EDUCATING PIOUS CITIZENS: LOCAL POLITICS, INTERNATIONAL FUNDING, AND DEMOCRACY IN BAMAKO`S ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

By ÉMILIE ROY

B.A., M.A.

A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy.

McMaster University

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (2012) McMaster University
Religious Studies Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Educating Pious Citizens: Local Politics, International Funding, and Democracy in Bamako's Islamic Schools.

AUTHOR: Émilie Roy, B.A. (University of Ottawa), M.A. (Université Laval).

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Celia Rothenberg.

NUMBER OF PAGES: 278 pages.

ABSTRACT

In this study, I emphasize the agency of the Malian arabisant community (individuals usually trained in médersas who use Arabic as their first language of communication and who often identify first and foremost as Muslims) in creating, maintaining, and improving an education system which provides the tools needed for young Malians to be pious Muslims and productive citizens of the Republic of Mali. By creating an extensive médersa system over the years, in collaboration and confrontation with the successive governments in Mali and abroad, Malian arabisants have answered the need for a new definition of what it is to be a modern Muslim democrat in a secular democracy. I suggest that the specific formation of the educational system in Mali is related to the development of the uniquely Malian configuration of what it is to be an arabisant.

I show how médersas have allowed and still encourage the development of a new mentality that gives Malian Muslims the tools necessary to re-define themselves in their own environment. Malian arabisants have reformulated their religious practice and sociability towards what has been called Islam mondain: a moralization of the mundane. One's energy is focused on morally purifying daily life in order to render it "islamically" sound while living in an environment that is not Islamic *per se*. It is an internalization of faith that allows the believer to enjoy the benefits of a rapidly modernizing environment by re-imagining both modernity and tradition as compatible and complementary. Islam mondain offers a model for virtuous socio-economic comfort, and an islamization of the benefits of globalization and modernization that renders them morally pure.

This research thus contributes to the theoretical and anthropological study of Islam as a lived faith in a secular democracy; such a study is central to an understanding of the developing relationships between Islam, modernity, and secular democracy across the Muslim world. It also speaks to the very current issues faced by Muslims living in "Western" countries and vice versa. This research illustrates the agency of the Malian arabisants in defining their relationship to modernity and democracy, and thus engages with the variety of research that shows other Muslim communities in the world also engaged in such a re-definition of themselves and of their tradition.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks chiefly go to my supervisor, Dr. Celia Rothenberg, who believed in me and my project from the beginning. Her advice, constructive criticism, and encouragement were precious and instrumental for the completion of my degree and of this dissertation. I would also like to thank the members of my present supervisory committee, Dr. Ellen Badone and Dr. Ronald Lukens-Bull, as well as former member Dr. Zdravko Planinc, for the time and effort they invested in my betterment as a scholar. A special thanks to Doreen Drew who worked so hard to get me through the administrative hurdles that always puzzled me.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my parents, Angèle Ferland and Jacques Roy, who have always been supportive (willingly or not) of my academic and life choices. I am grateful for the many ways, big or small, in which they have supported me over the years, from allowing me to discover Mali at a very young age to paying my rent when I could no longer afford it. For their moral and emotional support and their heavy subsidizing of my pursuit of knowledge wherever I could find it, I thank them from the bottom of my heart. I would also like to thank the Fond Québécois de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique for providing the funds necessary for the two years I spent in the field in Mali.

I am grateful to all my interviewees and friends in Bamako. I thank all médersas owners and employees who spent time conveying precious information to me, for their kindness, patience, and understanding; this dissertation would not exist without it. The special dedication of Alexis Sanou, Youssouf Samaké, Zakariah Kansaye, Mr. Kaba, and Mr. Sissoko were invaluable. I also owe gratitude to my numerous friends in Bamako who made the whole process of field research possible and even enjoyable: Tanti, Omar, ”Vieux”, Mary my Ghanian mother and her brother-in-law. My deepest recognition also goes to Anne Henner, Daline Derival, and Modibo (Van) Sangaré.

A host of friends and colleagues at McMaster and in Hamilton have been instrumental in the completion of this dissertation. For their friendship and support within the department, I would like to thank Stephanie Balkwill, Sarah Pelton, Joe Wiebe, Laura Lee Nimilowich, Alexis Dianda, and Grant Poettcker. For their precious help, mentorship, and friendship, I am grateful to Dr. Jennifer Selby and Dr. Justin Klassen. I also thank John and Barbara Dawson, as well as Talene Thomasian, who have dedicated much time proofreading this dissertation and provided insightful comments as well as friendship.

Last but not least, I am grateful to my dear friend and soon-to-be doctor Laura Tomes for all the time, work, and friendship she has invested in me and in my research over the past six years. I owe you much of my dissertation and of my sanity, we made it until the end. Not bad really, for a horse and a frog.

PREFACE

I left Bamako, after 2 years of field research, on December 29th 2010. Earlier that month, Mohammed Boazizi set himself on fire in Sidi Bouzid, and died the following January in a Tunisian hospital. What was not yet called the "Arab Spring" was underway with a snowball effect few people had foreseen. Within a few months, the governments of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya fell under the popular (and foreign) pressure and ripples of these events reached the Sahel region through the Sahara desert. Mali has since then been particularly affected.

Northern Mali, since independence in 1960, has seen a number of uprisings (1962-64, 1990-95 and 2007-2009) led by various Tuareg political groups with an armed wing. Each time, the rebellions were defeated or a peace accord was negotiated by the central Malian government in Bamako. However, following the defeat of Qhadafi's troops in Libya, an estimated 2,500 heavily-armed men crossed the Sahara to Northern Mali in the last months of 2011 and early 2012.[1] These Tuareg men of various nationalities (including Malian) who had fought in Libya merged with the local groups to form the *Mouvement National de Liberation de l'Azawad* (MNLA). The MNLA's stated goal is to create a federated Tuareg political entity, named Azawad, in Northern Mali and, possibly, in Mauritania, Northern Niger, Southern Algeria, and Southern Libya.

I need here to explain succinctly the geographical/ethnic division of Mali relevant to the situation in the North. Tuaregs are a group found in all countries sharing borders in the Sahara desert. In Mali, they mostly live in the Northern part of the country, centered on the towns of Kidal, Timbuktu and Gao, though they do not represent the majority of the population, even there. It is unclear how much support the MNLA has within the Tuareg community of the North and the assumption is that they have little support from the other ethnic groups of the North (mainly the Songhaï). During my stay in Bamako, Southern Malians have often expressed discontent with the Tuareg rebellion movements, accusing them of racism (Tuaregs are fair-skinned while Southern Malians are mostly black) and of dividing the country. The Southern population also resented concessions made by the government to the rebels in the previous rebellions and "soft" way the government was dealing with the issue.

Since January 2012, the MNLA has been successful in controlling the vast, sparsely populated territory of Northern Mali. Their troops, well trained and armed in Libya, have inflicted serious defeats to the Malian army, which fed discontent in Southern Mali. In the wake of the general dissatisfaction of the population regarding President Amadou Toumani Touré's management of the situation in the North, and out of frustration for being sent to the Northern front without proper equipment, segments of the Malian army based outside Bamako marched on the presidential palace on March 21st,

[1] Jeremy Keenan, "Mali's Tuareg rebellion: What next?" See also Al Jazeera, "Explainer: Tuareg-led rebellion in north Mali."

2012. Following a night-long battle around the presidential palace of Koulouba, a military junta led by Captain Amadou Sanogo overthrew President Touré and took power on March 22nd, 2012, ending 21 years of democracy in Mali.

The confusion in the capital city, the seat of executive and legislative power, as well as within the chain of command of the Malian army allowed the MNLA to advance on garrisons and strongholds of the army in the North. On March 30th, Kidal fell to the MNLA after the Malian army's retreat. The next day, the MNLA took Gao and Timbuktu fell on April 1st, 2012. At that point, the MNLA was in control of all the territory it considers to be part of the Azawad and proclaimed the independence of the Azawad on April 6th.

(Source: Al Jazeera, "The Crisis in Mali," http://stream.aljazeera.com/story/crisis-mali-0022168. Last modified April 11th, 2012.)

However, the situation was complicated by the presence, in the North and loosely allied to the MNLA, of various violent Islamic political groups: al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and the Ansar Din, to name the two biggest. These groups have no ethnic basis and their political goal is an Islamic state in all of Mali, as oppose to the MNLA whose goal is a secular state in Northern Mali. Nevertheless, and out of convenience, the groups allied to take control of the North. One can only, as of May 2012, speculate on the possible infighting among the various para-military groups in Northern Mali.[2]

[2] For an interesting point of view: The Telegraph, "Triumphant Tuareg rebels fall out over al-Qaeda's

In a similar predicament, one can also only speculate about the fate of the military junta in Bamako.[3] As of May 1st, 2012, clashes are happening in Bamako between soldiers loyal to the junta and the "bérets rouges," the elite airborne regiment stationed in Djicoroni Para.[4] This regiment did not join the mutiny of March 21st, and is credited with allowing President Touré – who was himself part of that elite regiment before he retired from the Malian army – to escape the presidential palace under siege. Clashes between soldiers of the junta and student protestors, led by the *Association des Élèves et Étudiants du Mali*, are reported to have claimed lives on April 30th, 2012 but the information remains to be confirmed.

The people I have worked with in Bamako – owners and employees of médersas to whom I collectively refer to as "arabisants" – have been affected by the recent events in Mali and the Arab world although they have not directly participated in these events. As Malian citizens, they have been affected by the changes in the nature of the state as well as its territorial integrity. As Muslims, and although they have no contacts with violent groups in the North to my knowledge, they are part of the new debate surrounding an Islamic state in Mali. As ordinary people, they have had their personal security as well as that of their pupils compromised by the fighting in the streets of Bamako. More generally, they have been affected by that changes happening in the Muslim world at large. The most evident of these impacts have been the fall the Qadhafi's regime and its implications in Northern Mali. In Bamako itself, a school like the médersa of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye, jointly funded by Libya and the United Arab Emirates, has seen its sources of income dry up. Chances are high that other schools are in a similar situation.

Despite the recent political events in Bamako and in Northern Mali, I contend that the democratic sentiment shared by the arabisants of Bamako, and to which I allude all through this dissertation, is still strong. To my knowledge, and based on recent phone calls with participants in the research, the restoration of the democratic state and the territorial integrity of Mali remain dear to the constituencies of Bamako's médersas.

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
May 1st, 2012

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jihad in Mali."

[3] For an in depth discussion of the possible consequences of the coup in Mali, see: African Arguments, "Mali: how bad can it get? – A conversation with Isaie Dougnon, Bruce Hall, Baz Lecocq, Gregory Mann and Bruce Whitehouse."

[4] Neighbourhood of Bamako. "Para" stands for the French "parachustiste."

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Introduction

"La débrouille" is a strategy that is well ingrained in the daily habits of most urban Malians. "La débrouille" is what allows children on my street in Bamako to create elaborate toys out of garbage; it is in the menial jobs my teenage neighbour (who fancies himself an American inner-city kid) will do to buy himself a cool cellphone. "La débrouille" is in the intricate network of relations that a young adult, like my friend Van (Modibo), will use in order to gain the commission on the sale of a third party's (his friend Momo – Mohammed) car. "La débrouille" is what pushed Awa, my young illiterate single female neighbour, to offer to wash my clothes and those of other neighbours in order to rent a room for herself. "La débrouille" is why a young mother will set up a street-stall to sell deep-fried plantain so there can be rice for dinner in her home; it is what drove Mohammed to establish a business recovering scrap metal in Germany and selling it to China."La débrouille" as Malians say, is the many ways, big or small, of making a good life for oneself in an economically precarious and difficult environment. "La débrouille" epitomizes some of the qualities I most admire in Malians:[5] their ingenuity, their resourcefulness, their imaginative ways of adapting to and making the best of their given circumstances.

Contrary to the image so often depicted in the Western media of the populations of destitute African countries as eternal, passive recipients of the generous aid of the West, populations that refuse to "modernize" and remain attached to "backward" traditions – I have found Malians to be active, empowered agents in the creation of their own identities and future. They use all the tools at their disposal, including resources from abroad, to create for themselves a world that suits their needs. I am not suggesting here that Mali is an ideal place to live; most Malians will readily admit that, although they love their country, it has major flaws and is in dire need of a complete overhaul. Most Malians I have talked to, especially younger Malians, talk of changing Mali themselves, on their own terms, to make it a better place – whatever they may consider this to be. In the pages that follow, I draw attention to the agency displayed by Malians, based on a study of Bamako's médersas. Médersas are primary and secondary schools where secular and Islamic courses are taught as part of the program and where Arabic is, at least in part, the language of instruction. I locate in Malians, through my writing, what they have never lost in reality: the right to define and transform their beliefs and practices to fit their present circumstances and recreate themselves into modern democratic Muslims.

Throughout this study, I emphasize the agency of the Malian "arabisant" community. By "arabisant," I mean individuals usually trained in médersas who use Arabic as their first language of communication and who often identify first and foremost as Muslims. Malian arabisants create, maintain, and improve an educational system which provides the tools for young Malians to be pious Muslims and productive citizens of the Republic of Mali. In spite of efforts by a succession of governments – French colonial

[5] By no means am I implying that "la débrouille" is always used to good ends, however.

authorities, socialist one-party rule, or military dictatorship – which attempted to remove Islam from public debate, and attempts by foreign governments (Libyan or Saudi) which wanted to impose Islam as the principal tool to understand politics, the Malian arabisants have endeavoured to demonstrate, via their schools, that they could fully participate in the building of a modern secular nation such as Mali while also being profoundly devout Muslims. Médersas and their constituencies created a new space for Malian Muslims to reconcile their faith with their hopes and desires for the benefits of modernity. Malian Muslims have adopted a mentality referred to as "Islam mondain," where one focuses one's energy on rendering one's daily life morally pure while living in an environment that is not Islamic *per se*. Islam mondain refers to an internalization of faith which allows the believer to enjoy the benefits brought about by the rapidly modernizing environment (technology, information, knowledge, democracy, liberalization of the public space) by re-imagining both modernity and tradition as compatible and complementary. I demonstrate in this thesis how, through constant conversation (and sometimes confrontations) with political actors in Mali and abroad, the arabisants involved with médersas in Mali have acquired the knowledge and dispositions to be both pious Muslims capable of making moral decisions for themselves, and also productive citizens in the modernizing Malian economy and secularized public space.

In the first chapter, I review the literature on the anthropology of Islam in Africa and present my research methodology. In the literature review, I critically discuss academic works touching on four main topics: 1) the problem of a definition of Islam; 2) the concepts of modernity and globalization in Islam; 3) the specific anthropological issues of studying Islam in an African context; and 4) the concepts and practices that form the basis of Islamic education. The works of Lukens-Bull, Haenni and Holtrop, and Soares and Otayek close this section as they each address the concepts of Islamic knowledge and education, modernity, globalization and the way these concepts are understood by modern Muslim agents of change and transformation. These authors' works also provide much of the theoretical basis for this study. Read together, they present the ideas that both tradition and modernity can be (re-)imagined as compatible and complementary (Lukens-Bull 2001, 2005); that young modern Muslims today are finding new ways to combine a profound devotion to Islam in their daily lives while enjoying the numerous benefits of a modern globalized world (Haenni and Holtrop 2002) and that this new way of being Muslim, called Islam mondain, is well adapted to modern secular public spheres such as the one found in Mali (Otayek and Soares 2007).

To link this theoretical discussion of Islamic modernity with practices found "on the ground," I turn to the tools offered by anthropology. I conducted fieldwork (January 2009 to December 2010) in numerous Malian médersas (with special attention to five schools in particular), and met with people involved at different levels of administration of the médersa school system. I have also talked, formally and informally, to Malians of all ages, genders, social categories, income levels, and discussed with them their views on

médersas, Islam, and Mali; Mali's place in Africa and in the world; international aid and its impact on Malian politics; and the inevitable problems of a poor, new democracy. The modality of these conversations will be detailed in chapter one as well as some epistemological considerations inherent to the work of the anthropologist.

In the second chapter, I explain the genesis of the Islamic educational system in Mali. I show the development by the French colonial authorities first and then by the Malian government after 1960, of a legal framework to regulate Islamic education in Mali. I offer a historical overview of both the legislation aiming to limit the extent of Islamic education (and the teaching of Arabic) in the French colonies of West Africa and the various ways in which the locals negotiated the rules in order to continue spreading Islamic knowledge. In this chapter, I also focus on the importance of the conversations and confrontations between the political authorities and the proponents of Islamic education in the development of médersas as they presently exist in Mali. Indeed, the strict regulations imposed on education by the French and subsequent Malian governments have forced Malians to re-invent the ways in which they transmit Islamic knowledge. An unintended consequence of the governmental legislation on Islamic and Arabic schooling has been the development of alternative forms of Islamic education by locals who, in an attempt to have their schools formally recognized, have combined in a new and original way the modern teaching methods of French schools recently created in Mali and those of traditional qur'anic education practised locally for centuries. This new form of education in the médersa has become extremely popular in Mali, as I demonstrate with statistical data regarding enrolment in médersas in the past decade.

The surge in popularity of médersas can be explained by both local and international factors, the focus of my analysis in the third chapter. For a number of reasons which have to do with the international economic climate as well as the sheer poverty of Mali, the public infrastructure for education, as well as that of many other sectors, is crumbling under the pressure of a fast-growing population. The Structural Adjustment Plans imposed by international organizations on Mali, as well as various pressures to reduce government spending have significantly affected the public educational system in Mali since 1980. Because of the poor quality of education received in public schools, their failure to lead students to gainful employment, and the perception of the absence of an ethical dimension to the schools' curriculum, Malian parents tend to have a poor opinion of public schools. The private sector has, partly in response to the decrepitude of the public schools, invested in the market of education and created médersas as well as private French schools. The médersas sell themselves by promoting their dual role: to provide an education to Malian children that make them both productive members of society and morally strong Muslims, while also inserting them in a new clientele network not controlled by the state. Parents, faced with choices in education, and also aware of the benefits that may come with the various types of education offered in Mali, have elaborate strategies in regards to the educational pathways

of their children. The médersas have become a popular option for children's education since they offer, according to parents, a chance as good as any to find gainful employment while also educating and socializing children in way that is closer to the "tradition" cherished by parents.

Following my overview of local governments, international economic inequities, and their impact on the development of the Islamic educational system in Mali, I move to a discussion of the most recent factors which are assumed, by scholars and "experts" in the field of international security, to have had a great influence on Mali's médersas and therefore, on the kind of Islam that schools promote. These factors are the institutional and personal aid from Arab countries. In the fourth chapter, I discuss the various forms of aid given to the Malian Islamic community by Arab states, organizations, and individuals. This aid was instrumental in the great expansion of the médersa school system that took place in the decade between 1973 and 1983. During that period, the oil boom in the Middle East allowed Arab countries to provide generous aid to many countries in the underdeveloped world; Mali was a major recipient of such funds. I focus specifically on the aid provided by Libya and Saudi Arabia to Mali during this period, not only because these countries were the major purveyors of funds, but also because they were the countries with the clearest political agendas. However, I make the point that, though Malian arabisants have welcomed the monetary help of Arab countries, the arabisants have remained at all times independent in terms of the Islamic content conveyed in their schools. Using the tools developed by the NGO sector and international institutions to assess the efficacy of international aid in underdeveloped countries, I show that there is no more reason to assume Arab funds have succeeded in changing local attitudes towards Islam and the political structure of Mali than there are to assume that western aid has succeeded in developing underdeveloped countries. Malian arabisants, in all cases, have been able to co-opt the money of donors, be they Arab or not, to continue on the path they have traced for themselves and their schools.

In the fifth and last chapter of this study of Islam in Bamako's médersas, I link together the analyses of the previous chapters – the institutional pressure, the international input, and local agency – in order to define a Malian Muslim modernity. Through a detailed discussion of the curriculum for médersas, especially the courses and material relating to Islam, I argue that médersas are participating in a standardization and rationalization of Islamic knowledge. In the courses offered in Bamako's médersas, the Islam transmitted to children is relatively non-controversial, purged of local particularities and presented on the same footing as secular material. Religious knowledge is still central to the curriculum of médersas but, at the same time, médersas are increasing the number of hours dedicated to secular knowledge with the aim of creating productive citizens. The combination of the two emphases found in médersas aims to create a self-conscious Muslim who is also and at the same time a citizen of a secular democracy. I show the effect of such education on the constituencies of médersas by discussing the ways in

which arabisants participate in the public sphere in Mali. Specifically, I pay attention to how they reconcile a morally pure, pious way of life with the forms and demands of a globalized and modern environment. I argue that the local answer to such circumstances, while developed in constant conversations and confrontations with the political authorities and the global *umma*, can be found in Islam mondain – a form of sacralization of daily life that allows one to live as a pious Muslim in a secular, pluralistic, and democratic environment.

The overall argument of this study demonstrates that médersas in Mali participate in the education of modern citizens who put value in both their religious beliefs and the democratic principles of the state. More broadly, I argue that Muslim knowledge and devotion need not necessarily be seen as contradicting the basic tenets of a secular democracy and that, together, one can work to reinforce the other.

Chapter 1
The Basis of Research: Literature Review, Methodology and Questions of Positionality

Academic discussions about a definition of "Islam" that scholars and Muslims alike can agree upon abound, just as such debates exist for "modernity" or "globalization" or any other broad and important phenomenon. The first section of this chapter will be dedicated to an overview of the academic literature on the nature of Islam, modernity, globalization and education. In many cases, the works deal with specific localities and groups outside of Mali, yet the theoretical backbone they provide is applicable to my research. By drawing on these works and extracting the relevant theoretical core, my research will apply concepts of Islam and of modernity to the specific field of Mali while allowing the voices of Malian actors in the médersa system to present their own understandings of what it is to be a Muslim in Mali today.

Much of the presuppositions surrounding Mali and Islam, still very much alive, is a legacy of French colonial scholarship about "Black Islam." As opposed to "Arab Islam," black Islam has been characterized as open to modernity and receptive to the ideas of the French colonizer. Examples of these views include the following statement dating from the beginning of the millennium: "Mali is, in the words of the Economist Intelligence Unit, a bulwark against Islamic radicalism in Africa; Mali is regarded as being the sole exemplar of freedom in a majority-Muslim country after 9/11."[6] However, Mali is fertile ground for multiple Islamic religious and political philosophies and it is essential to understand how international networks use Malian Islamic schools to promote their ideologies. The capital city of Bamako is an ideal setting for understanding this process insofar as it is the main "centre of economic activity, politics, education, cultural activity, and international assistance, since Mali, on the French model, remains a highly centralized state."[7]

The importance of studying Islam in Mali as it is constructed by Malians seems clear in light of the political tensions between versions of Islam and of modernity; as such, simplistic understandings of Mali and Islam must be rejected. As the literature reviewed here demonstrates, research on Islamic schooling in Mali is available and is of high quality – much of it by Louis Brenner – but the field research dates from the late 1980's and the first half of the 1990's. Although Brenner's data and his analysis of the situation are of great value and still extremely useful to this day, a more contemporary assessment of the state of Islamic education in Mali is necessary.

I have conducted field research in Bamako's médersas on two separate occasions. I spent five months in Bamako in the summer of 2005, to gather data on Islamic schooling

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[6] Benjamin Soares, "Islam in Mali in the Neoliberal Era," *African Affairs* 195, 418 (2005): 78.
[7] Soares, "Islam in Mali in the Neoliberal Era," 80.

in Mali for my Master's thesis submitted in 2007 at Université Laval.[8] I will, from time to time, refer to data gathered in 2005. For ethical reasons imposed by the Ethics Board of Université Laval, names of *médersas* with which I worked in 2005 were to remain anonymous (and names of people were changed in order to preserve their anonymity as well). Therefore, I refer to schools as "Médersa 1", "Médersa 2", etc. In 2009-2010, I again conducted field research in Bamako, this time to gather data for the present dissertation. The details of this research as well as the methodology used are provided in the second section of this chapter. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the position of the researcher in the field in general and a more specific reflection on how the researcher's attributes (both mental and physical) and those of the interviewees, as well as their perceptions of each other, influence the quality and the type of data that was obtained in the field.

Literature Review.

