friendship and tolerance,” links to the need “to rouse and consolidate national solidarity.” Moreover, the official solidarity agenda begins by calling for a return to the values of sharing, concern for others, which are all deemed exemplary of “an essential virtue of our [Malian] society.”

G. Drabo, a prolific journalist in the State-run Malian daily newspaper, *L’Essor*, emphasizes the pre-1991 anti-dictatorship convergence of radicals, reformers and formalists among the educated middle, upper-middle, and upper class actors, and the related alliance of urban professionals that supported former president Konaré’s rise and stay in power 1992-2002. Whether able to access state resources either personally, or by class alliance, to insist that their demands be met (e.g. salaries paid in full on time), the convergence of multiparty enthusiasts continued to keep divergent perspectives relatively aligned through two presidential elections, in 1992, and 1997. Indeed, to mobilize voters in 1992 “[ADEMA] successfully recruited a considerable number of traditional leaders, and could also count on a army of motivated volunteers (especially teachers and junior executives).” This hints at the complex composition

50 Ibid.

of the anti-dictatorship convergence in the specifically Malian context, as it developed from a 'tendency' towards a class segment, and which included administrative, industrial and commercial bourgeoisies (local and foreign, but with significant foreign management), and some rural elite actors.\footnote{J.-L. Alibert, “L’Opposition en afrique noire” in Traoré, Lô, and Alibert \textit{Forces Politiques En Afrique Noire} Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1966 : 277-80, 288-89}

**CRITIQUE OF NEO-LIBERAL DEMOCRATIZATION**

“Much of the current literature on democratization in Africa finds itself limiting the conception of democracy with which it works – the better, as noted, both to legitimate the neoliberal project and to insulate it against any unmediated claims by popular classes from below.”\footnote{J. Saul “For Fear of Being Condemned as Old-Fashioned,” Liberal Democracy versus Popular Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa. in Mengisteab and Daddieh, ed. \textit{State Building and Democratization in Africa}, Westport, CT : Praeger, 1999: 49. Following Saul, I rely on Shivji’s distinction to contrast broadly liberal conceptions with those of ‘popular’ democracy, in such a way as to criticize ‘liberal’ as the meeting point of formerly radical, anti-imperial, and anti-authoritarian intellectuals and activists. C.f. I. Shivji, ed. \textit{State and Constitutionalism: An African Debate on Democracy}, Harare, Zimbabwe : SAPES Trust, 1991 (esp. chap. 2, editor’s Epilogue).} Moreover, the apparent contradiction in conceptualizing and promoting transition at the expense of enabling consolidation and deepening is analyzed critically by Stephen Brown. From his study of “donors’ dilemmas in democratization,” he affirms that the same concepts and interventions successful in political transition (away from dictatorships with impunity) in Africa since the mid-1980 are of limited value to understanding and promoting democratic deepening.

In his assessment of mainstream approaches to democratization, in which State and foreign-led NGOs converge to legitimate a neo-liberal agenda, Brown insists that “even if we accept that good governance is necessary for growth, the notion that democracy = good governance [sic] (or sound management) must be problematized.”\footnote{S. Brown, ‘Donors’ dilemmas in democratization: foreign aid and political reform in Africa’, PhD dissertation, New York University, 2000: 92. C.f. Bayart, Jean-Francois. \textit{The criminalization of the state in Africa} Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1999} Indeed, excessive dependence on donor-led democracy invites questioning, “[h]ow indeed can a democratic state invent and acquire its own values in such a framework of external assistance?”\footnote{R. Abrahamsen, \textit{Disciplining Democracy}, New York, N.Y. : Zed Books, 2000: 145}
Critics of democratic ‘success’ in Africa “have serious doubts about the Western commitment to bring about and sustain popular democratic rule,” and that “[t]he World Bank never really meant popular participation in the first place when it introduced the theme of good governance.”66 This assessment is further based on seeing the “broad coalitions of relatively privileged citizens” who agitated for democratization “as a means to defend their privileges and not to bring about popular democracy, involving all segments of the population,” and the subsequent politics that has remained “competition among the political elites to the exclusion of the masses.”57

Important conceptual threads run through the mainstream literature on democratization in Africa. From US comparative politics, African studies are taking on concepts that preserve a dichotomy between state and society. This dichotomy affects even those outside the central mainstream, who grasp that, as Sklar argues, “every important question about the state” must be formulated “as a state-society relationship question.”58 However, if state-society relationships “[compel researchers] to question the very polarity between state and society as central to social theory,” the response of stressing society instead of the state does not necessarily escape the problematic dichotomy. Society-centred theorists, lacking “a concrete analysis of civil society and its contradictory character,” cannot “identify the development of concrete struggles for reform inside African societies,” and can be led to an anti-democratic bias “in spite of their democratic protestations.”59 Indeed, the persistent conceptual dichotomy hampers if not inhibits the analysis of hegemonic struggles of conservative modernization.

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Critical assessments of new electoral democracies in Africa describe them variously as “exclusionary,” “thin,” “low-intensity”, “compradorial”, and “choiceless.” Indeed, declaring as successful the outcome of Mali’s "People's Revolution" the consequences of political transformation in Mali since 1991 reflects a broader consensus in which donors and domestic middle and upper class actors enact a passive revolution, and call it democracy. The “rise of the new educated classes to power, their seizure of state resources, and their compromise with the previous holders of power,” has helped feed “their refusal to enhance and radicalize the popular movements.” Elites’ absorption of their rivals is fostering the adaptation of neo-liberal democracy to local norms and practices, and producing an ideological admixture that seeks to express and link indigenous ‘communitarian goals’, and relatively exogenous ‘liberal, democratic, and market values.’ Indeed, these elites’ post-colonial political experience was conducive to a political socialization and culture of high-level negotiations towards a ‘monotone consensus’ characteristic of passive revolution.

Understanding the development of contemporary Malian political culture demands theorizing a greater degree of consensus, among a broader collective of advisors, than was the case under the pre-colonial rulers, the independence regime, or the dictatorship. The limited democracy from above, however, despite opening political competition, remains confined to elite conciliation and consensus on divisive issues, so that the political class can channel, limit, and structure potentially destructive popular demands from peasants, workers, students, teachers, and their disenfranchised, potentially competitive, middle class counterparts. Factions of the political elite seek to limit alternative views ideologically, in order to set the terms of the debate about

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indigenous understandings of democracy and “thereby shape the broader popular perception of what counts as legitimate leadership.”

The late-20th-century transformation of African countries, from colonial private hunting grounds (chasse gardées) to being open for business is part of the multiple permutations of neoliberalism in the global political economy, whether linked to the West (France, US) or the Arabophone East.

Just as “[c]olonial domination could not incorporate Africans as ostensibly free ‘citizens’ and as producers or workers in ‘free markets’, but only as servile and dependent ‘subjects’ of authoritarian state control,” democratization transforms subjecthood into conditioned citizenship, consistent with ‘moral governance.’ Consequently, Malian elites’ ideology of moral governance links indigenous civil society and ‘liberal-democratic’ civil society to embellish minimal, elite competitive democracy with indigenous standards of reciprocal, asymmetrical solidarity. This linkage constrains potentially progressive elements of democracy as conceptualized within democratization while re-enforcing less progressive elements of indigenous social structure.

Implications for understanding the Mali case

The discourses of avoiding return to dictatorship, which tend to exaggerate that threat, seek to reduce expectations and to marginalize the extent of progressive politics envisioned against dictatorship. Further, such reduced expectations militate against what mainstream

63 Ibid. 127.
literature calls ‘political decay,’ in which there is less ‘supply capacity’ than ‘democratic
demand.’ Thus, the institutional democratic project seeks to build and consolidate institutional
capacity for a shrinking scope of public policy goals, consistent with neo-liberal state-reduction,
and, more importantly, with the attempts to limit demands, such that the ever more limited scope
is not challenged by “unmediated claims by popular classes from below.”

An analysis of political liberalization as neo-liberal democratization focuses on the
potentially important differences that may be glossed over when regime transitions are
approached comparatively. Mali is an intriguing case in part because of the relatively successful
consolidation. The task is to explain the interplay of norms and practices that are integral to this
‘success.’ As key as the mechanics of the success (credible electioneering, legislative and
judicial reform, and civic education) is the rhetoric of success, the terms of reference that make it
possible, even unavoidable to talk about the developments as ‘successes.’ Thus, this thesis
critiques the hegemonic project that represents as normal and inevitable the particular contours
(and purposively not others) of democratic ‘successes’ in Malian politics since 1991.

Minimal-procedural democracy is conceptualized as a bureaucratic technocracy that
limits expectations to merely leaders’ competition for citizen-voters’ support. Moreover, the
apparent solutions to such a limited procedural view of democracy, which are models of local,
participatory politics, are also deficient. The former expects too little of actors, and their
historical legacies and agency, and thus truncates the normative and practical scope of really
existing democracy in the democratization context. The latter, while overall much more
promising, plays down the reality of “antidemocratic forces (caste system, slavery/limbry* tradi
tions, marginalization of women, and the handicapped, etc) that often prevent many
subgroups from full participation in local-level decision making. [sic]” Conceptual balance is

66 Saul, op cit.
needed between merely procedural definitions and the insufficiently critical view of community-level dynamics.

**Importance of Hegemony**

The importance of studying hegemonic struggles over conservative modernization for understanding procedural democratization lies in highlighting, as a complex political project of class identity formation and social transformation, what is generally glossed as merely technical and functional (e.g. constitution design, political party charter, institutional reform, credible elections). Through the ‘educational’ dimension of hegemonic struggle, as we will see below, such limited concepts, while originating in the donor-led, ruling-class official reproduction of citizen identity in Mali, also become part of the unofficial repetitions and reinterpretations of the Malian political history that is constructed as relevant by middle-class actors.

Popular political culture provides idiomatic resources of legitimacy, including those of ‘directed’ consensus, which are incorporated by the elites, modified, then employed to educate the masses, as if these were still the original values.\(^{68}\) This circulation of ideas from indigenous to Western-democratic elites and back to the mass population legitimizes a hypertrophied consensus in multiparty coalitions and governments of national unity characterized by ‘unanisme.’ If “coalition parties do not represent large identifiable constituencies,”\(^{69}\) they compromise the inclusiveness of political decision-making, and reduce the competitiveness of the system; elections are thus disconnected from party turnover in the popular imagination. Consequently, coalitions seem to legitimate multi-partyism “though not necessarily as an institution of democracy.”\(^{70}\) From the passive revolution, the hegemonic coalition then sets out to ‘expand’ its


\(^{69}\) Schaffer, 1998: 127

\(^{70}\) Schaffer, 1998: 128
particular interests into national ones, to go beyond the minimum scope necessary to secure political power through coalitions, and appropriate, adopt, and co-opt on a national-political scale the relevant popular-mass idioms.\textsuperscript{71} The relative social peace of Mali since independence makes Mali a case of successful hegemonic drive, or passive revolution, since 1991, in contrast to many of the countries on the Continent, in which deep cleavages have exacerbated hegemonic collapse in ways ranging from election violence to ethnic cleansing. Where 1991 saw the "People's Revolution," post-\textit{apertura} Mali’s passive revolution is a scholars’ and intellectuals’ democracy. Furthermore, the intellectual segment is shrinking in the persistent employment and economic crises of the last fifteen years. Thus, not only is the ruling segment hegemony struggling to keep the subaltern classes on side, it is also struggling to unify its own actors and legitimate itself despite having jettisoned its own 'left' and a significant part of its previous support base from the mid-1980s to mid-1990s. In a middle-class urban media NGO worker’s analysis, the post-\textit{apertura} improvement is better than the outright tyranny of the Traoré regime. The ultimately popular-democratic results, however, are questionable and even doubtful.\textsuperscript{72}

\textbf{THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK}

In \textit{Power in Africa}, Chabal shows how Gramsci helps Africanists theorize and analyze the “search for hegemony,” or \textit{hegemonic drive}. Competing elites’ attempt to link economic and political power is a purposive enlargement of their authority. Also indebted to Gramsci, Bayart’s analysis of ‘low’ politics, to complement the more orthodox interest in ‘high’ or formal political actors and events, delimited by the terms politics \textit{par le bas} and \textit{du ventre} (from below, of the belly). Bayart’s use of Gramsci seeks to accommodate the reality of elite fusion as much as contest and circulation. Moreover, Bayart addresses the range of relationships among high and low politics. By insisting on ‘straddling’ rather than dualism, Bayart investigates the “radical ambivalence” of the state, and the equivocal interpenetration and mutual reinforcement of state

\textsuperscript{71} Gramsci, \textit{SPN}, 1971: 58, 182
\textsuperscript{72} Interview, Programme Assistant, Panos Institute, Bamako 18/04/2002. C.f. R. Abrahamsen, 1997: 149-50
and society.\textsuperscript{73} In these State-society dynamics, discursive elements placed in context of their producers are essential, as these actors produce contested understandings of community identity within a range of moral debates about society, membership, and politics.

While the conceptual separation of ‘State’ and ‘society’ may remain, these concepts are instruments not ends of analysis, in order to move beyond merely two strategies of hegemonic drive, penetration or ‘capture’ by society and rivalry (parallel modes), to grasp the contours of patrimonial links by which civil society actors re-appropriate the State, the “revenge of society,” in a bid to support and bolster the State’s own hegemonic drive, the fruits of which would be channelled to the elites’ clients.\textsuperscript{74} Although it makes some sense at the macro-level, then, to speak of a State-society struggle, at the micro-level, where individuals access the state for personal (and patronage) gains, the dialectics of hegemonic drive are harder to disentangle. The separation of patron and client, mapped onto that of ruler and ruled, is mutable, for persons move from one to the other and back again. This interpenetration (and the material benefits that accrue from its dynamics) is not in any way clearly to the betterment of the public weal; individual and client-group improvement may be at the cost of more general well-being.

\textit{Key concepts: Tradition, Hegemony, Moral Economy, Conservative Modernization}

\textit{Tradition and Traditional}

Given that these terms will arise throughout, and are employed in various contexts by scholars, observers, and respondents, some qualifications are in order. Indeed, in an attempt to avoid certain pitfalls of the modern-traditional dichotomy, this thesis aims to address ‘indigenous,’ broadly ethno-linguistically Bamanan actors and contexts. To interrogate the provocative statement by Z. K. Smith, that “a unique political culture […] may have provided Mali with a democratic advantage over other African nations,” and that “[m]any aspects of

\textsuperscript{73} Bayart, \textit{State in Africa}, 1993: 55, 162-63

\textsuperscript{74} Chabal, \textit{Power in Africa} 219-220, 231; Bayart, 110-15, 209
Malian traditional society encourage norms consistent with democratic citizenship,” the problematic concept of ‘traditional society’ must be challenged. As a legacy of ethnocentrism and Eurocentric 19th century imperial triumphalism, a myth of peaceful, static pre-colonial communities is belied by, among other things, the succession of political communities in West Africa from the 13th to the mid-19th century. And yet, as Coquery-Vidrovitch stresses, the specificity of pre-colonial Africa is crucial to understanding the diversity (historical and contemporary) of forces and actors in the composition of dominant classes, and their relationship to modes of production and exchange, including reciprocity, redistribution, money and market economies.

Hegemony

More than a general definition, in which rule combines domination and coercion (It. dominio) and consent-building (It. egemonia) in a twofold supremacy, moral and intellectual leadership, by those who ‘have’ of who ‘have not,’ hegemony may be analyzed for its relative success. Ideological convergence in political culture is evidence of a succeeding hegemonic drive. Indeed, hegemony complements material power; rulers establish their moral, political and cultural values as norms in the legitimation of their political rule. Consent, then, is ‘drawn out,’ as Gramsci’s emphasis on hegemony as education makes clear, in the relationship between the State and society, and among the actors who are situated in this dynamic site of cultural and political struggle. Gramsci insists [e]very relationship of ‘hegemony’ is necessarily an educational relationship and occurs not only with a nation, between the various forces of which the nation is composed, but in the international and world-wide field, between complexes of national and continental civilizations. As society is the primary site of consent-making, the influence of

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77 Ibid. 260, 262
78 Gramsci, SPN, 1971: 350
intellectuals on ideological convergence must be sought first in their non-State realms of action as producers of moral discourses.79

In Mali, the synthesis of local forms and minimal-liberal norms of legitimation is expressed in the related idioms, intellectual resources, and actors constructing political legitimacy. The result is a successful, if stultifying, hegemonic project, seeking “a ‘cultural-social’ unity through which a multiplicity of dispersed wills, with heterogeneous aims, are welded together with a single aim, on the basis of an equal and common conception of the world, both in general and particular.80 A meaning systems approach provides a way to approach this “welding together” in an analysis of relatively successful ideological struggle. Derived from Frank Parkin's ‘meaning systems,’ Stuart Hall offers three interpretative positions of discourses or texts.81

From a dominant or hegemonic position/reading the actors more or less fully share the text’s assumptions, and accept and reproduce the preferred perspective, the norms, practice and idioms that seem natural and obvious. From a negotiated position/reading actors only partly share the assumptions, and generally accept the preferred interpretation, but may resist and modify it commensurate with their own position and interests. From this interpretive position, local and personal experiences, seen as exceptions to the general rule of the dominant position, are the bases of contradictions. Most interesting to this thesis’ analysis, however, is the successful hegemonic management of the contradictions in this negotiation. From an oppositional (counter-hegemonic) position, actors are situated by their social situation in clear opposition to the hegemonic position. While they may understand the preferred interpretation, they do not share its

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assumptions and reject this perspective, drawing instead on alternative reference-points.\textsuperscript{82} Hegemony analysis considers various permutations of State-society relationships, whether antagonistic, unified, or balancing,\textsuperscript{83} to see actors in State and society contexts sometimes as adversaries and sometimes as allies in competitions for power.

Indeed, as Anderson shows in "The Antimonies of Antonio Gramsci," Gramsci grappled with the relationship between civil society and the state through the concept of hegemony. The multiple formulations of the relationship between civil society and the state are important to distinguish so-called state actors and so-called civil-society actors, especially in the African contexts in which each sphere is a staging ground of sorts for the other, for the mutual recruitment and recycling of elites. By combining domination and consent concepts, Gramsci includes law and education, to extend the State functions beyond parliaments and police, to include schools. Thus, education is relatively positive, where the law courts and repressive apparatuses are negative.\textsuperscript{84} Ultimately, however, for Gramsci, “a multiplicity of other so-called private initiatives and activities tend towards the same end, which constitute the apparatus of political and cultural hegemony of the ruling class.”\textsuperscript{85}

Notwithstanding the ahistorical conceptual distinctions among hegemonic, negotiated, and counter-hegemonic positionalities, these help categorize historical moments in which hegemony is both distinct from, and complementary to lawmaking or police intervention. This shift from coercion to consent-making is especially relevant for Mali’s post-dictatorship movement into the democratization moment, in which discipline and governance are the watchwords of socio-political management.\textsuperscript{86} The tolerability of a relatively \textit{disciplined} contemporary moment of consent-making and hegemony is thus in contrast to the living memory of greater force, domination, and violence. Thus, political hegemony embedded within the State,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{82} Chandler, ibid
\item \textsuperscript{83} See Chabal, Bayart above; Gramsci, SPN ed. Hoare, Nowell-Smith, 207-208
\item \textsuperscript{84} Perry Anderson, “The antimonies of Antonio Gramsci,” \textit{New Left Review} 100 (Nov. 1976 - Jan 1977): 31
\item \textsuperscript{85} SPN 246 cited in Anderson 31-32; 33, 36
\item \textsuperscript{86} Anderson: 21, 23
\end{itemize}
complemented by civil hegemony originating in civil society, combines more subtle authoritarianisms with the dominant ideology of neo-liberal democracy, for which one Malian scholar coined the word “démocrature”.

Indeed, we see how state actors seek to exploit the private networks of civil society for social reproduction. Such ‘state enlargement’ seeks to expand the activity of ostensibly state actors in which civil society functions as the private network of political society. By seeking to organize social reproduction “permeating all forms of organizations and mass-consciousness,”

elites inside and yet also outside State contexts seek to diffuse hegemony at all societal levels, and their struggle for hegemony is for the whole process of social reproduction throughout society. As such, while hegemony remains an activity of State actors, it ceases to be specialized as such. In an extension of breaking down the conceptual barriers between state and non-state actors and activities, Gramsci also rejects the separation of philosophy and common sense, thus making the link between philosophy and politics, recognizing that any hegemony-seeking class must struggle on the philosophical front to transform mass common sense. Moreover, Gramscian theory may address “that the development of capitalism was not going to cause the disappearance of those social groups which were not strictly the bourgeoisie or the proletariat and that the working class would have to pose the problem of the transition to socialism is terms which were not strictly class-based.”

The hegemony concept allows analysis beyond economic and decision functions of the leading group, to frame a more than instrumental view of politics, which links the State to the “the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities [of the] ruling class.”

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87 Bagayogo, 1999: 35. Such ‘democratatorship’ is juxtaposed to the ideals of robust socio-political pluralism for which activists agitated against Traoré’s dictatorial regime 1968-1991.
88 C. Mouffe, “Gramsci today” 5, in Mouffe ed; c.f. C. Buci-Glucksmann, “State, transition and passive revolution” ibid
89 C. Mouffe, “Gramsci today” 8
90 Ibid, 9
91 Ibid, 10
If ideology produces subjects, and of interpellation, not the subject, is the source of consciousness, then an exploration of the formation of citizen consciousness, the task of this thesis, is one of analyzing the actors, contours and consequences of such interpellation. In such an undertaking, the indissoluble union of political leadership and moral and intellectual leadership is beyond class alliance.  

Without strong differentiation of state and non-state realms and actors, as is the Malian case, hegemony coordinates dominant groups’ interests with those of the generally subordinate groups’ interests. This is essential, as we will see, in the management of social transformation consistent with conservative modernization, a selective resistant, even reactionary, integration of wealth and status from past practices with those emerging from social, political, and economic change.

The means of state enlargement include broadening the social base of the state through complex relations among the State, the dominant class, and the mass base; increased state functions through incorporation in the state of civil society apparatuses; and, important for our discussion, direct active adoption of popular interests by hegemony-seeking classes.

Furthermore, if consciousness is achieved “through the intermediary of ideological terrain where two hegemonic principles confront and contest each other,” then citizen identity formation (Fr. formation de la conscience citoyenne) will be the product of a convergence beyond class alliances, and be set forth through the actors and apparatuses of political and moral leadership. This is importantly non-economistic, but still grounded in material conditions. As a theoretical line through what follows in the subsequent chapters, hegemony recognizes that while ideology creates subjects and makes them act, the “material and institutional nature of ideological practice” is as important as are its specialized agents.

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92 Mouffe, "Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci" in Mouffe, ed. Gramsci and Marxist theory, 1979: 171, 179
93 Ibid, 182
94 Ibid, 186
95 Ibid, 187
As Gramsci draws from Marx’ *Contribution to Critique of Political Economy*, “a popular conviction often has the same energy as a material force or something of the kind, which is extremely significant,” and material forces and ideologies have a dialectical relationship, since “the material forces would be inconceivable historically without form and ideologies would be individual fancies without the material forces.”\(^{96}\) Moreover, among the State’s “most important functions is to raise the great mass of the population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level (or type) that corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development, and hence to the interests of the ruling class.”\(^{97}\)

The sought-after convergence of multiple-class ideologies into a new hegemony and ruling-class unity prevails by winning ‘popular religion’ status, which points in the Malian case to the importance of the patriotic discourses to indigenize democratization, as well as to the role of foreign actors and observers to bolster the legitimacy of the hegemonic project of citizen and civic orthodoxy. Moreover, the attempts to exploit popular ideological elements can be fiercely contested, as they constitute the chance to speak and act for the whole, and touch not only on access to wealth and the means to wealth, but relate also to struggles over cultural or religious authenticity.\(^{98}\)

The material nature of ideology, by its materialization into apparatuses and inscription in practices, is especially relevant to the questions of the cultural advantages for citizen consciousness formation in the interface, indeed conflict, between robust and sustainable democratic deepening and merely neo-liberal democratization.

Given the role of social cleavages other than class and what is made (or managed) of them, it is also worth recalling that Marx's ideas on class domination are intimately linked to those on ideology and consciousness. “Ideas will not come to prominence unless they articulate

\(^{96}\) SPN 377.
\(^{97}\) SPN 258-259.
with interests held by the dominant class, or with those of a class which comes in a position to challenge the existing authority structure."

Most struggles are discursive and ideological, but also articulate material interests and positions of power and wealth, whether actual and current or aspired to, or the loss of which is feared.

**Moral Economy**

The theoretical importance of hegemony also links to the moral economy analysis, given that moral economy is a type of hegemony, or rather the site of hegemonic struggle. Moral economy, as it is undermined, reinforced, and contested, seeks to legitimate the production, reproduction and distribution of wealth, power and access to these. This legitimation project occurs in contexts of inequality, where these inequalities are represented as natural and obvious with a view to being widely, if not unanimously accepted. In this way, moral economy refines an analysis of hegemony and ideology, and of how identities and interests come to be held by those who hold them. In brief, moral economy provides a powerful theoretical lens and analytical tools for investigating the interpellation of subjects, in this case the formation of citizen identity in a new African democracy. This constructivism is more satisfying than the neo-modernization theory that underlies much of the democratization literature.

From Bruce Berman’s influential work in collaboration with John Lonsdale, moral economy frames the socio-cultural and values-based drive to legitimate existing and exploitative relations of production and surplus-value extraction with “the indigenous understandings of the legitimate bases of the inequalities of wealth and power, authority and obedience, and the reciprocities and loyalties of social relations.”

In this drive “confrontations over class formation” are predominantly “about custom, social obligation, and responsibility, and the bounds of the moral community.”

Taking from Marx in *The German Ideology*, that ruling class ideology is the intellectual force of an epoch, Goran Therborn frames the problem of material and mental production as the ideological interpellation of individuals as subjects. This further elides the force-and-consent dichotomy by linking interpellation and representation and situating interpellation-representation...

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101 Ibid 14.
as both irreducible to and never wholly independent from class identification and representation of ideological stances.\textsuperscript{102}

\textit{Conservative Modernization}

If moral economy is a site or dimension of hegemonic struggle, then conservative modernization is a type of struggle. In an internal argument among the different ‘tendencies’ of elites, traditionalist and progressive to name only two, their ambivalence towards social transformation finds expression. A selective Westernization, now resistant, now accommodating, is closely connected with debates about ‘authenticity’ in cultural, political, and economic relationships. Indeed, the debates and discourses of authenticity are linked to those of recovery, revival, and reconciliation. Moreover, actors finding ways through cultural, political, and socio-economic transformations struggle with the relationship between the ends and means of social relationships, material goods, and individual interest, which Polanyi conceptualizes for precapitalist society in a general way in \textit{The Great Transformation}:

\begin{quote}
[M]an's economy is submerged in his social relationships. He does not act so as to safeguard his individual interest in the possession of material goods; he acts so as to safeguard his social standing, his social claims, his social assets. He values material goods only in so far as they serve this end. [...The economic system will be run on noneconomic motives.\textsuperscript{103}

For Polanyi the explanation of why economic relationships will have noneconomic motives “is provided in the main by two principles of behaviour not primarily associated with economics: \textit{reciprocity} and \textit{redistribution}.”\textsuperscript{104} The strategies of conservative modernization, then, seek means by which changing modes of production and exchange remain compatible with existing

\textsuperscript{102} Goran Therborn, \textit{The ideology of power and the power of ideology} London : NLB, 1980: 6, 99, 130-131


\textsuperscript{104} Polanyi, 47. NB "Distribution may often cover up a measure of exploitation" (52). Not surprisingly, Polanyi endorses a neo-Aristotelian view of the problem of the “divorcedness of a separate economic motive from the social relations in which these limitations [on "boundless and limitless" production for gain/accumulation] inhered.” (54)
surplus-value extraction, and the social standing, claims and assets on they are based. Indeed, in West Africa the networks of Mandé (Dyula) and Fulani traders from the 18th century onwards facilitated the integration of European firearms, especially with cavalry, into military strategy after the 1820s and ever more into the later 19th century. Samori Touré was especially effective in exploiting access to modern weapons afforded him by the Muslim merchants, and eventually produced firearms to supplement his purchases for his infantry in the 1880s.\(^{105}\)

**Ruling class unification struggle**

The organization of hegemony by intellectuals for the class they serve also requires that they “give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own functions, not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields.”\(^{106}\) Furthermore, “the most important function of the hegemonic ideology is to subject the subordinate ranks of the ruling classes, and secure the congruence of their practices to the requirements of any hegemony.” Thus, the dominant ideology common sense that is “more or less limited to a specific, strategically located stratum” is as important as the nexus between the elite and popular.\(^{107}\)

As the ruling class seeks to shore up its own unity, to interpellate itself, so to speak, it is also accumulating and deploying the resources needed to rule over the mass population, and 'educate' them into a 'common sense,' that will naturalize the inequalities, make the elites' legitimate entitlement to have wealth, power, and access obvious beyond challenge, and further a class-specific project of managing political-economic change consistent with, on the one hand, drawing on the sources of power and wealth that derive from Westernization and modernity, and

\(^{105}\) Coquery-Vidrovitch 1974: 96. 98-100
on the other preserving the privilege of said class in the local social contexts. This derivation and preservation of privilege, however, occurs in difficult political economic conditions.

The communities most able to survive and to reproduce themselves are those which operate outside the formal economy. Cattle-owners, traders, smugglers, religious-community leaders, etc., can all maintain some autonomy from the state and thus continue to function as they did before independence. [...] Here too, however, the limits on resources and the difficulties of accumulation usually rule out the possibility of these communities becoming established classes.¹⁰⁸

The difficulties of indigenous ruling elites reproducing themselves into viable modern ruling classes feed the conservatism of conservative modernization, since limited resources hamper the transformation of power into class accumulation. Limited chances for plundering the state under enforced austerity conditions combines with patrons’ patterns of personal consumption or social spending to limit the sustained development of a ruling economic class.

Social Differentiation in Mali: the context of hegemonic struggles

Outlining the key social divisions that hegemony seeks to manage, and the discourses thus synthesized, frames a moral economy analysis of the conditions under which hegemony both manages and educates at the interface of Mali’s ‘triple heritage’ or indigenous, Muslim, and Western-democratic aspects of struggles for legitimacy. Here, briefly, are the crucial social divisions of class, gender, generation, religion, and ethnicity, which will be connected to the indigenous, Muslim, and Western elements in the subsequent analysis of hegemonic struggle.

Class segment divisions: Multiple Civil Societies

Class segment divisions are broadly three, including the international, cosmopolitan segments, the middle sectors, and the peasant mass. These three may be further analyzed into the elite political class (upper class) remaining and recycled from the authoritarian State; the upper-middle class post-colonial State senior bureaucracy; the emerging petty bourgeoisie, including public servant entrepreneurs in privatized former State companies; and the majority of peasants,

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¹⁰⁸ Chabal *Power in Africa* : 259-60. Here Chabal is referring to class reproduction in ‘moribund economies,’ incl. e.g. Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.
whether farmers, herders or fishers, migrant workers, smallholders, or tenant farmers. Contemporary Malian political cultures are thus embedded in ancien régime authoritarian, emerging-middle, and popular-marginalized contexts.

Any upper or middle class in Mali is still struggling towards being ‘for itself.’ This struggle-in-progress is precisely the historical context of this study. The same ‘solidarity’ that co-opts and limits dissent at different potential sites of social cleavage also constrains the emerging middle-class actors from separating their particular class agenda from the patron-client linkages and necessary support (reciprocal interdependence) of the elites by the mass, and vice versa. Indeed, fostering a unified ruling class to direct an emerging middle class faces a social context polarized by the great chasm between a small, literate, cosmopolitan elite and a mass population.

This study focuses on the synthesis of ideologies legitimating democratic accountability, where such ideologies focus on citizens’ identity, and consciousness of membership in a political community. “The analysis and critique of ideology are concerned with showing how structures of signification are mobilised to legitimate the sectional interest of dominant groups, i.e. to legitimate exploitative domination.”

In other words, struggles over accountability are over the means by which unsustainable oppression is transformed into sustainable and legitimated exploitation. This perspective cautions against an uncritical adulation of the transitions from authoritarianism in the 1980s and 1990s, and of aspirations for pluralist politics that rest on a minimal conception of accountability. Critiques of democratic movements' struggle for mere multipartyism, is of a transformation that “was simultaneously an opening and a closure,” to the extent that it has been “[d]etached from


wider reforms that would guarantee social and ideological pluralism in public life."\textsuperscript{111} The shift towards pluralist politics in Mali’s early years of democratization successfully divorced the political and social movements, replacing popular accountability with bureaucratic accountability\textsuperscript{112} and recaptured bureaucratic-technocratic ‘effective/efficient’ governance at the expense of fostering debate and engagement with the social base on which the struggles against dictatorship were founded.

\textit{Patriarchy Rules: Gender And Generation Cleavages}

Gender and generation cleavages are the two main axes of Malian patriarchy: reproducing the power of elder men over women and younger men.

Despite being 52\% of the population, women form only 20\% of formal mainly urban sector workers; of these, the majority is concentrated in the social sectors of health, education, and social services. The informal sector is dominated by commerce and services. Rural women are peasant farmers on family or collective plots to the extent that their heavy domestic duties allow. Thus, more than simply the household labour force of processing for consumption, women also contribute to the agricultural, fishing, and herding output of their household.\textsuperscript{113}

Despite the high social value placed on women as wives, mothers and the labour force of the household, there remains, especially in rural communities if less and less on the national political scene, a distinct absence of women from public life born of their legitimated exclusion through socio-cultural restrictions and attitudes enshrined by the current state or absence of legislation.\textsuperscript{114} To the extent that institutional changes leave patriarchal and discriminatory values among men and women relatively unchallenged, certain groups of women (rural, less educated)

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., 52
\textsuperscript{114} APDF, 2000: 7-8, 11-12. “Despite the role as the pillar of the family that is given to women, they are the object of sexual discrimination in that very role.” (12) Further, the Malian Marriage and Guardianship [Tutelle] Code “makes a women into a perpetual minor […] limiting her rights as an individual and citizen.” (18)
will continue to be excluded from political life and public decision-making, legitimized as women's proper place and roles, even as their urban and formally educated counterparts challenge these roles and become more integrated into public political and economic life.

The clearest demonstration of this disconnection is in the account that NGO actors give of the role that women elites have played in Mali’s independence and democratization politics, together with the acknowledged mobilization of women in popular movements, whether spontaneous or directed by State apparatuses. The discrepancy in Malian private and public life is the conspicuous presence of a few women in important functions as decision-makers, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the continued systematic and systemic discrimination and abuse that women in general suffer under the reinforced modes and orders of indigenous and Islamic patriarchy. Education and awareness-raising, on a variety of fronts from micro-credit associations and voter education to reproductive health and hygiene, all provide the opportunities to link women’s great responsibility for Malian society to their sense of this responsibility and its exercise through channels of decision-making. This is a very slow and difficult process of changing values among men and women, about women’s identity.\[^{115}\]

Generational cleavages are acute in Mali, where 48.7% of the population is under 15 years old, 48.9% are 15 to 64 years old, and the balance are seniors. As the term patriarchy suggests, the gender cleavages that marginalize women from spheres of public influence, are reproduced between elder and younger men as well. The deference due to elders is central to the filial duty of younger members of families, and this familial dynamic is often reproduced in

organizations and associations. To the degree that parental and familial logics are mapped onto other social relationships, the reconfiguration and reform of politics, even if only formal for the time being, affects the traditional structures to which Malians have turned for support, security, solidarity, and social control. Generational cleavages are also expressed along the axes of local knowledge production and reproduction. Elders are, in many instances, the indigenous intellectuals, and practitioners of rituals associated with initiations, healing, fertility, and abundant crops, whether from Quranic texts or from other rites.

The gradual transformation, then, of patriarchal relations, norms and practices from indigenous histories and institutions, makes the patriarchs, as keepers of tradition and local knowledge, uneasy about ‘democracy’ that undermines their privileged position relative to their historical rule of subordinate groups, including women, youth, and others. Indeed, a “number of marginalized and disadvantaged groups within Malian society […] have the roots of their marginality in the ancient systems of Sahelian society.”

Furthermore, popular perceptions of political authority, embedded in social relations, are bolstered by perceptions among subordinate class actors of the relative efficacy of patron-client relations, and the moral and political authority vested in elder men and their delegates within a generational patriarchy. Crises may arise when both the ascendant liberalisers and the traditional

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116 Interview, high school (12th grade) student, 12 March 2002 Bamako; Focus group, 14 March 2002, Bamako. Urban young people, in the absence of their teachers and elders, are frankly critical about patriarchal social norms’ resistance to change, and their dependence on access to patrons’ resources.


119 R. Fatton, Jr. 1995: 85ff ‘Popular civil society’ includes the débrouillards and bricoleurs, the poor, unemployed, underpaid rural and urban inhabitants who rely on mutual assistance, personal initiative, and luck for simple survival. The institutions that structure mutuality include indigenous, family, NGO, and religious networks.
patriarchs are chastised in the same breath, whether through public protest or the ‘hidden transcripts’ of popular, if silenced, resistance.\textsuperscript{120}

\textit{Religious cleavages and Muslim Idioms}

The Malian Muslim community is diverse. This complicates any analysis of ‘Muslim’ idiomatic resources as key actors appropriate them. This richness, ambiguity, and diversity of Muslim identities in Mali notwithstanding, there is reason to analyze coherent Muslim idiomatic resources.

Given that identity is “a process of naming: naming of self, naming of others, naming by others” we must recognize that labels such as Muslim / non-Muslim, Wahhabi / traditional, and Qadiri / Tijani / Hamallist reify “more complex social and discursive processes”\textsuperscript{121} in which Muslim identity terms are a ‘nested’ series. In brief, then, relying on the local Malian appellations, the Middle Eastern (especially from Saudi Arabia since the 1940s and 1950s) Wahhabi/Sunnis are distinguished from the ‘traditional’ or ‘orthodox’ Islamic practitioners. Further, as much as the ‘foreign’ Wahhabi/Sunnis are criticized for their ignorance of local religious practice and institutions, these traditionalists, in one of the three main Sufi Muslim brotherhoods in Mali, are criticized for unorthodoxy (not of \textit{hadith} and \textit{sunna}), innovations (al-
\textit{bid`a}), and especially wrongful associations of things with Allah (\textit{shirk}) from the perspective of the Muslim heartland. Indeed the main axis of tension is between Wahhabi/Sunni and Traditional/Orthodox Islam in Mali, over ‘maraboutage’ practices connected to weddings, naming ceremonies, funerals, and divination or magical intervention.\textsuperscript{122}

\textsuperscript{121} L. Brenner “Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali” in Brenner, ed. \textit{Muslim identity and social change in Sub-Saharan Africa}, 1993: 59
\textsuperscript{122} L. Brenner, 1993: 60-2, 65-66, 75-76. Thus these are cleavages that are also mutually constituting referents, though Brenner prefers the language of ‘tension’ rather than ‘dialectic’ in his account of these shifting identity referents. A \textit{marabout} is a Muslim ascetic or saint (Arab. \textit{murabit}). \textit{Marabout}, “a religious personage,” translates the Bamanan \textit{mori} (also derived from \textit{murabit}) “a diviner, Muslim healer,” versed in practices of “divination, pharmacopoeia, and benediction.”
In addition to the cleavages internal to Islam, though in the context of an overarching sense of global Muslim unity within the community of believers (‘umma), the Christian-Muslim cleavage influences national politics, and democratization discourse especially. This is because, notwithstanding only 1% of Malians are Christian, they played roles in the current democratization reforms and in the resistance movements before 1991, with Mgr. Luc Sangaré the most well known and widely respected.\textsuperscript{123}

The French attitude towards Malians’ anti-dictatorship struggles may have been importantly influenced by the prominence of Christian leaders as much or more than Muslim ones in denouncing the pre-1991 abuses and injustices. Thus, while Islamic leaders may have played an important role in mobilizing their local communities against the Traoré regime, Christian organizations were involved most publicly. Altogether, the social formations key to the ongoing construction of Malian Muslim identities include the “Wahhabi/Sunnis, the Traditional/Orthodox, the secularists, the government/administration, and the international development community.”\textsuperscript{124}

Chapter Five pays particular attention to the Islamist-secular tension, “now more sharply drawn than ever,”\textsuperscript{125} and those of orthodoxy and intellectualism that connect the local and trans-national Muslim communities.

\textit{Ethnic Cleavages and indigenous idioms}

To assess the indigenous resources for hegemony, then, it is necessary to interpret norms, practices, and their bearers (actors). Subsequent chapters detail elements of indigenous moral leadership, drawing especially on the Mandé traditions, which are dominant in Malian national-political and economic life. Here it suffices to comment briefly on certain indigenous institutions


\textsuperscript{124} L. Brenner, 1993: 74

\textsuperscript{125} L. Brenner, 1993:74, 76.
and features of culture. As appropriated by middle-class actors, indigenous idiomatic resources may be reasonably generalized across different ethnic groups, regions, and livelihoods. Thus, ethnic diversity in Mali is more salient than ethnic cleavages.\footnote{Chapter Four will discuss more explicitly Mali’s ‘shared national’ culture, which is undoubtedly a sub-theme, and possibly a tension, throughout this study. My research of 2002 focused on only one linguistic region, where the moral economy is constructed from Mande and Bamanan history and symbolism. Undertaking similar research based in Mopti, for example, (the crossroads city of the inland Niger delta), would likely find more complex features of regional and ethnic identity.}

Common features across different ethnicities, cultures, and practices in Mali qualify rigid ethnic divisions. In line with Amselle’s influential concept of métisse logic and identity, many Malians talk about how Mali is ‘well mixed’ (bien brassé) in terms of ethnic mingling, shared historical memory, and common cultural if not ‘ethnic’ heritage.\footnote{J.-L. Amselle, Logiques métisses: Anthropologies de l’identité en Afrique et ailleurs, Paris : Payot, 1999: 13, 10, 35, 62-63, 248. C.f. Giddens above re: ideological analysis} Thus a perspective sensitive to ‘original syncretism,’ is preferable to ethnic (or social or political) essentialism; a sense of a priori fluidity rather than rigidity. Indeed, culture is a ‘reservoir,’ a “group of internal or external practices [...] that social actors mobilize at some political conjuncture or another.”\footnote{Amselle, 1999: 16-18, 20, 26. Amselle makes his strongest case drawing on the liberal English political anthropology of Evans-Pritchard that reproduced the distinction and ranking, while it idealized the Nuer communities he studied (The Nuer, a description of the modes of livelihood and political institutions of a Nilotic people. Oxford, At the Clarendon Press, 1940.)} Further, by avoiding bifurcating and essentializing social/cultural/ethnic identity distinct from the political, this approach complements analyses that bridge society and the State, and the economic and political spheres of activity. This bridge also attends to the dynamic relationship, rather than to the problematic static separation between cultural community and political community, and the hierarchical ranking of ethnos beneath polis.\footnote{Amselle, 1999: 39, 38. C.f. B. Jewsiewicki “The Formation Of The Political Culture Of Ethnicity In The Belgian Congo, 1920-1959” in L Vail ed. The Creation Of Tribalism In Southern Africa. Berkeley and Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1991: 324-49. Also C.f. B. Jewsiewicki and L. N’Sanda}

Also important to recognize is the suppleness of the political culture of ethnicity, which stems not from the functional interconnection of multiple identities but from the ‘great plasticity’ (grande plasticité) of ethnic identity itself.\footnote{J.-L. Amselle, Logiques métisses: Anthropologies de l’identité en Afrique et ailleurs, Paris : Payot, 1999: 13, 10, 35, 62-63, 248. C.f. Giddens above re: ideological analysis} This perspective links Marxist and cultural
approaches, connecting class struggles with identity recognition, so that culture is “the result of power relations,” a result that must be analyzed relative to the degree that it may be reproduced, and thereby becomes a “coherent cultural scheme able to be incorporated, in the strong sense, by a subject”.

**Competing political cultures: theorizing Mali’s ‘triple heritage’**

Citizen identity formation in Mali is a site of hegemonic struggle and rooted in a ‘triple heritage’ of norms and practices: indigenous, Islamic, and Western. Theorizing this heritage was important for understanding decolonization after WWII and struggles for independence in Africa. Moreover, processes of nation building and the development of political structures and values were influenced by cultural and scientific production in the same period. Furthermore, the contemporary legacies of these competing and converging heritages are crucial in a comprehensive understanding of democratization’s label the ‘second independence.’ Taken in their French West African historical context, ideologies, as understood in the West, were the product of colonial and independence periods. Characteristically explicit, if internally contested, ideas in debates oriented towards mobilization for a political program were not found in pre-colonial FWA. An important exception to this generalization, however, and significant for this thesis, was the ideological sophistication of the Islamic revolts, revolutions, and the State thus formed that were in place, with Quran and Sunna-inspired doctrines that functioned as ideologies.

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131 Amselle, 1999: 54, 55. Amselle draws the obvious link to language, which connects to Giddens’ structuration.

to mobilize combatants for localized conflicts and also to resist colonialism in the later 19th century.

Further, as we will see in our discussion of Islamic citizen identity, the embeddedness of Islamic social and political thought and its bearers from the pre-colonial to the post-*apertura* periods, provides much of its strength and oppositional stance towards forms of Westernization. Coquery-Vidrovitch identifies three key functions played by ideology as it applied to understanding social and political transformation in French West Africa since 1800: didactic, justificatory, and programmatic. The first function is to account for the established order, which complements Gramsci's notion of educational hegemony. The second function seeks to validate (or challenge) the status quo, while the third function provides the means to mobilize in support of (or resistance against) the established order. This thesis’ meaning systems approach to ideological contests complements a binary pro- or con- of ideological functioning and its actors and includes an intermediary term of negotiation and adaptation.

In this middle term we will see the importance of the use and contested construction of “historical tradition,” especially in the educational-didactic function of ideology, and in establishing the very parameters of operation. As critical as Malian ideologies may be of power, however, they remain cautionary and constructive rather than revolutionary. This, as we will see, becomes crucial in the ‘return to virtue’ discourse common among upper and middle class actors in contemporary Malian politics and society. Consequent to their emphasis on self-knowledge and cultural revival, they remain conservative and cautionary rather than profoundly challenging to the post-*apertura* status quo.133

As mentioned above, the ideology of moral governance links indigenous civil society and liberal-democratic Western civil society to embellish minimal, elite competitive democracy with indigenous standards of reciprocal, asymmetrical solidarity. The synthesis of ideological elements that serve a specifically democratic political legitimacy has not been sufficiently

133 Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974: 328, 330, 333
studied. Successful struggles for hegemonic control at key points of conflict produce a synthesis of endogenous and exogenous idioms of action. The discourse about a minimal-managerial (governance) democracy is led in particular by Western-oriented upper and upper-middle class actors, and focuses on ‘problems,’ i.e. about points of (potential) conflict and the partial or attempted resolution of these contradictions.

As an educational relationship described above, hegemony deploys cultural products that are constructed through explicit and implicit inter-generational negotiations, reproductions, and struggles. Also important here is how, in Mali, literate, relatively cosmopolitan multilingual intelligentsias exploit and confront predominantly oral traditions. And so, while sustained cultural production is necessary for authoritative norms and practices to develop, this very production is also contested even as it is reproduced in the interface of indigenous, Islamic and Western elements.¹³⁴

Opposing orientations to dominant ideology are born of crucial social divisions, for example those of generation and gender in broadly educational settings. The ‘teacher’–‘student’ relationship is one that provides the “structural principles [that] operate in terms of one another but yet also contravene each other.”¹³⁵ Thus, “[c]onflict and contradiction tend to coincide because contradiction expresses the main ‘fault lines’ in the structural constitution of societal systems,” because “contradictions tend to involve divisions of interest between different groupings or categories of people.” However, not only do “[c]ontradictions express divergent modes of life and distributions of life chances,” but they also link divergent modes of life to each other as asymmetrically reciprocal.¹³⁶

Indigenous cultures and legacies

Mali’s multiple groups have different experiences of their common histories of contact, conflict and exchange; paternalism, patriarchy, and hierarchical pluralism were contested via horizontal linkages of social structures. The African cultural roots that lead towards unanimity and consensus rather than dissenting debate (Fr. débat contradictoire) suggest that the contested political process could be dangerous for African states, and such energies should rather be directed towards national cultural, social, and economic development. This dissent-limiting perspective gets theoretical support from the notion that pluralist-democratic politics is “anchored to a value consensus.” When used to account for the non-opposition in political convergence and coalition in Mali, however, the notion that greater consensus means more pluralist democracy obscures the possibility that regime security and stability might override the very pluralism at the heart of the polyarchy model. Indeed, the Malian political landscape illustrates the overriding importance of non-constitutional social norms and practices in developing a politics of “reinforcing agreement, encouraging moderation, and maintaining social peace.” In brief, the polyarchy model imperfectly addresses the extent of ‘consensus before the fact’ in national unity governments and the politics of rassemblement.

Malian society and political culture shares with other African societies “an imbalance in the Platform of Unanimity,” by predominantly seeking consent which limits dynamic pluralism. The interaction in Africa of various democratic models, and the disillusionment in party politics “make[s] it necessary to review all the hypotheses which currently underpin theories of good governance.” In principle, this political culture platform should balance shared

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137 Mbembe, 1985: 12
141 Ibid, 7
norms and consensus while articulating pluralism and dissent, and would combine these “apparently contradictory characteristics” a “minimum degree of consensus” and “enough moral and material difference between citizens to make pluralism possible.” However, and this is crucial to understand, Mali’s ‘platform’ is not effective at combining consensus and pluralism, but rather combines domination-acquiescence in a legitimating ‘democratic-pluralist’ hegemony over a still unconsolidated post-apertura ruling class and over a divided society. Indeed, the platform facilitates the hegemonic management of social divisions. Moreover, rather than balancing shared interests with pluralism enough to foster constructive dissent, unanimism tends towards managing disparate interests to preserve ruling class unity and broader social cohesion.

Although predominantly oral traditions tend “to transmit only consensus, the accepted view,” and counter-hegemonic intellectuals “often have to begin in each generation all over again,” even a heritage that tends toward consensus is “never univocal,” but “plurivocal and contradictory,” with inherent potential for “transformation and renewal.” At a larger scale, two key pre-colonial achievements were that communities in West Africa in general were accustomed to centralized states, in which centralized governments (1) established relatively strong bureaucracies and judicial systems, and (2) provided security for the population. Indeed, the Mali Empire provides a fine example of such a single political unit encompassing diverse groups. This arrangement was certainly not conflict-free, but provided for trade among groups. Thus, the colonial administration did not confront a blank slate, and contemporary idioms of action are based in part on re-invented, pre-colonial socio-political identities.

While greater detail will be more relevant in Chapter Three, which sets the context of post-apertura hegemony, Robinson’s eloquent and sweeping description of two thousand years of

142 Ibid, 33.
Malian history hints at the strata of historical, socio-cultural and political economy tradition onto which contemporary competing political cultures are adding further layers:

Mali arguably has the richest cultural heritage of all the nation states of West Africa. The explanation is both simple and complex. The simple reason is the state of Old Mali, based in the Niger River valley. Starting as a chiefdom, expanding to a kingdom, and becoming an empire under the leadership of Sunjata Keita, Mali was the dominant force in much of the West African savannah from about 1200 to 1400 AD. It controlled a vast amount of territory, extending into today's Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea in the south, Burkina Faso and Niger in the east, and Senegambia and Mauritania in the west. Its reach extended even further, through the state-licensed traders who plied long-distance routes across the different ecological zones and through settlers who went far and wide into these same zones. They took their languages, Malinke and other Mande languages, and they took a social hierarchy in which key artisan skills — metal working, leather working, wood working, weaving and dyeing, music-making and historical chronicle — were allocated and transmitted by endogamous groups. These "castes," as they are often called, are found across a whole range of societies in the eastern portion of West Africa today. [...] The Old Mali heartland [...] corresponds to the demographic center of Mali today. [...] Archaeological digs at Jenne have extended the history of the zone's proto-urban development to 2,000 years ago. The wealth of the flood plain, including fish and minerals, has helped concentrate populations there for the later emergence of Ghana, Soso, Songhay, and Old Mali states.146

Malian historian Adame Ba Konaré brings this grand sweep into more contemporary focus, offering a critique of the use and abuse of history in Mali today:

From the matrimonial alliances of their ancestors and the rivalries that opposed them, Malians have developed a space of sociability and fraternity, often invoking the extraordinary system of senankua,147 the "joking relationship." After confrontation, after both sides judge the parties present and learn to respect each other, they become joking cousins who can say everything and tolerate everything of each other — a kind of Malian, indeed African, non-aggression pact. [...] All of these elements, internalized in the collective memory, are brought to the surface and invoked to protect Mali from ethnic conflict. [...] 

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146 D. Robinson, “Overview of the Section on Cultural and Historical Contributions” in Bingen, Robinson, and Staatz ed. 2000: 9-10. This type of layering prompted Berman to use Lonsdale’s metaphor of a 'palimpsest': a document in which older texts has been partially erased and others written on top of it, producing a texture that is rich, sometimes incoherent, and possibly contradictory. Berman, “A ‘Palimpsest of Contradictions’ op cit.

147 Different authors’ own spelling of Bamanan words is retained throughout, as they transliterate regional variations in pronunciation, which makes standardization difficult, even distorting. This thesis’ reference is C. Bailleul, (Dictionnaire Français-Bambara, Bamako : Editions Donniya, 1996), which is the product of the longstanding involvement of the Missionnaires d’Afrique (a.k.a. Pères Blancs) in national language literacy, in collaboration with Malian linguists and grassroots organizations. It is more comprehensive than the booklets available from Mali’s National Directorate of Functional Literacy and Applied Linguistics (DNAFLA). For sènèkunya, Bailleul has “traditional relation of joking (plaisanterie) and service” with members of the “family related to yours by traditional relations of mutual assistance and joking (entr’aide et plaisanterie).
These persistent values are not useful for mobilization because they are rooted in an undefined past, the period of the ancestors in which, conspicuously, the youth are not found. Indeed this kind of history hurts the younger generation by its peremptory and moralizing tone. The crisis of identity that we deplore can be explained by this failure. Is not the constant whipping up of the past a significant sign of weakness, of breakdown, of intellectual laziness? To say that our ancestors invented everything, is this not a confession of failure? What we need is a veritable social project, innovative, rigorously oriented toward the values that belong to our present and point toward our future. These values certainly include solidarity and sharing, justice, integrity, and tolerance.\textsuperscript{148}

Mali’s contemporary society and politics are ongoing attempts at difficult cultural synthesis. Malians are “strongly influenced by ideas and attitudes from the modern communication media, but still refer to the more or less active vestiges of traditional education.”\textsuperscript{149} Moreover, “the collective conviction of belonging to a nation whose age and extent largely exceed that of the contemporary Republic of Mali,”\textsuperscript{150} and the related historical memory that three of the largest ethnic groups (Mandé, Fulani, Songhai) ruled over the others at one time in the past is crucial in understanding the discourse of social cohesion and unity. Moreover, to understand the challenge of deepening democracy is to grasp the challenge of an urban, liberal upper middle-class project to instil shared norms and values across the rural-urban divide, and across the commensurate class and socio-cultural cleavages. The challenge is also to link the sensibilities of traditional villagers to those of modern citizens and, as importantly, vice versa. Despite these crisis conditions, the education sector broadly construed is a key institutional site for actors constructing the idioms of legitimization at work in Malian political culture.\textsuperscript{151}

The generational divide is striking in urban areas and in educational contexts. The solidarity among teachers and students mobilizing towards the People’s Revolution of 1991 seems replaced today with something less mutually respectful. Thus, scepticism of the ‘democratic’ innovation as a solution to economic crisis further complicates youths’ orientations towards Mali’s democratic institutions, norms, and practices.

\textsuperscript{151} Olly Owen, op cit.
Cultures and legacies of Islam

Of West Africa’s Islamizations since 900 AD, none have produced a single, authoritative Islamic culture that may be straightforwardly politicized in Mali. Furthermore, no political project is specific to Islam, which serves rather as a centre (including texts, practices, norms, and histories) around which different political cultures emerge, and are constructed and contested. In some African contexts, the politics becomes more explicit and formalized that in others. Hassana al-Tourabi (Sudanese justice minister, 1979) suggested this overtly political project: “religion — and none more than Islam— is beginning to establish itself as a third way: a true alternative to modern capitalism and socialism. [...] The position of Islam thus is more political than theological [in the nation-building context].”¹⁵²

In Mali, on the other hand, a conjunction of factors since the 1970s is producing a broad, transnational Islamic revival. The place of Arabic in these processes is especially important among certain counter-cultural elites, given the crises of education financing and policies.¹⁵³ Recent changes in the socio-economic bases of religious knowledge are evident especially in urban contexts, where the longer history of Islamic influence grows out of the economic influence and knowledge of the Muslim merchant and trading class segments, and where Islamic actors are increasingly coherent as a politicized force.

As Islamic elites’ socio-economic destinies become increasingly coincident with that of emerging liberal-bourgeois and secular elites, the two groups are being produced through shared educational processes. As madrasas (religious middle schools) modernize their structures, leadership and bureaucratic operation, Islam is being oriented toward attempts to co-opt this

¹⁵³ Otayek in Otayek Le radicalisme : 11
religious-political resource by an emerging group of modern educated Muslims, men especially.\textsuperscript{154}

The general failures of the State education system are conditioned by the general and persistent economic crisis in Mali. Religious education gains influence through this educational crisis by offering an alternative to the State secular system. The socio-economic context in which graduates seek work is also alternative to that of the Francophone-dominated bureaucracy and bourgeoisie. Notwithstanding the urban elite convergence mentioned above, among the mass rural population, Islamic education placed students on a second-tier class trajectory. Most \textit{madrasas} graduates’ parents have little Francophone education and work in the private sector; few graduate past middle school and very few get bureaucratic jobs. Some graduates teach Arabic in French-language schools, many teach in \textit{madrasas}, or open their own schools. Most return to the private sector. These social, economic, and linguistic differences between the Arabic- and French-dominated systems reflect and reinforce socio-economic and political divisions. Thus, despite the shared interests of senior bureaucrats and prosperous merchants, the \textit{madrasas’} students are more likely popular and poor, rather than children of an urban bourgeoisie.\textsuperscript{155} The implications for Muslim acculturation and citizenship identity are also crucial, and are discussed in Chapter Five.

\textbf{Legacies of Islam}

The contemporary legacies of Islam in Mali include a socially connected, yet not fully politicized religiosity. Islam is more than popular faith, less than coherent socio-political identity. In all this, layers of Islamic history still influence contemporary norms and practices. In general,\textsuperscript{154} Brenner “Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali” in Brenner ed., \textit{Muslim identity and social change in Sub-Saharan Africa} Bloomington : Indiana University Press 1993: 2-3, 6, 8
\textsuperscript{155} L. Brenner, “Introduction: essai socio-historique sur l’enseignement Islamique au Mali”, in Sanankoua et L. Brenner, ed \textit{L’enseignement islamique au Mali}, Bamako, Mali : Jamana, 1991: 12-13. The important social cohesion role that Wahhabism, for example, plays in a certain business, merchant community in Mali does not necessarily mean there is a deep engagement with Islam, but a more instrumental valuation of it. With the increasing influence in Mali of Arab-speaking NGO’s and wealthy entrepreneurs, this influence is shifting to include a harder line in terms of Islamicist ideology.
Mali’s Islamic tendencies reproduce an accommodating secularism, distinguished from an absolute separation of religion and politics on a European model (with particular reference to France). Since the colonial and independence regimes, the secular State has adapted to (and been adapted to by) these tendencies,\textsuperscript{156} in which “modernized education may be the single most significant driving force in this entire process.”\textsuperscript{157} Both the cultural and political manifestations of the ‘regime-neglected Islam’ in Mali are important. As much as some Malians would agree to the cultural and spiritual, and thus civic and moral importance of Islamic norms and practices, they would be quick to denounce the unprecedented politicized use of Islam to attempt to mobilize voters in 2002.\textsuperscript{158} This qualification or resistance is exemplary of religious tolerance as opposed to zeal.

\textit{Franco-republican and Western cultures and legacies}

Chapter Three sets the context of post-\textit{apertura} hegemony and examines the dominant role of Mali’s colonial heritage, education, forms, norms and institutions of political life, and state-society relations. Moreover, the French Republican tradition is supplemented in the post-\textit{apertura} period by the influence of the United States in Mali.\textsuperscript{159}

The influence of the French Republican tradition is most obvious in Mali’s institutions. Modelled on the French Republic, the Republic of Mali shares many of its institutional features: a President elected by universal suffrage, a Prime Minister and government responsible to the National Assembly, and a judiciary independent of political authorities, and overseen by a Supreme and Constitutional Court. Adherence to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a


\textsuperscript{157}Brenner “Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali” Brenner, ed., 1993: 2

\textsuperscript{158}Interview, national election observer, 14 June 2002 Ségou; Interview, high school teacher, 20 June 2002 Bamako

\textsuperscript{159}M. Crowder, 1968: 7-9, 17, 50
also fundamental principle of both constitutions, a feature made especially conspicuous in the text and in discussions of the Malian constitution. Three French Republics administered colonization, decolonization and independence in the Republic of Mali. These regimes struggled primarily with the conceptual contradictions of a political-civilizational project, which were exacerbated by contradictions in the economic development project. Furthermore, the crisis of the assimilation concept and policy was deepened by the internal fragmentation of the colonial Republic.

**The Western-Democratic hegemonic drive**

An ideological apology by upper middle-class segments defends specifically democratic political legitimacy and exploits the popular perceptions of political authority embedded in social relations. Moreover, with these endogenous and exogenous resources (concepts, values, histories, identities, and discourses) actors enrich (neo)liberal-democratic legitimization. As a hegemonic drive, democratic legitimization seeks moral accountability across social divisions. Accordingly, democratic legitimization must reconstruct the referents of social trust, trust which is ‘imbedded in the personalistic ties of patron-client networks.’ As a resource of political imagination, merely civil citizenship is insufficient to provide the “stable identity and a core of belonging and continuity” needed to assure ordered conservative political modernization in Mali. Accordingly, the project “to selectively control social change” appeals to appropriations of indigenous and Islamic traditions to link, through the intervening concepts of participatory democracy, embedded social citizenship to the minimal democracy central to democratization.

The Afrobarometer study for the World Bank (2001) recognizes, without exploring because of its alternative aims, the extent to which the democratic consolidation it identifies in

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161 Berman, “Ethnicity, bureaucracy, and the politics of trust” in *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*, James Curry, 2004

162 Berman, Palimpsest 16.

163 Ibid.
Mali is qualified by competing political cultures, or competing elements (and their bearers) of Mali’s political cultures.

Malians retain a strong attachment to their cultural roots, and local politics and traditional leaders continue to shape political understandings more than national politics. Malians thus attempt to adapt democracy to familiar cultural forms, focusing on communitarian goals such as promoting unity and consensus, while placing less emphasis on liberal democratic and market values such as individual civil liberties and political and economic competition.\textsuperscript{164}

Further,

Mali’s urban elites, like other Africans, are adopting universal political values while its rural masses remain attached to indigenous, culturally specific conceptions of democracy. A major challenge for further democratization in Mali is to reconcile these two different sets of expectations, especially in relation to the inherent tension between political competition and social consensus.\textsuperscript{165}

This thesis analyzes these “attachments to cultural roots,” and the “attempt to adapt democracy to familiar cultural forms.” In reconciling competition and consensus, Malian political culture tends towards consensus to accommodate rather than resist ‘universal’ (especially French-European and Anglo-American) political norms and practices. Communitarian norms and practices are foremost in the negotiation with pluralist-liberal political and economic ones. The discourse that seeks to reconcile Western and indigenous bases of citizenship consistently points not only to ‘universal’ principles, but also to cultural practices that structure power and authority in Malian society. While some practices encourage and inform political pluralism, others seek to reproduce roles fitted to hierarchical social stratification. Indeed, consensus politics in contexts of such profoundly unequal membership is easily collapsed into pseudo-democratic domination. To the extent that both the liberal-democratic and indigenous norms seek to legitimize such domination more than encourage dissent, consensus remains passive more than active, a politics of ‘witness’ and ‘presence’ rather than ‘encounter’.\textsuperscript{166}

\textsuperscript{164} Afrobarometer 2001: Abstract.
\textsuperscript{165} Ibid: 19.
\textsuperscript{166} Chapter Four will detail these terms. C.f. E. Dudley, \textit{The Critical Villager: beyond community participation}. New York : Routledge, 1993: 7, 159.
In general, the indigenous and Muslim ideological elements seek to manage social divisions with combined social and civic frameworks. Consequently, ‘citizenship’ discourse consistently points to cultural practices that structure power and authority in Malian society (e.g. asymmetrical reciprocities in families, associations and villages; the politics of gift exchange). While some practices encourage and inform political pluralism, others seek to reproduce cultural roles fitted to hierarchical social stratification, and to quietude rather than freedom of opinion.