One of the most pressing issues for scholars of Islam today is the challenge of understanding the social construction of local Islamic beliefs and practices in a globalizing world. Some of the key questions in the study of Muslim societies today will be addressed in this thesis. These include: what is Islam? How do transnational contacts influence identity construction of Muslims in Mali? How are conceptualizations of the "correct" teachings and practices of Islam linked to international political, social and economic agendas? What roles do the local schools play in creating national and religious identities in today's increasingly globalized world? The ongoing debates in the field of the anthropology of Islam focus on the first question: what is Islam and how does one take into account the wide diversity of practices referred to as Islamic? For some theorists, Islam is a discursive tradition allowing for a range of variation in practices (Talal Asad 1986) while for others, Islam does not exist for the purposes of anthropology, and the various practices encompassed by the term would be better understood as *islams* (el-Zein 1977). For a third group of researchers, the only possible definition of Islam is extremely minimal in order to encompass all (or most) people referring to themselves as Muslims: "Islam as submission to God" (Lukens-Bull 1999). In the following section, some of the key works that engage definitional questions of Islam, the relationship between Islam and modernity, conceptions of education in Islam and specific problems relative to the anthropology of Islam in Africa are discussed.

[8] See appendixes A and B for Ethics Board approval and CNRST approval for the 2005 research.

Islam and the Problem of Definitions.

A number of anthropologists, political scientists, sociologists and historians have put forward definitions and theories of Islam that try to account for the diversity of practices, linked to cultural backgrounds, encompassed by a "normative" Islam. Geertz, in *Islam Observed* (1968), defines modern anthropology's task as a discussion of culture of which religion is one part. He proposed a hermeneutic approach to the study of religion where religion is understood, and needs to be interpreted, as a system of significant symbols forming a coherent whole. The religious perspective, as the worldview of people who hold religious beliefs, is the conviction that values are grounded in an inherent structure of reality (the "really real"). According to his view, religious symbols must be understood as formulating an image of the world and a program for human conduct; religious symbols are models *for* (a model as providing guidance for how to organize physical relationship) and models *of* (a model as rendering reality comprehensible) reality.[9] To Geertz, therefore, anthropologists of Islam should focus on the comparative study of religion, which he defines as the scientific characterization of the religious perspective, the description of the variety of forms Islam takes, and the analysis of the forces that bring these forms into existence, alter them, or destroy them. This theory allows the researcher to account for the variety, in symbols and religious perspectives, within the frame of a normative Islam.

In contrast, el-Zein (1977) has argued that there is no such thing as a normative Islam. Like Geertz, el-Zein argues that religion is part of the cultural system but in structural relation with its other parts; Islam, in and of itself, without these structural relations, is not a thing; it has no inherent meaning, no positive content. Islam should be understood as an entity amongst others which, when in structural relationship with one another, forms the logic of the cultural system in which entities give one another meaning. Given that entities have no meaning without relationship to the wider cultural system, the analytical category of Islam (and of religion in general) as normative is useless to anthropologists (and arbitrary) and should therefore be disregarded. He argues that it is the entities called *islams* as part of a multiplicity of cultural meaning which should be studied by anthropologists, historians, political scientists, and other researchers.

el-Zein's theory, obviously, has stirred controversy in the academic world of Islamic studies. On the one hand, Talal Asad in "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam" (1986) has categorically rejected it in a short paragraph and with little explanation. Asad offers a novel approach to the anthropological study of Islam, which is also an attempt to resolve the question of definition and diversity of practice. He proposes conceptualizing Islam as a discursive tradition. According to Asad, this approach is useful insofar as it accounts for the historical variations of the political structures and different forms of Islam that are linked to these structures. The methodology he proposes for the

[9] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, NY: Basic, 1973), 93.

anthropological study of Islam should focus on five points: 1) how the narratives translate and represent historically-situated actors; 2) what the social structures (patterns of institutional relations and conditions) in which the discourse was produced are; 3) recognition of political economies and Islamic "dramas" as different discursive exercises; 4) attention to the fact that different types of Islamic practices are not necessarily correlated with particular types of social structures; and 5) Islam as a discursive tradition connects variously with the formation of the moral self, the manipulation of population, and the production of appropriate *knowledges*. Varisco, on the other hand, in his book *Islam Obscured* (2005), defends el-Zein's theory of *islams* as it prevents the natural tendency of anthropologists to substitute the "real" Islam (the one that is practised and can be studied in an observable social context) for the "ideal" Islam. In Varisco's terms, "real" Islam as it is found in circumscribed contexts is similar to el-Zein's *islams* while the "ideal" Islam refers to the emphasis put on orthodoxy (as in Asad). Varisco does, however, acknowledge the gaps in el-Zein's "Beyond Ideology and Theology", where he developed his theory of *islams*, but attributes them to el-Zein's premature death and his lack of time to develop further his ideas.

John Bowen (1992), reminiscent of Asad, also offers a theory of Islam that accounts for contextual diversity while acknowledging the existence of a normative Islam. His theory draws on the common problem faced by scholars of Islam in different fields: the strengths of Islamic studies are the weaknesses of the anthropology of Islam and vice versa. The former focuses on the textual analysis of a normative universal Islam, while the latter emphasizes the culturally-bound practices of Muslim populations. Bowen therefore proposes a greater dialogue between fields. To him, Islamic rituals are in a constant dialectical relationship with both local cultural concerns and the universalizing imperatives of a normative (or textual) Islam. Bowen suggests three levels of analysis of rituals to account for local variations in normative practices: 1) the public form of the ritual, 2) the ritual's overall social meaning, and 3) a comparison of the ritual forms in at least two cultural contexts. Like Geertz, Bowen insists on the importance of a comparative study of Islam in different cultures.

Lukens-Bull, in "Between Text and Practice" (1999), also acknowledges that Geertz was right in stressing comparisons between at least two localities. However, Lukens-Bull disagrees with Geertz regarding the clear methodological distinction the latter draws between mystical and normative Islam (the first being more subject to cultural variations than the second). In this same article which aims at a universal (i.e. accepted by all, scholars and Muslims alike) definition of Islam, Lukens-Bull argues against theories such as that recently proposed by Richard T. Antoun (2001) (reworking of the great versus little tradition dichotomy) and Talal Asad (Islam as a discursive tradition and his privileging of orthodoxy), although he does grant some relevance to the latter. He goes on to propose his own definition of Islam as one that all Muslims and scholars can agree upon: Islam as submission to God. The task of the anthropology of

Islam is consequently to ask *how* Muslims submit to God and to answer it through comparative studies.

Eickelman, in *Islam and the Religions of the Book* (2002), presents a review of theories in the anthropology of Islam, and praises el-Zein's theory of multiple *islams* as a justified reaction to the academic and theological search for an a-historical Islamic essence and the pervasive Orientalist discourse. However, and more so than Varisco, Eickelman emphasizes an apparent flaw in el-Zein's theory: It considers all expressions of Islam as transformations based on a single set of principles. That is to say, Eickelman reproaches el-Zein for, ultimately, making a claim that there is such a thing as an "essence" of Islam insofar as variations and transformations proceed from it. Contra Antoun, Eickelman dismisses the dichotomy of the "great versus little tradition," which is, he argues, merely the juxtaposition of "essential" Islamic principles against an inventory of local cultural practices. Eickelman's argument here is reminiscent of Varisco's partial defence of el-Zein: the study of Islam must avoid simple comparisons of local practices in light of some pure/ideal/essential Islam.

In "Zones of Theory" (1989), Abu-Lughod, like Eickelman, proposes a critical overview of the various definitions and theories developed by scholars of Islam. She argues that Geertz's study of social actors and ideas, and of objectivity and subjectivity in modes of social analysis, is indeed worthwhile, but falls short of explaining the ambiguity of who is doing the reading and how meaning is to be inferred for various individuals. Bourdieu, in Abu-Lughod's reading also falls short by not accounting for the coexistence of contradictory discourses within a given population or tradition. The answer, for her and for Asad, may be in Foucault's theory of discourse and discursive formation. In a more general comment on the scholarship of Islam, Abu-Lughod deplores the politics of place in the anthropology of Islam where theory is limited to three zones: 1) tribalism, family, and kinship, 2) the *Harem* (women, gender, and sexuality), and 3) theories of Islam. She advocates, rather, for a transnational study of Islam taking into account cultural flows, capital flows, political power, and military force. In *Politics of Piety* (2005), Mahmood follows Abu-Lughod in her critique of the "question of women" as the privileged field of the anthropology of Islam. She also critiques the secular-liberal presuppositions of Euro-American discourses on Islam and the proper role of religiosity in the constitution of a modern subjectivity, community, and polity. For Mahmood, what is at stake are the power relations embedded in different institutional sites and practices between the West and the Middle East.

Richard Tapper, in "Islamic Anthropology or Anthropology of Islam" (1995), also offers a critical review of theories developed by anthropologists of Islam with a specific focus on recent works which aim to put the voice of Muslims first. The insider/outsider question is central to Abu-Lughod's, Mahmood's and Tapper's theories insofar as they all ask the question: can Islam be studied and understood by non-Muslims? Tapper describes three problematic theories of Islamic anthropology offered by Ba-Yunus, Ahmad and

Davies. Tapper argues that these authors offer an openly ideological theory of Islamic anthropology which sets up an ideal and then compares specific societies to it. To Tapper, and to use the terms mentioned earlier, these authors are consciously comparing local practices of Islam to a pure/ideal/essential Islam. To summarize briefly, Tapper reproaches Ahmad[10] with unsupported statements in his critique of Western social theory and does practically the same for both Ba-Yunus[11] and Ahmad's critiques of structural-functionalism and marxism. Tapper also quickly dismisses Davies'[12] discussion of the Western secular discourse; Davies argues that Western secular academics understand religion as a human creation and therefore, any material produced by such academics is unable to understand Muslim civilizations.

It is clear that studies of specific practices are the basis on which anthropologists of Islam should build their analysis, whatever the definition one gives to "Islam." As such, this dissertation provides one such description of how certain Muslims (of various *maddhab*, school of thought, and/or sufi traditions) understand and practice their faith in the specific context of Malian Islamic schools. The arabisants, the social actors of the médersas,[13] are also constantly in relation to and negotiating with the global Islamic community, which actively participates in the schools by way of financial assistance, personal involvement, and/or exchange of ideas. Malian médersas are therefore well integrated into a web of international and local relationships that play a role in shaping these schools. A theoretical overview of the impact of modernity and globalization on Islam – and vice versa – is necessary to better grasp the influence of these global networks on Malian médersas.

Studying Islam in Relation to Modernity and Globalization.

In addition to the difficulties surrounding definitions of Islam, theorists are confronted with the problem of studying and understanding Islam as a globalized movement and the relationship of Islam to modernity. Dirlik provides a useful overview of concepts such as modernity, modernization, and globalization as they relate to the developing world in his article "Spectres of the Third World" (2006). He argues that the "modernization discourse" gave birth to the idea of a Third World in a teleological history where it has to "catch up" with the First World, and that this concept is unhelpful to the researcher. Instead, Dirlik proposes a theory of global modernity accounting for the contradictions present in a single world-wide, post-cold war, modernity. He opposes this

[10] Ahmad, A.S. *Toward Islamic anthropology: Definition, Dogma and Directions*. (Ann Arbor, MI: New Era, 1986).

[11] Ba-Yunus, I. and F. Ahmad. *Islamic sociology: An introduction*. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1985).

[12] Davies, M.W. "Towards an Islamic Alternative to Western Anthropology". In *Inquiry* (1985): 45-51. and Davies, M.W. *Knowing One Another: Shaping Islamic Anthropology.* (London: Mansell, 1988).

[13] Be they principals, administrative employees, teachers, and even some students.

theory to the idea of multiple modernities advanced by other theorists, such as Robert Hefner. Hefner, in the aptly-named article "Multiple Modernities" (1998), argues that the failure of secularization theories within the modernization discourse (and therefore of the thesis of Islamic exceptionalism) begs the question of how religions will maintain their claims to provide ultimate meaning, social engagement, and a coherent worldview. The answer, for Hefner, lies in how religions will adapt to modernity and he provides three options: 1) an organic response in holy war, 2) a separatist sectarianism, or 3) acceptance of the diversity of public voices and visions.

Asef Bayat, in *Making Islam Democratic* (2007), develops the idea of an analytical category of Muslim societies as denoting plural and concrete entities allowing for self-conscious Muslim majorities to define their own reality in an inevitably contested and dynamic fashion while claiming their own "true" Islam. According to Bayat, one should pay attention to the social forces that allow Muslim entities to mobilize consensus around their truth with the help of Foucault's theory of power, discourse and authority. Academic theories of transnationalism and globalization[14] suggest that modernity is not so much a paradigm shift as a phenomenon that is experienced globally, but unevenly. Appadurai (1996) proposes that one should prioritize a "theory of rupture" in order to recognize that many subjectivities and modernities are created by the dialogue between tradition and modernity. This theory of multiple modernities helps us to understand the present day construction of the meaning and relevance of numerous influential Muslim political theorists.[15]

Studies focusing on Islam's relationship to modernity are also useful for the study of identity construction in the context of Islamic education. According to Al-Azmeh, in *Islams and Modernities* (1993), the present day Islamic political theories (produced 19th and 20th centuries) are a product of modernity and are characterized by the globalization of the Western order. Traditionalism, as an apologetic or radical reformist discourse, uses modern terms of articulation and criteria of validation insofar as tradition, as an idiom, is reinterpreted in terms of Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment discourses: Marxism, naturalism, liberalism and nationalism. Even protests against modernity are framed within modern categories. Islamism is the mirror image of the modernist state, originated by the Jacobins and realized in the Napoleonic state. Euben defines globalization as the extension of global cultural interrelatedness, which involves the construction of complex images of the other and identity-reinforcing reactions to this proximity to the other. In "Contingent Border, Syncretic Perspectives" (2002), Euben critiques the Western political and economic domination of the world as well as the concomitant dominance of the

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[14] See Vertovec, Steven. 2002. "Religion in Migration, Diasporas and Transnationalism." In *Working Paper Series* no. 02-07. (2002) and Roy, Olivier. *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2004).

[15] Such as the Egyptians Mohammed Abduh (reformist grand Mufti of Egypt in the last years of the nineteenth century) and Qutb (influential Islamist within the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1950's).

Western epistemological tradition and urges others to make the same critique. To Euben, modernity and globalization are marked by the interrelatedness and hybrid nature of western and non-western perspectives: one should take into account cultural identities and meanings that are syncretic, indeterminate, and relational. There is a need for a new epistemology, a conversation about modernity across time and across cultures regarding knowledge about nature and human nature. Kinnvall, in "Globalization and Religious Nationalism" (2004), touches on the same topics tackled by Euben although from a different perspective. Kinnvall argues that the structural conditions of insecurity (de-territorialization of time and space as markers of identity) are the result of globalization and are directly correlated with the reinforced need for self-identity. Nationalism and religion supply powerful discourses addressing this insecurity because of their ability to convey an image of security, stability, and simple answers to claims of truth that make the world really what it appears to be. Religion and nationalism, as identity-signifiers, increase ontological security and minimize existential anxiety about identity in the face of globalization.

Although the definition and understanding of globalization is open to controversy, some researchers deny there is such a thing as globalization. Despite the impressive literature on globalization, Kessler poses the question of the relevance of such a concept in "Globalization: Another False Universalism?" (2000). For Kessler, theories of globalization, whether modernist in their liberal or sceptical forms, or post-modernist, require scepticism on the part the researcher since they all rely on market theories, which are themselves a previous version of a false universalism. However, Kessler acknowledges the increased mutual interdependence and worldwide involvement of people in one another's fates. He concludes, therefore, that there is a need for a definition of globalization that involves a moral process. This definition would account for globalization as a transformative moment in the moral imagination of humanity.

The discussion of globalization, with the interrelatedness of individuals that it implies, introduces the topic of networks and networking in the global Muslim community. Cooke and Lawrence, in *Muslim Networks* (2005), conceptualize Muslim networks as institutionalized social relations of a faith group and a social world, which involve a measure of choice and agency in creating Islamic identities. For these researchers, Muslim networks are a paradigm as well as an *episteme* for a complex and advanced view of Islam and of Muslim civilizations highlighting the transnational connections that are spatial but not space-bounded. The key in this theory is the *umma* as defining Muslim collective identity for constructing Muslim networks. Networks are also viewed as metaphor for a process, contingency and the variability in social relations. Cooke and Lawrence emphasize the power of networks as institutionalized social relations; they insist on the networks' instrumentalization as sources of power for people within the network.

The topic of Islamic networking and its instrumentality leads to a discussion of Rabasa's book *Building Moderate Muslim Networks* (2007). This book was written as a political project proposed to various government institutions of the United States of America for the promotion of democracy in Muslim countries. Although the book dates from 2007, it is current given the revolutions and political turmoil happening in the Muslim world in 2011/2012 as well as the military coup of March 2012 and the new Islamic militancy in Northern Mali. Rabasa compares the post-9/11 world to the Cold War world insofar as they both involve hostile ideologies and groups that pose a direct threat to the United States. She offers the solution (which she claims was used during the Cold War) of an active participation of the American government in building a democratic Middle East, establishing clear criteria for partnership with authentic moderates in the Middle East and promoting counter-Islamist networks. Roy, in *Globalized Islam* (2004), describes Islamism as a model of political association in which members are united by a common perception of the public good, including a critique of authoritarian and corrupt regimes in the Middle East (until recently, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen). Islamists share these critiques of local regimes with the moderate networks described by Rabasa. Islamist networks, however, also provide a model of community based on a voluntary commitment to fulfil religious precepts as beyond cultural particularities, a community of believers within and from any state and beyond the idea of the state. The community of believers described as such has all the characteristics of a globalized network, which transcends borders and unites people with special affinities.

This understanding of the *umma* and of Muslim network as offering a form of identity beyond the confines of the state will become important when, in chapter four, the international networks developed and used by Malian arabisants in the context of Islamic schooling are discussed. Social actors in Mali's médersas are in constant contact with people and organizations in the rest of the Muslim world. The non-Muslim world is also part of these networks as will be clear when discussing the World Bank and other supranational institutions. These contacts are used partly as financing networks, but Malians also use them to import books and therefore, ideas. Networks are created and expanded when Malians study abroad in the universities of the Arab world, where students share and learn ideas about being a Muslim today in different political contexts, and then bring these ideas back to Mali. Médersas owners and teachers in Mali often sustain an important correspondence with individuals abroad and thus also participate in a global Islamic discussion about faith, identity, modernity and education.

Anthropology of Islam in Africa.

Returning to a survey of anthropological literature, I now focus on a number of papers pertaining specifically to the study of Africa and Islam in Africa. Şaul, in his article entitled “Islam and West African Anthropology” (2006), reviews the problems

brought about by the legacy of colonial categories in the scholarship on Islam. The anglophone fascination with the Yoruba culture and the francophone studies of the Dogon both omitted Islam as a variable in their research, while distinguishing between Islam (as inauthentic) and pre-Islamic (authentic) history of West Africa. Anthropology of Islam in West Africa should situate Islam near the centre of the study and use a vocabulary of historical exchanges, absorption, adaptation and development in tandem, in a manner inspired by Appadurai's[16] theory of production of locality, where modalities of contact create original patterns of thoughts and behaviours. This should replace the vocabulary inherited from the colonial studies of diffusion of Islam, which implies a place of origin of Islamic knowledge (in the Middle East) and keeps West Africans as forever foreign recipients of their religion. The language of Islam is central to the Southern Malian arabisants' conception of themselves even within their local context: they are Malians and Muslims, one informs the other. Soares, in "Notes on the Anthropology of Islam and Muslim Societies in Africa" (2000), critiques Geertz's emphasis on local culture which ignores one of the features of Islam (both as discursive tradition in Asad's understanding and as a global religion) as supralocal and translocal relations of power within and across Islamic societies. Soares also critiques the notion of a periphery of Islam (see discussion of Lambek 1990, below) and of multiple *islams* (el-Zein, 1977).

To Soares, Islam is the sum of the connections and tensions between the local and the supralocal Islamic discourses and practices. Anthropology of Islam in Mali must therefore pay close attention to both the discursive tradition of Islam and to the diversity of local cultures and power dynamics. This emphasis on the diversity of cultures and power dynamics brings Soares, in his book *Islam and the Prayer Economy in a Malian Town* (2004), to use a theoretical perspective, inspired by Foucault, with a focus on the role of power relations based on economic and cultural capital. Such power relations sustain the authority of local religious leaders. For Soares, the notion of charisma (referring to the extraordinary powers of an object or a persons described by Weber)[17] is central to the understanding of Muslim religious specialists' claims to authority. The esoteric *episteme*, a hierarchy of knowledge involving secrecy in its transmission as put forth by Brenner in *Controlling Knowledge* (2001), along with the also hierarchical relations of master-disciple, form a central part of the religious economy of the Malian town (Nioro du Sahel) studied by Soares. As one of the most prolific contemporary researchers of Islam in Mali, Soares has also discussed on the preponderance of the political dimension of Islam in the country in his article "Islam in Mali in the Neoliberal Era" (2005). According to him, there are Islamic political demands regarding the official secularism of Mali which must widen to become a national debate on neo-liberalism and governance imported from "afar", as these concepts are part of the heritage of the French

[16] Appadurai, Arjun. *Globalization*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001).

[17] Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. With a new introduction by Anthony Giddens. (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1904 [1976]).

colonial rule and of the Structural Adjustment Plans imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.[18] New forms of associative life and increased transnational and global interconnections have changed the terms of the debates on secularism in Mali: new TV shows and radio programs try to instruct Malians on what it is to be a "proper" Muslim by shunning "un-Islamic and traditional practices."[19] Soares is careful to point out, however, that despite the spirited debate in Malian society, there are very few Malian Muslims who would argue that *shari'a* should be implemented as atate law, and despite their moralizing discourses, Malian religious leaders tend to be committed to democratic principles and invoke freedom of expression and of association to justify their presence in public debates about governance.

Discussion of religious authority and knowledge and the concomitant power relations they bring about leads into the vast literature covering questions of Islam, knowledge and education, starting with Robert Launay's *Beyond the Stream* (1992). Launay explains the historical evolution of religious changes in a small town in the Ivory Coast with reference to the relationship between religious expressions and social identities. In this case, conceptions of Islam function as ideologies by conferring or denying legitimacy to certain social distinctions.[20] The town's changing socio-economic fabric, increased mercantile opportunities and closer communication with the Middle East produced a series of permutations in religious identity from a Dyula Islam to a reformist (Salafi) movement locally known as "Wahhabis" (as is also the case in Mali).[21] Lambek's article "Certain Knowledge, Contestable Authority" (1990), focuses on religious authority in Mayotte, which he locates at "the periphery of Islam."[22] He explains how texts, in and of themselves, are silent and only become authoritative where and when there are people to read and speak them. For Lambek, this necessarily brings about a sociological and

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[18] This argument itself relates to the work of Marie-France Lange on the lack of political legitimacy in Mali due to the weight of certain international agencies on national policy (especially in terms of education). See Marie-France Lange, "École et mondialisation: Vers un nouvel ordre scolaire?" *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 1, no. 169-170 (2003): 143-166.

[19] See the works of Dorothea Schulz and Bintou Sanankoua on new media of Islamic education. Dorothea A. Schulz, "Promises of (Im)mediate Salvation: Islam, Broadcast Media, and the Remaking of Religious Experience in Mali," *American Ethnologist* 33 (2006): 210-229. and Sanankoua, Bintou. . "L'Enseignement Islamique à la Radio et à la Télévision au Mali." In *L'Enseignement islamique au Mali,* edited by Bintou Sanankoua and Louis Brenner, 127-141. (Bamako: Jamana, 1991).

[20] This is also the case for the Malian village studied by Gérard in his dissertation. See Étienne Gérard, "L'école déclassée. Une étude anthropo-sociologique de la scolarisation au Mali. Cas des sociétés malinkés," (PhD diss., Université Paul Valery, Montpellier III, 1992).

[21] For a discussion of the the "Wahhabis" in West Africa, see Jean-Loup Amselle, "Le Wahhabisme à Bamako (1945-1985)," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 19, no. 2 (1985): 345-357. and Jean-Loup Amselle. *Les Negotiants de la Savane. Histoire et Organisation Sociale des Kooroko (Mali)* (Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1977). For an analysis of the categories of "Wahhabis" and "Traditionalists" in Mali, see Louis Brenner, "Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali," In *Muslim Identity and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa,* ed. Louis Brenner (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993).

[22] I have already mentioned how Soares disagrees, as would Saul and I, with this spatial categorization.

political economy of knowledge. In the case of Mayotte, the Islamic idiom pervades society and knowledge shapes self-identity as cultural/symbolic capital. The sacred text is considered unchangeable, its material form being as significant as its content, and always true without qualification; it is a manifestation of things as they really are. The authority of Islamic scholars in Mayotte is derived from two sources: the skill and confidence of the religious leader in public recitation and his acquaintance with secondary sources of religious knowledge. However, their authority is not certain. In any case, religious authority conferred on a person remains socially negotiated, which is not the case for the authority of the text itself.

Concepts and Practices in Islamic Education.

The goals of Islamic education, according to Halstead in "An Islamic Concept of Education" (2004), are determined by the revealed religion: it has an objective quality and the curriculum should be designed in accordance with the Islamic understanding of the nature of knowledge and of human nature. As elaborated in the Qur'an, the Sunna, and the classical Islamic treatises, there are three Arabic words encompassing what is, in English, referred to as education. *Tarbiya* is the development of an individual's potential, *tâdib* is the process of character development in its moral and social dimension within society, and *tâlim* is the imparting and receiving of knowledge. These three aspects of the concept of education in Islam are present in what is termed "quality instruction" and although Malian arabisants I have interviewed do not generally use these terms, they do refer to the concepts (with a particular emphasis on *tarbiya*). Boyle, in "Memorization and Learning in Islamic Schools" (2006), expands on the same topic as Halstead by defining two types of knowledge in Islam: the revealed knowledge and the knowledge derived from reason (which is needed to understand and interpret the revealed knowledge). Islamic traditional education starts with a narrow focus limited to the Qur'an and broadens over time to include other revealed knowledge and the other type of knowledge necessary to make sense of revealed knowledge. Through memorization (the knowing of the text, the bodily attitude of one's learning and recitation of the text), the Word of God is embodied. Therefore, memorization is the preferred pedagogical tool insofar as there is a clear link made between memorization, Muslim identity and learning to live one's life as a good Muslim, because memorization of the Qur'an is thought of to offer moral direction. This pedagogical tool is the first step towards an understanding of the sacred text since the use of reason involves mental (and physical) discipline and memorization is an important part of such a discipline.

Hefner and Zaman's *Schooling Islam* (2006) is a wider study of the topic of Islamic education and the changes required to adapt to the modern and global world. Hefner and Zaman propose an analysis of present-day madrasa education around the Muslim world as an effort by intellectuals to answer the question of how to live as an

observant Muslim in the modern world and who is qualified to provide such instruction for other Muslims. According to Hefner and Zaman, madrasas are thoroughly embedded in modernity[23] and in a negotiation process of Islamic authority with diverse forms of plurality which challenge identities, hierarchies, traditions, knowledge, and faith. The importance of the study and the transmission of religious knowledge (*'ilm*) pushes the madrasas to emphasize the ethical dimension of Islam, in addition to the secular curriculum, in order to create modern citizens. There is an epistemological change from an esoteric concept of knowledge to a rationalized epistemology. This is precisely the core of Louis Brenner's argument in "Two Paradigms of Islamic Schooling in West Africa" (1993) in which he explains how the success of private Islamic schools in Mali (originally founded to ensure an education in line with traditional Islamic ethics) has led them to reinforce their secular curriculum in order to offer their students academic and social success. This development in turn, going full circle, led the médersas to set aside more of the religious dimension of the curriculum. This process resulted in a weakening of the esoteric paradigm and a strengthening of the rational paradigm in these schools.

In *Controlling Knowledge* (2001), Brenner further develops this idea of a paradigm shift in Malian Islamic education. The social and political locus of Islamic expression in Mali is in constant dialogue with the rest of the Muslim world, as it was with the French authorities during colonization and its legacy after independence. According to Brenner, Malian médersas are subject to and contribute to the appearance of a rationalistic *episteme* (replacing the esoteric *episteme* of the pre-colonial settings) and to the power relations of this rationalization process that attempts to render Islamic schooling relevant to the contemporary social and political order. Brenner's numerous publications, are central to this dissertation; he is the foremost specialist of Islamic education in Mali, in spite of the fact that his field research dates many years. Both his theoretical approach and the sheer quality of the data he provides, based on years of field research in Mali and personal interviews with important actors of the médersa system who are now deceased, make Brenner's works essential reading for future researchers.

The change in content and understanding of Islamic education described by Brenner in Mali's médersas can also be found in institutions of higher education and elsewhere. Eickelman, in "Mass Higher Education and the Religious Imagination in Contemporary Arab Society" (1992), argues that higher education brings about the objectification of the religious imagination, which is the modern process by which discourses and debates about tradition are produced by religious authorities, who derive their own power from such discourses. Mass higher education engenders new authoritative ways of thinking about the self, religion, and politics. Beliefs and practices are now expressed in public and are more directly related to political action. Religion is

[23] This feature of dual curriculum Islamic schooling is also discussed by Lukens-Bull in his book. See Ronald Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad: Negociating Identity and Modernity in Muslim Java* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

now considered a conceptual system of beliefs and the standardization of language (Modern Standard Arabic) allows for meaning to be situated in explicit statements of belief that reach wide audiences. The development of a curriculum with specific texts to be studied also contributes to creating a generic (what Brenner and others would call "rational") Islam and in marginalizing traditional religious leaders.

To conclude this literature review, the work of Lukens-Bull merits special discussion because it brings together concepts of Islamic knowledge, education, modernity, and globalization and explains how a new form of education has developed in the Muslim world, which attempts, and partly succeeds, in integrating all of these concepts. In "Two Sides of the Same Coin" (2001), Lukens-Bull summarizes quite well Brenner's ideas although the former is studying Islamic schooling in Indonesia's *pesantren*. Modern Islamic schooling is not just translating modernity for a Muslim audience, according to Lukens-Bull. Madrasas are in the process of imagining modernity as dangerous, since modernity and globalization are imagined as the loss of traditional values, but also as subject to and in need of reinvention. While reinventing modernity, Islamic schooling is also reinventing tradition and both are imagined as compatible with each other. Lukens-Bull's analysis of this process in Indonesia's *pesantren* sheds light on the Malian situation in médersas today as they are going through a similar process of redefining themselves in regards to their faith and to Malian society in general. Indeed, Mali's médersas are quickly changing in the early 21st centure in order to accommodate both the demands of society for a secular education leading to meaningful employment and those of parents who want a traditionally oriented and morally strong education for their children.

In the following dissertation, I combine Lukens-Bull's discussion of the re-imagination of both modernity and tradition within the context of Islamic schools with Haenni and Holtrop's description of Islam as practice by Cairo's golden youth in "Mondaines Spiritualités... 'Amr Khâlid, 'Shaykh' Branché de la Jeunesse Dorée du Caire" (2002). Haenni and Holtrop describe a reformulation of religious practices and sociabilities into what they call "Islam mondain." The term refers to a moralization of the temporal world not completely unlike a re-invention of the Protestant Ethic, to suit the spiritual needs of the newly affluent Cairene youth. Islam mondain offers a model for virtuous socio-economic comfort, and an islamization of the benefits of globalization and modernization which renders these benefits morally pure. Islam mondain has been further theorized by Otayek and Soares, in their edited volume *Islam and Muslim Politics in Africa* (2007), who describe it as a Muslim sensibility which is adapted to the neoliberal environment in which most Muslims find themselves. Islam mondain is an inward, pious orientation that involves rendering one's direct environment, the things one has direct control over, morally pure and "islamically sound" while accepting the wider context in which one finds oneself. This form of religiosity will serve to explain how Malian médersas have come to educate pious citizens, that is, devout Muslims who value their

tradition and endeavour to live a morally pure life and who are also active citizens of the secular Republic of Mali.

Methodology of Research and Some Epistemological Issues.

The research for this thesis focuses on médersas in Bamako, although I interviewed other actors and organizations during my fieldwork. Wagner clearly states the importance and relevance of studying and analyzing schooling "[...] as a social and cultural enterprise in which different community and institutional groups instantiate the themes, perspectives, concepts, and routines that organize and give meaning to their lives."[24] My research is qualitative in nature although a portion of it, regarding the funding of the different médersas and their budgets, contains quantitative data. The primary data for research was gathered through semi-structured interviews with key actors within the Islamic school system in Mali. In six médersas, although not all in the same depth, I interviewed the owners and principals as well as the director of studies and some other members of the teaching body (for an overview of interview questions, see Appendix E). I also performed participant-observation in classes.[25] The key groundwork for this doctoral research was conducted in Bamako in summer 2005 during field research for my Master's thesis.

Methodology: Temporality, Locality, and Informants.

I spent two years in Bamako, Mali, conducting fieldwork for this research, from January 2009 to December 2010.[26] To this must be added my first shorter visit to Bamako in 1996 as well as my six month stay in 2005.[27] This lengthy period of Ph.D. research was necessary in order for me to be immersed in Malian culture. Indeed, my first year of fieldwork was almost entirely dedicated to adapting to life in Bamako: I had to learn how to speak[28], to eat, to dress, to shop, to make friends, to interact with people, to be the only

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[24] Jon Wagner. "Administrators as Ethnographers: School as a Context for Inquiry and Action." In *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (1990): 197

[25] This research was approved by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board as well as by the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique*, *Ministère de l'Éducation de la République du Mali* (CNRST). See Appendixes C and D.
To obtain approval by the CNRST, I made contact with Salif Berthe, the director general of the *École Normale Supérieure* of the Université of Bamako, who served as my research guarantor in Mali, as required by the CNRST. See Appendix F.

[26] I did leave the country on occasions during this period for vacations in Canada, to attend funerals in Canada, and to visit, purely as a tourist, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana and Togo.

[27] One could also count various trips (ranging from a month to 6 months) in countries neighbouring Mali. These trips provided a partial partial introduction to the general culture of West Africa, which was very "foreign" to me.

[28] Québécois-French and Malian-French are sometimes difficult to reconcile, the Yemeni-Arabic I had

white person in the area and therefore to be the centre of attention at all times. I also had to learn to deal with the heat and the sun[29], to accustom myself to "heure à la malienne"[30], and to cope with all the wild life (ranging from donkeys and wild dogs in the courtyard to mice and cockroaches in the living accommodations to viruses and bacteria in the digestive system) that became part of daily existence. As Peter Metcalf explains, however, this is a part of fieldwork in its own right:

> An anthropologist beginning fieldwork must learn a host of social rules appropriate to the new environment. But this is not a preparation for fieldwork, this *is* fieldwork. Social rules are among the most accessible things to study because they can be observed in action. There is nothing hidden about them; sometimes they are even stated explicitly.[31]

In addition to this "culture shock," some formalities took time to complete, such as obtaining a letter of introduction from Dean Salif Berthe at the University of Mali and the research approval from the CNRST. Other non-related administrative matters also took a disproportionate amount of time and energy away from the research itself.[32]

I spent an average of 50 hours per médersa, either sitting in classes, semi-formally interviewing people, "chatting", sitting around, and drinking tea. This last activity, as any field researcher will know, is essential (though hardly always productive). Drinking tea provides time to get to know people and their environment. In Mali, politeness requires,

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learned was not very useful, and my little knowledge of Bamanankan needed to be greatly expanded, which did happen, in time.

[29] As well as the cold and the darkness of Canada. On occasions, there was a 70 degrees Celsius difference in temperature between boarding the plane in Montréal (or Toronto) and arriving in Bamako, or vice versa. The high temperatures reached in Bamako (especially during the hot season) also meant that my physical capacity to work was diminished; as anyone who has experienced severe heat knows, energy levels drop and the simplest work becomes exhausting.

[30] "Malian-time", sometimes also called "African-time", is used to explain and justify being late to any type of meeting. Indeed, it is not uncommon to wait for the person you are expecting to meet *at a specified time* for 2 hours or more which will be explained away by referring to the "Malian-time" being "elastic." Needless to say that for a punctual Canadian, this habit was infuriating (and led that unfortunate Canadian to be late herself to her subsequent meetings) though the advance warning, in the form of "see you at 3 o'clock, Malian-time," came to be appreciated.

[31] Peter Metcalf, *Anthropology: The Basics*, 42

[32] I had to renew my Canadian passport while in Mali and this took five months. It involved the exchange of official letters (between Canada and Mali), calls (between Canada, Mali and Ivory Coast), visits (me to the embassy of Canada in Mali, my parents to various governmental offices in Canada to obtain my birth certificate and other documentation) to sort the issue. Of these five months, I spent three without any legal identification papers. The Canadian Embassy took away my passport without giving me a new one which meant that I could not have a valid Malian visa which in turn put me in an illegal situation. As a result, I curtailed my activities in order to avoid being arrested for failing to provide my papers upon request by the police who regularly perform controls.
Time spent securing financial support from various sources was also greatly increased by the difficulties of communication and of obtaining documentation located in Canada while I was in Mali.

before attending to any specific topic of interest, extensive salutation ceremonies, detailed conversations about the health of family members, comments on some political matters, discussion of the latest football results[33], and significant tea-drinking. This time spent "chatting" was long and necessary at almost each visit to médersas or government offices. I met with a number of people in various settings, mostly at schools and government offices to observe and interview them.

My status as a researcher who was there to ask questions and observe was never hidden from the participants. I always made clear to all my interviewees what my purpose was and asked them to clearly and verbally agree to my presence. Beside the honesty I felt was required, the Ethics Board of McMaster University required me to ensure that respondents made an informed decision to be part of my research. I used direct observation and semi-structured interviews to ask questions to gain access to a variety of situations in Bamako's médersas. Interview questions were open-ended and fluid in order to allow, as much as possible, the conversation to be shaped by the participants' perceptions of their schools and of the Islamic school system of Mali in general.[34] Some interviews were conducted in private, which was my preferred method, however it was sometimes difficult to isolate ourselves[35] and some interviews were conducted in public (and consequently often ended up seeming like a group interview). The length of interviews was variable. Some people, especially the directors of study of certain médersas, were interviewed several times for a total of almost 10 hours. Other participants were interviewed only once for barely a half-hour. Given the unstructured format of the interviews, some "chatty" interviewees could discuss issues for quite some time and the conversation could lead to other, more general topics. Other people were clearly uncomfortable with the open-ended questions and answered succinctly to pointed questions and did not pursue further discussion. The position of the interviewee in the school also influenced the length of the interview as some individuals were sources of information on multiple topics while others knew only certain things relevant to my research.

I also undertook direct participation in the daily life of these médersas by attending classes in order to experience, as well as to observe, naturally occurring events,

[33] Soccer, for a North American. One should note that the 2010 FIFA World Cup took place during my stay in Mali and on match days (and there were a lot of them over the course of a month), it was practically impossible to meet people. If a meeting did indeed take place, a radio or television was constantly and loudly broadcasting the match. For personal inclination as well, I avoided meetings during matches. I also had to keep updated on the statistics of the English Premier League, the Ligue 1 of France, La Liga of Spain, and various other championships and events.

[34] See Appendix E for an overview of topics covered in these interviews. I did not, however, asked these question in order, or all at once, or even all of them in each interview. This list is provided as an example of questions potentially asked to any given interviewee.

[35] During fieldwork, there were various moments where a private conversation could not happen. In some cases, it would have been impolite to ask to leave the group to talk "in private". In other circumstances, my interviewees refused to be alone with me in a separate room for religious/moral reasons.

teaching and conversations. None of these interactions were taped or recorded as it might have limited the freedom of speech of some of the interviewees.[36] Written notes were taken and, even then, some participants made frequent requests for me to "stop writing" as some comments were clearly meant to be private. I resumed note taking as soon as possible after the interviews so a copy of these "private" comments and other events and commentaries was kept. My data, while it does contain some interview transcripts also contains a number of reconstructed conversations, due to these requests to "stop writing" and the informality of a number of encounters. In the very few occasions where I have made use of these comments, I have expressed them as opinions given in private conversations by a person who should remain anonymous.

Bamako[37] is a metropolis of nearly two million inhabitants, although exact numbers are difficult to determine, spread over a territory of more than 200km².[38] Approximately 16% of the Malian population lives in Bamako and thus one can understand why Bamako is the economic heart of the country. I chose to limit my field of research to Bamako, the capital, for a number of practical reasons. Firstly, given the time allocated for the research as well as the funding provided, it would have been highly inconvenient to base the research in multiple cities or villages in Mali.[39] Being in the capital also allowed me to observe Islamic schools in a variety of socio-economic settings depending on the neighbourhood, which would not have been the case in more homogeneous villages or towns. Second, Mali has a highly centralized state-apparatus and most governmental institutions regulating or working with médersas are situated in the capital. Third, Bamako tends to attract the majority of foreign resources (through cash or otherwise) as the seat of power and the biggest city of the country. Lastly, Bamako is an important site of research in and of itself as a big cosmopolitan metropolis in West Africa (although the city is not representative of Mali in general). The schools I chose to be part of this research should not be considered a representative sample of Malian médersas because the situation of médersas in Bamako differs considerably from what is happening country-wide. Moreover, my aim was never to generalize findings to *all* médersas in Mali. Each school should be considered as a case study, as a particular product of all the forces (internal, national, and international) that shape Islamic schooling in Bamako. A brief description of each school included in the research follows here.

The Institut Islamique (of Yattabaré) is a well-known and renowned médersa in Bamako. Cheickna Yattabaré, a learned man with close ties to Saudi Arabia, founded the

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36 In addition, I had an ethical responsibility to avoid focusing attention on the children in class settings, as they could not possibly give informed consent to my presence.

37 See map of the core of the city in Appendix H.

38 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Regional Atlas on West Africa*, 126

39 Mali is a fairly large country and the population is dispersed on the territory. Since roads and transportation networks are not well maintained in Mali, research in many locations would have been excessively (and perhaps unnecessarily, given the scope of this research) time-consuming and difficult to pursue.

school in 1958 in Niaréla neighbourhood.[40] The school later moved to its current location in Medina Coura, close to the Stade Omnisport Modibo Keita. The current building, two stories high with an enclosed courtyard, is well-maintained and spacious with fully-furnished, airy, and well-lit classrooms. The courtyard of the school is also well equipped with basketball nets, a small parking lot for the students' and teachers' scooters and information signs in French and Arabic. In 1985, as soon as it was possible, the Institut Islamique registered with the *Ministère de l'Éducation* to become one of the first formally recognized médersas in Mali. Since then, the school and some of its employees have actively participated, with some success, in the design of the official curriculum[41] for médersas as well as in the preparation of a nation-wide examination for the *baccalauréat* diploma. This médersa teaches in both French and Arabic although more time is dedicated to Arabic. The school is now owned and run by Abdul Aziz Yattabaré, a well-educated man of great personal charisma and prestige. Although I have met with Mr. Yattabaré on numerous occasions, both at his school and at other work-related functions, I mostly worked in collaboration with his director of studies, Mr. Kaba. The latter is a graduate from the Islamic University of Medina and although language proved challenging between us (his French was limited, my Arabic and Bamanankan were weaker), he was able to provide invaluable information on the Institut Islamique. For the school year 2010-2011, 921 pupils (segregated by gender classes for the first cycle, grades 1 to 6, mixed classes for the rest) were registered at the fundamental level and 236 at the Lycée level, making the Institut Islamique one of the biggest médersa of Bamako. Teachers of the first cycle usually have a *baccalauréat* degree; teachers of the second cycle (grade 7 to 9) have a "local Islamic diploma"[42]; teachers at the lycée level have all studied in Arab-speaking universities abroad. The lycée offers a Humanities and Literature program, a Scientific program and a vocational path. This is important as it is the only médersa with professional training: two years added to the *baccalauréat* gives one a *Certificat d'Aptitude Professionel* and four years in addition to the *baccalauréat*, allows one to obtain the *Brevet de Technicien*. The Institut Islamique offers these diplomas so that the students can train as commercial employees, electricians, seamstresses or accountants.

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[40] The history of the school and of Cheickna Yattabaré is contained in Louis Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge: Religion, Power and Schooling in a West African Muslim Society* (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001).

[41] It is interesting to note here, although this will be discussed in more detail later, that I enquired at the Ministry of Education a bouthow to get a copy of the official curriculum (of the Ministry) for médersas. I was told that no copies were available in any of the Ministry's offices and that I should go to the Institut Islamique de Yattabaré to find one. Upon my next visit to the Institut, I was able to buy the curriculum for the fundamental cycle at 3 000 FCFA francs and for the lycée at 5 000 FCFA francs. These documents were available at the Institut Islamique only because it is the headquarters of the Union Nationale des Médersas, and Yattabaré is the director of the organization.

[42] The status of this diploma remains unclear since there are no Islamic Universities in Mali, the diploma in question is either a *License* from the Arab department at the Université de Bamako, or a *baccalauréat* from a médersa.

The Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba is situated in the Badalabougou neighbourhood. The médersa was founded in 1966 by the father[43], Amadou Kansaye, of the current owner and director, Zakariyah Kansaye, and was registered with the government in 1985. This médersa teaches all subjects in Arabic although it has French and English classes (as second and third languages). Naharu Djoliba always had close ties to Iraq (teachers came from there and other Malian teachers went there for training). Zakariyah Kansaye himself studied in Iraq and Jordan. The school grounds are spacious and surrounded by one storey buildings where the classrooms, well furnished, large, well aired and lit, are located. The school is constantly under construction as Mr. Kansaye builds classrooms on a second storey when the need for more space is required and when funding becomes available. The school has 270 students at the fundamental cycle and slightly more than 200 at the lycée level. There are slightly more male than female students.[44] Although the school has a conflicted history in regards to the official curriculum,[45] Naharu Djoliba is well known for the quality of its Scientific program at the Lycée level. Indeed, and this is signifiant, Kansaye was able to find scholarships for his students to study medicine and computer science in Sudanese universities and other scientific diplomas at al-Azhar in Egypt. He points out with pride that students of other schools "only" got theology diplomas there at al-Azhar. Naharu Djoliba is the mother-school of a network of satellite schools covering the entire country (including five in Bamako).

The médersa Franco-Arabe al-Amir Ahmad ben Abdul Aziz is one of the satellite schools of Naharu Djoliba although the two schools differ significantly. The latter médersa is situated in the populous neighbourhood of Daoudabougou and, like the above-mentioned schools, has a large courtyard surrounded by classrooms buildings. The school was first founded as an Arabic-teaching médersa in 1974 but was transformed into a Franco-Arab médersa in 1995 which means that classes are now offered in French, and Arabic is learned as a second language and used for religious classes. As the name of the school indicates, it was founded with the financial support of a Saudi Prince and some of its teachers have received higher degrees from institutions in the Sudan, Egypt and Iraq. This school only teaches the fundamental level to a group of 520 pupils, boys and girls, in classes of about 50 students. This class size was the largest seen during this research although it is said to be common elsewhere).

The École Franco-Arabe al-Aman, in Djicoroni Golf neighbourhood (a fairly new extension of the city), is similar to al-Amir Ahmad in many ways. It is also only a fundamental school and it teaches in French and Arabic; the owner insists time is divided

[43] This man, the founder of the Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba, in collaboration with Cheickna Yattabaré (already mentioned), Sufiyana Dramé, of the médersa al-Hilal al-Islamiyya in Hippodrome, and the founder of al-Mohammediyya médersa, created the Union Nationale des Médersas du Mali.

[44] Mr. Kansaye explained that many of his female students left his médersa after the opening of an all-girl médersa in the neighbourhood.

[45] This issue is discussed in more detail in a later section.

evenly between the two languages. This school, within the context of this research, is unique. It was first opened in the 2008-2009 school year and was officially registered with the Ministry of Education for the 2009-2010 school year. It opened with classes for grade 1 only and is building classrooms and hiring teachers gradually. In 2010-2011, the school had classes from grade 1 to 4. Al-Aman now employs eight teachers who have *baccalauréat* diplomas from either a French-speaking school or a médersa and a principal-administrator who has a Master's degree in management. Being a new school, it is not as well-established as the other schools referred to here and it did not actively participate in the elaboration of the médersa school system and of the curriculum with the government (as did the other schools with more or less success). Significantly, the owner of this school is a younger woman (less than 40 years old) named Mariam Coulibaly. Although there are at least four médersas owned by women in Bamako, Mrs. Coulibaly is the only one I worked with directly.[46] Mrs. Coulibaly graduated from Naharu Djoliba, and Mr. Kansaye, from this school, put me in contact with her. She went on to obtain a scholarship from the government of Mali to study psychology at al-Azhar university in Egypt. Her personal trajectory as well as the particularities of her school made its inclusion important here despite the fact that I gathered only limited data on al-Aman due to time and language constraints.

The Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye (in the neighbourhood of Hamdallaye) is aalso different from the other médersas in this research. Firstly, the school itself is part of a larger complex called the Centre Culturel Islamique, which includes a cafeteria, a library, a conference centre, a mosque and a dispensary. The compound is very large, with impressive buildings and a beautiful courtyard shaded by trees and filled with basketball (and other sports) courts. The Centre is entirely financed by a private Libyan and Emirati foundation[47], which means that there are no tuition fees for the children (or fees for the clinic, and other facilities). The director of the Centre is a Libyan living within the compound, Mr. Farraj. He granted me access to the school in which I worked most closely with Mahamadou Sissoko, the director of studies. The médersa at the Centre is an École Franco-Arab; all classes are taught in French and Arabic is learned as a second language and used for religious classes, as at al-Aman and al-Amir médersas. The school has a 2nd cycle of the fundamental level (grade 7 to 9) with 202 students and a lycée (grade 10 to 12) with 167 students for the school year 2010-2011. Like Naharu Djoliba[48], the school of the Centre Culture only offers a Scientific program to the lycée students, divided in two sections: biological sciences and pure sciences (mathematics and physics).

[46] I shall say, however, that she did not speak French at all and that, therefore, our conversations were cut short by my limited knowledge of both Arabic and Bamanankan. I mostly engaged with her director-administrator who spoke French fluently yet did not speak Arabic at all.

[47] This is discussed in depth in chapter four, as the source of this funding did not seem as clear as it was presented to me. Also, given the current (as of July 2011) events in Libya, and to a lesser degree in the Emirates, funding might have been discontinued.

[48] Mr. Kansaye insisted that the Centre Culturel Islamique had copied his school's Science path program.

The students usually pass the national *baccalauréat* exam at a rate much higher than the national average and, of the 32 graduates last year, seven went on to pursue university degrees in Arab-speaking countries. It is not known how many continued their studies in Mali. The two students with the highest scores received scholarships to study in Libya and five others left by various means to pursue studies in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. Given the excellence of the school and the absence of tuition fees, one cannot overstate its popularity among parents who compete to send their children there. All potential students therefore have to pass a standard examination to be admitted and Mr. Sissoko himself meets and interviews each of the candidates before making a final decision.

Each of the schools I worked closely with has particularities, which justified its inclusion in this research. As mentioned, these médersas do not represent "typical Malian médersas", if such a thing even exists. They are each the product of their specific environments, the individuals who created the schools, the people or organizations that funded them and the views of the people running them now. Other médersas in Bamako would have been just as worthwhile to study. I visited or interacted with a few other schools to some degree, including the médersa al-Hilal al-Islamiyya, the Institut Islamique Khaled ben Abdul Aziz, and the médersa Sabil al-Hidaya which are all renowned médersas in Bamako.

The individual participants in this research can be divided into three broad categories: government officials, médersa constituencies, and general informants. Each group granted me access to various types of information about the Islamic school system in Mali and all were instrumental in this research. Government officials with whom I worked were from all levels, and a number of different departments including: *Centre pour la Promotion de la Langue Arabe* (CPLA), *Cellule de Planification et de Statistiques* of the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale*, *Académie d'Enseignement de la Rive-Gauche*, *Académie d'Enseignement de la Rive-Droite*, and *Centre d'Animation Pédagogique* (CAP) *de Bozola* as well as that of Torokorobougou. People within these departments and bureaus provided information on the educational system as a whole and Islamic schools in particular. They were the interviewees and informants most likely to provide the quantitative data that I gathered, although they also provided invaluable qualitative insights. Included in this group are some NGO[49] workers, especially at PHARE[50], who work directly with some médersas and were therefore great sources of information on the state of the médersas in Mali.

[49] Non-Governmental Organizations.

[50] Programme Harmonisé d'Appui au Renforcement de l'Education (Harmonized Program of Help in Reinforcing Education) sponsored by Education Development Center. See their website: http://www.edc.org/projects/mali_usaidphare_program_programme_harmonis%C3%A9_dappui_au_renforcement_de_leducation

The médersa constituencies, whom I call arabisants[51], are owners, principals, director of studies, teachers and other employees of particular schools who answered questions directly or whom I observed while they performed their given tasks in the schools. Two directors of studies in particular were key informants for their respective schools, providing me with both quantitative and qualitative data: Mr. Sissoko at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye and Mr. Kaba at the Institut Islamique de Yattabaré. Mr. Kansaye, owner and director of the Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba, was a key commentator on the development of Islamic schooling in Mali, of the curriculum and of the national organization bringing together médersa owners. Mr. Youssouf Samaké, an owner of a small médersa and Arabic teacher in a French private school, was also instrumental. Although I did not focus on his médersa, Mr. Samaké, who is an active participant in the *Union Nationale des Médersas*, was extremely helpful in introducing me to various people and commenting on events and people within the médersa milieu. Unfortunately, due to contraints by my university's ethics requirements, I was unable to interact directly with the students of the médersas without the explicit authorization of all of their parents. Although the student body of these médersas are technically part of the arabisants group, they have not directly participated in this research.

The third group of participants in my research is made up of various people whom I met in social or casual settings (neighbours, friends, taxi-drivers). These people provided me with insights into Malian culture, Islam as they understand it, Islamic schooling and education in general. Indeed, I have met a number of people who have studied in médersas themselves or sent their children to one and they have been keen to share their impressions and opinions about these schools. Although all the information gathered this way is treated with caution, these informal conversations have nonetheless provided a general sense of the Malian perspective on such topics.

Introductions by informants (some of whom were contacts made in 2005) to other informants, "snowball sampling," have been common. It often involved direct referrals: "Here is Abdul Aziz's phone number, I'll call him to tell him you are coming" is how Mr. Farraj, director of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye, put me in touch with Mr. Yattabaré, owner and director of the Institut Islamique. Both Mr. Farraj and Mr. Yattabaré can be considered "gatekeepers" as defined by O'Reilly:

> Gatekeepers are sponsors or individuals who smooth access to the group. They are key people who let us in, give us permission, or grant access. Sometimes, problematically, this is provided on behalf of the other participants, who may not even be aware of the research (...). Gatekeepers may be official or unofficial leaders, managers, organizers, or simply busybodies. They may be in a position to grant permission themselves or able to persuade others.[52]

[51] Following the use of this term by leading researcher on Islamic schooling in West Africa, Dr. Louis Brenner.

[52] Karen O'Reilly, *Key Concepts in Ethnography*, (Los Angeles, CA: Sage, 2009), 132

The owner and director of each one of the médersas I visited was a gatekeeper. Their permission was necessary in order to access the grounds of the schools and talk to any employees. Abdul Aziz Yattabaré was, more than any other, a gatekeeper insofar as, by virtue of his personal reputation and his real power within the Islamic school system, his acceptance of me as a researcher encouraged others to accept me also. The head of the *Centre pour la Promotion de la Langue Arabe* (CPLA) was also a gatekeeper as he granted me access to all of the schools and administrative sections under his direction and, on a larger scale, Dr. Salif Berthe, by acting as my research sponsor in Mali, was instrumental in allowing me to do research at all in the country.[53] Another example of a gatekeeper was the Director of the *Académie d'Enseignement de la Rive-Gauche* who provided me with a letter of introduction for all the *Centres d'Animation Pédagogique* under his authority.[54] Not all of the participants in the research who served as gatekeepers are named here; suffice to say that I frequently relied on many people to open doors and/or to lend me some of their credibility and authority.[55]

In other cases, Malian friends who had nothing to do with the research *per se* introduced me to relevant people they knew. This form of recruitment often happens spontaneously, on the basis of friendship or family connections. Meeting Youssouf Samaké, a key informant, happened in this way even though it was only later that I learned that he was involved in the médersa school system. In his classic ethnography of an Italian slum, William Foote Whyte recounts how he relied on the now notorious "Doc" [56] to open doors, introduce people, explain events, and help him in the research in a general way. For me, Youssouf Samaké played this role. To explain my encounter with Youssouf, it is first necessary to introduce Alexis. I met Alexis for the first time in 1996 when we were both participants in a student exchange program between Bamako and Joliette (the small town in Québec where I lived at the time). I was fourteen years old and sent away to Bamako, Mali, for my very first trip abroad and Alexis was an eighteen-years old college boy from Bamako who came to Joliette for a month. Over the years, we stayed in contact and when I went back to Mali in 2005 to conduct field research for my Master's degree, he was a science teacher in one of the most renowned private secular schools of the capital city: the Lycée Kodonso. Alexis, in his own way, became a key informant as he "translated" Malian culture on numerous occasions. He facilitated my adaptation to Mali's culture by helping me with transportation, finding an apartment, introducing me to people, and in a myriad of other ways. Most importantly, he introduced me to Youssouf, a colleague of his who teaches Arabic at the Lycée Kodonso but also owns a médersa himself and is very much involved in the Islamic schooling network in

[53] See his letter of reference in Appendix F.

[54] See Appendix G.

[55] As I discuss below, I singularly lacked credibility and authority in the eyes of a number of my interviewees owing to their perception of my status and, perhaps, my self-presentation.

[56] See Whyte, William Foote. *Street Corner Society: the Social Structure of an Italian Slum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993 (4th Edition).

Mali. Youssouf answered numerous questions, both in 2005 and in 2009-2010, about the Islamic schooling system in Mali and took a keen interest in my research, becoming personally invested in it. He arranged meetings with various actors of Bamako's médersas whom he knew and always invited me to events organized by the *Union Nationale des Médersas*. He often insisted, sometimes making it uncomfortable for me, on sitting in on meetings with officials from the *Ministère de l'Éducation* as he "had some questions of his own" for them. On numerous occasions, he made it clear that he counted on this research (despite my own claims to more modest ambitions) to promote the improvement of Islamic education in Mali. As a source of information and knowledge, as an intermediary to other informants (he personally provided the phone numbers of four people who became central to this research such as Mr. Kansaye), as a translator sometimes, and as a mediator of my presence in some schools, Youssouf was central to accessing the sites and maintaining a secure position for me in the field. Such long-standing and sometimes intense relationships and interactions with resourceful people were instrumental in enabling me to gather data for this research.

Positionality: The Harmless Anthropologist.

Fieldwork, writing ethnographies, and the work of the anthropologist in general requires, at least since the 1970s, that attention be paid to some epistemological questions that arise from the research. As clearly stated by Milner, "[...] the researchers in the process of conducting research pose racially and culturally grounded questions about themselves. Engaging in these questions can bring the researchers' awareness and consciousness known (seen), unknown (unseen), and unanticipated (unforeseen) issues, perspectives, epistemologies, and positions."[57] Questions of perception, of positionality, and of understanding of the other's discourse are therefore discussed here, as any researcher should reflect on the identities and roles she takes on in the context of the research and how participants in the research do the same.[58] Positionality is the idea that

> [...] gender, race, class, and other aspects of our identities are markers of relational *positions* rather than essential qualities. Knowledge is valid when it includes and acknowledgement of the knower's specific positions in any context, because changing contextual and relational factors are crucial for defining identities and our knowledge in any given situation.[59]

[57] Richard H. IV Milner, "Race, Culture, and Researcher Positionality: Working through Dangers Seen, Unseen, and Unforeseen," *Educational Researcher* 36, no. 7 (2007): 395.
[58] Milner, "Race, Culture, and Researcher Positionality," 395.
[59] Frances A. Maher and Mary Kay Tetrault, "Frames of Positionality: Constructing Meaningful Dialogues about Gender and Race." *Anthropological Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (1993): 118.

I have decided to focus on one specific such question that had a direct impact on the data I collected: the perception respondents had of me and how this informed the way they treated me in the field.

For many of my interviewees, for the students who saw me in their school and for most people with whom I came in contact, some "facts" about my person were impossible not to notice and led to certain assumptions about "who" I was. I was white, a "toubabou" in Malian local parlance. I was a woman (a girl even, with all that is implied by the word). I was young, I was not married, and I was childless. I was Christian, and denying this identity was useless—atheism or agnosticism are not valid Malian categories.[60] I am Canadian, and I was told on numerous occasions that to be Canadian was "a good thing". The majority of my interviewees typically identified me within the framework of this set of characteristics. My interviewees were generally black, male, Muslim scholars in their 50's who, although of Malian nationality, have studied Islam and/or Arabic in a university in the Arab world, and now pass on this knowledge to the younger generation in a médersa. When interviewing these teachers, principals and owners of médersas, common stereotypes about my identity crystallized and our relationships were inevitably affected by the respondents' perceptions of me. It is clear that my own attributes, and my informants' subsequent judgements about them, granted me access, to a certain degree, to the field. As explained by O'Reilly, "[d]ifference can be a resource in ethnographic research, enabling the ethnographic researcher to ask naive questions that an insider [...] would never consider"[61] and that might not be tolerated coming from an insider. My respondents' assumptions about my identity has helped my research in Bamako in ways that I had not expected and it seems important to discuss here, albeit briefly, some effects my "identity" had on the content of this research and on how the research was conducted.

The combination of being a young woman in a foreign culture, with neither a man nor a family as a guide seemed to encourage many of my male respondents to feel paternal towards me. I was often referred to as "petite"[62] by interviewees, which is commonly used as a term of endearment for young girls. One such respondent, Youssouf (whom I have already mentioned as being one of my key informants), is an important figure in a national association of médersa owners. Youssouf acted as a guide through the

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[60] This observation leads me the ethical question of my partially covert persona in the field. Claiming out loud my dedicated agnosticism would have closed many doors to me or significantly limited the type of interactions I could have had with a number of respondents. I therefore decided not to correct people when they assumed I was a Christian and to display my cultural knowledge of Catholicism when useful (I have been to a Catholic school and various members of my family are pious Catholics). I have, on occasion, lied when asked directly whether or not I believed in God.

[61] Karen O'Reilly, *Key Concepts in Ethnography*, 8

[62] "Small girl". Common term use to refer to female children or younger girls. Although it literally means "short", and I am indeed fairly short, it was clearly used in this context to refer to a combination of my attributes: my short stature, my youngish looks, my lack of a husband and children, my perceived lack of experience, etc.

administrative maze of the Ministry of Education, familiarized me with the major organizations involved in Islamic schooling, and introduced me to some of its primary figures. He answered my questions with great detail for fear of being misunderstood. Although his presumptions were condescending, he nonetheless provided me with a better grasp of the educational system in Mali and of the details of Islamic schools in particular than I would have obtained on my own. He also seemed to have genuine, fatherly concern for my well being and for the success of my project, mentioning on many occasions how he wanted me to write a good thesis, since my education was important for me but also for all of the people involved in the médersa system. Youssouf felt a need to guide and help me, and make sure that I was "okay" both for my sake and for the sake of promoting good research, useful to "all."[63] Many others, as Youssouf, saw me as a youngish, slightly incompetent, girl in need of guidance, and this turned out to be an advantage on numerous occasions by providing the opportunity to ask just about any naive questions and receive in reply a detailed and clear answer.

Other respondents—best represented by Salif, an Arabic teacher with a master's degree in Arab literature from Algeria—often mentioned the "fact" that Christians are at war with Islam, and that Western researchers ultimately want to go back to their countries to "write bad things" about Islam to undermine the religion. Initially, I made an attempt to explain to him and others that all of "us" Westerners did not hold these views, but I later decided it was pointless. People in Bamako usually held on to their assumptions about Westerners while, at the same time, clearly differentiating between those "Westerners" and me: I was an exception. Despite their general suspicions, Salif and others like him tended to see me as an exception to the rule, or as too inoffensive to be bothersome or dangerous, because of my age and gender. I was dismissed as being young and female, traits which, in their view, meant that I could not possibly be taken seriously even in my own cultural setting. I was further considered incompetent for having only an approximate knowledge of Arabic, which is equated to possessing only an approximate knowledge of Islam. Revealing a quite complex understanding of the geopolitical map of the world and of the international "pecking order", attitudes towards my nationality played a role also. My "quality" (I was often assured it was a "good thing") of being a *Canadian* researcher was less offensive than being French or American. Given the history linking France and Mali, in which confrontations were the norm, and given the popular perception of America as Islam's primary antagonist, the potential for confrontation between a French or American researcher (the most common nationalities in Mali) with a Malian interviewee would have been greater than that coming from a harmless, young female researcher from a country conceived of as courteous and toothless. In short, I was perceived as not knowledgeable enough and not from an influential enough country to pose a real threat to Islam in general or to any particular médersa. This positioning

[63] This attitude is reminiscent of a concept discussed below: the Malian understanding of education for all as meaning education of some for the benefit of all.

resulted in the opening of doors, giving the major players the assurance they needed to speak their mind and answer questions with impunity. They allowed me into their circle and answered my questions because I was perceived to pose no significant threat to them or their worldview.

For a third group of interviewees, the majority, I was first and foremost a potential convert, or an "almost-insider" or "soon-to-be-insider." Some interviewees granted me a position that was betwixt and between, a position where I was obviously an outsider yet, in some ways, not quite like other outsiders although not quite an insider either. Lukens-Bull explains his own similar predicament in the following terms:

> I was an outsider by every measure – non-Muslim, white, American – but was different from other outsiders – I spoke Indonesian, was knowledgeable about Islam, and was openly and decidedly non-Christian. And for whatever reason, the community with which I worked desired to define me as an insider. Sometimes these attempts meant trying to convert me. At other times, the community simply assumed that I had already converted.[64]

I faced a similar situation: as already explained, everything in my appearance distinguished me from my respondents but yet I knew Malians and their culture very well. I knew Bamanankan and Arabic, and I proved knowledgeable about Islam, to the amazement and surprise of some people. Although no one assumed I had converted to Islam *yet*,[65] it was usually taken for granted that conversion was the logical end of my research and of my interest in Islam.[66] Direct attempts to convert me, strong encouragements to convert in the near future, and even congratulations for my obvious eventual conversion were common during fieldwork, to the point of annoyance. However, these assumptions about my present and future motivations for undertaking the study of Islam allowed me to be accepted as a valid and valued interlocutor by many arabisants.

Some arabisants were not so charitable and constructed me as an incompetent, inoffensive, harmless and rather helpless researcher. It is also possible that I adopted a demeanour allowing them to construct such an image. This impression of me still allowed me to collect the required data. Indeed, their view of me as vulnerable and my acceptance of this quality is an integral part of research insofar as it displays the "appropriate" respect the anthropologist owes to his/her interviewees:

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[64] Ronald Lukens-Bull, "Lost in a sea of subjectivity: the subject position of the researcher in the anthropology of Islam," In *Contemporary Islam: Dynamics of Muslim Life* 1, 2 (2007): 177

[65] I did not usually participate in *salat,* although I sat at the back of the prayer hall with the female attendees, which clearly distinguished me as a non-Muslim. They have sometimes pulled me into the lines although it was usually accompanied by the recommendation to "just remain in the kneeling position" during the prayer.

[66] The logic here, put simply and as it was explained to me, was: after years of studying Islam, I could not possibly fail to recognize it as the Truth. If I did fail, however, it should be considered as due to a flawed reasoning or disposition of mine. Most of my interviewees gave me the benefit of the doubt and assumed I would come to see the Truth, eventually.

> Vulnerablity [*sic*] is such an elemental part of fieldwork [...]; if the fieldworker is too good, too smart, too sophisticated to be treated in this way, people will never talk to them. And that is the heart of participation observation research – the researcher shows respect for the people he or she is working with by doing what they do, especially when asked to join them.[67]

The mostly condescending labels (from my point of view) attached to my person facilitated data gathering on topics usually difficult to discuss, such as politico-religious ideologies and financing. The "fatherly" interviewees saw mainly a young girl in need of guidance by an older, more experienced man, as opposed to a researcher who was well-trained and well-informed on the field. To my benefit, this perception expedited data collection that might otherwise have taken me months.

Respondents thus helped me to gather information they would have been hesitant to grant me access to if they had not prejudged me as a questionable researcher on the basis of my gender, age, nationality, and general demeanour. This probably reflects the way I negotiated my entry into the field, having an unassertive attitude in public. I will not delve any further into any self-reflexive discourse, as, like Salzman, I sometimes doubt the usefulness of such long analysis of the self in enlightening the reader about the value of the research. Although I would not go as far as Salzman in his rejection of reflexivity as a useful tool in anthropology, I would emphasize that all these characteristics of myself that I have pointed out in this section can only give so much insight into how I "read" or "experienced" given situations in the field. Quoting from Salzman:

> So it is hard to see how such general characterizations -by gender, religion, nationality, race, class- tell us much about the actual perspective of any particular individual. It seems odd for anthropologists, of all people, to imagine that individuals, and particularly such peculiar folks as anthropologists, will mechanically conform to some generally held social stereotypes and cultural labels.[68]

The reflexivity discourse, "[...] as self-positioning and self-reporting, in depending on realistic self-awareness and honest disclosure, is a rather pre-Freudian idea, assuming, as it does, that all of our critical personal parameters are available to the consciousness, and that people present themselves with no ulterior motives. These assumptions appear to be unwarranted."[69] Discussion of *who I think I am*, and how it might have influenced the data collected by skewing personal perceptions or by triggering certain responses in my interviewees will therefore be limited. As suggested by Salzman, perhaps the best way to assess the data presented here is to wait for other anthropologists to challenge it.

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[67] Lukens-Bull, "Lost in a sea of subjectivity," 182

[68] Philip Carl Salzman, "On Reflexivity," In *American Anthropologist* New Series, 104, no. 3 (2002): 809.

[69] Salzman, "On Reflexivity," 810.

Chapter 2
Historical Development and Current Organization of Islamic Schooling: Legal Frameworks, Influences and Statistics

Prior to French colonization, there was a long tradition of Islamic schooling in the territory known to North Africans as Bilad al-Sudan, which would subsequently be called French Soudan, Haut-Sénégal-Niger, then Soudan again, and finally, Mali, after independence. Islam reached the territory of today's Mali via the great trans-saharan commercial routes during the 9th century. Learned men, serving commercial communities and political authorities along the trade routes, played an important role by transmitting Islamic knowledge and teaching to the population.[70] Mansa Moussa was the first political leader (emperor of the Empire of Mali) of the region to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. His pilgrimage marked an important step in the Islamization of the region: he returned having established diplomatic ties with political entities in North Africa and the Middle East as well as with a following of scholars. He also brought back with him a number of books to further Islamic knowledge in his territories.

Ibn Battuta, the great Moroccan traveller of the 14th century who visited most of the Muslim world, visited the region a few years after Mansa Moussa's death, made note of the Islamic schools in various cities teaching *fiqh* and qur'anic interpretation.[71] Higher learning in Islamic sciences tended to be centred around Timbuktu, as the historical renown of the Sankoré Mosque attests, although it is not limited to that city. The traditional Islamic curriculum in these institutions included grammar, rhetoric and style, commentary of the Qur'an, the traditions of the Prophet, the sources of the Law and jurisprudence, and logic. A student would approach each topic separately, with a *marabout* expert, and study it through a specific book that would be read, possibly memorized, and analyzed. The chain of textual authority would be traced from the author all the way to the student's master.[72] Education was provided in mosques and teachers' houses as well as in public places. It has been estimated that these various forms of "schools" educated between 15 000 and 20 000 students at Timbuktu's peak in the 16th century.[73]

The master-student relationship was central to the method of teaching practised in qur'anic schools at both lower or higher levels of study: "The basic pattern in both stages, Qur'an memorization and advanced studies, is one of master-seeking, the pupil moving from one teacher to another, from one place to another. Particularly for younger pupils,

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[70] Drissa Diakité, "Les fondements historiques de l'enseignement islamique au Mali," In *L'Enseignement islamique au Mali,* ed. Bintou Sanankoua and Louis Brenner (Bamako: Jamana, 1991), 27.

[71] Diakité, "Les fondements historiques de l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 29.

[72] Humphrey J. Fisher, "Islamic Education and Religious Reform in West Africa," In *Education in Africa: Research and Action,* ed. Richard Jolly (Portsmouth: Heinemann Educational Books, 1970), 250.