The Western hegemonic drive is distinctively self-contradictory in that, notwithstanding the widespread lexicon of ‘civil society’ democratization, it seeks to keep separate the civil (minimally voting and rights-bearing) and the social, embedded in moral and political economies. Thus attempting simultaneously to segregate and merge the civil and social idioms, the contradictory hegemonic drive for democratic legitimacy seeks (eventually) to embody “a coherent social project,” despite its tendency “to be a disorganized plurality of mutually exclusive projects that are not necessarily democratic.”

The end of a predatory Malian dictatorship is not identical to an end of various, subtle forms of domination. The emerging upper and upper-middle class actors have been the key local proponents of the minimal liberal state, and are distinctively well placed to incorporate indigenous features in promoting bourgeois civil society. This legitimization struggle by the ascendant, middle class segments is essential to the relative success in the development of a hegemonic-democratic political culture in Mali. A synthesis of indigenous, Muslim and Western idioms in the struggles shows the sophisticated intellectual resources available to these actors. Unifying the post-apertura ruling class and keeping subordinate classes on side in this ascendancy is the focus of considerable imaginative labour and political creativity. Linking bourgeois civil society to indigenous institutions and networks of survival and mutual assistance weakens potential antagonisms, improves political opportunists’ image and promotes the

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citizenship formation commensurate with the minimal State. The norms of quietude among youth, women, and under-classes are incorporated to encourage liberal-democratic rather than social-democratic orientations, isolating a minimal set of civil entitlements from a social citizenship content that comes ‘from below’.\textsuperscript{169}

The Western-Democratic drive is particularly concerned with the divisions produced by education in the colonial and post-colonial periods. Furthermore, coincident with European-modeled nation-State building, the Western hegemonic drive seeks a more comprehensive management of social divisions through its specific citizenship identity idioms. The ‘national’ imperative of such State-building, through constructing citizen identity, seeks to harmonize groups across social divisions or by minimizing most critical inequalities. By seeking to manage all social divisions, and by relying on the synthetic adoption and domination of indigenous and Muslim terms and strategies of hegemonic struggle to do so, the Western drive attempts to shore up its own relevance and influence in the specific area of a civil-type society in relation to the democratizing nation-State.

The Western drive appropriates discourses of \textit{harmony} among social divisions; ‘ethnic harmony’, ‘inter-class solidarity’, the separate-but-equal script about gender relations, and the ‘disaffected youth’ (obscuring their disenfranchisement) are all evidence of the successful indigenized Western hegemonic drive.\textsuperscript{170} Consequently, by constructing a social base and legitimating it as indigenous, the citizenship project is the latest version of cooptive domination to produce a relatively ordered and tranquil unity in a socio-political environment characterized by social divisions mediated by indigenous and Muslim social institutions.\textsuperscript{171}

\textbf{Western Legacies}

\textsuperscript{169} Ibid: 85-87.
\textsuperscript{170} Owen, 2002, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{171} Smith 2001: 76.
Participation, since the inclusion of selected elites in colonial institutions, has remained defined, and even has been repeatedly redefined to be commensurate with subservience to hierarchical social and political order. These redefinitions are neither simply foreign impositions, nor the result of ‘capture’ by local agents, norms, and practices. Rather, the post-apertura cultural change in Mali produces a ‘third way,’ guided by elites to preserve continuities of authority, as well as moral and political economy. Authoritarian elements help make communitarian politics operate effectively in Mali. An analysis of post-apertura Malian political culture must see the dual elements of (1) the limitations of merely liberal political identities and the (2) potentially authoritarian elements of the indigenous counterweights to these, as articulated by upper- and middle class actors in broadly ‘educational’ contexts and institutions. Certainly, indigenizing and articulating Western norms via local communitarian norms potentially ‘deepens’ and ‘embeds’ the otherwise formal and superficial citizen identity commensurate with procedural democracy. Conversely, however, the local norms thus reproduced and reinforced with Western norms may, on the one hand, qualify the freedom-loving and materialistic Western model with the communitarian-solidarity modes of Malian social and political organization and participation. On the other hand, however, the influence of communitarian norms may limit the progress towards equality and thus to substantive (capacity-enabled) freedoms. The hegemonic struggle seeks a conservative, controlled, and limited political liberalization. This conservatism responds, in part, to the patron-clientelistic legitimation of pre-capitalist relations that are incompatible with those of modern capitalism. Thus in seeking to reproduce, or rather reinvent the quasi-feudal political and moral economy, colonial and post-colonial elites have returned to paternalism to legitimate hierarchy. The ‘return’ to virtue’ thus has its basis in the retrograde practices of the third way’s ruling class, reacting to the chronic failures of conditioned capitalism since independence.
Contemporary Legacies: convergent ideologies of order

The post-1991 moral economy of democratic legitimation rests on the continuity of past modes of hegemony, indigenous, Islamic, and Western, which include colonial and post-colonial legacies of economic and political domination. Subsequent chapters will detail who struggles to establish hegemony in Mali, and places the social divisions hegemony seeks to manage in the context of colonial and post-colonial political economy. In brief, Western-oriented actors appropriate indigenous and Muslim idioms to serve Western-democratic legitimation, and to further the agenda to indigenize legal-electoral, minimal democracy. These educated, cosmopolitan middle and upper class political actors are successfully linking concepts of the exogenous, minimal, citizen-as-voter democracy to specific indigenous and Islamic norms, practices, and institutions. Thus, political class actors defend democratic political legitimacy while serving their interests and preserving or consolidating their positions.172 This they accomplish through appeals, among others, to the ‘participatory’ idioms of indigenous and Islamic norms: e.g. palaver, Bamama korofò and consultation, Arabic shura.

Educated middle and upper class Malians are relatively cosmopolitan actors who recognize themselves in the liberal individual described by the dominant paradigm as the “essential prerequisite in the making of civil society.”173 These actors’ political imagination is both innovative and conditioned or compromised. Therefore, there is in the middle class liberal ascendancy “perhaps the most important” factor for democratic consolidation, a synthesis that seeks to increase “the level of ideological homogenization of the middle class.”174

The ideologies underwriting indigenous and Muslim ruling class legitimacies are in flux. This changeability affords emerging upper- and upper middle-class actors with the opportunity to

172 Fatton, Jr. 1995: 82ff
deploy a composite Western-democratic legitimization drive. The idioms, intellectual resources, and agents of political legitimacy construction produce the synthesis of local forms and minimal-liberal norms of legitimization, and produce a successful, if stultifying, hegemonic project. ‘Western’ here indicates a hegemonic synthesis by agents with resources under mainly French and American aegis. Within the relatively successful Western-democratic hegemonic drive (not the least because funded externally) the emerging, liberal middle class actors seek to replace the indigenous and Muslim modes of ideological production, while selectively appropriating key elements of their respective legitimizing moral economies.

The contemporary project of democratizing Mali seeks to separate further the ‘political’ and the ‘economic’ in the “fetishization or reification of capitalist social relations” through “institutional differentiation and separation, and an ideological dimension of depersonalization and articulation of abstract ‘principles.’”\textsuperscript{175} In other words, democratic consolidation is the current form of legitimizing capitalism at work through, and ‘working on,’ Africans, no longer as colonial subjects, or post-independence ‘party-militants’, but now as ‘democratic citizens.’ Just as domination co-opts both formally and informally, legitimacy struggle indicates the turbulent ‘autonomy’ of the state.\textsuperscript{176} As “part of the moral calculus of power,” political accountability “concerns the mutual responsibility of inequality,” given the ongoing political-economic crisis and “unusually serious problems of productive persuasion” for Africa’s rulers.\textsuperscript{177} Political accountability frames legitimate political authority through a constructed public morality.

Linked to the elites through patron-client relations, the ruled are simultaneously dominated and participating as a form of participatory ‘subject-hood’ within the elites’ drive for political accountability through moral economy. This search for political accountability is underwritten by a psychological acceptance, a tacit consent powerful enough to counteract

\textsuperscript{175} B. Berman, Control and Crisis 27.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid: 30, 33-34.
divisive forces based on conflicting material interests.\textsuperscript{178} Legitimized domination is thus more fragile than is often supposed, and is simultaneously material, coercive, and consent-seeking or persuasive. Nevertheless, patron-clientelism is not simply a form of domination, or rather not a simple form of domination. From a subaltern viewpoint, political accountability is exploitation, which clients witness, and in which they are variously complicit.

With this thesis’ focus on the ideological convergence that legitimates domination, its discursive-ethnographic perspective on the idioms of action and structures of signification includes “a continuous tacking between the ‘inside’ and the ‘outside’ of events [that] grasps, on the one hand, the sense of specific occurrences and gestures empathetically, and, on the other steps back to situate these meanings in wider contexts.”\textsuperscript{179} Thoughtful upper-class observers of democracy’s development in Mali refer to a similar need to find a middle ground to contextualize a political analysis. A balance is needed between an excessive and thus complacent relativism, and the unreality of context-free, theoretical treatments of ostensibly ‘universal’ norms such as equality, responsibility, and especially participation.\textsuperscript{180} Although an accurate interpretation must grasp that “a fact is always cultural,”\textsuperscript{181} this cultural element (social culture and political culture) is seldom taken into account. “The cultural element is the essence of actions, which determines the pertinence and appropriateness of behaviour. The ‘universal’ eye is falsely generalized from very specific histories and cultures of particular peoples.”\textsuperscript{182}

Malian political culture and economy have experienced the continuity of varyingly responsive authoritarian rule. Contemporary, democratically legitimated governance would well build on this history to root a ‘democratic’ equivalent of responsive authoritarianism (responsive

\textsuperscript{180} Interview, Public and NGO sector political consultant, Bamako, Mali, 13/12/02.
\textsuperscript{181} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{182} Ibid. This person has served in many relevant capacities: as a policy analyst under the first Konaré government, and as a political analyst and consultant to e.g. the United Nations and the Canadian Embassy
at least at present to an enlarged circle of elites’ and linked groups’ interests). Thus, certain practices that are now labelled ‘democratic’ (by middle-liberal elites) have complex links (and some more evocative than actual) to older political and economic institutions.

This produces an ideological admixture that simultaneously highlights and obscures the contradictions between (indigenous) “communitarian goals,” and (exogenous) “liberal, democratic, and market values.” Indeed, these ‘advantageous’ goals, norms, and practices are drawn especially from indigenous institutions that structure social divisions through various relationships of patriarchy, class, and ethnicity to indigenize liberal norms and practices. Some observers, though cautiously open to the potential of civil society balancing State power, are also rightly sceptical about the democratic rather than dominating features of village-level political institutions.

Some observers note that since the dictatorial regime was overthrown and there was some release from arbitrary power, the mixture of democratic and aristocratic or autocratic practices has tended and will tend towards deepening democracy rather than qualifying or stunting it. Key qualifiers, however, emerge from assessing the resilient legacies of indigenous communities and societies, including “a mixture of rudiments or democratic tendencies and practices on the one hand, and aristocratic, autocratic and/or militaristic practices and tendencies, with varying degrees of despotism on the other.” Indeed, in the ‘democratic wave’ of the early 1990’s, ‘democracy’ in its most limited sense must be juxtaposed or linked to “the democratic myth in traditional societies,” political and economic structures “geared to gerontocracy” with few

openings to recruit from ‘below’ (class, gender, age, caste), bureaucratic legacies of the one-party state, “the ideology of order,” and pressures of external relations.\textsuperscript{187}

The subsequent analysis of the evidence in the subsequent chapters will show that the degree of legitimated domination in Malian political culture rests, as one would expect, on the dominant and negotiated positions. Modelling the oppositional position, however, is important to ground the analysis in the contingency of the contemporary hegemonic synthesis; its contingency allows for other possible arrangements, alliances among agents, convergences, and divergences in the use of idiomatic resources.

\textit{Methodology / Research procedures}

The points below consolidate the methodological arc of the thesis, on which further comment is made throughout the dissertation.

This qualitative study of the formation of citizen consciousness and the ideological hegemony of ‘moral governance’ is based on evidence gathered in a variety of ways, including interviews, observation (including participant-observation), archival materials, historical and contemporary newspaper articles (from State and independent newspapers). Documentation from governmental and non-governmental sources that addressed democratization in Mali at national, regional, and municipal/commune levels was collected in paper form in the field and online. With such documentation, subsequent analysis placed primary evidence of Malians’ experiences and understandings of democratization and citizenship in wider political, economic, and social context.\textsuperscript{188}

\textit{Mali\'ans’ scholarship}

Engaging Malians’ scholarship, led to crucial internal debates about the construction and contestation of the social and cultural transformation accompanying democratization since 1992.

\textsuperscript{187} Ibid: 69; W. Oyugi, et al. 1988: [x]
\textsuperscript{188} In some particularly rich cases among NGO intellectuals, both primary and secondary evidence originated with the same person, e.g. when the author of a report, article, or book was also interviewed and observed at work on a project site.
Malian scholarly and journalistic writing on dimensions of political ideology and consciousness scrutinizes the comprehensive meanings of the history and culture. Selected as key respondents, these intellectuals not only provided evidence of the transformations underway, but who were also engaged in (with varying explicitness) producing, reproducing, and opposing such transformations. In doing so, they also produced their own interpretations and analyses of the phenomena in question.

**Selecting interview participants**

From February-December 2002, I lived and worked in and from Bamako, Mali, (a cosmopolitan capital city of ~1.5 million in the predominantly Mendé Koulikoro Region of south-central Mali) and including six weeks based in Koniobla (a rural village of ~700 mainly Bamanan-speakers in the Sanankoroba district of the dijumu, a transitional area between Bamanan and Minyanka-speakers that straddles the Koulikoro and Sikasso Regions in southeastern Mali), and two weeks in Bandiagara (a district capital in the Mopti Region of ~9,000 persons in a mixed Fulani and Dogon-speaking region in central Mali).

From my learning in the field, respondent selection shifted from a relatively exclusive focus on teachers as education ministry employees, to include other actors, who were integrated into a larger socio-political project of ‘democratic pedagogy’ and the formation of citizen consciousness. This shift was required to understand the broader civic education dynamics and actors in Mali in state and NGO institutions (national and international) together with members of the civil society intelligentsia (e.g. newspaper editors, journalists, lawyers).

I held open-ended elite interviews with 58 individuals in three regions of Mali. ‘Elite’ indicates not only interviewees in terms of their positionality within institutions, organizations, and the broad civic education project, but also the adaptation of interview questions to the specificity of that positionality, primarily in relation to ‘democratic pedagogy’ (civics, institutional decentralization, peace and human rights education & activism). Some interviewees
became ‘key informants’ and aided my research greatly with insights, introductions, materials and encouragement. Moreover, because of the place of these ‘elites’ in different social spheres (urban, rural, education, government, NGO, Muslim schools), the effective viewpoints were like those achieved by stratified sampling across social class segment levels, providing diverse, if interestingly convergent it turns out, views. In certain cases, respondents were sought out as key actors as professionals or experts in their field. Nevertheless, these very actors were also ‘raw data’ of the discursive positions and perspectives from which democratic pedagogy is produced and reproduced.189

Through this process and contrary to my expectations, focus groups significantly enriched the dynamism and scope of responses. They provided a more structured context for my observations of respondents’ exchanges, where remarks were amplified, contested, and corrected. Not only important testing grounds for my earlier questions, these sessions produced among the most effective prompts for subsequent one-to-one interviews with group-members (in the nine cases cited in this thesis). Indeed, the design of probing but not leading questions tailored as necessary to each different sector and context was greatly aided by a dynamic engagement with the terms and idioms that emerged from these exchanges.190 Responding to individuals’ conversational resistance in the presence of a tape recorder, I kept abbreviated notes, which I amplified immediately afterwards. In cases where I had research and interpreter assistance, I was able to compare and contrast my grasp of the interview with that of my collaborators. This helped

189 The treatment of the Afrobarometer research in Chapter Three, as “sources of information,” and as “evidence of the actors who are engaged in the neo-liberal democratization project,” could be extended to the expert testimony cited in this thesis. Chapter Three, Section “Origins of the Hegemonic Project of Conservative Modernization” p. 149 –fn500
190 Respondents’ tendency to cooperation, and merely reproduce official discourses demands particular attention. For my research, however, sufficient variety of respondents allowed subsequent analysis to track the movements from official to non-official discourses. Also, the aim was to investigate precisely the interface between discursive sites, rather than to identify or develop a more thoroughly oppositional or counter-hegemonic positionality. R. Yow, Recording oral history Thousand Oaks, Ca.: Sage Publications, 1994: 38; cited in Lazar, “Ain’t I a Citizen?” 2000: 150-151.
reflexive stance towards my research, qualify my own views, and further hone my real-time note-taking skills.\textsuperscript{191}

Over the course of ten months of field research, as my understanding of the milieu deepened and my fluency in local French idioms and grasp of basic Bamanankan improved,\textsuperscript{192} respondents’ view of me shifted towards someone interested, engaged, and with a certain insight to domestic issues. Thus, my access and entrée improved, and spaces of inquiry opened.

Concentrated in urban and including rural settings, I interviewed persons in the following categories and institutions on the condition of anonymity. Unless their publications already made them known to a wider public and they agreed to be cited with their work, I fully respected this desire, given the small, close-knit intellectual community of my inquiries. I entered this community through a number of avenues, of which these are illustrative.

By participating in the research and conference agenda of \textit{Point Sud: Musclez le savoir local} (Empowering local knowledge) a research NGO in Bamako, I made contact with respondents in State and Non-State Education sector institutions, including the University of Mali, the Superior Normal School, and Faculty of Letters Arts and Social Sciences, as well as high school and college teachers in four diverse Bamako quartiers.

Contacts in the \textit{Departement Nationale de Formation Linguistique et d'Alphabetisation} (DNAFLA) lead me to language-learning materials and further contacts. In particular, I was invited to a workshop of the \textit{Reseau des Communicateurs en Langues Nationales} (RECOLAN) where I met civil society and media actors (print and radio) focused on translating the terms of political discourse (e.g. around elections, democracy, human rights, and peace building) into local (primarily Bamanankan) idioms. Referrals and introductions broadened the range of senior and mid-level staff in local, national and international NGOs, and also revealed ever more threads of

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{191} These skills I had developed through my university training in anthropology, philosophy, and political science, as well as ten years of amateur and three of professional experience as a stage actor, where performance notes are an integral part of honing the skills of observation, interaction, and script workshopping.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{192} See also below, “Languages.”}
formal and informal networks of organizations and actors engaged in different facets of ‘raising and forming citizen consciousness,’ as the Centre Djoliba called it: *l’éveil et la formation de la conscience citoyenne*. Once accessed, these networks of actors increased the numbers of available civil society respondents, and brought with it a certain surfeit of choice.\(^{193}\)

Thanks to the relationships built over months with these and other persons, I met actors in Islamic education and Islamic civil society in international and domestic NGOs, including senior staff, national association staff, journalists, radio programmers, middle school principals, teachers, and former students. Indeed, questions of Islam, religion, and secularity were sensitive enough to warrant building relationships in advance of seeking to question respondents. Having sufficient local contextual knowledge to demonstrate sensitivity and empathy was a necessary prior condition.

Respondent selection was therefore purposive, providing not a representative sample, but one indicative of the views held by a particular segment of the population. The statistically generalizable evidence in the admirable aggregate work in the Afrobarometer public opinion survey (2001) provided a base from which to probe questions suggested by but not addressed in that research.

Questions’ content was informed by current terms of reference (e.g. the (then) upcoming elections, economic crisis, education-system dysfunction, unemployment, post-conflict peace-building, media freedom and access, and religious politics). Interview questions tailored for specific institutional contexts or population groups, aimed to elicit respondents’ definitions of terms while at the same time provide openings for a glimpse of gaps and links between terms and their lived experience. Respondents situated themselves in relation to the more abstract terms of reference (e.g. participation, democracy, patriotism, liberty, duty, secularity, reconciliation), and articulated these to frame current events and experiences.

\(^{193}\) A more detailed description of the arcs of documentation, contact, entrée, observation, introduction, interview, follow-up, collaboration, is beyond the space afford here.
As respondents informed the account (as evidence) and structured the investigation, they were engaged in a twofold process of articulating and evaluating their own experience related to the central issues: authority, representation, legitimacy, socio-political membership and identity. In some cases, therefore, respondents gave reflexive explanations of their own remarks and their position.

Languages

French fluency and an ultimately active beginner’s knowledge of Bamanankan facilitated entrée with respondents with less formal French education and analysing key terms. From the beginning of field research, greater local language capability became clear as *sine qua non* for entrée and interviews that were more telling. Drawn especially from Geertz’s methodological and interpretive ‘thick description,’ this anthropological sensibility focuses on local knowledge and “webs of meaning” constructed and contested through idioms of political discourse at the interface between vernacular and official discourses. Without close language work, the richness of the materials would have not been as readily linked to the oral historical tradition —the very traditions deployed in articulating and ‘indigenising’ democratization.

Moreover, ethnographic analysis of democracy is also an inquiry into donors’ self-awareness of democratization as trans-cultural, applied democratic theory. Abbink and

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195 On respondents’ use of idioms and producing discourses, the voices of interviewees are compromised by multiple factors, including transcription, organization for illustration, interpretation (mine and theirs, or others’). While the original expression is not recorded in the strictest sense, a dynamic sensitivity to it consistently directs the overall analysis and interpretation. This said, my normative concerns, while heavily conditioned by those of my respondents, and key informants, are, of course, my own, and are more fully stated at the conclusion of this methodological section.
Hesseling\textsuperscript{196} make explicit the need for democratization research is to take a page from anthropology, and put the cultural, political, and philosophical underpinnings of African democracy—realized and unrealized—on the research agenda.

\textit{Some Axes of Normative Commitment}

\textbf{Local—Global}

As may be gleaned from the above, certain normative commitments animate this thesis. While I do not ascribe to a ‘cult of the village’ that privileges local knowledge above all, I do believe that scholars must at least qualify the prescriptive universalisms of economic, political, and cultural ‘globalization.’ The interface of official and vernacular, ‘global’ and ‘local’ discourse and practice presents opportune sites for such work.

\textbf{Democracy: Thick and Thin}

Taking seriously scholars’ assessments of new electoral democracies in Africa as “thin,” and “low-intensity”\textsuperscript{197} brought me to consider not only the dynamics of staging elections or the ideological spectrum represented by candidates, but also the very concept of the citizen who’s consciousness is to be raised and formed. Related to the dissent–consensus axis mentioned above, I am currently considering further the place of communitarian-republican norms and values of political identity and citizen engagement in a normative theory of citizenship. This is not yet a \textit{normative} stance entirely against liberal individualism and materialism, but rather a epistemological commitment to take seriously the ‘thicker’ social and political-cultural referents provided by domestic actors’ vernacular–official hybrid discourses. I do believe, however, that

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{196} Eds. In \textit{Election observation and democratization in Africa}, 1993\textsuperscript{197} R. Abrahamsen, 2000: 145; Sandbrook, 2000: 6, 25.}
republican citizenship formation in former French colonies operates within complex and problematic normative legacies for which liberal individualism is conceptually insufficient.  

**Dissent—Consensus**

Although I am currently questioning further the place of dissent in a normative theory of democracy in post-dictatorship and post-conflict contexts, this thesis is animated by the belief that enabling dissent, not managing it, is indeed a *sine qua non* for deepening and sustaining democracy in Mali, Africa, and beyond. This belief stems from my reading in political theory, as well as the guidance of Malian intellectuals, whose activism against the dictatorship informs their sense of and frustration with the discourses and practices of ‘consensus,’ ‘unanimism,’ and ‘unity’ pervasive apologies for the current status of democracy in Mali and elsewhere in Africa. Consequently, a critique emerges of the means by which unsustainable oppression is transformed into sustainable and legitimated exploitation. Thus, pluralist politics that rest on a minimal conception of accountability or “mere multipartyism,” have been “[d]etached from wider reforms that would guarantee social and ideological pluralism in public life.”

**Equality—Hierarchy (e.g. patriarchy, patron-clientism, ‘solidarity’)**

How rarely the word ‘equality’ comes up in the range of discourses considered in this thesis drew me to reconsider de Tocqueville’s characterization of democrats. Cherishing equality above all, democrats’ disdain for rank distinctions and the rituals of their representation and reproduction is one of de Tocqueville’s key distinctions between American and European political communities and culture in the early 19th century. I, uncomfortable from an

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200 *Democracy in America*
ethnographic standpoint with insisting on equality as a fundamental democratic value and thus imposing it on the Malian contexts, engaged Malians’ internal debates about dissent in both domestic and foreign-modelled political norms, practices and institutions. That said, facing —and partly participating in— Malians’ production and reproduction of the rituals and symbols of rank distinction and order, I found my relatively egalitarian sensibilities challenged almost daily.201

OUTLINE OF ARGUMENT IN THE NEXT FIVE CHAPTERS

This study is critical of liberal theory, and follows a structuration approach to ideological analysis of hegemony, supplemented with a moral economy approach to idioms of action that defend a specifically democratic political legitimacy. These idioms link indigenous and Western-democratic civil societies together, in order to legitimize pluralist-electoral democracy with local, embedded standards of legitimate political authority, especially those of reciprocal, asymmetrical solidarity. Thus, democratic legitimization seeks, in the popular perceptions of political legitimacy, its own moral accountability across social divisions.

The ‘moral economy of good governance,’ then, sets the theoretical framework in which to question Mali’s ostensible ‘cultural advantage’ for democratic consolidation, as well as the democratic theory that frames both the cultural and democratic aspects of this advantage.

Chapters Two and Three will place the socio-economic and political-cultural of the social divisions contemporary hegemony seeks to manage in the context of indigenous, Islamic and Western political economies of the pre-colonial, colonial, independence, and post-dictatorship historical periods. Chapter Three will also discuss the contemporary legacies of these political economies, in terms of norms, practices, and institutions as concepts for understanding contemporary political identities and the ideological homogenization of the ascendant middle-class. Chapters Two and Three detail further the culture and language relevant to elements of

201 As suggested by this thesis’ ethno-linguistic approach, taking on and ‘performing’ rank sensibilities proved too useful for my access and entrée (a white male foreign researcher), to be wholly resisted on principle. For example, sênekunya (“joking cousinage”), while also a reciprocal levelling mechanism, operates as such within a well-articulated set of hierarchical relationships between groups.
indigenous moral leadership and the idioms of action and expression, drawing on the Bamanan language tradition which is dominant in Malian national-political life.

Chapters Four and Five situate, respectively, the indigenous and Islamic idiomatic resources that are available for the Western-Democratic appropriation. Chapter Four seeks to square the broadly democratic and anti-democratic forces in Malian society and politics from a perspective critical of procedural neo-liberal democratization as political modernization. The chapter deconstructs ostensible cultural advantages for democracy, and uses these to engage Malians’ assessments of the ambiguous cultural elements relative to (1) democratic and anti-democratic norms in Mali, and (2) what is meant by democratic norms to whom? The chapter analyses how ‘moral governance’ is the product of middle and upper class actors’ struggle to legitimate neo-liberal democratization with indigenous authority through the synthesis of indigenous and post-colonial mechanisms of hegemony in the post-apertura period.

Chapter Five analyses how the diversity and coherence of Islamic idiomatic resources reproduce and negotiate the legitimation of neo-liberal democratization. Together with indigenous idioms, Islam is used to articulate anxieties and particular forms of conservative renewal. Elaborating on the issues mentioned earlier, Chapter Five depicts ambivalence about Mali’s Islamic socio-cultural heritage, and especially about Arabophone influence in Malian society, culture, and political economy. Islam in Mali is, on the one hand, consistent with an ‘accommodating secular’ State, religious toleration, and a pro-West stance, which are part of legacies of religious syncretism in West Africa; and, on the other hand, as oppositional, increasingly politicized Islamicist forces unprecedented since Malian independence. This oppositional Islam and its agents highlight some of the social divisions the neo-liberal democratization hegemony seeks to manage by using indigenous and exogenous idioms, as well as those of Islam itself.
Chapter Six details the Western-led and -oriented synthesis of democratic discourses in domestic contexts. Actors at various levels of the factioned unity-seeking ruling class (local and foreign, State and NGO development practitioners) stress minimal, procedural, managerial, and elite-driven democratization. Both the intended and unintended consequences of this project link a autonomous-individualistic citizen identity to a embedded-interdependent communal one, in order to co-opt or marginalize the indigenous and Islamic idioms, which have potential for articulating resistance to the moral and political idioms with which upper-middle class cosmopolitans represent citizenship, patriotism and nationalism through authoritarian and hierarchical norms and practices.
CHAPTER 2: The historical, political, and economic context of contemporary hegemony

PRE-COLONIAL MALI

Imperial tradition

The imperial tradition of West Africa establishes the historical basis for the subsequent discussion of the “collective conviction of belonging to a nation whose age and extent largely exceed that of the contemporary Republic of Mali.” I will later critique contemporary actors’ historiography of the imperial tradition. However, the sophisticated pre-colonial organization of production, distribution, consumption, and exchange, as well as the interdependence of governance norms and practices are the historical realities underlying the “Malian identity of common characteristics and values that are internalized and shared.”

Because of the pre-colonial political and economic structures, West African polities through the colonial and post-colonial periods “only partly absorbed European notions of ‘stateness’ and political behaviours.” The colonial state did not “totally reorder[ ] political space, societal hierarchies and cleavages, and modes of economic production,” and left evidence of “continuities in structures and practices, adaptations but not submission to European concepts of politics and state.” Pre-colonial West Africans were generally accustomed to centralized states with relatively strong bureaucracies and judiciaries, and that provided security for the population. Although this arrangement was not conflict-free, it protected trade among groups within the empires and states, and for long distances beyond.

Division of the large pre-colonial polities and economies in the 18th and 19th centuries left these communities able to organize to resist colonial invasion, but ultimately too fractured to

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205 Ibid
206 Ibid
defeat superior European weapons technology. If European intervention nearly completely removed landholding chiefs, it brought to the fore a new generation of big land owners and small local entrepreneurs who were at once producers and merchants. Commercial activity thus became relatively open, whereas the pre-capitalist economies privileged authority of various kinds (over slaves or captives, land access, military force), leaving only a small number of entrepreneurs with sufficient wealth for investment.208

Table: Chronology of West African Kingdoms209

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Century</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th century</td>
<td>Future Ghana empire beings among Soninké groups in modern Senegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1076</td>
<td>Almoravids campaign against ancient Ghana and enter its capital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1230's</td>
<td>Ghana declines. Mali Empire emerges under Sundiata Keita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th century</td>
<td>Mali dominates the upper Niger basin, peaks under Mansa Musa 1312-1337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th-15th centuries</td>
<td>Mali declines. Songhai Empire dominates of gold trade; Timbuktu focus of Islamic culture and trade on the trans-Saharan routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1464</td>
<td>Sonni Ali becomes leader of Songhai and defeats Mali.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1493</td>
<td>Askia Mohammad I expands Songhai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1591</td>
<td>Moroccan army defeats Songhai, make Timbuktu their capital and rule until their decline in the mid-18th century.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to extensive long distance trade, the regional empires of Ghana (8th–11th centuries), Mali (13th century), and Gao/Songhai (16th century) shared the features of significant standing armies and an effective taxation system.210 The Ghana empire formed among clans of the Soninké (in modern Eastern Senegal). The empire’s wealth was salt and gold, supplemented by trade in slaves, salt and copper, textiles and other manufactured goods through the trans-Saharan routes.211

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The political and economic power of Ghana, as well as of Mali and Songhai, came from their agricultural base in the Niger River Valley; control of regional trade, and military control of the savannah to sustain the empires; Islamicization also helped integrate the empires socio-economical, politically, and culturally.  

As Ghana declined, Mali emerged, with Sundiata of the Keita clan as leader, and benefited from the extensive trade networks and political communities accustomed to imperial rulers. In addition to gold dust and agricultural products, Mali controlled the salt trade, and established the imperial capital at Niani on the upper Niger River. Crucial to subsequent history, a

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professional class of traders developed, including those of Mandinka, Bamana, Soninke and later Dyula ethnicity.  

**Sundiata Keïta**

The epic story of Sundiata Keïta founding the Mali Empire is retold in contemporary Malian political discourse to situate a type of authority that is at once authoritarian, popular, hierarchical, and pluralist. Subsequent chapters will show that the history represents leadership, correct social relations, and reconciliation among classes, ethnicities, regions, and former enemies.

In 1235, twelve vanquished regional kings swore fealty to the conquering *Mansa* who would preside over them all. This great meeting of leaders, given today as an example of proto-democracy in the pre-colonial era, established social and economic classes, by which, through paternal hierarchies, information flowed from the peripheries to the centre, and from the bottom to the top to build consensus, solidarity, and manage social divisions.

Recounted by oral tradition, the *kurukan fungan* (Bam. ‘hill-top clearing’) had a lasting impact on subsequent regional history. There, through the bard Balla Fasséké, Sundiata “proclaimed all the prohibitions that still govern relations among tribes [tribus], to each he assigned their land, he established the rights of each people [peuple] and he sealed the friendship among them [l'amitié des peuples.]”

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214 “Ancient Ghana” op cit
215 D T. Niane, *Sundjata; an epic of old Mali*, trans. G. D. Pickett, (Harlow, England: Longman Group Ltd, [1965]): 84; Preface to the French Edition, Characterised by ‘supreme rule’, the terms are ‘sovereign’, ‘supreme chief’, ‘Fama of Famas’, and ‘Mansa’. Pickett preserves Niane’s translation of *fama* as ‘king’ and glosses *mansa* as “emperor or paramount king.” (Pickett, 1965: 95). It is important to stress that *faama* also means powerful, rich, and influential (as of a king or administrator), and derives these meanings from *fanga ma* that which/one who has power, since *fanga* means force, power, and efficiency as well as reign, authority and political and administrative power.
216 Djelé Mamadou Kouyaté’s oral account of this is reported by Niane in a section of his *Sundjata or the Mandé epic* called ”Kouroukan-Fougan or the Division of the World” (Le Partage du Monde).
In addressing the assembly, Fasséké identifies those present, including warriors and people of Manding, Do, Tabon, Mema, Wagadou, Bobo, Fakoli, and especially those of Sibi and Kà-ba, where kurukan fugan occurred, today Kangaba. Furthermore, Sundiata decreed kin-like alliances between the Kamara of Sibi and the Keita of Manding. The Djallonké and Maninka would also be allies of the Manding, their descendants welcome at court. Sundiata proclaimed the Kondé of Do the royal Keitas’ uncles, and the Tounkara the joking cousins of the Kéita. Certain occupations, class, and ‘caste’ relationships were also set forth, including marabouts from the Cissé, Bérété, and Touré clans, and blacksmiths from the Sissoko clan of Fakoli. From among the Kouyaté, descendants of Keita’s bard (Bam. djeli, Fr. griot) future bards would be chosen, entitling them to joke at the expense of every people, and especially the Keita.\textsuperscript{218}

An account of imperial history is crucial for understanding the importance of its use in later political historiography, mobilization and resistance, both successful and unsuccessful. More important for this thesis are the imperial-civilizational norms, practices, and institutions of paternalism, hierarchy, unification, and reconciliation.\textsuperscript{219}

\textit{Islamic Entries}

African traders included the Wangara, Dyula, and Soninké, who through conversion to Islam, accessed religious community and transsaharan and Maghrebian business networks established by Arabs and Berbers since the 9th century.\textsuperscript{220} These Muslims’ entrepise was concentrated in towns and cities, among urban “bourgeoisies of merchants and `ulama

\textsuperscript{218} Niane, 140-142.
\textsuperscript{219} Reconciling classes, ethnic communities, regions, towns, villages, and former enemies under a paternal authority is part of reinforcing social and moral responsibility, and social cohesion through interlinked hierarchies.
\textsuperscript{220} Benoist, 1998: 42-43
[teachers],” and thus influenced the structure of imperial political, economic, social and cultural development.222

As Muslims enjoyed an important and secure role in administration and commerce in the Mali Empire, Islamization reinforced the state, elites, and court in the centres of trade and government.223 Indeed, among the Mandé, Islam’s minority status classed it with traditional religious society, as “a socio-religious caste alongside other occupational castes, such as the nyamakala, or artisans’ class,”224 also distinguished by their roles as traders and promoters of the textile industry. Traders increased external contact and exchange of goods along the hajj routes to the Middle East more than they produced a ‘deep’ Islamization of influence over ritual practice and moral authority.225 Furthermore, ‘syncretic’ Islamic-indigenous structures, norms, and practices connected upper-middle class clerics to the general population through relationships of teaching, healing, and magical interventions.

If Islam held a relatively circumscribed place among elites before the 18th century, Islamic renaissance movements of the 18th and 19th centuries, such as those of El Hadj Oumar Tall and Samori Touré, brought Islam into prominence throughout society, albeit in smaller polities. These military and conversion movements reacted against the decline in the position of Muslim communities since the Songhai Empire’s collapse in the 16th century. This reaction prepared a political, territorial, and ideological counterforce to French conquest. In response, colonial authorities exploited internal conflicts by supporting and strengthening certain religious lineages (e.g. in Timbuktu, Djenné, and Nioro du Sahel), against an emerging group of upper

223 N. Levtzion, 1973: 47; M. Crowder, 1968: 33
225 Hargreaves, West Africa, Englewood Cliffs NJ: Prentice-Hall 1967: 25. Although Islamic norms and practices are pervasive throughout the region in all aspects of social, economic, political and cultural life, their relative authority varies widely. In brief, Islam is unevenly authoritative and is not monolithic.
class, upper-middle and middle class Arabophone merchants and intellectuals. The perceived threat to political stability united colonial authorities with established religious specialists, whose practices the Arabophones challenged as ‘non-Islamic.’

The pre-colonial legacies of religious accommodation in West Africa allowed Islam, adopted to reinforce established power as an elite religion of imperial courts, traders and healer-clerics, subsequently to forge States under a dominant class and ruling clan. The general “superficiality of Islamic penetration among the cultivators [that] was revealed as Mali [empire] disintegrated” is a paradoxical legacy of the larger-scale pre-colonial states that facilitated Islam’s diffusion through their internal organization and longer-range trade networks.

**Successor polities and ethnic communities up to the 19th century**

Although contemporary actors’ historiography of the imperial tradition tends to connect today’s Republic of Mali with the ‘Great Mali’ empire, the more recent Songhai empire is also an important period in the imperial political economy, and the “common heritage” of Malians today. Indeed, “[c]ohabitation among such diverse peoples [hommes] has not always been easy [...] Mali’s history is full of conflicts, conquests, and liberations.” Groups nevertheless share “a common denominator [...] strengthened by a long history of cohabitation, conflict, and exchanges of all sorts -matrimonial, commercial, or simply that of neighbours.”

**Songhai**

The Songhai state developed trade networks between Sorko fishers on the Niger River bend with Muslim traders in Gao since the 9th century. Although within Mali’s sphere of influence in the 14th century, the Songhai state was never effectively taxed by Mali. The later Songhai empire, founded by Sonni Ali (1464–92), flourished under Askia Mohammed I (r. 1493-

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228 Benoist 1998: 21-22, quote 23
229 Ibid, 23
A Soninké and devout Muslim, Askia I brought Islam to the regions under his rule, and strengthened links to the Muslim heartland by going to Mecca. More centralized than Mali, the Askia dynasty established schools, standardized weights and measures, improved banking and credit practices, reorganized the armed forces, promoted more foreign trade, and based the administration of justice on Koranic law.

As in Mali, Songhai had a caste of artisans, and agriculture relied on slave labour. Exports included gold, kola nuts, and slaves; imports included textiles, horses, salt and luxuries. After a coup by Askia Mohammed II, internal divisions and conflicts among his successors allowed the empire to decline. The state’s disintegration was final in 1591 with the Moroccans’ invasion; they governed from Timbuktu until the 18th century.

*Map: ethnic groups’ areas*

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230 The Caliph of Egypt also made him Caliph of the region now Mali, Chad, north west Nigeria, and Niger
231 Benoist, 1998: 33 ; D. Duncan “West African Kingdoms” *Black Excellence In World History*
http://www.csusm.edu/Black_Excellence/documents/pg-g-m-s-empires.html acsessed 03/03/2007
The Bamanan states

The Bamanan states, much smaller in scale than the earlier empires, were dominant in Ségou and Nioro (Kaarta). Segou and Kaarta were organized mainly for slave trading and warfare. Ségou, founded early in the 18th century, declined after losing a decisive conflict in 1818 to the Peul Muslims under Cheikou Amadou Barry in Macina. Despite linguistic commonalities spread across West Africa by Mandé speakers through migration and trade, there are historical differences. While the Maninka in western Mali recall the Mali-Keita empire, the Bamana distance themselves from it, instead recalling the Kaarta and Segou kingdoms on the middle Niger River in the 18th-19th centuries.  

Cheikou Amadou ruled (1818-1844) over a Peul community with significant political, economic, and military organization, as well as a more radical, systematic religious orthodoxy of the Qadiriya brotherhood. By mid-century, however, these events would be overshadowed by the political-military exploits of El Hajj Umar Tal (1794–1864). A Toucouleur of the Tijaniya brotherhood, he defeated Segou in 1861 and Macina in 1862. Umar's son Amadhu ruled after 1864 over a significant, if fractured State that resisted the French conquest under Faidherbe until colonial conquest was completed by century's end.  

The Dyula traders mentioned above, centered on Sikasso were important especially after 1875, serving as solid allies for Samori Touré. Indeed, harnessing the Dyula and building an army in the 1860s, Samori's state (1886), with 162 provinces, flourished around trade routes under his able military protection, and encompassed an Islamic polity that resisted the French, until Samori's eventual defeat in 1898.  

234 Benoist, 1998: 33  
236 Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974:100-103. See also below, French Colonialism section  
237 Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974: 98-100, 150; Benoist, 1998: 80, 82-83. See also below, French Colonialism section
Social Structure of Communities and Traditional Leadership

Generally, in pre-colonial Mali, local communities were nested within regional and still larger entities, up to “states dominated by military, religious and merchant aristocracies.”

Dominant in these large political communities “were not the landowners, but the guarantors of trade and of the security of the land who exacted tribute from the population.” Kinships or religious relationships linked together agriculturalists, nobility, artisan castes’ members, and slaves or captives in an extended ‘family,’ several of which founded a village. This “triangular structure (nobility, agriculturalists, slaves) […] called the tributary mode of production […] concealed a permanent conflict of interests between various groups.”

Despite paying in kind products to the state on which it depended for trade security, the village was relatively autonomous and self-reliant. Moreover, while cooperative and private modes of cultivation, land use and labour co-existed in the village, “latent social contradictions involved elders who controlled land and the young men and provided collective labour”; moreover, artisans “were in conflict over the distribution of food” and women “had no direct role in decision making.”

Among the Mandé, free persons, hòròn, did no manual labour other than farming, to which was attached a certain sacredness. The spiritual/magical skill of village and family heads gave religious content to socio-economic stratification and served to “eliminate professional competition to ensure social order.”

Jogoramè and somonò (canoe fishers) were an intermediate category between nobles and the caste members, who were in general called nyàmakala, and including the sub-categories numu blacksmith, jèli bard, garanke leatherworker,

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239 Ibid
240 Ibid
241 Ibid
and *kule* woodworker. The slaves and were in general a trade slave, *jôn*, and captive, *jòn woloso* ‘house born,’ meaning of a second generation,

Although not every ethnic group in Mali has terms corresponding to all these social categories, there are significant commonalities. Important additions originate in the Tuareg and Moor terms for warrior, marabout, and vassal among free persons, and serf among the slave/captive category. Also, more caste category terms are found among the Toucouleur and Peul, though not necessarily a greater number of categories themselves. Indeed, Bamanan incorporates terms from these other languages to refer to (e.g.) the Muslim marabout as akin to a Moor (*mori, morikè*), or as a learned person or teacher (*karamògòkè*).²⁴⁴ Pre-colonial Maasina Fulani social categories included free pastoralists, fishers, farmers, lineage-entitled property-masters (lands, water, pasture) with spiritual links and magical authority over or pacts with unseen forces to complement wealth and power.²⁴⁵

As of the 11th century, Islam transformed to a certain extent the socio-religious organization of pre-colonial society in West Africa, through the conversion of Peul and Toucouleur populations (through their upper classes) especially. Thus, pre-colonial social structure incorporated both indigenous and Islamic elements of social stratification, and dislocated in certain cases the political and religious authority of the pre-Islamic ruling class. Combining herd wealth independent of the agricultural nobility with military organization catalyzed by a warrior aristocracy, Islam challenged and integrated with previous structures of economic, social, and moral authority. Although Islam’s impact was primarily among the elites, conversion to Islam also broke the caste and slave social boundaries at the lower social strata, and mobilized resistance to colonial occupation.²⁴⁶

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²⁴⁶ B. Traore, 1966: 3-4
The categories of the Muslim elites as recorded in the Bamako district in 1904 gives a sense of elite stratification. *Chorfas* were descendants of the prophet, with numerous privileges, including captured wealth, and immunity to the death penalty and taxation. *Hadji* had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and their political influence varied widely (from some to none). *Marabouts* were the literate clergy, about 1/30th of the Muslim population.247

The composition of dominant classes depended on the communities’ different livelihoods, whether farming, fishing, gardening, herding, artisanal processing of products such as shea nuts and cotton, or trading. Moreover, linked dominant classes were sustained by education and trade networks in urban settings, and by land holdings and control of labour in rural ones. Suggesting a distinctly “African mode of production,” the “combination of patriarchal agricultural economy with low internal surplus” was linked to “exclusive control of long-distance exchange by one group”248 in a given region. Pre-capitalist exchange was based on reciprocity and redistribution, socially from below to above, and geographically from periphery to center. Side-by-side with money token economies was “the ‘multicentric’ juxtaposition of discrete transaction spheres.”249 Moreover, though wealth established power, so too did power, influence, or reputation afford access to wealth. Such reputation may be premised on membership in a social group (e.g. landholding nobility) whose identity, recruitment, access, and exclusivity are carefully regulated and guarded through cultural and social mechanisms of the lineage.250

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248 Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974: 285
249 Ibid: 263.
250 J. H. Vaughan "Population and Social Organization," in Africa by Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara, Bloomington: Indiana University Press: 1986: 159-180: 172. While certainly more complex, the two broadest social divisions in Mandé regions are horon, ‘free,’ landholding nobility and the opposite jon, ‘caste-person,’ also ‘slave / captive.’ Bailleul, 1996. The slave class was also divided: e.g. jonwoloso (birth slaves, 2nd generation) san-jon (purchased), and jongoro (captured / freed) (Ward, 1976 : 23)

Among the nobles’ councils were different roles overseeing “all the domains of society and social life,” -(B. Fofana, Ancrages culturels, 2002) —e.g. keletigi defense; tontigi culture, morals, values; tyentigi justice— linked to the general population through geographic officers, such as the jamanatigi, who represented the faama (royal authority) in the regions, and the kabilatigi ‘dynasty chief’ who oversaw the extended family and its links to other groups through marriage, propinquity and common interests.
Indeed, class, occupation, age grades, and craft-caste contributed to the identity of patrons and clients as well as the parameters of social differentiation and their relationships.\textsuperscript{251}

Moreover, the “outstanding characteristic of African limbry* was its tendency to make its members marginal to the society, neither a part of the society nor apart from it.”\textsuperscript{252} Such marginality to society “was also clearly reinforced by ideas about the ethnic superiority of the host society.”\textsuperscript{253}

The problem for the host society is really that of \textit{including} the stranger while continuing to treat him as a stranger. [...] how to append someone who does not belong to the local social system, who when included still remains less than fully an insider.\textsuperscript{254}

Furthermore, age-grades, women’s associations, and sub-sets within them, organized social life.\textsuperscript{255} Notwithstanding the legacies of asymmetrical relations among actors and groups within the village context, the social divisions that organized village life were not identical to class stratification. If these social relations were characteristic of asymmetrical solidarity, it was the subsequent importance of social organization for military exploits, and the captured populations that such activities brought under the ruler of multiple, multi-village communities, that produced relatively legitimated relations of exploitation and authority, that persisted up until colonial conquest.\textsuperscript{256}

With the extended family and household as its base, and lineage from common ancestors, whether real or mythical, the \textit{terroir} is also essential, related not only to livelihoods, but also a historical and sacred link between the people and land. The village chief (\textit{dugutigi}) played a pivotal role, transmitting (in the name of the original inhabitants the founders) entitlements, and

\textsuperscript{251} Ibid: 171-72
\textsuperscript{253} Ibid: 17
\textsuperscript{254} Miers and Kopytoff: 15-16
\textsuperscript{255} J. A. Mbembe, 1985: 196, 209-211
local knowledge. Women’s indispensable roles in production and reproduction make them both cherished and objectified as potential wives and mothers on which to base the economic and cultural reproduction of the household unit.

**FRENCH COLONIALISM**

*Table: Chronology of French Colonialism*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1638; 1688</td>
<td>France on coast of Senegal; then Guinea coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1719</td>
<td>French discover gold at Bambuk on upper Senegal River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1746-56</td>
<td>Gold regions near Bambuk explored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1795-7; 1805</td>
<td>Mungo Park explores Khasso, Kaarta, Sansanding; then Bélédugu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827-8</td>
<td>René Caillé travels from Guinea coast to Timbuktu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863-6</td>
<td>Faidherbe’s emissaries in Segou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>Borgins-Desbordes takes Bamako</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>France completes conquest of French Soudan, future Mali.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899-1916</td>
<td>French resisted for ~20 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Map: French West Africa 1906**

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257 From *dugu* soil, earth, plot, also village, country, region; also *du* ‘household consession.’ Baillieul, 1996


Retreating from the range of reserved welcome or outright hostility he received on his meandering return from his 1817 *hajj*, El Hadj Oumar Tal established a fortress in the Futa Jalon in 1848 (today in Guinea). He subsequently extended his rule towards Timbuktu, and confronted the colonial occupation after allying with the Khasso kingdom and bringing the Kaarta kingdom under his rule in 1855. Failed sieges against the French in 1857 and 1859 prompted Tal to sign a treaty over western territories with Faidherbre in September 1860, and focus his conquest to the east, occupying the Bamanan in Segou in March 1861, and the Peul in Macina and Hamdallhi by May 1862. Retaliating against Tal, the northern Kounta allied with the Macina Peul to force Tal and many of his sons to flee in February 1863. In addition to the 1860 treaty, the French exploited Tal’s conquest of Khasso (and the continued threat from his son Amadu after 1864), to fortify Médine. From Médine the French extended their influence over the entire Khasso region, linking forts at Bafoulabé and Kayes by the first piece of Soudan’s railway in 1884. To these posts, French colonel Brière added the small Bamako state that was never subjected to Tal. With a base at Kita (near Bamako) in 1880 established by Gallieni, and the defeat of Amadu in March 1881, the French could begin in earnest their eighteen-year conquest of the Soudan by force.

As Borgnis-Debordes, firmly established at Kayes, made his plans of attack, his future nemesis Samori Touré was also shifting from life as a prosperous trader to that of Almamy, “commander of the faithful.” Fighting began in December 1882 the strategic point of Bamako on the Niger, which the French took decisively in April 1883. Subsequently taking the fight to Samori’s base in 1885, France encountered significant resistance. Leaving Samori his 200,000 square kilometre, 162-province, million-person empire in the south, France signed a treaty with Amadou Tal in May 1887 to bring all the Toucouleur-ruled states under French protection. Subsequently shrinking Amadou’s sphere of control, the French took on the role of conquerors or


262 Ibid, 73-76
allies of the former ruler’s subjugated territories after February 1889, allying with the Beledougu Bamanan and defeating the Segou Bamana in April 1889.\textsuperscript{263}

The only remaining opponent of colonial occupation, Samori found the purchase of modern rifles limited after 1890 by the Brussels Act, and had repeating rifles produced locally. As he lost ground in the West, he gained it in the East, keeping the French at bay for five years. Defeated ultimately by local resistance as he went east and by his troops’ desertion under French pressure, Samori was injured in September 1897 in an attempt to escape capture, and died in exile in June 1900.\textsuperscript{264}

The French military and strong-arm civilian colonizers, with greater military resources, exploited local rivalries to coerce and co-opt local elites. Indeed, many local leaders sought their particular interests in strategic alliances with the French to settle scores with adversaries.\textsuperscript{265} Subsequently, groups reacted to the French “from different vantage points,” with elite alliances and resistance,\textsuperscript{266} producing a co-opted and contested conquest. Oppressive and uneven, colonial power produced spaces in which West Africans reclaimed control over their work and land.\textsuperscript{267}

Initially uninterested in local institutions for social control and legitimation, the French administration subsequently co-opted and transformed local structures of elite recruitment, labour management, and agricultural knowledge. The colonial commandant de cercle, given his many varied roles, sought the assistance of local collaborators to help manage his comprehensive range of responsibilities and powers to discharge them. The man in this position, whether a former

\textsuperscript{264} Ibid, 88-89
\textsuperscript{265} Ibid, 88-89; Hargreaves, 1967: 97, 99, 101
\textsuperscript{266} J. Ward, 1976: quote xii-xiii; 138-139, 153.
\textsuperscript{267} Ibid: xiv. C.f. “For the majority of the Bambara cultivators French colonial rule became yet another — albeit alien and ruthless— central authority demanding labour, supplies, soldiers and complete loyalty.” (215)
senior officer of the conquest or a commissioned officer risen through the ranks, was known as a “Bush King” (Fr. **Roi de brousse**).\(^{268}\)

To marginalize the existing leadership, the colonially chosen collaborators included the *chefs de canton* who, when compliant, served crucial functions in transforming the social, economic and political structure of community life. Promoted from domestic service or slavery “with contempt for the old families of the country,” these *chefs* executed orders by performing their new roles in the pre-existing social structure.\(^{269}\) From indigenous chiefs being the protectors and managers of the extended family and clan, the creation of *chefs* shifted this patronage towards more exploitative, less reciprocal relationships. The demands of the *commandant* and the *chef* converged to exploit subalterns; this precipitated resistance, refusal, and the cycle of increasingly oppressive discipline over peasants and workers who were impoverished by the very processes that increased their productivity (for colonial coffers).\(^{270}\)

Furthermore, translators and interpreters were an indispensable link between the *commandant* and the administered population, while being able and tempted to exploit their relatively autonomous position *vis-à-vis* the locals to improve their own position by various machinations.\(^{271}\)

**Table: French administration in Soudan**\(^{272}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 September 1880</td>
<td>Command post at Medina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 July 1881</td>
<td>Haut-Fleuve (Upper [Senegal] River) region created, capital at Kayes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 February 1885</td>
<td>Berlin Conference (art. 31) implicitly recognizes France’s sovereignty over the Upper and Middle Niger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{272}\) Benoist, 1998: 89-90
18 August 1890  Haut-Fleuve (Upper River) region becomes administratively, militarily, and financially autonomous, with the Governor in Senegal retaining oversight, and is called the French Soudan.

27 August 1892  French Soudan becomes a fully autonomous colony

16 June 1895  Soudan Colony recognized in the Gouvernement Générale of AOF, subdivided into four independent districts and four regions

January 1889  End of indirect administration, start of direct colonial administration

1899, 1902, 1904, 1911, 1919, 1920, 1932, 1944, 1947  Administrative reorganizations alternatively divide and merge parts of Soudan with neighbouring colonies

Map: French West Africa 1933

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**Socio-Economic Change Under Colonial Rule**

Early French occupation did not translate into immediate, widespread economic transformation. Effective French conquest in Soudan was extended inland from the coastal areas, where French economic interests were more significant, and was the product of oft-changing leadership, as well as contested on scales large (Tal, Samori) and small (localized resistance). Combined with the France’s attention shifting to the First World War, significant administrative reorganization continued, and Soudan’s desert routes were only fully secured by France in the

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273 http://www.sandafayre.com/atlas/fwaib.htm accessed 18/05/07
1930s.\textsuperscript{274} Thus, the early colonial economic development was limited to “striking though irregular increases in tonnage of vegetable exports”\textsuperscript{275} (mainly groundnuts).

The agricultural production of millet and sorghum in Soudan increased most markedly in the latter colonial period. Indeed, of a 46% increase from 1928-1959, 33% occurred after 1945. Similarly, though less dramatically with rice, production increased 102% in the same period, with 48% of that increase occurring after 1945.\textsuperscript{276} These changes point not only to the colonial exploitation of labour in the period, but also the integration of the Soudan’s export crops’ into the global political economy, especially groundnuts, animals, and fish. Moreover, the sectoral proportions through the colonial period show the transformations in socioeconomic structure, particularly the late colonial increase in the service sector, including administrative, commercial, and financial services.\textsuperscript{277}

### Table: Gross domestic production, percentage by sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1928</th>
<th>1939</th>
<th>1945</th>
<th>1959</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map: French Sudan 1920\textsuperscript{278}

\textsuperscript{274} Hargreaves, ibid: 115
\textsuperscript{275} Hargreaves, ibid: 113-114
\textsuperscript{276} S. Amin, 1965: 23. The Office du Niger production increased from 13.5% of total production in 1945 to 32% in 1959.
\textsuperscript{277} S. Amin, 1965: 32. The stagnant industrial sector was sustained mostly by public works (Ibid 34, 36)
\textsuperscript{278} http://www.sandafayre.com/atlas/fsia.htm accessed 18/05/07
The colonial creation of towns and cities

Colonial urbanization, concentrating populations of more than 2,500 inhabitants, saw the urban population more than triple between 1928 and 1959, of which doubling occurred in 1945-1959. This growth further indicates how the colonial economy was accelerating transformation toward the end of the colonial period, and the important changes in urban class structures must be dated from after WWII.

The colonial creation of towns and cities is key in the political economy of post-colonial Mali, and especially interesting for the post-

Table: Colonial Urbanization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>.000 urban inhabitants</th>
<th>% of total population</th>
<th>% Growth rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.9 (to 1945)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.8 (after 1945*)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

279 S. Amin, 1965: 22
280 Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974: 364-367, 369. Also reproduced in towns was a dichotomy of the "European quarters" – centres of administration and commerce (well-guarded by police or soldiers) – and the "African quarters," located apart, with significant differences in public services, housing, policing, spontaneous growth in population and density, and economic dependency on the European quarters.
281 S. Amin, 1965: 22. *This average conceals increases in growth rate later in this period, from ~5% in 1946-47 to ~8% in 1957-59. Other figures have 9.2% of Soudan’s 3.6 million inhabitants in urban centres over 2,000 inhabitants. Afrique Occidentale Française, Haut Commissariat, AOF 1957, Tableaux Economiques, Dakar, 1958, cited in Foltz, ibid: 42
Facing such urbanization, the problematic colonial concept of ‘detribalization’ reproduced stereotypes of village-dwellers’ resilient moral goodness, and city-dwellers becoming corrupted (Fr. *perverti*).\(^{282}\) Yet, as Chapter Four will discuss, notwithstanding the colonial genesis of such prejudices, ‘citification’ is today supposed necessary by contemporary upper class and upper middle-class actors (Malian and non-Malian) in the formation of democratic citizen identity. Moreover, the envisioned processes of contemporary citification articulate rural and urban identities, as well as reproduce ideas of rural populations as the ultimate source of authentic Malian identity, both in terms of historical, cultural and social norms and practices and the source of aggregate votes necessary to carry elections.

As did earlier rulers, the colonizers developed key resources and intensified the control of production. As part of policies by which France encouraged production for the colonial export economy and the colonies’ economic self-sufficiency, the administration established *l’indigénat* on November 15\(^{th}\) 1924. This special legal framework for ‘colonial subjects’ gave administrators flexible, arbitrary power to impose fines, force service or give prison sentences for the most minor of offenses.\(^{283}\)

Servitude was the norm, given the limited influence of labour markets and labourer-worker status on the subjecthood of peasants. Delocalized labour markets and displaced migrant labourers pressured for more ‘citizen’ than ‘subject’ relations of production and consumption. However, a protean ‘citizenship in formation’ without clearly defined content began to emerge. Nevertheless, after 1945, circumscribed entitlements and conditioned political identity ended the

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\(^{282}\) Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974: 375. This should also be seen in the context of French and broader European ideas that “Africans in interior districts were somehow ‘purer’ than those deemed to have been corrupted (whether genetically or culturally) by contact with European slave-dealers or missionaries.” (Hargreaves, ibid: 92-93)

formal status of ‘subject’ for West Africans, bringing relief from the indigénat, forced labour and restrictions on collective organizing.284

Late Colonial Economic Development

After an AOF Governor-General’s 1926 decree, the administration of French Soudan employed WWI (drafted) soldiers for public works. This “new system of forced labour” (50,000 people over 25 years) enabled the construction of the Office du Niger – an irrigation project of 960,000 hectares (~98x98 km). Intended to provide cotton for French textile manufactures and rice for Senegal, the OdN began (1931-32) in a "sparely populated colony [that] could not supply enough labour to exploit the irrigated land,"285 expecting that improvements would ‘attract’ farmers to an otherwise thinly populated area. Recruited farmers and their families were resettled at the OdN (mostly forcibly), to cultivate under an oppressive colonial tutelage.

In part because of worker flight and resistance, another labour strategy, colonisation indigène made labour available and compliant, and included “intensive plow agriculture based on European expertise, private property, and the nuclear family.”286 Consistent with “longstanding,” “habitual” French colonial practice and thinking, the OdN relied on “labour-intensive rather than capital-intensive methods” as well as “forced labour in a situation where labour was scarce.”287 The use of variously coerced and relocated labour for the OdN subsequently affected class differentiation by helping to foster the disdain that soldiers and officers would cultivate for ‘civilian labour’ (e.g. agricultural work) into the post-independence

287 Echenberg and Filipovich, 1986 : quotes 536; 540, 549-550
period. These and similar distortions, in military, bureaucratic, labourer, and peasant classes, are aspects of the larger colonial pattern of transforming the local populations’ ‘class’ contours through recruitment, forced labour, and urbanization.

The French used “forced labour, taxation and rents,” to compel the peasants “to engage in production for exchange and to cultivate the cash crops (cotton and groundnuts)” to integrate the colonies with European markets and industry. This transformed village chieftaincies into a level of colonial administration whereby the chiefs recruited labour for public works and enforced cash cropping to generate tax payments. Their role in supplying labour produced a certain separation, even autonomy from the community. In addition to shifting labour relations among traditional chiefs and villagers, the expansion of trade strengthened merchants as “strategic agents of economic development.” Declining rural food production and living standards during the colonial period further strengthened the “non-productive classes through their association with the developing export crop economy.” Ultimately, the “peasants found themselves at the bottom of an oppressive pyramid of chiefs, merchants and colonial administrators.”