[73] Sékéné Modi Cissoko, *Tombouctou et l'empire Songhaï*, (Abidjan: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1975), 205 cited in Diakité, "Les fondements historiques de l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 33.

teachers might be their own relatives - a father, an uncle, an elder brother."[74] The mastery of a given text under the supervision of a given teacher was recognized by a diploma (*ijaza*) awarded by the teacher who attested to the student's education. This diploma allowed the student to teach.[75]

In accordance with this teacher-focused approach to education, pilgrimage became very important as a kind of "study abroad" program. A typical pilgrimage was done over a number of years and would involve stops in various centres of Islamic learning, where West African scholars were put in contact with higher standards of learning and new methods of teaching, on the way between today's Mali and Mecca, including stops in Macina, Sokoto, Cairo, Bornu, and Medina among other places.[76] This form of transmission of Islamic knowledge was common in Timbuktu and Djenné at their apogee during the 16th century: for the first time, the Soudan went from being the recipient of Islamic scholarship produced elsewhere in the Muslim world to being a producer of such knowledge with a local intellectual elite contributing to the reach of global Islam.[77] Contrary to their predecessors, Timbuktu's scholars of the 16th century were fluent in Arabic and had a thorough knowledge of the fundamental texts of classical Islamic scholarship. The literary productions of Spain and the Maghreb coexisted with productions from Egypt and Iraq in the libraries of Timbuktu.[78]

The Dina of the Macina,[79] established through *jihad* in 1818 by Sekou Ahmadou, a Muslim scholar and teacher in his own right, exemplifies the continuity of the formal transmission of Islamic knowledge in West Africa: "In Masina, only qualified teachers might open schools. Teachers in the main towns received state salaries. Government inspectors checked on the orthodoxy of the teaching."[80] Since the fame of Timbuktu had faded in the sixteenth century, the Dina represented a renewal of Islamic scholarship. The state, spread on a territory half the size of present-day Mali, required the services of Islamic scholars for its smooth functioning. Sekou Ahmadou established a theocracy ruled by a Council of 40 *marabouts* renowned for their science and their good morals and with their help, he created an Islamic school system, the Dean of which had a seat on the Council.[81] The system was composed of some 600 state schools, in which the *marabouts* received a salary from the state and the education was free, as well as free-schools, open by *marabouts* with the authorization of the Council and for which students had to pay

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[74] Fisher, "Islamic Education and Religious Reform in West Africa," 250.
[75] Diakité, "Les fondements historiques de l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 36.
[76] Fisher, "Islamic Education and Religious Reform in West Africa," 251.
[77] Diakité, "Les fondements historiques de l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 31.
[78] Diakité, "Les fondements historiques de l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 35.
[79] From the Arabic الدين meaning "religion". The Dina of the Macina, itself a region of Mali in the interior delta of the Niger river, was meant as a religious organized community of believers reproducing the ideal community created by the Prophet in Medina.
[80] Fisher, "Islamic Education and Religious Reform in West Africa," 253.
[81] Diakité, "Les fondements historiques de l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 40.

tuition fees although the state imposed a limit on these. The curriculum of these schools was entirely based on the three fundamental sources of Islam: the Qur'an and the Sunna, and since the knowledge of Arabic was seen as essential to furthering one's Islamic knowledge, its study was preponderant. The basic teachings focused on the practical obligations of Islam, the study of the life of the Prophet and his companions, and the commentary and interpretation of judicial and philosophical texts. This educational system was completed and complemented by the opening of a public library in Hamdallaye, the capital of Macina, where books could be consulted by anyone. However, this educational system collapsed in 1862 at the same time as the Dina of Macina came under the attack of the jihadist al-Hajj Oumar Tall. Tall undertook a jihad in the interior delta of the Niger river, defeating the troops of the Dina outside Hamdallaye in 1862. Tall did not build much of a state apparatus in the region as he was on the war path and was closely followed by the French army's arrival in the region.[82]

While the French colonial authorities took over territories in West Africa and created a vast political entity known as *Afrique Occidentale Française*, they also tundertook the institutionalization of Islamic education on a wider scale. The colonial authorities took various approaches to limit or control the spread of Islam and of education in Arabic, and the newly independent state of Mali followed suit after 1960. It is important to note, however, that despite all attempts by various governments – French or Malian – to regulate, limit, confine, and control Islamic education, the demand for increased Arabic-language religious education never diminished amongst West African populations. Furthermore, because both French and Malian authorities insisted on heavily regulating education, the owners, principals, and teachers involved in Islamic schools undertook the rationalization of Islamic knowledge and made their own efforts to restructure the methods and content of their schools.

As a result of this confrontational relationship between the various stakeholders involved in the governing of Islamic education, the re-invention of Islamic education was brought about to better fit a modernized environment in need of strong Islamic ethics. This chapter points out the historical trends in the conceptual changes in Islamic education: how the constant tensions between political authorities and Malian arabisants created a climate that precipitated the rationalization and standardization of Islamic knowledge in Mali's médersas. These processes are ongoing and, although I present here the main events shaping them, the current state of knowledge and pedagogy in médersas will be presented in chapter five.

[82] Diakité, "Les fondements historiques de l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 41-43.

The Origin of the Médersa System: French Colonization and Legislation in the 19th Century.

French military rulers in West Africa were well aware of the importance of limiting the influence of Arabic and spreading the knowledge of French. French policy on the question of language always involved a religious dimension. I focus here on French policy in the Commune of St. Louis as it exemplifies the French attitude towards education, religious or not, in the colonies. As early as 1855, Governor-General of West Africa, Louis Faidherbe, wrote to the Ministry of Colonies that it was urgent to stop the spread of Arabic as a written language so that French could take hold in the African population. He was concerned that, in contrast to mulattos[83] and French people who were educated in French in Catholic schools, the majority of Muslims would only be literate in Arabic, if at all. He insisted that efforts should be made to attract Muslim children to French schools, in order to learn French and be assimilated to French culture.[84] One way of doing so was by heavily regulating the circumstances under which an Arabic education could be available in the colony.

On June 22nd 1857, a decree regulating qur'anic schools stated that no one could open a qur'anic school without the authorization of the Governor; in order to obtain this authorization, the candidate had to be from St. Louis or have resided in St. Louis for the past seven years,[85] prove sufficient knowledge of Arabic and religious matters in front of a examination jury, and provide a certificate of good morals from the mayor of the city.[86] The examination jury, composed of the mayor of St. Louis, the *tamsir* (representative of the Muslims of the city) and a knowledgeable Muslim inhabitant of the city also served as a surveillance committee: every three months, teachers of qur'anic school teachers had to provide a list of their students and their ages to the committee. These lists were necessary to implement Article Five of the decree which stated that the *marabouts* (teachers of qur'anic schools) had to ensure that students older than 12 years old would attend night class at a secular school or at a Catholic school. This recognition, although conditional, of qur'anic schools was accompanied by the obligation for the *marabouts* to put up a sign "école arabe" in front of their houses and the implementation of gender segregation: girls were not to be accepted in these qur'anic schools although women wanting to open a

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83 Mulattos are mixed-race individuals (half Black, half white). *Quarterons* are individuals which are mixed-race in a ratio of ¼.

84 Denise Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920: Mission civilisatrice ou formation d'une élite," (PhD diss., Université de Lille III, 1975), 284.

85 One can extrapolate that this specific rule is a precursor to the "politique d'endiguement" to be later promoted by the French authorities with the explicit aim of isolating "Black Islam" from the nefarious influence of "Arab Islam".

86 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 290.

qur'anic school for girls were allowed to go through the same recognition process as their male counterparts.[87]

The legislation governing qur'anic schools was tightened with the decree of February 28th 1870, again aiming to force the pupils of qur'anic schools to also be educated in French. From that time on, the *marabouts* themselves were expected to be fluent in French in order to teach it to their students. After two years, those students unable to make themselves understood in French would not be allowed to pursue further education in qur'anic schools and would be forced to take full-time classes at either a Catholic or a secular school.[88] However, it seems that this decree was never implemented in St. Louis. In 1879, following the review of Bity Logho Diobé's proposal to open a qur'anic school for young girls, the director of the Interior concluded that it was useless to try to enforce a decree that had never been taken seriously. Bity Logho Diobé, like many other school owners, did not know French and the director of the Interior found a number of authorizations granted by the Governor's office to files containing only a certificate of good morals.[89]

This failure to make French part of the curriculum of qur'anic schools, or to force pupils to be educated in both systems, brought about, in 1882, a new strategy by the French colonial authorities to co-opt Islam and Arabic to its benefit. Since the local population placed such value on the religious education found in qur'anic schools, to the exclusion of the secular knowledge gained in the colonial schools, the authorities decided to offer Arabic classes in the secular school and the Catholic school.[90] In 1897, an Islamic religious course and an Arabic class was introduced in the secular school of St. Louis and justified as follow:

> It seemed to us that the best way to bring the indigenous people to welcome the reforms of the May 9th 1896 decree was to incorporate religious education to the program of secular schools which they tend to follow. In doing so, we would simply be conforming to a common rule among them which asks that all educational institutions offer a course in religious instruction.[91]

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87 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 291.
88 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 298.
89 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 298.
90 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 312.
91 All translations from French to English, unless otherwise noted, are mine. "Il nous a paru que le meilleur moyen d'amener les indigènes à accueillir les réformes consacrées par le récent arrêté du 9 mai 1896 était d'introduire l'enseignement religieux dans le programme de l'école laïque qu'ils suivent plus particulièrement. En procédant ainsi, nous ne ferons que nous conformer à leur égard à une règle commune, qui exige que tout établissement d'instruction soit pourvu d'un cours d'enseignement religieux." Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 317-318.

However, this new strategy failed to entice parents to send their children to colonial schools. The French authorities did not comprehend that Muslim parents in St. Louis sent their children to qur'anic schools because they expected the *marabouts* to provide more than just religious instruction or Arabic literacy classes: qur'anic schools provided an all-encompassing, socializing education.[92] In the latter half of the 19th century, qur'anic schools in the French colonies of West Africa saw the enrolment of children increase with no change in their curriculum despite all the attempts made by the French authorities in the form of decrees (1857, 1970, 1896). These decrees, emanating from high level *fonctionnaires* who saw a need to limit the progress of Islamic and Arabic knowledge and the resistance to European ideas and the French language, were never actively implemented. Given that the colony was calm and that the Africans were loyal French subjects, implementing these decrees would only have brought about political complications, not to mention their costs for aims that were not obvious.[93]

Governor-General Faidherbe founded, in 1856, a school in St. Louis the aim of which was evident from its name: the School for Sons of Chiefs.[94] The idea here, as it was for most of the history of education in French West Africa, was to educate the sons of traditional leaders in order to return them to their cultural milieu with a sufficient knowledge of French. French would make them useful intermediaries between the *Administration Coloniale* and the indigenous, non French-speaking, population. The schools created in the colony of Soudan, drawing on the experiences of the established schools of Sénégal, insisted on the spoken knowledge of French. *Petit-nègre*[95] language was strictly prohibited. French literacy, the metric system, mathematics, drawing, and "leçon de chose" during which the children would be instructed in agriculture or commerce were also required.[96] In the colony of Soudan, as early as 1891, there was a similar school for the Sons of Chiefs, also often referred to in official documentation as "hostages' school", in Kayes.[97]

All schools in the Soudan at the time can be considered as "hostages' schools" since Colonel Louis Archinard, who was in charge of the military conquest of the Soudan, insisted on the necessity of carefully choosing the pupils who should come from notables' and influential peoples' families in each town. In an official *circulaire*, Archinard was explicit about the aim of the education for these chosen children: after graduation, they

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92 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 318.

93 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 319-320.

94 William Bryant Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French. A Review of Educational Activities in the Seven Federated Colonies of French West Africa and Algiers undertaken in 1935* (New York, NY: Negro University Press, 1970), 45.

95 Sort of French pidgin, term used to identify the French spoken by blacks in both Africa and the Caribbean.

96 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 444.

97 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 439.

were to be returned to their indigenous milieu in order to become vectors for the transmission of French ideas and influence.[98] The term hostage also clearly indicate how these children were taken without the consent of and used as leverage against their parents, the tribal chiefs, by the authorities.

As the French authorities were building this secular school system, they were also supporting the establishment of missionary schools by the Pères Blancs in the colony. In 1894, the Pères Blancs opened a missionary school in Timbuktu, the largest Muslim region in the colony of Soudan. This attempt failed as the population, as in Senegal, was wary of sending their children to a Catholic school. The Fathers therefore moved their school to Ségou, in a largely Bambara and animist region, in 1898. By 1900, they were educating 63 students. This new school was much more in line with the aim of education in the colony according to the French: it was thought that the Christianization of the animist population was an effective and cheap way to partially assimilate the indigenous population to French culture as well as limit the growing influence of Islam.[99]

In 1902, when military rule of the colonies was abolished to create the federal entity of French West Africa, the colony of Soudan (amputated from regions in the South and West and officially called Haut-Sénégal and Moyen-Niger between 1899 and 1902) had 30 schools educating a total of 730 students from a population of approximately 950 000 inhabitants.[100]. Bouche, however, makes a good case that calling establishments in a corner of a military post where an interpreter sporadically taught children who did not understand why they were there, "school" is an overstatement and so is the use of the verb "to educate" in many cases.

French Legislation and the Creation of the Médersas Franco-Arabe*: 1903-1913.*

Before the turn of the 20th century, there was no unified, centralized, structure governing France's territorial possessions in West Africa.[101] A major reorganization took place in 1900 in which the different colonies (the four communes, Sénégal, Haut-Sénégal-Niger, Guinée française, Côte-d'Ivoire, Haute Volta, Dahomey, Niger and Mauritanie), each under the rule of a Lieutenant Governor, were overseen by a Governor General of French West Africa established in St. Louis between 1900 and 1905, then on Gorée Island, and finally in Dakar in 1907.[102] Governor-General Roume, with new powers and influenced by the necessity of reforming education in French West Africa following the 1903 *laïcisation* decree from Paris, took the decision to reorganize the educational system

[98] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 441.
[99] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 447-448.
[100] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 454.
[101] Gail Paradise Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire:' School Knowledge in French West Africa, 1918-1938* (Buffalo, NY: State University of New York in Buffalo, 1984), 2.
[102] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 475.

of the colonies.[103] A series of *arrêtés*, or decrees, published on November 24th 1903, constituted a charter for education in French West Africa.[104] Four types of schools were to be created: 1) a primary elementary school system, 2) a vocational school system, 3) a primary superior and vocational education school system, and 4) an *École Normale*[105] common to all of French West Africa to train teachers for the other three types of schools.[106] Although education policy and implementation was to be determined by the Lieutenant Governor in each colony, an Educational Advisory Council and an Inspectorate were created at the federal level. These entities, based in Dakar, were to ensure the coherence of the different colonies' educational systems and oversee the functioning of a number of federal schools (*École Normale* – teacher training school, the Medical and Midwivery training school, *École Pinet-Laprade* and *École des Pupilles Mécaniciens Indigènes de la Marine* – both vocational schools) in Dakar and Gorée.[107] The reforms of *laïcisation* in the colony of Haut-Sénégal-Niger, led to Lieutenant-Governor William Ponty's decision to cut all funding for the six schools of the Pères Blancs (in Timbuktu, Ségou, Kita, Dinguira, Ouagadougou and Coupéla), for the Soeurs Blanches' school for girls in Kita, and for the Sisters of St. Joseph's school for girls in Dinguira.[108] In public schools (all levels), there were, in 1911-1912, 2 500 boys officially receiving an education in the 63 schools of the Haut-Sénégal-Niger colony. In 1912, William Ponty, former Lieutenant-Governor of Haut-Sénégal-Niger and now Governor-General of French West Africa, ordered yet another reorganization of the educational system which was, in the colony of Haut-Sénégal-Niger, the first real attempt to actually implement the reforms of 1903.[109] The colony still had only five regional schools in 1913 (in Bamako, Ségou, Timbuktu, Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso – the first three in nowadays Mali and the latter in today's Burkina Faso).[110]

In this new system, the emphasis was put on the complete education a child should receive in each school, which was adapted to the local needs. The idea was not to prepare

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[103] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 500.

[104] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 475.

[105] The *École Normale*, based in St. Louis until 1913 and later moved to Gorée, was to become of major historical importance under the name of École William-Ponty. A list of former students includes: Mamadou Dia (first Prime Minister of Sénégal), Sylvanus Olympio (first President of Togo), Modibo Keïta (first President of Mali), Hamani Diori (first President of Niger), Robert Guéï (Head of State in Ivory Coast, 1999-2000), Félix Houphouët-Boigny (first President of Ivory Coast), Abdoulaye Wade (current President of Sénégal).

[106] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 500. A figure depicting the organization of the different schools in 1930 can be found in Appendix I.

[107] Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 2.

[108] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 491.

[109] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 653. For an overview of the organization of education, refer to Appendix I.

[110] For a map showing the distribution of schools on the territory of Haut-Sénégal-Niger, refer to Appendix K

the student for entry into the next level of studies but to prepare him/her directly to enter a productive (by French standards) life in the student's cultural milieu.[111] It is worth quoting Kelly at length here to better grasp the aim of this new educational system created by the French colonizer in West Africa:

> It was never the intent of the French colonial politicians or pedagogues to create a metropolitan school system in West Africa for a variety of reasons. Many Frenchman believed metropolitan education was beyond the grasp of Blacks; others saw it as irrelevant to either the colonial government or to Africans and feared that metropolitan education might disrupt indigenous society and cause no end of grief. Finally, ideology aside, most admitted the impossibility of financing and/or staffing such a system. Education, as far as Hardy and his colleagues were concerned, was to be adapted to the African context. Its goal was to be useful and usefulness did not consist of vocationalism [sic] or necessarily the diffusion of new techniques (...). In French West Africa, education's purpose was to teach local African elites – chiefs and notables – how to communicate with the French administration. The utility of schooling was to teach those who were by heredity to rule Africans to speak French so that French men could in turn rule them.[112]

The French authorities' goal was to create a double system of education. The first system was a European system for white and black children raised in French-speaking families; these pupils were already considered to have a "French" outlook. Second, France created an African system aimed at slowly assimilating Africans, by teaching them to have a French outlook, in a way considered more suitable to their background.[113] Albert Charton, Inspector-General of Education in West Africa in the 1930s, summarized this goal of the African school system:

> To the school falls the task of bringing to fruition these efforts of ours which, by a steady process of infusion, shall give birth to this French consciousness, as we may term it, and bring to realization this moral conquest which we ought henceforth to describe as a moral alliance. It is quite clear that the general culture we give to the cream of native youth must be of European inspiration, and, in our colonies, exclusively French.[114]

The decade of 1903-1913 saw not only the reorganization of education policies in French West Africa but also the regulation of Islamic learning in the form of the establishment of qur'anic schools and médersas. As with the rest of the policies regulating education in the colonies, the colonial government hesitated between two opposite view

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[111] Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French*, 31.

[112] Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 2. Kelly points out that such opinions are clearly expressed by Hardy in Georges Hardy, *Une Conquête Morale: L'Enseignement en AOF* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1917).

[113] Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French*, 29.

[114] Albert Charton, "The Social Function of Education in French West Africa." In Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French*.

points regarding Islamic knowledge: one point of view aimed to reduce qur'anic education by coercion. Exemplified by the July 15th 1903 *arrêté* regulating qur'anic schooling in Senegal, the opening of a school became so complicated and the granting of permission so rare as to significantly limit the number of qur'anic schools. On the other hand, some within the government supported the modernization of Islamic education, in the form of médersas, in order to make it a channel for French ideas to penetrate the population at large.[115] This change of policy towards Islamic schooling was brought about by a new generation of inspectors of education in French West Africa: first Mairot, who had experience from dealing with the Algerian educational system, followed by his successor, Mariani, a *fonctionnaire* born in Algeria and fluent in Arabic.

Mairot and Mariani approached Islamic education in French West Africa, knowing Arabic themselves and being aware of pedagogical improvements and modernization happening in Egypt, with ideas based on "Maghreb's Islam" as opposed to "African Islam."[116] According to Mairot, who went on a mission in Haut-Sénégal-Niger in 1905, there was not one decent-sized village without a qur'anic school in the colony; he counted 3 688 qur'anic schools teaching 41 986 students.[117] Based on this, he came to the conclusion that these schools, their masters, pupils and former pupils, formed a moral force that the French colonizer had to respect.[118] As a partisan of Franco-Arab education, Mairot envisaged three solutions to combine French ideas with the religious education already in place: 1) attach a *marabout*, chosen by the administration to each French school, 2) attach a French teacher to qur'anic schools, and 3) make the *marabouts* teach French as well as other secular courses after being educated themselves in Franco-Arab schools which came to be known as médersas.[119] It was for the last of his proposals that Mairot requested, from the Governor-General, the creation of the position of *Inspecteur des écoles coraniques* (Inspector of qur'anic schools) which should be held by a graduate from the École des Lettres d'Alger (Algeria). It is with this title that Mariani arrived in Gorée in 1906.

Like Mairot, Mariani thought that the médersa system was the most logical one to apply in any Muslim-majority region: to form an official body of *marabouts* capable of teaching both religious knowledge and French values to the Muslims of the colonies.[120] François Joseph Clozel, successor of William Ponty as Lieutenant-Governor of Haut-

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[115] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 703.

[116] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 718. This dichotomy created by the French authorities between "Arab Islam" and "Black Islam" will be of importance in the policies governing Islamic education in the territory of Mali up to the 1980s.

[117] For statistics regarding enrolment in qur'anic schools in french West Africa for the years 1907, 1908 and 1909, refer to Appendix L.

[118] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 720-721.

[119] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 722.

[120] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 724.

Sénégal-Niger, was sent to Algeria, where he did his military service and learnt Arabic, to gather information on the médersa school system there and he concluded that it should definitely be emulated in French West Africa.[121]

With the combined political will of the Governor-General of French West Africa (Ernest Roume), the Lieutenant-Governor of Haut-Sénégal-Niger (Ponty), the knowledge gathered by Clozel in Algeria, and under the supervision of Mairot and Mariani, the first Franco-Arab médersa was created in Djenné in 1906. The Governor-General Roume, as well as Ponty, understood the creation of this médersa as the best strategy against Islamic propaganda: "Everyone knows that the study of French is the most effective cure one can employ against fanaticism, and experience teaches us that Muslims who know our language are less imbued with prejudice than those who know only Arabic."[122] According to Bouche, it is unclear as to why Djenné in particular was chosen but one could speculate that this city's renown as a centre for Islamic learning as well as its status as a rich commercial city at the crossroads of caravan-trade between the North and South of the Sahara desert made it a centre of influence where the French wanted to gain a foothold.[123]

The médersa was created by the *arrêté* of July 4th 1906 with the stated goal "to develop Muslim higher education and to train teachers for qur'anic schools, to teach an elite of young Muslims spoken and written French as well as to impart them with correct views of the civilizing role of France in Africa."[124] The médersa was to have 30 pupils chosen from the ranks of those leaving qur'anic schools under the age of fifteen and with a preference for those who had also attended French schools.[125] However well intentioned, the médersa of Djenné stirred resistance amongst the population which had never been consulted in this process and by 1910, the failure of the school was obvious. A series of visits by various inspectors reporting on the médersa showed that the 22 year-old teacher taught in his native Algerian-Arabic to his 18 to 20 years old students who, at best, knew a little literary Arabic. A rumour spread in the local population that he might be a Christian and the administration, in reaction, made him lead the Friday Prayer at the Great Mosque.[126] He was reproached because the médersa students did not speak French (this would prove to be a recurrent problem with the Islamic schooling of West Africa) when they graduated; the religious content was too similar to the teachings of the local

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[121] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 726-727.

[122] "Circulaire de William Ponty, du 30 août 1910", *L'Afrique Française. Bulletin du Comité de l'Afrique française et du Comité du Maroc*, 1910, 341. In Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 41.

[123] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 728-729.

[124] Arrêté 369 du lieutenant-gouverneur du Haut-Sénégal-Niger, 4 juillet 1906. *Journal Officiel du Haut-Sénégal-Niger*, 1906, p. 15. In Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 729.

[125] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 729.