**Colonial and mission education**

We need interpreters to make ourselves understood by the native; as we need intermediaries, belonging to the native milieu by their origin and to the European milieu by their education in order to have these civilizations understood and adopted by local populations whose hostility to anything foreign is beyond comprehension. (M. Delafosse, *Bulletin de l’Education en AOF* #13 (June 1917))

Mission and colonial education created administrative support staff, leaders in the colonial systems, good negotiators with colonizers, all with access to economic opportunities

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290 Ibid
291 Ibid
292 Ibid
afforded by greater openness to France and Europe. Established with assistance and subsidies from the colonial military and administration, missionaries fostered particular kinds of links to European modernity through the operation of colonial schools. Thus, entry into the world of colonizers’ knowledge and expectations was through mission education.294 Facing established basic Koranic education (and some advanced e.g. in Timbuktu), as well as indigenous education that Islam itself had confronted earlier and partly incorporated, colonial administrators and missionaries agreed that “African conditions demanded a specially close relationship between church and state,”295 to train an “indigenous clergy, catechists and schoolteachers.”296 The alienating colonial education was based on different educational purposes to indigenous instruction, which sought social integration overseen by the general community in a variety of settings (household, field, forest, river, village palaver).297

Table: Colonial education in FWA (excluding Koranic schools)298

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1938</th>
<th>1949</th>
<th>% of school-age ‘49</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>000s enrolled</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>~0.6 of pop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region Schools</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
<td>20% of these were in Catholic or Protestant mission schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village schools</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: Koranic schools, Bamako district299

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1909 Students</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1912</th>
<th>1913</th>
<th>1914</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although French-derived education “offered the possibility of individual promotion to a tiny handful, it educated neither efficiently nor effectively the great mass of individuals who

294 Benoist, 1987: 502
296 D. E. Gardinier “The Historical origins of Francophone Africa,” in Johnson, ibid: 335
297 Benoist, 1987: 509
298 Hargreaves, 1967: 129. Senegal held 25% of the schooled population, but only 12% of the AOF total. (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974 : 174)
attended only the first three elementary grades.” The secondary and tertiary education, respectively, produced lower-level administration staff and a Francophone cosmopolitan elite for international commercial and government relations with France after independence. Between 1918 and 1945, though the Ecole Normale William Ponty in Dakar, Senegal had granted only 2,000 degrees, as the “‘nerve centre’ of the West African elite,” Ponty educated “all the cadres of the former colonial civil service,” who met in alumni associations in the federated AOF territories such as Soudan for political discussion and organization. The impact of French acculturation in their households, however, varied. Indeed, provisions for educating the next generation were “fittingly ambivalent […] at the same time reaffirming traditional obligations” and exposing “a new generation to Western (essentially still French-dominated) education.”

By independence, however, “appropriate employment could no longer be found for the thousands of brevets and bacheliers much less for those who had failed the examinations or dropped out of their courses.” Indeed, “France in the era of decolonisation failed to devise an educational policy that would create the elites needed by a modern nation and yet prepare the masses for a productive life in the countryside.” Ultimately, this constraining and coercive ‘integration’ into the colonial political economy created the elements of the post-colonial dominant class, as well as their client base and supporters among petty bourgeois, lower-middle class artisans, lower salariat, and teachers. Moreover, transforming the resulting crises of cultural identity into a bedrock of political organization and protest, the new intellectual elite produced by the colonial education, former ‘subjects,’ grasped means by which ultimately to

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300 Garinier, 342
301 Foltz, ibid: 21.
303 Sabatier, 1985: 184. The ‘elite’ terminology here provides some difficulties: ‘elite’ before WWII is defined as “any French-speaking African person.” Until 1950 however, “their pre-eminent position was qualified by their dependence on and subordination to the French.” (Sabatier, 179, 185; note #2, 182)
304 Garinier, ibid
305 Ibid, 343
challenge the form, prospects, and legitimacy of relations with the French metropole.  

Conspicuous in an emerging educated ‘elite’ class, then, teacher-organizers linked the metropolitan French and colonial administrators to the local (largely peasant) population and non-agricultural African workers (16,300 of 3.6 million inhabitants) in Soudan in 1956.  

*Table: Colonial School Graduates FWA between 1950-1958*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary certificate</th>
<th>10th grade</th>
<th>Baccalaureat I (after 12th grade)</th>
<th>Bac II (after 13th grade)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62156</td>
<td>7391</td>
<td>2623</td>
<td>1841</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As there was no colony-by-colony education system in AOF, the first school built in what would become Mali, the *Ecole des ôtages* at Kayes in 1886, drew its students, the potentially rebellious sons of traditional chiefs, from all over the French-controlled territory, and had 75 students in three classes by 1902, seeking to create local allies and administrative support staff for the colonizers. After 1900, a vocational school in Sudan had 800 students, and two urban schools in Kayes and Medina taught 110 between them.  

The *Ecole des ôtages*, subsequently “School for the Son’s of Chiefs” in 1893 and the “School for the Sons of Chiefs and Interpreters” in 1910 was to produce “among the children of the traditional chiefs a nucleus of native aristocracy” familiar with and sympathetic to an increasingly French way of life. Following this, in 1916 the *Terrasson de Fougères*  

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309 Gardinier, 339  
310 Benoit 1998: 153-154  
Professional school was established in Bamako, Soudan’s only superior school for many years. Primary education enrolments in 1914 were estimated at 3,000 for Soudan, of 17,000 in AOF.\textsuperscript{313}

Subsequently, elementary town and village schools, regional and upper primary schools recruited students into Soudan’s very few higher schools. These schools included Sons of Chiefs, Veterinary, the Rural training school at Katibougou for village teachers and agents for the agricultural service and interior ministry, which included 99 students in 1938, and the Higher Technical School of Soudan, which was later subdivided into Public Works schools providing doctor, pharmacist, and teacher training for the AOF.\textsuperscript{314}

The effects at Malian independence are instructive. Of over four million inhabitants, 10\% could read, 12\% of school-age children attended school, and Mali’s upper-level colonial education legacy was “three veterinary surgeons, eight medical doctors, ten lawyers, seven engineers and three pharmacists.”\textsuperscript{315} Indeed, the colonial investment in training cadres saw eighteen Soudan primary schools produce one (1) graduate to secondary school in each of 1957, 1958, and 1959.\textsuperscript{316} While the early independence enrolments paint the culmination of colonial education in the best possible light, the small number of persons with secondary, technical, and higher education is clear.

\textit{Table: Enrolments 1961-62}\textsuperscript{317}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|l|l|l|l|}
\hline
Enrolments & Primary & Secondary & Technical & Higher \\
\hline
75,097 & 4,586 & 835 & 600 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}


\textsuperscript{315} A. Touré, ibid: 191. School enrolments significant increased from 3.5\% in 1945 (Suret-Canale, ibid: 391) and very sharply (150\%) after the loi-cadre of 1958. (A. Moumouni, \textit{Education in Africa} trans. P. N. Ott, New York: F. A. Praeger, 1968: 77) This jump in primary enrolments, however, had little affect on the numbers of upper-level cadre-bound students.


\textsuperscript{317} Moumouni, ibid: 95
Commercialized, not developing colonial economy

Overall, the colonial agricultural and industrial sectors stagnated and the service sector expanded rapidly from the increased commercialization of exports and the expansion of financial services, taxation, and public works administration. Trade in key cash crops (cotton and groundnuts) was the mainstay of the AOF economy linked, as it is today, with small-scale artisanal production for domestic markets. Given assessments of this trade-centric economy as “primitive and lazy,” it invited little capital investment. Where investment was made, through the Compagnie Française de l’Afrique Occidentale (CFAO) and the Société Commerciale Ouest Africaine (SCOA), it was concentrated on infrastructure developments for extracting primary products.\(^{318}\)

All these factors further unbalanced economic growth. Gradual production growth (millet, sorghum, rice) before WWII turned to decline afterward, with the shift to an increasingly commercialized, rather than effectively developing, economy, with lesser export flows relative to imports.\(^ {319}\) Modest colonial economic growth, limited by demographic growth, produced little economic expansion from 1930-60, about 1% per annum increase in productivity. Indeed, per capita growth resulted from greatly improved commercialization programs to export only modestly growing production. Furthermore, increased duty revenues swelled colonial coffers, but did not increase productive capacity.\(^{320}\)

Overall, this situation was vulnerable to changes during decolonization and early independence. Moreover, the creation of a small stratum of colonial bureaucrats, given the relative absence of a proletariat and the disconnection of the peasant mass from the centres of economic and political power, isolated the ruling class administrative bourgeoisie. As mentioned

\(^{319}\) Amin, 1965: 36-37, 59
\(^{320}\) Ibid: 69, 70, 72
above, colonial political economy intensified urbanization and created a new urban petit bourgeois class of clerks and junior civil servants, reinforcing some and dislocating other sites of commercial activity. In consciously “Marxist terms,” Hargreaves identifies the classes that developed during the colonial period:

a petite bourgeoisie (junior civil servants, commercial clerks and agents, market traders and shopkeepers, urban landlords, letter-writers, journalists, school teachers, headed by a small elite of professional men and a proletariat (port and railway workers, building labourers and tradesmen, domestic servants, porters and casual labourers with a sizable fringe of family dependents having no regular employment)\textsuperscript{321}

These ‘classes’ were small, however, estimated at 350,000 as late as 1950, or just 2% of the whole FWA population; moreover, the cleavages produced by urbanization were somewhat mediated by characteristic linkages to rural regions, and by seasonal ‘circular’ migration between urban and rural areas. These mediating factors preserved “essentially rural” ways of life and perspectives in the midst of “commercial development and government policy” with social, economic, and cultural effects of “varying intensity.”\textsuperscript{322}

\textbf{Fonds d’investissement pour le développement éconómique et social (FIDES)}

A reversal in colonial views of development financing and concentration on industrialization and public works was marked by the creation of the \textit{Fonds d’investissement pour le développement éconómique et social} (FIDES) on 30 April 1946. A major investment program, FIDES established the conditions for France’s financial and economic tutelage of Mali’s dependent and conditioned economy after de-colonization.

FIDES allowed the State to invest 134 billion francs CFA (approximately 20 billion USD) in two successive plans (1946-1952 and 1953-1957) in AOF.\textsuperscript{323} This significant

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{321} Hargreaves, 1967: quote 123-124; 121
  \item \textsuperscript{322} Hargreaves, ibid: 124
  \item \textsuperscript{323} Communauté Financière Africaine francs. In 1947, 134\textsuperscript{B} CFA = 227.8\textsuperscript{B} F = 20.5\textsuperscript{B} USD. Today, because of Franc devaluation after WWII and the CFA after independence, 134\textsuperscript{B} CFA = 204.6\textsuperscript{M} Eur = 275.8\textsuperscript{M} USD. “CFA franc” Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CFA_franc#Exchange_rate 18/04/2007; “Historical Currency Conversions”
\end{itemize}
investment provided credit loans, subsidies and grants to the colonial administration, to which local receipts were added to finance the projects.\textsuperscript{324} As services expanded and infrastructure developed, the colonial government extended the scope of its already considerable powers.\textsuperscript{325}

Over a period of 40 years, FIDES intended to transform the overseas territories “into modern countries in terms of public infrastructure, and the production, processing and exchange of natural resources.”\textsuperscript{326}

Furthermore, to ensure the French State and overseas administration a dominant role in the mixed economies,\textsuperscript{327} the financing would be composed of an annual endowment from Paris, contributions from the particular territories, made up of local taxes and duties, and any reserve funds or other revenue. Indeed, complementing foreign capital investments (public and private) through this period, local financing grew from 7\% to 32\% in 1928-1959, growth which reflected “the establishment and the enriching” of a “local bourgeoisie of dynamic merchants and transporters”\textsuperscript{328} as decolonization approached. However, the growth of foreign private sector profits, as these were expatriated, was an increasing drain on the level of national savings. FIDES’ financing mechanisms also ensured further intervention in economic and financial

\begin{flushright}
http://futureboy.homeip.net/fsp/dollar.fsp 18/04/2007; “FXHistory: historical currency exchange rates”
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ibid 18/04/2007
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\textsuperscript{324} Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974: 227 ; French governemnt documents online
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\begin{flushright}
http://cubitus.senat.fr/evenement/archives/D23/assemblee.html accessed 06/02/2007. In addition to FIDES, investment sources included CCFOM Caisse centrale de la France outré-mer, the Ex-AOF budget, Local colony budget, French Bidget, Road funds, FEREDES Founds d’expansion rurale et de developpement economique et sociale, and Special credits to the OdN. (Amin, 1965: 38)
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\textsuperscript{327} Article 2 , Paragraph 2, Ibid
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{328} Ibid: 72, 16
\end{flushright}
matters. For example, the State used the *Banque de l’Afrique occidentale* (BAO) as a State bank with development policies “effectively giving the State control of capital markets.”

The dependence on investments made in the AOF colonial economy through FIDES, which was replaced in 1959 by the Aid and Cooperation Fund (FAC) and perpetuated after independence through reliance on foreign capital, continued France’s currency supervision, preferential economic relationships, as well as technical assistance. Moreover, the colonial financial institutions served the European economy, and preserved the French “control of currency, the establishment of exchange rates, and regulating the account balances.” Thus, the French metropole could unload certain administrative burdens of colonialism by the *Loi-cadre* in 1956, while retaining links and mechanisms of domination through financial and economic cooperation agreements.

*The French Republican Tradition and Decolonization*

French Republicanism in its colonial manifestation struggled with the conceptual contradictions and crises of a civilizational perspective, and internal divisions in the metropole. Assuming the need for full-fledged citizens, not merely territorial inhabitants, France was still ultimately unwilling to include West Africans as such. The French republican ideal was contradicted by racism, ethnocentrism and Eurocentrism. In this way, the French *assimilation* imperative sought, on the one hand, to save the continent from its own violence, tyranny and backwardness by opening it to European commerce, Christianity and civilization, while, on the other hand, retaining the notion of an innate, unchangeable and essential ‘Africanness.’ The contradictory assimilationist logic “rests on a certain idea of society as linked to or derived from political ties” by which the

two concepts of the nation and the republic came to merge: one political and therefore inclusive, the other more organismic and culturalist, and as such particularly exclusive. Given these ambiguities, political uniformity came to

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329 Article 3, Ibid; Fall, 530.
330 Fall 531
331 Ibid.
mean cultural uniformity and vice versa: only people sharing that civilisation could be part of the republic’s *civitas*.”

Although the French sought to articulate the knowledge on which their claims to power were made they feared the implications of assimilation, whereby all French West Africans would become not only bearers of French civilization, but also rights-claiming citizens of France. Subsequently, association and decentralization were pragmatic, late colonial bids to keep AOF in France’s sphere of influence, by which French colonies would become ostensibly independent but would not be fully relinquished by France. These policies reacted to crises in France’s relations with African territories and the inter-territory relations between 1946 and 1956.  

Also based in colonial paternalism, *association* emerged as a form of flexible indirect rule, coupled with education of *évolués*. While the colonial economic imposition undermined local development or fledgling accumulation, and a state-sanctioned plutocracy of trading companies repatriated surplus to metropole, paternalist ideology attempted to justify the domination. The French were ultimately compelled to acknowledge their incapacity to manage sustainable political and economic transformation. Direct modernization from the metropole had failed; colonialism began to end in the 1950s.

France responded to popular and elite-level agitations in AOF that forced the issues at the heart of the colonial contradictions. Internally fragmented and contested metropole administrations oversaw late colonialism. If the French Republic's colonial Ministers in Paris were more generally liberal, the field administrators, military and civilian, were characteristically

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not. Also, progressive views on colonial policies put forward in Paris, if not matters of indifference, were hampered by deadlocked debates between the Left and the Right.  

Who Supported Nationalism and Mobilization?

Here we must clarify the transformation of the late colonial structure of class segments to introduce the independence period. The influence of relatively few urban workers must be contextualized with that of the merchants, village chiefs and civil servants, who “emerged from and profited by the colonial period,” and for whom the “object of independence was to improve the terms of their relationship with the ex-colonial power.”

The success in decolonization politics of West African trades union and political leaders came from their close ties with French administration, and thus produced both convergence and divergence in their interests, ideologies, and strategies. In turn, these few elites appealed for support to a relatively small, educated class of bureaucratic-administrative elites more than bourgeois economic actors. Ultimately, the importance of the foreign sector (investments, exports, management) would exacerbate conflicts between nationalist actors. As a precursor to middle-class actors after WWII, this small group of administrative elites was familiar with the colonial administration and economy. Among salaried workers, teachers, artisans, and junior clerks for commerce and administration, some advocated reducing inequalities and others conceded to foreign investors’ pressure (in cash-cropping and mining sectors especially) to continue expatriating capital surplus and leaving little for productive reinvestment. While maintaining connections with rural areas, this salariat would be among the first members of professional organizations between 1920 and 1940, themselves the beginnings of trade unionism.

335 P. M. Williams, De Gaulle’s Republic. [London], Longmans, 1961; 22-4
336 François, 27
and political mobilization in AOF.\textsuperscript{338} In January 1947, the Railway authority, \textit{Régie du Chemin de Fer de l'AOF}, had 600 European and 20,000 African employees, including 8,230 workers organized in three categories. The \textit{cadre commun supérieur} included all Europeans and a few Africans, mostly involved in accounting. The \textit{cadre local supérieur} comprised technicians and local officials, graduates of the \textit{École Terrasson de Fougères} (Bamako), and similar schools in Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinée and Dahomey (today Bénin). The \textit{cadre local secondaire} were local staff including draftsmen, topographers and public works foremen. All other employees were African \textit{auxiliaries} without advancement possibilities, recruited by need on short-term contracts.\textsuperscript{339}

Though the right to form labour unions was ultimately extended to all African workers in August 1944, European representatives of major private firms still refused to accept collective bargaining with African labour unions. In response, in 1947, the \textit{Union Regionale des Syndicats du Soudan} (URSS) was formed and led by Abdoulaye Diallo from Guinée. Within this umbrella union, railway workers were organized as \textit{La Confédération des Cheminots Africains}.\textsuperscript{340}

For such African workers and their families, social and political movements in AOF sought socio-economic entitlements equal to French citizens through the universalistic appeals of 'assimilationist nationalism.' However, elite opinion was not unanimously assimilation-nationalist, and anti-imperial voices were well organized from the same moment in 1946. While the common opinion in Senegal, represented by the Senegalese member-group of the FWA \textit{Committés d'Etudes Franco-Africaines} (CEFA), was assimilationist, the view among CEFA members in Soudan and elsewhere was inclined more towards independence.\textsuperscript{341} Different experiences of colonialism among the political class of French-educated African elites were articulated along a spectrum from relatively moderate to radical nationalism, with no single vision

\textsuperscript{338} Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974: 175-176
\textsuperscript{339} C. H. Traoré, 1974-5: 21, cited in J. Jones, ibid
\textsuperscript{340} Ibid, 29-30. Diallo a \textit{postier} at the \textit{Poste et Télécommunications.}
\textsuperscript{341} Chafer, 2002: 72-78
of the post-independence nation-State. The mass appeal of the more moderate option ensured its success, with promises of economic development through cooperation with France. Especially in Soudan the paucity of local resources showed the importance of continuing partnerships with France and other countries in the sub-region.³⁴²

Over time, political elites divorced socio-economic issues from the larger political question of emancipation in their apologetics for assimilationism; they sought merely French-style collective bargaining in industrial relations. Already, then, beginning in the late 1940s, the nationalist leadership was disconnecting from the movement. This greatly weakened the latter, while it bolstered the personal power and influence of the former.³⁴³ Notwithstanding these weakening links, the nationalist movement gained ground between 1950-56 with the formation and involvement of trades union, student, and youth movements. Reconciling certain internal divisions, the trade union movement in AOF produced an autonomist alternative to assimilationism as early as 1951, when these two tendencies clashed at the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT)’s Bamako conference. Soudanese trade unionists favoured metropole linkages because, from Soudan’s perspective, union autonomy without metropole links was futile, as only 5% of the AOF workforce was wage-earning, and of which certainly a small portion was concentrated in the Soudan territory. The autonomist alternative found some allies also, however, among the middle- and lower-level civil servants, teachers, assistant teachers, and clerks. These comprised the locally educated leaders of the student and youth movements after 1955, “in a context [both in France and AOF] of political agitation which was the expression of a more radical challenge to the colonial presence.”³⁴⁴

³⁴² Ibid: 230-231
³⁴³ Chafer, 2002: 111. A similar disconnect in the political and social movements for pluralism (1985-present) is discussed in Chapter Six, c.f. S. Bagayogo, Le cheminement du Mali vers un espace politique pluriel Association Djoliba & Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Bamako, 1999
The left-wing dynamics of early independence are in part an artefact of the ideological peculiarity of the implementation specialists in the French Soudan’s colonial administration. It was “members of the technical corps of the colonial bureaucracy, who constituted the colony’s political Left. They set out to involve young progressive Africans in a variety of voluntary associations and became thereby catalysts for the genesis of a nationalist elite.” In contrast to the colonial administrators, the clerks, teachers, engineers, and agricultural or health technicians were simultaneously integrated into the colonial bureaucracy, and yet, as specialists on discrete projects were marginalized from that same bureaucratic and social hierarchy. Their support of more radical politics was in part a response to this sense of alienation from their own colonial regime, and aligned the Soudan Left with that in France.

However, over time more divisions separated the unionists’ and students' outlooks, founded on generational rather than ideological or party differences. Seeing the unionists as collaborators with the colonial establishment, and fuelled by events elsewhere in the European empires (e.g. Algeria, the Bandung conference, anticipations of Ghanaian independence), the younger nationalist activists mobilized opposition not only to the French, but also to those African leaders they saw as allies of that colonial administration. From this stance converging student and youth movements, initially cultural organizations, were able to work with ever more radicalized elements of the unions on campaigns for political independence between 1957-1960.

**Limited decolonization benefits**

Developing from mutual-aid societies after WWI, the labor union movement, with trades union and student organizations at the forefront, fed the nationalist

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345 C. Cutter; “The genesis of a national elite: the role of the Popular Front in the French Soudan 1936-39” in G. W. Johnson, ed, 1985: 108. This will become especially relevant to the post-1991 context, in which supporters of the status quo and the social democrats are splinters of a previously common front.  
346 Cutter, 1985: 109-113  
347 Chafer, 2002: quote 217; 194-195, 207-208, 216
movements between WWI and WWII. The militantly anticolonial Union Soudanaise-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (US-RDA, Sudanese Union – African Democratic Rally) became an important political force as the Soudan federation's first interterritorial political party (launched at the Bamako congress, 19-21 Oct. 1946). Forming within the broader Rassemblement Démocratique Africain under Mamadou Konaté and future Malian president Modibo Keïta, the US-RDA sought to represent a progressive vision for Soudanese society, buoyed in no small part by rail workers’ support after their strike (10 October 1947 to 19 March 1948). Nevertheless it was ultimately “representative only of the new bourgeois elite’s preoccupations,” key to which was refining relations with France in the post-1956 context of ‘political autonomy.’ The US-RDA class factions are illustrated by its delegates in 1957, which included: 27% functionaries, 22% teachers, 20% professionals, 14% commerce and industry, 7% chiefs, 3% farmers, 1% unionists.

Under Keïta after 1956, the US-RDA identified the middle class as the vanguard; it was an administrative bourgeoisie of salaried bureaucrats and private sector employees that did not “identify always with the masses and […] sometimes show[ed] a certain condescension towards them.” Moreover, representatives’ views were abstracted by their experience from those of the masses, and these representatives were also removed from party decision-making power. The first fruits of de-colonization thus went to a small ‘national bourgeoisie’ of officials and intellectuals; this nomenklatura had taken

352 Benoist, 1998: 120.
shape during colonial state building whose privilege was remote from the masses’ economic reality.\textsuperscript{353}

\textsuperscript{353} Hargreaves, 1967: 166; Cheick Oumar Diarrah, \textit{Le défi démocratique au Mali} Paris: Harmattan, 1996: 67
CHAPTER 3: The historical, political, and economic context of contemporary hegemony
INDEPENDENT MALI

Table: Independence Chronology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Union organization authorized</td>
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<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td><em>Indigénat</em> and forced labour end (February, April). l’Union régionale des syndicats du Soudan (URSS) formed (June), affiliated with French CGT; Rassemblement démocratique africain (RDA) formed (October)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>The <em>loi-cadre</em> (enabling act) devolves certain powers from the Gouvernement-Generale to the territorial assemblies</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Formation of Mali Federation (Senegal and Soudan), dissolved at independence</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>l’Union nationale des travailleurs du Mali (UNTM) formed from l’Union nationale des travailleurs soudanais (UNTS), which had replaced l’Union régionale des syndicats du Soudan (URSS) in 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Mali becomes independent with Modibo Keita as president of a one-party, socialist state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Keita ousted in coup led by Lieutenant Moussa Traoré.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Protests erupt following Keita’s death in prison, “after nine years arbitrary detention.” This “played an important role in radicalizing the movement opposing the military dictatorship.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>New constitution and single-party elections; Traoré re-elected president. End of CMLN (Military Committee for National Liberation), beginning of UDPM (Democratic Union of the Malian People) regime. The single party is “the expression of unity and of supreme political authority of the country.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Mali and Burkina Faso engage in border fighting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Traoré deposed in coup and replaced by transitional committee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**From socialism to dictatorship: socio-economic changes 1960-68**

Mali gained independence within the Community France designed to preserve economic and political domination in the former colonies, and “to transfer power to the classes which had made good during the colonial regime.” Under Modibo Keita, the US-RDA “combined various elements of these classes, dominated initially by the urban intelligentsia (mainly civil servants and teachers).”

From 1960, The USRDA’s socialist experiment was externally resisted, and failed to legitimate itself domestically. Internal party-state divisions existed from its inception, and the

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354 “Chronologie: De l’Union française à l’indépendance”
http://www.clio.fr/CHRONOLOGIE/chronologie_mali_de_l_union_francaise_a_l_independance.asp
19/04/2007

355 Diarrah, 1991: 70


357 François, 27

358 Ibid
decolonization alliances unravelled. Indeed, following independence, the very organizations through which Malians had tried to reassert measures of control over their own work were banned. Fearful of domestic social groups’ claims, state actors framed their recent political experience with centrist ideology. Thus they produced strong anti-colonial rhetoric and harsh internal party and social discipline, but only loosely linked decision-making processes to popular political activity. This two-fold centralism was meant to forestall class-based politics and limit the influence of other social divisions, both ethnic and those stemming from the contests and conflicts of the past.\(^{359}\)

Subsequently, the professionals and union leadership were increasingly at odds with the government-party's ever-narrowing interest in simply preserving its power.\(^ {360}\) The relatively radical anti-liberal bureaucrats and professionals of the early independence period found their project was not readily translated into concrete proposals in the government sphere, and remained sidelined. Indeed, much of this antagonism towards the established regime was born of dissatisfaction with the fruits of decolonization.\(^ {361}\)

While moderate state capitalists struggled with state socialists and Marxists within the Keita government, the State struggled to collect taxes from “merchants, traditional producers, and civil servants.”\(^ {362}\) Moreover, any possibility of significant transformation was severely undermined by elite patterns of consumption and low levels of productive investment.\(^ {363}\)

Keita’s government deployed the rhetoric of mass mobilization and enacted the economic development plan of 1961-1966 to give priority to developing agricultural production. Economic diversification included the industrialization of key export commodities (e.g. cattle, vegetable oil, fertilizer), import substitution (textiles, sugar, canned goods, construction materials); and mineral

\(^ {359}\) Cooper, 1994: 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 18; Hargreaves, 1967: 159-60, 162-63; Diarrah, 1991: 26
\(^ {360}\) Alibert 277-80, 288-89
\(^ {361}\) Alibert, 1966: 293-298
\(^ {363}\) Ibid
and fossil fuel exploration to complement social policy (education, health, administration). 

Pressure, however, “from middle- and high-level public-sector employees […] for salaries that approximate to European standards,” limited the possibility for transformation.

**Independence Economy**

Although the economic context would subsequently worsen, the independence situation was compromised from 1960 by colonial legacies in the ponderous bureaucracy, ineffective investment, and export-led development. Nationalizing industries, brief currency isolation, and then French financial supervision did little to overcome the inherited limitations. Together with the collectivization of peasant agriculture, the state created enterprises to eliminate foreign capital domination gradually, and sought to centralize all public funds, whether of local or foreign sources. Indeed, the significant development of the public sector was the key feature of the early independence years.

However, increases in the expenses of administrative function and equipment outstripped the growth of fiscal receipts. Furthermore, significant increases in government investment in public enterprises encouraged only modest production increases. Also, the growing spending on salaries increased demand for imports. The significant growth in imports (27%) reflects similarly significant growth in administrative expenditures (40%), and the even stronger growth in investments (65%). This, in turn, contributed to a balance of payments deficit. The dependence on foreign input was perpetuated after independence through reliance on foreign capital, France’s currency supervision, and preferential economic relationships, as well as technical assistance. Projections included the ‘optimistic’ of 6% growth per year (1962-65) and the ‘pessimistic’ of 3% growth per year, which reflected the actual growth rate in 1962. Placed in

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364 Amin, 1965: 100  
365 Wolpin 594  
366 Amin, 1965: 78, 85, 87-88, 97-99  
367 Hargreaves, 1967: 165-166
the context of previous economic growth, even with the reservations of certain planners, the projections were extremely ambitious, and susceptible to numerous obstacles and shortfalls.  

Table: Annual growth percentage 1928-1962 (-1967 plan)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928-39</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-59</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959-62</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-67 (plan)</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The trends of 1959-1962 continued into 1962-63 and 1964. In particular, the failed “takeoff of traditional agriculture” resulted from mass population urban migrations (to evade collectivization), and the government’s spending beyond that envisioned by the plan. Thus, even in the ambitious moment of independence, negotiations with the IMF already envisioned the necessity of austerity measures and corrections from the perspective of external balance and narrowly financial parameters. Faced with these shortcomings, Mali’s “real problem” was the tension between “external balance at any price,” and “development in financial balance.”

The nationalized economy plan to provide agricultural self-sufficiency and then export was marred as much by farmers’ memory of forced relocation colonial farming as it was by the growing bureaucracy and the costs of imports. The only growth sectors in the Malian economy were import expenditures and the bureaucratic budget in an ever-expanding public sector. Notwithstanding its expansion, the State sector was unable to promote development, and thirty-three State companies, such as that for import and export (Société Malienne d’importation et d’exportation – SOMIEX) and agricultural industries (Office des produits agricoles du Mali – OPAM), as well as those in transport, public works, banking, pharmacies, tourism, mining, printing and commerce, all drew heavily on subsidies. Furthermore, inflation, the failure of

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368 Amin, 1965: 112. Amin counts his among the ‘pessimistic’ critiques of the “extremely ambitious” early draft plans (125)
369 Amin, 1965: 118
370 Ibid: quote 127, 128-29
371 Amin, 1965: 129
372 Benoist, 1998: 123-26
agricultural policy, and failed commercialization of agricultural products, even in neighbouring countries, exacerbated the secondary sector morass in State enterprises and industries. Such economic troubles exacerbated the contradictions within the political class itself. This deepening economic crisis detonated the political crisis within Keita’s US-RDA.

**Radicalization in the USRDA**

Malian Socialism saw some of the senior administrative and political actors seek social and economic transformation “through the nationalisation of certain sectors of the economy, the establishment of state corporations for the management and marketing of agricultural commodities and the encouragement of co-operatives.”  

Without “a strong organisational and political base and direct links with the majority of the peasants and with French opposition,” however, the US-RDA Keita government “could not create the conditions necessary for the changes it desired.”

Agreements with the Soviet Union and China provided insufficient financial assistance and external economic relations to foster significant internal development. Domestically, “merchants and other privileged groups (especially the major cattle owners)” resisted the regime and policies “by diverting produce towards neighbouring countries.”  

Sceptical of US-RDA socialism and well served by relations with the former colonial partners, merchants, village heads and cattle owners exploited US-RDA’s weak influence in rural areas, and further limited party-State links with the peasantry.

The increasing radicalization of key actors in the US-RDA regime gathered in the *Comité national de défense de la révolution* (CNDR) and given full powers in March 1966 to resolve political and economic crisis, fuelled growing opposition among former national executive members. With government factions disagreeing over strategies to remain in power, the

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373 François, 27
374 Ibid
375 Ibid
“weakness of the regime was such that the army met no resistance when it overthrew Keïta in November 1968.”\textsuperscript{376} Opposing the dissolution of the national political bureau (BPN) in August 1967, militant actors reacted.\textsuperscript{377} Lt. Moussa Traoré precipitated a bloodless coup in November 1968 and placed the \textit{Comité Militaire de Libération Nationale} (Military Committee of National Liberation – CMLN) in charge. While Keïta remained personally popular with the population, his US-RDA was irredeemable to them, and they generally welcomed the coup.

An influential group of senior civil servants retained from Keïta’s administration after 1968 installed, and sustained important features of the 1960-1968 government. The army officers, content with “controlling the heights of government, reducing the disagreements with France and permitting merchants and other privileged groups to take control of the economy” did little to transform the power of the civil service.\textsuperscript{378} This so-called 'historic compromise' produced dual powers, on the one hand the Malian army and its French officers, the French companies, and the Malian merchants, operated side by side with the civil servants on the other. Peasants and disenfranchised urbanites were largely left out.\textsuperscript{379}

The military leaders wanted to manage this parallel structure, and profit from control over the State. In this compromise “the various dominant classes [were] transformed, combined and re-deployed” to conserve, “the powers and instruments of the state,” and monopolize “a good part of the national economy.”\textsuperscript{380} Until the late 1980s, the lower and middle level bureaucrats maintained their standard of living through the survival of state-owned corporations. At its approximate mid-point, the Traoré regime forms of State capitalism undermined Mali’s compliance with French and IMF liberalization reforms. The power sharing between the army

\textsuperscript{376} Ibid, 28  
\textsuperscript{377} Benosit, 1998: 126-127  
\textsuperscript{378} François, 28  
\textsuperscript{379} Ibid  
\textsuperscript{380} Ibid
and other ruling class fractions limited “the capacity of the regime to make a U-turn in its policies to the exclusion of a large number of those who [had] shared its power.”

In 1977, France was Mali’s most important trading partner, complemented by aid and trade relations with other Western countries (West Germany, Belgium, Britain, the Netherlands, the United States and Canada). However, notwithstanding Mali’s subordination to these Western capitalist economies led by France in West Africa, Mali was also closely linked to the Soviet Union. Links established under Keita Traoré maintained “to secure the 'historic compromise' between the army and the supporters of the old regime” as well as “to allow Mali an additional margin of manoeuvre in the face of France and the West.” In particular, the USSR’s support allowed Mali to sustain a “complex and contradictory geo-political situation,” and a certain autonomy from Western norms of international diplomacy. “Dependent economically upon France, but militarily and diplomatically upon the Soviet Union,” Mali under Traoré enjoyed a “greater margin of manoeuvre in the face of Western demands,” because the USSR, “while maintaining a political and military presence […had ] no interest in intervening further.”

This shows in the coup transition the interplay of Western influences, of France and US, and the Francophiles within the US-RDA, together with the links to the USSR as counterweights and contradictory influences. This is especially evident in the tension between elites mobilizing in civil society and those in the bureaucracy.

Within the BPN [national political bureau] and the civil administration as an entirety, a very large minority and more probably a majority of the middle-class were anything but willing to sacrifice present life-style for national self-respect and mobilization.

More importantly, the ‘class chauvinism’ and “disdain of modern-sector leaders and employees from the rural hinterland,” reinforced the peasants’ sense that “the new class had simply replaced

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381 Ibid 35  
382 Ibid 35  
383 Ibid 36  
the French.” Moreover, “[e]ven the modern-sector worker recognized that Africanised managers were for the most part mouthing meaningless socialist slogans.”

The Traoré regime, composing the “upper stratum with the much more important ‘elites’ and ‘subelites’ in bureaucratic employment” included the military-administrative bourgeoisie and extensive upper class patrimonial entourages, the higher managerial and professional occupations, including employers and managers in larger state and France-linked corporations, senior civil servants, senior officers in the police and armed forces, and the upper middle class who straddled ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ positions with bureaucratic waged jobs and land or herds.

If the 1968 coup brought an ostensibly reformist military regime into power, Traoré’s CMLN further entrenched independence vanguardism, and was increasingly disconnected, isolated, and brutally oppressive. Following the constitutional void post-coup (1968-1974) and the subsequent 5-year ‘implementation phase’ of the 1974 constitution, Traoré also suppressed all opposition to consolidate power within the military. When former president Keita died in prison in 1977, the protests this prompted fuelled the reactive creation of the Union Démocratique du Peuple Malien (UDPM, Democratic Union of the Malian People) in 1979 to fill the political void.

The new constitution of 1979 provided for single-party state elections, with certain democratic measures implemented despite an unsteady socio-political climate. Traoré was re-elected president, and subsequently became increasingly repressive of challenges to his authority. Behind an electoral façade within the single-party, combined with party-founded organizations, such as the National Unions of Malian Women, and the promotion of Islam, the Second Republic continued to keep civil society compartmentalized and in check.

Notwithstanding the policy progress made under his rule, including a more open foreign policy, securing foreign investment for industrialization and infrastructure development, as well

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386 Ibid
387 Arrighi and Saul, 1973: 69
as the creation of national universities for teacher training, administration and agriculture, Traoré and the military-bureaucratic class remained insulated from the economic and social disruptions that most Malians suffered.\(^{389}\) From 1968-1978 the CMLN was shaken by internal, personal rivalries and legitimacy crises with the population it brutally repressed; from 1979-1991 Traoré purged ever more of his former collaborators. Moreover, through the 1970s and 1980s, the military saw developmental state policies as reminiscent of Keita-era socialism and threats to their corporate identity and privileges.\(^{390}\)

Indeed, a key paradox of citizen identity formation through the socialist and post-socialist periods was framing existing socio-cultural conditions as ripe for socialist transformation, while insisting on modernization to overwrite long-standing traditions. The authoritarian State’s role was “to sweep away the last vestiges of the traditional order […] and to attack [the people’s] most ancient beliefs and practices.”\(^{391}\) Traoré attempted to preserve this one-party state, even as he capitulated to external (donor) and internal (civil society) pressure for economic liberalization and multipartyism.

Domestically, internal (civil society) activism included protests and strikes, especially by the National Union of Pupils and Students of Mali (UNEEM). From cultural associations came the political associations that ultimately became important political parties.\(^{392}\) Despite the inability of these groups to coordinate their organizations effectively, events such as the arrest, torture and assassination, in the 1979-80 school year, of the UNEEM secretary, Abdoul Karim Camara, (a.k.a. “Cabral”) forged a powerful symbol of students resisting the dictatorship.\(^{393}\)

\(^{389}\) Benoist, 1998: 128


\(^{393}\) Diarrah, 1991: 73
Unable to sustain his position in relation to such civil society groups and associations in Malian society, Traoré resorted increasingly to violent crackdown.

_Economic context of post-independence_

If Keita’s overthrow in 1968 “improved [Mali’s] image,” in the eyes of Western media, “thanks in particular to the realism and liberalism” of Traoré’s regime, Western and French liberals and anti-socialists gradually recognized the disastrous subsequent situation. The ratio of exports to imports fell from 80% in 1979 to 40% in 1977. Moreover, by 1981, external debt surpassed 300 Billion Malian francs, and external 'aid' of 80 billion CFA exceeded the national budget of less than 60 Billion CFA. Neo-colonial economic dependency was further exacerbated by a drought and Sahel famine that attracted international attention in 1974.

The famine, which killed 100,000 Malians alone and more than doubled food prices through shortages, was particularly devastating for northerners; nomads were little able to rebuild their herds after the drought. “Effectively ‘liberated’ from their environment,” they were “forced to emigrate to the towns and adopt a sedentary life. At the level of social relations, this process involve[d] a radical transformation from free petty producer to proletariat or semi-proletariat.” Thus, chiefs’ and merchants’ power increased; “large landowners, with the best land on the banks of the River Niger” profited from these changes, and the “processes of proletarianisation and land concentration,” further reinforcing processes taking place since colonization. General food security had been “stagnating or declining for years,” and peasants’ “only immediate source of a cash income” was cotton cultivation “supervised and supported by Government services and French multinationals.”

Beyond the neo-colonial political economy and environmental challenges, Traoré’s government’s development initiatives exacerbated poor conditions by “integrating the

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394 Marches Tropicaux, 21 December 1979, cited in François, 29
395 François, 29
396 Ibid
397 Ibid
398 Ibid
supervision, financing and management of agricultural production and marketing.”

Although the Groundnut and Food Crop Programme, the Segou Rice Project and the Office du Niger “may have increased the national income as a whole,” they also deepened economic and social divisions through the system of credit. The development projects’ policy limited credit access for farming initiatives to the rich, and thus those “able to obtain agricultural supplies have been the traditional chiefs, retired civil servants and peasants whose relatives were staff on the projects.”

After nearly 20 years post-WWII (~1948-65) of high export prices, income to purchase industrial goods (imports), and expand social services and infrastructure, Mali subsequently faced falling world prices for 20 years (1965-85). If ties to France ensured economic and financial stability, this further entrenched the dependence of former colonies on the metropole. Prices for imported goods rose much more acutely than for exported goods, further exacerbated by the oil crisis "perhaps more severe for Africans than for those elsewhere in the world,” and the inflation this produced further handicapped the struggling economy. Subsequently, transnational corporations’ greater importance limited the domestic entrepreneurial class to very few products, mainly import-substitution ventures such as beverage bottling and textiles, or government companies such as Air Mali. National and nationalized enterprises may have brought stability, but little prosperity under the conditions of the 1970s. The crises of the formal economy produced the 'second,' informal or survival economy, which is still key in providing livelihoods for wage earners from the lower to the middle classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total external B $US</th>
<th>% of exports</th>
<th>% of GNP</th>
<th>DebtService ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>227.2</td>
<td>467.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

399 Ibid, 30
400 Ibid
401 Manning, 1998: 110-111, quote 122
402 Manning 126-127
<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ivory Coast</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>208.3</td>
<td>418.6</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>165.3</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>198.2</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>241.7</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Mali, the petty bourgeoisie expanded more than the bourgeoisie. The activities of transporters, tailors, mechanics, laun- derers and merchants “provided hope but rarely prosperity.” In the relatively slow growth of industrial employment in the 1980s, the petty bourgeoisie actors moved into small-scale business. With these transformations concentrated in urban areas, the peasant population either struggled to subsist in agriculture or were drawn to the potential for waged work in the main cities, Ségou, Sikasso, and Bamako, or to farm crops (especially garden vegetables) for sale nearer to larger markets, especially the capital Bamako. The irregular work, and rising unemployment, however, contributed to the social unrest that would be politicized and mobilized in the mid-1980s to change the regime, end authoritarian rule, and seek improved conditions for the general population.

Of the administrative-military, commercial (less so industrial), and rural bourgeoisies, the former and latter were relatively supportive of the government, given, respectively, their place within the structures that reproduced and supported them, and, on the other hand, their relatively passive acquiescence to the state policies and programmes.

A domestic observer noted:

The wealthy peasant farmers have modern equipment: ploughs, carts, fertilisers and sometimes threshing machines and tractors. They include old soldiers, the traditional chiefs who made money during the colonial and post-colonial period, the relatives of wealthy civil servants, retired civil servants (agricultural staff, health officers and livestock inspectors)... They are the ones who get assistance from the development projects. They invest their profits in cattle.

Furthermore, tensions existed between government and merchants, in part because of divergent attitudes towards indigenous, pre-capitalist norms and practices. Although outright disdain for

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404 Manning 128
405 Mali conforms to a broader African pattern in which “the concentration of government agricultural expenditure on the so-called progressive (i.e. wealthy) farmers compensate[d] the rural bourgeoisie for worsening “town-country” terms of trade and urban biases of government expenditure. Arrighi and Saul, 1973: 71
indigenous norms and the peasant populations who bore them was rare in Mali, the biases of modern, Westernizing urbanization reflected not only increasing pressures of economic conditions and political conditionalities, but also the gradually cohering dominant class consciousness that found itself at home in newer modes of protecting itself and its wealth. Thus, the social cleavage between the segments linked to the State and the non-linked peasants started to become as salient as that between the bourgeoisie and proletarian segments.\(^{407}\)

Since the 1968 coup d’état, the previous experiments with agricultural co-operatives succumbed to competition from merchants and were taken over by the wealthy peasants. Established in a hierarchically structured society, co-operatives “made more formal and more explicit the relationships between the exploiters and the exploited,”\(^ {408}\) in which cattle owners and wealthy peasants dominated by virtue of their links to the government, and willingness to manufacture shortages of consumer goods or divert grains into “fictitious co-operatives (set up in every detail) to which they market[ed] tons of cereals for resale on the black market.”\(^ {409}\)

If these forms of exploitation highlight the social divisions between poor and wealthy peasants, the contradictions between the various fractions of the Malian bourgeoisie are also important to assess in light of this type of exploitation, often labelled ‘corruption.’ As “one of the central means of private accumulation in Africa (with some attendant benefits to foreign capital),” such exploitation does not readily foster indigenous or national bourgeois class formation; it is “often fragmentary and episodic,”\(^ {410}\) and responds to economic crisis as well as vagaries of political change even in relatively stable regimes. Moreover, while such accumulation may help reproduce a dominant class, it does not foster the conditions of sustainable middle-class formation, such as reliable and predictable administration. A view common to domestic

\(^{407}\) Alibert, 1966: 278-80
\(^{408}\) François, 31
\(^{409}\) F. Ardoux, “Mali, 20 Ans d'indépendence, 12 Ans de Colonialisme, Essai de Bilan.”, Aujourd'hui l'Afrique, October 1980, cited in François, 32
observers sees private accumulation “as a parasitic phenomenon,” whether among senior officials or their lower-level clients, whether invested or consumed: a zero-sum game that further impoverishes the masses.411

The targets of popular anger before the 1991 coup are illustrative of “popular reaction against those engaged in the process of wealth accumulation”412 through the dictatorship years:

prominent officials, military officers and members of the wealthy elite that had prospered during 23 years of Traoré’s authoritarian rule. Customs and tax offices, traditional centres of high-level corruption and embezzlement, were systematically burned [...] Big merchants, accused of collaborating with the ousted regime and benefiting form state favours, saw their shops emptied and destroyed.413

Notwithstanding these popular indications as to who constitutes the exploiting class, it also includes “top civil servants, army officers, traders and middlemen,” with various “connections between these various groups within and between the public and private sectors,” as well as complex “links between the various regional elites, and their connections with foreign interests.”414 An ostensible “national bourgeoisie” is “heterogenous in origin and has at its disposal a variety of subordinate groups, which adhere to its ideology and gather up the crumbs from its table.”415

It is important to note that in the context of informalism and patron-clientelism, “the continent is largely devoid of social classes” (self-consciously constituted in defence of interests

411 Ibid, 43. Harsch is moving towards a needed nuance of ‘corruption’ terms, to reflect the limitations of the IFI definitions abstracted from domestic contexts as well as the popularly expressed anger at the perceived ‘ill-gotten gains’ of the wealthiest. Discussing the title of his album, “Surafin” (Bam. ‘bribe’), 8 Sept. 2003, Malian Rapper Amkoullel observed, “Everybody speaks about it but nobody attacks directly the roots of the scourge: poverty. A family leader who doesn’t manage to secure his social duties will easily succumb to corruption.” http://www.malimusic.com/Cat/CatA/Amkoullel/AmkoullelInterview_En.htm accessed 8/13/2004
412 Ibid, 32
413 Ibid: 31. The complicity of international actors in such accumulation was represented by the translation of FMI (Fond International Monetaire - International Monetary Fund) as “Famille Moussa et Intimes” – the dictator “Moussa’s family and friends.”
414 François 32
415 Ibid
Because vertical integration provides patron-client links in sub-national geographic areas more readily than common cause among patrons or economic peers across the national territory, clientelism complicates if not mitigates social class formation. Analyzing hegemony attends to the permeability of class categories, such that patrons’ material interests may also be clients,’ and allows for kinds of elite domination and leadership as these become progressively more autonomous from non-elites in their powers and scope of access to wealth. “[R]elations between leaders and followers, rulers and ruled are to be understood in terms of asymmetrical reciprocity” as these reciprocities make the really existing, extreme inequalities “more legitimately bearable than they would otherwise have been.”

The contemporary contradictions, between the various fractions of the Malian bourgeoisie on the one hand, as well as between domestic-oriented and the French-oriented interests on the other, emerge in the debates over the state corporations, which the heterogeneous bourgeoisie exploits as well as development projects. While senior Malian bureaucrats resist wholesale IFI demands for privatization or dissolution, employees and other beneficiaries would prefer they be retained and reformed to allow the state to manage its fiscal affairs.

**Contemporary Industrial Sector**

The Malian industrial sector includes small and medium-sized processing factories for agricultural products and cotton, unable to absorb surplus labour, under-financed, and controlled by Western capital by joint stock holdings or ‘technical assistance.’ As an Agriculture Ministry officer observed in 1981,

Malian industry is handicapped by its size and its source of capital. National investment is insufficient and available credit is principally directed towards commercial enterprises so that industrial development depends primarily upon foreign investment. This is a major problem since industrialisation in Mali risks

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416 Chabal and Daloz, 1999: 41
417 Ibid, 41-42
418 François, 32-33
becoming part of the international division of labour which would scarcely favour the establishment of basic industries in a developing country.”

Table: Five largest enterprises by staff in 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENTERPRISE</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Earnings CFA</th>
<th>~ USD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Companie Malien Development Textiles CMDT</td>
<td>2,293</td>
<td>228,054 Million</td>
<td>375 Million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOKALA AGENCE IMMOBILIERE</td>
<td>2,263</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDM Energie du Mali</td>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>26,057 M</td>
<td>42.9 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUICOMA Huilerie Cotonnière du Mali</td>
<td>1,168</td>
<td>19,350 M</td>
<td>31.9 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMATEX Companie Malien Textile</td>
<td>1,097</td>
<td>6,496 M</td>
<td>10.7 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8,091</td>
<td>517.5M</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Direction Nationale des Industries

Social Divisions and Consequences of Structural Adjustment Programs

Outside the cosmopolitan elites and the peasant mass, the middle segments include the ‘rising’ middle class segments, including public servant entrepreneurs in the private sector of privatized former State companies, and the ‘falling’ middle shed from the SAP-shrunk bureaucracy. The rising or falling middle segment does so relative to their education, links to State administration, the varying potential for waged work in the main cities, Ségué, Sikasso, and Bamako, and their potential in market gardening or the formal urban sector of construction and manufacturing. Those who find work, whether stable or precarious, in the city, moreover, enter an urban proletarian segment of relative privilege, further separated from the peasant and urban unemployed. This ‘rising’ status, however, must also be seen as a form of forced migration to the towns and city life. This is a process of transformation to proletariat or semi-proletariat from relatively free small producers, from a position common to the majority of peasants, whether farmers, herders or fishers, migrant workers, smallholders, or tenant farmers. Indeed, through the State-shrinking period of the SAPs, “the working class [in Africa] not only plays an important

role in the process of production but a very strategic one too, notwithstanding their small numbers.”

Table: Bureaucrats (April 1994)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>~YOB</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;24</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-36</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>8513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37-48</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>23225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49+</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>5837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>37622</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source *Annuaire* 1994 DANSI: 25

Notwithstanding these categorizations, however, as Shivji notes, “classes are hardly ever very clearly demarcated and there are all sorts of what appear to be intermediate groups, and strata and even ‘overlaps,’” which are best viewed “in terms of the ‘core’ and ‘fringes’ of the various classes,” though not necessarily as “links between classes or ‘bridges’ giving identity of material interests to the two different ‘classes.’” This challenge to ‘bridging fringes’ qualifies the notion, key in analyses of patron-clientelist dynamics, that “no fundamental contradictions between the exploiting and the exploited classes” exist and that there is “merely a continuum or a continuous hierarchy of interests without any qualitative break.” Education also plays an important role in reproducing and complicating class divisions, as do the various economic activities undertaken by a single person, and the sociocultural linkages that may exist between persons with different occupations.

Table: Students’ Fathers’ occupations in secondary school (1976)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fathers’ occupation</th>
<th>% of population *</th>
<th>% of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managerial, clerical</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniformed services</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual workers</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traders, artisans</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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422 Shivji, 1975: 14
423 Ibid
If the SAPs improved macro-economic indicators with “enormous progress” in prices, investment, wage markets, and commercial liberalization, the consequences have been difficult for the most vulnerable social strata to endure.\textsuperscript{425} Indeed, through the Traoré years Mali lacked a coherent economic project, in spite of the overt interventions and pervasive influence of the IMF and World Bank. Women, youth, and children were especially vulnerable to the impoverishment of unemployment, the exodus of rural youth to urban centres, and the crises of educational funding and functioning.\textsuperscript{426} Indeed, adjustment became synonymous with “[e]conomic stagnation, the rise in poverty, the breakdown of public services,” and the “declining purchasing power of civil service salaries.”\textsuperscript{427}

The economic elements of the crises and distortions that blocked Malian development included ill-adapted and inflexible policies for industrial and agricultural development, exacerbated by large bureaucracies diverting State support from farmers. State monopolies, however, were unable to meet demands. Further, crises in public finance included delayed salaries, overdue foreign payments, and growing debt. Economic relations beyond Mali’s borders and its commercial balance were encumbered by massive grain and petroleum imports. Constantly increasing external debt unbalanced the balance of payments, which affected all sectors, while inflation reduced consumers' purchasing power, and primary necessary products were lacking across the country.

Structural adjustment constricted economic activities and degraded the standard of living of the most vulnerable populations. These included the traditionally poor, who were structurally limited (e.g. youth, women, lower-class and underclass actors, persons at the lower level of the

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmers, fishers, shepherds</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{425} Diarra, 1991: 246, 247
\textsuperscript{426} Diarra, 1996, 301, 309-10
\textsuperscript{427} N. Van de Walle, 2001: 231. The apology, “that things might have been considerably worse” without adjustment is weak in the context of donors and governments ‘overselling’ adjustment programmes. (233)
informal sector); the ‘newly poor’ (downsized public servants, and unemployed, educated youth), and others including voluntary retirees from public or military service. Moreover, the SAPs also affected those in the formal urban sector (construction and manufacturing), and owners of small to medium-sized businesses.\textsuperscript{428} Indeed, at the democratic opening in Mali leaders faced great challenges balancing longer-term development investment with the immediate needs of the population.

**Merchants**

The contemporary merchant segment includes ‘traditional merchants,’ elder men who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca and who, though often illiterate, can exploit their commercial capital to move into the industrial sector.\textsuperscript{429} A second generation of businessmen (Fr. *hommes d'affaires*) includes these traditional merchants’ sons, often have secondary or tertiary education, even management studies in Europe or the United States, who rather than follow available paths to the public sector instead pursue business with their elders. Also in the businessmen category are the young graduates and former civil servants (including teachers, and senior bureaucrats) who left the State for the private sector under the pressures of IFI conditionalities on State companies and the bureaucracy in general. Between the elder entrepreneurs and the two new generations differences in business practices are commensurate with the relative decline of deference. Furthermore, Lebanese and Syrian operators, some in place for generations, having survived through the Traoré regime, have also exploited liberalization to expand their commercial and industrial entreprises. Foreign private capital entrepreneurs have also used the liberalization moment to abandon some sectors in favour of others.\textsuperscript{430}

\textsuperscript{428} Diarra, 1996: 77-78, 80, 82
\textsuperscript{430} Ibid: 631-632
Through the Keïta and Traoré periods alike, the Malian bureaucracy was a pillar of merchant activities, though under the latter State–merchant cooperation was more involved. This cooperation produced within the dominant class two segments of the State bourgeoisie: bureaucrats proper and bureaucrat-merchants in State companies or their subsequently privatized incarnations. Beyond the direct participation of the senior political actors (and their relatives) in private sector endeavours, State actors could access the bank credit (through State or subsequently private banking) key to industrial and commercial development, through their political connections, and a combination of predation and other modes of accumulation within the State. In addition to these accumulation strategies, inheritance and migration are also significant modes of accumulation in the merchant sector. Furthermore, links to colonial, post-colonial, or contemporary European trading companies also serve as complementary modes of accumulation.  

Political mobilization and overthrow

From 1968 to the SAP era, State pillage was undertaken by senior bureaucrats and merchants through the diversion of international assistance funds. IFI-induced privatization after 1980 undermined bureaucrats’ patronage resources, and created divisions between those still within the State bureaucracy and those downsized out. This in turn created parallel schisms in society between a primarily urban poor, disenfranchised from State-patrons’ redistribution, and those still linked to the State. Moreover, division between those preserved in State structures and private enterprise operators was exacerbated by the IFI-led policies to encourage the latter at the expense of the patronage resources of the former.

431 Ibid: 632-634
433 Ibid, 22-23
In the latter days before the Peoples’ Revolution, ‘unemployed youth’ and ‘young graduates,’ both part of a “stratum of impoverished urban youth, semi-ruptured from traditional family order (founded on the head of household’s capacity to ‘feed his people’)” shared the bleak lack of job prospects in both the stagnant private and shrinking public sector. In this situation, complemented by intellectuals calling for democracy and popular disgust at years of State actors’ corruption, military staff outside of the senior officers also shared the bureaucrats’ fates.

IFI-imposed liberalization, including privatizing State lands (e.g. OdN) has allowed wealthy peasants and private entrepreneurs to enlarge their agroindustrial base. Aimed at reducing Mali’s financial deficit and further integrating Mali into the global economy, such land liberalization added to “the pressures forcing the rural population off the land […] and the elimination of the small farmer.” State corporations’ employees were fired or forced to accept wage and benefits cuts. The only beneficiaries were the “few private entrepreneurs, the junior (Malian) management in European companies, the army” and the large Western companies. Challenges to the status quo thus confronted surviving earlier forms and emerging new forms of exploitation. Where the earlier trade economy was “based on export crops, supported by a predatory state and a strong bureaucracy living on the backs of the peasantry,” the new economy is a “society of private agro-industry directly under the control of European financial interests under a 'modernised' regime.”

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434 Ibid, 25
435 Ibid, 26
436 François, 34-35.
438 Ibid 37-38
Map: the Republic of Mali, 1994

439 Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas Libraries
http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/mali_pol94.jpg, accessed 18/05/07; map produced by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency
Table: Post-apertura timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 91-Jun. 92</td>
<td>Transitional government (CTSP, Transition Committee for the People’s Salvation), including civilian and military actors. National Conference and new constitution (modelled on France’s in 1958), electoral code, and legal framework for political parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan-Apr 1992</td>
<td>Municipal, legislative, presidential elections; Konaré elected president; ADEMA dominates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1996</td>
<td>Peace agreement with Tuareg leads thousands of refugees to return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1997</td>
<td>Opposition boycotts elections Konaré re-elected; ADEMA dominates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Former President Moussa Traoré sentenced to death on corruption charges, but has his sentence commuted to life imprisonment by President Konare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999 Oct.</td>
<td>Several people killed in fighting in the north between Kounta and and Arab communities over local disputes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 Feb.</td>
<td>Konaré appoints former International Monetary Fund official Mandé Sidibé prime minister</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The legacies of colonial political economy and export price decline through the first independence decades had forestalled general prosperity in Mali; the Traoré regime faced “narrowing bases of support, declining fiscal resources and increasing pressures from international organizations,” lost entitlement to “rightful leadership of the nation, and came to be seen as distinct interest groups seeking only to retain power.”

In these conditions, then, the convergence of groups in a broad social movement against Traoré’s regime was led by intellectuals and professionals, the “employed, the civil servants, teachers, students and workers who constitute a minority (15 per cent) of the population, [and] struggle[d] to defend their interests through the trade unions.”

Leading up to March 26, 1991, trade unions in particular organized to defend the collective interests of 'downsized' and marginalized groups including street children. The cross-section of dissatisfied groups was broad indeed. The involved professionals included “academics, intellectuals, and professionals, the ‘employed, the civil servants, teachers, students and workers who constitute a minority (15 per cent) of the population, [and] struggle[d] to defend their interests through the trade unions.’”

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441 Manning 180-81, 194, 195
442 Ibid, 36. François adds this critique, “The failure of the urban population to renounce its relative privileges has, however, allowed the regime to stay in power and prevented the building of an alliance with the peasantry.”
government servants, religious leaders, doctors and lawyers, teachers and university students headed towards these occupations.\textsuperscript{443} They were “Francophone, cosmopolitan, and imbued with ideals of progress for their class and their nation;”\textsuperscript{444} wanting to improve their circumstances and act for change, they sought “common cause with urban workers, with urbanites at the edge of employment, and with the rural population.”\textsuperscript{445} The solidarity of the grouping was both complex and contradictory, divided at times by class, ethnicity, and region of origin, and articulated “rapid alternations between expressions of national unanimity and sharp divisions across one divide or another.”\textsuperscript{446} Among the important divisions among students were the radical and pragmatic elements dating from the independence struggles. Tensions and ambivalence were manifest between proponents of socialist and communist ideology, and the seeming necessity of integration into patron-client relationships for professional-bureaucratic success and privilege.\textsuperscript{447}

Leading up to March 26\textsuperscript{th} 1991, a reform-minded faction of the military led by then Lt. Amadou Toumani Touré arrested the state-party military leaders, and catalyzed the existing social movement around certain categories of key actors. The \textit{revolutionary democrats} included disenfranchised and disaffected middle and lower classes, including students with ‘nothing to lose,’ and journalists who spearheaded the movement, recalling 19\textsuperscript{th}-century anti-monarchist European models. The \textit{reformer democrats}, mostly upper-middle and middle class intellectuals, and higher professionals (e.g. doctors, lawyers, teachers) who straddled both civil society and the state “had one foot in the \textit{ancien régime} and one in the stirrup of the insurgents.”\textsuperscript{448} Numerous in the higher levels of the Malian State, these were “very little inclined to accept and even less to accomplish deep socio-political changes.”\textsuperscript{449} The \textit{liberal formalists} included a ruling class administrative bourgeoisie firmly in the \textit{ancien régime} upper class and upper middle class.

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{443} Manning 185, quote 186
\textsuperscript{444} Ibid: 186
\textsuperscript{445} Ibid: 186
\textsuperscript{446} Ibid: 186
\textsuperscript{447} Alibert 295, 298-99
\textsuperscript{448} Bagayogo, 1999: 25
\textsuperscript{449} Ibid
\end{footnotesize}
Moreover, higher managers and professionals, senior company managers, civil servants, officers in police and armed forces, and some professionals and new petty bourgeoisie (e.g. engineers, supervisors) were “freshly converted” to democratic ideas in Mali, and “the formal aspects of democracy were enough for them.”\textsuperscript{450} The then current management of affairs suited them, as it largely preserved their interests. Indeed, they rejected the “idea of justice,” and “social rights they associated with anarchy.”\textsuperscript{451} Moreover, they were “masters of democratorship [démocrature],” which left-intellectuals see as “nothing but errant democracy that blocks any possibility of alternating power.”\textsuperscript{452} Indeed, actors in the reformer and formalist categories were accustomed to aligning themselves with whatever regime came into power.

The Transitional Committee for the Salvation of the People (CTSP) and the National Conference drew members from the groups who had actively opposed the military regime, and evolved into a transitional national unity government. The CTSP guided the State through founding a multiparty political system, including a national conference, a constitutional referendum, and the 1992 elections. In these elections Malians elected their first post-dictatorship president, Alpha Oumar Konaré. Following his successful resolution of the Malian army's conflict with the Tuareg in northern Mali, Konaré was re-elected in 1997, albeit virtually unopposed because of boycotts by the credible opposition.

The influence of the French Republican tradition is most obvious in Mali’s institutions, and includes a president elected by universal suffrage, a prime minister and government responsible to the national assembly, and a judiciary independent of political authorities, overseen by a supreme and constitutional court, constitutional design, political party charter, election mechanisms, even the guidelines for extensive labour legislation.\textsuperscript{453}

\textsuperscript{450} Ibid: 25-26.
\textsuperscript{451} Ibid
\textsuperscript{452} Ibid: 26.
The national conference July 29 – August 12, 1991 sought to structure the reform demanded by these “members of a specific social fraction: educated, urban, professional employees, many of them centered in the public service, along with artists, students, and intellectuals.” The emergent dominant class is educated, urban, francophone, and cosmopolitan. This is particularly evident in the cosmopolitan cultural products that actors make and consume. Their writings, visual and performing arts, and especially music began to be 'globalized' as never before. The richness of Malian and African civilization was being reasserted against decades of tyranny and transnational exploitation. The ‘second independence’ would also necessarily revive cultural pride, not to say chauvinism, in indigenous languages reaching across national borders and in indigenizations of European cultural forms. Thus, continued corporate and government links between Mali and France have a parallel in cultural cosmopolitanism, which is typified by the ambivalent experience of the “growing ties of cultural and political identity” within the Malian diaspora. Indeed, new generation members “saw themselves partly in alliance with and partly in opposition to [...] numerous international influences.”

Furthermore, facing “visions of Francophonies of Western Civilization,” these actors “could seek out a UN-based cosmopolitanism” or an “informal pan-africanism,” which “[m]ight include a more oblique cosmopolitanism, one mediated through local idioms, norms and practices.”

There is since 1991 a larger level of consensus among a broader group of political actors, which is perceived as a definite improvement over dictators and their cadres. Though far from unequivocal, there are clearly encouraging signs in elite political behaviour, and among the actors from whom future elites could be recruited. Political elites have worked together to further

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454 Manning 190
455 Ibid. 224
456 Ibid. 224
457 Ibid. 224
458 Ibid. 224
entrench democratic politics in Mali by respecting the Republican Pact and the ‘rules of the
game’ in multiparty competitive politics. The consolidation of political institutions was indeed
given an important boost in the 2002 elections, viewed by many to indicate changes in how
middle and upper class actors ‘do politics.’

**Decentralization**

Administrative decentralization, by which State responsibilities are devolved onto local
authorities at the level of *communes*, with greater or lesser resources transferred to support it, has
been in progress officially since 1994 and practically begun in 1999. This administrative reform
is taking place in Mali with increasing external influence, and is more aligned with the agendas of
the donors involved than with domestic dynamics. In the donor thinking, the Malian State,
ostensibly ‘centralized’ through colonial and independence regimes, now ought to be
‘decentralized.’ Accepted on very little historical evidence, such centralization has obvious
reference points in Western development discourses and policies.

Moreover, decentralization occurs in the context of State failure in organizing and
managing development. Indeed, concepts of ‘participation’ and ‘local resource management’ are
coop-opted by a donor-led technocratic authority through devolution of responsibilities and
power. Furthermore, the new local officers are not yet legitimated, and are contested by
customary authorities who see these retain while legitimating *re-centralized* State authority at
the local level. A limited set of highly circumscribed powers are being devolved to new local
authorities, and those powers, in the name of participation and decentralization, are *upwardly*
accountable to the central state, rather than being *downwardly* accountable to local populations;

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Exemplary here was the role Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta (IBK) played in preserving the peace and
credibility of the second round of the 2002 elections. See Chapter Five “IBK: Victory of the Vanquished.”
E. Macamo and Dieter Neubert « Lorsque l’Etat post-révolutionnaire décentralise » Point Sud Research
Centre Conference Paper February 2002, Bamako
Georg Klute and Trutz von Trotha, "Décentralisation et para-étatisme," 2002 Point Sud Conference
Gundrun Lachenmann « Savoir local, étatique et développementaliste: quelle interaction entre
décentralisation et société civile ? » Point Sud Research Centre Conference Paper February 2002, Bamako
they administer rather than enfranchise. Furthermore, NGOs are becoming local service providers on behalf of a State that is shedding its welfare role consistent with neoliberalism.  

Table: Timeline since 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002 Apr</td>
<td>Amadou Toumani Toure elected president by landslide. Poll is marred by allegations of fraud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 Aug</td>
<td>Clashes between rival Muslim groups in west kill at least 10 people. Fourteen Europeans, kidnapped in Algeria, are freed in Mali after negotiations with captors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Apr</td>
<td>Prime Minister Mohamed Ag Amani resigns and is replaced by Ousmane Issoufi Maiga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 June</td>
<td>World Food Programme warns of severe food shortages, the result of drought and locust infestations in 2004.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 May</td>
<td>Attacks in Northern Mali by Tuaregs the government said were army deserters; they looted weapons in the town of Kidal in May, raising fears of a new rebellion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 June</td>
<td>The government signs an Algerian-brokered peace deal with Tuareg rebels seeking greater autonomy for their northern desert region.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Economy since 1991

Mali is heavily dependent on foreign aid and is vulnerable to changing world prices for cotton, gold and livestock as globalization facilitates capital investment flows.

Despite the contributions that industries (17%) such as processing farm commodities into food, construction; phosphate and gold mining, and diverse services (38%) make to GDP, the agricultural foundation (45%) of the Malian economy is farming cotton, millet, rice, corn, vegetables, peanuts; herding cattle, sheep, goats or fishing; the defining activities of over 80% of Malians (85% of women and 78% of men).  

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465 “Timeline: Mali A chronology of key events” BBC Online
Table: Population\textsuperscript{467}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>&lt;15 yrs</th>
<th>15-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13million</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: General Economic Indicators (2002)\textsuperscript{468}

| Labour force | 3.93 Million: Agriculture 80% – 786,000 others: incl. 133,620 salaried/waged, incl. 63,643 school staff; 37,622 bureaucrats; 10,072 large enterprise staff\textsuperscript{469} |
| Approximate composition | |
| GDP | Sources | 3.2 Billion US$ Agriculture 46% Industry 17% Services 37% |
| GDP / capita USD (UNDP rank) | 275 (164 / 177) |
| Total external debt | 3.1 Billion US |
| GDP growth ’91-00 | 4% annually |
| Inflation (2002) | 5.1% |
| Foreign Direct Investment | 76 Million US |
| Trade Balance | 353 Million US |
| UNDP Human Dev. Index Rank | 174 / 177 |
| Official Devevelopment Assistance | 354 Million US |

Commerce also forms an important part of the domestic economy in Mali, whether a full-time occupation in commerce or transport, or in supplement to some other work. The rural bias of Mali’s population exists in a dialectic with the dynamics of urbanization, that, on the one hand, isolates the land-working classes in the country, while on the other hand, increases the ranks of urban poor.\textsuperscript{470}

Social Cleavages In Contemporary Mali

The fundamental particularity of the current situation [1991] is that the citizens, all the while deeply determined to defend their rights, are less inclined to engage in a collective venture. […] In this there is a great danger for the republican spirit and democracy that pre-suppose citizens who are conscious/aware of their civil duties and their obligations to the collectivity.\textsuperscript{471}

\textsuperscript{467} Source: Malian Department of National Statistics DNSI
\textsuperscript{469} Rough calculations from Annuaire Statistique du Mali 1994, 2003 DNSI; Direction Nationale des Industries
\textsuperscript{470} The two French terms débrouillard and bricoleur (resourceful, do-it-yourself) describe people who undertake the small-scale work necessary just to get by: the daily condition in which most Africans have to ‘start over every morning.’ B. Sottas, and L. V. Vischer, eds. L’Afrique part tous les matins: Stratégies pour dépasser le bricolage quotidien (Peter Lang, Bern, 1995)
\textsuperscript{471} Diarrah, 1996: 16.
The most important social cleavages in contemporary Mali are clear in the income distribution: the small group 10% of very rich, who earn 56.1% of the national income, and the large number of others, the remaining 80%, who earn 43.7%. Indeed, the richest 10% earn almost as much as four-fifths of the population.

**Table: Income of Mali’s population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%GNI</th>
<th>Poorest10%</th>
<th>Poorest20%</th>
<th>2nd 20%</th>
<th>3rd 20%</th>
<th>4th 20%</th>
<th>Richest20%</th>
<th>Richest10%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moreover, not only does Mali’s inequality index (GINI=50.5) compare unfavourably to regional countries with similarly low GDP per capita, this indicator obscures the even greater inequalities that are moderated by indigenous and Islamic norms and practices of mutual assistance and solidarity, patron-clientism, and still resilient social networks.

Complementary to these statistics is a ‘sample’ population identified by Afrobarometer for their public opinion surveys. Their data suggests a lower figure (~56%) than the UNDP for the percentage of Malians living on less than $1 per day (cf. 72.8%), but reflects the discrepancy between those with and without wealth in Malian society.

**Table: Monthly revenue of sample population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FCFA / MONTH</th>
<th>% OF SAMPLE</th>
<th>~USD / MONTH</th>
<th>~USD / YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 10 000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>&lt;19.70</td>
<td>&lt;236.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 001 – 30 000</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19.70 — 59.08</td>
<td>696.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 001 – 50 000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>59.08 — 98.48</td>
<td>1181.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 001 – 100 000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>98.48 — 162.11</td>
<td>1945.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 100 000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&gt;162.11</td>
<td>&gt;1945.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Class**

In the context of hegemonic struggles, contemporary class cleavages in Mali include actors among a cosmopolitan upper ruling class, an upper-middle class of public

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474 Coulibaly and Diarra, "Tableau 1. Caractéristiques socio-démographiques de l'échantillon"  
Afrobarometer 35, 2004: 3; UNDP Human Development Report (Indicators) 2003
servants, an emerging middle-class, including some urban workers earning a middle 20% income range, and the majority of peasants. Vulnerable to the cost of agricultural inputs and consumer goods increasing faster than agricultural products’ prices (since the 1980s economic crisis and reform since the 1990s), small farmers compete less effectively in domestic and international markets. Furthermore, retrenchment and restriction of public sector workers’ wage levels have also reduced urban incomes. Consequently, highly demand-dependent formal and informal sector workers have been less able to face increased food prices and service charges commensurate with reduced public spending (e.g. on health, education and infrastructure)

**Table: Earning a living**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>None %</th>
<th>Some %</th>
<th>A lot %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaried or wage work</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of goods</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work paid in kind</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employing others</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in savings group</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing (non-bank)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing bank</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money from family members</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas remittances</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table: Five Most Numerous Economic Operators (Bamako 1994)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Operators</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail sales</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>Of 621 total operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale</td>
<td>175</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Home Services</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction and public works</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels, restaurants</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>585</strong></td>
<td>Of 621 total operators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Direction Nationale des Industries

**Table: 2002/03 Schools’ personnel (teachers, principals, secretaries, monitors)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Junior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total personnel</td>
<td>50179</td>
<td>13464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>19069</td>
<td>9696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>12145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medersas</td>
<td>6086</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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475 Coulibaly and Diarra, « Tableau 3.9. Comment gagner sa vie » 2004: p 33
Source CPS Education in *Annuaire Statistique du Mali* 2003 DNSI: 39

The Malian of salaried or waged workers is of limited development, 37% of the people sampled spend no time at all earning a wage. Further, gender and the urban–rural divide also qualify the existing salariat. Women form only 6% of regular wage earners (versus 14% for men), and only 6% of rural populations earn regular wages (versus 20% urban). Not only have these challenges transformed livelihood strategies by increasing labour circulation away from and returning to home areas where social and economic ties are strong, but they have also increased multiple spheres of activity, especially among younger Malians. Demand for agricultural wage labour is increasing in peri-urban areas; thus increasing employment for small farmers, but at the expense of their own farming. Indeed, smallholder farmers face land shortages, limited credit access, and imperfect markets. Moreover, labour to work land is further hampered by increases in non-farm employment opportunities in sectors related to urban growth: e.g. services.

**Table: Education level of sample population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION LEVEL</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No formal</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary incomplete</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary complete</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary incomplete</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary complete</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-secondary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational differences complement and complicate class segment divisions. Level of education qualifies actors’ access to the formal (domestic and global) economy; type of education (secular or Islamic) links actors to the State bureaucracy public sector or to a merchant and commercial economy. Not only do these figures help nuance the more general figures on literacy, but also hint as to the role of informal education, into which Islamic education levels

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478 Ibid: iii-iv
479 Coulibaly and Diarra "Tableau 1. Caractéristiques socio-démographiques de l’échantillon” 2004 : 3
would still fall. The social cleavages in contemporary Mali, which contextualize the neo-liberal democratization and hegemonic project of conservative modernization, are the relatively small proportion of the population in the upper class and upper-middle class segments. In the middle class segments also, the democratization ‘enthusiasts’ discussed in the following chapters participate in the ongoing ideological homogenization.

**Gender and Generation**

In describing the gendered division of labour in Mali, a Bamako-based research group identified “nearly 80% of men are *agriculteurs* and very few of them are involved in commerce. Women, on the other hand, are more often merchants (44%) and are involved in market gardening (34.5%).” Overall, the role and position of women gives an accurate picture of political context and conditions in Mali. While women’s work in households and the public market is essential to social reproduction, politics “remains highly male-dominated,” even when construed broadly to include formal and informal, Western-modelled and indigenous institutions, and while taking into account the greater opportunities for women in public life, especially since 1992. Political exclusion is “most acute at the local level, where public and community decisions tend to be made by men with the assumed agreement of the women.”

As might be expected, patriarchal divisions of labour qualify economic opportunities and constraints. Indeed, in Mali’s urban and peri-urban development dynamics, “men’s economic activities are limited by declining access to agricultural land and the down-sizing of the operation of urban and peri-urban factories.” Conversely, Malian women, dominant in small-scale trade, “benefit from expanding demand for horticultural products and from their location between rural producers and urban markets,” notwithstanding that their “access to farmland is traditionally

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480 Coulibaly and Diarra, 2004: 2
Moreover, younger Malians are more involved in multiple economic activities than older ones, exploiting non-farm employment opportunities to cope with constraints on family farming, including low returns, expectations of unpaid labour, limited participation in decisions, and, “for young women, limited access to land through inheritance.”

Furthermore, generation is a key social division as it relates not only to economic resource access, but also to patron-clientelist norms of ‘sharing the spoils’ in electoral politics.

Although they face perhaps the most uncertain future prospects of any groups, youth and women are reclaiming their history of activism against the dictatorship through various forms of associations and organizations. Notwithstanding these activities, there is a certain ambivalence towards the progressive and conservative tendencies among their members. As discussed in Chapter One, the limitations in a minimal, “scholars’” not “people’s democracy” are becoming ever clearer, especially to those who experience forms of social marginalization, circumscribed human rights, and the permutations of indigenous and Islamic patriarchy. Women’s groups include middle-class leaders and lower middle class and lower class members. Indeed, recognizing that they are still “taught that if they choose to speak out they will be considered arrogant and disrespectful,” and that “in public, they have learned to let others speak for them,” associations struggle to teach Malian women to “not be afraid to lift the curtain,” and be seen and heard in deliberations.

Religion

The relatively indigenized Muslim traditions in West Africa oppose merging religious practice and political power, and encompass a range of politics seen as consistent with the practice of Islam. This range importantly qualifies the figures that 90% of Malians identify

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482 Cecilia Tacoli 2002: v
483 Cecilia Tacoli 2002: v
484 Chabal and Daloz, *Africa works* 1999: 34, 36
485 Wing, 177, cites a seminar on women’s civil and political rights (Sikasso, 1998).
themselves as Muslim.\textsuperscript{486} Moreover, as relatively indigenized Islam meets the more recent, more ideologically forceful tendencies to align Islam and politics in Mali, the key social formations in the construction of Malian Muslim identities include these latter Wahhabi/Sunnis versus the relatively indigenized Traditional/Orthodox.

Furthermore, Islamic revival in Mali and francophone Africa more generally is part of a broader trend in the whole Muslim world. In Mali, "immigrant group of Muslim leaders" known now as Wahhabis (from the strict 18th-century Arabian group), have gained social influence by providing schooling and health care services in the context of State failure and crisis of public service infrastructure. Who bears the ‘genuine Islamic orthodoxy’ is contested between established brotherhoods such as Tyijaniyya that dispute the entitlements of Wahhabi or other ostensible representatives of the Sunni heartland orthodoxy.\textsuperscript{487} Moreover, the illusion of being an exclusive site of authority and identity that pervasive Islam creates, and whose bearers willingly foster, depends on the degree to which it supports social cohesion and occasions various forms of mutual self-help across borders of different kinds (clan, family, village, regional, and international).\textsuperscript{488}

Given the minority of Christians in Mali (1%),\textsuperscript{489} the Christian-Muslim cleavage is not greatly significant in an analysis of social differentiation. Nevertheless, as mentioned in Chapter One, the prominence of Christian leaders' anti-dictatorship struggles was certainly aided by the confessional community between Malian and French Christians, and the contemporary influence of well-placed middle, upper-middle and upper class Christian Malians, many graduates of mission-run schools, is felt in the processes of democratization and citizenship identity formation.

\textsuperscript{486} Instructive here is that, while 9/10ths of Malians are Muslim, only 22% describe religion as their primary group identity (significant comparators include Ethnicity 36% and Occupation 34%). Coulibaly, et al, 2004: 2.
\textsuperscript{487} Manning, 1998 : 207-208
\textsuperscript{488} R. Oteyek, “Dynamiques religieuse et gestion communale par tempt de dentralisation: le religieux comme analyseur de la politique urbaine,” presentation, Point Sud Deuxième Colloque Scientifique Colloquium: Décentralisation et Savoir Local en Afrique, 15-18 February 2002 Bamako, Mali
\textsuperscript{489} The World Factbook “Mali” https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ml.html accessed 13/03/2007. Although the 1% figure is commonly cited, other figures exist. As I received no reply to a request for methodological clarification on rates of up to 4%, I do not use them here.
The French attitude towards Malians’ anti-dictatorship struggles may have been importantly influenced by the prominence of Christian leaders as much or more than Muslim ones in denouncing the pre-1991 abuses and injustices. Thus, while Islamic leaders may have played an important role in mobilizing their local communities against the Traoré regime, Christian organizations, with their French NGO connections, were involved most publicly against him. For example, on February 17th, 1991, Mali’s Bishops published the “Declaration of the Malian Church” that noted political and economic crises, the reduction of political life to power contests "to conquer or protect the power market," the growing wealth of a few and “growing social and economic disparities,” human rights violations, the contemporary “worship of money and image” and the hurried pursuit of material wealth at any cost, and the loss of “a taste, love and courage for truth.”

This scathing analysis honours the Church that, out of concern for truth and rigour, clearly distinguishes itself from the servile collaboration of certain Islamic authorities represented by the Imam of the Great Mosque of Bamako.

**Ethnicity**

Table: Ethnic groups in Mali

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bamana</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soninké</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malinké</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Songhai</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bwaba (Bobo-Oule)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moor or Berbers</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diola</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peul</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sénoufo</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Diarrh, Vers, 1991: 93, 94 reproduces the document edited**

**Diarrah, Vers, 1991: 94. Instructive in the contemporary context is the “Message from the Bishops of Mali for the General elections 2002” that was part of the kit provided to international election observers in 2002, as well as the ‘confessional’ designated place on the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) being filled by a Christian for the 2002 elections.**

Of the forty living languages listed by ethno-linguists in Mali, thirteen are used in teaching and popular literacy.\textsuperscript{493} From the complex history of ethnic relations in Mali, ethnic diversity emerges as more salient than ethnic cleavages.

Other than occasional and localized conflicts (especially over land-use), which can take on some ethnic dimensions, there has been very little ethnic tension and conflict in contemporary Mali.\textsuperscript{494} The exception is the ‘problem of the north,’ sporadic Tuareg rebellion since Malian independence, intensifying since 1990 into armed struggle, that flared into localized civil war in 1994, with a peace concluded in 1996.

In general, however, “relations between ethnic groups have been remarkably peaceable, and Mali has seen few of the tensions which have emerged elsewhere in the region.”\textsuperscript{495} Moreover, Konaré’s achievement of northern peace in 1996, and ATT’s subsequent pursuit of a ‘national unity’ government goes further in the ongoing challenge of nation-building in Mali, including regionalization within administrative decentralization, northern economic development, and integrating Tuareg (and Songhai) fighters into the Malian army.\textsuperscript{496} Nevertheless, legitimacy is not merely a “problem of informing subjects of their rights and responsibilities as citizens or a new polity or of the effectiveness of public policy decisions” but is also the “problem of creating attachment to the symbols of that polity.”\textsuperscript{497} Indeed, contemporary surveys show that Malians identify themselves along ethnic lines more than religion or occupation, the next most important identifiers. Further, even religion and occupation may have important links to ethnic identity.

\begin{tabular}{|l|c|}
\hline
Name & Count \\
\hline
Dogon & 8 \\
Tuareg & 1.7 \\
Other & 1.8 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\textsuperscript{494}Notwithstanding this generalization: “Mali clashes kill eleven” BBC Online Saturday, April 24, 1999 Accessed http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/327422.stm 22/06/05; “Many [10+] die in Mali sectarian violence” Wednesday, 27 August, 2003 Accessed http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3185635.stm 22/06/05
\textsuperscript{496}Benoi st, 1998: 232-234
This confounds any simplistic distinction between ‘traditional’ or ‘ascribed’ and ‘modern’ or ‘achieved’ identities, especially in the context of grasping the complexities of national and citizen identity formation in the post-apertura period.\(^{498}\)

*Who is engaged in neo-liberal democratization?*

From the above, we can, in the subsequent chapters, analyze the social cleavages in contemporary Mali that highlight the neo-liberal democratization and hegemonic project of conservative modernization. Indeed, the ideological homogenization of the ascendant middle-class is part of the hegemonic struggle to exploit the continuities between minimal democracy and conservative indigenous socio-political norms and practices. By seeking to manage social divisions, and by relying on the adoption of indigenous and Muslim terms to do so, the Western hegemonic drive, by those whose post-1991 prosperity enables them to become progressively more autonomous patrons (including a cosmopolitan upper ruling class segment, an upper-middle class segment of public servants, an emerging middle-class segment, including some urban workers), attempts to bolster the relevance and influence of civil citizenship in relation to the democratizing nation-State. ‘Indigenous’, ‘Muslim/Islamic’ and ‘Western’ are analytical categories derived from social divisions of class and the type and extent of education; indeed, education differentials are among the most significant forms of pluralism and division in Malian society.\(^{499}\)

By supporting the transitional and consolidating State, Malian intellectuals since 1991 are not supporting a retrograde abandonment of public debates, but are rather furthering precisely the

\(^{498}\) The survey results deserve more nuanced interpretation than seeing ethnic group identity at 36% and occupational group identity at 34% as indicators of relatively balanced traditional and modern forms of identity. Indeed, as discussed above, some ethnic belonging would definitely overlap with that of occupation, further complicating the ascribed / achieved status dichotomy. Coulibaly and Diarra, “Tableau 4.6. Choix identitaire,” 2004: 39. Other figures for primary identification: Religion 22% Class 3% Gender 3% Others 2%.

ideological homogenization of the ascendant middle class deemed crucial to democratic consolidation that is also a ‘contraction’ of public space and a feature of hegemony. Indeed, actors find the terms of political discourse constrained to the basic (neo)-liberal variants articulated under the aegis of IFI conditionalities, through which is imposed a doctrine of procedural ‘pluralism’ linked to economic liberalism. The catalysts for overthrowing the dictatorship are now turned to channelling the popular forces thus unleashed. As with the anti-colonial struggle, the pro-pluralism struggle, in its rural and urban manifestations, was elitist and indicated the emergence of a new group of upper class and petty bourgeois actors. While both the anti-colonial and pro-pluralism struggles were broadly “African-humanist” in orientation, the 'second act' has turned from that relatively social democratic sensibility to embrace the neo-liberal agenda more fully.

Ultimately, minimal-procedural enthusiasts limit the terms of reference to make it possible, even unavoidable, to talk about democratic 'successes' rather than shortcomings. Furthermore, hegemony manages intra-class and inter-class divisions to forge legitimacy; the liberalizing upper and upper-middle class actors have been the key proponents of the Western liberal state, and are distinctively well placed to incorporate indigenous features in promoting bourgeois civil society. These Malians, who pushed out the dictator and his extensive patrimonial entourages, with popular support and a pluralist-electoralist mantra, now seek “to ratify and legitimize the political ascendancy of the middle-sectors.” The rising upper-middle and middle class actors thus find links to the upper class, formerly guarded by the authoritarian regime agents. Enjoying post-apertura prosperity, the new petty bourgeoisie are, on the basis of ideological, political, and economic criteria, also potential reproducers of ideological domination.

In Mali, after the legacy of the Traoré regime’s disdain for intellectuals, and despite the surprising ambivalence towards journalists of the Konaré-ADEMA government, the emerging upper-middle and middle class reformers share certain interests with the liberal formalists among the upper class and upper middle classes in the State and among national and foreign capitalist actors. Members of middle class segments draw from their own indigenous identities in the service of neoliberal-democratic hegemony. Most interesting (understood in the transnational circumstances) is the compromise of the self-governance principles, and acquiescence to the inequalities of a neoliberal version of ‘social solidarity.’

Furthermore, ongoing contested search for ‘national characteristics’ is key in nation-making in the contemporary emergence, consolidation, and legitimation of the president ATT’s ‘unifier politics’ (*politique du rassembleur*). This strategy attempts to balance two approaches of the post-apertura leadership to managing diversity. On the one hand, accepting diversity and institutionalizing group autonomy recognizes and attempts to reconcile relatively autonomous power bases. On the other hand, unifier politics seeks to deny diversity, stress harmony, and create a unity mythology. As might be expected, the reconciliation and mobilization can be contradictory even as elites attempt to make them complementary.\(^{503}\)

In the May 2004 Malian municipal elections the success of independent candidates was at the expense of certain longer-established parties (e.g. ADEMA, CNID-FYT). President Touré, who “has always said that the current situation of non-opposition is not permanent,” was forced to consider the results carefully in order “to envision a way out of his role as président-rassembleur, since his adversaries will come out in strength to form a coalition aimed at the next presidential elections [2007].”\(^{504}\)


Origins of the Hegemonic Project of Conservative Modernization

More refined contours of the population’s social strata show better who is engaged in and enthusiastic about neo-liberal democratization, who is reproducing, acquiescing, and passively or actively resisting the hegemonic project of conservative modernization. Indeed, this clarifies the social cleavages in contemporary Mali that make the hegemony of neo-liberal democratization an important subject of inquiry and analysis. Also, the origins of the hegemonic project, operating in tandem with (though not coterminous with) the enthusiasm for neo-liberal democratization may be better situated among segments that are not necessarily a full-fledged ruling class that has achieved (rather than is seeking) ideological homogenization and unified agendas.

Furthermore, as significant as the large percentage (81%) of the population that supports electoralism is the range of thinking about who should govern in the absence of free and fair elections, and the cleavages of education level and age especially that qualify the responses. Indeed, not only do 53% agree overall that a council of elders/chief should govern in the absence of free and fair elections, but also such agreement is consistent across educational levels. Notwithstanding, however, the hegemonic, ‘educational’ influence of electoralist enthusiasm, the bearers of this enthusiasm (esp. teachers, students, and State agents) straddle categories by virtue of past activism, current (versus past) position in State or non-State institutions, and position relative to the emerging beneficiaries of post-apertura economic liberalization.

This suggests not merely an elder-led openness to traditional leadership, but also a certain disenchantment with post-apertura politics by younger people, for whom the legacy of partisan politics does not include the late colonial and independence periods. Furthermore, tolerance of a possible return to some form of military governance (24%) or the single party (18%) is still significant in Mali, among the highest of any in the Afrobarometer cases. It varies by education

505 "La légitimité du pouvoir résulte du choix des dirigeants à travers des élections régulières, libres et honnêtes." Coulibaly and Diarra 2004: p.4
506 Ibid
507 Ibid “Tableau 1.3. Les partis politiques créent la division et la confusion,” p.5
level, but only significantly across the threshold of those who have and those who have not attended or completed secondary education.\textsuperscript{508}

As noted above in discussing urbanization’s and peri-urbanization’s impacts on social differentiation, the links to regions of origin are key to political mobilization and economic redistribution, and also inform the discourses of conservative modernization. Rural forms of solidarity sustained and legitimated elders’ authority, while providing for wellbeing (not to say prosperity) and protection for the most vulnerable people in times of crisis. The contemporary, urban solidarities of unions, parties, and professional associations produce more mobilized, activist and effective organizations for political action, but reduce the scope of solidarity even as it becomes more egalitarian and engaged. Indeed, transforming and reproducing hegemony are products of urbanization and urban movements from relatively decentralized ‘traditional’ elites, to the colonial and post-colonial nouveau-elites of the independence era (more centralized and concentrated by subsequent industrialization and urbanization) and political anti-authoritarian, pro-democracy movements.

The destabilization of the asymmetrical solidarity that legitimated traditional privilege and patriarchy has also deepened the schism between the peasants and urban underclass, on the one hand, and the urban privileged classes, on the other.\textsuperscript{509} Although it is important not to presume that life was better under indigenous and Muslim paternalism (especially for women and youth) than under the more precarious conditions of contemporary social transformation, it is also key to grasp that the desire to revive and protect the cohesion and stability of these forms of social organization is not entirely reducible to nostalgic patriarchal privilege. Young educated migrants to the cities face the realities of underemployment and unemployment. Moreover, it is impossible to expect a generalized reversal of urbanization, and a return by migrating youth to

\textsuperscript{508} Ibid: 6
\textsuperscript{509} Alibert 231-32, 268. The term ‘the rootless,’ (Fr. \textit{les déracinés}) further distinguishes the relatively embedded peasant poor from the more destitute urban poor, bereft on more fronts than their rural counterparts. As Chabal and Daloz note, “[t]he truly destitute are those without patrons.” (1999: 42)
work in the villages and fields. Conversely, while working the land “may no longer be attractive, cities are the mirage of modernism [...] as they cannot provide work for the multitude that demands it.” An urban proletariat, by finding work becomes further separated from the peasant and urban underclasses. Solidarity between such a proletariat and the mass of the most vulnerable precariously employed population is less than it was during the days of the Peoples' Revolution.

The tendency towards enthusiasm for neo-liberal democratization must be seen as a minority-led view, most fully articulated among only 5% of the population among the salariat, including professionals, teachers and State agents, and supported at most by 35%, including merchants, some artisans and labourers, and the self-employed. The various tendencies among the 'enthusiasts' include actors with incomplete secondary education and complete primary education, reflecting the 'educational' reach of the neo-liberal democratization and conservative modernization projects. The various indicators of 'support' for political liberalization point to a certain convergence on conservative modernization, while there remains more divergence on the acceptability of a neo-liberal agenda.

Indeed, while poorer Malians want more economic democracy, they generally agree with the paternalistic, authoritarian, and hierarchical norms, practices and institutions that could make such redistribution happen in spite of the foreign-led, neo-liberal consensus that deeply conditions if not dominates domestic politics. Indeed, the two highest values responding to “The president can decide everything” are from two seemingly unlikely groups to agree on this issue, those with informal education and those with secondary education completed. And yet, this points to a certain convergence on conservative modernization regardless of educational attainment. A dimension of class convergence in this is suggested by attitudes toward the government, in particular “Considering the government like a parent,” with which 34% agree.

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510 Alibert, 270
511 Alibert, 272
overall. Furthermore, those income groups most agreeable to parental government have the most to gain from its patronage resources, earning over 30,000 FCFA (~$60 US) per month, almost 29% of the population.  

Finally, as much as the Afrobarometer surveys and reports serve us as sources of information, they also serve in themselves as evidence of the actors who are engaged in the neoliber al democratization project. Indeed, their discussions are frank and public, as part of their stated goals of policy influence within African governments. Discussing sources of market legitimacy, the Malian researchers first acknowledge their compatriots, general resistance to purely liberal economic reforms. The preferences noted among Malians through the surveys, are “all elements that challenge the market economy paradigm.” Malians stress how state involvement in the economy is understood as integral to a democratic society in which basic needs are satisfied. In response, the researchers note that “in such conditions, the legitimation of the market depends on finding the factors that determine support for neo-liberal reforms.” “To prepare modelling such legitimation,” the recommendations target the as yet unintegrated, non-neo-liberal moral economy: “basic economic values and social capital must be identified and better quantified, i.e. the networks for problem-solving and conflict resolution.” Indeed, as Chapter One discussed about the policy advice aims of the Afrobarometer studies, and the impact of US comparative political science on Africanist studies,

[f]rom the time our scholar becomes "realistic", he or she begins to take the ‘official’ standpoint as the point of departure in the process of production of knowledge. The tendency is for the "realistic" point of view to overlap with the "official" point of view. The Africanist begins to speak in the language of a consultant, whether to the donor or to the recipient government.

513 Ibid, “Tableau 1.6. Attitudes envers le Gouvernement” : 9
515 Ibid
516 Ibid. « Tableau 4.1 Préférence pour l'économie de marché » 36
517 Ibid, 35
Notwithstanding the identification of 'social capital' as key in legitimating neo-liberal reforms, the Afrobarometer focuses its conclusions on the economic sphere and how this legitimation is expected to affect support for the minimal procedures of multipartism à la maliennne. Participation in the market economy is thus linked to “satisfaction of democratic values,” as well as confidence, still widely absent, in the private sector's dynamism and respect for labour laws.\footnote{Coulibaly and Diarra, 2004: 44} Moreover, links are made to employment policy reform, including public sector reform and the sense of the government's limitation in managing the economy, creating jobs, or reducing corruption. In all, then, the aspirations of 'satisfying democratic values,’ (framed in limited terms) are dependent on managing (reducing) expectations of mixed economies and social democracy preferred by Malians overall (Fr. démocratie économique)

While it makes a certain sense to focus on legitimating the economy in the moral economy, the researchers are only tangentially interested in the dynamics of the 'moral' factor that structures the social capital which they invest with importance, but little corresponding interest.\footnote{Interesting, if frustrating, is how ‘social capital’ indicators were ‘streamlined’ out of the second round of Afrobarometer surveys, precisely those indicators that would provide information about these dynamics. Carolyn Logan of Afrobarometer mentioned this during the question period after her presentation, "Demand for Democracy, or Mere Desire? Africans’ Willingness to Defend Democratic Freedoms" African Studies Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 2004} What they seem to be missing entirely, is that neo-liberalism as it has been experienced by most Malians contradicts “satisfying basic economic needs” on which the support for democracy is, according to the respondents, ultimately based.\footnote{Ibid. The researchers deserve credit, however, for reporting case-specific findings counter to their general findings and counter to their theoretical predispositions: the very factors that serves to undermine the neo-liberal legitimation project.}
Chapter Four Indigenous elements of citizen identity in Mali

INTRODUCTION: Cultural advantages for democracy?

The overall aim of this chapter is to square the broadly democratic and anti-democratic forces in Malian society and politics from a perspective critical of procedural democratization (neo-liberal, political modernization). As Abrahamsen noted at the macro level for countries in Africa, “good governance discourse, despite the efforts of its proponents to present it as radically different from past development doctrines, reproduces the hierarchies and relationships that have been the hallmarks of development ever since its inception in the post-war period.” Domestic political democratic practice, however, is not necessarily commensurate with (neo)liberalism.

The internal dimensions of ‘good governance’ are products of middle and upper class actors’ struggle to establish the hegemony of liberalism with indigenous authority. Further, the analogy of the household is extended to larger political units, including the nation-State: reproducing hierarchy (asymmetrical reciprocity of patrons and clients), patriarchy, and paternalism in the hegemonic project of conservative modernization, by which kinship writ large establishes parameters of trust alternative to those of liberal, institutional trust.

Ostensible cultural advantages for democratic deepening, then, must be seen in the context of historical syncretism in Mali and West Africa. Also, these ‘advantages’ must be seen in the context of the contradictions of (neo)liberal democracy and communitarian-indigenous values around citizenship and socio-political membership and action, as well as middle and upper class actors’ hegemonic struggles succeeding to merge the contradictions. Elites merge but also neglect the contradictions, given the relative success of the hegemonic struggle.

Analyses of Mali’s democratic success tend to emphasize the institutional and elite factors over the political cultural ones. Some have noted, however, that there are key institutions that rest on Mali’s indigenous and Islamic culture that are being drawn upon to deepen

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democracy. In general, there is growing recognition of the cultural elements in democratic consolidation in Africa. In particular,

...the trust that Malians have in one another demonstrates the importance of a unique political culture that may have provided Mali with a democratic advantage over other African nations. Many aspects of Malian traditional society encourage norms consistent with democratic citizenship, including tolerance, trust, pluralism, the separation of powers, and the accountability of the leader to the governed. These ideas first appear in the founding epic of the nation, in which Sundiata Keita defeated a tyrant guilty of exercising illegitimate power. Furthermore, traditional forms of social organization and village government have stressed the interdependence of various social groups and power-sharing between classes. Patterns of reciprocity, trust, and social solidarity are also found in the traditionally syncretic relationship between Islam and non-Islamic elements, which is accompanied by a strong commitment to religious tolerance.523

All these aspects of Mali’s democratic cultural advantage cannot be addressed here. The key considerations are those of tolerance, trust, pluralism, etc., are qualified by patron-clientelism and the pragmatism of social interdependency on the one hand, and unanisme on the other. It is consultative from the top down, and builds unanimous consent through various forms of imposition more than from participatory constructive dissent and debate.524

The chapter deconstructs the cultural advantages and anchors, using these to construct an alternative assessment of the ambiguous cultural elements relative to (1) democratic and anti-democratic norms in Mali, and (2) a more philosophical question, what is meant by democratic norms and to whom? In terms of first-hand local experience, secondary analyses and judgments of that experience, and the ‘imperial gaze’ from foreign donors and States that seeks an ‘ideal

524 Interview, Domestic NGO worker Apr18, Bamako, 18 April 2002. A typical* urban middle-class analysis sees the post-apertura improvement is better than the outright tyranny of the Traoré regime, what we might call a ‘passive revolution.’ The ultimately popular-democratic results are questionable and even doubtful. On passive revolution in Africa, see R. Abrahamsen, 1997: 149-50; J.-F. Bayart, The State in Africa: the politics of the belly London and New York, 1993.

A methodological note is in order here. To distinguish primary evidence from secondary analysis is important, particularly when both come from Malian respondents. In the presence of the investigator respondents engaged in a twofold process of articulating and evaluating their own experience related to the central issues: authority, representation, legitimacy, socio-political membership and identity. In some cases, therefore, respondents’ remarks are reflexive explanations of the remarks themselves and the respondents’ position. Moreover, as investigator, I am present in the dialogic, analytical endeavour.
type’ of democratic political culture, what is meant by democracy to whom is complicated by idiosyncrasies. These idiosyncrasies are instructive about the linkages between liberal and communitarian norms and practices, between patron-clientelism and autonomous individuals. The subjects are: (1) indigenous elements of accountability, moral authority, and leadership and (2) their idioms of action and expression in transforming citizen identity.525

Its political culture provides Mali with ambivalent democratic advantages. Nevertheless, aspects of Malian traditional society also encourage norms inconsistent with or indifferent to democratic citizenship, including consensus-\textit{unanisme}, patriarchy, and patron-client solidarity. Furthermore, forms of social organization and village government have stressed the asymmetrical interdependence and power-sharing between various social groups. Such patterns of asymmetrical reciprocity produce particularized more than generalized trust, and limit political pluralism through social solidarity.

Given this ambivalence, democratic-pluralist legitimization faces a significant challenge: seeking moral legitimacy across social divisions by attempting to exploit hierarchy and patriarchy—in which the elder-superior-expert sets the parameters of ostensibly popular consultation. Communitarian values in popular perceptions of political legitimacy are thus pressed into the service of liberal norms, because merely pluralist-electoral-competitive legitimation is insufficient by itself.

Critics of democratic success such as Mali’s “have serious doubts about the Western commitment to bring about and sustain popular democratic rule,” and that “[t]he World Bank never really meant popular participation in the first place when it introduced the theme of good governance.”526 This assessment is further based on seeing the “broad coalitions of relatively privileged citizens” who agitated for democratization “as a means to defend their privileges and not to bring about popular democracy, involving all segments of the population,” and the

525 I draw on the Mande-Bamanan tradition, which is dominant in Mali’s national-political life.
subsequent politics that has remained “competition among the political elites to the exclusion of the masses.”

Indigenous elements of citizenship idioms are deployed in concert with Western-Good Governance ones. Thus, key actors who bear Western-democratic idioms of citizen identity tend to reproduce rather than challenge patriarchy, and to negotiate limits on participation through consultation, to reproduce participation-as-presence rather than encounter. While these actors do resist ritual practice related to institutionalized marginalization, they incorporate and manage the inequalities under the rubric of solidarity.

Furthermore, relatively egalitarian and inclusive democratic idioms are also deployed to emphasize electoral participation, and civic duty rather than activism, dissent, and protest. Middle and upper class actors connect the governance discourse to one of good morals, to lend indigenous legitimacy to Western-modeled neo-liberal democracy. This synthetic discourse thus attempts to simplify rich and challenging idioms of action in Malian political and social life, while simultaneously exploiting this complexity to enrich the thin norms and values of liberal citizenship (individualistic Vs. communitarian).

**Historical Legacies**

It is key to retain that the pre-colonial history set forth in Chapter Two is used to represent leadership, correct social relations, and reconciliation among classes, ethnicities, regions, and former enemies. The contemporary political narratives of imperial Mali situate a type of authority that is at once authoritarian, popular, hierarchical, and pluralist. Indeed, central to Mali’s contemporary society and politics are ongoing attempts at a difficult cultural synthesis. In brief, Malians are “strongly influenced by ideas and attitudes from the modern communication media, but still refer to the more or less active vestiges of traditional education.” Nevertheless, a

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528 See Chapeter Six re: the German social democratic NGO Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung), shift of collaboration with the Malian workers’ movement to promoting democratic institutions and “democratic consolidation through political education.” (Les Echos 17 April 2002: 4)
dialectical perspective supplements the tradition-modernity dynamic in that “nothing in Malians’ daily life is spared from the permanent conflict between the two tendencies. In fact, despite its tendency to embrace universal canons our society continues with behaviour dominated by purely archaic taboos.”

Whether this tendency is decried or accepted, it is widely recognized as indispensable for understanding contemporary life in Mali. Analysis of political institutions needs to be supplemented by attention to vernacular discourses, such that “daily life” is a “constant point of reference,” given that “modern Malians are straddling between modernity and tradition, between the city and the village.”

The “Collective Conviction of Belonging”

Malian unity is “founded on the collective conviction of belonging to a nation whose age and extent largely exceed that of the contemporary Republic of Mali.” This sensibility follows from the shared historical memory that each of the largest ethnic groups ruled over the others at one time, from the eleventh, fourteenth, and sixteenth centuries. Moreover, Malians generally grasp the core common histories of sophisticated pre-colonial economic and political relationships in organizing production, distribution, consumption, and exchange, and their interdependence with governing norms and practices. The core of Sundjata’s empire is the demographic centre of today’s Republic of Mali. This history has forged what many call “a veritable Malian identity of common characteristics and values that are internalized and shared.” The important, contemporary ‘great Mali’ trope (including social cohesion, unity),

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530 Interview, high school teacher Mar14, Bamako, 14 March 2002.

531 S. & V. Adrianmirado, 2001, 24

recalls especially a time before major schisms and splintering defeats, and subsequently French colonial occupation.

Historians stress the wealth and variety of independent, pre-colonial political and economic systems in Africa. Indeed, Mali’s past and present preserves long-established traditions and conceptions of historical narrative, in which history remains “a site of integration of events that have marked the collective memory. Yesterday and today are blended together.” In addition, the “narrative of common membership is elaborated in relation to the material environment surrounding the tellers and the socio-cultural codes of the time, but it is also linked directly to political contingencies.” These are the resources, as lived history and as cultural ingredients, upon which the ongoing nation building and community imagining project draws, as middle and upper-class ‘cosmopolitan’ Malians seek to legitimize democratic political institutions and culture from those of the empires’ rise and fall up to the 19th century, colonialism’s intrusion from the 1880s and its defeat in 1960, and the ‘Peoples’ victory over military dictatorship in 1991.

The continuing dominance of people’s livelihoods by subsistence fishing, farming, and herding also frames how Malian identity was rooted historically and materially, and how these roots are reaffirmed and transformed in contemporary imaginings of Malian identity.

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533 Ibid. 16.
534 Ibid 16. Despite certain reservations with the terms’ pedigree, ‘intellectual’ and ‘social’ capital label the importance of historical and cultural resources for this analysis throughout.
536 Konaré, 2000: 19 “more than lived history, these deeds [of Sunjata et al] are cultural ingredients defined for all time.” Konaré’s essay reproduces the problematic utilitarian-nationalist historiography she identifies. Konaré typifies the modernizing-conservative legacy of Malians’ past experience, as emergent upper and upper middle-class liberals (the conservative ‘people of tomorrow’) deploy the idioms that link (1) the ‘last of the past’ with (2) their own particular ascendant culture-and-class oriented future, and (3) the ‘best of the west’: as if this conservative synthesis were a national-political will and social project, and not a project particular to unifying the ruling class strata.
537 The group-shot for ATT’s presidential poster is a good example: each ethnicity is imaged in its traditional dress, to accompany ATT’s message of finding what unites us i.e. ATT himself, but also the sense of unity from diversity, whereby legitimating access to wealth and power is constructed and extended from a symbolism that stresses ‘All have a place, their rightful place.’ Indeed, a phrase popular among
As mentioned above, the generally credible presidential 2002 elections were a reference point of institutional consolidation and changing elite behaviour. Though far from unequivocal, there are clearly positive signs in elite political behaviour. There is, since 1991, certainly a larger level of consensus among a broader group of political actors, which is perceived as a definite improvement over dictators and their cadres. Domestic political elites have worked together to further entrench democratic politics in Mali, by respecting the Republican Pact and the ‘rules of the game’ in multiparty competitive politics. More importantly for analyzing democratic deepening, political elites frame political legitimation in Mali’s republican tradition such that loyalty, unity, and consensus limit and co-opt dissent and opposition. Given the colonial republican, party-State, and State-party norms and practices, there is continuity of using mythologized aspects of Mali’s history to give meaning to the citizen-militant and their patron-leader. Thus, there is continuity in the hegemonic ideal, in which participatory politics is properly constrained and limited so as not exceed the institutional bounds available for its articulation, and more importantly continues not to exceed elites’ present and future management capacities. Exemplary here was the role Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta (IBK) played in preserving the peace and credibility of the second round of the 2002 elections.

The transformation of political culture and citizen identity

**IKB ‘le gros Mandinka: the victory of the vanquished’**

In May 2002, it was widely acknowledged that IBK should have made the second round, but was excluded due to serious irregularities at the heart of the electoral process, especially between the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Collectivities (MATCL) and the Constitutional Court, the bodies responsible for fighting such irregularities.

Despite the questionable marginalization of IBK after the first round results, his acceptance of the Court’s ruling meant that the population should accept, even if the verdict was

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Malian politicians about bureaucratic reform suggests this injunction to ‘flourish in your proper place’: “*l’homme qu’il faut à la place qu’il faut.*”
‘fixed’ (Fr. charmé). Many indeed were disappointed with the result. The defeated candidate’s acceptance signalled that things must be all right. As mentioned in Chapter One, political elites’ respect for the ‘rules of the game’ in multiparty competitive politics, can have significant influence on general political behaviour. Citizen opinions supported the Constitutional Court’s recount and determination of second round candidates, which included Soumaïla Cissé from the ruling ADEMA party (Alliance for Democracy in Mali) versus ATT for the Citizens’ Movement. For this, IBK le gros Mandika “the great Mandika,” was honoured with ‘the victory of the vanquished’ and praise for his wisdom in not taking his supporters into the street following a large stadium rally. On the one hand, this action points to the relatively strong sense of respect for the outcome of the pluralist-electoral game, even when the results may be fixed. On the other hand, it points to the power of social cohesion and reconciliation considerations to obscure injustices, in this case to IBK and his supporters, to give this resolution and reconciliation relatively widespread, though not uncritical, popular credence. Clearly, this does not recommend violence as part of the functioning of pluralist politics, but rather raises the question of how muted the social conflicts thus mediated become, and how these divisions remain, but remain

538 The Constitutional Court rejected over 28% of the ballots cast (514,019 of 2,078,795) due to irregularities on vote day and (N.B.) the process of vote centralization. This gave the Presidential elections of 2002 the tenor of an improvement over the electoral debacle of 1997, but left some very serious questions unanswered. Votes from 69 Bamako District communes were reported lost, some nearly within sight of the Centralizing Commission office. IBK was in third place by 4382 votes. For some election observers and many Malians generally, IBK was marginalized from the second round against the ballot-box results. Election observers were stunned to witness the Constitutional Court dismiss the counts and work done by the designated institutions, and do their own, closed-door vote-count. Among the international observers, the Carter Center team, lead by Dr. D. Pottie, was the most publicly critical of the process. Such criticism was marginalized and ultimately did not impact much the overall assessment of how peaceful, transparent and credible the 2002 elections were. Given the improvements over the 1997 electoral farce, this assessment is fair. Measured by the standards the Malian government set itself, however, much was left to be desired.

539 Radio Klédu, Bamako news broadcast 12h45 10/05/02. “IBK: ‘La victoire du vaincu’ Les Echos, 10/052002. Le gros Mandika, ‘the big/great Mandinka’ (predominant ethnic group) is partly a comment on IBK’s girth—the most obvious sign of his personal prosperity—as well as his rich traditional dress clothes when in public. Moreover, it points to two supposed character traits of the historic Mande leaders and nobility (Keïta clan) a ferocious desire for power, left unsatisfied since being Prime Minister and the ‘heart’ of the ruling ADEMA party, and the long-view, big-picture vision of a genuine statesman, rather than a mere politician.

subordinated to relatively thin attachments of political identity and engagement, based on voting rights in the context of peaceful yet suspect elections.

Furthermore, reconciliation is a key idiom in emerging political elites’ culture and behavior, which links social cohesion and ‘high road’ politics with the necessity of pragmatic social solidarity. Analysis of idioms, on the one hand, and of actors on the other hand shows that seeking consent and limiting dissent are thus paired functions of a hegemonic enterprise, which takes on (co-opts) other strains of moral and intellectual leadership including subaltern and potentially counter-hegemonic ones. The tensions inherent in reconciliation (and the ‘reconciled’ social divisions) run along the axis of (political) opposition and loyalty, and the range of ‘consensus,’ though not without criticism, long-standing schisms (ADEMA breakdown), and respect for the republican pact and rules of the pluralist, electoral game.

Unlike the progress of institutions and elite behaviour, the transformation of political culture and citizen identity has been much slower, ambiguous even contradictory, and a challenge to interpret and analyze. Nevertheless, important progress towards more inclusive participatory politics as the mass level has been noted and encouraged. Against this, however, is the perpetual poverty of choice in Malian politics. Not only is this a problem of a limited spectrum of political ideas and social policy, and of the “generous or utopian promises” made by political opportunists, but is also related to the patron-client dynamics inherent in Malian politics at the national-partisan and local levels (on which more below), and also the limited choices afforded by the poverty of extreme material and psychological vulnerability (see Chabal under ‘Tolerance’ below).

There is a whole range from ‘needy gullibility,’ to dependent or conditioned resignation, acceptance, even conformity to the habitual practice or the perceived appropriate practice. This habit says ‘I am supposed to believe/ try to believe what this politician is promising me. As I have next to nothing, I have next to nothing to lose by buying into the same fantasies, again.’

poverty of Mali’s vulnerable majority “provides the perfect conditions for conmen to flourish,” according to sociologist Assata Diallo, “[c]harlatans, witchdoctors and others who live by selling dreams can easily attract people by saying they have the solutions to their problems.”

Conversely, there is the positive side of ‘gift politics’. Mamadou Bakary ‘Blaise’ Sangaré, President of the Social Democratic Convention CDS, is instructive here. Accused in a 1997 interview of buying the electorate of his home district with development projects, he replied: “That is true.” Objecting to the terms of the question, he defended ‘buying’ the electorate by stressing that “politics is first of all real knowledge of a social milieu,” a “reservoir of confidence,” and a “whole social network that puts itself at your disposal because you too have known how to be sociable and to be in symbiosis, in phase with society.” Having succeeded in local NGO initiatives and finding donors, Blaise says, the people of Bougouni, “figured that when I would have greater means, I would do even better. […] I think the word ‘buying’ does not fit. Rather, I invite politicians to do more than Blaise.”

Thus, notwithstanding shifts in patronage relations towards greater exploitation and less asymmetrical reciprocity since the colonial institution of French commandants de cercle and local chefs de canton, the patron-leader, (Bam. mogotigi), retains important material and symbolic power in part to alleviate and in part to legitimate inequalities economic, social and political spheres.

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542 Interview, trades worker Nov1, 1 November 2002 Bandiagara; Interview, trades worker Nov3, 3 November 2002 Bandiagara; Interview, small holding farmer Jul5, Koniobra, 5 July 2002 Farmer and village association executive member, 1 July 2002 Koniobra. Rural, secondary-school educated tradesmen and political party members, as well as rural farmers situate their own experience within an analysis of the limits that poverty places on choice and thus on political imagination. Diallo cited in Sadio Kante “Mali’s human sacrifice - myth or reality?” BBC Online Monday, 20 September, 2004 accessed 9/24/2004. A Sixth grade reader from Horizons d’Afrique pictures two types of political candidate paired with their target audience type of voter: utopian promises and gullibility, and explanation and critical thoughtfulness. Although oversimplified, the typology represents the problems of needy gullibility and the rhetoric of diminishing expectations.


**Tolerance**

Tolerance is genuine and pragmatic; it must be seen from the perspective of Malian brassage (cultural mixing, intermarriage, shared history, and syncretism), as well as a certain conservatism of vulnerability. Facing uncertainty, scarcity and potential crisis ‘getting along’ with neighbours is paramount: you will need them, sooner rather than later. This social pragmatism focuses on the networks emanating from a patron. The resulting personalization of power works through the informal sector with principles of legitimacy that are based on reciprocity between patrons and clients, personalized vertical social links with short-term goals of subsistance and reinforcing networks. Actors in highly vulnerable contexts commonly emphasize short-term gain not longer-term development, which are based on “the primacy of communitarian and clientelistic political imperatives —which make good sense at the micro-level of individuals and communities, despite unpredictable and nugatory consequences at larger and broader socio-political levels.”

**Trust**

Trust as a democratic norm needs further consideration to distinguish dimensions that might be advantageous or disadvantageous for democratic politics. The presence of clientelist dynamics within communities of trust suggests that politicizing personal trust both “indicates and exacerbates democratic deficits, which in turn undermines the kinds of trust that are good for democracy.” Thus, to assess if “trust mediated by shared norms is good or bad for democracy,” one must consider encompassing and generalizable versus particular norms:

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545 J. Scott The Moral Economy of the Peasant 1976: 40-1, et passim: The ‘subsistence ethic’ is a moral claim to a living, not an egalitarian principle, but admits of inequality in its conservatism, and preference for protection rather than equality.

546 P. Chabal, “The quest for good government and development in Africa: is NEPAD the answer?” International Affairs, July 2002, 78: 3, (pp. 447-462): 454

particularized trust versus generalized trust in public institutions and their agents. Most interesting about the Malian case, within the scope of Mandé socio-cultural relations, is the combination of generalized and particular cultural trust, or rather extended particular cultural trust.

If generalized cultural trust is characterized by spontaneous generosity and even altruism toward strangers, “it may not even matter that you do not belong to the group.” Malian social structure, however, by building the role of strangers (Bam. duman) into social relations as well as institutionalizing marginality of certain groups, incorporates an important feature of generalized trust into an otherwise particularized trust culture. The inclusivity notwithstanding, particularized trust societies, such as Mali’s, have high levels of mistrust. One’s own interests are assumed to diverge from others’ who may compete for patronage. Thus these interests are not necessarily justifiable to a wider public. This too goes hand in hand with strong bonds of clientelism-structured trust relationships. Particularist trust relations foster clientelistic protection and reciprocity. Further, not only is this trust relationship difficult to justify publicly, the interests this trust serves must remain hidden, or only known within the trust community. Such trust “leads to a rigid modus vivendi in social life, within which democracy will be unable to do its creative work” of broadening inclusion.

550 Warren, Trust in Democratic Institutions, n.d.: 18-20, 28. Even if institutionalized marginals (e.g. casted trades-people) are afforded an exceptional right to speak the truth to power, this exception reinforces the central hegemonic rule: know who you are, and do what you should.
Pluralism and Mali’s ‘platform of unanimity’

Pluralism is similarly connected to social pragmatism to manage social divisions as potential sources of conflict, but also of effective pluralism. Thus, political unanisme and consensus limits Malian pluralism.

To balance shared norms and values while articulating pluralism and dissent is the central issue for critically assessing the ‘cultural advantages’ for deepening democracy of pluralism in Mali. The ‘platform of unanimity’ is central to democratic consolidation as a form of hegemonic domination in Mali. As mentioned above, Mali’s ‘platform’ is, in fact, not effective at combining consensus and pluralism, but rather seeks consensus at the cost of pluralism. On "Balancing the platform of unanimity," Nzouankeu is worth quoting further:

It is this platform on which the members’ solidarity is based. But, on the other hand, [... moral and material] differences must be sufficiently great and perceptible to justify political competition, but not so great as to call into question the platform of unanimity. Pluralist majoritarian democracy is impossible where the differences are so great as to tear the fabric of society; neither can it exist where the platform of unanimity is so broad that there is no longer anything for the citizens to debate.\(^{552}\)

The ‘platform of unanimity’, rather than balancing shared interests with pluralism enough to foster constructive dissent, tends towards managing disparate interests to preserve social cohesion in the political community. Social cohesion idioms routinely stifle more dynamic pluralism to build consensus. Vertical and horizontal linkages as democratic and patrimonial axes connect pluralism to social pragmatism, and thus conform and limit it.

Patriarchy: Generational and Gender Divisions

The broadly ‘educational’ (in Gramsci’s sense) hegemonic struggle rests on re-inventing patriarchal traditions, which manage generational, class and gender divisions, to re-imagine a national-political community in which democratic legitimization can occur without disrupting too

\(^{552}\)Ibid. 33

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much (and draw on as idiomatic resources) indigenous, communitarian and corporatist norms and practices to reinforce legitimacy. The resulting legitimation modes can be morally very conservative.

The predominant view of responsible leadership is of a father-figure leader taking care of his people, who in turn behave themselves and support this relationship. Even challenges (provided for example by Malian youth) to such a ‘heritage view’ of citizenship as correct social relations refers to this as a starting point, while “searching for a kind of citizenship that goes beyond that of the ‘good government’ exercising its authority as a ‘good father’ over a ‘good people.’”\footnote{553} Indeed, the dominant perspective shares and preserves the assumptions about the suitability of the \textit{paterfamilias} political leader. From an oppositional position, students understand the preferred interpretation, but do not fully share its assumptions. Drawing on alternative reference-points, they alternatively, oppose and negotiate, resist and modify the forms of citizen identity commensurate with their own experience, position, and interests. From this interpretive position, personal experiences are the bases of contradictions. Among them is students’ relatively privileged position relative to the very dominant perspective they might struggle against. Excluded as youth and actors as yet not fully linked to State or non-state networks, students aspire to be potential patrons and leaders.

Part of this struggle and negotiation occurs as students at school transform age-sets and home-town organizations into “small programmes […] working explicitly to raise consciousness,” and in which “[d]emocratic practices are at work, and a leadership education is taking place.”\footnote{554} Given the role of the student movement in the advent of democracy in Mali, urban student youths reclaim these organizations’ proud heritage of popular, progressive activism, while facing an uncertain present mandate and future prospects.

\footnotetext{554}{J. A. Mbembe, 1985: 196; cf. 209-211.}
Middle-class youth attending school seek to modify and re-interpret traditions they feel restrict them, from seeing, or hearing about, and experiencing other cultures, and new technologies. Their understanding of their own traditions differs from that of their elders, and is varied among their peers. It is not, however, fiercely antagonistic or revolutionary, but an alternative view of wisdom received from previous generations, responding to more recent social and economic realities. Members of a rural lower-middle class emphasize the coexistence of relatively radical forms of resistance (e.g. student walkouts and strikes) and values about protecting and promoting Malian cultural norms. Moreover, when students under twenty-five reflect a widespread cynicism about politics and politicians, they combine it with a sense that the culture and survival of Mali and Africa is under siege from these same politicians, who are influenced or directed by outside designs and agendas. This in the context of urban unemployed youths’ or underemployed graduates’ impoverishment and separation from a family order “founded on the head of household’s capacity to ‘feed his people’”.

Some youth, especially urban, middle and upper middle class, seek to bear the radical, regime-challenging attitudes and actions of 1989-1992, when the student movement was central in the struggle against military dictatorship. Other students articulate a more conservative view in which the strikes, marches, and rhetoric (especially since 1993) as more destructive and disruptive than constructive, the agenda of a minority of their politically ambitious fellows without any clearly articulated counterproposals. This reflects broader public opinion about the disruptive student movement into the mid and late 1990’s. The generally approving reaction to

555 Interview, High school teacher #1Nov11, 11 November 2002 Bandiagara. Members of an educated rural middle-class are often teachers, armed forces or other civil servants, and thus the product of a ‘double displacement’: once from their home region to study and again to another region to work. This experience produces a sense of the national Malian political community, a nation-State confronting domestic complexity (divisions and differences) and cosmopolitan or neo-colonial forces.
556 Focus group, high school students 11Nov, Bandiagara, 11 November 2002.
557 Ibid, 25
crackdowns on civil disobedience by IBK early in his tenure as Prime Minister (1994-97) illustrates this.\footnote{Interview, university professor Jul14, 14 July 2002, Bamako. The analysis of a university professor and active opposition party member stresses the sensibly conservative general reaction to civil disruption without any clear goals.}

Upper middle class urban and rural elders, including retired civil servants or wealthy peasant farmers, articulate the conservative views of their indigenous authority counterparts and complain of how youth culture confounds liberty and libertinism. The preoccupation with respect illustrates the perceived chaos of political transformation and the erosion of relations, norms and values from indigenous histories and practices. In this context, many rural populations see democracy as “a monster come to devour tranquility [Fr. quiétude] in our country.”\footnote{Konaté et al, Sur les petites routes de la démocratie, 1999: 46, quote: 65. Village members’ perceptions rest especially on the events of March 1991 (Konaté’s study dates from 1993), including “fires, automatic gunfire, hundreds wounded and killed, an increase in banditry, the loss of parental authority even in villages, in brief that since this time the State has been loosing its authority.” Interview, Senior NGO executive Oct14, Bamako 14 October 2002; Interview, Small holding farmer #1Jul5, Koniobla, 5 July 2002, Koniobla July 2002, Interview, Assistant mayor #1Jul6 6 July 2002 Sanankoroba.} An author of this remark, a senior NGO practitioner based in the capital and experienced in the rural milieu, explains that many of the observations from 1993 have been slow to change even a decade later. Today’s perception, however, is less of chaotic violence in the absence of State authority, but the ongoing crisis of managing development that feeds similar contemporary popular perceptions and misconceptions of the promise and problems of democratic politics.

Moreover, as youth, influenced by urban culture and media, redefine their place in the continuity and transformation of Malian society, filial duty erodes in the contemporary democratizing context. This erosion is rehearsed by wealthy and less wealthy rural peasant farmers, who in their vulnerability suspect that more democracy means more disorder for their lives, and little change in terms of their security and well being.\footnote{M. Konaté, et al., 1999. Interview, Senior NGO executive Oct14, Bamako 14 October 2002; Interview, assistant mayor Jul7, 7 July 2002 Sanankoroba.} Their experience and historical memory of exploitation under colonial, post-colonial, and post-apertura liberalization provides them with strong evidence for their views. Among those most uneasy about such
erosion, keepers of tradition and local knowledge often remain sceptical of non-indigenous education, whether at French-Western or Arabic-Islamic schools. Members of the middle and upper class, however, despite their different education levels and relationship to vulnerability, production, and the State, reiterate rather than challenge the conservatism reinforced by uncertainty.\textsuperscript{561}

Like privileged actors vulnerable persons see the struggle for democratic pluralism as still in some measure synonymous with threats to social cohesion, which is represented as having existed for centuries, especially in rural areas, and in particular because this struggle and the goal it seeks are perceived to be poorly or wrongly understood. Historically, such ‘social cohesion’ was never synonymous with conflict-free harmonious society, but rather characterized communities endowed with robust forms of integration and legitimation. Where hierarchy, role, status position and the attendant duties and entitlements are very deeply ingrained, the outspokenness of the People’s Revolution, which continues to today in Mali’s record for freedom of conscience, expression, and media, is seen as part of the excess of liberty; taken over from the decadent West (Europe and North America) without care or critique.