[126] The Great Mosque of Djenné is now a World Heritage Site protected by UNESCO.

marabouts; and the curriculum was not sufficiently inspired by the reformed Islam of Egypt. To solve this problem, William Ponty, who created the médersa in his position as Lieutenant-Governor of Haut-Sénégal-Niger, decided, as Governor-General of French West Africa, in 1910 to increase drastically the number of hours spent learning French and made the médersa virtually indistinguishable from any other primary school in the colony. The school was definitively closed in 1913.[127]

A second médersa was established in St. Louis, in the colony of Sénégal, which ought to be mentioned here. As part of the French goal of educating young African hereditary chiefs, establishments such as the School for the Sons of Chiefs were created in St. Louis.[128] The efforts made by the various *fonctionnaires* of the colonies to co-opt Islam and Arabic and integrate them into the curriculum of the secular schools led to the reorganization, in 1908, of the School for the Sons of Chiefs of St. Louis into what the French authorities called a médersa.[129] Mumford details the content of courses in this new form of school:

> The course of study covers four years; the curriculum includes science, hygiene, history, geography, etc. In addition, there are classes in the theory and practice of administration in French Africa, and, as part of this, students practise writing letters, such as a chief might have to write to the Government, are trained in book-keeping and accountancy and the study of Government decrees and *arrêtés*. Students also study Arabic grammar and literature, theological law and Koranic exegesis, and recently an hour and a half a week for practical agriculture on the school farm has been added to the curriculum.[130]

This experience of a médersa in St. Louis did not last and the school returned to its previous, non-religious format and purged the teaching of Arabic in 1922.[131]

In 1910, a third médersa was opened by the French authorities in Timbuktu with a clearly stated political goal (as opposed to the pedagogical goal of the Djenné médersa of educating future qur'anic school teachers). The establishment, in this traditional centre of Islamic learning, wherein local masters would be paid to teach under the surveillance of a superintendent from Algeria was to allow the French authorities to indirectly control Islamic education in the city.[132] In 1914, Timbuktu's médersa received the library collection and a few students from the newly closed médersa of Djenné and a new director was nominated: Victor Auguste Dupuis, known as Yacouba, a former Père Blanc.

[127] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 730-732.
[128] See discussion above.
[129] Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French*, 45.
[130] Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French*, 45.
[131] Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French*, 45.
[132] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 732-733.
[133] Dupuis preferred to leave the church and his vocation rather than leaving Timbuktu after the closure of

This new school was to teach French, predominantly, as well as Modern Arabic and Tamashek (language of the Tuaregs, major ethnic group of the region). However, this school faced resistance from the local notables and had very little contact with the other free Islamic schools of the city, rendering the indirect control of their teachings impossible.[134] One can speculate that the use of *Thousand and One Nights* as the set text in the Arabic language course did not endear the new médersa to the pious directors and teachers of the free Islamic schools.[135] Jumping ahead in time, the médersa in Timbuktu was reorganized in 1938 and the school, in the 1940s, was made to teach the exact same curriculum as could be found in any other primary French school in the colony, although it kept the privilege of being the only place where Arabic was taught as a second language. This type of curriculum, found at the médersa Franco-Arab of Timbuktu, was being implemented in a developing network of such schools which were, both under colonial rule and after independence, fully part of the public educational system.[136]

Despite mostly failing, the French colonial authorities' attempts to control qur'anic schools stemmed from the competition they posed to French schools for which the authorities had a difficult time recruiting pupils.[137] Despite this reorganization of the system and the decrees, the period from 1903 to 1913 saw a series of abandonment, modifications, and resumptions of the proposed program for the circumscribed teaching of Arabic until it was possible to implement in practice the principles posed in the 1903 reform.[138] In 1913, 2 750 students attended public schools in Haut-Sénégal-Niger, for a population of 4 150 000 inhabitants in French West Africa. The Governor-General of French West Africa, William Ponty, and his Inspector-General of Education, Georges Hardy, found that this was insufficient and opened a new era in the development of education in their colonies.[139]

Legal Developments in Schooling, the Question of Language and Religion: 1913-1945.

In 1913, following a decade of hesitation regarding educational policies and the implementation of the reforms devised in 1903, Georges Hardy, the Inspector General of Education in French West Africa, initiated a vigorous resumption of action in the domain

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the Père Blanc's mission. He was fluent in Arabic and published a number of studies on the people of Timbuktu, the Songhaï.

[134] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 734-735.

[135] Fisher, "Islamic Education and Religious Reform in West Africa," 256. For a more detailed discussion of the content of the curriculum at the Timbuktu médersas in the 1930's, see Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 52-54.

[136] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 48-49.

[137] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 703.

[138] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 475.

[139] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 654.

of education.[140] While no new ideas came from this renewed vigour, the political will was there to finally, energetically, implement the reforms of 1903. The role of each type of school – village, regional, urban – was redefined and strict rules for their inspection were put in place. A specific point of the July 1st 1914 *circulaire* detailed the new rules for education and had a great impact on the development of Islamic médersas in the 1940s (as will be explained later). The *circulaire* extended the new educational policy to private schools; these schools now had to register officially with the French authorities, clearly indicating their educational purposes and their intended clientele. They had to submit, every year, a report to the administration with a list of their students and undergo a yearly inspection. Most importantly, the only language of education allowed in any schools would be French.[141] This was again confirmed in the decree of February 14th, 1922, which reads as follow:

> Art. 3 [modified by the decree of 29 September 1938]: General education must be given in the French language; however, indigenous languages can be authorized in practical courses and in centres of native education. In addition, the Qur'anic schools and the "catechism schools" are authorized to give exclusively religious education in the local dialect. These schools are not considered to be educational establishments.
> Art. 7: Only French, Latin and the indigenous languages spoken in the colony are authorized for use in the practice of religion.[142]

One should keep in mind that, in the French Administration's perspective, Arabic is not an indigenous language in French West Africa and cannot therefore be used as language of instruction in any school in the colony. This decree would be of importance in the upcoming legal battles between the founders of the first Islamic médersas, resulting in the closure of some of them.

During the First World War, schools in French West Africa were provided with the first textbooks adapted to the needs of the colony (as they were thought of by the French colonizers).[143] Georges Hardy, as the Inspector General of Education in French West Africa, oversaw the production of textbooks in geography, history, drawing and singing adapted to the milieu.[144] In 1931, a staple in French West African education was produced for the first time: the inexhaustible series of "Mamadou et Bineta,"[145] a reading booklet

[140] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 806.
[141] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 809-811.
[142] Décret du 14 février 1922, règlementant l'enseignement privé et l'exercice de la propagnade confessionelle en AOF, in CAOM, Affaires Politiques, 2256, dossier 4. In Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 61.
[143] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 816.
[144] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 812-814.
[145] Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 816-817. The "Mamadou et Bineta" by A. Davesne, series is still published by EDICEF, in Évreux, France.

comparable to "Dick and Jane". The Ordinance of May 1st, 1940[146] was passed to define a curriculum for primary schools which was in line with the general aims of education in the colonies: teach students to speak French, not make them French. The metropolitan curriculum was banned from the colonies' schools and pedagogical material and class content should be adapted to the local milieu: history and geography was to be African, even though little was known about it at this time, French was to be taught via local folktales translated into French.[147] The insistence on learning French is made evident in the following table[148] detailing the weekly time allocation per subject in primary schools:

Weekly Time/Subject, Time allocation, Primary Grades, 1924

School subject	Cours Préparatoire	Cours Élémentaire	Cours Moyen	Cours Supérieur
Moral Education	--	--	1	1
French (spoken)	12	9	8	7
Reading	6	6	4	3
Writing	3	3	1- ½	1
Math	5	5	5	5
General Science	--	1	2	3
History and Geography	--	½	2	2
Drawing	1	1	1	2
Singing	--	½	1	1
Manual Labour	--	½	1	1
Physical Education	½	1	1	1- ½
Recreation	2- ½	2- ½	2- ½	2- ½
Total	30	30	30	30

Source: Gouvernement Général de l'Afrique Occidentale Française, *Textes portant Réorganisation des l'Enseignement en AOF. 1 mai 1924* (Gorée: Editions du Bulletin de l'Enseignement de l'AOF, 1924), p. 39.

Pedagogical theories of the time stressed that children in primary schools in West Africa were to be taught according to their "mentality": starting with the concrete and progressing slowly towards the abstract. Effective teaching would therefore begin with what the child was already familiar and slowly move beyond it. However, given that pedagogues generally questioned the mental abilities of Africans and their capacity to understand abstractions, the curriculum in these schools focused almost exclusively on material dealing directly with the immediate environment of the child. Although this material could slightly progress in terms of linguistic complexity, it barely did in terms of

[146] Boniface I. Obichere, "Politicians and Educational Reform in French-Speaking West Africa: A Comparative Study of Mali and Ivory Coast." In *Education & Politics in Tropical Africa,* ed. Victor C. Uchendu (New York, NY: Conch Magazine Limited, 1979), 198.
[147] Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 10.
[148] Found in Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 11.

intellectual depth[149] and this is where the difference in pedagogy lies: African students were presumed to have reached their maximum intellectual capacity at that point while a typical French pupil would go on to more abstract material.

> Year after year students began the school year in September with a month or two of French lessons that focused on the school: school materials (paper, pen, blackboard, cabinets, desks) and proper student behaviour. From there, the curriculum progressed to discussing the human body and its care, clothing, housing, the village, the family, animals, plants, the weather, and work. In the upper grades the year inevitably ended with French West Africa.[150]

Based on her extensive study of pedagogical material and pupils' notebooks, Kelly provides a good commentary on the quality of education in the primary schools of French West Africa: "The notebooks indicate that students, especially at the primary level, where 98 per cent were concentrated, had tremendous difficulty in following day-to-day classroom instruction. They imply that the schools did not teach students French or anything else particularly well."[151] The formal curriculum of the colony's primary schools aimed at making the children effective relays between the non-schooled population and the French administration. In 1935, there were 83 primary schools in the colony of Soudan (nowadays Mali) schooling 11,721 children and only one primary-superior school educating 186 children.[152]

Secondary education, in the form of the four schools mentioned above (*École Normale* – teacher training school, the Medical and Midwivery training school, *École Pinet-Laprade* and *École des Pupilles Mécaniciens Indigènes de la Marine* – both vocational schools), was always to be limited to an extremely small number of pupils in French West Africa and to be centralized in the communes of Dakar and Gorée. However, each colony was to develop a form of primary superior education that would instruct the pupils depending on the colony's needs. In this five-year cycle, one could be educated with the aim of attending the *École Normale* or another of the federal schools, attend short-term training in order to become a *moniteur* or a school-aid, or receive vocational training in the form of an apprenticeship.[153] By 1913, the *École Normale* had been reorganized to deliver diplomas called *Certificat d'Aptitude à l'Enseignement* (Aptitude to Teach Certificate) after oral, written, and practical examinations. The school also delivered the *Diplôme Supérieur* to teachers who had already been working for two years but who wanted to further their education and qualifications.[154]

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149 Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 12.
150 Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 12.
151 Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 12.
152 Gouvernement Général de l'AOF, *Annuaire Statistique de l'AOF,* 1935, p. 25. In Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 7.
153 Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire,'* 6 and 8.
154 Bouche, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920," 522-

As has been previously mentioned, the colonial authorities in French West Africa created a number of médersas with the stated aim of forming a new elite of Islamic scholars who spoke Arabic, as well as French, and were familiar with French ideas and values and could pass them along in the population by acting in their traditional roles of religious (and sometimes political) authorities. This French policy towards Islamic education continued throughout the 1920s and 1930s, as can be seen in this passage taken from a letter of the Director of the regional school of Timbuktu to the Governor of French Soudan (formerly the colony of Haut-Sénégal-Niger):

> Médersas are Muslim educational institutions meant, in principle, to canalize, to the benefit of the French political goals, the influence of the *marabouts* over the Muslim populations. Médersas will dissipate the negative pretensions of the Muslim world against our own civilization. To this end, these schools prepare interpreters, secretaries for Muslim tribunals, etc. [...] They develop higher qur'anic education while also providing students with appropriate views on the civilizing role of France.[155]

This quote clearly explains that the policy for the creation of médersas in French West Africa was to co-opt indigenous Islamic education by raising a chosen group of youngsters with French ideologies and educating them with the aim of making them low level *fonctionnaires* speaking both French and Arabic.[156]

"In 1934, there were four Medersa [*sic.*] schools in French Africa, at Timbedra, Timbuktu, Boudimit and Diourbel, with a total attendance of a little over 300 young Moslem leaders."[157] Of interest here are the two Franco-Arab médersas of the colony of Soudan, nowadays Mali, in Timbuktu and Timbédra that, for the school year 1933-1934, had a combined enrolment of 167 pupils.[158] The Timbuktu médersa, because of the enormous difficulties in recruitment in the local population and implementation of a viable curriculum, was thoroughly reformed in 1938 and its new objectives are summarized as follows:

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155 "Les médersas sont des établissements d'enseignement musulmans destinées, en principe, à canaliser au profit de la politique française l'influence qu'exercent les marabouts sur les populations musulmanes. Elles se proposent de dissiper les prétentions du monde musulman contre notre civilisation. À cet effet, elles préparent des interpètes, des secrétaires de tribunaux musulmans, etc. [...] elles développent les études supérieures coraniques tout en donnant aux étudiants des vues justes sur le rôle civilisateur de la France." Archives Nationales du Mali, 1-G-72 FR: Cité dans la lettre du Directeur, École Régionale de Tombouctou au Gouverneur du Soudan Français, 25 février 1936. In Louis Brenner, "Médersas au Mali: Transformation d'une institution islamique," In *L'Enseignement islamique au Mali,* ed. Bintou Sanankoua and Louis Brenner (Bamako: Jamana, 1991), 67.

156 Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 67.

157 Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French*, 45.

158 Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French*, 165 and 170-171. See Appendix J for detailed statistics.

> Article 7: Education in a médersa encompasses the study of the language, the grammar, the recitation, and the literature of Arabic, of Islamic law, the *Sunna* of the Prophet, qur'anic exegesis, and theology.
> Article 8: Students who formally reqest it will be allowed to take French classes that will be taught under the supervision of the principal of the médersa.[159]

The results of a census, published in 1944, established the number of Muslims in French West Africa at 6 241 000 in 1936 (from 3 875 000 in 1924).[160] Combined with French worries about the political development in the rest of the Muslim world (the situations in Algeria, Egypt, Arab nationalism and pan-Islamic activities, Wahhabi religious proselytism, etc.) following the end of World War II, the Islamization of French West Africa had a clear impact on colonial authorities. The administration had no more illusions about its ability to limit the spread of Islam in the indigenous population. All local religious activities in French West Africa were closely monitored to identify potential international connections: mail was controlled in order to see who received what from which Arab country, a census was undertaken to determine who owned a radio in order to establish who might listen to The Voice of Cairo, etc. In the same *circulaire* which states these statistics, a new approach to Islamic schooling was devised: official monetary help to *marabouts* and other religious figures was to be reduced and their activities closely monitored; data sheets on these people were created. Two *arrêtés*, in 1945, regulating the opening and curriculum of religious schools (both qur'anic and catechism), were published and stayed in place until the independence of Mali in 1960. These documents stated that religious schools were not considered "établissements d'enseignement" and therefore would not receive public subsidies.[161] These *arrêtés*, in combination with the *Décret* of February 14th 1922, were to become the legal basis for the containment policy the French Administration would use through the 1940s and 1950s, a time period that saw the creation and the rapid growth of today's Islamic médersas.

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[159] "Art 7: L'enseignement de la médersas comporte l'étude de la langue, de la grammaire, la prosodie, et de la littérature arabe, du droit musulman, des traditions du Prophète, de l'exégèse du coran et de la théologie.
Art 8: Les élèves qui en feront la demande pourront suivre des cours de français qui leur seront donnés sous le contrôle du Directeur de la médersa." Archives Nationales du Mali. 1-G-72 FR: Arrêté no. 2/89/E. 27 septembre 1938. Cited in Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 66.

[160] Archives du Ministère de l'Intérieur, Circulaire datée décembre 1944, signée Coumarie, Chef de Bureau Politique (AOF) et Textier, Chef de Cabinet. In Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 69.

[161] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 69.

The Creation of the First Islamic Médersas: the Agitated 1950s.

Islamic médersas were created and still function today as alternatives to both the qur'anic schools and to the secular French public schools of which the médersas are a social and pedagogical amalgam. Here is a summary of the aims and methods of the Islamic médersas in Mali:

> The stated primary goal of médersas has been the teaching of the Islamic religious sciences. Arabic is the language of instruction and it is taught to student as a first language as soon as first grade, although with uneven efficiency. This practice follows the model to teach French in state schools where French is the language of instruction. Secular topics are also taught and their importance in the curriculum is constantly increasing since some médersas have tried to respond to the educational needs of contemporary Mali.[162]

Médersas are clearly a reaction to and result of the various schooling options available in the territory of Mali. Pedagogically, they revolutionized the methods of qur'anic schools, judged slow and painful, to teach both Arabic as a language and religious sciences. With their clear religious orientations, médersas also positioned themselves as opposed to French schools, which are seen as fostering either secularization or christianization.[163] Although médersas developed, until the 1980s, independently of each other and with no outside supervision, they all shared characteristics that made them significantly different from the qur'anic schools, the only other form of formalized Islamic education in Mali:

> Curriculum, pedagogical methods, even physical structures of the schools would be profoundly modified; children would be taught in classrooms in graded groupings, religious knowledge would be subdivided into subjects to be taught in designated schedule slots in the school day, and Arabic would be taught as a foreign language from the first year of school with the intention that it should become the language of instruction.[164]

These first Islamic médersas appeared as the result of networks of personal contacts and the exchange of ideas on a regional and international level. The personal trajectories of the various founders of the first three Islamic médersas will not be discussed in detail here, as their partial biographies are well detailed elsewhere.[165] It will suffice to

[162] "Le but premier déclaré de toutes les médersas a été l'enseignement des sciences religieuses islamique. L'arabe est la langue utilisée, et elle est enseignés comme première langue aux élèves à partir de la première année de leur entrée à l'école, quoiqu'avec un degré d'efficacité très variable. Cette pratique suit le modèle de l'enseignement du français dans les écoles d'état où le français est la langue d'enseignement. Des matières laïques sont également enseignées et leur importance est en croissance constante dans les programmes, car certains médersas ont cherché à répondre aux besoins éducationels contemporains du Mali." Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 63.

[163] Seydou Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992), 157.

[164] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 54.

[165] Amongst others: Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*; Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*;

summarize here how these personal trajectories led them to create this new educational system:

> The early founders were all young men in their thirties who had grown up in and been moulded by the ambiguous and ambivalent realities of life in colonial West Africa which had introduced them to experiences and opportunities not available to their parents' generation. These experiences encouraged and prepared them to challenge both colonial policy and accepted forms of Islamic teaching and practice.[166]

The two first médersas (created from private initiative, without much external prompting and help) were established in 1946 in the territory of Mali. al-Hajj Mahmoud Bâ opened one in Kayes and Saada Oumar Touré in Ségou.[167] Saada Touré's médersa, Sabil al-Falah al-Islamiyya, was affiliated to the Tijaniyya. By 1947, 17 students were in attendance; in 1951, there were 125 students; and five years later, there were 300 students.[168] These statistics on enrolment clearly show the success of the médersa as well the demand for such an education in Ségou.

The third médersa was opened in Bamako in 1949 by an association called *Shubban al-Muslimin* under the leadership of Kabiné Kaba and a number of others who studied at al-Azhar (often referred to, as a group, by the French authorities who closely monitored their activities, as the Azharists).[169] This group demanded permission from French colonial authorities to open a médersa in Bamako in 1945 (prior to the opening of the médersas of Kayes and Ségou). This was refused by the Administration Coloniale.[170] The médersa was finally opened in Badialan (neighbourhood of Bamako) in November 1949 under the name *École Coranique Supérieure*.[171] The curriculum was limited to religious courses and the development of civic and moral education in the pupils, 34% of the schedule was dedicated to the Arabic language and 60% to religious classes – and 6% to arithmetic. Its characterization as a médersa stems primarily from its modernized pedagogical approach to the study of both language and religious knowledge, although it spent less time on secular topics usually found in médersas. When it was closed by the *Administration Coloniale* in 1951, the school had 300 students.[172]

Ahmet Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone: Les médersas de la Répulique du Mali* (Istanbul: Centre de Recherches sur l'Histoire, l'Art, et la Culture Islamiques (IRCICA), 2003).

166 Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 55.

167 Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 73.

168 Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 142.

169 Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 73. The 4 Azharists are Kabiné Kaba and Muhammad Fodé Keita, Guinean and French subjects, and Buyaji Fati Kuran and Muhammad Sanusi, Gambian and English subjects. In Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 143-144.

170 Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 144.

171 As explained earlier, médersas were considered as qur'anic schools (as opposed to "établissement d'enseignement") by the French authorities in order to distinguish them from the médersas franco-arab and legally limit the curriculum of these schools. See p. 17.

172 Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 146-147.

Despite this médersa's closure, the demand for Islamic education in Bamako grew and by May of that same year, the médersa Radiul-Ilm, patronized by the traditionalists, opened, followed in 1953 by a médersa sponsored by the *Jamiat al-Murshidin* that was not very successful.[173] Sheikhna Yattabaré who studied and worked in Cairo, Saudi Arabic, Yemen, and Ivory Coast,[174] opened the Institut Islamique in the Niaréla (neighbourhood of Bamako) in 1958. This médersa is particularly significant as it became one of the biggest in the country and is still considered to be the best model for the Islamic school system to this day, as we will see.[175]

These innovative Islamic médersas (to distinguish them from the Franco-Arab médersas created by the French, although the French authorities always refused to call them médersas, referring to them only as qur'anic schools), established in the late 1940s obviously prompted a reaction by the French colonial authorities. As has been explained previously, the *Décret* of February 14th 1922 banned the use of Arabic (as a foreign language) as the language of instruction in French West Africa and the *arrêtés* of 1945 banned the teaching of secular topics, including French, in qur'anic schools, and limited the number of hours dedicated to teaching Arabic in these schools, which were not to be considered as "établissements d'enseignement". This development is of importance as the French authorities used these specificdecrees and *arrêtés* to harass and temporarily or permanently close the new Islamic médersas on the grounds that they taught French and secular topics.

The French policy of containment in the 1940s and 1950s was the work of Marcel Cardaire, of the *Bureau des Affaires Musulmanes*, whose main concern was to control the internationalization of political Islam in French West Africa. Cardaire identified two main streams of "imported" Islam in Soudan and this classification remains important to this day in Mali: 1) the Wahhabi-influenced class of merchants who picked up their ideas during their pilgrimage to Mecca; and 2) the reformist learned class mostly educated in Egypt. The combination of these two groups are often referred to as "the Wahhabis," by both scholars and the Malian population, although they themselves prefer to be called the Ahl al-sunna, or the Sunnis, who, as a group, are often opposed to the traditionalists, represented by the *marabouts*.

A digression must be made here to explain the vocabulary specific to the Malian Islamic scene. The local Malian discourse, to this day, contrasts the Islam of the "Wahhabis/Sunnis", which is agreed by all to have roots in Saudi Arabia (seen as a claim to legitimacy by the Wahhabis/Sunnis themselves) to that of the "traditionalists/marabouts" who see the "foreign" roots of the Wahhabis as their main flaw.[176] All the terms – "Wahhabis/Sunnis" and "traditionalists/orthodox/marabouts" – as

[173] Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 147 and 149.
[174] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 127.
[175] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 79. See chapter one for the history of this médersa.
[176] Brenner, "Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali," 60-61.

they are used in the Malian context, must be understood in the socio-political context of the French colonial period.

> It would seem that the French were the first to classify the Traditionalists and the Wahhabis as such. The latter refer to themselves as Sunnis, which from an internal Muslim perspective means that they are calling *themselves* Traditionalists (...). Similarly, from an internal Muslim perspective, one would expect the Wahhabi/Sunnis would refer to their opponents as "innovators" (*ahl al-bid'a*), as similar group in Nigeria do, such as the Izala.[177]

Instead, the opponents of the Wahhabis/Sunnis are the Traditionalist/Orthodox/marabout although "Sunni" is often translated in European languages as "orthodox". The semantic permutations and conceptual obfuscations must be kept in mind as these categories are still used today in Mali.[178]

Both groups, though, were passionate about proselytizing their faith and their anti-French ideas and Cardaire saw clearly the threat that this combination posed to France's interests: the teaching zeal using modern methods of the reformists combined with the monetary capabilities of the merchants could establish a network of schooling institutions reaching far and wide along the commercial routes.[179] Cardaire viewed the Azharists, young men returning from attending universities in Egypt, as clearly posing a threat to the French system:

> These young men have lived for years in the politically volatile environment of contemporary Egypt. In contact with unbridled modernism and mostly with partisans of a return, pure and simple, to the *salaf*, they have indistinctly drawn from these contradictory sources. They have come to know the use of politico-religious arguments that the press distills continually. They have acquired the intimate conviction that God has bestowed upon them the mission of education their compatriots and we all know how proud they are of the role they intend to play in the public religious sphere of their country.[180]

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[177] Brenner, "Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali," 65-66.

[178] Brenner, "Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali," 66. For an in depth analysis of these identities, see Brenner, "Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali," 59-78.

[179] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 70-71. For more in depth studies on the interaction of reformist ideology and commercial networks in West Africa, see Lansiné Kaba, *The Wahhabiyya. Islamic Reform and Politics in French West Africa.* (Chicago, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1974). and Jean-Louis Amselle, *Les Négociants de la Savane* or "Le Wahhabisme à Bamako".

[180] "Ces jeunes gens ont vécu pendant des années dans l'atmosphère politiquement surchauffée de l'Égypte contemporaine. Mis au contact des tenants d'un modernisme démesuré, mêlés surtout aux partisans d'un retour pur et simple au Salaf, ils ont puisé indifféremment aux deux sources contraires. Ils ont connu le maniements des arguments politico-religieux que la presse orientale distille inlassablement. Ils ont acquis la conviction que Dieu leur confiait la mission d'instruire leurs compatriotes et l'ont sait combien ils sont fiers au rôle qu'ils entendent jouer sur la scène religieuse de leur pays." Marcel Cardaire, *L'Islam et le terroir africain*, 138. Cited in Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 70.

Cardaire was even sent by the colonial authorities in the early 1950s to tour the Middle East (Lebanon, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, etc.) in order to survey the ideological currents that French Sudanese students would encounter abroad. He found 104 Sudanese students at al-Azhar and, after conversations with their "leader," Souleymane Camara, wrote a report on these "fanaticized" people who planned to return to French Soudan wanting to get rid of "superstitions" and the "bad influence" of *marabouts*. Cardaire also found the community of Sudanese in Saudi Arabia, under the ideological leadership of Abd al-Rahman al-Ifriqi and Mohamed Ali Ag Ataher, to be even more politicized: "For both these men, education had become a means to confront what they considered political domination by non-Muslims."[181]

The new Islamic médersas represented a threat to the French authorities on various levels but particularly due to their efficient methods for teaching Arabic: writing and reading in Arabic was now mastered at a much greater speed than ever before in the French Soudan's educational history and students were conversant in Arabic by the end of primary schooling. The French saw this as a sort of Arab cultural invasion which could potentially bring about major political disruptions in the colony. The authorities responded to this threat with a cultural counter-attack: the teaching of religion in the vernacular languages.[182] This came to be known as the Counter-Reform, created by Amadou Hampâté Bâ (historian and specialist of African culture) and applied mostly by his son-in-law, Abd al-Wahhab Doucouré (learned in both French in Arabic, he graduated from Zaituna University in Tunis), both of whom were *fonctionnaires* in the French administration. The Counter-Reform promoted an educational reform in two respects: 1) opening religious classes after school hours in French schools and 2) creating free-médersas (Counter-Reform schools) which would use Fulfulde or Bamanankan[183] as the language of instruction. In order to promote these objectives, Doucouré founded, in 1953, an association known as *Jamiat al-murshidin* which itself opened médersas in Bamako, Ségou, Kayes, Diafarabé, and Sikasso between 1953 and 1959.[184] These schools functioned for a few years and the French authorities were optimistic about their chances of success, possibly because the French authorities shut the Islamic médersa of Bamako in 1951 for two years and the one in Kayes was closed by the French for an indeterminate period due to the absence of its founder. Saada Oumar Touré in Ségou was the only one to remain open until 1954 when the other Islamic médersas were re-opened and saw their enrolment increase regularly while the médersas of the *Jamiat al-Murshidin* stagnated.[185] The médersa in Ségou which was associated with the *Jamiat al-Murshidin*, founded in 1954 by the Thiam brothers who were once associated with Saada Oumar Touré, became,

[181] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, *95*-96.
[182] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 77.
[183] Language of the Fulani and Bambara people, respectively.
[184] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 78.
[185] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 78.

by the end of the 1950s, a regular Islamic médersa and is, to this day, one of the biggest in Mali. One of the Thiam brothers, Abu Bakr Thiam, is the author of a series of grammar books for Arabic which are widely used in Mali: *Al-Risala al-nahwiyya li 'l-madaris al-ibtida'iyya*, published in Tunis by Maison Tidjani Muhammadi.[186]

The French authorities, Marcel Cardaire first among them, were aware of the changing socio-religious dynamics in the French Soudan and attributed them to external influences (in Cardaire's classification: Wahhabism from Saudi Arabia, modernism from Egypt) on an indigenous society in which traditional values were crumbling and creating a spiritual gap infiltrated by Islam.

> Cardaire's 1952 report ends on a pessimistic note, which is not surprising considering that it is filled with thumbnail sketches of active and committed individuals, not so prestigious and influential as al-Ifriqi or Ag Ataher, but who were taking full advantage of the freedom of movement and expression that they had found in the Middle East and who fully intended to return to West Africa and to translate their new ideas into action. Cardaire agreed with the contention of al-Ifriqi, that although the French had closed the Bamako médersa, another would open to take its place, and that when the present students of Cairo and Medina return to Soudan, they would find a ready clientele for their new schools. And so, he counselled, let the "counter-reform" movement go ahead; if it fails, it will not be the fault of the administration. And let the "traditionalists" resist the Azharists, since there is little the government can do in order to stop the flow of events.[187]

The French authorities never took into account their own influence on the development of Islamic schooling in the French Soudan. They did not consider how their demands for formal curriculum in the proposal packages to open a "qur'anic" schools made the directors conceive of their schools much more carefully. The networks of communication and commercial links put in place by the French were also used by Muslims for commerce and travel around the region and beyond, so that some of the founders of the first médersas were educated by the French themselves and acquired, by this means, a modernized conception of education.[188] Neither did the French authorities clearly understand that, despite all the complex local and international factors that brought about experimentation with Islamic médersas in French West Africa and Islamic religio-political claims, the médersas were always "intended to function effectively both socially and politically within the colonial (and post-colonial) political economy, and not outside or apart from it."[189]

Despite attempts by the French authorities to limit the growth – by legal harassment, counter-policies in education, and outright closures – of the new Islamic

[186] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 79.
[187] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 102.
[188] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 76-77.
[189] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 129.

médersas, by the end of the 1950s, it was clear that these institutions were very successful. By 1960, Sénégal counted approximately 30 médersas created on the model of Mahmoud Bâ's médersa in Kayes. The Azharists reopened their Bamako médersa in 1957 and, three years later, there were five médersas in Bamako educating between 800 and 850 children. Sikasso (in Mali), Bouaké and Kankan (respectively in today's Ivory Coast and Guinea) also had médersas.[190]

Independence of Mali and the Organization of Islamic Educational System.

The first President of independent Mali, Modibo Keïta, although a practising Muslim himself, was also profoundly secular. His objective, in terms of the médersa school system was to integrate them, via *laïcisation*, in to the public educational system while keeping Arabic language instruction in order to promote and facilitate relationships with the Arab countries of North Africa. In his view, Arabic was an international language, which would serve as the basis for the future of African unity on par with the importance of English and French.[191] Modibo Keita and his henchmen, inspired by their revolutionary and socialist ideals, created a new educational system for the newly independent Mali through reforms passed in 1962-1963. In 1962, the responsibility of education was in the hands of two ministries: the Ministry of Basic Education, Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Education and Scientific Research.[192] Obichere provides a clear summary of the goals sought by the Reform:

> The basic aims and objectives of the 1962 Education Reform Law were simple and clearly stated. It was to provide mass education for all Malians. It envisaged universal elementary education and at the same time it aimed at providing quality education at the various stages with the in-built objective of adapting all educational efforts to the need of Mali. The education offered to Mali citizens would be a means of decolonizing their minds by effacing completely the colonial mentality. The educational system was to ensure the establishment of Africa and African values among the educated. Finally, cultural and political independence would be imbued with socialist values in keeping with the political and economic objectives of Modibo Keita's party.[193]

The schools' curriculum took a nationalist orientation evident in the changes "made in the content of subjects such as history, geography, natural sciences to emphasize and to deal with topics of Malian and African interests."[194] The organization of schools departed from

[190] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 81.
[191] Louis Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," In *L'Enseignement islamique au Mali,* ed. Bintou Sanankoua and Louis Brenner (Bamako: Jamana, 1991), 4.
[192] Obichere, "Politicians and Educational Reform in French-Speaking West Africa," 196-197.
[193] Obichere, "Politicians and Educational Reform in French-Speaking West Africa," 198-199.
[194] Obichere, "Politicians and Educational Reform in French-Speaking West Africa," 201.

the French system: the Education Reform Law created a compulsory fundamental education of nine years divided into a primary cycle of five years and a secondary cycle of four years (this was changed in 1969 to make the primary cycle six years and the secondary cycle, three).[195] The National Pedagogic Institute, created in 1964 (although initiated by the Education Reform Law of 1962), oversaw the revision of the curriculum found in public schools, the preparation of textbooks, establishment of technical services for the teachers, the cycle of examinations and the administration of the scholarships. Staff was composed of Malians, French, American and UNESCO officials, but due to shortages in funding and manpower, the Institute never achieved its lofty objectives.[196]

President Modibo Keita's educational policy involved the gradual transformation of Islamic médersas into secular state schools in which the language of teaching would be Arabic. Although this never materialized, the President did get international support for the development of Arabic education in Mali, primarily from President Nasser of Egypt. The socialist government of Modibo Keita, as opposed to the French colonial authorities, was not afraid of an Arab cultural invasion, especially not in its anti-imperialist Egyptian version.[197] Islamic médersas were allowed to receive governmental subsidies (which they were always denied under French colonial rule, since they were not officially "établissement d'enseignement") and were encouraged by the government to provide their students with more secular classes. This policy was again quite different from the French policy which denied the right to médersas – as qur'anic schools – to teach French and other secular topics. Scholarships also became available to pursue university-level education in Arab-speaking countries. For example, many scholarships were offered to students from Saada Oumar Touré's médersa in Ségou to study in Egypt. Upon return, these graduateswere immediately hired as *fonctionnaires*.[198] This policy towards Islamic education had a great impact on the creation of new médersas; Brenner summarizes the amelioration of others as:

> There is no doubt that the Keita government's policy encouraged a rapid increase in the number of médersas. Many new médersas, which would previously pretend to be qur'anic schools, overtly presented themselves as médersas; many teachers went on to open their own médersas in order to attract the newly available subsidies. Most of the currently important médersas of Mali were founded in the 1960s.[199]

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[195] Obichere, "Politicians and Educational Reform in French-Speaking West Africa," 199.
[196] Obichere, "Politicians and Educational Reform in French-Speaking West Africa," 200.
[197] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 80.
[198] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 80-81.
[199] "Il ne fait aucun dout que la politique du gouvernement Keita ait apporté une augmentation rapide du nombre de médersas. De nombreuses médersas naissantes, qui se faisaient passer auparavent pour des écoles coraniques, s'affichèrent ouvertement comme médersas; beaucoup d'autres enseignants ouvrirent des médersas afin d'attirer les subventions nouvellement offertes. La plupart des plus importantes médersas actuelles au Mali semblent avoir été fondée dans les années 60." Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 80.

These subsidies and encouragement for Islamic schooling should be viewed as part of a greater plan of the socialist, secular, government of Modibo Keita: the gradual co-opting of Islamic médersas into the public schooling system by their transformation into secular Arabic-teaching schools which would provide the government with much needed Arabists who could help with the construction of African Unity. The plan was to create a system in which these secularized médersas would feed students to the Lycée Franco-Arabe of Timbuktu (the former médersa of Timbuktu founded by the French colonial authorities) which would, in turn, provide students for an eventual Arab Superior Studies Institute also in Timbuktu which never materialized. The *laïcisation* (the absence of religions from the public sphere) project of Modibo Keita's Government was cut short by the military coup of 1968 but it served to unite the directors of Islamic médersas in an ideological defence of Islam against the government. The divisions between "wahhabis/sunnis" and "traditionalist/*maraboutism*" faded in the face of the threat of secularism.[200]

In the 1970s and in the first half of the 1980s, médersas saw their fastest growing period in Mali which can be explained by various factors: the general crisis of the educational system in Mali,[201] the absence of government regulation or involvement in Islamic schooling, the oil boom and the influx of money from private benefactors and petrol-monarchies. Other reasons were endemic to the médersas system itself. For example, médersa graduates have few job opportunities other than working in existing médersas or opening new ones. In addition, the religious dimension of the curriculum was alluring to parents as well as the fairly cheap tuition fees. Until 1985, médersas multiplied without any oversight or regulation by the military government of Moussa Traoré. As there was no uniform curriculum for the médersas, schools developed their own curriculum and administered their own examinations to students who would then receive a diploma that was based on no standard evaluation.[202] The topics covered in each médersa tended to reflect, more than anything else, the personal orientations of the director of the school. Some schools only taught religious courses and Arabic, making them much more similar to qur'anic schools.[203] Furthermore, as Oumar Kane explains, only a few médersas had a formalized structure and elaborate curriculum of their own: Sabil al-Falah and Sabil al-Najah in Ségou, al-Hilal al-Islamiyya (Hippodrome neighbourhood), Naharu Djoliba (Badalabougou neighbourhood) and Institut Islamique (Medina Coura neighbourhood) in Bamako.[204] The only measure of the quality of

[200] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 81.
[201] See chapter three.
[202] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 81-82.
[203] Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 150.
[204] Oumar Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," In *L'Enseignement islamique au Mali,* ed. Bintou Sanankoua and Louis Brenner (Bamako: Jamana, 1991), 91. During my field research, I have worked closely with the Institut Islamique and Naharu Djoliba and have visited a number of times al-Hilal al-Islamiyya (as I lived less than 500 meters from it and had a private Arabic teacher recommended by its director/owner).

education one could expect in a specific médersas was the number of scholarships that its students received to pursue further education in Arab universities.[205] However, scholarships were usually obtained through the médersa director's personal networks.

Prior to 1985, the Ministry of the Interior loosely monitored médersas in Mali,[206] as it did all religious activities at the time. The military government, in an effort to better control any disturbance and inhibit the further growth of a civil society and possible troublemakers, created a national Muslim organization, the *Association Malienne pour l'Unité et le Progrès de l'Islam* (AMUPI):

> AMUPI was meant to play a central role in the construction of Mali's national Muslim identity. Internally, it was intended to define the religious arena and, through its hierarchy, to contain and control intra-Muslim conflict and to imbue the population with a sense of moral responsibility. Externally, it was to have enhanced Mali's Islamic image abroad and attracted Arab and Muslim financial assistance. The structure of the AMUPI consciously reflected and reinforced existing divisions between Wahhabi/Sunnis and the Traditional/Orthodox.[207]

The AMUPI was to play an important role in the médersa school system insofar as it was the sole Muslim association in the country during the military regime of Moussa Traoré; all the initiatives of médersas directors were under its umbrella. Indeed, the decree of 1985 rendering the médersas' official status within the Malian educational system also stated that they were represented by the AMUPI[208] in which a few directors of médersas came to play an important role. However, the AMUPI never enjoyed much authority at any level of the Muslim community as it was fraught with internal dissension and always thought to represent the interests of the state as opposed to the interests of the Muslim community it was supposed to represent.[209]

The Traoré government, in 1985 after preliminary considerations,[210] decided to directly intervene in the Islamic schooling system by a decree[211] making médersas officially "écoles fondamentales," or basic schools, in which the language of teaching was Arabic. This decision was brought about by the recurring conceptual ambiguity surrounding the médersas since colonial times: were they to be considered religious schools or regular primary schools? This issue was clarified in the wording of the decree:

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[205] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 82.

[206] Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 130. It was the religious activities of the médersas that were monitored by the *Ministère de l'Intérieur* via its *Direction des Affaires Religieuses* which oversaw all religious activities in Mali. Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 169.

[207] Brenner, "Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali," 72.

[208] Which goes to show, once again, the corporatist nature of the single party state under the military regime.

[209] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 260.

[210] First census of the médersas in 1981 and the decision of 1982 that the Ministry of Education should oversee the médersas. See Appendix M.

[211] See Appendix N.

médersas were private primary schools in which religious instruction was allowed.[212] The médersas were placed under the supervision of the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* via the *Centre pour la Promotion de la Langue Arabe* (CPLA).[213] The CPLA itself was created in May 1979; the first *Inspecteur général d'arabe* was Oumar S. Touré (son of Saada Oumar Touré, founder of the first Malian médersa in Ségou in 1946)[214] and its objectives are as follow:

> 1) continuous formation for the employees teaching Arabic in the Republic of Mali;
> 2) the production of pedagogical material for the teaching of Arabic;
> 3) the elaboration of Arabic programs, they continuous adaptation and their correct implementation;
> 4) the gathering of suggestions for the amelioration of Arabic teaching;
> 5) the uniformization and control of the activities of Franco-Arab schools;
> 6) the study of projects for the creation and opening of insitutions;
> 7) the promotion of Arabic as language of instruction and of language of culture.[215]

To this day, the CPLA oversees all matters relative to the opening of new médersas, their regular inspections, the continuous training of the médersas' staff, and the follow-up on the curriculum for both the primary and secondary fundamental cycle.[216] Médersas were then, under this new decree, officially allowed to teach in Arabic, have French as a secondary language, offer religious education as they saw fit, but they were now also

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[212] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 262. Brenner argues that this precise wording was probably meant as a compromise to satisfy all parties: secularists would be content that médersas were cited as exceptions in their permission to have religious education and médersas directors would be satisfied with the officialization of their schools' model. However, this wording seems to have failed insofar as secularists still saw the recognition of médersas as a breach in the official *laïcité* of the State and the directors were wary of the government's possible attempt to interfere in the religious content of their schools.

[213] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 82.

[214] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 260-261.

[215] "1) du perfectionnement continu du personnel chargé de l'enseignement de la langue arabe en République du Mali;
2) de la production de matériel pédagogique pour l'enseignement de l'arabe;
3) de l'élaboration des programmes arabes, de leur adaptation continue et de leur exécution correcte;
4) du recueil des suggestions relatives à l'amélioration de l'enseignement de l'arabe;
5) de l'harmonisation et du contrôle des activités des écoles franco-arabes;
6) de l'étude des projets de création et d'ouverture des établissements;
7) de la promotion de l'arabe comme langue d'enseignement et langue de culture."
Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 130.

[216] Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 172. In 1994, during his fieldwork, Kavas already noticed how the actual control of the CPLA fonctionnaires over médersas, in Bamako itself and even more in other regions, was limited (see p. 173). One can doubt the CPLA's capacity to do so nowadays in the light of experience: in November 2010, employees of the CPLA were unable to find, upon my request, a copy of the official curriculum for the médersas in their offices and were uncertain as to where I could get access to one.

under the obligation to teach the official curriculum of all elementary schools of Mali and to present candidates to the state-wide standard examination for the *Diplôme d'Études Fondamentales* (DEF) in Arabic[217] which is called *Brevet d'Études Arabes*.[218] The reasons for this change of policy for the médersas were numerous and again, as with the creation and growth of the médersas themselves, both the local religio-political context and the international influences were significant:

> The decision to recognize the médersas as "educational establishments" stemmed from two complementary sources: the corporatist political thinking which informed the creation of the single party state in the 1970s, and the developmentalist ideology which the government adopted in guise of policy-making. Considerable evidence exists to demonstrate that the change in status of the médersas was ultimately precipitated by the adoption of the *4ème Projet Education* which was launched in the late 1980s, led by the World Bank and implemented by a consortium of international aid agencies. The actual implementation of the decision to modify the administrative status of médersas was a complex and deeply ambivalent process through which the party and state sought to capture the energy and initiative of the médersas movement for their own political purposes, while at the same time acting to ensure that any implied formal association with "Islam", through AMUPI and the médersas, would not provide a political opening for Muslim-based dissent from their national project.[219]

The developmentalist attitude – the teleological idea that a third world nation should be developing on a continuum leading to a state similar to the "first world" – of the 1980s (which is still found in Mali today), engulfed all spheres of public policies. No other sector was more affected than that of education and the developmentalist program brought about the systematic dismissal of Malian initiatives as running counter to "development-oriented" projects. All programs originated, in content, form, and funding, from foreign governments and international aid agencies (NGOs); the concepts were imported from abroad and applied by a new class of "experts" also from abroad.[220] These experts, agencies, and governments, overwhelmingly Europeans and North Americans, tended to exclude "the possibility 'development' could take place in the absence of the authority and expertise of properly trained 'development experts'" and were often deeply suspicious of anything branded 'Islamic.'[221] This created a mood within the government that was ripe for the co-option of Islamic schooling into the public school system in order

[217] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 84.
[218] Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 153.
[219] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 257.
[220] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 259-260.
[221] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 257.

to limit the influence of possible Islamic advocacy and for the better development of the nation.[222]

This legal change of status for the Islamic médersas was accompanied by the government's proposal to instruct médersa teachers in the secular topics that were to be covered in the schools' curriculum, especially in sciences. A three year deal was signed with Morocco for 100 teachers to receive training in Bamako in 1988-1991 and 80 teachers were sent to Morocco to receive further instruction. The African Islamic Center of Khartoum sent eight of its teachers to Bamako to train 80 médersa teachers in 1988.[223] Between 1979 and 1990, nine workshops for Arabic teachers in médersas were organized by the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* with the help of various Arab states (Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and others) and international organizations.[224] The government, without any consultation with médersa owners or directors,[225] elaborated and published an official curriculum for the médersas and started controlling, via competitions, the awarding of scholarships for studies abroad.[226] Most directors of médersas refused to implement the official curriculum since, according to them, it allowed very little time in the schedule for religious courses due to the required Arabic, French and general secular courses.[227] Islamic school directors understood this new legislation in the context of their previous experiences with the French colonial authorities (judged as anti-Islamic) and the Modibo Keita government with its policy of *laïcisation*:

> Given the histories of the médersas, and in particular their habit of resistance to the intervention of the government, the directors suspect anti-Islamic motivations and reacted to these initiatives with considerable hostility. The directors are aware of the critiques from Malians, chiefly those who fear an increasing political Islamic influence in their country. A reform of education presented as reinforcing médersas might be a double-edge sword that could be used to close all schools that would not conform to the new demands of the government. At best, these new rules are perceived as one more step towards secularization which all directors fear will ruin what is the *raison d'être* of the médersas as religious institutions.[228]

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222 The considerable impact of the developmentalist trend of the 1980s will be further examined in chapter three.

223 Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 84.

224 Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 151.

225 A fact that was often mentioned by my interviewees as exemplifying, up until now, the attitude of the government towards Islamic schooling.

226 Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 82.

227 Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 150.

228 "Étant donné l'histoire des médersas, et en particulier leurs antécédants de résistance à l'intervention du gouvernement, les directeurs suspectent des motifs anti-islamique et ont réagi à ces initiatives avec une hostilité considérable. Les directeurs sont très au courant des critiques des Maliens, principalement ceux qui craignent une influence politique islamique grandissante dans leur pays. Une réforme de l'éducation présentée comme devant renforcer les méderas peut bien être une arme à double-tranchant qui sera utilisée pour fermer toutes les écoles qui ne se conformeront pas aux nouvelles exigences. Au mieux, ces

This obviously stirred resistance in the ranks of médersas owners and directors who united in 1987 and presented an alternative, via the AMUPI, to the governmental curriculum. This program for the elementary cycle was indeed adopted and is now implemented, theoretically, in Mali's médersas.[229] The resistance to the program imposed by the CPLA as well as médersas' directors development of their own curriculum brought about the formalization of the network of Islamic médersas in Mali, for the first time outside of the government's reach. In 1985, the *Union des Médersas Arabo-Islamiques* was created (later to become *Union Nationale des Médersas*).[230] As will be seen later, the *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* has developed, since 1990, much greater, although imperfect, control over the implementation of the program and the overall quality of education in médersas via a network of inspectors who visit schools and write regular reports.[231]

Brenner summarizes the various kinds of help provided to Islamic schooling in Mali in the 20 years following independence, under both the socialist government of Modibo Keita and the the military regime of Moussa Traoré, which saw a rapid increase in the number of médersas in Mali:

> The expansion was facilitated by the important financial aid, in the form of donations, from Arab and Muslim benefactors who contributed to the construction and functioning costs of médersas and distributed numerous scholarships so Malian students could pursue their education in Arab-speaking countries.[232]

Many have argued that, under the military regime of Moussa Traoré, the official policy of secularism (*laïcité*) had been compromised by the creation of the AMUPI; the increase in the airwave-time when the broadcasting of religious content in the public media would be allowed; and the official recognition of médersas as *écoles fondamentales*.[233]

In 1991, the year that saw the fall of the military regime of Moussa Traoré, according to the *Rapport Final de la Table Ronde Nationale sur l'Éducation de Base pour*

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règlements sont perçu comme un nouveau pas vers la sécularisation dont tous les directeurs sentent qu'elle va saper la raison d'être même des médersas en tant qu'écoles religieuses." Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 83.