If from the rural context of citizen traditions and regime concepts democracy’s excesses are most notable, in the urban context, middle class actors focus on the terms of practical activism versus civic duty, or of opposition versus loyalty, as structured by relations of presumed deference to authority. Moreover, the ostensible grassroots democracy engendered through local community development faces its own particular challenges in redefining functional participatory decision-making and action where the patriarchal principles are still in practice and are being gradually challenged. Given the circles of deference and respect that can surround local notables and authority figures, \textit{decisions are made collectively, but not necessarily democratically.} “There are, at the heart of every African community, modes of organization which, despite certain

lacunae in terms of democratic principles, constitute the foundations of the society.\textsuperscript{562} The contradiction is within the character of popular public politics intertwined with practices of leader-centrism, and public calm, with secret politics rather than engagement and participation, except in the most general, mediated, or limited terms.\textsuperscript{563}

Participation is also mediated or limited by cleavages of local knowledge production and reproduction. Indigenous ‘wise ones’ (Fr. \textit{les sages}) and practitioners of rituals associated with initiations, healing, fertility, and abundant crops, are ambivalent towards preserving the \textit{status quo} and acting to influence events.\textsuperscript{564} Their secret knowledge articulates the social divisions among youths and elders, between people of different levels of knowledge and education, and thus between classes, and between men and women.

The discrepancy of women’s presence in Malian private and public life is made conspicuous by women’s absence from important functions as public decision-makers. Certainly, the Malian government since 1991 “has created a space within which female citizens can discuss their rights.”\textsuperscript{565} This provides linkages between local women and broader discourse on women’s rights. In the adaptation of global discourse on human rights to local conditions, however, the \textit{merely} civic, rights-bearing model tolerates, brackets or incorporates indigenous modes of patriarchy, and allows discussions among women to remain isolated from the public sphere of political participation. The archetypal story of leaders consulting women is told about a village chief who, having been presented with a matter to decide, would consult his wife or wives once alone together to inform his decision.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{562} Konaté, et al, 1999: 63. Interview, farmer and village association executive member, 1 July 2002 Koniobla.
\item\textsuperscript{563} Radio Bamakan, Les ondes de la liberté 1997 distinguishes ‘governance’ from ‘citizen flourishing’ (Fr. \textit{épanouissement citoyenne}) as a focus of ‘democratic politics’.
\item\textsuperscript{564} Esoteric knowledge and silence are central. “[I [Djeli Mamoudou Kouyaté] took an oath to teach only what is to be taught and to conceal what is to be kept concealed” and “Do not seek to know what is not to be known,” exemplify the \textit{djeli} oral historian’s principle: “All true learning should be a secret.” D T. Niane, \textit{Sundjata: an epic of old Mali}, trans. G. D. Pickett, 1965: 84; Preface to the French Edition, viii.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Although Malian women “today must not be afraid to lift the curtain,”\textsuperscript{566} and be seen and heard in deliberations, they are still “taught that if they choose to speak out they will be considered arrogant and disrespectful. Thus, in public, they have learned to let others speak for them.”\textsuperscript{567} Indeed, women suffer continued systematic and systemic discrimination and abuse under patriarchy. As much as consensus may emerge from among voices in the palaver, such consensus is structured from the top by the patriarchs.\textsuperscript{568} Women’s greatest ‘traditional’ contribution to politics was as mothers of great men, as evidenced in oral tradition, reinforced through the institutions of polygamy, and through the patron-client relations of production, distribution and reproduction (sexual, economic, and cultural) within households.\textsuperscript{569} “Despite the role as the pillar of the family that is given to women, they are the object of sexual discrimination in that very role.”\textsuperscript{570} Further, the Malian Marriage and Guardianship [Fr. Tutelle] Code “makes a woman into a perpetual minor […] limiting her rights as an individual and citizen.”\textsuperscript{571} Moreover, women who challenge this are singled out for special insult. The ODEF (Watchdog for the Rights of Women and Children) president Mme. Diakité, for example, is “perhaps one of the most criticized figures in the women’s movement” for being “Westernized” by her ties to France, against values and interests that are "Malian." Given the public insult of leaders of women’s organizations, activist women in Mali eschew the ‘feminist’ label, and struggle “to present themselves as separate from the international human rights movement.”\textsuperscript{572}

\textsuperscript{566} Wing: 177
\textsuperscript{567} Wing, 177, cites a seminar on women’s civil and political rights (Sikasso, 1998).
\textsuperscript{568} Konaté et al, 1999: 44. Traditional property rights prohibit ownership to women despite changes in official legislation to the contrary. (jitumu region, S-E Mali toward Minyanka region and the Ivory Coast border) C.f. I. Doungon, Conference, 2002 on similar restrictions among the Dogon. Traditional property rights prohibit ownership to women despite changes in official legislation to the contrary.\textsuperscript{569} F. S. Diakité, et al 2000 (APDF-Association for the protection of women’s rights) 7-8, 11-13, 38-44. Benoist, 1998: 23-24. An interesting part of discussions about the presidential candidacy of ATT was his military training and worldview, social status, ethno-regional and clan heritage (Touré), but also the fact that he was raised by his paternal grandmother, a Peulh from the Mopti region.\textsuperscript{570} Diakité, et al 2000: 12
\textsuperscript{571} Diakité, et al 2000: 18
\textsuperscript{572} Wing 174.
Attitudes and values about women’s role and identity are very slowly changing, including among women themselves. Women, especially those with some formal education, increasingly recognize themselves and are recognized as doing at least half the work of ‘nation-building’. Within women’s own associations there is an engaged participation and commitment, with internal conflicts certainly, linking local and national dynamics of socio-political activity. “Malian women have always been active politically. Women's associations (musotonw) in Bamana villages regularly sent representatives to village meetings,” whereby cooperative and private modes of cultivation, land use and labour were managed, but had limited or “no direct role in decision making,” showing that “behind the unanimity of the village community lay many latent social contractions.” Moreover, the private-public divide, bolstered by other social divisions, undermines women’s subjective sense of an entitlement to influence public decisions more. The contemporary struggle remains to equate involvement with an entitlement to influence decisions from the homestead to the village to the national-political levels.

**Accountability Of The Leader To The Governed**

Two things need mention about accountability of the leader to the governed. First, is the general critique that liberal accountability is insufficient as a standard of African political

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573 Focus group, tontine 6 July 2002 Bamako.; Interview, High school teacher Jun26, 26 June 2002 Bamako
576 Ibid
practice. Second, in the Malian context accountability is structured through hierarchical social relations, that resist equalization and allow consensus to be ‘dictated’ as much as built, and then glossed as participatory and plural. Politics is increasingly insulated from the social movements that challenged dictatorship, whether ones inclined towards the West or vocally opposed to mere Euro-American mimicry.

*Imperial model of accountability: Sundiata founds the Mali empire*

“The fact of Sundiata’s importance as a contemporary political symbol in the context of Malian democratization during the past decade has been recognized.” The epic story of Sunjata Keïta founding the Mali Empire is widely viewed as key in understanding Mali’s contemporary political discourses. The story is retold in contemporary Malian political discourse, however, to situate a type of authority that is more authoritarian and hierarchical than it is popular and pluralist. Functioning as such a reference for contemporary values, the story of imperial accountability is a central contemporary motif of accountable politics in Mali. Indeed, idioms of elite competitive democracy are articulated with those of pseudo-imperial authority.

Sundiata the peacemaker unified the conquered and the allied peoples, and not only ‘divided the world’ among the victors but returned the lands to their original rulers and inhabitants, though now under the supreme rule of Sundiata. The great meeting of leaders (on a

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579 Bagayogo, 1999. Al-Assane Sanogo, “Political Crisis or settling of accounts?” *Les Echos* 12 June 1997. “No behaviour of the ‘adepts of occidental democracy’ can be justified in Malian culture of peace, dialogue and humanism.” Dr. Sanogo’s proposal for a formally instituted civil-society (through the Constitution), with tribunal-like powers, is reflected by his work since 1995 building civil society organizations’ capacity to debate, influence, and react to politics. In brief to take on the work that parties and politicians are not doing in terms of informing, training, and facilitating democracy internally within the structures of Malian society. Interview, *Senior NGO executive 1Oct*, Bamako, 1 October 2002.
581 Re: ‘supreme rule’, the terms are ‘sovereign’, ‘supreme chief’, ‘Fama of Famas’, and ‘Mansa’. Pickett preserves Niane’s translation of *fama* as ‘king’ and glosses *mansa* as “emperor or paramount king.” (Pickett, 95). It is important to stress that *fama* also means powerful, rich, and influential (as of a king or administrator), and derives these meanings from *fanga ma* that which/one who has power, since *fanga* means force, power, and efficiency as well as reign, authority and political and administrative power. (C. Bailleuil, *Dictionnaire Bambara-Français* 1996)
‘hill-top open space’, Bam. *kurukan fugaran*) is cited by upper, middle, and lower-middle class segments as an example of proto-democracy in the pre-colonial era. It stands to reason that this is part of Malians’ repertoire of civic idioms, given the place of these stories in history, geography, and education. As a contemporary symbolic tool for re-imagining the past, *kurukan fugaran* frames the pluralist present. Conversely, *kurukan fugaran* also is considered to have established all social and economic classes such that hierarchical social divisions were commensurate with the capacity for intervention to manage problems or crises. The palaver brought information and demands from the peripheries to the centre, and from the bottom to the top: structured with protocols, institutions, and roles of speaking truth to power, in order to build consensus and solidarity to manage social divisions. As Malian historian Adame Bâ Konaré says, though perhaps overstating continuity and understating processes of change, “more than lived history, these deeds [of Sundiata and others] are cultural ingredients defined for all time.” Implicit is the minimum standard of democratic pluralism: accountability of a leader more responsive than a dictator. Also, social cohesion and threats to it are key in the contemporary idioms of Malian moral governance. Moreover, threats may be exacerbated by people's sense of their links to forces beyond human control. Because there is a struggle in the cosmos, in the material and spiritual realms, between the forces of social destruction (*fadenya*) and those of social cohesion (*badenya*), “[c]ircumventing the authority structure calls for dangerous and antisocial behaviour characteristic of the Mande concept of the culture hero.”


584 J. W. Johnson “The dichotomy of power and authority in Mande society and the Epic of Sundiata” in R. Austen, *In search of Sunjata: the Mande oral epic as history, literature and performance*, 1998: 15-16. The epic narrative also links to contemporary political culture as an account of how the rupture of fast-track power seeking is normalized with the community’s need for continuity, peace, and social cohesion in a *longue durée* continuity of historical memory and myth.
Such norms, practices and institutions of unification and reconciliation are reference points for an ever-increasing divide between the ways of life of the upper, middle, and even lower-middle class urbanites and the majority of peasants of ‘deepest Mali’ (Fr le Mali profond). The mass population seen as most characteristic of Mali’s historical and cultural experience is ‘other’ than that of the elites, and yet serves as a resource for their construction of citizenship discourse. This serves to reproduce the idioms of linkage between leaders and the mass population as ‘reconciled’ to one another. Further, deepest Mali bears the meaning of the deep woods, the bush (Fr. en brousse, Bam. Mali kono), the farthest points from the influences of modernization and political and economic liberalization, and also of the most authentic Mali. Legacies of problematic colonial conceptions of villagers’ resilient moral goodness, and city-dwellers corruption and corruptability persist among contemporary upper class and upper middle-class actors (Malian and non-Malian) who insist that ‘citification’ is necessary in the formation of democratic citizen identity; rural and urban identities are to be articulated, as the seat of authenticity and of transformative potential, respectively. Preserving moral accountability and legitimate leadership is aligned with a hierarchically conditioned pluralism. Malians are united by shared norms and practices about acquiring, holding, and exercising power, and about constructing and legitimating political authority. Indeed, all of this, especially Sundiata's story illustrates important values for reinforcing moral accountability in Malian society. The Sundiata story is about 'great man' virtue (including virtues and ‘virtuosity,’ Machiavelli’s virtù), and ultimately about peace and social cohesion through interlocking hierarchies under a relatively responsive leader. Malians from a range of backgrounds see Sundiata as consistent with their ideas about the ideal consensus-building democracy they imagine and to which they aspire. Even in criticizing the minimal elite-democracy they see around them, different actors envision three types of (ideal) accountable authority. Traditional (Mandé/Bamanan) authority, contemporary

585 Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1974: 375.
consensus-seeking, and Western-modelled elite competition are expressed through their respective idioms of action to work in concert to sustain peace and social cohesion.

Indeed, the central contemporary motif of democratically accountable politics in Mali is (1) an increasingly responsible and responsive leader, (2) electoral mechanisms by which this responsiveness is expressed, and (3) ‘civic’, voter education to mobilize voters in their voting capacity. In fact, in the context of citizen identity formation and civic orthodoxy in Mali, a group of middle and upper class actors, both local and foreign, are appropriating and (re)inventing indigenous idioms of moral accountability to provide for a stable, peaceful, and unified, pluralist-democratic nation-State. Thus the (re)invention of tradition normalizes neo-liberal democratic citizen identity as well as with the norms and values of indigenous moral economy. As the formation of liberal citizen identity seeks to legitimate the production, reproduction and distribution of wealth and power, it incorporates elements of indigenous moral economy, including norms and practices of communitarianism, patriotism, patriarchy, solidarity, and consensus-building.

**From imperial norms to pluralist politics?**

A critical appraisal of cultural anchors for democracy, from a middle-class urban Malian perspective experienced in rural milieux, seeks the intersections between culture and democracy; and asks if democratic pluralism means a “systematic divorce from tradition.” In the context of a decline in pan-Africanism and *Africanité* since the previous ‘independence’ from colonialism, overtly pro-Western intellectuals (foreign and Malian), with little regular contact with rural Mali (q.v. ‘deepest Mali’ above) tend to ignore the socio-cultural milieu of any project of social and political transformation. Consequently, the apparently commensurate norms of democratic and hierarchical pluralism are not appropriately distinguished. Moreover, the balance struck between over- and under-contextualizing Malian culture and politics, is particularly

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586 Fofana, 2002. Fofana presents an analysis from his middle-class urban perspective, experienced in rural milieux from work with the agricultural ministry, and elicits responses from the generally middle-class conference audience.
striking for a policy practitioner in the first ADEMA government, reflecting on analytical problems encountered in any assessment of Malian democratic practice since 1991. On the one hand, over-contextualizing impairs critical appraisal and incorporation of indigenous practices and norms, and on the other hand, under-contextualizing assumes *a priori* and imposes Euro-American norms and values.⁵⁸⁷

In Mali since the end of dictatorship (1991), classical 'positive' definitions of liberal democracy (freedom to) are confounded with negative ones: freedom from tyranny, or reaction against tyranny and illegitimate exploitation. Perceptions of 'corrupt accumulation,' discussed in Chapter Two allowed the democratic opening to be framed as anti-tyranny, similar to the anti-colonial resistance and Sundjata’s victory. Notwithstanding this emphasis against a leader or elite regime, the watchwords of pro-pluralism activism also emphasized the ‘all-in’ aspects of democratic governance: *be jefanga* – all together in power. Subsequently, since every individual, group, or elite cannot effectively manage power at the same time within a mass society, this interpretation of democracy began to undermine public comprehension.

The Sundiata story is used to analyze democratic politics in Mali to assess how a responsive leader unites the whole people, to put power to work for their needs and interests. An important concept originating in the anti-Traoré activism was *ko ka jè* “clean it all” (Fr. *lavez propre*) expressing an antipathy to the ‘corrupt accumulation’ of officials, officers, and their ‘big merchant’ collaborators. Another slogan of the People’s Revolution was *an be jee ka fanga be baara ke*, or *ka je ka fanga baara* (Fr. *Tous ensemble nous mettons le pouvoir au travail*) “All together we are putting the power to work.” Another version of this expression, shortened to a composite term, *jekafanga*, is ‘cohabitation.’ While certain political class actors might distinguish between democracy understood as pluralism from unity governments and cohabitation, the sense common across middle and lower class actors, is that democracy and

⁵⁸⁷ Interview, Public and NGO sector Political consultant, Bamako, 8 December 2002.
cohabitation have the same ends, working for the people, and are thus reasonably equated.\textsuperscript{588} The challenge this presents to specifically democratic pluralism has been alluded to above. The problematic merging of hierarchical and democratic pluralist norms and practices is judged by rurally experienced urban intellectuals to be characteristic of indigenous cultures disconnected from their own values: “African society has lost its values.”\textsuperscript{589} Rural middle-class actors qualify this assessment with the nuance that the historic cultural norms and values have not simply been ‘lost’ through the colonial and dictatorship legacies, but have undergone various forms of transformation.

The contemporary problems of youth unemployment, urbanization, and globalizing communications media and culture are seen as part of a contemporary struggle to reconnect the ongoing disconnect between pre-democracy and post-democracy generations (between the approx 46\% of Malians under 15 born since the anti-dictatorship struggles started towards the success of 1991 and the rest). The faded legacies that have receded through colonialism and post-colonial dictatorship may or may not be democratic linkages from the rural perspective. It is a local-cosmopolitan, upper middle and upper-class perspective that draws these links, and thus provides them as resources for international and cosmopolitan political and economic elites.\textsuperscript{590}

The common themes and frames of reference found among wealthier peasant farmers with some links to urban commerce or local administration and cosmopolitan members of the middle and upper class segments include the problem of an emerging African identity, in the image of capital markets and in the absence of ancestral values, threatening a kind of disorientation near blindness. Without firm roots in ancestral modes, cosmopolitan Malians, especially intellectuals, resort to “aping the West poorly,” and “don't know on which foot to


\textsuperscript{589} Fofana, 2002.

Thus straddled between norms, ‘cosmopolitans’ struggle to represent traditions (and possibly misrepresent them), bolster social organization and the moral authority of traditional leaders, and construe democratization as a process of conservative cultural renewal (see below ‘Disrespectocracy’).

Mali ans from a variety of backgrounds say this, and thus raise the question of ‘what's wrong’ and ‘wrongly understood’ with democracy. The shared themes and perspectives across social divisions are articulated by political and middle class actors struggling to legitimate moral and intellectual leadership by merging indigenous norms and practices and institutions with terms, norms and values of procedural-minimal democracy. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter One, political elite actors set the terms of the debate about indigenous understandings of democracy to “shape the broader popular perception of what counts as legitimate leadership.”

Middle and upper-class urbanites appropriate rural ‘communism’ to insist that a reciprocity of duties and rights is commensurate with democratic politics ‘properly understood’: “you work; we [leaders] give you that to which you have entitlement.”

Self-knowledge, then, is linked to preserving social equilibrium of non-revolt against the village chief, and is to be achieved with the provision of adequate wealth and services for all.

Clearly, colonialism and dictatorship as well as the continuities of communitarian norms and practices in Malian society and politics combine to imbue emerging citizenship norms with quasi-corporatist and even authoritarian political habits drawn from Mali’s history. The ‘return to democratic virtues’ trope is belied somewhat by the indigenous virtues promoted under similar banners of moral recovery, and the paternalism that this trope embodies.

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591 Fofana, 2002.
593 Fofana, 2002.
594 Fofana, 2002. The first objection to a ‘return to virtue’ is that of the place of women in the pre- and colonial societies and the importance of human rights faced with ‘culturally compatible’ democracy – meaning patriarchal-corporatist democratic pluralism. Second, exemplary or relevant indigenous institutions social organizations must be sensitive to inter-cultural recognition. A Soniké woman at the
**Foreign Enthusiasm, local reservations**

A minimum democratic standard, accountability of leaders more responsive than a tyrant, is also reflected and reproduced in contemporary assessments of Malian public opinion about their regime since 1991. For example, the 2001 Afrobarometer, for all its important insights, over-emphasizes ‘support’ when Malians say they prefer the current regime with its faults to a return to dictatorship. It is worth considering what alternative touchstones of democratic success might be addressed by further research on such a scale, research that would not necessarily take liberal presuppositions (*inter alia* separate economic and political ‘baskets of goods,’)^595 or those that over-represent the threat of a return to dictatorship.

Foreign-fostered enthusiasm for Mali’s consolidation of democratic institutions tends to obscure the reservations expressed by Malians. The enthusiasm of Malian and international political actors, including scholars, NGO actors, and diplomats, overstates –and thus raises questions about– Mali’s remarkable road towards pluralist politics.^596

Urban middle and upper class actors’ attempts to adapt democracy in Mali to familiar, local cultural forms are producing an ideological admixture that highlights the contradictions they seek to obscure between (indigenous) ‘communitarian goals’, and (exogenous) ‘liberal, democratic, and market values’.^597 These attempts by emerging middle-class actors in the political class draw from indigenous culture ostensibly advantageous norms and institutions that structure conference, for example, responded “the nkomo [Bamanan initiation society] means nothing to me.” See ‘Patriarchy: Generational and Gender Divisions’ above


596 This ‘cult of enthusiasm’ was evident and contagious among elections observer in Mali in 2002: “The [USAID] meeting’s tone was very positive and encouraged by the observations made during the second round [of the 2002 Presidential elections].” (J. Sears, *Report to the Canadian Embassy*, 14 May 2002). Bagayogo prefers ‘plural’ to democratic in characterizing Mali’s political space (*Cheminement du Mali vers un espace politique pluriel,* [Mali on the way towards a plural political space] Bagayogo, 1999: 35).

social divisions, especially of patriarchy and class. The attempt to transform local norms into
democratic ‘advantages’ seeks to obscure these key social divisions. Key elements in this cultural
specificity advantageous to democratic deepening are commonly seen from a perspective that
takes for granted the principles of Western-derived, liberal democracy. The attendant ideological
conflicts over claims to moral accountability and political authority centre on citizen identity
formation with reference to the State, but also important “arrangements and patterns of
domination and participation emerging in the non-state sphere.”
The hegemonic struggle takes
democratic political culture as equivalent to an Euro-American ‘ideal type,’ with innumerable
local and indigenous idiosyncrasies that reveal the linkages and contradictions between liberal
and communitarian norms, values, and practices, between patron-clientism and autonomous
individualism, between collective (particularized and extended) trust, and public-civic
generalized trust.

Local reservations among an urban middle and upper middle class focus less on the
institutions, and when they do, are usually not substantive but instrumental: the democratic-
pluralist ideal is sound, but the practice is faulty. They more often question the social, economic,
and historical roots of democratic political culture. A 1999 survey in the capital, Bamako, points
to the sentiment that permeates popular opinion. Although 70% of respondents said that their
continued involvement in politics was because of the political liberties gained through and since
the 1991 People's Revolution, they said the subsequent institutional consolidation was not
enough, and without genuine political alternation of power, with substantive difference in social
policy [Fr. alternance], transparency, and improved socio-economic conditions. Sixty percent

C. Mouffe, “Hegemony and Ideology in Gramsci” in Mouffe, ed. Gramsci and Marxist theory, 1979:
187. Indeed, as discussed in Chapter One, analyzing hegemony recognizes actors as they are produced and
made to as well as the “material and institutional nature of ideological practice.”
M.R. Doornbos cited in Shaw “Popular participation in non-governmental structures in Africa:
implications for democratic development,” Africa today 1990: 21
M. S. Traoré [French] “The advent of democracy in Mali: a critical analysis of the role of intellectuals
in the democratic process,” Mémoire de fin d’études, Philosophy/Psychology/Pedagogy École Nationale
Supérieure, Bamako 1999.
said that the current state of Malian democracy was unfavourable, and explained that Malian democracy was sick, that many crises block the democratic process, and that people at the margins (80% agricultural labourers) are not engaged in debates that affect them, and overthrowing the dictatorship has created a “democracy of the schooled,” [Fr. des lettrés] not a popular democracy. Less than 30% agreed that democracy and transparency actually exist.

In all of this, the respondents criticized themselves as well as the political class and elites. ‘Misunderstood democracy’ is a central preoccupation for Malian citizenship. Malians across social divisions emphasize this; the most fully elaborated version of the ‘misunderstood democracy’ discourse is among educators (broadly defined). ‘Misunderstood democracy’ features personal interests that override commitment to the public good, and the belief that intellectuals have failed to rid themselves of the culture of the single party that dominated post-independence politics. Traoré’s analysis of the responses reflects this sense of failure, and a nostalgia for abandoned ideals, most common among middle-class urban Malians born before independence, and educated before the deepening crisis of education in Mali. Furthermore, younger Malians have little patience for such nostalgia of ‘defunct ideals.’ Educated since the 1980s, through the deepening crisis of public education, they are critical of the shortcomings of ‘scholars’ democracy’ in contrast to a ‘people’s democracy.’ Their disappointment reflects certain middle class youths’ ambivalent position relative to carrying popular struggles forward as a vanguard, and trying to find a place in the established order. “We are profoundly disappointed by the incapacity of the intelligentsia and the Malian elite to think democracy through from the perspective of the country's development. We have gained our independence without an intelligentsia prepared for transformation.”

Ostensible public opinion support for democracy obscures the complex linkage of authoritarian and democratic orientations. Simply less arbitrary government better linked to mobilized popular support reproduces a truncated democratization. “[T]hose concerned about

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601 M. S. Traoré. 1999: 9, 40.
how countries can move ‘beyond authoritarianism and totalitarianism’ must also ponder the conditions that permit such movement to endure [...] To rid a country of an authoritarian regime or dictator is not necessarily to move it fundamentally beyond authoritarianism.\footnote{L. Diamond, “Beyond Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism: Strategies for Democratization,” The\textit{ Washington Quarterly} (Winter 1989): 142; quoted in Schraeder, \textit{African Politics and Society}, 2004: 236.}

A Critical look at cultural advantages for democratic deepening: ‘democracy misunderstood’

“Demokrasi be duguwa diya farafinu afrikana, Demokrasi be jamana diya o ye tunyan ye, nka a fuamtu cogo jugu be jamana chi / nagami”

Democracy exists and is good for the village in black Africa, that is true, but if understood in the wrong way, it can destroy / trouble the country. \footnote{Guinean singer K. O. Kouyaté, “Demokrasi,” sound recording T.A.T Audio-Visuel Paris [n.d. \textendash}1996-7].

An important view of democracy in Mali and West Africa is expressed in the popular song from the mid-1990s quoted above: “democracy exists and is good for the village […] but if understood in the wrong way, it will destroy the country.” ‘Poorly understood,’ ‘wrong understanding,’ ‘misunderstanding’: these terms are used by a broad cross-section of Malians to express a range of dissatisfaction with the progress of democratic deepening in Mali. These are common phrases with which actors across various middle class segments regularly describe Malians’ ‘poor comprehension’ [Fr. \textit{mauvaise compréhension}] of democratic politics. Foremost are both the intellectual and moral connotations of \textit{jugu}. The related senses include bad, mean, mean-spirited, an enemy (or a harmful creature in nature), nugatory and serious or grave. Thus, not only might misunderstood democracy be destructive to village and country alike, but democracy \textit{meanly} understood is another aspect of the problem, by which more or less predatory practices and more subtle authoritarianisms operate under the façade of democratic politics, and

\footnote{Interview Translator 21Nov, 21 November 2002. An translator and cultural interpreter recollected the popularity of this song in the mid-1990s, and provided translation assistance. When I heard this song, after eight months in the field, I recognized the expression I had been hearing about democracy: ‘poor comprehension’ [Fr. \textit{mauvaise compréhension}].}
further, that ‘democratarship’ (Fr. démocrature) is a leader-and-cadres form of elite democracy.604

In addition, there is the complex interplay of changing social norms in the culture of political action and identity. Referring to relationships among people of different generations and social statuses especially, the misunderstanding is one of excessive liberty and disrespect. The resulting erosion of social structure and norms is also evident among people of different social classes where formerly cohesive and cooperative social conjunctures are breaking down. Also, there is the ongoing challenge of constructing a coherent national identity and a sense of good citizen membership within it.

A middle-class urban critique ranges from government corruption and favouritism, poor policy decisions, global political economy, and international financial institutions’ conditionalities. This critique also often espouses some version of an agenda of ‘education for democracy and development’ as a challenge of civic culture formation and transformation. More popularly, among lower-middle class urbanites and peasants with less formal education, this ‘misunderstanding’ eschews ‘expertise,’ but also identifies corruption and favouritism, policies that favour the few and those linked to foreign interests above those of the local mass population. Members of the rural upper middle class segments also emphasize misunderstood democracy in terms of libertinism confounded with liberty, a selfish mentality characteristic of urbanites, and those (especially youth) returning to the villages from the cities.

**Palaver tree potential?**

Despite the important role often played by the council of the elders to debate and make decisions with reference to the daily village needs, such patriarchs meet in the absence of youth (men and women).605 The Palaver Tree is an important illustration.

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604 Bailleul, 1996. The character of the understanding ‘wrong’ is the idiom’s heart, given that the word for comprehension, *faamu*, has a more precise meaning derived from the Arabic *fahm*, and is thus less evocatively rich. ‘Democratarship’ expresses a nuanced and critical perspective. (Bagaygo, 1999)
The West African palaver tree is often discussed as “a traditional West African institution of debate and consensus whose democratic potential has been overshadowed by modern political systems.” Moreover, as a “key socio-political institution of pre-colonial Africa,” this assembly debates and makes decisions concerning the community. Although participants are usual male elders, “everyone has the right to speak and air their grievances or those of their group,” and “a complainant may be represented by a griot (a poet, storyteller and traditional singer), or some other speaker.” In practice, however, this ‘everyone’ is often structured by norms of representation according to association, clan, generation, or gender. Consequently, even if ‘everyone’ attends and is present as witnesses to the process, they are rarely engaged participants; this role is filled by the usual, privileged actors, whether by habit of practice or by ascribed entitlement. Indeed, “[t]he status of women in these assemblies, where the elders try to reach a consensus, varies from region to region. Among some peoples, women actively take part in the decision-making. Among others, they settle for advising their menfolk outside the assemblies.”

The value of such institutions invariably compares well to “a superficial legal structure imported directly from the West.” The conservative acceptance, however, of hierarchical and corporate representation, though crucial in resisting foreign or domestic tyranny, is slow and difficult to integrate into more inclusive democratic-pluralist practice. Although everyone who wants to speak may, there remains “hierarchy of importance among the speakers.”

Rural farmers are accustomed to these processes, and understand how to work within them, and exploit them to their advantage and to acquiesce to their decisions. Popular participation is thus witness and acquiescence to high-level deliberation and decisions. Far better

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605 Youth’ translates ‘jeunes’ as per “an adult man may be considered a youth up to the age of forty, as long as he does not form part of the circle of the elders.” (Konaté, et al 1999: 48)
606 Jasmina Sopova, “In the shade of the palaver tree - traditional African institution of debate and consensus” UNESCO Courier, May, 1999
607 Ibid
608 Ibid
than repressive tyranny, this is an interestingly conservative “democracy in its purest form.”\(^{611}\)

The elder council determines needs and values; outside of democratic processes, which are nevertheless not necessarily anti-democratic ones.\(^{612}\)

Moreover, despite the role played by the indigenous institutions that group the large part of the local population, there is an over-abundance of poorly coordinated structures (both ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’), and the poor circulation of information, which stems in part from a lack of media, but also from the power that secrecy can bring to individuals or sub-groups. The newer institutions related to ‘modern’ agricultural, water, and health development are limited by a lack of training and of maintenance resources. Further, despite the role played by collective agriculture and the related sharing of fiscal and labour burdens, the available resources are often too little, or spread too thin. Women’s workday, including domestic work, agricultural labour and small market activities to supplement subsistence farming, suggests the insufficiency in these collective endeavours, and of the low profitability of activities unrelated to subsistence.\(^{613}\)

Maliens rightly retain their proud notion that theirs is an “extremely sophisticated, organized and institutionalized society”; in local environments, whether rural villages or urban neighbourhoods, there is little that is private.\(^{614}\) Thus, the ‘extremely institutionalized’ Malian context is prolific with associations and levels of authority (neighbourhood, clan, or village)\(^{615}\) with limited transformative capacity. Indeed, Malian society is greatly organized and

\(^{611}\) Mandela cited in Sopova, 1999

\(^{612}\) Interview, Small holding farmer, Jul15, Koniobla, 14 July 2002; Assistant mayor Jul7, 7 July 2002 Sanankoroba.

\(^{613}\) Konaté, et al, 1999: [58-59]

\(^{614}\) Mamadou D. Diallo, “Pédagogues pour le développement,” Workshop facilitator document, community education project [n.d.], p. 10

\(^{615}\) Konaté, 1999: 32 clan “group of families who share the same genealogical tree or who are grouped by alliance”; “elders [men] tend to represent families, clans or lineages of the village”). Some middle-class urban conservatives see the council of the wise as analogous to ministers and ministries, in which: “all the domains of society and social life are represented.” The representation is through leaders or masters (igi) in various aspects of socio-political life. The keletigi :: defense; tontigi :: culture, morals, values; tyentigi :: justice. The upper strata are linked to the base through geographic entities overseen by a representative (jamanatigi), which for the Manden represented the faama (the ‘chairman of the board’) in the regions, and the kabilatigi ‘dynasty chief’ who oversaw the extended family and its links to other groups through marriage, neighbour relations and common interests. (Fofana, 2002)
institutionalized, however, it is not sufficiently deeply organized or institutionalized to transform consciousness and identity. Moreover, organisations that correspond approximately to ‘civil society’ are often criticized as being prone to being used for the self-interest of the founders and their close friends.\(^{616}\)

**‘Disrespectocracy’**

“Dogo te koro bonya, den te ba bonya, ... duguba chi ; den te fa bonya, ma te fanga bonya ... jamana ngagami,”

The little brother does not respect his elder brother, the child does not respect his mother, the child does not respect his father, ... it will destroy the town; the people do not respect authority, it will trouble the country.\(^{617}\)

Across the social divisions in evidence, then, (especially gender and generation), although the features of ‘democracy misunderstood’ differ in their degree of elaboration, they meet on the problems of moral lassitude and decline, the difficulties associated with rapidly changing social relations. ‘Disrespectocracy’ characterizes democracy as it acts against key indigenous elements of socio-political identity. Among these are solidarity ‘le social, features of civic duty and patriotism, or fasodennyumanya (good citizenship).

“Nyedonakrasi” emerged as a term characterizing the early years of Malian democracy, circa 1996. Translated as “disrespectoracy,”\(^{618}\) the rule of disrespect is a key feature of democracy wrongly understood. The main social relationships that new democracies of West Africa jeopardize are those of children to parents, and those of youth to elders. By extension, there is a commensurate crisis of authority. Indeed, the greater political freedoms associated with democratic opening have unblocked submerged or suppressed identity orientations. The

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\(^{616}\) NGO workers are repeatedly frustrated by these weaknesses of the numerous associations. Interview, Foreign NGO worker 12Jul, 12 July 2002 Bamako. This Swiss NGO worker sees the effectiveness and functions of associations from the perspective of transformative development, and spoke out of a characteristically frustration with the static, conservative norms of prolific associations and organizations.\(^{617}\) K. O. Kouyaté, “Demokrasi,” [n.d ~1996-7]. Bamanan+French nyedona+cric. The difficulties are problems of filial duty, and these are linked to cosmological, social and political principles and problems of peaceful continuity and destructive, revolutionary change. (C.f. Johnston in Austen, 1998 above).
alternating, ostensible ‘newness’ of the contemporary Malian language of democracy and the attempts to express the antiquity of historical sensibilities mapped onto certain aspects of it is striking especially its double-sided, emancipatory content. Democracy as nyedonakrasie translates the chaos of political change and the related erosion of relations.⁶¹⁹ What is also implied but never as overtly stated, however, is the decline in patronage resources that accompanies this erosion. Indeed, in a society “founded on the head of household’s capacity to ‘feed his people,’”⁶²⁰ the loss of that capacity threatens the material as well as moral basis of duty and deference.

To the degree that parental and familial logics are mapped onto other social relationships, the reconfiguration and reform of politics erodes the structures to which Malians have turned for support, security, and solidarity. As these sorts of relations come under attack and react, other elements of transformation may be silenced. Consequently, where there was once a revolution to be made, there is now license threatening chaos, with everyone out only for themselves, uninterested in promoting common cause or protecting public goods. The deference due to elders is central to the filial duty of younger members of families, and this familial dynamic is often reproduced in organizations and associations. Through conservatives’ struggles, the analogy of the household is extended to larger political units: reproducing asymmetrical reciprocity of patrons and clients, patriarchy, and paternalism within the outward institutions of liberal democratic politics.

Thus, elements of civic orthodoxy for democracy tend to ignore the issue of equality, and focus on reducing excessive liberty, a lack of respect by youth, who believe themselves to be more fully equal to their elders and teachers, since the role of the student movement in 1991 when teachers and students (among other groups, including urban labourers and women) acted and

⁶²⁰ Ibid, 25
sacrificed side by side in the struggles against the dictatorship. There is now the vetting of possibilities for greater equality through the sacrifices of 1991. Legitimacy of authority from elder or superior status, and commensurate respect once enjoyed by elders and teachers is fading.\(^{621}\) This decline of deference parallels the shifting business practices between elder and junior merchants, declines in some bureaucrats’ patronage resources, and threats to peasants. Only a well-networked, wealthy peasant segment has been able to enlarge their agroindustrial business through IFI-imposed privatization and sale of former State land.

**a) Solidarity, Demennyogoya, and ‘le social’**

“One of the strengths of our society, are the concessions that every one is ready to make once we sense danger threatening. According to the saying “ko to nyogon t’a la” (mutual respect, and the public takes precedence over the private.).”\(^{622}\) On the one hand, this is an important social “principle to revisit,” given that norms of mutuality are under siege, especially in urban areas, by the increasing pressures of poverty, foreign media, and individuals’ daily struggle to survive. On the other hand, this is also an important feature of harmonizing public disputes before they can solidify into political positions based in social divisions.

The name of the ruling and dominant party since democratization is also illustrative. ADEMA-PASJ (Alliance for Democracy in Mali –Party of African Solidarity and Justice) is rendered in Bamanan as: *Afriki Demennogoya ni Tilenmenya Ton*. The term *demennyogoya*, mutual aid (Fr. *entr’aide*), renders ‘solidarity’.\(^{623}\) The partisan political landscape, populated with

\(^{621}\) See *fasodennyuman* below. Urban students, in the absence of their teachers and elders, are frankly critical about the resistance to change this social norm represents. The importance of youths’ access to patrons’ resources play into this as well. Focus group, high school students Mar12 , Bamako, 12 March 2002; Focus group, high school students Mar14  Bamako, 14 March 2002

\(^{622}\) A. Kalambry, ‘*Médiations, Un principe à revoir,*’ Les Echos #1989. October 2, 2002: 4. Interview, agricultural researcher with rural milieu experience, October 2, 2002 Bamako, C. Bailleuil, *Dictionnaire Français-Bambara*. 1996. In defining *nyogon* Bailleuil cites another saying that express a similar notion: *an taala ye nyogon ye*, “that which makes us progress, is solidarity, interdependence, reciprocity”. This connects to the term *demennyogoya*.

\(^{623}\) Interview, Trades worker Nov1, 1 November 2002 Bandiagara; Trades worker Nov3, 3 November 2002 Bandiagara. Rural, educated tradesmen and political party members, as well as rural farmers, describe their
70+ parties, emphasizes and re-emphasizes the links between work, solidarity, justice, and union.

‘Guiding and assisting together’ demen-nyogoya, ‘le social’ excuses, explains, mediates or mitigates, and obfuscates; it is an omnipresent, unavoidable element in Malians’ daily lives and self-image. Even in those actors open and self-aware enough to talk in such terms, it is necessary for understanding and living life in Mali. Le social is an aspect of social cohesion and unity; it is the background against which to see the reality and threat of eroding common causes.

Constructing Class and Ethnic ’Solidarity’

Since 1993 a national policy has focussed on the “Fight against poverty and exclusion,” and “to rouse and consolidate national solidarity.” This responded to the growing understanding among Malian policy-makers and NGO actors that Mali’s level of infant mortality and urban sanitary conditions were characteristic of the increasing poverty since the democratic opening of 1991. With 102,971 CFA per year (~165€, USD $210) fixed as the poverty line in 1996, 71.6% were under it on a national scale, with 78.3% among rural populations, and an average of 40.6% in urban areas, with some towns reaching 53%, while the capital was at 28% (1996 figures).

Faced with these figures, it seemed right to build national state and international NGO cooperation on the strengths of Mali’s reputation as a land of “meeting, welcome, friendship and own experience of unevenly shared prospects and problems as mediated by their access to the resources of a patron. Interview, High school teacher 24Jul, 24 July 2002 Bamako. A neighbourhood political party organizer and member of the urban middle-class stresses how, at neighbourhood level meetings to select legislative candidates, meeting organizers attempted to align the local party leadership’s selections with those that the neighbourhood representatives knew would be well-received by the mass base. Further, the overriding consideration in selecting possible legislative candidates is their deemed degree of support at the local level, the strength of “their people [Fr. ses gens.]” Issues of legislative experience, honesty, and capability are bracketed or rolled into those about the character that rallies and mobilizes people.

624 Annuaire des Parties politiques du Mali FES / Ministry of Institutions and Parties’ Relations [n.d.]
625 Interview, Office clerk 14Aug, Bamako, 14 August 2002. Interview, Retired import-export entrepreneur 15Oct, 15 October 2002. The perspectives typical* of a young, urban lower-middle class clerk, and those of a quasi-retired import-export entrepreneur bracket the ‘top’ and ‘bottom’ of le social: the one seeing it as a potential source of patron’s resources, while the other sees the obligations to a very extended family and that impinge on his reinvestment in his business.
The official solidarity agenda begins by recognizing difference and calls for a return to the values of sharing, concern for others, all exemplary of “an essential virtue of our [Malian] society, which must translate into concrete actions for the most disadvantaged social strata.” The model is that of ethnic relations, which stress difference more than division, and thus solidarity links a hierarchically structured society of unequal individuals and groups, sharing the common cause of social cohesion. Although “ethnic affiliation remains important to people’s self-identity, along with their home town of origin, their family name and history […] relations between ethnic groups have been remarkably peaceable.”

The case is similar with class ‘solidarity’. In pre-capitalist Malian society, the family, clan or village protected people against the worst poverty, especially the very young and very old, women, those with poor health or physical challenges. Blood relationships, morality and religion together formed the social and structural basis of traditional solidarity: to take the most vulnerable in hand, with the onus for mutual support an issue of pride for families, just as was that of hospitality to strangers.

Malian social relationships are such that solidarity includes an understanding of pitié for those less fortunate. In the relative absence of talk about and opportunities for equality of opportunity or of result, social justice is a form of fairness, where what is ‘fair’ is what is integral to social cohesion, and its asymmetrical reciprocities. Thus social solidarity has indigenous and religious elements, and these are from an aristocratic perspective, unequivocally the product of self-help organizations in the Third World: six case studies FES, 1982: 12)

627 Televised address, ORTM, 30 Sept 2002; “Tomorrow begins Solidarity Month: its sustainable effects are sought more than ever” L’Essor 30 Sept. 2002. Messages in French are aimed first and foremost at the educated classes, as are all media in French. Notwithstanding education and class biases of the message, common practice translates and interprets the message into national languages and local idioms and expressions.
629 Diallo, 1999: 129. The important similarities and differences lie between the idioms and articulation of Malian-style solidarity and that of European social democrats. For example, while there is a shared basis in socio-economic realities and an antipathy to merely liberal individualism, there is also the bracketing of the basic equality assumptions, since the common cause of social mutuality is structured by hierarchical, patron-client relationships. (Self-help organizations in the Third World: six case studies FES, 1982: 12)
generous spirits, but as surely the product of a kind of complex noblesse oblige. \[630\] “[R]elations between the [vulnerable] group and society are limited to those that exist between the beggar and his benefactor […] and relations of fraternity and solidarity are relationships of assistance and pity (Fr. entr’aide et pitié).” \[631\]

**Sociability and Mutual Assistance**

The sense of reciprocity, solidarity and mutual assistance is very highly developed in Malian culture, if given to certain kinds of limitations. *Tontines* (self-financing village groups/credit unions in West Africa), for example, are broadly class-based, given the amount of the weekly or monthly contributions, and its effects are limited to the neighbourhood. The notion of the possibility of *transforming* social conditions is foreign to, or at least beyond the reach of, such institutions. What is emphasized, understandably, is survival and coping with conditions rather than before changing conditions; social solidarity sustains survival more than promotes transformation. Indeed, the tontine dynamics illustrate conservative norms, expectations, and practices.

Considering women’s networks of “sociability and mutual help” in Bamako, one study observed that “[c]ollective accomplishments among neighbours are mentioned in only 12% of responses,” and concludes that “[t]his confirms that women do not take advantage of the networks they establish to deliberate on and work for improvements in the conditions of life in the neighbourhood.” \[632\] They support this conclusion by noting that it is especially in poorer neighbourhoods where this low response is given.

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630 A near-daily occurrence, examples of this attitude during Solidarity month are perhaps more striking. A domestic worker who lived with a typical* middle-upper class urban family was in need of sheets to sleep on. When it was suggested (by a foreigner) that she just use some of the family’s sheets that could then go into the general laundry, the woman of the house was shocked. Even though the house-worker was the niece of a friend, the idea of *sharing* sheets crossed a line of social status and propriety. Solidarity and differential social status were thus preserved. Interview, Foreign NGO worker Bamako, 16 October 2002.


632 ONG MISELI, *Citadines: vies et regards de femmes de Bamako* Bamako 1998: 143. These networks include clubs, credit unions, and cultural associations.
Idioms of solidarity in citizen identity formation exemplify attempts to resolve a contradiction, to express traditions in terms of modernity, to translate universal norms into local norms and vice versa. Between modern and traditional relationships, dissent is also at the heart of this difficulty, and this is key. Agreeing to disagree may be undermined by struggles over material conditions, land, access to wealth and health. Vulnerability and the threats it brings may curtail civility. The Malian response, however, in general, is not conflict, but overriding agreement: limiting the expression and pursuit of particular social group interests. This fosters a type of and level of ‘consensus’ that is, though possibly acknowledged as imposed rather than built, sufficiently hegemonic to carry through and act as a dominant ideology. Thus a focus on practical solidarity, mutual self-help and looking beyond one's own interest, sees dissent frustrating communities (re)forming to meet concrete, material challenges.

Le Mot d’ordre: ‘Witness’ and ‘Presence’

In addition to the consensus-seeking and reconciliation idioms of elite political culture mentioned earlier, those of witness and presence are important parts of the maintenance of social cohesion so crucial to solidarity. These modes of participation in assemblies (especially in rural locations), public meetings, political meetings, even conferences and discussions-debates (Fr. causeries-débats) are clearly transforming discourse within public space, whereby local forms of top-down consultation and discussion interact with a more contentious model of public debate. Social divisions, as expressed through indigenous norms and institutions, complicate ‘universal’ (rights-bearing) citizenship with other socio-political memberships, especially at the

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633 Koniobla, village tobacco producers meeting; Interview, Farmer and village association executive member, 1 July 2002 Koniobla; National Assembly Plenary Session, Bamako, 28 November 2002
634 E. Dudley, The Critical Villager: Beyond Community Participation 1993: 7, 159. C.f. “In many circumstances, the very ideas of community participation and democracy can be externally imposed concepts based on western ideology rather than local practice.” (J. Midgley, Community Participation. social development and the state 1986: 152)
village level, “where public and community decisions tend to be made by men” and the agreement of women and other excluded community members is taken for granted.\textsuperscript{635}

Some of the limitations the indigenous elements of citizenship idioms place on contentious public debate derive from their roots in oral traditions. By virtue of their medium, oral traditions tend “to transmit only consensus, the accepted view: those who are in intellectual rebellion [...] often have to begin in each generation all over again.”\textsuperscript{636} And so, the sustained cultural production necessary to change an authoritative tradition may itself be resisted, both openly and implicitly, as the authoritative tradition is reproduced and transformed through the interaction of indigenous and exogenous elements.\textsuperscript{637}

The issue of presence and encounter is also connected to how cultural and political elements articulate each other, to how the authority of authoritative cultural values and practices is reproduced. The ‘same’ or shared norms, values, and terms have different, simultaneously compatible and conflicting meanings from the top and from the bottom.\textsuperscript{638} The important tension in Malian conservatism, in terms of ideological consensus and acculturation, is between opposition and loyalty. The relative authoritative-ness of traditions of dissent, resistance and struggle are muted by a thoroughgoing conservatism.

In R. Schaffer’s socio-linguistic and ethnographic analysis of democracy as a transcultural ideal, Senegalese farmers share a perspective on consensus with Malian conservatives with reference to coalition and consensus politics. Consensual multiparty politics is generally understood by as the “natural endpoint of demokaraasi. Demokaraasi to them, after all, means

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Owen, op cit. “We are behind the men.” (Konaté, et al 1999: 51. Q.v.. 48-50).
\item A. Appiah, \textit{In my father’s house}, 1992: 92. However, the present generation “invests an inherited tradition with (much of its) ‘authority’”, and thus this authority “derives from the evaluative activities of a recipient generation.” K. Gyekeye, \textit{Tradition and Modernity}, 1997: 229.
\item Gyeke, 1997: 222-24. The ‘passing around’ of an issue for re-statement in deliberation illustrates the influence the oral medium can have in bringing a number of people’s views into line with one another, and subject to the influence of the differential status and ability of the speakers.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
consensus, and what better manifestation of a national agreement than the integration of opposition parties into the government?"  

“What we have seen pleases us because [...] agreement is the only thing that really matters. We now have *demokaraasi* because everyone agrees.” This illustrates the tolerance even praise for the compromised inclusiveness of political decision-making under national unity or coalition governments, and the reduced competitiveness of the system in which elections are disconnected from party turnover in the popular imagination, “[n]ow there is *demokaraasi* in the country because the three parties have come to agree, become united. They share the same ideas and make decisions together. Where one goes, the others follow; nobody is going in the opposite direction.”

Key here is the limited opportunities for *alternance*, in terms of parties and alternative or dissenting views, given the fundamental conciliation, compromise, and consensus-seeking practices. Also key is the limiting of alternative views pursued by factions of the political class is done not only instrumentally, but also ideologically and hegemonically, in order to “set the terms of the debate about *demokaraasi* and thereby shape the broader popular perception of what counts as legitimate leadership.”

Political parties, as vote-mobilizing institutions, see that people follow an instruction about how to vote, then that counts as effective communication and awareness raising. This wholly brackets the problem that supporters follow without understanding. While discussing how parties had largely failed in their mission to raise citizen understanding of, and participation in, Mali’s young democracy, party officers admit willingly the relative inconsequentiality of this in a

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641 Schaffer, 1998: 125-26 quotes two farmers with reference to the first Diouf-lead coalition. Schaffer socio-linguistic and ethnographic analysis takes democracy as a trans-cultural ideal to compare ‘democracy,’ (U.S. Engl.) ‘démocratie’ (France French) and ‘*demokaraasi*’ (Senegal Wolof). His insight may be extended to the Malian case: consensual pluralist politics is popularly understood as the “natural endpoint of *demokaraasi*.”
political vote-getting structure and mentality. Obedient, mobilized electors are as politically useful, perhaps even more so, than informed, engaged and possibly critical citizens.\textsuperscript{643} Although aware of the lacuna of active though ignorant members, party agents attach little significance to it. Taken together with the attitude towards political participation in general among members of other parties, partisan politics in Mali rests on the electoral mobilization of supporters through various commands and instructions (Fr. \textit{mots d’ordre}).

Mao Tse-Tung captures the essence of such a ‘command-communication democracy,’ fitting with democratic centralism:

Without democracy, you have no understanding of what is happening down below; the situation will be unclear; you will be unable to collect sufficient opinions from all sides; there can be no communication between top and bottom; top-level organs of leadership will depend on one-sided and incorrect material to decide issues, thus you will find it difficult to avoid being subjectivist; it will be impossible to achieve unity of understanding and unity of action, and impossible to achieve true centralism.\textsuperscript{644}

The importance of unity in understanding and action illuminates the Malian preoccupation with consensus and unity. Thus, even authoritarian regimes must give some latitude to ‘open’ communication from subaltern populations, though “[t]he focus is exclusively on the informational side –ignoring its incentive role, and also the intrinsic and constitutive importance of democracy.”\textsuperscript{645}

\textbf{Fasodennyumanya: citizenship and patriotism}

As mentioned, the problem of respecting one’s elders and superiors is crucial to democratic citizenship idioms. Within this framework, a good citizen serves, period. The \textit{fasodennyuman}, literally, a ‘good child of the father’s house’, works for, respects, and preserves. The steps to enter the circle of mature members of society (Fr. “\textit{la cour des grands}”) parallel the

\textsuperscript{643} Interview, communications officer, RPM, Rally for Mali, 9 December 2002.
\textsuperscript{645} Sen, 1999: 182
requisite respect and understanding of totems and prohibitions of villages and families to foster and preserve familial solidarity. This social solidarity is crucial in the transfer of technical and artisan knowledge, where the next generation still serves as a retirement plan for their parents and kin, and must therefore master elders’ trades and skills. Moreover, indigenous civic education instils intellectual and moral values, e.g. bravery and honesty, as characteristic within the spirit or soul, which is symbolized partly in family names, and their derivations and etymologies. Good citizenship, then, is foremost a right relation to one’s own particular family, clan and village heritage and history. By extension and analogy, the good citizen is a dutiful child connected to the territory of the homestead family. Indeed, attachment to faso is linked to respect of elders and its limits, and to working as a social and moral value.

Civics orthodoxy embodied by Education Ministry teaching materials has both narrow and mass messages. Middle-level actors should respond to (paternalist) leaders; mass populations should be interested but engaged only within the liberal-institutional limits of democratization (conservative political modernization). Thus, civics frame the middle and upper-class actors’ struggle for legitimated moral and intellectual leadership by merging a minimal-procedural democracy with indigenous norms, values and institutions that “constrain unmediated claims from below.”

A country is composed of multiple fasow ‘small fatherlands,’ on a common or shared territory, which is structured mainly by lineage, including blood relatives who share the same lands. Faso thus carries the connotation of “being oneself, being from the village first,” and thus the country of Mali “is plural, a multitude of patries, fasow.” The subjective sense of faso

646 Clan name derivations are also sometimes the subject of joking-cousins (Bam. senakuya) insults and banter. The banter is often based on expert and popular etymology. Keïta ~ takers of tradition; Traoré ~ carried the message; Diabaté ~ cannot be refused; Diarra = ‘Lion’; Coulibaly ~ ran down the hill;
647 National Education Ministry/ Institut Pédagogique National, Éducation Civique et Morale, 10th Grade, 1994-95: 32. Hereafter ECM.
648 “Much of the current literature on democratization in Africa finds itself limiting the conception of democracy with which it works—the better, as noted, both to legitimate the neoliberal project and to insulate it against any unmediated claims by popular classes from below.” J. Saul “For Fear of Being Condemned as Old-Fashioned”: Liberal Democracy versus Popular Democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa,” in Mengisteab and Daddieh, ed. State Building and Democratization in Africa, 1999: 49.
membership, combines connection to and pride about origins to the realities and histories of migration. *Faso*, then, is linked by common term and analogy to the ‘large *faso,*’ synonymous with the country or nation-State (q.v. ‘Burkina *Faso*’). In both large and small versions, the *faso* members share pain and suffering, joy and flourishing.

In this connection, then, West African migration and ‘Balkanisation’ can spread one family across three or more nation-states, especially those from border regions and whose ethno-linguistic heritage links them to a large, distributed population. Despite the colonial cut-up, these families and groups recognize themselves and each other as sharing a close common heritage, and contemporary solidarity and become networks of security and solidarity.

Consequently, the sense of self and place, love of one’s *faso,* is linked to the reality of movement and exchange, of contact and conflict with others. Thus, strangers may be recognized for both their qualities and faults, and Mali’s cultural syncretism, that adapts rather than rejects, provides a way of insisting on established traditions, transforming them, and incorporating exogenous norms and values. The common features of different ethnicities, cultures and practices in Mali illustrates the high degree of *brassage:* contact, exchange, marriage, interdependence, shared historical memory, and common cultural if not ethnic heritage. Moreover, socio-cultural identity is intertwined with political identity.

Loyalties are possibly divided between a *national Malian community,* on the one hand, which is still in the process of being imagined, and of which the process of citizen-making is a key part, and, on the other hand, a *local community* that is founded on more concrete affinities.

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649 Interview, High school teacher #2Nov11, Bandiagara 11 Nov 2002. As mentioned above, members of an educated rural middle-class often have experience that produces a expanded sense of the national Malian political community while confronting domestic divisions and differences.

650 Ibid.

651 This *brassage* is in spite of still influential marriage prohibitions, and heated debates about their relevance.

652 French, *terroir.* Music sound recordings will be labelled, “Music of the Dogon (Peulh, etc.) *terroir,*” to indicate both a cultural and physical space, connected to specific ritual practices, economic activities (farming, herding, fishing), and environments.
and material relations, and relies less on abstract features of imagined community. *Fasoden*

qualifies the definition of ‘Nation’ that relies on and reinforces the sense that a nation

needs an organic unity, a sort of vital community with multiple linkages: geographical, ethnic, linguistic, political, sometimes even religious, without being so necessarily nor exclusively [...] thus the Malian nation is made up of Bambara, Sarakolé, Maures, Bobos, Miniankas, Dogons, etc., the French nation of Gaulois, Romains, Bretons, etc.\(^{653}\)

Furthermore, official educational texts stress that a nation cannot develop if its constituent members are not

a harmonious whole acting as a single man. The nation thus needs all its children to build itself. Each in that which concerns him, and at his own level brings his stone to help build the nation. That is why national unity is a decisive factor of development. a nation cannot progress in hatred, division, disorder and anarchy.\(^{654}\)

Against a simplistic form of political unity, however, a critical perspective on diversity denies unity in the sense of a nation-state. Notwithstanding that ideological convergence in Mali’s political culture is evidence of a succeeding hegemonic drive, the basic illiteracy and linguistic pluralism thwart an intellectual homogenization of even the small number of highly educated actors. Mali, “like most African nations, does not constitute a nation,” in the sense of a “mystique of shared history, culture, language, economy, territory.”\(^{655}\) Indeed, as Chapter Two discussed, “[v]arious Mande farming groups make up half of Mali’s population (Bambara, Malinké, Sarakolé)”; the Fulani, livestock herders traditionally represent 17%. The balance “are made up of Voltaic groups 12%, Songhai 6%, Tuareg and Moor 10%, and others 5%.\(^{656}\)

In idioms of struggle, then, the notion of ‘organic unity’ is merged with that of resistance to oppression, such that “Mali became aware of its unity and emerged as a nation in the liberation struggle against the colonial power.”\(^{657}\) The understanding of 19th century colonial resistance

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\(^{653}\) ECM, 12th grade: 3

\(^{654}\) ECM, 12th grade: 10. Quote all underlined in original.


\(^{656}\) Mali Poverty profile IIED Drylands Programme, May 2000: 15


\(^{657}\) ECM Grade 10.
(e.g. Samori Touré) is especially important. It refers forward to the struggles for independence 
(loi cadre of 1956, the community of 1958, and the birth of the Republic of Mali), as well as back 
to the great figures of Malian history, e.g. Sundiata Keïta, Sékou Amadou. As mentioned 
above regarding the democratic opening of 1991, this dual historical glance informed the anti-
dictatorship, pro-pluralism struggles of the 1980s and 1990s.

Given the idioms of unity in struggle, military analogies merge citizenship with 
patriotism of service and sacrifice. Although slightly ironic, given how Malians suffered under 
military dictatorship, the dominant reading of the military dimension of civics orthodoxy idioms 
emphasizes organization and hierarchical structure, patriotism, and especially national unity. 
Because soldier status was a source of privileged access to wealth in pre- and post-colonial 
contexts, and forced labour and conscription through the colonial period, martial references and 
idioms carry complex and contradictory connotations in the more general discourse of internal 
instability and weakened social structures. The civics orthodoxy, as a project to articulate 
traditional norms consistent with democratic citizenship, illustrates the complexity of this 
ostensible consistency. The stated ambitions of civic education echo those of education more 
generally: to renovate society, culture, politics, and economics. In general, these norms are 
expressed as progressive conservatism, or conservative modernization

Given the rising cost of living for the average Malian, “there is no room to be a citizen,” 
and “citizens are cheated by their own State.” Indeed, as a result the term ‘citizen’ tends to refer 
to ideal type of elite (Fr. haut-cadres), who is nevertheless disconnected in roles and relationship 
from the mass of Malians. Illustrative of the military-service analogy, the true citizen is a 
‘patriot’ and “attached to and works for their city, participating in the town’s development.”

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658 ECM Grade 10; "Companion note" to Semaine d'Education civique et d'Eveil patriotique (SECEP) [Civic Education and Patriotic Awareness Week] 1999-2000
659 ECM, 11th grade, 1994-95, p. 1; Emphasis added.
660 Interview, High school teacher #1Nov11, 11 Nov 2002 Bandiagara.
Notwithstanding these ideals, political parties have utterly failed to undertake the formation of citizen consciousness, and thus the requisite political culture is largely missing, and very slow to emerge. Indeed, “the masses do not identify with the [political] parties.” Furthermore, when local and foreign NGOs participate at the local level in civic consciousness-raising, authorities may perceive this as potentially problematic and move to frustrate such efforts: in small part to undermine citizen awareness-raising objecting on ideological grounds to changes in status quo patriarchy, but more to get their share of whatever resources are connected. Even if the initiatives are positive, they may be construed as anti-authority (State or indigenous), and tend to get plagued by difficulties. Seeing this, people reasonably conclude that the State itself and its agents “hinder citizen development” through blockages and embezzlement. Indeed, the broader economic crises of employment, investment, and development deepen cynicism and dissatisfaction and witness to the impotence and irrelevance of service citizenship in the public sphere.

Thus, a double shortfall is indentified. On the one hand, endeavour of Western-inspired political education commensurate with democratic citizenship is lacklustre; and, on the other hand, indigenous values and institutions simultaneously erode, leaving no effective anchors for such political education. Indeed, the shortfalls are in the enlarged sense of the nation, but also in the basic socio-political and cultural community upon which to ground an expanded and inclusive sense of membership and identity. This eroding basis of citizen solidarity fails to instil a sense of and pride in national cultures and by association an emerging, national culture.

This sense of citizenship emphasizes knowing oneself first. The omnipresence of Western norms and practices demands retaining a sense of self, and the crucial elements of one’s cultural heritage. This civic education would be a “bulwark against ‘Toubabification’,” against the excess of liberty modelled by the West in terms of ideas and opinions, and habits. Also, since

661 Ibid.
662 Ibid.
663 Ibid. Become like a ‘toubab’ a white, a European: from Arabic tabib, doctor (C. Balleiul, 1996).
moral and intellectual development require horizons to provide perspective, it is crucial to frame achievement within the community as shared and as working in concert. In brief, the indigenous communitarian social-political norms must be emphasized as a counter-weight to those of liberal individualism. This constellation of norms embodies a conceit of the ‘return to virtue.’

**Activism and Resistance**

To analyse democratic deepening and *civisme* in the Malian context is to conceptualize legitimate and challenge illegitimate authority. Moreover, the question of legitimacy is coincident with that of resistance and submission; the question “should I resist?” is concomitant with the question “can I resist?” Colonial resisters are key figures in civics orthodoxy, but such challenge/encounter with State authority is still relegated to the colonial or further distant past. The contemporary situation is still too potentially volatile to exploit links to contemporary practice. Furthermore, the very actors who are in the position to make such linkages, teachers, have less to gain by fomenting disruptive behaviour than they once did, given former president Konaré’s successes to satisfy their demands and placate them.664

Democratizing by abstracting from local-level institutions runs in some measure counter to the ‘organic/ *Gemeinschaft*’ character of the local forms of organization; further, without some form of intimate, resource-intensive programme of assessment, awareness-raising and cooperative organisation, local collectivities will simply not have the concepts and capacity to meet decentralisation head-on, and will further struggle to meet this new set of obligations for which they are poorly prepared.665

The attempt to link these two elements of political identity, national membership and legal-administrative State citizenship, is perhaps most instructive of the challenges and limitations

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664 Interview, High school teacher #1Nov11, 11 Nov 2002 Bandiagara.; Focus Group, High school teachers 22Mar, 22 March 2002 Bamako
that a broad civics agenda faces: notwithstanding the conceptual distinction and contradictions reproduced between membership in nation and State communities, the assumed and ambiguous equivalence of citizenship in both nation and State. The coincidence in the mid-1990s of the latest edition of official civics texts at the same moment of administrative decentralization is also instructive. To discuss national unity and national consciousness, the official texts for high school students (nearest to majority and voting age) begin with defining commune citizenship with reference to the neighbourhood [quartier], village, collectivity in which the students’ live. ‘Commune’ here is a term quintessentially linked to decentralization. Moreover, in order to define citizenship and the citizen, the teacher “starts from the commune to introduce the notion of State, and the citizens’ belonging to a republican state.”

The membership in the local community is thus equated to the smallest administrative division in order to build from the local-level affective membership up to that of citizenship in a relatively abstract State.

Conclusion: democratic citizen identity and ‘good governance’ in Mali

This chapter deconstructed the cultural advantages and anchors, then used these to construct an alternative assessment of the ambiguous cultural elements relative to (1) democratic and anti-democratic norms in Mali, and (2) what is meant by democratic norms to whom? The story is the success of the elite-led middle and upper class appropriation of indigenous idioms to serve governance (democratic legitimation), by articulating certain indigenous norms and values with procedural democracy and mediated, limited participatory politics. Mali’s ‘cultural advantages/anchors’ for democratization are related to (1) indigenous mechanisms of hegemony, (2) the colonial mechanisms of domination, (3) post-colonial mechanisms of hegemony and (4) the synthesis of these by the middle class emerging out of the post-dictatorship political liberties, and the neo-liberal conditionalities of African politics in the late 20th century.

The internal dimensions of ‘good governance’ are products of middle and upper class actors’ struggle to establish the hegemony of liberalism with indigenous authority: reproducing

666 ECM, 12th grade: 11
asymmetrical reciprocity of patrons and clients, patriarchy, and paternalism in a conservative modernization. In brief, upper class actors produce and deploy the idioms of a unified people under the responsible leader. Moreover, their critics—including disaffected middle-class and also more popular actors—stress their objections to the failed revolution, and emphasize the persistence of mass economic vulnerability: challenging mere citizenship from the perspective of moral and political economies in crisis.

Thus, they variously link the culture and language relevant to indigenous ideological elements of moral leadership and their idioms of action and expression, which draw especially on the Mandé-Bamanan tradition, which is dominant in Malian national-political life. The pattern of identity-formation is best modelled as negotiating identities and power relationships, and the need to engage in a cultural pluralism that both takes root in local histories and opens out to the West.\footnote{J. McGuire, “Sunjata and the Negotiation of Postcolonial Mande Identity,” in R. Austen, In Search of Sunjata: The Mande Oral Epic as History, Literature, and Performance, 1998: 264-65. C.f. Amselle, 1999.} This precisely encapsulates an insular reading of indigenous moral accountability and leadership struggle: cultural ‘pluralism’ is construed as the link between Mandé and the West more than between Mandé and its neighbours, who have sometimes been enemies and even conquerors. To the degree that constructing the identity of citizens in a modern Malian nation-State is a process of forgetting, it silences and overwrites the cultural and class complexity of the Malian territory and ethno-linguistic regions, in an ostensible “dialogue with the rest of the world as a modern nation.”\footnote{McGuire, in Austen, 1998: 270.}
Chapter Five  Self-knowledge and the return to virtue:  
Islam and citizen identity formation

‘Self-knowledge’ and the ‘return to virtue,’ are two analytical entry and focus points in a constellation of norms, practices and actors crucial to Islamic elements of citizen identity formation. Through these two terms we see a snapshot of current Islamic political discourse in Mali. Together with indigenous idioms, Islam is used to articulate anxieties and press forward its particular forms of conservative renewal. As a feature of democratic deepening in Mali, hegemonic struggles over moral accountability and political authority are part of citizen identity formation. Further, struggles over the role of Islam are occurring in the context of political liberalization since 1991. Indeed, Islamic identity idioms in Mali emphasize standpoints from which various upper-middle and middle actors adapt to, oppose and negotiate the burdens and benefits of liberal-democratic norms and practices.669 As I will discuss below, in such a situation, there are negotiations among present and past dominant perspectives, with reference to the historic importance of Islam in Mali. As much as the Islamic voices in the political realm may be seen as oppositional (if not as coherent as counter-hegemonic), they enjoy a certain discursive dominance among certain groups on certain issues. Where the indigenous discourses are more readily turned to support and nuance dominant perspectives, the Islamic discourses and their producers are more likely to oppose dominant perspectives in their negotiations and adaptations. Given the indigenization of Islam in Mali since ~900 AD mentioned in Chapter Two,

669 Throughout, there are certain important caveats to bear in mind. Social divisions impact unevenly in different settings. North and south, rural and urban, periphery and centre all further refract the divisions of class, education, and ethnicity. An attempt has been made to reflect more recent developments in the unprecedented use of mosques, in northern Mali and key urban areas especially, to incite antagonistic attitudes among adherents and against the perceived moral lassitude of the pro-West government. That said, this chapter attends to southern rather than northern realities.
‘Indigenous’, ‘Muslim/Islamic’ and ‘Western’ must be stressed as analytical categories derived from social divisions of class and the type and extent of education.  

In brief, searches for authenticity, self-knowledge, and conservative revival are integral to Islam’s roles in citizen identity formation in Mali; these roles are framed by calls for a ‘return to virtue.’ The perceived threats presented by Arabophone Muslims to political stability united the colonial authorities and the established religious specialists, whose practices these Arabophones challenged as ‘non-Islamic.’ This convergence has a contemporary analogue in the democratization project. Western-oriented actors appropriate indigenous or indigenized idioms against more overtly Islamic and economically powerful ones with their Wahabbi and Middle Eastern ties. Among the most public cleavages are those between the moderate Muslims with links to the State, and those without State ties. The former are found in the institutional legacies of the Malian Association for the Unity and Progress of Islam (AMUPI), the party-State association intended to pre-empt more organic, spontaneous Muslim organizing. In historical perspective, the sense of prerogative to State influence dates from the 13th century when Muslims enjoyed important administrative and commerce roles and the spread of Islam reinforced elites’ dominance in the centers of trade and government. Moreover, contemporary actors seek to redress the colonial marginalization of Islam from political life in Mali, which aimed to mediate the threat perceived by the French in Middle Eastern influence over trade management by an

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671 Brenner in Brenner, ed. *Muslim identity and social change in sub-Saharan Africa*, 1993: 72-73. Established by President General Moussa Traoré, and cited as evidence both of his commitment to Islam in Mali, and of his desire both to contain and control the political influence of religious leaders, and to reproduce the regime and Party norms of obedience, unity and passivity.


673 N. Levtzion, 1973: 47; M. Crowder, 1968: 33
emerging group of upper class, upper-middle and middle class Arabophone merchants and intellectuals.\textsuperscript{674}

The discussion below is organized as follows. First, a brief discussion situates the title’s terms of reference in the overall discourse of conservative cultural reaction to the real and perceived threats of social dislocation occurring in Mali’s political liberalization moment since 1991. Second, the historical discussion contextualizes the overall analysis in relation to Mali’s different Islamicizations. Third, the analysis proper of the Islamic idioms of citizen identity formation proceeds from a more detailed discussion of self-knowledge as a reference point, which includes the distinction of self and ‘others,’ crises of education and acculturation, and the crucial and difficult distinction of moral and mobilizing Islam in Mali. Fourth, the analysis continues with the return to virtue as a reference point, which includes mediating dissent, secularity and secularism, and an example from the 2002 elections. Self-knowledge and the return to virtue reflect the ambivalence of Mali’s Islamic heritage, and, ultimately, encompass idioms used by religious leaders and their subordinates to reinforce social cohesion.

This chapter sets up the concluding discussion (in Chapter Six) of relationships among and tensions between indigenous, Islamic, and Western elements of hegemonic struggles over specifically democratic legitimacy. To understand democratic deepening we must see more than hegemonic forces simply imposed by the West, and understand the specific contours of various actors’ creative ability to adapt external influences to local conditions. The actors include ruling and upper class elites, and their upper-middle class subordinates. Islamic political leaders, while sharing upper and upper-middle class status, include actors both sympathetic and opposed to the Western-liberal-democratic ideological convergence.

Self-knowledge and the return to virtue

Self-knowledge, referring to group identity, and the return to virtue are terms to analyze idioms of political and social action. ‘Self-knowledge’ includes seeking authentic identity and knowledge of cultural norms and practices, and issues of education and acculturation.

Given the conservative cultural reaction to Mali’s post-apertura political and economic landscape, ‘return to virtue’ includes nostalgia for an individual, group, and national identity. ‘Virtue’ includes moral recovery and promoting social cohesion against decay, as well as the perceived excesses of liberalization. These concepts are key to understanding that Islamic elements of citizen identity formation in Mali, which are not as readily integrated into the Western-led, bourgeois tenor of the citizenship project since 1992. The disjunctions highlight important contradictions in the citizen project itself. Most important among these contradictions is the aim among the project’s agents to deploy elements of Mali’s heritage as ostensible ‘advantages’ for democratic consolidation and deepening. Islam, given the modes and agents of its articulation in the post-apertura moment, is not a ready resource to support liberal-democratic national citizen identity.

In brief, indigenous norms and practices seem relatively easily incorporated into the procedural-electoral norms and practices of democratic consolidation. The interaction between Islamic and indigenous norms and practices has produced a relatively coherent, syncretic religion. This interweaving of Islamic and indigenous norms has complicated the integration since 1991 of indigenous and Western-democratic norms and practices. On the one hand, middle-class State and NGO actors seem relatively easily able to see indigenous norms and practices as cultural advantages for democratic consolidation. Conversely, these actors, and the Western-democratic norms they support are less likely to draw on Islamic norms and practices as normative and practical anchors for democratic politics. Moreover, Islamic norms and practices are as yet more contested and its actors less united between the general population and the middle and upper class leadership. Therefore, as a cross-group alliance builder, Islam is as yet less clearly able to
provide the ‘thicker’ social and political-cultural referents that indigenous idioms do, and which are sought by proponents of mainly ‘thin’ liberal citizen identity to legitimate procedural-electoral democratic norms and practices. Thus, the contemporary relationship between Islam and democracy in Mali is complex and contested. At the broadest level, indigenous, Islamic and Western norms and practices both combine and conflict in the formation of citizen identity. In particular, the hegemony-seeking, Western-led project of citizen identity formation draws readily on indigenous norms and practices, but less so on Islamic ones. Here, the Islamic elements are deconstructed in terms of self-knowledge and the return to virtue.

Self-knowledge and identity

\[ ni nyiena i jujon ko, i laban ko b'i konofila \]
If you forget your roots, you compromise your goals.

(“Thoughts for the Day,” Preparation materials for a rural workshop, SUCO headquarters, Bamako, 15 October 2002) 

While ‘self-knowledge’ articulates a sense of group identity, its content is contested and re-interpreted by actors from different class backgrounds and Islamic traditions. The identity referents in Mali most relevant to the citizenship and the development of national political identity are those deployed by indigenous, Islamic, and Western-oriented actors. To analyze the search for self-knowledge, the variety of Islamic histories are most important, given the legacies in the post-\textit{apertura} period of different periods of contact, resistance and conversion. In these legacies, two potentially nation-building identities, including Malians as Africans and Muslims, are paramount in the articulation of common history, shared identity, and imagined community.

\textbf{Seeking Self-knowledge against ‘Outsiders’}

Knowing oneself and one’s ‘own’ are essential and common reference points between indigenous and Islamic idioms of citizenship. This common ground emerges from reaction to a matrix of shared ‘others’: including contact with neighboring groups, and longer-distance Arab-

\footnote{SUCO Solidarité – Union – Coopération. Materials were for a mission to assess institutional strengths and weaknesses at the village level.}
Muslim, European and American cultural, economic, and political diffusion or imperialism. The contemporary influence of Western norms and practices especially, demands retaining a sense of the crucial elements of one’s cultural heritage. Thus Islamic identity is a “bulwark against ‘Toubabification’,” against the excesses modeled by the West. This resistance to becoming like a ‘toubab’ a white, a European, embodies a common indigenous and Islamic conceit of the ‘return to virtue,’ whereby communitarian social-political norms are emphasized as a counter-weight to those of a thin, liberal individualism and materialism. In the Islamic idioms, the threatened identity responds by building capacity for resistance within an explicitly Islamic framework.

Indeed, the call to re-Africanize is central to the current rehabilitation and future revival of Muslim education in Mali, as part of an overall project of economic self-reliance and socio-cultural autonomy. The problem of national identity is, thus, interwoven with that of African and Muslim identity, with its dimensions of rural and urban life, and the social divisions of gender and generation, all mediated by education level and type. Pre-eminent Malian scholar and author, Amadou Hampaté Bâ, gives a clear manifesto for cultural revival when reflecting on the future of Islamic education in Mali.

Until Africans […] re-Africanize themselves, they are Africans, but have ceased to be such, they must become Africans again, and seek their way within their civilization, which is orality. Otherwise, they will become what Europe will become, because they will be its appendages, cars attached to the Western locomotive.

Bâ’s views are interesting. Intellectual and moral, while not clearly or overtly political, they bridge the African and Muslim identities in a dual defence against Western norms as sources of authoritative value. The desire for relative independence (economically, culturally, politically) is seen with the actual interdependence among nations and peoples, with the colonial and neo-colonial realities also in full view. Thus, asymmetrical interdependence among nations and peoples characterizes the context of Islamic norms in Mali, with more or less explicit

reference to the colonial mis-education, and the more implicit suggestion that Islam may serve as
a counter-weight to it.

No country is independent. We are interdependent, and our own error, or else
our destiny, since we don’t know whether it is an error or our destiny, is such that
we continue to be always colonized in the most terrible manner, that is to say
economically; that is the most terrible colonization and we will be colonized
intellectually. We think like whites, we want to eat like whites, dress like whites,
and to say: all that is white is good. Everything from ourselves is outdated, is
savage; so well has the colonizer turned us against ourselves, and we have
accepted being against ourselves.\footnote{Bâ in Cissé, 1992: 196.}

With this indictment of upper and middle class Africans, past and present, Bâ signals his hope in
the youth for tomorrow. The grounds of this hope are in the civil society groups, nationally and
internationally, in which activists, especially youth, hold governments to account, and pressure
them into action, or work alongside and with them to build the future. On this view, there are
roles to play in shaping the future destiny of Africa and of Mali, provided these are rooted in self-
knowledge and self-appreciation. This acknowledgement of ones’ own versus the other thus
shifts to an image of one’s own with the other in interdependence based on self-confidence, not
mere dependent inadequacy. Interestingly, in response to questions about the future of Islamic
education and acculturation, Bâ makes no mention of Islam, but focuses instead on the notion of
African identity.

Africa will be what you [youth] will make of it, and for this, learn first of all to
love yourself, to love your language, your tradition, with what is outdated cut
out; it is a tree, there are dead branches, prune them, know how to graft, but do
not cut the trunk!\footnote{Bâ in Cissé, 1992: 196}

Moreover, a reading of Bâ’s own fiction shows that “narratives of this kind often
distinguish the path laid out by European education from another form of acculturation –in

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{678} Bâ in Cissé, 1992: 196. \\ \textsuperscript{679} Bâ in Cissé, 1992: 196}
African cases initiation rituals and/or Islamic learning— which would have allowed the hero to attain the kind of adulthood experienced by the generations before him.”

**Tolerance and the struggle for Authenticity: accommodating authoritative religious ethics**

Debates about tolerance and ethical pluralism are key in contemporary struggles worldwide over the role and meaning of Islam in society and politics, mediating between the universal and the universalizing, and local, traditional norms and practices. West African Islam is subject to significant local and regional variation in the primacy or ‘authoritativeness’ of Islamic norms and values. Variations occur in terms of centrally institutionalized Islamic communities, their internal or trans-national ethno-territorial boundaries, and in individuals’ experiences including Muslim and combined resources and social networks, moral authority, and spirituality. As mentioned above, the ‘Muslim practice and Islamic culture’, distinction frames a distinctly southern Malian version of debates about the potential (progressive, reactionary, peaceful, and violent) of conservative Islamic modernities in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The pervasive rather than profound influence of Islam in Mali is central to the potential of politicizing Islam as a counter-hegemonic voice, and this is clear in the increasing formal State recognition of this voice and attempts to co-opt its most outspoken leaders. Nevertheless, this potential, to participate in reclaiming and representing legacies of counter-hegemonic resistance, is, on the one hand, conditioned by the conservatism of Malian Islam, and, on the other, by the role that Islam plays in Mali as religious *practice* rather than Muslim *culture.*

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683 Interview, Senior NGO executive 8Dec, 8 December 2002, Bamako
‘Cultural Islam’ in Mali is framed thus because some Malians across social divisions, including members of cosmopolitan, leisure and upper-middle class (often Christian, or mission-educated), and lower middle class farmers and lower class subsistence farmers, express ambivalence about Mali’s Islamic cultural heritage: i.e. ambivalence especially about Arabophone influence (as manifesting forms of doctrinal and class domination) in Malian society, culture and political economy. Indeed, upper class religious leaders and upper-middle class Islamicist actors are confronting precisely the influence of their class counterparts with more Western orientations. Moreover, this cultural ambivalence points to the resilience of indigenous non-Islamic norms and values in capturing imported ones, whether in the fifteenth or twentieth centuries, and to translate those idioms into other cultural forms: new yet rooted, different yet the same, local, yet heavily conditioned by external forces. Indeed, the relative and contested degree of influence of religion on segments of certain populations has important ethno-territorial dimensions (e.g. Songhai, Touareg, Fulani), and relates to the different patterns of contact, diffusion, and conflict with Muslim proselytizers since the eight century, as well as with nineteenth century colonizers.

As important as the religious dynamics of community authority and identity are the multiple sites of moral authority and identity. Most southern Malians would identify themselves as Muslims, but most often have ‘more important things to worry about’. The illusion of being an exclusive site of authority and identity that pervasive Islam creates depends on the degree to which it provides various forms of mutual self-help across borders of different kinds (clan, family, village, regional, international). To exploit the importance of religious institutions to local populations, administrative reform addresses the “role of religious organizations to aid the

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684 Interview, Small holding farmer 1Jul5, Koniobla, 5 July 2002; Interview, Senior NGO executive 8Dec, 8 December 2002, Bamako
685 Prof. Thiam, Interview on Radio Klédu, Bamako, 12:45pm 10 May 2002.
state in decentralization,” while recognizing religion less for its spiritual content than “as part of the global-local political economy.”

The juxtaposition or coexistence of different cultural values corresponds to the way in which individuals also live daily and simultaneously in religious and non-religious spheres. Local religious practice is the source of a “[religious creativity that] sustains the principle of flexibility and historically allowed Muslims to be incorporated into non-Muslim societies in Africa. All of which represents a considerable achievement for indigenous hospitality and tolerance.”

Most crucial are the multiple forms of community organization and identity that are the historical legacies of Islamic periods. Internal community ties among the social divisions of class and ethnicity, and within the ruling class strata in particular, are the historical undergirdings of the contemporary hegemonic idiomatic synthesis. This history and its subsequent re-interpretations help shape present-day notions about the cultural roots of contemporary politics.

Furthermore, the Dyula-Mande religious practice distinguishes broadly ‘scriptural’ and ‘magical’ Islam, bayani karamogoya, and siru karamogoya respectively. These refer to the expertise of canonical texts, on the one hand, and expertise of “secret knowledge concerned with personal needs in this world.” Together with these distinctions and divisions is that of urban-rural patterns of Islamic experience. Indeed, contemporary Mali also preserves a legacy of the medieval kingdoms: the urban ‘bourgeoisies of merchants and ‘ulama [teachers].’ The pre-colonial legacies of religious accommodation in West Africa persist in that Islam, adopted to

688 Sanneh, 1997: 26, cites R.. Launay, Beyond the Steam: Islam and Society in a West African Town, U. of Calif. Press (Berkeley and LA), 992: 154ff. Karamogoya (Bam./Mande) ‘learning-mastery’, bayan from Arabic ‘evidence,’ and siru, also from Arabic ‘secret, esoteric’ and “connected with divination, amulet making, and other forms of clerical practice.” Indeed, “this example suggests plural options are available to practitioners, with law and custom giving people the freedom to adopt and adapt, as they have always done.”
689 Levtzion cites R. S. Morgenthau, Political parties in French-speaking West Africa 1964: 262-4
reinforce established power as an elite ‘class religion’ and as the cult of imperial courts and of traders and healer-clerics, forged an ‘Islamic State,’ and dominant class and ruling clan. This left the “penetration in numbers and quality” into the general peasant population “neither extensive or deep.” Indeed, the historical legacies suggest that the contradiction persists between the larger-scale pre-colonial states that facilitated Islam’s diffusion through their internal organization and longer-range trade networks (e.g. Dyula above), and the subsequent “superficiality of Islamic penetration among the cultivators [that] was revealed as Mali disintegrated, for it disappeared almost completely except for the threadlike dispersion of the ubiquitous Mandé traders.”

Although this historical reality has less relevance in middle and northern Mali, even today, these ambivalent legacies are “an integral component of the national ethos in Modern Mali.” When Malians boast about “a strong sense of history” or say “‘our wealth is our civilisation,’” they are starting rather than concluding a debate about ‘civilization,’ and the role of Islam’s civilizational heritage and mission in the past and potential for the future.

The Muslim citizenship elements, between and beside the indigenizing and Westernizing elements, draw on idiomatic resources of religious tolerance and syncretism, on the one hand, but also the struggle for ‘authentic’ Islam in West Africa, on the other. While indigenous citizen discourses exploit the idiomatic resources of overlapping past empires and the great Mali Empire in particular, the Western democratic citizen elements draw on idiomatic resources of anti-colonial and anti-dictatorship struggles, with particular reference to the problem of legitimating centralized and personalized power. Furthermore, these contemporary discursive struggles frame the issue of accommodating secular and religious political ethics.

Mali’s constitution provides for secular liberalism (preamble, Articles. 4, 18, 25, 28), for respecting all faiths (Art. 4), against discrimination (Art. 2); to guarantee liberty of conscience.
(Art. 4, 12) and the prohibition of religiously based parties (Art28, Party Charter).\textsuperscript{695} As we will see below, notwithstanding these constitutional provisions, there is no “information about the content of secularism,” other than freedom of religion and the separation of spiritual and temporal authority. Moreover, a view among upper middle class actors stresses that secularism as practiced in Mali, contrary to that in the West, is one in which the “separation between religious and civil authority is not necessarily absolute,” though does not as a result make a forceful apology for more political Islam.\textsuperscript{696}

In the recent past, Malians generally appreciated the neutrality of religious leaders (e.g. in 1997), since it preserved their ability to act as peacemakers, calling for calm in heated situations since 1991. The balance to strike is that of public perception: ‘State Muslims’ (AMUPI) include the opportunists of the past, including those who supported the Traoré regime against the pro-pluralism struggle and the Collective leadership and Islamic High Council actors, including upper and upper-middle class opportunists of the present. The greater influence of Islamists in the urban areas, including the south, faces the parallel influence of Western norms and values. Indeed, legacies of colonial political economy are key to urban post-colonial Mali, and especially for the post-\textit{apertura} interface between the urban bases of Islamic and Western norms and practices of citizen identity. These tendencies are arrayed in some configuration against more embedded, local, middle-class leaders of deep religious principles and conviction.\textsuperscript{697} Ultimately, the accommodating view, seeks “[T]he involvement of spiritual authority in political debate

\textsuperscript{696} N. Keita "Les forces religieuses et le débat politique dans une république laïque," \textit{Les Echos}, 30 April 2002
\textsuperscript{697} Indeed, the ostensibly ‘apolitical’ AMUPI (as a State-created association) is more firmly entrenched in the bureaucracy than any other institutions representing Muslim concerns. The qualifier should rather be ‘non-partisan’. For example, the AMUPI “is represented on the National Independent Electoral Commission [CENI].” « Mali : Le Facteur Islamique » \textit{Religioscope} 27 April 2002.
within limits” defined by the Constitution; involvement that, “far from diluting the secular character of our Republic, enlarges the debate to include an influential side of civil society.”

In general, Malians are struggling to actualize and express their ‘Malianness’ in tandem with their ‘Africanness’ and ‘Muslimness.’ All three of these broad identities have links and tensions among them, depending on the class segment of its bearers. A modern, national identity might include a Francophile or pro-Western orientation commensurate with a “UN-based cosmopolitanism”; also an "informal pan-africanism,” “[m]ight include a more oblique cosmopolitanism, one mediated through local idioms, norms and practices” to form an alternative contemporary indigenous identity. An Islamic identity is constructed with reference to the above-mentioned dimensions in local and globalizing contexts. Furthermore, the rise of Islamic NGOs provides sites of local-global linkages.

Table: Percentage of NGOs that are Islamic 1980-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>13.04</td>
<td>21.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>16.07</td>
<td>16.95</td>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>15.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>21.40</td>
<td>19.10</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>23.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>17.24</td>
<td>33.82</td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>11.76</td>
<td>20.98</td>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>0.40</td>
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The rise in Islamic NGOs was driven by the same post-independence crises that have prompted a general increase in NGO activity. Reacting to crises in the economy, livelihoods, the environment, and governance, Islamic NGOs are “active in conventional NGO fields of operation such as development, education, women, child care, community health, environment, water, 

698 N. Keita, 2002.
700 NGOs and Voluntary Organisations’ Registry of the countries cited; Economic Commission for Africa Source Book of African People’s Organisations. 2 Volumes. Public Administration, Human Resources and Social Development Division. Addis Ababa 1996, cited in Salih 2002: 9-10. "African Islamic NGOs rate of growth between 1980 and 2000 was double the rate of non-Islamic (secular and religious) NGOs combined. (p.8). Major Transnational Islamic NGOs in Mali include Islamic African Relief Agency (Denmark); The Islamic American Relief Agency (USA); Muslim World League (Saudi Arabia)* World Islamic Call Society (Libya)* Organisation of Islamic Conference (Iran)*; International Islamic Charitable Foundation (Kuwait)* and Islamic Relief Worldwide. *(*) These inter-governmental organisations, provide material and ideological support to national and transnational Islamic NGOs. (Ibid: 20). Salih contrasts a secular-Islamic NGO, the Saudi International Islamic Relief Organisation (not in Mali) with a more “proactive” and conversion-oriented one, Lybian World Islamic Call Society. (19-22)
sanitation, shelter, legal assistance, advocacy, networking, relief, famine and food distribution in emergency operations.”  

With the Afro-Arab dialogue begun in the 1970s-1980s, Arab countries’ petro-dollars increased the influence Islamic organizations within and beyond typical development work to include Da’wa or Islamic call (equivalent to Christian evangelism), publishing, and broadcasting to address comprehensively the “failure of Western development model(s) with an Islamic civilising project.” This project is set forth in the context of a Westernized State sector, “considered by the Islamic movement as part of Western decadence.”

**Reclaiming key features of Islamic history**

Identity self-knowledge depends in part on the reclamation of key features and moments of Islamic history, especially pre-colonial history, in which indigenous and Islamic norms, practices, actors and institutions conflicted with and adapted to one another. As a model of African Islamic identity, then, this history is especially relevant to contemporary middle class Islamic actors’ resistance to perceived excesses of Westernization. Indeed, such actors characterize Islamic norms in Mali as challenging *both* pre-Islamic political traditions (e.g. status hierarchy, rule of might versus rule of laws, emancipation), and the ostensibly libertarian influences of post-colonial Westernization. Thus, for middle-class actors, Islam is progressive over pre-existing Malian political community traditions, and thus commensurate with the relatively ‘new’ notion of democracy.

Islam and contemporary democracy in Mali are thus represented as sharing an emancipatory mission and a consultative principle. Islam (Bam. *diiné*, religion from Arabic) came to fight against the troubles born of the hierarchy and rule of might of the pre-Islamic traditions in Mali (Bam. *laada*, custom), and in particular to fight against slavery (*jonya kélé*) and

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701 M. A. Mohamed Salih, “Islamic NGOs in Africa: The Promise and Peril of Islamic Voluntarism” OCCASIONAL PAPER Centre of African Studies University of Copenhagen The Netherlands 2002: 5
702 Ibid: 6
703 Ibid: 8
to seek and promote greater equality. Thus the schools, including madrasas, teach things that are not new, but that are contested and nuanced as they are translated across national languages, Arabic, and French. Somewhat contradictorily, just as Islam qualified indigenous practices historically, it serves as a model from which to qualify contemporary social-cultural and political norms and practices, which middle-class actors characterize as Western excesses.

A view held by a madrasa teacher shows that upper middle-class, Saudi-educated religious actors in urban Mali see the democracy inherent in Islam as based fundamentally in an anti-slave mentality and the struggle for freer minds, open to submission to Allah, and Muslim belief. Moreover, Islam’s consultative bent recast a previously ideological struggle (Bam. hakili kélé kélé) in terms of an openness for all to speak and give advice, and for any leader to seek out such consultation and advice before undertaking any significant project. The idioms of contesting and exchanging ideas are given Islamic, indigenous and Western content by middle-class actors, who stress, alternatively, consensus-building palaver (Bam. kòròfo), consulting experts of specialized religious knowledge, or freedom of expression as an individual liberty. Shura as a ruler’s consultation with appropriate experts on pertinent issues turns on (1) what matters demand such consultation, and (2) to whom should the ruler turn for advice. Given the links between the two, for example on matters of defense or health policy a ruler would consult different people. Indeed, to whom a ruler should turn is especially contentious in the philosophical tradition, including elders, notables, professional experts, the ‘ulama’ (religious teachers) or bureaucrats. Even more crucial is how binding the recommendations are on the ruler’s decisions. Moreover, historically, in the Middle East, the institution was never sustained and formalized, and most importantly, “the members of the shura were never representatives of the whole community.”

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704 Interview, Associate madrasa director #1Sep17, 17 September 2002 Bamako
705 It is crucial to stress, as Brenner does, “there is no political program specific to Islam” (L. Brenner, Introduction: essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement Islamique au Mali in B. Sanankoua et L. Brenner, ed., L'enseignement islamique au Mali, 1991: 10). Throughout history, Muslims have pursued various political options consistent with their understanding and practice of Islam.
As mentioned in Chapter Two, a range of privileges followed from adult males’ place in the religious hierarchy from Mohammed’s descendents (Chorfas) to returned pilgrims (Hadji) to the literate clergy (Marabouts). 707

In the Malian context accountability is structured through patrimonial, hierarchical social relations, that resist equalization and allow consensus to be ‘dictated’ as much as built, and then glossed as participatory and plural in the context of ostensible ‘consultation.’  The Palaver tree, as a localized form of quasi-shura, exemplifies the limitations on participation. In practice, those who participate are integrated into the discussion, by norms of representation according to association, clan, generation, or gender. Consequently, even if ‘everyone’ attends and is present as witnesses to the process, they are not equally engaged participants; the usual actors of significant social status fill this role, whether by habit of practice, ascribed entitlement, honor, prestige and knowledge.

Indeed, defending freedom of the press as central to democratic politics, the editor of a French-language, independent monthly newspaper comments on ostensibly anti-Muslim trends in public life and government. In doing so, the newspaper illustrates the view that far from being held in the esteem it should be in a majority Muslim country, Islam is not even accorded the minimum acknowledgement of being one perspective among many in an ostensibly pluralist, democratic polity. This reasoned discontent, however, often leads to exuberant rhetorical flourishes that hint at relationships more antagonistic than pluralistic. For example,

On Thursday 31 October 2002, the pagan catholic deputy Noumountié Togola of SADI [Party for African solidarity development and integration] risked provoking a great religious war in Mali one day. […] He] thinks that secularism [Fr. laïcité] prohibits the practice of invoking the name of Allah in Arabic. Mr. Deputy, if you are inclined to make war on Islam in the hemi-circle [Parliament], you will find practitioners of Islam everywhere. 708

Though a minority, such combative upper middle and upper class actors politicize Islam by drawing on the moral idioms common in public discourse and across social divisions. These idioms include those of moral indignation, of extending moral authority over both politics and society, and especially those related to gender issues and acculturative education. These idioms are at their most virulent when expressed by middle and upper class actors who express strongly anti-Western views, characterized by a constellation of anti-American, anti-European, and anti-Christian references.\textsuperscript{709} Of particular concern to this perspective is the role of foreign ruling and upper class actors, particularly from the United States and France, in influencing the subsequent political and social change in the context of fighting terrorism. A provocative editorial title links these issues: “\textit{Fight against terrorism or Islam? The West against Hajj}”\textsuperscript{710}

This view sees foreign influence excluding those who do not speak French, and considers leisure class and upper middle class Arabophones important resistance activists to plans elaborated by the Malian government collaborating with Western State and NGO actors. The ruling and upper class leaders who cooperate with the West, and also stress their Islamic practice, are perceived by upper middle and middle class actors as “Muslims in name only,” who cannot collaborate with practicing Muslims. A definite cultural divide exists within Islamic communities in Mali, and a few actors struggle to bridge this divide with the shared values of Islam and democratic modernity in Africa.\textsuperscript{711}

Transforming the content of the self and group, knowledge of one’s own is integrated into a common political culture, history, and values. The call to seek self-knowledge provides the ground for current conflicts over identity in the context of education, culture, norms and practices, and the moral economy of conservative political modernization simultaneous with

\textsuperscript{709} e.g. M. Diaby, \textit{Le Politicien Musulman}, #147 13 November - 13 December 2002.
\textsuperscript{711} Interview, Associate madrasa director #1Sep17, Bamako, 17 September 2002; While many citizens followed religious leaders’ call to support IBK, in the 2002 presidential elections, others were critical of Islamic electoral mobilization, such that opportunistic leaders not ‘real Muslims.’ Interview, High school teacher Jun24, 24 June 2002 Bamako
democratization as liberalization. Thus, overtly Islamic upper and middle class actors have various interests in contesting French-modeled education and Western acculturation from an explicitly Islamic standpoint. Thus we see an internal argument among the different ‘tendencies’ of Islamic, traditionalist and progressive to name only two, expressing ambivalence towards social transformation, transformation for which strategies of conservative modernization seek means by which changing economic relations remain compatible with the social standing with which they are integrated.

Because Islamic philosophical traditions on equality derive more from jurisprudence than political and social philosophy or ethics, this history may account for the primacy of brotherhood and equality in the texts, and legal practices of Islam being at odds with the unequal opportunities of social outcasts, or people of second-class status, including non-Muslims, women, and slaves. Islamic equality, then, in principle has been a fraternity of freeborn men.\(^{712}\)

The male-female dichotomy is most persistent, given that non-Muslims may convert, and slaves may be freed. Granted that women’s categorical inferiority within Islam may be the product of the historical context of its texts and leaders, rather than the moral precepts themselves, it is clear that there is little to challenge patriarchy within a generally more conservative Muslim context such as Mali. Reform-minded upper and middle class Malians have sought to keep religion in their private lives and seek progressive social change within the secular framework of the colonial French and post-colonial socialist idioms.

Indeed, “a tension exists between two tendencies in the message of Islam, namely, an ethical egalitarianism, which is a fundamental part of its broader spiritual message, and an advocacy of male dominance.”\(^{713}\) While equal before God, women are socially inferior to men.

\(^{712}\) Jahanbakhsh 2001: 32-33. Publicly Islam has no roles for women in affairs, but allows for private-realm influence often of great degree (Callaway and Creevey, 1994: 53)

\(^{713}\) Jahanbakhsh 2001: 39-40
Marginalized Islam

The general failures of the formal State-secular education system are conditioned by the general and persistent economic crisis in Mali. Religious education gains influence through this educational crisis by offering an alternative to the State secular system. The socio-economic context in which graduates seek work is also alternative to that of the Francophone-dominated bureaucracy and bourgeoisie. The implications for Muslim acculturation and citizenship identity are also crucial. The transnational politicization of Islam operating within Mali is opposed by upper middle and middle class Malian secularists and ruling and upper class State officials, who recognized in 1991 that although it was not yet developed in Mali, the development of ‘Islamic infrastructure’ showed that “Mali is not separate from international Muslim influences.”

For upper middle and middle-class actors, marginalization of Malian Islamic values in formal education signals political class actors’ abandonment of key cultural and spiritual elements of Malians’ individual and social development. Non-state upper-middle and upper class religious leaders reason that since Malians are mostly Muslim, then Islamic structures, especially educational and acculturative ones, should be better incorporated to the regime’s school system. The less explicit assumption is that once better integrated in the education system, Islamic actors’ influence in other realms, especially the State bureaucracy will follow. On a moral and ideological level, the moral principles that have their roots in Malian Islam are reserved for teaching in religious schools. The idea of integrating religious norms into moral and civic education has made politicians uneasy because of the increasing ideological, financial, cultural, and educational influence of organizations from Arabophone countries. Indeed, the ambivalence of upper middle, upper, and ruling class State actors towards Islam is also obvious in the citizenship project that glosses Islamic norms as part of a national Malian socio-cultural heritage, rather than an explicitly religious, transnational and linked to the Middle East. Local Islam and

714 L. Brenner, 1991: 4
its agents may thus be integrated with less contestation into the contemporary liberal-democratic legitimation project. Western-oriented secular upper class actors struggle with the moral legitimation of ‘good governance’ to establish the hegemony of liberalism with indigenous authority, while placating and marginalizing Islamic actors and elements of citizen identity.

Despite being marginalized from official citizenship scripts as expressed by ruling and upper class State actors and upper and lower middle class civil society actors (scripts through which these actors use indigenous norms to legitimate ‘good governance’), Islamic idioms and their proponents form an emerging and important dimension of citizenship identity in Malian political culture, with important regional differences. Thus, tensions exist between indigenous and Islamic elements of the (ostensible) Malian cultural advantages for democratic deepening. Ruling, upper and upper-middle class actors, who seek to merge both indigenous and Islamic idioms under the rubric of Mali’s national ‘cultural heritage,’ tend to neglect the elements’ contradictions. State and upper class secular civil society actors marginalize Islamic actors and idioms by stressing the ‘Malian-ness’ of social and norms and cultural practices that have important Islamic content. Indeed the contested content of self-knowledge is key.

For example, solidarity and mutual assistance are deemed essential virtues of Malian society. Furthermore, the zakat is described as the “poor person’s part of the wealthy’s excess [superflu du nanti],” so that “mutual assistance [entr’aide] is established by this charity.” When the month of Ramadan falls in and around October, Mali’s official “Solidarity Month,” how this virtue is enacted as a Muslim virtue is made all the more clear by linking Mali’s reputation as a land of “meeting, welcome, friendship and tolerance,” and the need “‘to rouse and consolidate national solidarity’” with the daily charity that is part of observing Ramadan. The official solidarity agenda begins by calling for a return to the values of sharing, concern for others, all

exemplary of “an essential virtue of our [Malian] society, which must translate into concrete actions for the most disadvantaged social strata.” Yet, while social solidarity has bases in indigenous and religious norms and practices, the official rhetoric during Solidarity Month minimizes any explicitly Muslim tone of such social solidarity.

**Counter-cultural Islamic leadership**

In their desire to eschew an explicitly Muslim gloss on norms and practices of Malian society and culture, State and secular civil society actors are depicted by upper middle class and upper class, nationally prominent Islamic opinion leaders (such as the Collective of Muslim Associations of Mali leaders Imam Mamoud Dicko and Imam Thierno Hady), as serving Western powers (esp. USA, France) and their corresponding Malian ruling and upper class actors, and marginalizing not only the mass of Mali’s people, but also the ‘counter-cultural’ Muslim leaders, who are ‘defending’ Islam. Following the intellectual leadership of upper and upper middle class Islamic leaders, middle class Muslims, including teachers in religious schools, emphasize neglect, betrayal, corruption, and moral lassitude, reinforcing idioms of conservatism. Moreover, for the middle class segment who succeed relative to their education, madrasa or advanced Islamic studies allow integration with traditional Muslim merchants and a younger generation of entrepreneurs, who have forsaken the route to the public sector, to pursue business with their elders.

Islamic leaders, upper-middle class actors who are supported by resources and ideologies from the Middle East and North Africa, often deploy ‘second class status’ idioms. Notwithstanding the rhetorical strategy, they also draw on the realities of Islam’s ‘second culture’

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719 Muslim intellectuals, however, are not always or necessarily Islamic activists.

status in the perspectives of Western-oriented upper-middle and upper class State actors linked to Western governments and NGOs. Against this neglect, Islamic actors, including the more strident, use Islamic idioms to invoke a return to virtue against the ascendant (neo)liberal project. Thus, nostalgic and conservative reins are fitted on a liberalizing political culture. The nostalgia of a lost identity stresses a cultural, religious and social artefact that has been buried from past flourishing to present decline and decay.

As an analytical entry point, the ‘return to virtue’ encompasses a range of moral recovery, securing social cohesion, and responses, especially by upper-middle and upper class Islamic actors, to political marginalization especially. Indeed, a relatively excluded and educated upper middle class minority deploy more radical Islamic political ethics to question the government’s record, and to challenge liberal democracy as a foreign mode of politics, while seeking to mobilize increasing numbers of disaffected, unemployed or underemployed urbanites, including young urban middle lower middle and lower class men especially.

As mentioned above, secularism in post-colonial Africa also shares in certain perceived failures of Westernization, modernization, and consumer materialism. Changes in religious schools’ organization follow a broad pattern towards equipping young lower middle and lower class Muslims (mostly men) to bring Islamic principles into political struggle. Islam in *madrasas* is being modernized, and oriented toward attempts to co-opt this religious political resource: an emerging group of modern, lower-to-middle middle class educated Muslims. Thus, youth leaders are educated in Muslim interest groups, and in the process help to politicize Islam. Both the cultural and political manifestations of the ‘regime-neglected Islam’ in Mali are important. As much as some Malians would agree to the socio-cultural and spiritual, and thus moral and civic

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Brenner “Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali” in Brenner, ed. *Muslim identity and social change in sub-Saharan Africa*, 1993: 2-3, 6, 8. The institutionalized marginality of youth within indigenous social structures of filial duty (compounded with a lack of employment opportunities, even for those with education or accreditation, can be circumvented in some measure by seeking religious education. Thus, young men especially might embark on a ‘parallel’ track of social mobility within a religious school community.
importance of Islamic norms, they would be quick to denounce the unprecedented politicizing use of Islam to attempt to mobilize voters in 2002. This qualification or resistance is indicative of religious tolerance as opposed to zeal, and is in contrast to what may be seen in other parts of Africa.

Seeing religious schools as alternatives to failed secular schools, pupils’ parents choose them with the conviction that youth should at least be morally educated if they cannot get much else out of State education. Moreover, parents’ choices for children’s education are thus conditioned by “societal and communitarian ‘forces’ (such as lineage or ethnic group affiliation of father’s occupation)” and moral considerations are “very relevant when parents evaluate various types of education.” Education is thus crucial to self-knowledge and identity. Indeed, the link between religion and education is central in Islam; Islamic education frames “knowledge as accountability to the past,” rather than of individual self-entitlement against the ostensible ignorance and stagnant intellect of one’s forebears. As mentioned in Chapter Two, educational differences affect class segmentation, qualify people’s access to the formal economy, and link actors to the State bureaucracy or to merchant enterprises. For some scholars, educational pluralism produces divisions that are among the most significant in Malian society.

**Religious Schools and “so many Muslim ideologies floating around”**

Since the 1991 democratic opening, Muslim associations have advanced their ideas through radio and cassettes to the point of almost seeming like quasi-electoral campaigns. The

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722 Interview, National election observer, 14 May 2002 Ségou. Interview, apprentice diviner, practicing Muslim, 25 June 2002, Bamako
723 This said, see note #1. The zeal, aggression, and incivility of Islamicist discourse in Mali seems to be increasing since I did my fieldwork in 2002, according to informal conversations with observers there up to August 2006. C.f. “Many [10+] die in Mali sectarian violence” Wednesday, 27 August, 2003 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3185635.stm Accessed 22/06/05

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Islamic question in this context, and specifically the problem of facilitating and encouraging madrasas students’ integration into the public school system, is over a decade old. The social, economic, and linguistic differences between the Arabic- and French-dominated systems reflect and reinforce socio-economic and political divisions. There is constant comparison in Mali society of these two systems, and the rise of madrasas coincides with the crisis of public schools. Indeed, the important social cohesion role that Wahhabism, for example, plays in a certain business and merchant communities in Mali combine engagement with Wahhabite Islam with more instrumental valuations of its potential material benefits. With the increasing influence of Arab-speaking NGO’s mentioned above as well as that of wealthy entrepreneurs, the influence shifts to include a harder line in terms of Islamicist ideology.

The issue still plagued the Education Minister, M. L. Traoré in 2002, who faced the ongoing challenges of an educational crisis and the criticism from Muslim leaders. Leaders such as Imam Mamoud Dicko, an executive member of Mali’s Islamic High Council, repeated the need discussed in 1991 for the government to face the problem of religious schools and their neglected pupils, by making them more a part of the education system. “At least 40% of all kids attend [Koranic schools]. So if the government doesn’t get involved, in this day when there are so many Muslim ideologies floating around, I think the government is making a very serious mistake by not taking charge of these schools.” In response, the Education Minister counters that Islamic leaders themselves should modernize and monitor religious schools, and combines recognition of the Muslim heritage with an apologia for the State’s impotence:

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729 Not only proponents of religious education improvement see the coincidence of educational crisis and the Islamic revival. Interview, retired education professional, 11 June 2002 Bamako. This respondent, retired from pedagogical development work at the National Education Ministry is characteristically ambivalent about the respect for the past and hopes for the future. He sees the French-style schools ideal for effective literacy, as was the experience of the educated class under late colonial rule; he also sees the insidious cultural affects of Francophone education, in particular its impact on village and family life, and its atheistic tendencies, which in turn foster Islamic educational revival.
It is tradition for children from Koranic schools to go to the streets for charity, to learn humility and modesty, [...] I’ll tell you the truth, I don’t see how the Ministry of Education, with all the problems we have already, can possibly deal with Koranic schools too. We don’t even know where they are.\textsuperscript{731}

Notwithstanding this eschewed responsibility by the Minister, the influence of Islamic education on the discourse and idioms of moral recovery in democratic politics is impossible to ignore in its broad criticisms of neo-liberalism’ impact on educational reform in Mali. Indeed, while the Education Minister’s comments indicate institutional limitations and stalled reform processes, Imam Dicko directly links these to the issue of norms and values to ‘ideologies.’ This is crucial, for it points to the growing influence of Arabophone countries’ resources in doing what the Malian state has been unable or unwilling to do for at least a decade. Thus, politicizing morality is set forth in tandem with moralizing politics. Moralizing and mobilizing converge in judgements of the failure of education and development, and specifically of the moral-religious neglect that must also be remedied. The divide in education is clearly moral, intellectual and ideological, and not merely a technical and bureaucratic problem of resource allocation and organizational management. Seeking self-knowledge also affects individuals’ identity as bearers of ideology, norms, and values.

Briefly, the educational legacies of Francophone secular and mission schools, and Arabophone religious schooling have produced in the general population the view that State education is a colonial legacy, and thus foreign, corrupting, immoral and a threat to established values and culture, both indigenous and Islamic, while it is embraced, if often reluctantly, by middle and upper classes as the vehicle for prosperity and influence in the post-colonial and independence eras.\textsuperscript{732}

Certainly, the degree of influence of Middle Eastern and North African upper and upper middle class actors in Mali is related to ideologies derived from Arabophone Islam. However,

this influence stems as much from Mali’s need for openness to Arabophone States’ and NGO’s aid and investment. Ignoring how aspects of the trans-national political economy of aid and investment may influence vocal members of the upper and upper-middle classes is wrong, but this should not lead observers to overestimate the potential threat of the ideological Arabophone influence in Mali. While the influence in Mali of upper middle class Arabophone NGO actors and upper class entrepreneurs is certainly increasing, the shift in this influence includes a harder ideological line. Nevertheless, Malians in general are not yet singularly committed enough to embrace any such ‘fundamentalism’ (Wahabbite or other) because they either have many ‘fundamentals’ already, with sources in the history of religious and cultural syncretism, or are materially interested in covering all the bases and alienating as few perspectives as possible. Mali should not be construed as being rife with Islamic chauvinistic or militant characteristics. No amount of Middle Eastern countries’ support and investment is worth alienating other sources of support. There are too many forces at work to rely exclusively on support from Muslim sources, let alone on wholly Wahabbite support. As relatively indigenized Islam resists more ideologically forceful tendencies that insist on being an exclusive site of Islamic authority and identity are qualified by the degree to which it supports social cohesion and mutual assistance for which the indigenized Islam has longstanding networks if not as significant financial resources. Supplementary to the view that “it is poverty that makes a bed for terrorism,” which in Mali would be expected to be articulated through Islamic groups, the same poverty such as it is in Mali calls forth as many forms of solidarity, cooperation, interconnection and mutual dependence; moreover, these are commensurate with preserving social cohesion.

733 Interview, European sociolinguistics researcher, 2 March 2002 Bamako.
734 Even so, this should be seen in the light of Ramadan-feast day vandalism of five bars/restaurants and the physical assault on prostitutes at one of them subsequent to the morning prayer of al-Fitr in quartier Magnambougou, Bamako. (ORTM televised journal 5 December 2002)
Moral Education, Moralizing Politics and Political Mobilization

If seeking knowledge of Muslim identity may serve as a bulwark against ‘toubabification,’ as mentioned above, then a moral and civic education that draws on Islamic principles and history in Mali is essential to building such a defence. At a more popular level than the institutions of State-society relations and its brokerage gambits, as Islamic faith in Mali becomes increasingly about representing conviction publicly as much as membership, “Muslim leaders who frame their political and social aspirations as a disengagement from immoral politics” and seek to disconnect Islam and politics to put “an end to politicking.” are those “most likely to win popular support.”

Indeed, political, or rather politicizing Islam is itself an object of the struggles and ‘social transformations’ throughout the post-1991 political apertura, social transformations that are also changing the relationship between religious and public life of both elite and mass populations. Social-moral Islam, an attempt at Islamic populism, acts precisely against opportunists’ exploitation of religion, which is also decried by critics of politicizing religion. Even middle class neighborhood-level leaders and lower-class urban rank-and-file supporters of RPM (Rally for Mali: whose leader, IBK was touted as the candidate for ‘Mali’s Muslim majority’ to support), have serious reservations about the use of religion to such political–electoral ends.

Moreover, while public opinion researchers doubt whether being Muslim “constitutes much of an obstacle to becoming a democrat,” they recognize that there are “distinctive political attitudes” that articulate citizenship identity consistent with Muslim norms and practices. From this viewpoint, the problem is less politicized Islam as politicking Islam. Furthermore,

737 Interview, party member and high school teacher, Rally for Mali (RPM), 25 June 2002
engagement rather than withdrawal seeks to correct the abuse of Islam in Malian politics. Clearly, in a Muslim society, Islam can and will influence political decisions and religious leaders have a role to play. This is consistent not only with Mali’s Islamic past, but also its indigenous norms, practices and institutions of consultation, adjudication, and decision-making. Thus Islam’s role in the public square represents not only the possibility, but also the fundamental importance of distinguishing, when possible, moral discourse and mobilizational Islam.

**Islamic idioms of citizen identity**

Before discussing the idioms of politicizing, mobilizational Islam, certain key features of a moral discourse must be detailed. In brief, Islamic idioms of citizen identity cast the widest net over idioms of action (expressing norms, enacting practices, and filling institutional frames) that have their acknowledged roots coming from Islam. They provide religious bases for social, political, and cultural norms and practices. It is important to situate Malian Islam in the context of West African Islam, and to distinguish its contemporary contours from those found in more frequently studied Islamic contexts.

Indeed, separating non-Islamic from Islamic religious bases presents some difficulty, given the syncretism of Islam and indigenous religious norms and practices in Mali; the levels of syncretism and tolerance for ‘deviations’ vary across the regions. Moreover, there are the questions related to categorization, whether self-identified or attached, even imposed, by others. The following terms help gloss these difficulties.

Considering “Islamic revival,” academics and analysts distinguish Sufism (especially “black African” forms: Fr. l’islam noir) from reformism or “Islamism,” with the broad characterizations of “tolerant indigenous (African) religion” on the one hand, and “a more

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739 C.f. Schaffer, 1998: 76-79. In Senegal, people distinguish potentially noble demokaraasi politics from opportunistic even deceptive politig in political and broader social contexts.

This distinction builds upon the reputation of indigenous Islam to be “more or less compatible with democratic change,” while ‘Islamism’ embodies “a political ideology proposing the alignment of political structures with religious structures [...] understood as inherently incompatible with—and indeed as a hostile alternative to—[Western forms of] democracy.”

Notwithstanding these analytical distinctions, however, there has been recently a certain blurring of the traditional Sufi and Islamist contours, thus highlighting the “limitations of the Sufi-Islamist dichotomy,” and showing the extent to which upper class and upper-middle class Francophone and *arabisant* actors draw on and reinterpret both traditions, and in particular how the historically dominant Sufi elements are being reinterpreted, even reinvented as ‘Sufi’ from an ‘Islamist’ standpoint, how Sufi and Islamist mutually borrow idioms from one another, and most importantly, how “a new respect for *arabisant* intellectuals —those with religious and Arabic education,” emerges.

Indeed, even from a slightly longer-term historical view, the 20th century emergence of Islamic fundamentalism in West Africa is an angry reaction against the degree of ‘irrelevance for modernity’ of Arabic literacy and links to Arabophone countries. A legacy of de-colonization, and of contemporary reconfiguration of Anglophone (U.S.) global influence raises questions whether “Islam’s tradition of [Arabic] literacy was simply not compatible with the requirements of the modern world.” The language and cultures contesting and adapting thus include the indigenous, Islamic, colonial, and neo-colonial.


742 ‘Arabization’—increasing knowledge of the Arabic language (for prayer, commerce, study, and communicating ideas)—should not necessarily be equated or conflated with Islamization. This is precisely the subject of debate and contestation, growing in Mali’s social, economic and political context since the mid-1980’s. L. Brenner “La culture arabo-islamique au Mali,” in R. Otayek, ed. in *Le radicalisme islamique au sud du Sahara: da’wa, arabisatoin et critique de l’occident*, 1993: 182, 187-88; 180ff.

743 L. A. Villalón, "Islamism in West Africa: Senegal" *African Studies Review* 47.2 (September 2004): quote 68; 69

Notwithstanding arabisant influence, there are important and influential strains of Islam in Mali that reject outright the necessity of knowing Arabic for the Muslim faith, and stress that there are important differences between Islamism and Arabism. Nevertheless, the as yet weak influence of Arabism should not be assumed to indicate similarly weak Islamism, given the importance of bilingual intelligentsia translating Arabic messages (from Koran or other media) into local languages. Beyond insisting on the minimum Surahs needed for effective daily prayer, this openness to national languages responds to the realities of Mali’s ethno-linguistic diversity and the great challenges of promoting literacy in languages largely disconnected from the majority’s daily life (Arabic and French). Moreover, it seeks to further the practice in Mali whereby marabouts translate the Koran for recitation during Ramadan by their congregations.

A functional categorization includes traditionalists organized into brotherhoods, (including followers of Sufi or mystical brotherhoods, mainly Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya dominant since the early 19th century). Rationalists “condemn radical reformist Islam and consider Islam as a personal religion and not as a social movement.” Reformists are “principally Sunni groups that seek to ‘purify’ Islam and return it to its literal reading of the ‘word,’” and reject both the legal schools and Sufi ‘deviations’. Over these internal divisions, ‘Islamism’ in this context encompasses “organized activity and/or a systematic thought process that strives to bring politics into line with Islamic precepts.”

On the important common grounds among such divisions, then, authentic and modern society is sought through struggles over Muslim identity “not rooted in ‘Western’ norms of ‘modernization’ but not limited by ‘non-Western’ norms” of traditional society.” Indeed, the

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745 Indeed, despite his less political vision of Islam, A. H. Bâ was a pioneer in getting the Koran translated into national languages.
746 Amadou Hampaté Bâ in Cissé, 1992: 191-92
prospect and impact of Islamic globalization, especially with the growing availability of satellite television from the Middle East, presents the conceptual and practical problems of grasping “a non-Western form of modernization that may well aspire to create an alternative globalization.”

Central in this modernization is an Islam that “creates a certain kind of individual and permits the individual to accumulate wealth. [...] within a legal and religious context that, in denying many their individual aspiration and even their exploitation, is quite different from that advocated by Western proponents of ‘human rights,’” especially for women.

**Family values, respect and obedience**

From the family to Koranic schools to *madrasas*, various levels of Islamic education and acculturation structure the Muslim aspect of Malians’ identity formation. The Muslim philosophy of education manifest in West Africa stresses human flourishing and “harmonious integration in to society or community,” as well as moral and social responsibility, respect and solidarity.

Indeed, as the student is “perceived as modeling clay that must be taught,” Muslim pedagogy and institutions have significantly influenced Malian society. Indeed, there are “multiple signs of the involvement of Islam in Mali’s social life. Islam takes the local colour. Islam integrates those behaviors that are not contradictory with its principles.”

With students who attain an advanced level of Islamic education, their fathers have taken pains to teach Islam within the family. “My father always taught in the family with reference to

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751 Charlick, 2004: 105. The impact of globalizing television and internet needs further study, to place its influence alongside that of cassette-tapes, and mosque preaching. Class and education predispositions to the expanding presence of Saudi satellite TV, even in smaller towns, are important considerations. A cooking show filmed in the Riyadh Hilton, hosted by a woman wearing (open face) *hijab*, gave the message: ‘good Muslims eat a good Ramadan breakfast,’ linking great wealth and religious rectitude. (Saudi satellite TV, Bandiagara, 29 October 2002)
752 Charlick, 2004: 106
754 Bà in Cissé, 1992: 190
755 Bà in Cissé, 1992: 191
Islam. […] Returning from the Mosque he would teach us the Koran and hadith until seven o’clock, and then go to work.”

This commitment to transmit Islam is shown by insistent counsel, recommending “prayer and respect of elders” and “to avoid bad company.”

On the other hand, punishment seeks to correct unwanted behavior: “My father treats me with brutality when I commit bad acts. He gives his all so that I will be a perfect man in the future. He wants me to obey all his orders.”

The important modeling aspect of Islamic acculturation is also emphasized, in which children are invited to participate with the father or mother in prayers and ablutions within the family home. For, “children also must learn to tolerate hardships for God and to submit themselves to religious discipline. Parents must take pains to educate the children, and to make them grow up in the shadow of Islam, imitating the prophet Mohammed (May Peace and Salvation be upon him).”

Indeed, within the lower-middle class families where some children pursue secondary Islamic education, the respect due to parents is emphasized as second only to the adoration due to God. Moreover, the link between respectfully attending to ritual observances and to parents’ instructions, on the one hand and the ‘democracy’ of community living is made without apparent need of explanation: “God says in the Koran: ‘Your God orders you to worship only him and to respect your parents.’ Islam is a democracy. It invites every man to live well in society.”

Here, as with indigenous idioms of membership in political community, the emphasis is on right living as dutiful, respectful and obedient. This conservative reading of the relationship

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758 Cissé, 1992: 198 cites M. L. H., 11th grade student at IIKBAA

759 Cissé, 1992: 199 cites L.D., 9th grade student medersa Sebil Salam (Markala). Indeed, the widespread practice among Malian house heads, especially the most vulnerable urban populations, to entrust some of their children to Koranic teachers for whom they must beg food and money in the streets, is seen simultaneously as a scourge and a resilient and important practice. (See L.Traoré quoted by Baxter below.)

760 Cissé, 1992: 201 cites A.K., 9th grade student medersa Sebil Salam (Markala). Emphasis added. The Surah the student likely has in mind is Luqmaan, (31) Ayah 14: “And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination.”
between Islam, acculturation, and socio-political life is not surprising. Indeed, in the realm of education and transmission of Islam, reproducing and conserving norms and practices is invariably central. The role of the oral tradition, the ‘recitation’ (Qu’ran), radio programs, and audio cassette tapes all exploit the tracks on which Islamic discussions, debates and preaching may operate parallel to the more obvious (to foreign observers) forms of dominant political discourse and popular culture. Indeed, in part because counter-hegemonic intellectuals “often have to begin in each generation all over again,”\textsuperscript{761} the relatively sudden changes in the Islamic—non-Islamic contours of Malian society may be increasingly striking.

The discourse of good morals, however, is not necessarily deployed for political mobilization. Conversely, in activist contexts, struggle, and resistance, the more progressive, even radical tenets may be deployed to frame the right life of Muslims in society. Politicizing Islam in Mali, its most visible proponents insist, is “not questioning the secular state or the tolerant Islam they preach in Mali,” but emphasizes that local needs and values should guide domestic politics, which is contrary to the legacy of leaders and policies “chosen to please the west.”\textsuperscript{762} Moreover, Malian Islam resists fundamentalist changes as much as it does ones towards more progressive and inclusive norms and practices.\textsuperscript{763}

The lessons learned link faith and patriotism, particularly in the context of service, to God, and to ones’ fellow citizens and Muslim brothers and sisters. Urban, madrasa students repeatedly emphasize this patriotic service in discussing their ambitions to be preachers, teachers, nurses, and professors, as well as obedient housewives. These are repeatedly framed as part of service to God and to the country.

\textsuperscript{762} J. Baxter, “Mali’s Muslim majority enters political fray,” BBC Online 22 April, 2002 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1939770.stm, accessed 23 March 2003
\textsuperscript{763} Interview, Canadian researcher on northern Mali, 5 March 2002 Bamako.
An aspiring preacher seeks to “call people to God, and fights for progress and prosperity of the country.”

An aspiring teacher wants to share “religious and scientific knowledge needed for life, for the country to advance as it should.”

An aspiring nurse wants to work “for the progress of the country and [her] Muslim brothers,” and an aspiring theology professor wants to show his teachers that he is courageous, to be “what his parents always wanted him to be,” and to serve his parents and his country. All stress that “the prophet Mohammed (May Peace and Salvation be upon him) said: ‘Love of one’s country [la patrie] is part of faith.’”

*Idioms of Politicizing Islam*

In Islamic politicization, as the mediation of ideological Islam through the material needs that religiously framed social solidarity seeks to address, we see repeated the combination of conservatism and tolerance that characterizes those indigenous citizen identity idioms that stress living in harmony and thus heavily mediating or stifling discord and dissent. In the sphere of Islamic idioms, however, seeking preservation of historic and heritage norms, or striving for ‘authenticity’, appeals simultaneously to the traditions of tolerance, and the more severe reactions of conservative reform, by which the ‘return to virtue’ becomes a struggle over authentic Muslim virtue: the terms of political and religious discourse come into question.

The contests over what are good morals in the post-*apertura* context of fostering good governance are essentially between a grounded sense of Malian dignity and rectitude, and the potential and shortcomings of ‘governance’ as a form of political and economic liberalization and modernization. The issue of ‘modernization’ is especially important when dealing with the conservative reviverist and reformist tendencies of Islam globally and locally. These Islamicizing

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764 Cissé, 1992: 202 cites O.K., 9th grade student at l'Institut Islamique Ahliyat Marzoukiat Kuweitiat (IIAMK Sansanding)

765 Cissé, 1992: 203 cites L. B., 9th grade student at IIAMK

766 Cissé, 1992: 203 cites L. B., 9th and S.T., 8th grade students at IIAMK. Perhaps the questions asked lead students to offer these responses. The way Muslim elites seek to link Islam and patriotism, then, is further illustrated. This, in part, distinguishes what Afrobarometer public opinion data in Mali suggests, that Muslim identity is insignificant to support for democracy, from the increasingly influential pedagogical and political project of Malian Muslim elites.

767 As mentioned, ‘politicizing Islam’ includes moral discourses; the converse is not necessarily the case.
and secularizing discourses share issues: unity and difference are central issues, and thus the imagining of an African as well as a Muslim Malian citizen identity with reference to a representation of past norms and practices.\(^{768}\)

In defining Islamic politics,

Islamic refers to “an effort [by Muslims] to draw meaning out of Islam applicable to problems of contemporary governance, society, and politics.” This definition captures some aspects of other related concepts such as political Islam, fundamentalism, revivalism, and renewal.\(^{769}\)

Notwithstanding that Islam in Mali is generally consistent with an accommodating secular State, religious toleration, and a pro-West stance, a growing minority of oppositional and increasingly politicizing Islamicist forces highlight some of the social divisions the liberal-democratic hegemony seeks to manage (esp. religious identity articulated through class, as well as type and level of education in different geographic settings) by contrasting ‘Malian Muslim’ norms with those from the West. Thus, a ‘contested tolerance’ along the Islamic—secular axis and between Islamic communities within Mali informs the mainstream discourse of democratization as conservative political modernization, and is emerging in the spaces among accommodation, negotiation, and opposition.

The contemporary re-invention of tradition to support the norms and institutions of democracy conceived minimally and procedurally has sidelined Islamic elements. The fervour of contemporary debates about an increasingly politicized Islam is part of the ongoing contest over Islamic norms and values, both among the doctrinally and class divided religious community leaders and between religious leaders and avowedly secular ruling class actors.

Although the direct political influence of Malians as Muslims is still relatively weak or at least unclear, certain religious leaders were, in the year running up to the 2002 Malian


Presidential elections, “making angry noises about foreign interference and calling the
government anti-religious.”

Their concerns are animated by reaction against Western influences seen to dominate many aspects of Malian policy, politics, social and religious affairs. They claim, however, to challenge neither the secular, republican state nor the historically tolerant Malian Islam that they themselves preach and defend. For them, however, “western praise of Mali’s democracy as an ‘African model’ means nothing.” and their criticisms of the government’s record on reducing poverty, corruption and improving educational standards in the 10 years since the democratic opening are taking on an increasingly threatening tone.

The angry tone of these ostensibly Muslim sentiments may have its roots as much in the internal power struggles within the Islamic leadership. Parallel to the vitriol and infighting among religious leaders, many Malian Muslims are uncomfortable with the increasing use of religion in electoral politics, given the constitutional prohibition of religiously based political parties.

It is thus important to see this definitely ascendant ‘strident Islam’ in Mali as an important but only one perspective in a more general dissatisfaction with crises and foreign influence in Mali’s domestic affairs. Although strident Islam is one way in which this dissatisfaction is articulated, it is as yet a counter-cultural movement against outside influences, not a counter-hegemonic bid likely to be effective in gaining more political power within or against the regime for certain Islamic leaders' agendas.


Secularity between moral and political Islam

It is crucial to distinguish, while appreciating the interconnection between moral and political tendencies of Islam in Mali, and the different class actors who support one, the other or both. A perspective of southern, urban, secular, upper and upper-middle class actors, on the relative importance of including spiritual authorities in public political debate within a secular republic such as Mali, begins by taking stock of the constitutional provisions for secularity mentioned above. While avoiding preferential treatment, exclusion, and discrimination, cooperation between the state or political formations and religious ones is possible, even desirable if done equitably. Malian tradition has been one of religiosity, and needs, instead of marginalization of religious voices in the name of secularism, “an institutional system to structure relations between the State and religion equally to the modern era, to maintain and preserve the secular Malian tradition of tolerance and religious liberty.”

This proposal seeks to right the balance of secular civil and religious civil society authorities’ input. Indeed, “[u]ntil a very recent date, religious forces, notably through their imams and priests, were never absent during important political debates and contests.” In the relative absence of clear content of secularity, upper and upper and lower-middle class Islamic actors find a space to debate the relationship between religious and secular norms, practices, and institutions in social and political spheres. Ultimately, the accommodating view, seeks “[T]he involvement of spiritual authority in political debate within limits” defined by the Constitution; involvement that, “far from diluting the secular character of our Republic, enlarges the debate to include an influential side of civil society.”

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775 N. Keita "Les forces religieuses et le débat politique dans une république laïque," Les Echos, 30 April 2002. Indeed, the Islamic High Council is one such institutional mechanism, which still struggles to establish itself and begin this task of linking State and religious civil society.
776 All above quotes Keita 2002.
777 N. Keita, 2002.
“Yes to secularity no to secularism”\textsuperscript{778}

This slogan of sorts, “Yes to secularity no to secularism,” (\textit{Oui à la laïcité non au laïcisme}) is instructive about the dynamics of accommodation and revival in Malian Islam. This view held by upper-middle class doctoral graduates, able to bridge norms and values from experience and education in Saudia Arabia, Kuwait, and Egypt or France, Russia, and Germany echoes even moderates’ assessment of accommodating Islam in Mali: that secular society and politics is not divorced from religiosity or religions as reference points for the ethical foundations of social policy decisions. On the one hand, secularity maintains the neutrality of the State to religious institutions.\textsuperscript{779}

Contrast with secularism: an exclusionary doctrine, clearly \textit{not} neutral and indeed openly hostile to religious opinions, which by “excluding religion from all public institutions,”\textsuperscript{780} may act in a punitive way against potentially legitimate forms of religious authority (moral, ethical) in civil society. Traces of this Islamicist idea date from the 1920s-1950s. Calls to affirm religious tolerance, while opposing enforced secularism, are informed by the long struggles in France over clericalism, from which \textit{laïcisme} carries strong connotations of ‘anti-clericalism’ or even atheism for people in West Africa. \textit{Laïcité}, on the other hand, connotes a more favorable pluralism. Secularization is “the change from a religious to a secular culture in which all the different

\textsuperscript{778}Belco Tamboura, “Exclusive Interview with Youssouf Hassane Diallo: Oui à la laïcité, non au laïcisme,” \textit{l’Observateur} #712, Friday 12 April 2002: 4-5. Diallo bridges the intellectual-moral and mobilizing aspects of politicizing Islam by stressing the importance place for Islam within the context of domestic pluralism, while connecting this domestic setting to a transnational centre (Saudi Arabia as Muslim heartland). His concern is moral and educational first, political and mobilizational second, in contrast to IBK who seeks the converse.

\textsuperscript{779}Le Trésor de la Langue Française v.10 Paris, Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 1983 : 911. C.f. A more expansive definition is commensurate with of Diallo’s insistence on equal encouragement rather than strict neutrality and withdrawal of the State’s role in religious institutions. Shared ‘secular’ community exists “outside of all political, philosophical, and religious creeds or of groups’ ties to such ideals.” \textit{Laïcité}, is “the cement capable of uniting people above and beyond the ideological barriers that might separate them.” \textit{Grand Dictionnaire Terminologique} (Office québécois de la langue française) http://w3.granddictionnaire.com/btml/frm_r_motclef/index1024_1.asp accessed 12/2/2004

\textsuperscript{780}Le Trésor de la Langue Française v.10, 1983 : 911.
spheres of life are autonomous; whereas secularism is an ideology, an attitude [...] that rejects spiritual values and the religious outlook.”^781

Committed Islamist presidential candidate and cosmopolitan intellectual, Youssouf Hassane Diallo explores this issue at length and demonstrates his understanding of the moderate position.

What is laïcité? According to the modern reading, which is not an ideological reading, laïcité signifies simply that the State must place itself at an equal distance from religions. But the problem today is in most of our countries, laïcité becomes instead laïcisme. That is to say, the opposite of religion. In strongly Muslim countries such as ours, I think that a wholly normal reading of laïcité is needed. That is to say that people have the latitude to flourish in their religion as they understand it. Without there being impediments from another segment of the population.^782

On this view secularity is indeed fine, if it is overseen vigilantly by religion, especially in the areas of family values and an anti-vice agenda opposing advertising cigarettes and selling alcohol in residential neighbourhoods. “Taking back the family to take back the nation” is central to the idioms of re-appropriating civilizational values, here more Muslim than indigenous, but in a certain sense merging the two, or rather defining Islam as part of the Malian civilizational legacy in tandem with indigenous norms and practices. Indeed, the call for a return to virtue and Muslim values makes explicit the need to educate (Fr. former) Malians “in keeping with their culture, without misgivings, to re-learn their identity, their history, and their capacities.”^783 The legacy of men of science is that of builders of culture, of civilizational values and customs.

In fact, this historiography is at the forefront of both indigenous and Islamic return to virtue idioms. In the Islamic ones, however, this recollection of legacies and heritage of a past civilization is most pronounced, as these idioms draw on a rich corpus of oral and written

^782 Diallo in Tamboura, 12 April 2002: 4
literature. Moreover, a ‘civilizing mission’ in the advent of Islam in West Africa, provides an important substratum of Malian language, culture, and socio-political membership and action. The history and theory of politics in Africa include Islamic referents that reveal the colonial and post-independence legacies by which the State was set forth as the pre-eminent, omnicompetent moral authority, as well as the bureaucratic-administrative power. In reaction and resistance to making the State absolute, State-religion dynamics engendered a relativization of State sovereignty and religious moral authority that sought to erase dissent and to dictate, rather than develop political obligation.

Thus, the impossibility of integrating these ‘duelling absolutes’ recommends complementarity, as commensurate with the historic pluralism of the region. The practical failings of the secular State call its moral authority into question. The risk in other African contexts, where there is a certain capture by religious leaders of State politics that then elide religious doctrine and political practice, is not Mali’s situation. Complementarity and accommodation are part of the syncretic and tolerant traditions of indigenous and Muslim religion, potential resources for re-inventing the pluralist tradition that allowed for Islam’s historic success in West Africa.  

Although religion should not be simply equated with society, the two are very much interconnected in Mali, and thus socio-political norms and practices were readily able to accommodate elements of an Islamic blueprint for society. To be effective, then, political ideology must draw on norms, practices and idioms of such a religious blueprint, in order to give politics some of the depth and breadth of the religious mandate. The resulting tensions and struggles show the limits of political sovereignty as an exclusive ‘value-centre’ for people’s lives and relationships. Ruling and upper class Malian State actors seek to frustrate or constrain rather than cooperate with religious actors in civil society, and defend the State’s omnicompetent role under an overstated ‘leader-father figure’ principle. Eliding and confounding religion as a State

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784 Sanneh, 1997: 186-87, 202
idea or the State as a religious idea, risks having the same result: reproducing a politics of secular or religious absolutes.\footnote{Sanneh, 1997: 188-89, 192.}

‘Complementarity,’ rather, by which “political and religious institutions play complementary roles in the pursuit of human welfare,”\footnote{J. Kelsay, “Civil Society and Government in Islam,” in S. H. Hashmi, ed. *Islamic political Ethics*, Princeton UP, 2002: 8. “Complementarity does not indicate identity, however. Indeed, it sets up a certain set of tension, as the humans beings engaged with each type of institution attempt to carry out their assigned tasks.”} is essential to the relationship between civil society and the State in Mali. Consequently, in an ‘Islamic setting’, complementarity “implies some sort of established status for Islam.”\footnote{J. Kelsay, ibid.: 31 (quote), 30, 3ff} While emphasizing the importance of secularity, an Islamic leader such as Diallo responds to questions about the normalcy of Muslims “thinking more and more that their voice will count in the conduct of the country’s affairs,” and objects to the ‘secondary’ status of Islam in public life:

What is not at all normal is that Muslims feel that they are separated from decision-making. That Muslims, in a Muslim country feel frustrated because their concerns are not taken into account, that is not normal. What would be normal is that, in a country like Mali, a Muslim country, a democratic country, all citizens be at the same level in the case of rights and duties. Whether Muslim, Christian or animist and whatever your social status, no one should feel marginalized.\footnote{Belco Tamboura, 12 April 2002: 4}

Indeed, evidence supports this marginalized status. “Muslims are consistently less likely than non-Muslims to participate” in aspects of the political process other than voting.” Moreover, this disengagement “seems to bespeak a political detachment among followers of Islam from anything other than the most rudimentary aspects of citizenship.”\footnote{Afrobarometer, 2002: 200}

Bridging the abstract level and concrete application of ‘secularism and secularity’ is the concern in public discourse of politicizing Islam, with referents also in the ‘private’ realm, given the amount of attention to the reconsideration of the family law. Indeed, as a presidential candidate, Diallo sought to distinguish himself from the others by “the absolute priority that I
place on the rehabilitation of our values.\textsuperscript{790} Notwithstanding the rhetoric of this pre-eminent preoccupation, the ‘Mali’s core values’ and ‘return to virtue’ idioms were common among presidential candidates in 2002, whether they carried expressed Islamic content or not. Moreover, given the opposition mounted in reaction to the governments of Konaré (1992-2002), and the role of IBK as the centre around which such opposition sought to gather (as the ‘heart of ADEMA vs. Konaré as the ‘head’), it is clear that, at least partly, the conservative rhetoric of family values frames reaction against the ruling party’s legacies and perceived failures (e.g. job-creation problems, education crises). Indeed, in common with trends in Islamic elsewhere, which suggest the cosmopolitanism of Mali’s Islamicist leaders, Diallo emphasizes pluralism.

{[I]t is time to allow everyone to express themselves, for everyone to propose something, that no idea, no opinion be occluded. This indeed is the rule of democracy, the rule of plurality. This is why I say we must mutually tolerate one another.}\textsuperscript{791}

**The 2002 elections: the Collectif phenomenon**

The general patterns noted above are exemplified in the dynamics of Mali’s 2002 presidential elections. Since the 2002 election period attempt by the *Collectif of Mali’s Muslim Associations* to mobilize voters, there is increasing concern with and interest in, the growing role of Islamic opinion leaders in Malian public life. The *Collectif* proposed a ‘platform’ to whichever candidate might take seriously the calls to re-moralize politics. This platform included proposals to better integrate religious schools, close bars during Ramadan, and remove brothels from residential neighbourhoods, all with a view of improving public morality.\textsuperscript{792} The press, depending on its sympathies, reported either sympathetically on this form of religious politicization, treated the Islamists as outsider-pretenders rather than credible contenders, or wanted the Collectif to have done even more. For example, *Nouvel Horizon*, an independent paper sympathetic to the

\textsuperscript{790} Belco Tamboura, 12 April 2002: 4
\textsuperscript{791} Belco Tamboura, 12 April 2002: 4
\textsuperscript{792} Thus, we see a convergence on candidate support among agents of ‘traditional’ and reformist Islam in Mali.
Islamists, questions the wisdom within the Collectif of ultimately supporting the mainstream Ibrahim Boubacar Keita (IBK) over other candidates more deeply embedded in Muslim culture and practice (crucially, more reformist-Islamist than traditional).\textsuperscript{793}

The involvement of cultural organizations and unions in Mali’s political life signals important developments in the democratic activity of civil society. Given the recent, unprecedented role of these organizations, the Collectif in particular is setting the tone of non-governmental discourse and power to influence the government.\textsuperscript{794} Thus, political contours are redefined by the interplay between these socio-political entities and the constituted power—a familiar type of ruler-ship in Mali: the leader and cadres working with and reconciling social groupings constituted through processes parallel or alternative to party formation, and even part of institutionalized interfaces between influential groups and the State bureaucracy.

\textbf{The 2002 elections: the IBK phenomenon}

Mohamedoun Ould Cheick Hammahoullah, Cherif of Nioro du Sahel fulfilled the Collectif’s instruction (Fr. consigne) by naming the preferred candidate. This example importantly bridges moral and mobilizing Islam, and suggests the shifting dynamics of engagement and disengagement with formal politics:

Ibrahim Boubacar KEITA is a blessed child of God who has good judgement, a good sense of responsibility, honour and of human respect. If I were to have entered politics, I would have taken the RPM membership card. Nevertheless, I instantly invite all my disciples, adepts and sympathizers residing in Nioro and elsewhere to vote for IBK and to be with him, for better and for worse.\textsuperscript{795}

The negative public reaction to politicized Islam in 2002 was complex. It stemmed in part from outright rejection of opportunistic political use of religious adherence, but also from the

\textsuperscript{794} Dramane Aliou Koné “The pressure of associations and unions: the next government threatened by perpetual blackmail” Nouvel Horizon #1896 25 April 2002: 3
\textsuperscript{795} Info Mali 12 April; 2002, : [8] ; the back page advertisement features a photo of Mohamedoun Ould Cheick Hammahoullah, Cherif of Nioro du Sahel listening to IBK, and has the caption below it. Nioro du Sahel was the heart of the Hammalist Islam in Mali and the region, and of pre-independence tensions between Hammalite (dissident/reformist Tidjani) and mainstream Tidjani Muslims.
type of use that the upper- and mid-middle class actors made. Thus, negative reaction by lower-middle and lower class actors was to both the arrogant attempt and the unfortunate failure. The significant Wahabbi influence (which is based in doctrinal and class dynamics) in the Collectif leadership combined with the reaction of the Muslim community in general to being told how to vote: the support for manifesto points presented to presidential candidates did not necessarily translate into heeding the instruction to support IBK. This divided the Collectif membership.  

The instruction also created problems because it departed from Malians’ experience of Muslim religious leaders preaching truth and patience, and above all avoiding sectarian problems in the public sphere. Public opinion is still adjusting to the new generation of upper class and upper-middle class actors, university-educated and more politicized, who are all now part of the religious leadership. These actors insist that although political parties are not based on religion, as the Malian constitution sets forth, no stratum is legitimately told to stay out of public, political debate. Furthermore, it is important to see the ambivalent reaction to this message: in terms of mobilizing support and provoking a backlash, showing that the Collectif cannot credibly speak for or to Mali’s ‘Muslim majority’.  

Nevertheless, the failed instruction might be read as follows: (1) the Collectif leaders are not representative; (2) although the Muslim vote was mobilized qua Muslim, it split the vote among the regional and adherent bases of the various explicitly Muslim candidates, and the different tendencies of Islam they represent. These interpretations highlight the question of the Islamic leaders’ relative representativeness of a mass base. Most importantly, notwithstanding their strident public discourse and performances, the intégristes, are minority not majority

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796 Interview, J. Baxter, BBC correspondent, 9 May 2002. At the Collectif meeting (7 April 2002) there were more veiled women than Baxter had ever seen in six years in Mali, an unusual manifestation in Bamako.
797 J. Baxter, "Mali's Muslim majority enters political fray" BBC Online, Monday, 22 April 2002 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/1939770.stm, accessed 3/23/2003. At a meeting of “Muslims for massive participation in the 2002 Elections,” Palais de la Culture, Bamako, Mali, 7 March 2002, posters hung about the meeting hall, which said, among other things, “We condemn all forms of perdition and socio-cultural deviation.”. The hall was full of men—the women wearing (open face) hijab and even some chador (eyes only uncovered) were in the yard outside, listening on loudspeakers.
players. They are few, and mobilize a small proportion of Malians under their banner. Also instructive is their comfort working within civil society’s institutions and discourses, despite their problematic and qualified posture of ideological antipathy to current State-society relations, norms, and practices.

The bias of Western-oriented upper and lower middle class NGO and State actors, and that of upper middle class leaders of “influential lineages of religious specialists,” tends to exaggerate the intégristes fundamentalist threats to secular politics. The corrective to this view is not, however, simply minimizing the threat, but rather to nuance the complexities of the influence of these actors, norms, and practices. To simply minimize the threat would leave little room for more nuance in assessing political Islam in Mali, situated in “social transformations and on a political situation characterized by the failure of the state to capture the allegiance of its citizens to the nation.” Consequently, multiple identities are in flux in the ongoing process of citizenship formation and democratic deepening.

The division that the support of IBK wrought within the Collectif informs the question of Islamic ‘authenticity.’ Authenticity discourses rest not only on the rectitude of particular individuals, but also their perceived connection to the mass base, with the understanding that the mass base (deepest Mali) is both the bearer of most authentic Islam, but also of democratic-populist legitimacy, against that of either the non-Muslim, non-practicing, or –most interestingly– Muslim leaders of questionable moral fibre. For example, a journalist sympathetic to another Islamicist candidate for president insists “[t]o say that Ibrahim Boubacar Keita is not a saint would be a euphemism,” and bemoans the decision of the Collectif’s leaders to back IBK: “[b]ut it seems that this aspect was not taken into account in the Collectif bureau’s deliberations.” Konté goes so far as to question the authenticity of Keita’s professions of faith, “[c]an we therefore

799 D. E. Schulz, 2004: 2
defend the truth with lies?’ Indeed, the corpulent Keita is known for peppering his discourse liberally with Arabic phrases and Koranic verses, benedictions and invocations, on the one hand, and for drinking heavily in private, on the other. His reputation for extra-marital relations is less widely or openly discussed, though the link between alcohol consumption and prostitution is both real and opportunistically exaggerated in morally conservative Islamicist discourse.

Furthermore, idioms of ‘decadent elites’ are present and varyingly strong across the political landscape, and across key social divisions and the urban-rural split. Challenging the claims about IBK, a lower-middle class elder expresses the ideal that many Malians see IBK as a politician who personally senses the “loss of moral moorings that preys on Mali, this country of Muslims.”

Further, we know IBK, who governed this country [as Prime Minister Feb 1994–2000], and we know of what he is capable. Considering our concerns, he already knows the sickness that putrefies our country. We only want a just, moralized society where life is good, with dignified wives and children who understand true family values in a country of Muslims.

With this quote, the IBK ‘phenomenon’ in 2002 is a good illustration of the range and complexity of the return to virtue trope in (1) elite political behaviour, (2) popular anxieties about disorder (whether violent, moral, or social), and (3) the need to get ‘back on track’ of moral discipline and social order in the broader context of indigenous and Islamic modes of patriarchy. More than any politician with similar influence and support, IBK deploys indigenous and Islamic idioms of action, and represents this by his rich traditional-Islamic dress when in public. His


801 S. Haidara, “IBK and the Muslims: beneath the idyll” L’Observateur #718 2 May 2002: 2

802 Sidy Koné cited in S. Haidara, 2002: 2. Emphasis added. IBK is a moderate who bridged the morals discourse and the government’s good governance commitments as former Prime Minister, and now Parliament Speaker.
electoral slogans more than the other ‘contenders’ relied on references to the centrality of God in guiding his social project, and thus—and this extension is important—the suggestion that his supporters be similarly guided by God and their conscience to support his candidacy. Competition among certain presidential candidates (and the reflection of these contests among party rank-and-file and the political engaged more generally) runs along two axes: effective leadership (Bam. mogotigiya) and truth-telling (kankelentigiya). IBK went furthest (again among the contenders) in claiming submission to God as his source of these governing qualities. Moreover, IBK’s self-styling points to two supposed character traits of the historic Mandé leaders and nobility (Keïta clan): a keen desire for power, and the long-view, big-picture vision of a genuine statesman, rather than a mere opportunistic politician. Indeed, IBK’s persona includes indigenous and Islamic idioms in tandem, to support political action, and the commensurate formation of citizen identity.

CONCLUSION: Seeking Moral Recovery and Social Cohesion

Islamic practice in Mali is framed by Malians, ranging from members of a cosmopolitan, ruling class to upper class to upper-middle class managers and professionals, to (lower) middle class precarious workers and peasant farmers, to express ambivalence about Mali’s Islamic socio-cultural heritage, and especially about Arabophone influence in Malian society, culture and political economy. Moreover, this ambivalence points to the resilience of indigenous non-Islamic norms and practices in resisting and mediating introduced ones, whether historical or

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803 Portion of the popular vote, IBK =21,04%. Other more overtly Islamicist candidates ran for president, but garnered no more than 1% of the votes each (with the exception of Mountaga Tall, 3,86%), and are more instructive as to the range rather than the mainstream of Islamic political idioms.

804 Election posters, Quartier Mali/Torokorobougou, Bamako, April 2002: “God and my conscience.”

805 In the oral tradition Sundjata Keïta’s mode of dress changes from that of the bush-hunter-magician (bogolan-finí) to those of the urban “embroidered robes of the town” (duloki-ba). This change not only contrasts the chaotic power of the hunter-sorcerer with the calm order of family and village stability, but also clearly reflects Islamic influence.

806 Interview, small holding farmer, Small holding farmer, Jul15, Koniobla, 14 July 2002; Interview Small holding farmer, Jul28, Koniobla, 28 July 2002; Senior NGO executive Oct14, 14 October 2002
contemporary, and to translate those idioms into other socio-cultural forms. Thus the reality and representations of the benefits of historical practices are roots for the present and future.

Impoverishment as it is in Mali calls forth as many forms of solidarity, cooperation, interconnection and mutual dependence; these are commensurate with preserving social cohesion. Indeed, *le social* is an aspect of social cohesion and unity, and the background against which to see the reality and threat of eroding common causes, Islamicizing politics is an attempt, on the one hand, to draw the thread of common Muslim heritage into the call for a ‘return to virtue,’ and play up the history of Mali’s Islamic unity and membership in the global ‘umma. On the other hand, there are attempts by certain individuals to deploy idioms of religiosity to paint themselves, and their followers as more Muslim than others, bearers of a greater or purer religiosity.

As important as the religious dynamics of community authority and identity are the multiple sites of moral authority and identity. To exploit the importance of religious institutions to local populations’ material needs, administrative reform (including decentralization) does address the “role of religious organizations to aid the state in decentralization,” while recognizing religion less for its spiritual content than “as part of the global–local political economy.” Indeed, the multiple sites of community and identity are forms of social organization that are the historical legacies of different periods of Islamicization. Key in this history is not only the predominant past political forms, but also how subsequent appreciations and interpretations of these help shape present-day notions about the cultural roots of contemporary politics.

Concrete government failures that exacerbate economic vulnerability and educational crisis are moral failures. Reaction and threatening tone are framed as moral; to correct or avoid

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807 Prof. Thiam, Interview on Radio Klédu, Bamako, 12:45pm 10 May 2002. Thiam’s remarks attempt to correct the impression that the Collectif was tantamount to a religious political party, which are prohibited by the Malian constitution, and stressed that even in a secular republic no stratum is legitimately excluded from public, political debate, including religious leaders and adherents.


crisis needs a return to disappearing standards of moral discipline and social cohesion. Given the overall tenor of conservative reaction to the real and perceived threats of social dislocation occurring in Mali’s political liberalization moment since 1991, Islam is an important means for articulating the related anxieties, and yet is still too contested and divided to press forward effectively its particular forms of social, cultural, and political renewal. The links between Islam as a resource of moral education and political mobilization in Mali bear close attention, while the distinct realms and actors involved in each of these aspects should never be uncritically collapsed together.

As we have seen, authenticity, self-knowledge, and conservative revival are integral to Islam’s roles in citizen identity formation in Mali; these roles are exemplified and framed by calls for a ‘return to virtue.’ This political project challenges and engages the emerging and ostensibly dominant democratic values and the civic acculturation commensurate with liberal-democratic deepening. Indeed, struggles over moral accountability, among the range of upper-middle class and mid-middle class actors in the secular State and in religious civil societies, are integral to citizen identity formation. Islamic identity idioms are resources that various actors use to challenge, adopt, adapt to, and negotiate the burdens and benefits of liberal-democratic norms and practices. Different actors seek dominance or inclusion by deploying Islamic discourses. Moreover, the issue of authenticity, though certainly not exclusive to Islamic idioms, is more explicitly politicized in their Islamic modes, and is produced along the axes of unity and division within Mali’s Muslim population. The focus is especially on issues of education and acculturation in the contexts of family and community norms and practices, especially communitarian norms clustered around respect, obedience, and deference to authority.

Given such ideological struggles among religious leaders, attempts ‘to capture hearts and minds’ to support a more frankly political Islam in Mali walk a difficult terrain of idioms and norms between a resolute pride in Mali’s Muslim civilizational or national values, and the acknowledgement of past, present, and future influences from upper class and upper-middle class
actors and norms from the Arabophone Middle East and North Africa. The attempted link through these complexities, community unity and divisions, struggles over authenticity and entitlements of representation, local autonomy and global interdependence, is that of returning to oneself: reclaiming the pride of the anti-colonial emancipation and nationalist struggles. In this, the democratic *apertura* seems to offer the possibility of a ‘second independence’, not merely from the decades of post-colonial authoritarianism, but also from the reinvigorated neo-colonialism of the post-Cold War era. Indeed, a ‘Malian nationalist’ gloss on Islamic norms and practices draws on the long-term integration of Islamic and indigenous ideas and idioms. In the face of these issues, certainly, the potential for vibrant politics in Mali will work at the contradictions between tolerance for pluralism, on the one hand, and the deeply rooted struggles for practical authenticity in national citizen identity and political membership.

Finally, without a more grounded sense of embedded political membership and identity, the merely procedural democratic project remains vulnerable to competition from religiously based social and political movements. Where hierarchy, role, status position and the attendant duties and entitlements are fundamental socio-cultural norms and practices, and based on spiritual leadership and religious knowledge, Mali’s improved post-1991 record for freedoms of conscience and expression can be represented as part of the excess of liberty; taken over from the decadent West (Europe and North America) without care or critique. Crucial in Mali’s different settings (between North and South, rural and urban) is the relative degree of ‘contested tolerance’ and accommodation between religious and secular norms and values. If in the rural context of citizen traditions and regime concepts people perceive mainly a surfeit of democracy’s excesses, the urban context centers on the terms of practical activism versus civic duty, or of opposition versus loyalty, as structured by relations of presumed deference to authority. It is important to note that it is especially in urban contexts, where the longer history of Islamic influence grew out of the economic influence and knowledge of Muslim merchant class, Islamic idioms and agents are increasingly coherent as politicized forces. Even in the most harmonious accommodation of
religious and secular principles of politics and public space, Islamic idioms and agents represent 
the inexorable need to moralize politics, not simply make it tolerably linked to existing norms and 
practices. The Islamic challenge to merely procedural democracy in Mali, then, turns on the 
ethical content of the institutions. Islam is being used publicly to set forth in the strongest terms 
the moral and socio-cultural (as distinct from and complementary to institutional) problems of 
democratic deepening.
Chapter Six
Western perspectives on citizenship: rounding the contours of hegemony

In this chapter, I will discuss the Western elements of hegemonic conflict over authority, legitimacy, and membership in political community, while reconstructing the interfaces among ‘indigenous’, ‘Islamic,’ and ‘Western’ elements as well as recognizing the heterogeneity of each. From this reconstruction, I will discuss how membership in political community is a matrix of embedded identities, each claiming moral authority with which to overrule the others, but none of them ever being forever the ‘court of last appeal.’ I will further show how neo-liberal democratization and the hegemonic project of conservative modernization highlight the social cleavages in contemporary Mali, where the sense of the present and aspirations for the future are based on understandings and idealizations of the past.

Ideological conservatism must be seen in the context not merely of consensus-seeking that stifles pluralism, but also of a consensus-seeking political culture that faces real and perceived threats (of division, conflict, and social decay) to emerging middle class segment actors, and the values they bear. A relative convergence of outlook against the dictatorship subsequently changed to ideological divergence, prompting the specifically democratic legitimation phase of the ruling class’ hegemonic attempts to manage social divisions. Upper class actors are seeking to unify the ruling class, while upper-middle class actors are seeking to improve and consolidate their position in relation to the ruling class.

The ruling class’ hegemonic success depends in part on the sense of vulnerability of the middle class segments, and the real vulnerability of the mass population into which middle class segments fear to slide. Indeed, the ideological homogenization of middle-class segments is part of the hegemonic struggle to exploit the continuities between minimal democracy and conservative indigenous socio-political norms and practices. Moreover, similar to that during the socialist and post-socialist periods, citizen identity formation reproduces conservative capitalist modernization
by framing existing socio-cultural conditions as ripe for transformation (then socialist, today democratic). The democratizing state in Mali shares this paradoxical outlook on modernity and reinventing tradition with the authoritarian State, whose role was “to sweep away the last vestiges of the traditional order […] and to attack [the people’s] most ancient beliefs and practices.”

The divisions and conflicts within the ruling class, as much as more general social divisions, point to the artificiality or pretence of political cohesion under the 1990’s ruling party ADEMA, and the ongoing difficulties for genuine pluralism to emerge from the democratic apertura. For example, while ADEMA might stress ‘consensus-building’ in the face of increasing party factionalizing in 2002, the ‘Citizens’ Movement’ support for President ATT has been characterized and defended by sympathizers (and decried by detractors) as an expression of atypical, particularly African democracy, distinct from Western-style pluralism.

In brief, whoever speaks of democracy must speak of pluralism. Thus to ask what ‘democracy,’ can mean (to whom), is to ask what ‘pluralism’ can mean (to whom). Pluralism founded on notions of the aggregate of autonomous individual actors is unsatisfactory, and ultimately insufficient to analyze and assess the scope and limitations of participatory politics in Mali. Conversely, the apologia for ‘African style’ democracy in which ‘consensus’ (elite led) is preferred to pluralistic ideological and political contest is also unsatisfactory. Thus, a middle term

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is needed between an enthusiastic support of liberal citizen identity and the elite led appropriation of ostensibly ‘African’ modes of consensus building to silence and marginalize dissent.

Fundamentally, the fear of conflict-prone divisions (fear that affects local and foreign actors alike) reinforces the conservative tendencies towards preemptive consensus and away from ideological heterogeneity. The unity and solidarity idioms reproduce the unitary discourse of the Traoré regime, especially its later and last days, when it faced the pressures for multipartyism – which was 1) an upper-middle-class led movement for better material conditions and a more expanded, bourgeois ruling class against the predatory, military autocracy, with links to 2) popular agitation for social and cultural rights of a more pluralist social democracy.

Urbanization continues to reflect and intensify the social cleavages between those linked to the State and the those not linked; a gradually cohering dominant class is thus able to exploit the features of electoral politics and administrative decentralization to continue to foster personalized, ‘consensus’ politics hostile to dissent and opposition. Indeed, devolution imparts a limited set of highly circumscribed powers onto new local authorities, and those powers, in the name of participation and decentralization, are upwardly accountable to the state, rather than being downwardly accountable to local populations; they administer rather than enfranchise.

In this context of ruling class actors seeking unity and consensus, idioms of potential resistance (e.g. dissent, opposition) are marginalized through the moral and political idioms with which relatively cosmopolitan upper class actors represent the democratization trajectory of the nation-State. The requisite patriotism and nationalism further requires conservatism (of loyal service, and a certain tolerance for authoritarianism), which is represented as part of the compatibility of democracy and indigenous norms and practices. Conversely, this conservatism

is also represented as demanding popular sacrifice for modernization and overturning of traditional norms incompatible with further global economic integration, growth, and development. As Gramsci says on nationalism, patriotism and hegemony,

[T]he particular form in which the hegemonic ethico-political element presents itself in the life of the state and the country is ‘patriotism’ and ‘nationalism’, which is ‘popular religion,’ that is to say it is the link by means of which the unity of leaders and led is effected.

And further,

[T]he dominant class must have been capable of articulating to its hegemonic principle all the national-popular ideological elements, since it is only if this happens that it [the class] appears as the representative of the general interest.  

Vestiges of progressive or radical politics from the anti-colonial or anti-dictatorship struggles (1960s and 1980-90s) that might question a neo-liberal trajectory are either silenced, marginalized, or normalized into a liberal-procedural, minimal democracy. Thus, democratic deepening is consistent with authoritarian, communitarian, and hierarchical social and political norms and practices, which combine to mediate the flourishing of civil society within the discourse of moral governance.

General Elections Elected a General

Subsequent to ATT’s (Amadou Toumani Touré) election, some observers at the time hoped that the defeat of Cissé (official ADEMA candidate) would force the party-of-State to recognize its disconnection from the general population, and retool for better party cohesion and relevance to the electorate. Moreover, an elected general (though ‘anticipating retirement’) winning with 13% of the electorate signalled serious, unresolved problems, even profound crisis, in the historical party of government (ADEMA) and more generally in the reproduction of the political class. Consistent with the procedural-liberal gains against the earlier predatory autocracy, and

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815 Interview, University professor 5 October 2002, Bamako. Despite this, however, the relative tranquility of the vote, and the apparent vigilance of the Constitutional Court in rejecting over 28% of the ballots cast due to irregularities on vote day and the process of vote centralization, has given the Presidential elections of 2002 the tenor of a technical success, or at least of an improvement over the electoral debacle of 1997
“[d]espite setbacks and thwarted hopes, the democracy glass is at least half-full.” Nevertheless, in Mali, local reflections on the 2002 elections insist that “Maliens have a long apprenticeship yet in democracy.”

Furthermore, the new political institutions that reinforce democracy in Mali still tend to personalize politics in ways that threaten inclusive political participation, and the regime has proved more presidential than parliamentary during its first ten years. Indeed, there remains the continuing divide between the constitutionally defined structures of the regime and a larger system that fosters adherence to the regime, and includes citizen socialization, parties, media, and effective political rights. Thus, together with the emerging democratic rudiments, tendencies, and practices, there are “aristocratic, autocratic and/or militaristic practices and tendencies,” that retain much of their influence over popular political culture in Mali.

**A Return To ‘Chief Down’ Consensus Building**

The 2002 election results (ATT and allies’ victory) are construed by middle-class intellectuals, especially in the opposition, as a return to chief-led top-down consensus building. Thus, despite the electoral legitimation enjoyed by the government, it fills modern political practices and institutions with a conservative combination of executive power and traditional consensus seeking, which in turn frustrates pluralist politics. Although ‘getting back’ to genuine consensus building is occasionally set forth as the necessary counterweight to executive decision-making, it is the combination of centralized, executive authority with pre-emptive consensus that limits pluralistic norms and practices. Limiting this centralism with decentralized participatory institutions has yet to produce either a pluralistic national politics or a reformed centralized authority. Arguments similar to those for multipartism and against the Traoré single-party State

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816 P. Smith, “Africans crazy for democracy” *BBC Focus On Africa magazine*, 21 April, 2004  
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/low/africa/3586085.stm accessed October 26, 2004  
818 M. Samaké 2002  
819 V. G. Simiyu, 1988, 51  
820 Focus group, university professors, 10 May 2002, Bamako.
in the late 1980s should warn against the re-assertion of centralized leadership and the decline of pluralism in post-*apertura* Mali.

The idioms of Mali’s tradition of unity in diversity draw an analogy to the way that Mali’s hierarchical social structure ‘unifies’ (or articulates and identifies as a unity) groups of different social or economic status. This ‘deeper’ meaning of unity comes out of the imperial history from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries, which the Traoré and Keita brain-trusts used to attempt to homogenize citizens under ‘mobilizing orders’ and ‘unifying centralism,’ in which “[t]he citizen thus ceased to be different from his fellows, and became a militant among the other militants engaged directly in the project of nation-building, which was standardized by the single party’s norms and unified under the direction of this party.”821 The single party thus preserved the worst elements of traditional personal rule, and removed the traditions of checks and balances that could go along with chiefly or royal political authority. Thus, ostensible mobilization fostered not genuine participation, but ‘unanimism’ exaggerated with manifestations and support rallies.

**Meaningful pluralism and Mali’s ‘platform of unanimity’**

Mali’s ‘platform of unanimity’, is central to democratic deepening as a form of hegemonic domination. In principle, this political culture platform should balance shared norms and consensus while articulating pluralism and dissent, and would combine these “apparently contradictory characteristics”: a “minimum degree of consensus” and “enough moral and material difference between citizens to make pluralism possible.”822 However, and this is crucial to understand, Mali’s ‘platform’ is not effective at *combining* consensus and pluralism, but rather combines domination-acquiescence in a legitimating ‘democratic-pluralist’ hegemony over a still

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821 Camara, 1990: 4-5
unconsolidated post-*apertura* ruling class and over a divided society. Indeed, the platform facilitates the hegemonic management of social divisions. Moreover, rather than balancing shared interests with pluralism enough to foster constructive dissent, *unanimism* tends towards managing disparate interests to preserve ruling class unity and broader social cohesion.

Malian society and political culture shares with other African societies “an imbalance in the Platform of Unanimity,” by predominantly seeking consent which limits dynamic pluralism.

The interaction, in Africa, of pluralist majoritarianism, a variety of democratic models, and the continuing decline and disillusionment of party politics “make[s] it necessary to review all the hypotheses which currently underpin theories of good governance.” Within an ostensibly pluralist, majoritarian institutional framework, a *quasi-corporatist* regime operates and produces a political landscape in which there is no longer a single party uniting all trends and potential divisions, but a larger unified political culture in which majoritarian pluralism replicates the ostensible ‘balance’ of homogenizing hegemony. This *conditioned* pluralism produces a “single framework […] to include as many significant political trends as were present in the country. These trends would take the place of political parties.”

*Participation, presence, and encounter revisited*

The current state and future prospects of democratic deepening in Mali are conditioned by historical and contemporary socio-cultural and political traditions that mute the dissent and opposition characteristic of dynamic pluralist politics, and frustrate the institutionalization of opposition as envisioned by democratic theory. In the absence of institutionalized opposition and more developed political cultures of dissent, the mere *presence* of popular participation in Mali (of which the 2002 voter turnout of is decidedly not an encouraging sign), is not identical to

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823 Ibid: 33
824 Ibid: 7
effective *encounter*. Even the genuine successes of civil-society community-level practices are frustrated by dissent-limiting norms and practices. This is further evidence of the contradiction in Mali between elaborately, and hierarchically, organized society, and the persistent popular disaffection with democracy *à la malienne* since 1992.

The ruling class is relatively satisfied with State-society relations, in which the State plays a dominant role. The falling middle class segments are not as satisfied with the status quo since the multiparty *apertura*. These contradictions qualify the aspirations and optimism for a society-wide political culture of genuine *alternance* against the continuing trends of cooptation, and the so-called unity and consensus of *monotone* (*monocouleur*) ruling class coalitions. Middle-class activists from the early days of the anti-dictatorship struggles insist that without this true participation and the attempt to debate and renovate civil society, the potential for a second beginning with the post-2002 government will be wasted, and the same electoral ‘*monarchist*’ republicanism of the last ten years will continue to serve the few and ignore the many. Moreover, the aspirations of the People’s Revolution and the transitional regime of 1991-2 will be similarly stifled.

*Teaching texts and civic sensibilities*

The contemporary, official, liberal-democratic citizen traditions are based on the fundamental texts of the Republic of Mali, including the Constitution, Republican Pact, and Party Charter. The essence of such fundamental documents is gradually becoming part of a more popular consciousness through use of the media by government and NGO actors. Their use of the discursive fundamentals of Malian legal-bureaucratic citizenship seeks to inform the public, and to raise and address issues, and to challenge the top-level leadership. Moreover, through the media, these upper-middle class actors reproduce and negotiate the minimal-procedural idioms of citizenship, even if they do not believe that these texts are the first and last word in Malian

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828 Interview, Foreign NGO worker 12Jul, 12 July 2002 Bamako; Interview, Senior NGO executive 1Oct, 1 October 2002; Interview, Engineer and neighbourhood religious leader, 24 August 2002, Bamako
citizenship identity. Thus, even in a potentially oppositional context, a minimal liberal (rights-bearing, voting) citizen identity becomes part of the unofficial repetitions and reinterpretations of the official texts of citizenship and nationhood. Thus, actors may only partly share the dominant assumptions, and partly accept its perspective, but their personal experiences, as exceptions to the generalities of the dominant position, are the bases of contradiction that remain relatively unformed as bases for a fully oppositional perspective. The closer actors are to the institutional contexts in which the dominant perspective is produced, managed and reproduced, the greater their difficulties in resisting the successful hegemonic management of the contradictions in this negotiation.

**Civic orthodoxy**

Upper and middle-class intellectuals (national and international) are the primary sources for the democratic pedagogy of the citizen enterprise, the civics orthodoxy. As discussed in Chapter Two, these “members of a specific social fraction,” are “educated, urban, professional employees, many of them centered in the public service, along with artists, students, and intellectuals.”[^829] The emergent dominant class of Francophone, Francophile and cosmopolitan orientation thus includes “academics, government servants, religious leaders, doctors and lawyers, teachers and university students headed towards these occupations.”[^830] Their complex and contradictory solidarity is also divided by class, ethnicity, and region of origin, and produces “rapid alternations between expressions of national unanimity and sharp divisions across one divide or another.”[^831]

These actors are themselves a stratified ruling class, and are seeking to unify their own identity, interests, and agenda. The democratic pedagogues of central interest here have their roots among the new intellectual elite produced by colonial education and their ‘spiritual heirs’

[^829]: Manning 190
[^830]: Manning 185, quote 186
[^831]: Ibid: 186
who engage in the contemporary crises of cultural identity through political organization and protest, exploiting metropolitan or cosmopolitan political discourses from French, and increasingly US, sources. Moreover, these actors also emerge from the small ‘national bourgeoisie’ of officials and intellectuals who benefited through decolonization. This benefit, however, was curtailed into the late dictatorship period, disenfranchising from State linkages many of the intellectuals who would call for democracy in the 1980s. Indeed, ideological convergence subsequently changed to divergence, facing the ruling class’ hegemonic attempts to manage social divisions between those riding post-1991 prosperity and those left behind. The first contours of the post-*apertura* hegemonic struggle were set in place, between the old and new privileged classes aspiring to ruling class status.

Teachers and other professionals, as ‘educators, broadly conceived’ connect the metropolitan/cosmopolitan actors and the discourses they produce to the local (largely peasant) population. Situated in State and NGO institutions, these are at the forefront of the hegemonic project of Mali’s democratization orthodoxy. Within such institutional contexts, the cosmopolitan dominant class and bureaucracy of public servants recycled from the authoritarian State and the post-colonial State including public servant entrepreneurs in the private sector of privatized former State companies, find new lives in the NGO sector as professional democratic pedagogues.

In this shift of many from the state to non-state institutions, Malian intellectuals since 1991 are not supporting a retrograde abandonment of public debates, but are rather furthering precisely the ideological homogenization of the ascendant middle class deemed crucial to democratic consolidation that is also a ‘contraction’ of public space and a feature of (neo)-liberal hegemony. The ‘second independence’ has turned from that relatively social democratic sensibility to embrace the neo-liberal agenda more fully.  

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‘Second independence’ is also reviving pride in indigenous and hybrid cultural forms. Often typified by ambivalence the “growing ties of cultural and political identity” are forming a new generation that sees itself “partly in alliance with and partly in opposition to [...] numerous international influences.” The contradictions of the NGO sector further complicate the pan-African and cosmopolitan cultural pride as these are “mediated through local idioms, norms and practices.”

By limiting the terms of reference, minimal-procedural enthusiasts make it possible, even unavoidable, to talk about democratic ‘successes’ rather than shortcomings, while incorporating indigenous features in promoting bourgeois civil society. Enjoying post-apertura prosperity, the new petty bourgeoisie is, on the basis of ideological, political, and economic criteria, potential reproducers of ideological domination.

Such apparent ideological enforcement and homogenization is, however, also open to heterogeneous influences. As discussed in Chapter Two, the revolutionary democrats include disenfranchised and disaffected middle and lower classes. The reformer democrats, are mostly upper-middle and middle class intellectuals, and higher professionals (e.g. doctors, lawyers, teachers) who straddle both civil society and the state. Numerous in the higher levels of the Malian State, these are “very little inclined to accept and even less to accomplish deep socio-political changes.” Moreover, their post-1991 prosperity enables them to become progressively more autonomous patrons. The liberal formalists include a ruling class administrative bourgeoisie from in the ancien régime upper class and upper middle class; these have “freshly converted” to democratic ideas. The current management of affairs suits them, as it largely preserves their interests. Indeed, actors in the reformer and formalist categories were accustomed to aligning themselves with whatever regime came into power.

833 Ibid. 224
834 Bagayogo, 1999: 25
These categorizations focus our attention on how the exploiting class still includes “top civil servants, army officers, traders and middlemen,” with various “connections between these various groups within and between the public and private sectors,” as well as complex “links between the various regional elites, and their connections with foreign interests.”\textsuperscript{836} An ostensible “national bourgeoisie” is “heterogenous in origin and has at its disposal a variety of subordinate groups, which adhere to its ideology and gather up the crumbs from its table.”\textsuperscript{837} Through the legacies of the ‘historic compromise’ between the army and the supporters of the ancien regime, “the various dominant classes [were] transformed, combined and re-deployed.”\textsuperscript{838}

The emerging liberal reformers (upper-middle and middle class intellectuals, and higher professionals working especially in the democratization aspects of development programs, and who straddle both civil society and the state) share certain interests with the liberal formalists among the upper class and upper middle classes in the State and among national and foreign capitalist actors. Members of this composite middle class segment draw from their own indigenous identities in the service of neoliberal-democratic hegemony. In this class segment context, the realities of social solidarity are important to acknowledge even as the discourses of solidarity may be exploited perhaps somewhat cynically by upper and upper-middle class segments’ actors who have ever less to do with and in common with their lower class fellow citizens.

The discourse of ‘national characteristics’ consolidates and legitimates ‘unifier politics’ (politique du rassembleur), which seeks to deny diversity, emphasize harmony, and thereby create a unity myth. Nevertheless, the success of independent candidates in the May 2004 Malian municipal elections at the expense of certain longer-established parties (e.g. ADEMA, CNID-FYT) compelled President Touré, who “has always said that the current situation of non-opposition is not permanent,” to consider the results carefully in order “to envision a way out of

\textsuperscript{836} François 32
\textsuperscript{837} Ibid
\textsuperscript{838} François, 28; 35
his role as *président-rassembleur*, since his adversaries will come out in strength to form a coalition aimed at the next presidential elections [2007].”

As it turns out, this coalition was unable to challenge ATT seriously in the presidential elections of 2007, further showing that ATT’s role as *président-rassembleur* is as strong as ever and risks making non-opposition still more enduring.

Without the need for a second round, ATT was re-elected with 71% of votes cast with IBK second with 19%. While it is still early to draw many conclusions ATT’s win is perhaps not surprising, and should lead researchers towards the contours of how ATT has been able to erode IBK’s support, reducing the impact of his Front pour la Démocratie et la République (FDR). Furthermore, focus is necessary on the discursive ‘space’ afforded to opposition perspectives and messages. This focus is especially important in light of the ongoing *rassembleur* and consensus politics, and the reconciliation that has been, according to ATT, the « precondition of all durable democratic construction,» and resists attempts to undermine the « unity of action that has allowed five years of political and social peace. »

Even these partisan political materials frankly acknowledge the weakening of the political parties ostensibly at the heart of pluralism; this surprises little, as ATT’s success depends little on national party structures, since fourteen minor formations came under ATT’s l’Alliance pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (ADP) in December 2006, and gathered as many as a further thirty minor ones before the elections in April 2007.

As discussed in Chapter One, the notion that pluralist-democratic politics is “anchored to a value consensus,” is used to account for the non-opposition and coalition in Mali; greater consensus means a more robust pluralism. ATT’s personal appeal is still as strong as it was in 2002. This consensus fixation obscures the possibility that consensus might override pluralism. Indeed, in the Malian political landscape, social norms and practices continue to “reinforc[e] agreement, encourag[e] moderation, and maintain[ ] social peace” in national unity governments and in the politics of rassemblement. Clearly, with the presidency firmly returned to ATT and his coalition of supporters it remains to see what inroads opposition candidates will make in the subsequent legislative elections in July 2007. Some observers note, however, that even in the case of a significant breakthrough for FDR candidates in the legislative elections, ATT’s presidency is firmly supported by the non-partisan associations and groups within the Malian Mouvement Citoyen. Nevertheless, one of IBK’s strategies in the presidential campaign was of negative reaction, e.g. “I say no to….” with a series of difficulties facing Mali; this points perhaps to his willingness and ability to exploit dissatisfaction for legislative electoral success.

846 TOURE , S. and Oumar, S. GRAND MEETING DU RPM 2007-04-03 http://www.rpm.org.ml/cgi-bin/view_article.pl?id=104 accessed 20/05/07
Democratic pedagogues

The democratic pedagogues include the relatively small proportion of the population in the upper class and upper-middle class segments, those still linked to the State apparatuses, whether through salaried work, merchant ties, patronage links, the private and quasi-public domestic and foreign commercial sectors, and domestic and international NGOs, institutions through which they attempt to deliver their message: educational and training institutions, broadly understood. Finally, there are audience populations, with a complex relationship to the institutions and intellectual elites, and their own role in constructing the civics orthodoxy of democratic citizen identity. Categorizing elements of the national and international intelligentsias at work in Mali is a challenge, given a number of factors: the range of national and international languages in which these intelligentsias operate, the changing nature and relationship between broadly public and private entrepreneurs of the citizen enterprise, and the various sources of the good citizen message.

Civics texts: rights and duties

At this time when there is so much talk about ‘moral recovery’ [redressement morale], civic instruction must prepare citizens for their future responsibilities. (Education Civique et Morale, 11th grade, Ministère de L’Éducation de Base / Direction Nationale de L’Institut Pédagogique National / Embassy of the United States of America, 1994-94: 1)

To deepen democracy in Mali, urban ruling class elites struggle to consolidate a unified, national vision of citizenship, and to instil these shared elite norms across broader social divisions: the rural-urban, socio-cultural, and related class cleavages. Thus, they seek to link the sensibilities of rural villagers to those of urban citizens and, as importantly, vice versa. Political communities imbued with the relationships seemingly characteristic of village life fit imperfectly with those imbued with the relationships seemingly characteristic of city life. Thus the gambit of citizenship, with its assumption of city relationships (Latin civis), lies in two transformations. One is to acculturate members of the population into citified orientations. The other is to
simultaneously re-conceptualize political community, and ‘to meet the villagers half way,’ so to
speak. Indeed, “a profound awareness of the importance of the revival of ‘indigenous’ African
values is now widespread among the peoples of Africa,”⁸⁴⁷ to respect the “legal and political
pluralism”⁸⁴⁸ and to incorporate resurgent traditional authority and local government structures.⁸⁴⁹
Central to Mali’s contemporary society and politics are ongoing attempts at difficult cultural
synthesis. “The marriage of the rabbit and the giraffe” characterizes a situation in which Malians
are “strongly influenced by ideas and attitudes from the modern communication media, but still
refer to the more or less active vestiges of traditional education.”⁸⁵⁰ In brief, “the Malian citizen
is continually pulled in opposite directions.”⁸⁵¹ Nevertheless, a dialectical perspective
supplements the tradition-modernity dynamic in that “nothing in Malians’ daily life is spared
from the permanent conflict between the two tendencies. In fact, despite its tendency to embrace
universal canons our society continues with behaviour dominated by purely archaic taboos.”⁸⁵²
Furthermore, the dynamics of civic sensibilities are refracted through reactions to the challenges
and crises of globalization as de-localization.⁸⁵³

The general tenor of civic education emphasizes order, cohesion, structure, and
epecially, patriotic national unity. The elements of continuity from the colonial period included
instruction in moral rectitude, respect for authority, personal hygiene, and politeness through the
major educational reforms of 1962 under Keita to instil a sense of pride in virtuous patriotism

⁸⁴⁷ D. Ray, “Rural Local Governance and Traditional Leadership in Africa and the Afro-Caribbean” in
Calgary, University of Calgary Press, 2003: 15, summarizing C. Owusu-Sarpong, “Setting the Ghanaian
Context of Rural Local Government: Traditional Authority Values,” in Ray and Reddy, ed. The question is
how do participatory norms and practices acquire and sustain their status as authoritative traditions, given
that the modes of acculturation (socialization) are hierarchical and paternalistic.
⁸⁴⁸ Ibid
⁸⁴⁹ Ibid
⁸⁵⁰ Ibid
⁸⁵² Ibid
Giddens’ notion of dis-embedding in late modernity: activities and relationships uprooted, displacement of
local networks, intensification of world-wide social relations, through which distant realities encroach and
affect ‘local’ events and dynamics.
commensurate with justice, liberty, and civic duty. While Traoré deemed explicitly ideological instruction at the high school level unnecessary between 1968-1978, with the transition from CMLN to UDPM high school civics were reintroduced as part of instilling virtues conducive to a more healthy economy.\textsuperscript{854}

As mentioned in Chapter Three, patriotism is intimately linked to respect for and loyalty to one’s elders and superiors. In defence of this patriotism, great figures from Malian history are depicted as instructive models of resistance and nation building (e.g. Soudiata Keïta, fl. 1235; Sonni Ali, fl. 1464-1493; Sékou Amadou, 1775-1844); and the “illustrious resistor of colonial penetration,” Samory Touré (1830-1900). Supplementary to this, a notion of building republican State citizenship extends from membership in the basic social units beyond the family. Thus, while patriotism may spring from kin-like attachments and norms of filial duty, administrative units rather than ‘organic’ referents inform citizenship and membership in political community.\textsuperscript{855} Indeed, in the synthesis of indigenous and Islamic good citizenship by Western oriented actors, citizenship is the product of affective relationships, norms, and practices, together with formal, more bureaucratic ones. Moreover, the ‘return to virtue’ conceit permeates not only the discourse of proponents and of Western-lead civics, but also the more critical discourse of inter-generational friction, and the internal instability that threatens because of a weakening of established social structures (especially familial and generational). As mentioned, this conservatism stresses governance more than flourishing.\textsuperscript{856}

\textsuperscript{854} Interview, Education Ministry bureaucrat, Bamako 25 April 2002. Subsequent to the democratic opening, although ECM has remained part of the primary and secondary public school curriculum, there has been a certain stagnation of civics since 1994-1996 at the higher-grade levels, in the face of more general crises in the education sector, and the focus on core disciplines. This shift ran parallel to the declaration of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, 1995-2004.


\textsuperscript{856} Radio Bamakan, 1997. This radio-journalist’s distinction characterizes the preoccupation with government as a primarily Western concept, and the main Western vision for democratization in Africa. Democracy-promoting initiatives (of donor-partners in Mali) tend to reproduce ‘good governance,’
As if to demonstrate the abstraction of politics from society, the Ministry of Education civics texts insist that, in Mali, “national unity has been realized since the [1946] merger of the PSP [Progressive Sudanese Party] and the US-RDA Sudanese Union – Democratic African Rally]. Political Unity thus constitutes the condition of national cohesion.”\textsuperscript{857} As mentioned in Chapter Two, the disconnection between the independence party (and the subsequent military regime) was profound, and if initially the product of an ideological justification of a middle-class vanguard, became entrenched as elites’ disdain for the persistently dispossessed masses.\textsuperscript{858} Just as under Keïta and Traoré, post-\textit{apertura} civics calls for “understanding, devotion, availability, sacrifice, and total engagement,”\textsuperscript{859} to consolidate national consciousness, and stresses “common past glories to sustain common will in the present.”\textsuperscript{860} This educated discourse attempts to mobilize not only the masses, but also to reproduce (rekindle) ruling class unity, and a sense of dedication to patriotic national development among a class historically known more for its chauvinism and self-seeking separation from its roots in ‘deepest Mali.’

The post-dictatorship challenge that Mali’s democratic deepening faces is to make an otherwise debatable statement come true: rather than national unity \textit{has been realized}, reconstructing national unity is an ongoing process, foremost among the ruling class strata. Indeed, the call has the tenor of an older, modernization dream of traditional norms and practices ceding their place, and an urgent, contemporary necessity, whereby civic sense manifests in “the

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according to the World Bank concept, which holds that fostering good governance enables human flourishing.

Key governance indicators –institutions, roles, jobs, salaries– are more concrete than those of flourishing, particularly given the contested norms and values of ‘living well.’ While donors and State actors can agree on quantifying governance, the indicators for human flourishing are less certain (and less amenable to quantifiable, short-term change). Governance also assumes that institutional reforms provide apolitical, technical solutions to structural problems, and are not themselves part of a regime culture that presupposes correspondence to elements outside of State governance structures (e.g. realms of civil society).
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\textsuperscript{859} ECM, 12th grade, 1994: 11
\textsuperscript{860} Ibid
struggle against the vestiges of regionalism, the clannish spirit, against local particularism, and
electoral opportunism.”

In the interplay of existing and emerging norms and practices, the process of nation building, still incomplete at the transition from the Keita to Traoré regime, is ongoing since 1992. An American political scientist observed this paradox in 1971, “nations exist where the nation does not.” Conversely, this diversity is portrayed by the official civics texts as a strength of Mali’s nation-building enterprise, with analogies to the historical development in France by which regional groups were interrelated and assimilated into the dominant culture of ‘greater France’, yet over a period of many decades and centuries not mere years. Indeed, the imposed colonial state and its post-colonial bureaucratization, nation building, and nationalist struggles separate the elite from popular citizen identities. Nationalist, single party leaders attempted to forge this abstract sense of national community identity with flags, anthems, the cult of a national people’s army, and a new, modern national school system. Agents of such attempts were too few relative to the population, and were tainted with biases from the period of colonial administration: including, among others, the deeply held scepticism that a multiethnic nation-state could work on the model of a chief-leader struggling towards modernity. By trying to abide faithfully to the modernization programme, African leaders were too concerned in replicating Western norms and practices. Thus, the deepening of foreign-lead and domestically mediated political identity formation is still happening.

Urban students’ associations after 1997

As potential link between the general population and the ruling class segments students, through their associations, are an example of upper-middle and middle class actors articulating

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861 Ibid. Indeed, “[d]evelopment supposes a progressive and rational extension, a forward movement” (12).
863 Ibid: 8, 16.
864 C.f. M. Camara, “[The single party and development]” Les Echos 1990; B. Fofana, “[Cultural anchors of democracy in Africa: the case of Mali], 2002
civic orthodoxy, and a contemporary urban manifestation of dynamic modern political norms and practices. Students’ associations are sites of solidarity, mutual support, and collective action. Moreover, students can coordinate their resistance to the consent-seeking and consensus-building moral and intellectual leadership of lower-level elites in institutions such as high schools and universities. By objecting to the conditions of their education, students (and the few teachers who support their activities) are questioning the conservative civic orthodoxy as it has stood against activism as a mode of political participation since the mid-1990s. In the early post-apertura years, the students especially were caught between the progressive vision still influential among the intellectuals and professionals of the anti-Traoré movement, and the generalized conservative backlash against the realities and rhetoric of social disruption and violence. This general perception influenced even sympathetic intellectuals who saw the students in two categories: (1) the radicals, those who had failed in their studies and who had no future in the school system; with nothing to lose, they had become quasi-professional agitators, ready to serve any cause, and (2) those, the most numerous, who followed the post-apertura student movement “by unconscious solidarity,” without distinguishing good and bad causes, and who were “subjugated by the verbal terrorism of the radicals.” Through the marginalization or cooptive moderation of the more radical elements, a vacuum in student movement leadership emerged through the mid-1990s.

All of the above indicates the backlash against the modes of activism present in the anti-dictatorship struggles, and students’ transition from activism to disaffection and being ‘put in their place’ post-1993. In 1996, Prime Minister Sow’s public comments against the student

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865 Age-sets and hometown associations (associations de ressortisants) are part of the rural communities’ social organization, and support urban students organizations. Interview, High school student Mar14 (grade 12), 14 March 2002, Bamako. Also a home-town association founder and president.
866 Around the April 1993 change from Prime Minister Y. Touré to A. Sékou Sow.
868 Diarrass, Défi, 1996: 277. The conflicts within the AEEM culminated in the destruction in Bamako April 5th, 1993 at the National Assembly, at the ministries of Mines, Defence, National Education; at the President’s, Defence, and National Education ministers’ private residences, and those of high level functionaries in the MEN. (278)
movement and forceful tactics “were immensely popular and many Malians seemed glad that someone was finally getting tough with the students.” The prime minister and the upper ruling class held the view of the students’ activism as ‘anti-democratic’; this opinion was supported and possibly lead by foreign apologists for the policy implications, and especially the education sector impacts, of structural adjustment programmes.

After the enthusiasm and optimism of the early 1990s about far-reaching political transformation, intellectuals and their students began to believe that Malian democracy was sick, and began to see that people at the margins were not engaged in the debates that affected them. The emerging “democracy of the schooled,” (des lettrés) was not only not a popular democracy, but also the upper and upper-middle class elites threatened also to marginalize a significant portion of the upper-middle mid-middle learned class –the very actors who were leaders in the anti-dictatorship movement. Indeed, division has been emerging since circa 1996 between upper-middle class activist intellectuals, on the one hand, who see students and the Malian Association of Pupils and Students (AEEM) as “a potentially healthy part of Mali’s civil society and a vital component of Malian democracy,” and the upper class, cosmopolitan, and international actors. The groups all both exploit and seek to lead domestic public opinion on the local and foreign norms and practices that foster or threaten democratic deepening, while agreeing in a formal or superficial way that “[i]f democratization is to be meaningful in Mali, and Africa more broadly, the results of the democratic process can not be predetermined by members of the international community.”

This noble sentiment about meaningful democratization in Mali notwithstanding, the convergence of international community and local public opinion maintains conservative

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869 Z. K. Smith, 1997: 254
872 Smith 1997: 261
assessments of Malian civil society’s more activist elements, such as AEEM, and consequently limits and qualifies the contours of democratic consolidation and deepening. The enthusiasm for Mali’s democratic consolidation, which tends to obscure the reservations expressed mainly by domestic critics, is lead by the international and cosmopolitan domestic ruling class, and their upper-middle class collaborators (also including Malian and foreign State and NGO actors, scholars, development practitioners, and diplomatic civil servants). Consequently, certain aspects of Mali’s remarkable democratization are overstated.

Students’ experience of educational crisis and the modest if any economic improvement since the early 1990s has eroded much of the once-strong solidarity between students and teachers in years leading up to 1991. This distancing evident in the Education sector crisis reflects a broader social stagnation and weakening of inter-generational solidarity in the post-apertura era among the important upper-middle class intellectual segment which is still struggling to reproduce itself after 23 years of dictatorial oppression. The educational insufficiencies illustrate the tremendous difficulties in channelling, moderating, and even preventing attempts at political engagement by disaffected Malian youth. Although the ‘AEEM Generation’ born in the 1980’s has inherited the current decade-long crisis and decline, they do not equate failing schools with failing democracy. Despite their cynicism about politics in the new democracy, students are not protesting much for another regime change, but neither are they motivated or optimistic about activism or citizenship in the context of national development.

Middle-class high school students bemoan the fact that “a civic sense [Fr. civisme] demands means.” Without some baseline better than poverty and vulnerability, there cannot be politics more principled than belly politics, rent-seeking, and patron-clientelism and struggling to eat your full from the état-marmite (the stew-pot state), coupled with the ‘feed the voters’

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873 Focus Group, High school students, Bamako 11 March 2002; Interview, private high school principal, Bamako, 11 December 2002
electoral politics that these produce. These are key elements of conservative ‘crisis’ modernization.

Further, some youths hold that toppling the dictatorship was all very well, but their status quo motto should now be ‘Let’s get back to class and back to work,’ even though the material conditions are little if at all better than they were. This view echoes their elders’, certainly, but is also based on students’ front-line experience of the effects of social disruption on their education. Indeed, the perception is relatively common that democracy tends towards erosion of the links of social capital under the pressures of labour market capitalism. These links include gender, age group, and inter-clan relationships, as well as those customary codes that related members of different ethnicities to one another.\footnote{Q.v. M. Konaté et al (1999). They found similar ideas in villages pre-workshop (1993); S.Tag, Paysans, \textit{Etat et démocratisation au Mali}. Hamburg African Studies 04. 1994. C.f. A. Sen, “The ends and means of development,” \textit{Development as Freedom}, Oxford UP, 1999: 36. re: the constitutive (primary end) and instrumental (primary means) roles of ‘participatory freedom’} This uneasiness about attenuated fundamental social ties (with their cultural, economic and political dimensions) precisely reflects the generalized uncertainty subsequent to gains in political liberalization in tandem with persistent stagnation, unequal benefits, and crises of economic liberalization. With the intensification of the survival economy for lower and lower-middle class segments,\footnote{Manning 126-127} liberalization matched “the rise in poverty, the breakdown of public services,” and the “declining purchasing power of civil service salaries.”\footnote{N. Van de Walle, 2001: 231.}

The various indicators of 'support' for political liberalization point to a certain convergence on conservative modernization, while there remains more divergence on the acceptability of a neo-liberal agenda. Indeed, there is a certain ambivalence towards the progressive and conservative tendencies among their members. As discussed in Chapter One, the limitations in a minimal, “scholars’” not “people’s democracy” are ever clearer, to those who
experience forms of social marginalization, through reinforced forms of indigenous and Islamic patriarchy.

These misgivings about political and economic liberalization are emerging clearly in public opinion research, which reveals “a certain moderation in the Malians’ democratic idealism,” as well as “a desire to limit the role of the market, for example in political party competition, or concerning the recognized place of traditional chieftaincies in the life of the city.” Indeed, there is “not a clear choice for integral multipartism,” given that, people think that “competition between political parties leads to conflicts.” Furthermore, Malians “condition their support for democracy and economic reforms, with limits that give these other than purely liberal content.” Consequently, “support for democracy is conditioned by meeting basic economic needs,” and thus Malians “prefer economic democracy (one that meets the basic economic needs of all citizens) to political democracy identified solely with citizens’ free and equal choice in decision-making.”

In sum, “Maliens seem divided between a preference for a market and a directed economy,” and the politics that support either one. Indeed, peoples’ understanding of modernity is in part contained in certain kinds of goods and services, as important manifestations of material vulnerability and of the potential efficacy or inefficacy of the State, e.g. health care, education, roads, and water infrastructure. Material development is thus separable from and even antithetical to moral progress and even regression; furthermore, modernity’s impact on moral economy, and on moral judgements is related to social solidarity in market and money relations.

878 Coulibaly and Diarra, Afrobarometer 35 (2004): 44
879 Ibid
880 Ibid
881 Ibid: vi
Notwithstanding that teachers and students are the least deferential to State authority, this intellectual class of democratic pedagogues is also key in processes of entrenching democratic values and participatory political culture. Moreover, the education sector in Mali has historically been one of resistance, tension, dissent, activism, and state crackdown. Conversely, the education sector has also been the site of consensus building between the students and the teachers, alternately against and in support of the regime, with reference to problems and priorities in education and in Mali’s future economic and social development. Education in such a context is not exclusively or even mainly an dominant ideology delivery system, but a site of resistance and compromise in the process of unifying the ruling class with the top-level, cosmopolitan elites’ citizenship agenda (to synthesize and form ruling class citizen identity), and part of a dynamic negotiation where civil society can press for and give concessions to the democratizing State.

Indeed, teachers and students do not simply mediate the logic of legitimating domination. Contradictions emerge around the ideology of democratic rights reproduced in the school curriculum. Schools play an active role in legitimating the view that politics and power are primarily defined around the issues of individual rights and through the dynamics of the electoral process. Central to such liberal notions of democratic rights are assumptions that define the political sphere and the role of the State in that sphere. This is key. On the one hand, the civics orthodoxy curriculum separates the issue of politics and democracy from the economic sphere and to displace the notion of conflict from its class-specific social context to the terrain of individual rights struggles. On the other hand, there is a certain counter-logic within democratic liberal ideology that can anchor resistance and conflict. That is, “liberal democratic ideology

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882 Ibid: 8. Interestingly, however, seeing the government as a good paterfamilias is proportional to income level, giving educated middle and upper class actors contradictory or ambivalent attitudes towards State authority.
contains concerns for human rights that are often at odds with capitalist rationality, its ethos of commodity fetish, [sic] and its drive for profits.  

*Openings For Unofficial Reinterpretations of the Citizen Tradition*

The repetitions and reinterpretations of the official texts of citizenship and nationhood emerge not only to popularize the official script, but also have openings and potential for unofficial, contemporary reinterpretations of the citizen tradition. Notwithstanding these opportunities for a more engaged citizen identity in Mali, however, the predominant use of official democratization script by upper and upper-middle class actors is to reinforce minimal procedural concepts of citizenship. State and private media, which serve to mediate these concepts to lower-strata intermediaries, are the preserve of educated upper and upper-middle class actors: an emerging ruling class of primarily urban intellectuals. These people have been key in the pro-pluralism movements, political parties, and administration positions.

For example, the role of teachers (educators understood broadly) is crucial to understanding the permutations and ambivalence of official scripts in hegemonic legitimation. Given teachers’ place alongside students in the anti-dictatorship movement, it is reasonable to look to their agency in the articulation of post-*apertura* democratic ideology. Teachers were, on the one hand, an important part of the civil society activism against the 23-year dictatorship, and thus may be seen as bearers and as reproducers of anti-authoritarian ideology in the Republic of Mali. On the other hand, it is clear that teachers do not simply reproduce the civics orthodoxy, because of the ideological contest and struggle that characterizes teachers’ action in the education sector.

As reproducers of complex and potentially radical democratic ideology, educators’ teachings exist within a contradictory matrix of complicity with and resistance to the hegemonic citizen identity agenda of foreign donors articulated with the State. Moreover, educators embody

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an ambivalent character subsequent to the pro-pluralism struggles, from anti-regime to pro-party, or more complex, vague and less fully ‘worked out’ orientations towards the emerging institutions, norms, and practices.

This picture, however, is insufficiently complex, as it is built largely by projecting educators’ historical role into the democratic deepening moment. Rather than being bearers and reproducers of democratic ideology against the regime (once dictatorial, now democratic, or ‘democratorial’)\textsuperscript{885}, as they once were, democratic pedagogues are, after all, part of the ideological apparatuses of the State. More importantly, democratic pedagogues are part of the ideological apparatuses seeking to unify the ruling class, of which they are lower and middle strata. As such, while democratic pedagogues perform the unifying, hegemonic discourse, they nuance it in ways that do not clearly support the \textit{status quo}. It is clear that the legitimacy and leadership of nation-State actors, \textit{and the corresponding citizenship commensurate with it}, are only part of the project to raise citizen awareness and articulate idioms of moral accountability within a struggle for ruling class unity. This makes sense in that the State is not an omnicompetent actor in the hegemonic struggle for moral accountability. Indeed,

\begin{quote}
Democracy is not bestowed, but is gained through fierce fighting. Democracy is a state of mind. It demands an \textit{unceasing information campaign within civil society} so that all citizens feel themselves involved in the ongoing process of transformation […] Democracy is a daily quest. It knows no respite for it risks loosing ground at all times. It is never definitively achieved.\textsuperscript{886}
\end{quote}

\textbf{To Politicize Pluralism or Reinforce Unity}

The following contrasts the potential of the more engaged pluralism for which anti-dictatorship actors struggled, and the over-riding unity sought in the post-\textit{apertura} context. In 1990, calls from professionals, journalists, trades people, and popular movement actors for politicizing the real diversity of Malian society, history, culture, language, economy, and geography also objected to the false or abstract unity project of the single party (“flags and

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{885} Bagayogo, 1999: 1 \\
\end{flushright}
Conversely, the contemporary consensus-seeking conservatism of the civics orthodoxy relies on concepts similar to those brandished by apologists for the single party and centralism in the late 1980 and early 1990s: particularly the “spectre of division,” and the “tribalist menace” that articulating genuine diversity and difference might rouse. This menace is alternately real and chimerical, given the broader socio-cultural unity in Mali that could provide a basis for the friction and conflicts of politicized diversity. Mali’s history of great empires provides a long-term perspective of compromise that “negates the threat of tribalist break-up.”

This difference discourse is in stark contrast to the ‘unity’ talk of 2002. Every politician tried to find and articulate what the successful presidential campaign slogan of Amadou Toumani Touré (ATT) called for: “Let us find what unites us” (Retrouvons ce qui nous unit).

Monopartism was part of the authoritarianism that had been put down. In the current political reality, however, more than 60 political parties ‘exist,’ each of the three major legislative blocks have one main and at least three satellite parties, and ATT was elected without party affiliation: all this suggests to some observers that multiparty, electoral democracy has regressed in Mali since 1992.

**Order not progressive change**

To transform society, culture, politics, and economics, and to articulate traditional norms consistent with democratic citizenship and vice versa, upper and upper-middle class State and NGO actors often define and defend newly introduced norms and practices of combined economic and political liberalization as superseding previously existing ones. At other times, they defend newer norms as continuations of existing norms in new contexts and organizational structures. In some cases, there is an antagonistic stance ‘for’ traditional practice and ‘against’ innovation. In general, these norms are expressed as a form of progressive conservatism.

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887 Camara, 1990: 4-5
888 Election poster, April 2002, King El Fahd bridge Torokorobougou-Quartier Mali Bamako, Mali.
The role of international actors and links to domestic actors in promoting democratic consolidation has been neglected in democratization theory. Correcting this neglect is especially important because donors “seek accommodation that will restore order, at the expense of progressive change that could invite risks.” Thus, domestic NGOs work to reinforce conservative democratization as political stability and liberal economic reform, seeking to promote growth rather than “expanding democratic practices beyond voting.” Moreover, by situating partnerships with local actors and groups in the neo-liberal model of democratization for economic growth, donors prefer the democracy of stability and order commensurate with increased trade, decreased aid, and favourable to foreign investment. Democratic consolidation and deepening are the areas least well served by such donor approaches and the domestic NGOs they support. Among even progressive organizations, the earlier visions of a New International Economic Order are giving way to the neo-liberal emphasis on internal restructuring and political conditionalities that sees no alternative to drawing Africa into the world capitalist economy to allow investors to get their share of the “magnificent African cake” that former colonial powers guarded jealously.

A relatively unified (and unity seeking) group of local and foreign upper and upper-middle class actors expresses ‘Western’ civics orthodoxy elements through official discourses, whether from the Malian State itself, mediated by the Malian State, or through civil society organizations and NGOs in broadly governance-democratization programs. Foreign State and NGO’s agencies articulate their roughly congruent, liberal perspectives on political authority, legitimacy, and membership in targeted Malian contexts (e.g. judicial and parliamentary reform,

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890 Ibid: 454
education, media freedom and journalistic professionalism).\textsuperscript{892} The actors with Western-democratic perspectives on citizenship in Mali also include local upper and upper-middle class actors working in State and related special institutions, civil society, or local NGOs.\textsuperscript{893} This analytical category –Western idioms of authority, legitimacy, and political membership– is predominant in the democratization moment. Moreover, the synthetic use to which Western idioms are being put by the unity-seeking ruling class segment that bears them (State and NGO’s in tandem) illuminates the matrix of indigenous and Islamic perspectives marshalled or marginalized to serve the Western civic orthodoxy project.

For example, the German social democratic NGO Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES, \textit{Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung}) has shifted from an agenda sympathetic to the workers’ movement since 1968 to promoting democratic institutions and elections. Since 1991, FES has reoriented its work to focus on “democratic consolidation through political education.”\textsuperscript{894} This education was concerned mainly (but not exclusively) with changing elite electoral behaviour, and mobilizing voter turnout. FES also “played an active part in the political parties’ roundtable that eased tensions, and developed the Republican Pact for good electoral conduct.”\textsuperscript{895} Beyond these initiatives, FES, “sponsored a series of seminars and training sessions for nearly all the actors in political life (parties, civil society, press, association leaders, youth, women, etc.)”\textsuperscript{896} The FES work illustrates the liberal shift in even overtly social democratic organizations and idioms. From resisting authority, the strategy becomes contesting elections, thereby legitimating the existing regime by virtue of formal participation.


\textsuperscript{893} Interview, Municipal Court magistrate, 3 July 2002, Bamako.

\textsuperscript{894} \textit{Les Echos} 17 April 2002: 4. FES’s Programs aim at consolidating democracy, reinforcing civil society, and promoting the media http://mali.fes-international.de/Programmes/index.html. Interview, Domestic NGO worker 24Sept, 24 September 2002, Bamako

\textsuperscript{895} \textit{Les Echos} 17 April 2002: 4

\textsuperscript{896} Ibid
NGO intellectuals, defined broadly in their roles as democratic pedagogues and with their State counterparts, are not simply ‘ideological enforcers’ for the State and the domestic and foreign interests it serves. Neither are they radical anti-establishment actors featured in the socialist and social democratic rhetoric of the anti-dictatorship struggles. Partly co-opted in the process of ruling class unification, and yet steadily marginalized materially within the same ruling class, they are gradually grasping their greater potential for solidarity with the mass population. These actors struggle to interpret the dominant ideology of democratic consolidation to preserve local norms and practices within a broadly social democratic framework.\(^{897}\)

Such ‘political education’ in the democratic pedagogical mode uses Malian cultural heritage and history selectively for political socialization that links moral discourses with those of good governance. The civic sense and duty promoted holds a view of democracy against activism. Democracy is defined consistent with indigenous norms and with good governance as minimal, procedural-electoral, and exclusionary.\(^{898}\) The discourses of recovering rectitude and social cohesion seek to preserve and reproduce hierarchical social norms.

Hierarchical are those norms that value above all ‘knowing your place and filling your role,’ and the attendant submission to authority and obedience. Thus, a discourse of an externally conditioned, elite democracy is linked to (selected) local traditions and knowledge. The civics orthodoxy formalizes knowledge present in various oral versions of shared historical memory. From the great figures of Mali’s imperial history, through resisting colonial penetration to the struggle for independence and the ‘birth of the Republic’, the texts and discussions emphasize national unity and patriotism. Civics emphasizes the patriotic support –by groups and individuals– of the state’s sovereignty, national autonomy, and nation-building project. Woven into this ultimate obedience is the rich texture of honour, dignity, honesty, and respect for elders. Appeals to this conservatism evoke a simplistic notion of national unity while the social cohesion

\(^{897}\) ‘The Other Mali’ (L’Autre Mali) social movement is linking to the transnational anti-corporate, neo-liberal globalization movement and shows signs of some emerging coherent and coordination.

\(^{898}\) Abrahamsen 2000: 139
narrative marginalizes dissent, and muffles critiques of ‘unanism,’ opportunistic consensus seeking, in the ostensibly pluralist regime.

*Intellectuals from resistance to acquiescence*

Upper and upper-middle class intellectuals straddle both civil society and the state, as bureaucrats and collaborators in the state-hegemonic project. Moreover, post-independence political elites as a political ‘class’ in Mali, as elsewhere in Africa, were based in the state bureaucracy, and not materially independent of the state. Their role against the dictatorship, though much discussed in the democratization context and with references to the “spirit of 26 March,” is not necessarily part of the intellectuals’ stance against new kinds of domination or hegemony. None of this is, of course, on par with the explicitly violent repression that occurred under the military regime. This freedom from fear is one of the unequivocal gains of Malian democratization.

Indeed, the bourgeois-liberal tenor of the broad ‘civic education for democracy’ project is almost exclusively vote centred, and accepts as given the ignorance of the masses about the intricacies of electoral politics. These assumptions devalue local knowledge of socio-political and cultural conditions in favour of a minimal-procedural-technical, and merely rights-bearing citizen identity. As crucial as any specific content of civics discusses above, is the belief in the need for civics itself. The medium, civic awareness-raising is the message: democratic pedagogy is necessary, and necessarily liberal because it occurs in the good governance moment (1980s-1990s) to legitimate elected government domestically, which seeks in turn to legitimize the global, US-dominated, IFI-led agenda.  

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Culture of Peace and Human rights

Moreover, the notions of negative liberty (“freedom from ….”) are predominant in the foreign actors’ discourse, and identify individuals as bearers of rights against state authority. With this discourse, foreign actors generally neglect the broader dynamic of rights and correlated duties, which is stressed by domestic State actors, as well as a more general population, dependent on formal education level. Indeed, a middle class perspective stresses the citizen-to-citizen obligations (Fr. *devoirs*) as concrete and realizable, as much or more than a vague sense of state obligations to transparency and accountability, which have been betrayed by leaders in their self-interested ‘commitment’ to Western standards of citizenship and ‘democracy.’ Thus, through social citizenship, notions of minimal liberal citizenship are corrected by the norms and practices of ‘*le social*,’ which is an essential “rampart of citizenship.” Citizenship “*tout court*” is thus needful of “good citizenship” qualification.\(^{900}\) Indeed, Malian observers recognize that Mali’s political culture is hampered by its own citizens, who are “all the while deeply determined to defend their rights,” but who “are less inclined to engage themselves in a collective venture.”\(^{901}\)

Moreover, the Malian government, lead by the UNDP, attempts to link the specifics of Malian cultural practice to the larger ‘culture of peace and human rights’ project, and to supplement democratization civics by emphasizing a culture of peace and mutual respect against legacies of intolerance and violence. The State thus draws *appropriate and applicable* elements of civic identity and education from Malian traditions, together with national and international legal understandings for integration into primary and secondary education syllabi. Nevertheless, the link between explicitly democratic politics and human rights is made only weakly, or rather

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\(^{900}\) Interview, archives staff-person, 15 August 2002, Bamako. Interview, private high school principal, 11 December 2002, Bamako

\(^{901}\) C. O. Diarrah, *Le Défi démocratique au Mali*, 16

The commensurate citizenship discourse and civics orthodoxy is reproduced by United Nations actors, and emphasizes “underlying cultural cohesion to try to keep the peace,” in order “to build a model democracy based on the Malian tradition of seeking consensus.”\footnote{Ibid} The high ideals, however, obscure the complexities of the aspirations for “freedom to flourish, national identity and memory to be revived, differences to be respected, and grassroots democracy established.”\footnote{Ibid} Moreover, material crisis loom large in any attempts to give peace a chance. Freedom from fear is interwoven with freedom from want. As one Timbuktu resident complains, “When the government’s strong, it crushes us, and now it’s weak, we’re dying.”\footnote{Ibid} Indeed, some “unemployed youth tired of waiting for the peace dividend” either leave Mali or “make easy money by joining gangs of bandits and smugglers who roam the country.”\footnote{Ibid}

\textit{L’Éspace d’Interpellation Démocratique (EID)}

The establishment, role, and functioning of the EID provides an important challenge to the critique here of Malian political culture that ultimately circumscribes effective and genuine participation. Further, the EID exemplifies the individual-to-State relationship on which optimists about democratic deepening in Mali insist. As a showpiece of popular access to bureaucrats for redress on rights violations, bureaucratic oversights, and more generally

dissatisfaction with the conduct of the government’s business, the EID has attracted much international attention in its 10-year history.

The impetus for and ingredients of the EID point to key features in the landscape of political culture and institutions. These features help explain why, distinct from many African countries’ experience, “Mali has maintained its standing as a model of democratic change, in the region.”

Whether made explicit or remaining implicit, because of the need for more inclusive, legitimating politics, the Malian State’s “approach to democracy rests on the broadening of popular participation through various innovative institutions.”

In the brief description below, an American political scientist identifies both the innovative potential and possible shortcomings of the EID.

The ‘Éspace’, by providing an open forum for dialogue on rights has increased popular awareness of the rule of law and human rights. Such awareness serves constitutional legitimacy and political stability. By helping to close the gap between the power of the state and the people, a forum such as Mali’s ‘Éspace’ allows the population to better understand the obligations of the government to the citizens.

Moreover, while the EID’s strengths are evident from certain participants’ positive experiences, its limitations are many, including “the potential for it to turn into a hollow institution unless it becomes more inclusive.” Left implicit here, however, is the dysfunctional formal political system (and the ADEMA party in-fighting) that was in many ways circumvented by the EID. Indeed, the strategic impetus for EID was to strengthen then president Konaré’s supporters at the expense of others.

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907 S. Wing, Abstract, “Questioning the State: Constitutionalism and the Malian Éspace d’Interpellation Démocratique” Democratization 9.2 (Summer 2002) 121-147
908 Ibid
909 Ibid. In 2002 the EID was suspended and evaluated, citing a significant backlog and ineffective address of cases. Insiders noted that the internal party wrangling (ADEMA) that founded the EID was effectively over since Konaré’s intended successor, ATT, had won the presidency. Interview, retired journalist, Bamako, 8 Dec 2002 (in attendance). This analysis notwithstanding, the EID re-started in 2004. C.f. Maison de la Presse du Mali, “Exercice Des Droits Du Citoyen L’Éspace d’Interpellation Démocratique reprend du service” http://www.mediamali.org/Archives%202004/Novembre/eid.htm 29/07/2005; I. Maïga, “Éspace d’interpellation démocratique : Le nouveau départ” Le Républicain 24 Nov. 2004 http://www.lerepublicain.net.ml/jour/cgi-bin/view_article.pl?id=1785 accessed 29/07/2005
910 Interview, former ADEMA EID design team member, 10 December 2002, Bamako.
Furthermore, while the possibility of shared discourses of authority across the democratic—patrimonial distinction may invite scepticism, active citizen witness to injustice, variously addressed or ignored, may indeed be a powerful symbol of the citizen’s critical presence in the face of the leaders and bureaucrats. Thus, ‘witness’ could characterize inclusive engagement as well as the more widespread relatively passive acquiescence. ‘Mere’ witness-presence, exemplified sometimes by crowds at village palavers in their relation to the community leaders, youth in elders’ company, women in men’s company, and caste/class deference, would be in contrast to witness-as-participation exemplified by the EID, the exception that proves the general rule of acquiescence.

**Combined Social And Political Frameworks Of Solidarity And Reciprocity**

As discussed in Chapters Four and Five, indigenous and Muslim ideological elements seek to manage social divisions with *combined* social and political frameworks of solidarity and reciprocity, and highlight both divisions, as well as what links groups together. Socio-political membership is embedded in cultural practices that tend to reproduce norms and practices fitted to hierarchical social stratification, and to quietude rather than dissent. Drawing on these norms of quietude, the Western hegemonic drive is distinctively self-contradictory in that, notwithstanding the lexicon of ‘civil society’ democratization, it seeks to keep separate the civil-individualistic (voting and rights-bearing), and the social-communitarian aspects of citizen identity embedded in moral and political economies. Thus attempting simultaneously to segregate and merge the civil and social idioms, the contradictory project to indigenize democratic legitimacy appears to embody “a coherent social project,” despite being a constellation of “mutually exclusive projects that are not necessarily democratic.”

In the ideological landscape conditioned by indigenous and Islamic idioms, then, the Western idiomatic resources include the history of anti-colonial and anti-dictatorship struggles,

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with particular reference to the problem of legitimating a centralized, personalized power linked to a loyal, committed, and mobilized people. These idiomatic resources are crucial in constructing legitimacy. The ‘new’ terms in which the questions of legitimacy are being posed are set forth by upper and upper-middle class actors in a synthesis of indigenous and Islamic idioms forming a domestic and foreign moral economy of democratization.

Local norms are synthesized with democratic legitimation via mobilized electors, and from an aristocratic vantage point, neither authoritarian in the sense carried through the colonial and dictatorship periods, but neither in keeping with the more radical modes and orders of participation in grassroots activities or of socialists in either the Keita government or anti-Traoré movements.912

In brief, against the promissory note of radicals and progressives in the apertura moment of the 1990-1991, an upper and upper-middle class conservative liberalism is driving forth. This dynamic simultaneously furthers and limits hegemonic consolidation by broadening the political class, while this class seeks to unify itself. Thus, the ruling class becomes more complex and potentially fragmentary even as it seeks to unify its interests and ideology. The difficulties in this unity-seeking are also undermining the hegemonic drive over society in general.

The end of a predatory Malian dictatorship is not identical to an end of various, subtle forms of legitimacy seeking, domination, and exploitation.913 The liberalizing upper and middle-level elites have been the key local proponents of the Western, minimal-procedural liberal state, and are distinctively well placed to incorporate indigenous features in promoting bourgeois civil society. These Malians, who pushed out the predatory Traoré dictator and his extensive patrimonial entourages, with popular support and a liberal, pluralist-electoralist mantra, now seek “to ratify and legitimize the political ascendancy of the middle sectors rather than empowering les

912 Tag, 1994; Smith, “From Demons to Democrats” ROAPE; Interview, Engineer, political movement militant, 24 August 2002 Bamako
The rising liberal middle-class thus finds its way into the ruling political class, a space formerly inhabited and guarded by the authoritarian-predatory regime actors.

This legitimization struggle by the ascendant, liberal middle sectors is essential to the relative success and struggles in the development of a hegemonic democratic political culture in Mali. A synthesis of indigenous, Muslim and Western idioms in the struggles shows the sophisticated intellectual resources available to these sectors. Keeping the ruling class strata form the upper-middle and middle classes on side in this ascendancy is the focus of considerable imaginative labour and political creativity.

Linking bourgeois civil society to indigenous institutions and networks of survival and mutual assistance weakens potential antagonisms, improves political opportunists’ image and promotes the citizenship formation commensurate with the minimal State. The norms of quietude among youth, women, and under-classes are incorporated to encourage liberal-democratic rather than social-democratic orientations, isolating a minimal set of civil entitlements (1\textsuperscript{st} generation rights) from social citizenship content (2\textsuperscript{nd} generation rights) that comes ‘from below’.  

Nevertheless, the Western drive incorporates key indigenous and Muslim idiomatic resources to enhance its attempts to manage social divisions. This drive is particularly concerned with the divisions produced by education in the colonial and post-colonial periods. Furthermore, coincident with European-modeled nation-State building, the Western hegemonic drive seeks a more comprehensive management of social divisions through its specific citizenship identity idioms. The ‘national’ imperative of such State-building, through constructing citizen identity, seeks to harmonize groups across social divisions or by minimizing the most critical inequalities. By seeking to manage social divisions, and by relying on the synthetic, hegemonic adoption of indigenous and Muslim terms to do so, the Western drive attempts to bolster the relevance and influence of civil citizenship in relation to the democratizing nation-State.

\textsuperscript{914} R. Fatton, Jr. 1995: 84.
The Western drive appropriates especially the idioms of *harmony* among social divisions; e.g., ‘ethnic harmony’, ‘inter-class solidarity’, the separate-but-equal script about gender relations, and the ‘disaffected youth’ (obscuring their disenfranchisement) are all evidence of the succeeding Western hegemonic drive.\(^916\) In other words, and this is key, by constructing a broad social base and legitimating it as indigenous, the citizenship project is the latest version of coopticive domination to produce a relatively ordered and tranquil unity in a changing socio-political environment characterized by social divisions that are still somewhat mediated by indigenous and Muslim social institutions.\(^917\)

Indeed, north-south relations in Mali, especially since 1996, serve as an important test and qualifier on the relative success of idioms of ethnic harmony. The Azouad conflict (a.k.a. Tuareg rebellion / “Northern problem” ~ 1991-1996) demonstrates most explicitly the perceived and real marginalization of northern Tuareg and Songhai populations. The problem of ‘northern alienation’ from the centre-south was still an issue in 2002, and it is not entirely clear if ATT has managed to improve on Konaré’s record *vis à vis* northern Mali.\(^918\) Typifying the ways in which Tuareg especially are represented and represent themselves, as fiercely proud, self-sufficient, and ‘apart,’ while depending on, expecting, and demanding support from the economic and political centres (domestic and foreign) in the south, Tuareg university teachers in the southern capital Bamako make these instructive comments: “I was born in Gao, I’m not a Malian,”\(^919\) and “‘Unity’, et cetera are just words. [President] ATT can’t do what France doesn’t want.”\(^920\) Operating in tandem with idioms of historical reconciliation (see below), the *idioms of regional*
reconciliation work under the aegis of renewed domination from the South core. This links the role of the former colonial power, in sustaining northern marginalization and supporting the attempts at military ‘solutions’ to the troubles through the early 1990s, with a matter of fact disdain for southerners, as corrupt, lazy, profit-seeking, and self-serving.

Democratic institutions, including political parties, and the texts that frame Malians as citizen-voters, are also key in managing class stratification that divides the purportedly homogenous mass population of ‘social need’ (Fr. demande sociale). Indeed, this socio-economic homogenization was embodied in the ‘movement’-based political formation that supported the current president’s 2002 candidacy. The movement, under its leader, ostensibly represented the ‘unity’ of social demand devoid of important class, regional-ethnic, or gender divisions. This movement mentality exemplifies the current state of pluralism in Malian politics. Especially relevant criticisms of the ATT regime include the spectre of the single-party system, highly personalized politics, and the charge that “movement democracy stifles debate and therefore runs the risk of ultimately becoming the means for maintaining control, rather than a dynamic tool for promoting change and development.”

Channelled political pluralism pre-emptively manages economically based social divisions including class, generation, gender, ethnicity, and terroir/region. Indeed, deepening democratization, as a combination of foreign and local forms of legitimating domination and conservative modernization, subtly sustains as it transforms the domination that suspended citizen and worker identities and constructed instead identities of “servile and dependent ‘subjects’ of authoritarian state control.”

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922 B. Berman, Control and Crisis, 1990: 41. The struggle for citizenship is thus substituted by hegemonic elites for the class struggle that might interest the subordinate classes. The notion of bourgeois democratic politics as being an expression of class interests and hegemonic struggle needs to be refined. Interests in
The citizenship *strategy* (in tandem with the good governance project) operates to deny and obscure social divisions in the service of dominant class interests. Furthermore, beyond class, there are in Mali, other social divisions that the citizenship strategy seeks to obscure, while tying them, through the synthetic idioms of moral recovery and the return to virtue, to the emergence of a just society without yet seeking to split away fully from existing social and material relations. Citizenship thus ‘includes’ the excluded without materially changing their relationship to the means of production controlled by dominant class actors. The citizenship strategy is itself relatively silent *vis à vis* social rights while emphasizing relatively ineffective or highly conditioned political rights.

**Party-State ideological formation and ‘creating the militant’**

The particularly liberal content of the citizenship strategy is somewhat surprising in the context of Mali’s post-colonial political and ideological traditions of socialism and resistance to oppression. As mentioned in Chapter Two, however, there were ideological precursors to democratic awareness-raising in the explicitly political education of the Keita and Traoré regimes, which included civic, moral, and political education (*Éducation civique, morale et politique*, ECMP). The key features shared by the contemporary democratic-civic, the independence socialist and the single party military ideological projects derive from the legacies of socialist and military variations on democratic centralism. ‘Democratic centralism’ was the watchword of the party-state of independence socialism (US-RDA, Sudanese Union -African Democratic Rally), and the rhetorical pose of the military dictatorship’s State-party (UDPM, Democratic Union the Malian People).

The anti-colonial liberation socialism that characterized Mali’s first eight years of independence from French colonial rule, stressed two themes: the emancipation and participation

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this case are not exclusively class ones but also ones related to affiliations and networks. See the Conclusion ‘Citizenship *contra* working class coherence’
of citizens. Mali’s first president, Modibo Keïta expressed the emancipatory stance of his African socialism: “As long as the people is not free, as long as it is does not feel in its own country master of its destiny, there is a revolution to be made.” Similarly, the contemporary civics orthodoxy project to form citizen identity simultaneously emphasizes freedom from the weight of the colonial past and managing the political and economic necessities imposed by post-colonial conditions. This is part of the ongoing process of building and imagining a viable political and economic community.

The particular thrust of the political pedagogy that emphasized the ideological political training (Formation idéologique et politique, FIP) for African socialism was a more or less direct indoctrination-type ‘education’ of socialist party supporters (Fr. militants) as citizens. “[P]ermanent ideological training” was deemed a key counter-force to colonial domination in the service of capitalist exploitation, and indeed, to the “most colossal creation of colonization,” the colonized subject. This training stressed the strong links between communitarian ways of life and socialism with reference to pre-colonial Africa, in which “the idea of the community, the group, [...] the patriarchal family, village, and the union of families” predominated over that of the individual. In this collective production and consumption by networks of households, independence socialists saw the “unity of political and economic destiny.”

Moreover, “the training of the militant is vital in Africa to give the Party a place in every spirit.” The educational dimension of transforming citizen subjectivity was repeatedly emphasized: “[c]reating the militant is the number one problem” and thus “transforming the whole national territory into one vast school is necessary” to bring about the mental revolution.

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923 Keïta in S. Badian, 1965, frontispiece.
924 Badian: 1965: 94. ‘Training’ Fr. formation
925 Ibid.: 39
926 Ibid.: 24
927 Ibid.: 100-01.
928 Ibid.: 110
that is needed to face the new realities of post-independence Africa. This revolution will require a political education that starts from the “ancestral heritage, but with the elements removed that do not mesh with the principles of the world to be built”929; these traditions, its heroes and values should be “held up in the service of the revolution and of the new society.”930 With effective political education, “national culture can give back to the people the creative consciousness that the colonial regime denied them.”931 This national culture must, however, be guarded against its own elements of cultural xenophobia, self-importance, isolation, and feudal aspects that lead to intellectual confusion.932

Indeed, contemporary civics also stresses the necessity of cultural, educational, and ideological transformation remains in the contemporary citizen identity project: a political education grounded in re-invented traditions that both preserved and transformed national political and economic community. Indeed, the ideological component is central to this transformative mission.

In Mali today, this propagandistic pedagogical model is still pervasive, and many people, more and less educated, deem it appropriate to the acculturation functions of education. By force of will, apparently, the authorities (educator/elder/patron) imprint those under their tutelage. Central in this model is supposed malleability of the un-trained mind by the trained and is predominantly by rote learning. Consequently, critical thought, together with creativity and innovation, is neither an aim nor outcome of the Mali educational systems, including the modern (post-colonial) and traditional (elder/master, youth/apprentice).933

929 Ibid.: 1965: 102
930 Ibid
931 Ibid
932 Ibid.
933 Interview, University professor Mar16, 16 March 2002, Bamako; Focus group, high school teachers 14Mar, 14 March 2002 Bamako; Focus group, high school teachers 22Mar, 22 March 2002 Bamako; Interview, High school teacher 22Apr, 22 April 2002; Focus group, archives staff, 15 August 2002 Bamako. Indeed, this model of reproducing moral authority is one of the meeting points between indigenous-initiation and Islamic education in Mali.
Overall, from the socialist state-party to the military transition and the party-state regime there is a continuity of using mythologized aspects of Mali’s history to given meaning to the citizen-militant who is alternately served by and serving the development and national-building mission of the party, State, and army. Indeed, after the November 1968 coup d’état, the militaristic aspects of this ideology and identity became more prominent in the official rhetoric, given that the new regime styled itself initially as the “army of the people,” and that citizens were called on to be similarly militant in the construction of the nation. Indeed, the popular roots and anti-elite tenor of the soldier–citizen elision was represented by Traoré himself as a model soldier and citizen, and as fundamentally different from the personal power of his predecessor Keita. The 1978 transformation of the Malian Committee for National Liberation (CMLN) into the Democratic Popular Union of Mali (UDPM) entrenched the military idioms within those of an ostensible constitutionalism, what has been called a “constitution without constitutionalism” in which “civil society is a zone of limited pluralism.” This single-party rule, centred on a military junta, claimed that within its ranks “a real democracy will be assured for all militants.”

Thus, the model of civilian citizen identity became that of the military ruling class and their subordinates, with the discipline, command structure, and cohesive unity of barracks life integrated into wider social norms and values.

Such use of history by political leaders and elites is not in itself noteworthy, especially given the socialist transformers’ overtly propagandistic agendas. What is important to note in connection with the contemporary articulation of democratic citizenship identity is the mode of propaganda production in which the highly ideological regime is itself a communication strategy,

934 Editorial “[The People’s Army]”, L’Essor Daily #5537 Jan. 7, 1969: 1 E.g. “The army (soldiers) are children of the people, come from the people, and are more than every connected to the people.” C.f. “New Year’s Message to the Malian People from Lt. Moussa Traoré, President of the CMLN, Head of State” L’Essor Daily, #5534 2 Jan. 1969


a regime of communication, and its elites and leaders even consciously understand it as such. Also key is the particular constellation of historical and traditional elements that are deployed to make the case for socialism, its overthrow, and the ten-year transition to a military dictatorship dressed up as a return to a more genuine socialist party-state. The prior use of common elements in the socialist, military ‘citizenship’ identity does not invalidate them for use in the articulation of democratic citizenship in the post-apertura period. The common elements do, however, because of their prominence in the contemporary civic orthodoxy, show the pre-democratic identity and values that contemporary Malian democratic pedagogues are trying to ‘recover,’ and instil as fundamental features of Malian democratic political culture.

**Social solidarity awareness**

Key here is the extent to which solidarity is related to hegemony (leadership as domination, management, and education). On the one hand solidarity is an ostensible a strategy of resistance to domination; but it is also, on the other hand an appropriated element of hegemony itself. Common forms of awareness raising (Fr. *sensibilisation*) and disseminating information when done by the rulers to the ruled, are hegemonic; when they are undertaken by the ruled against status quo authority (e.g. the State, the dictator), they constitute resistance-solidarity. Such awareness raising and consensus building is still asymmetrical in its operation and functions, but is more reciprocal, although not necessarily egalitarian. Thus, solidarity is a kind of (or element of) equality under very unequal (vulnerable, precarious) conditions. ‘We’re all in this together’ is a practical version of the more abstract notion of individual equality. The basic contradiction is as much about the nature of community as it is about equality. The axis of governance—flourishing is key because ‘flourishing’ in the Malian context is primarily conceived of in community terms, not (as liberalism would suggest) primarily individual ones.
Supporters of the pro-pluralism movement distinguish between dictatorship under Traoré and the post-1991 opening, on the one hand, and between Traoré and Keïta, who embodies the anti-colonial, emancipatory cause on the other. Traoré’s regime is represented in two historical periods (1968-1979 and 1980-1991) as the outcome of a prolonged ignorance, imprudence, negligence, and incompetence in statecraft, while Keïta represents true belief in the fight against colonialism and for Mali’s future.  

Indicative of this attitude, older upper-middle class intellectuals are nostalgic about the proud nationalist patriotism that animated the past struggles, different from the materialism and cult of money that has emerged in the last generation. The generation of the 1960s sees their struggles against the dictatorship as commensurate with the anti-colonial struggles of an earlier generation, including its ideological content, calls for and justifying sacrifices, repudiation of fraudulent for wealth as dishonourable and against the nation-building cause. This nobility notwithstanding, much acquiescent quietism was demanded and defended in this context.

Also, notwithstanding this distancing from the brutality and greed of the military regime, Malian upper-middle class intellectuals, especially those over thirty years old, commonly equate the sense of patriotism as service in a fight for the good cause of ‘civic sense and duty’ (civisme) and democratic citizenship, and thus preserve the martial or militarized meaning and idioms of political membership. ‘Patriotism’ in this context merges struggle in the cause with consensus and hierarchically organized unity, which tends to quietism and unanimism.

Patriotism was thus equated with nationalism and nation building. From the military take-over, nationalism took on a military mentality that discouraged intellectualism and intellectuals, and imposed hierarchy and unity against dissent and debate. The Keïta-Traoré
dynamic and commensurate citizen identity expectations are represented between ‘brain’ and ‘brawn.’ Important in this is how a historically hegemonic reading of an intellectual vanguard, was attacked under Traoré from a military-vanguard position, and has left actors in the contemporary context re-negotiating, from local and personal experiences as the bases of contradictions, the dominant assumptions from multiple historical periods, in light of the current dominant status of civics orthodoxy. Upper middle and middle class Malians born before 1968 idealize recollections of their early adolescence under the civilian teacher and socialist visionary, Modibo Keïta. Even if the practice of Malian socialism was not very close to the theory, the lingering sense is that there was at least an expectation and modeling of intelligent citizenship, including ideological commitment, practical know-how and moral intelligence. The rule of soldiers, lieutenants, and generals began with a moralistic rhetoric of ending the corruption that had crept into the Keïta regime. This moralized rationale for the coup soon proved to be empty; the rule of soldiers reframed Malians as subjects, despite the language of comrades and fellow militants in the march into the future.

The contemporary dominant class segment face a significant intellectual challenge in re-imagining and re-inventing Malian citizenship as democratic. They refuse the language of the dictatorship and struggle to exploit the unity and communitarian ideas of the socialist founders; they cope with the fact of former dictatorship elites re-inventing themselves as multiparty politicians and democrats, and address the important weight of indigenous and Islamic institutions of political authority and moral and intellectual leadership. Indeed, ruling class actors, from upper-middle class intellectuals to President ATT himself, defend Mali’s alternative, non-Western, and ‘African’ democracy, and thus defend unanism and unity, and suspend the social democratic tenor of the pro-pluralism movement more subtly; it retains the parameters of democratization, and ‘democratic’ development as the watchword, but with chain-of-command
Indeed, the questions of loyalty, patriotism, sacrifice to the building of the country features in the good citizenship discourse of Malians born before 1970; they had the first hand or early experience of the nation-building project and rhetoric of the First Republic. The principled anti-colonial struggles and the idealistic, if deeply flawed, socialist experiment gave way to the “politics of selfishness and anything goes” (politique de se faire plaisir et du n’importe quoi), and now have given way to the contemporary conservative, status quo politics of ‘laissez faire et laissez aller.’

Reconciliation: historical

‘Reconciliation’ is an important term within the constellation of idioms to transform socialist principles and rhetoric into the conditions for liberal democratic deepening and hegemony, and of citizenship identity formation. Reconciliation combines with consensus and loyalty to limit dissent in the context of the platform of unanimity and unanisme. Idioms of historical reconciliation, under the aegis of the democratic legitimization of Konaré and ATT, recall and link the anti-colonial and pro-pluralism struggles.

For example, to further the cause of national reconciliation, one month after the coup against Traoré seven figures from Mali’s post-colonial history were ‘rehabilitated.’ These enemies of the Traoré regime from Keita to the most recent pre-coup purges were ‘rehabilitated’ “for having said ‘no’ to oppression ‘colonial or other,’” to become symbols of the spirit of struggle, and objects of homage “as unanimous as it is deserved.” In the months immediately after the 1991 coup, the tenor of the official State newspaper, at the time under the CSTP government, attempted to balance vilifying the corrupt, defunct regime while building what

939 Interview, University professor Mar16, Bamako, 16 March 2002
940 Interview, University professor (retired), Bamako, 13 September 2002; Interview, Clerk Sep9, Bamako, 9 September 2002
09/13/2002. The end of predatory politics is not the same as genuine participatory politics “The base sends this message to the summit: ‘you don’t represent us, only your own interests.’ A return to the base is needed.” Interview, Office Clerk, Sep27, Bamako, 27 September 2002
941 L’Essor Weekly #1631 20-21 April 1991
bridges were possible between pro-pluralism activists, and to “remain vigilant in order to preserve
the gains of the revolution.” It is now clear, however, the CSTP sought to co-opt or mute the
‘revolutionary’ tenor of these activists.

The treatment of former dictator-president Moussa Traoré in 2002 shows that
reconciliation and rehabilitation are related and key idioms in emerging political elites’ culture
and behaviour. Through reconciliation and rehabilitation, social cohesion and ‘high road’ politics
are linked with the necessity of pragmatic social solidarity. Announcing Traoré’s pardon was “a
highly symbolic gesture,” and part of ATT’s “promise to reconcile Malians with their past.” For
his part, Traoré said he wanted first “to be rehabilitated, so he can enjoy the privileges reserved
for a former head of state.”

After winning the presidential election, ATT visited political cadres in a “strong moment
of reconciliation in Malian history.” This makes an instructive ‘bookend’ with the early post-
dictatorship rehabilitation mentioned above. These figures include those who were executed,
persecuted, and maligned through the dictatorship decades. These bookend reconciliation
overtures illustrate the delicate balance of repudiating and revering the past that Malians,
especially Malian elites, must strike in the formation of citizen identity in a national political
community.

The transformative potential of the second independence, post-1991, seems to have been
very short-lived, even less enduring than the eight Keita years, 1960-68. The optimism
occasioned by General ATT’s coup d’état (26 March 1991) has been somewhat revived with his
accession to the Presidency (2002), but such optimism is qualified by the Malians’ reservations
and disenchantment with the decade of ADEMA rule, and the unmasking of the early days of

942 Tièble Dramé, the Secretary General of the AEEM, interviewed. 07/04/91 Essor Hebomadaire p.8.
Today Dramé is leader of PARENA (Party for National Renaissance). Dramé was a presidential candidate
in 2002. This issue of the L’Essor Weekly touts the dissolution of the Council for National Reconciliation
and the formation of the CSTP transitional government.
944 Radio program, BBC Africa en français, 10:05 10/05/02
Malian democracy, in which the great promise and promises were not, indeed, seem would never be met.  

*Islamic and Western hegemonic struggles*

The links and tensions between Islamic and Western struggles over legitimation and authority in the democratic *post-apertura* context have been discussed in Chapter Five. Here it suffices to recap these links and tensions.  

Maliens’ historical and contemporary experience of Islam creates contention between local socio-political practice and transnational cultural-ideological diffusion and struggle. Conflicts among sites of moral and political authority seek to mitigate absolute authority, especially that of the post-colonial state. Challenging the ostensibly absolute moral and political authority of the secular state, Islamic activism and ideological opposition focuses on education. As with similar issues over colonial language literacy, the place of an Arabic and Islamic education intersects global politics, further complicating questions of appropriate literacy for West African modernity, whereby secular and religious elites contest the meaning of Islam in West Africa. Modernizing Islamic study in Arabic and French is gaining popularity with middle-class actors in cities: a sort of combined secular and religious education, with Islam seen as an official, national faith. A cosmopolitan, urban, petite bourgeoisie, however, favours private, secular, and Western-oriented schooling in French, and largely eschews the value of formal religious education, even if private faith remains important.  

With this dynamic in view, reform Islam seeks to supplant traditional populism, by setting intellectual elites’ sympathies against the old-guard learned Muslims, while forging legitimacy from the notion that Islam serves the vulnerable. Tapping popular support remains a  

challenge, despite the majority status of Islam in Mali, and the leaders’ appeals to a symbolic unity in faith. Unity and fluidity are key in Islam’s role in social and political change in Mali. Also key is the historic state attitude towards religion. The neglect of Islam by secular national state elites has rendered the space encompassed by Islam relatively autonomous, if ambivalent, contested, and disordered. Cultural flux in all these matters is especially influential, in large part due to the relatively small literate elite, whether in Arabic, French, or national languages. To situate reform Islam as a way forward into democratic pluralism greatly downplays the depth of contest in Mali over visions of Islam into the 21st century.

Islamic values are largely neglected by the mainstream (liberal middle class secular State) in attempting to link foreign and local norms and practices of democratic citizenship. Thus, the distance that exits between the Islamic and liberal-democratic citizenship discourses tempers the use of Islamic idioms to further the legitimation, via electoral mobilization, of liberal political membership. Thus dissociated from the ‘spirit of March 26th, and the emancipatory strains of Islam, the idioms of Malian Islam establish the ideological conditions of critical and oppositional, yet still conservative, idioms of citizenship identity. By invoking the ‘return to virtue,’ there is a more or less explicit appeal to the religious heritage that interacts with indigenous elements of culture and character.

‘Moral governance’ seeks few of its elements among Islamic values. The secular State ‘principle,’ articulated by Western-oriended actors, emphasizes the politics of conserving loyal positions within the government, and limits the shortcomings with which a critical Islam challenges the ruling government. Islamic leaders critique neo-liberal democratization and good governance as an externally directed and conceived project from their position and preservative/conservative modernization perspective.

The neglect mentioned above has a number of features dependent on the history of Islam in Mali. Politicizing Islam is among the most openly critical voices of good governance as part of the externally conditioned national development agenda. The potential of politicizing Islam to act
as a counter-hegemonic voice is clear in the increasing formal State recognition of this voice, and attempts to co-opt its most outspoken leaders. Nevertheless, this potential, to participate in reclaiming and representing legacies of counter-hegemonic resistance, is conditioned by the conservatism of Malian Islam, on the one hand, and, on the other, the role as religious practice rather than Muslim culture that Islam plays in Mali.  

In the context of the civics orthodoxy, the selection of certain key features and events from Malian history is instructive about the ‘ideal type’ relationship between religious and political ethics in a predominantly Muslim society. In particular is the parallel existence of a devout religiosity, combined with a circumspect pragmatism that mediates any fanaticism. Indeed, within an accommodating secular perspective, Sonni Ali (fl. 1470 CE) personified the pre-colonial stance of established power towards Islam, according to historian Boubou Hama, and was “the very synthesis of his people.”

Moreover,

Although he never lingered in the mosques to which he frequently made donations, neither did he keep the sages at a distance, since on numerous occasions he recognized their usefulness and great value. For him, Islam was good only to the degree to which it helped him to establish the unity of his empire. A subject like any other, the Muslim deserves respect insofar as he participates in the established order and in the effort to unify the [Western] Soudan.  

As an archetype of the relationship between political and religious authority this experience placed Islam second, in a complementary role in terms of ultimate moral authority, even during a reign that increased Islam’s extent across the territory.

The colonial period and post-independence secular modern stance set the stage for a tug of war over ‘tradition,’ both Islamic and indigenous, in the context of politicizing Islam and challenging the liberal-democratic governance model. Accordingly, Islam remains a potential

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946 Interview, Senior NGO executive 8Dec, Bamako, 8 December 2002, Interview, High school teacher #1Nov11, Bandiagara 11 November 2002; Interview launderer and Koran teacher, 12 December 2002 Bamako.
means through which good governance discourse is resisted, while the good morals discourse is accommodated. This use of Islam, simultaneously to support and to critique good governance agendas, interrogates the ways in which morals and governance are linked, whether to transmit and reproduce governance as the ultimate aspiration of contemporary foreign supported and local, elite-led social transformation in Mali, or to hold to aspirations other than merely liberal political modernization.

Nevertheless, it is important to link the demarcation of political membership (inclusion or exclusion of individuals and groups) with the procedures strictly internal to the community thus constituted. Thus, the core of citizenship issues is the historical processes of political community genesis; this is emphatically not simply a historical fiat of colonial map-making, or of national conferences or constitution-making, but an ongoing, significant imaginative project.

**Western norms do not combine readily with Islamic ones.**

Indigenous and Islamic norms have combined in the past and been normalized as syncretic, embedded, and indigenized forms of Islam, and as Islamized forms of indigenous norms and practices. In this pattern of combining, indigenous and Islamic norms and practices reflected those, respectively, of rural and urban social divisions (classes, education level and type, and trades/production). Thus, they reflected both the division of rural and urban life, as well as integrate these together; for example Islamic teachers from urban bases going out to teach in villages and attract students from rural areas into the towns and cities.

In the post-colonial context, Islam flourishes in urban and rural milieus and reflects the historic separation and integration of indigenous and the Islamic norms and practices. The contemporary conflict between the Western and Islamic discourse and actors is a specifically urban phenomenon. Thus, the rural-urban ideological split is now complicated to include multiple axes vis à vis the indigenous rural population.
Thus, Western and Islamic actors contest in urban discourses norms, and to this end selectively deploy indigenous elements to legitimate their respective perspectives. Western, urban secular actors deploy indigenous idioms more than Islamic ones. This is in part because of the ambivalence of the new urban Islamic actors toward the long-established, indigenized Islamic norms and practices, which are alternately deemed to be corrupt forms of Islam and, on the other hand, exemplary of ‘Islam-as-local norms’ expressed in statements such as ‘Mali is a Muslim society.’

At a general level, the indigenous and Muslim hegemonic drives seek to manage social divisions with combined social and civic frameworks. Conversely, the Western hegemonic drive is distinctive in that it seeks to keep the civic and the social separate, despite the realities that intertwine the two. The Western drive struggles to incorporate key elements of how, on the one hand, the indigenous idioms manage divisions based in class or individual interest through social solidarity; while, on the other hand, the Islamic drive encompasses politics and society with moral authority claims to span both realms, and challenges secularism perceived as neo-colonialism. By seeking to manage all social divisions, and by relying on the synthetic adoption and domination of indigenous and Muslim terms and strategies of hegemonic struggle, the Western drive attempts to shore up its own linkages between the civil-political and the social.

Moreover, the dominant tendencies of Islam in Mali feed an ‘accommodating secularism’ supported from the Western-modelled separation of religion and state since the colonial and independence regimes, as well as by the preservation of indigenous religious and ritual practice, including marabouts, magic, and reputations of occult power.948

Concluding overview and contributions to the debates

The perspective that Mali is a model of democratization in Africa is held and driven by segments of the unity-seeking ruling class (local and foreign, State and NGO development

948 Interview, diviner 9 September 2002 Bamako; Interview, University professor (retired), Bamako 13 September 2002, Bamako
practitioners), who articulate a Western-oriented, procedurally minimal democracy inherent to the conceptualization of democratization processes. Both the intended and unintended consequences of this hegemonic project co-opt or marginalize indigenous and Islamic norms, practices, institutions and identities, and produce the ostensible universalization of Western-democratic ones.

Ultimately, the hegemonic strategy of the ruling class-in-formation is to produce (Fr. former) citizens suited to and acquiescent political and economic liberalization. Indeed, the artificiality of political ‘cohesion’ under the ruling party before ATT as well as under his ‘national unity’ government since 2002 shows the ‘cohesion’ in crisis, partly masking ongoing difficulties and frustrating the emergence of more effective pluralism. Moreover upper and upper-middle class actors represent democratization by marginalizing idioms of dissent and opposition in favour of ‘moral governance,’ which stresses and tolerates highly personalized politics at the national and local levels, and is articulated more broadly with idioms of moral recovery and social cohesion that preserve and reproduce hierarchical social norms.

In tandem with such a ruling-class vision of national citizenship, cultural, educational, and ideological transformation remains central to the contemporary citizen identity project, which is commensurate with international financial institutions and donor countries’ neo-liberal vision of democratization.

While dominant class segments still envision the ‘good paterfamilias’ government, these segments also exhibit contradictory or ambivalent attitudes towards State authority, reproducing both qualified deferential attitudes and those of participation, opposition, and engagement. From such an ambivalent position, straddling civil society and the state, upper-middle class actors resist

While a careful analysis of the 2007 presidential and legislative elections remains to do, it will test this view of frustrated pluralism in the national political sphere. This study points to the pervasive political culture of ‘unbalanced unanimity’ that may continue to frustrate political pluralism in Mali. Of particular interest will be how to combat the reality and perception of « democratic backsliding [recul] through weakening political parties and the emasculation [émasculisation] of all forms of credible and responsible opposition, » as well as « unanimism [that] kills democracy, collasping it into one man’s will. » Touré, S. and Oumar, S. ibid
and reproduce liberal citizen norms, on the one hand seeking to simplify rich (and potentially challenging) idioms of action in Malian political and social life, while, on the other hand to exploit simultaneously this complexity to enrich minimal citizenship norms and practices. To further this transformation of political culture, middle-class segments participate in the development of a hegemonic-democratic political culture, and in a broad political education project. Indeed, among these actors the discourse of ‘democratic cultural advantages’ is especially fascinating; it links the donor and IFI-led enthusiasm for neoliberal democratization to the more qualified enthusiasm of domestic actors who are seeking to access the narrow post-1992 economic prosperity.

In Malian political culture and in the scholarship of Malian political change, the hegemonic project of citizen identity formation becomes more evident as discourses, norms, and practices produced and reproduced by privileged actors. Used thus, indigenous norms and practices, and those of Islam especially, provide Malians with ambivalent elements with which to transform political culture and citizen identity. Where indigenous and Islamic norms work in tandem, especially in Southern rural communities, these encompass consensus-unanisme, unity, patriarchy, and patron-client solidarity. Without a more comprehensive sense of political membership and identity in Mali, merely procedural democratization project remains vulnerable to competition from religiously based social and political movements. In such competition, not only will regional and urban-rural differences be especially important, but, as with communitarian critiques of ‘thin’ liberal citizenship, individualism will face challenges from multiple, alternative sites of moral, social, and political authority. Sustainable and deepening democratic transformation in Mali needs more than enthusiastic neo-liberal democratization.

To understand more fully the perhaps intuitively obvious claim that the norms and practices of neoliberal Western democracy are contradictory to Malian political and cultural traditions, this dissertation investigates how legitimacy is sought and produced, how consensus or hegemony is achieved, and how responses reproduce or resist such legitimation.
Cosmopolitan foreign and domestic actors are attempting to provide a rationale for neo-liberal democracy in Mali. This thesis is a critical chronicle of the contours of and orthodoxies of this rationale, and of the multiple attempts to make it palatable both to those complicit in its articulation, seeking ruling class consolidation, and to the general population in a broader social hegemony. By challenging the democracy and democratization literature about Anglophone and Francophone Africa and the view that Mali is a model of democratization in Africa, this thesis questions the ostensibly universal minimal democracy discourse embedded in policies of structural adjustment and political liberalization. Thus, this thesis opens the conceptual framework of democratic citizenship inherent in the democratization discourse to greater critical scrutiny. Moreover, the contested character of these multiple constructions become evident only as the thesis carefully and critically unpacks the development and deployment of selectively synthesized indigenous, Islamic, and Western-democratic norms, practices, and institutions of citizenship in contemporary Mali. Thus, apparent historical and cultural legacies of conserving traditions (e.g. accommodative consensus and patriarchal deliberation) are part of a hegemonic enterprise to articulate neo-liberal democracy with domestic norms and practices.

Using and reworking Africanist class analysis to chart the material bases of domestic political power in Mali, ethno-linguistic enquiry of this thesis sets forth the nuances of key idioms within Malians’ terms of political discourse. Thus informed by historically and ethnographically “thick” investigation, uncommon in democratization research, this thesis pulls together a complex, often recombinant, matrix of persistent tensions in the debates about the meanings and practices of democracy and democratization in Mali. The thesis attends to the multiple sites of social division (e.g. international, local, ethnic, class) where ‘stakeholders’ debate contemporary socio-economic transformation.

Moreover, this dissertation interrogates the discourses (and their relationships) of secularity, tradition, patriarchy, authenticity, and ‘being modern,’ as these discourses are produced by actors in formal and information political spaces, in which Malian history is used as
part of the ostensibly political and cultural fitness of Mali and Malians for liberal democratic norms and practices.

The comparative politics of democratization in Africa studies transitions and consolidation more than the deepening of democracy. The approaches, definitions and assumptions that guide questions and analysis of potential durability are derived from those deployed to study transition – i.e., amenable to minimalist perspectives on electoral government turnover and institutional reforms. The thesis’ main analytical contribution analyzes the “common core” of indigenous and Islamic citizen identity, as these seek to moralize modernization in the context of political and economic liberalization. The study goes beyond democratization as political and economic liberalization to show how democratic citizen identity is rooted in indigenous, Islamic, and Western norms and practices, which are plural and dynamic.

Without a more embedded sense of political membership and identity, the merely procedural democratic project remains vulnerable to challenges from multiple, alternative sites of moral, social, and political authority, and the pursuit of sustainable democratic deepening risks occlusion entirely. The fragmentation of democratic experience and thinking replaces the often-assumed homogeneity of the donor-lead discourse of ‘model’ democratization with a richer and more challenging conception of democratization, and an indigenised, if truncated conception of democracy. Thus filling out an understanding of the discursive convergence among donors and local actors enriches the debates about the character of African and donor democracy in the specifically hegemonic relationships surrounding democratization. While it points to a form of sustainable, minimal democratization for it also raises question as to the democratic character of such transition, given the reproductions of hegemonic relations domestically and internationally.
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High school teacher, 25 June 2002
High school teacher, 26 June 2002
Municipal Court magistrate, 3 July 2002
University professor, 14 July 2002.
Women’s advocacy NGO animatrice, 5 July 2002
Foreign NGO worker, 12 July 2002.
High school teacher 24 July 2002
Office clerk, 14 August 2002.
Assistant archivist, 15 August 2002.
Engineer and neighbourhood religious leader, 24 August 2002

**September-December**

Apprentice auto mechanic, former *madrasa* student, 8 September 2002.
Apprentice diviner, practicing Muslim, 9 September 2002
Office Clerk, Sep9, Bamako, 9 September 2002
University professor #1Sep9, Sept 9 2002.
University professor #2Sep9, Sept 9 2002
University professor (retired), 13 Sept 2002;
Associate madrasa director #1Sep17, 17 September 2002
Assistant madrasa director #2Sep17, 17 Sept 2002
Domestic NGO worker, 24 Sept. 2002,
Office Clerk, Sep27, Bamako, 27 September 2002
Retired import-export entrepreneur, 15 October 2002.
Senior NGO executive, 1 October 2002.
Agricultural researcher, 2 October 2002
University professor 5 October 2002.
Senior NGO executive, 14 October 2002
Domestic NGO worker, 16 October 2002.
Foreign NGO worker, 16 October 2002.
High school teacher, 21 November 2002
Public and NGO sector Political consultant, 1, 8, December 2002.
Senior NGO executive, 8 December 2002,
Retired journalist, Bamako, 8 Dec 2002
Communications officer, Rally for Mali, 9 December 2002.

Former ADEMA EID design team member, 10 December 2002


Private high school principal, 11 December 2002

Launderer and Koran teacher, 12 December 2002.

Engineer and neighbourhood religious leader, 4 December 2002

Former ADEMA national executive member, 13 December 2002.

Foreign NGO worker, 15 December 2002

**Bandiagara (Rural town, district capital) 5\textsuperscript{th} region**

Trades worker 1 November 2002

Trades worker 3 November 2002

High school teacher #1Nov11, 11 November 2002

High school teacher #2Nov11, 11 November 2002

**Sanankoroba, Koniobla (periurban town district capital, rural village) 2nd region**

Farmer and village association executive member, 1 July 2002 Koniobla

Small holding farmer, 5 July 2002, Koniobla,

Assistant mayor 6 July 2002 Sanankoroba.

Assistant mayor 7 July 2002 Sanankoroba.

Small holding farmer, 14 July 2002 Koniobla

Small holding farmer, 28 July 2002 Koniobla

**Ségou (regional capital) 4th administrative region**

National election observer, 14 May 2002 Ségou

**FOCUS GROUPS**

1. High school students, 11 November 2002, Bandiagara

2. High school students, 11 March 2002 Bamako
3. High school students, Bamako, 12 March 2002,
4. High school students Bamako, 14 March 2002
5. High school teachers 22 March 2002 Bamako
6. Tontine, 6 July 2002, Bamako
7. High school teachers, 14 March 2002 Bamako
8. University professors, 10 May 2002, Bamako


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