229 Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 150.

230 Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 268. Note that the founders of this Association were Sufiyana Dramé, of the médersa al-Hilal al-Islamiyya in Hippodrome, Yattabaré (senior) of the Institut Islamique and Kansaye (senior) of the médersa Naharu Djoliba in Badalabougou.

231 Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 170.

232 "Cette expension fut encouragée par une aide financière considérable sous la forme de dons en provenance de bienfaiteurs arabes ou musulmans qui contribuèrent à la construction et au fonctionnement de médersas et distribuèrent un grand nombre de bourses d'études afin de permettre à des étudiants de poursuivre leur études à l'étranger dans des pays de langue arabe." Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 5.

233 Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 5.

Tous d'Ici à l'An 2000[234], médersas accounted for 163.3%[235] of schooling in Mali for the elementary cycle. According to the statistics available for 1986, of the 305 médersas officially recognized by the government, 129 educated children up to grade 6 (*Certificat d'Études Primaires*), 170 up to grade 9 (*Diplôme d'Études Fondamentales*) and grade 6 up to grade 12 (*Baccalauréat*).[236] In 1989, 318 médersas were registered with the Ministry of Education with a total enrolment of 67 449 students.[237] In 1991, 12 médersas educated children all the way to the *Baccalauréat*. All of these médersas, despite attempts made by the government, continue to teach their own curriculum.[238]

The social and political implications of the increasing number of graduates from médersas are significant. Médersas are educating a large community of Arabic speakers who have a distinctive religious consciousness. This is a group that never existed in Mali prior to the 1980s.[239] By the end of the twentieth century, médersas had strayed from their original goal of educating the future religious leaders of Mali and evolved into institutions of mass education in which more and more time was devoted to secular topics. This is partly due to the coinciding crisis faced by the public schooling sector as well as the world-wide economic downturn of the 1980s (and beyond in the case of Mali) which put pressure on the médersas not only to provide their pupils with an Islamic education but also to face the social and economic hardships of the time.[240]

The Current Organization Overseeing Médersas and Enrolment Figures.

For the sake of clarity, I present here the various government structures that have played a role in the supervision of médersas in Mali since they were integrated into the national educational system as private religious schools. Overseeing all of the educational system in Mali are two ministries: 1) the *Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales* and 2) the *Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique*.[241] Of these two, the *Ministère de l'Éducation, de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales* (refered to as the *Ministère de l'Éducation* hereafter) includes, under its *Direction Nationale de l'Éducation de Base*,[242] an entity specifically in charge of the médersas: the *Centre pour la Promotion de la Langue Arabe* (CPLA)[243] inside the

[234] Cited in Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 2.
[235] Insofar as statistics can be relied upon and only counting officially registered médersas.
[236] Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 91.
[237] Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 130.
[238] Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 91.
[239] Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 5.
[240] Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 22.
[241] This is the Ministry of which depends the Centre National de le Recherche Scientifique et Technique which delivered to me the authorization for research mentioned above.
[242] See website of the *Ministères en Charge de l'Éducation* of the Répulique du Mali: http://www.education.gov.ml/
[243] It is also written, on the plaque at its entrance, how the funding for the construction of the building

compound of the *Ministère de l'Éducation*. The CPLA is also officially known as the *Division de Contrôle et d'Animation du Système des Médersas* (DCASM).

In the organization chart of the *Ministère de l'Éducation*, the médersas are normally under the direct control of the CPLA. However, this control is mediated via other structures in the *Ministère de l'Éducation*, which control the quality of the education, provided by the médersas. The territory of Mali is divided into eight geographical sectors, plus the District of Bamako,[244] in which all schools (public, private secular, private catholic, médersas) are under the supervision of an *Académies d'Enseignement*. For our purposes, I will limit my discussion to the two *Académies d'Enseignement* of the District of Bamako: *Rive-Droite* and *Rive-Gauche*.[245] Each *Académie* is further divided into various numbers of *Centre d'Animation Pédagogique* (CAP),[246] which, in the district of Bamako, generally respect neighbourhood boundaries. Within the CAP are usually one or two *inspecteurs d'arabe*: the sole *fonctionnaires* in the organization chart to have direct contact with médersas' employees, visit schools and control the quality of education. The few *inspecteurs* I have personally interviewed were doubtful of their own work insofar as they all mentioned the difficulty of access to certain schools, that they did not have the time to visit schools often enough to effectively control the quality of education, and that there were no actual sanctions taken towards schools who did not comply with the program. These comments made to me in 2010 are in line with comments made to Kavas in the early 1990s, allowing one to think that few improvements have been made in the supervision of médersas by the *Ministère de l'Éducation*:

> The *Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale* controls and ever greater number of médersas through its inspectors, competent in this domain, who sit in classes and prepare reports on these schools; they also advice teachers when irregularities are identified. However, inspection is not systematic. There are médersas which inspectors rarely visit (in Bamako, 11 teachers on 32 were never controlled, 10 sometimes received a visit from the inspector and 11 teachers have received visists on numerous occasions.[247]

housing the CPLA was a donation from the United Arab Emirates.

[244] Bamako, Gao, Kayes, Kidal, Koulikoro, Mopti, Ségou, Sikasso, and Timbuktu.

[245] It is at this level that are stored the yearly reports médersas must submit to the *Ministère de l'Éducation*: I have personally gone through piles of them for the 2009-2010 school year, with the help of the *fonctionnaire* in charge of médersas, at the *Académie d'Enseignement de la Rive-Gauche* and the *Académie d'Enseignement de la Rive-Droite*.

[246] *Rive-Droite*: Banankabougou, Faladié, Kalaban Coura, and Torokorobougou. *Rive-Gauche*: Bamako-Coura, Banconi, Bozola (with whom I worked more closely), Centre Commercial, Djelibougou, Hippodrome, Lafiabougou, and Sebenicoro.

[247] "Le Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale contrôle de plus en plus les médersas à l'aide de ses inspecteurs, compétents en ce domaine, qui assistent à certains cours et préparent des rapports sur ces écoles; ils donnent aussi des conseils aux enseignants lorsqu'ils constatent des irrégularités. Cependant, l'inspection n'est pas systématique. Car il y a des médersas que les inspecteurs visitent rarement (à Bamako, 11 enseignants sur 32 n'ont jamais été contrôlés, 10 ont parfois reçu la visite de l'inspecteur et

To better exemplify the sheer complexity of the bureaucracy overseeing the médersas, one can follow the course of an official request to open a médersa as explained to me by a *fonctionnaire* of the CPLA in 2005. One should make the request by depositing a dossier at the local CAP which the *Inspecteur d'arabe* will evaluate and eventually officially approve. The dossier is then transmitted to the *Académie d'Enseignement* which must also approve it and pass it on the the *Direction Nationale de l'Enseignement de Base*. When a *fonctionnaire* of the Direction has approved the project, the dossier goes on to the Cabinet of the *Ministère de l'Éducation* in order to be signed. When this is done, the CPLA will be notified of the creation of this new médersa.[248]

Despite these complications, the number of officially recognized médersas in Mali is constantly increasing. The *Cellule de Planification Statistiques* of the *Ministère de l'Éducation* provides exhaustive statistics on schooling in Mali, a few of which are included here. One must keep in mind, when analyzing these statistics, that they only represent the enrolment in médersas officially registered with the CPLA. A number of médersas still operate independently although the exact number of them is difficult to estimate.

Enrolment in officially recognized médersas in the District of Bamako[249]

	Number of boys		Number of girls[250]		Total enrolment		% of national school enrolment	
	Primary cycle	Secondary cycle	Primary cycle	Secondary cycle	Primary cycle	Secondary cycle	Primary cycle	Secondary cycle
2002-2003	13 344	2 548	14 616	1 513	27 960	4061	12	5.5
2003-2004	15 675	2 788	16 494	1 594	32 169	4 382	13.1	5
2004-2005	16 965	3 539	19 072	1 975	36 037	5 514	13.9	5.9
2005-2006	17 390	3 443	19 856	2 167	37 246	5 610	13.8	6
2006-2007	17 152	3 934	19 380	2 701	36 532	6 635	13	6.6
2007-2008	17 437	4 112	20 039	2 828	37 476	6 940	12.9	6.6
2008-2009	16 339	4 271	19 424	3 146	35 763	7 417	11.8	6.9

11 enseignants l'ont reçu plusieurs fois)." Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 170.

248 Émilie Roy, "Les médersas du Mali: l'influence arabe sur l'enseignement islamique moderne." (MA thesis, Université Laval, 2007), 42.

249 Table built with statistics taken from the *Annuaire Statistique* produced yearly by the *Ministère de l'Éducation*, see bibliography for complete reference for each of them.

250 One may note, for the primary cycle, in Bamako and nationwide, the systematic over-representation of girls in médersas. At the secondary cycle, however, girls are systematically under-represented. This will be further discussed when analyzing the reasons parents give when sending their children to a médersa.

Enrolment in officially recognized médersas in Mali[251]

	Number of boys		Number of girls		Total enrolment		% of national school enrolment	
	Primary cycle	Secondary cycle	Primary cycle	Secondary cycle	Primary cycle	Secondary cycle	Primary cycle	Secondary cycle
2002-2003	69 484	11 233	52 173	5 198	121 657	16 431	9.4	6.9
2003-2004	80 903	9 446	59 291	3 545	140 194	12 991	10	4.6
2004-2005	95 383	12 192	70 632	4 537	166 015	16 729	11	5.3
2005-2006	104 975	12 957	79 234	5 057	184 209	18 014	11.4	5.1
2006-2007	114 176	15 046	85 197	6 215	199 373	21 261	11.6	5.5
2007-2008	124 334	16 283	94 306	7 041	218 640	23 324	12	5.5
2008-2009	136 043	17 499	104 536	8 195	240 579	25 694	12.5	5.6

As can be seen here, in absolute numbers as well as in percentage of school attendance, enrolment in médersas tends to increase year after year. However, enrolment declined for certain years, which may suggest the stripping of official recognition by the CPLA of certain schools.

The Emergence of a Médersa Consciousness.

The creation of Islamic médersas in the 1940s and 1950s – as opposed to the Franco-Arab médersas created by the French authorities prior to the 1940s – was, as argued by Louis Brenner, a paradigm shift and an epistemological rupture in Islamic knowledge and education in West Africa. The esoteric paradigm of the qur'anic school emphasized that Islamic knowledge is sacred, that it must be comprehended by the intellect after lengthy devotional practice, and that it is transmitted directly from master to pupil. In the rationalist paradigm, Islamic knowledge is no longer considered secret and revelation and the divine law are equally accessible to all. Religious devotion is dissociated from the pedagogical means of teaching and divine intervention plays no role in the intellectual development of the students.[252] As Mommersteeg has argued, in line with Santerre's previous work, qur'anic schools were meant to provide a "comprehensive education." Beyond the simple transmission of Islamic knowledge, these schools were institutions of socialization where a model of behaviour for men in society was also transmitted to the students. In this paradigm, Arabic, both as a language and as individual letters, becomes part of the esoteric sciences through its use in amulets, numerology and

[251] Table built with statistics taken from the *Annuaire Statistique* produced yearly by the *Ministère de l'Éducation*, see bibliography for complete reference for each of them.
[252] Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 20.

the science of magic squares.[253] This is part of the esoteric paradigm that Brenner argues has been replaced by a rationalist one in Islamic médersas.[254]

One of the ways in which the perception of Islamic knowledge has changed significantly has been through the improvement of Arabic teaching methods for Arabic in médersas. This was a deliberate goal of the first founders of Islamic médersas which had significant implications: a faster and better understanding of Arabic also meant that students of médersas (as compared to students of qur'anic schools) had a better understanding of the sources for Islamic studies and that, in turn, required the masters to develop modernized pedagogical tools for religious education. These pedagogical changes in teaching Arabic and Islamic studies were also accompanied by a conceptual change in the place of Islamic knowledge alongside other sorts of knowledge. In a modern Malian Islamic médersa, religious courses are some among many other courses taken by the students in their very busy schedule: religious knowledge becomes just another topic.[255] This approach is akin to Lukens-Bull's observation of the conceptualization of modernity as developed in Java. Modern Islamic schools are not just translating modernity for Muslim audiences, they are in the process of imagining modernity as dangerous because it is a factor of globalization as well as a factor in the loss of traditional values. But these schools also are constructing an imagined modernity that is malleable and subject to (re)invention which they propose to do by injecting "Islamic values" into their concept of modernity. In this way, Lukens-Bull argues that the actors of the Islamic schooling system are re-inventing their tradition, which is conceived of as compatible with modernity.[256]

Brenner makes clear how the pressures of the "rationalization" of knowledge and religion in Malian society are both a product and a cause of the changes in the organization of education. He also shows how, although the founders of Islamic médersa claimed to be opposed to it, the official secularism of the government and the rationalization of knowledge are largely responsible for the dynamism of Islamic schooling which itself has many secular and rational attributes.[257] As Lukens-Bull has argued regarding a similar process of modernization and rationalization of knowledge in the Islamic schools, or *pesantren,* of Indonesia, it is an act of appropriation of the material of modernity and a subsequent re-invention of modernity. This new form of Islamic education rooted in secular pedagogy and courses has "created an educational system to

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[253] Geert Mommersteeg, "L'éducation coranique au Mali," In *L'Enseignement islamique au Mali,* ed. Bintou Sanankoua and Louis Brenner (Bamako: Jamana, 1991), 46-47.

[254] For a thorough discussion of the content and methods of teaching in qur'anic schools in Mali, see Mommersteeg, "L'éducation coranique au Mali," 45-61.

[255] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 64-65.

[256] Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad*, 10-11.

[257] Louis Brenner, "Introduction," In *Muslim Identity and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa,* ed. Louis Brenner (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 2-3.

address both the educational needs of a modernizing society as well as guard it against perceived moral decay."[258]

Brenner summarizes the reasons for the emergence in colonial West Africa of the current Islamic school system very succinctly:

> The creation of the médersa school system was influenced by pressures and interests other than educational, including the colonial episode and the predominance of the secularist policy in the Malian national experience, the progressive integration of Mali in the worldwide capitalist economy, the specific expressions of Islamic resurgence and the doctrinal reform that attracted Malian Muslims. Médersas are 20th century institutions which reflect the contemporary social and political conditions.[259]

If médersas have failed to provide their graduates with actual job opportunities (as will be seen in chapter three) they have succeeded in constructing, occupying, and controlling a social and political sphere by creating a valued social status offering a certain amount of upward social mobility that students of qur'anic schools never enjoyed. The emergence and rapid increase in enrolment in médersas in the last decade of French colonial rule has to be seen in light of the general attempts at social transformation and hegemonic control by the French authorities. Access to education was also the key to social mobility and the only way to access a government job (both under colonial rule and in the years following independence) and was therefore a major factor in the new forms of political and economic competition in which médersas started creating a new group of Muslim intellectuals.[260]

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[258] Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad*, 8.

[259] " L'apparition du système scolaire des médersas a été influencées par des pressions et des intérêts autre qu'éducatifs, y compris l'épisode colonial et la prédominance d'une politique de laïcité dans l'expérience nationale du Mali, l'intégration progressive du Mali dans l'économie capitaliste mondiale, les expressions spécifiques de résurgence de l'Islam et la réfrome doctrinale qui ont attiré les musulmans maliens. Les médersas sont des institutions du XXe siècle qui sont le reflet des conditions sociales et politiques contemporaines." Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 2.

[260] Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 8 and 11.

Chapter 3
The Malian Educational Market and its Impact on the Growth of the Islamic Médersas System (the 1980s Until the Present)

When assessing Malian schools, literacy, enrolment, and student achievement, one must bear in mind specific characteristics of the country. In most Western societies, with the exception of a minority of children who are home-schooled or out of school for extraordinary reasons, virtually all children are affected by school-related issues. In vivid contrast, in Malian society, 70% of children are unaffected by school matters as they have not and will not attend any form of schooling in their lives. Of the remaining 30% of children, the future decision-making class of Mali, the sons and daughters of the current decision-making position holders, go to schools outside the Malian educational system altogether. This 0.1%, perhaps, of the 30% of children attending school, goes to the American International School, the French Lycée Liberté or to boarding schools abroad. The fact that brokers of power in today's Mali remove their offspring from public school is indicative of the state of public education in the country.

For the 30% of Malian children enrolled in Mali's schools, the state offers few options and little quality: students struggle to enrol, struggle to learn and often exit public schools without a diploma or much knowledge.[261] The educational crisis in Mali is endemic: situations prevalent in the 1980s and 1990s still affect the perceptions of schooling held by Malian parents. Educational problems have become, since independence in 1960, a major preoccupation of society at large. Mali has witnessed student "revolts" on a number of occasions: the spontaneous and localized movements of 1970 and 1972 and the crises of 1976 and 1980, which were well organized by the *Union Nationale des Élèves et Étudiants du Mali*. This last crisis almost toppled the military regime of Moussa Traoré and was ended by the closure of all schools and the assassination of the Secretary General of the Union, Abdoul Karim Camara on March 17th 1980. The 1990 movement was organized by the *Association des Élèves et Étudiants du Mali* (which replaced the Union) and culminated in March 1991 by a general revolt ending 23 years of military rule by the Traoré regime.[262] Between 1990 and 2000, every school year has been disturbed in some way, although some years have been salvaged with enormous concessions. Extreme examples of this are the "optional year"[263] of 1993 and the "white"[264] year of 1994.[265]

The educational crisis is a complex one rooted in the deep identity crisis Malian society is facing: the occidental model proposed by the public school system creates a

[261] Gérard Dumestre, "De la scolarité souffrante. (complément à 'De l'école au Mali')," *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 9, no. 3 (2000): 178-179.
[262] Drissa Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 9, no. 3 (2000): 7-8.
[263] Academic year that may or may not be validated depending on the school.
[264] White year, in Mali, means that the school year has been cancelled.
[265] Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 6.

dichotomy between a small educated minority holding political, social and cultural power and a poor population oscillating between resignation and revolt.[266] The overall failure of the public school system in Mali in the 1990s is summarized by Dr Diakité, former Dean of the Faculté des Lettres, Arts, et Sciences Humaines of the Universté de Bamako:

> During these ten years, we have identified a continuous degradation of the quality of education which is reflected in the "school exodus" towards neighbouring countries (Burkina Faso, Sénégal, Côte d'Ivoire) and overseas (France, USA, Germany, Belgium...) and in the results at the *baccalauréat* between 1988-1989 and 1999-2000: 68.7% in 1988-89, 39.7% in 1996-1997 and 26% in 1999-2000 (Rép. Du Mali, MEB 1999b) and finally in the increasing difficulty of finding a first job for young graduates.
> Indeed, the product of school no longer responds to the needs of society. The image of school in the popualtion is strongly affected. School is more and more perceived as a place of perdition rather than of socialization.[267]

As the public schools' failure was becoming obvious to all in the 1990s, the possibilities of private education appeared to answer the demands of some parents for better and varied education for their children. Brenner explains how the development of the médersas happened during a time when educational policies were at the forefront of a cultural revolution imposed by the state, first the colonial state and then the independent Malian state:

> In Mali, the multiplication of Islamic schools happened in the context of an educational policy that was primordial to both the colonial and post-colonial governments. An educational policy was the essential element towards a cultural transformation and in order to control the hegemony as understood by the French; education was also primordial for all development policies initiated after the independence.[268]

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[266] Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 6-7.

[267] "Durant ces dix ans, on a constaté une dégradation continue de la qualité de l'école qui se rélète en premier lieu dans "l'exode scolaire" vers les pays voisins (Burkina Faso, Sénégal, Côte d'Ivoire) et lointains (France, USA, Allemagne, Belgique...), puis dans les résultats du baccalauréat entre 1988-1989 et 1999-2000: 68,7% en 1988-89, 39,7% en 1996-1997 et 26% en 1999-2000 (Rép. Du Mali, MEB 1999b) et enfin dans les difficultés croissantes d'accéder à un premier emploi des jeunes diplômés. En effet, les produits de l'école ne répondent plus au besoins de la société. L'image de l'école auprès de la société s'en trouve fortement affectée. L'école est plus perçue comme un lieu de déperdition que de socialisation." Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 23.

[268] "Au Mali, la multiplication des écoles musulmanes sous la forme de médersas survint dans le context d'une politique éducative qui était primordial tant pour le gouvernement colonial que pour le gouvernement post-colonial. Une politique éducative était l'élément essentiel des efforts effectués en vue d'une transformation culturelle et afin de contrôler l'hégémonie telle que les Français l'envisageait; l'éducation était de même primordiale pour toutes les politiques de développement initiées après l'indépendance." Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 11.

The 1990s saw the continued, and even more rapid, expansion of the médersas school system. The decade was marked in Mali by a diversification of educational opportunities, which participated in the overall improvement of the educational system. The expansion of educational options that were, until then, quite limited came in response to the paucity of the state's offerings for education. New types of schools, opened through private initiatives, were regulated by and then integrated into the *Ministère de l'Éducation de Base*. The *Ministère* oversees all types of formal educational institutions (public schools, private secular schools, private confessional schools including médersas, community schools) and the *Direction Nationale d'Alphabétisation Fonctionelle et de Linguistique Appliquée* regulates non-formal educational projects.[269]

The division of the school system – public schools based on the European model and private schools primarily based on the Arabo-Islamic model – demonstrates how the social demand for education reflects the various external influences as well as internal diversity in Mali, and their social navigation.[270] The state remains the major provider of schooling but other schooling opportunities have appeared that partly escape the control of the state.[271] Central to the situation are the difficulties in accessing quality education and the low level of enrolment in schools despite the available options. As will be shown, the increase in the number of places available in public schools (made possible by various reforms and significant international financial donations and loans) did not result in the expected increase in enrolment. The social demands for schooling were diversified and led to the creation of new community schools and an increasing number of médersas, at a time when disaffection with public schooling was growing. This unforeseen diversion of students into new private schools rather than the newly-funded state schools, can only be understood when education is conceptualized as a positive collective right.[272]

Popularly, in Mali, children are not considered to be individuals capable of making use of such a right. The interests of a particular child are not the primary factors taken into consideration when decisions are made regarding his/her educational future; the child's interests are subordinated to the needs of the community. Malians believe that education has to be collectively useful to the social group (extended family, village, clientele network) even though a minority of children are schooled. Education for all, in Mali, is often understood to mean: education of some *for the benefit of all*.[273]

It is in this context and based on this conceptualization of education that parental strategies with respect to education can be explained: Parents send *some* children to specific schools in order to maximize the benefits (salary, perks, influence, authority) for

[269] Karine Turcotte, *Les écoles communautaires au centre du système éducatif malien du 21ème siècle*, (Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2008), 21.
[270] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 144.
[271] Étienne Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique: réflexions sur des cas d'écoles maliens et burkinabè," *Politique africaine* 76 (1999): 153.
[272] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 160.
[273] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 160.

all members of the family. The demand for education is diversified due to the collapse of the public school system. Since education through the public system no longer directly leads to employment anymore, some parents choose to send some of their children to other types of schools from which they might reap other benefits. This diversification of demand is a deciding factor in the evolution of the schooling system and in the concomitant diversification of available schooling options.[274] Social, economic and political factors influence parental strategies for maximizing their possible educational capital. Based on their socio-economic position, parents make their decision about the schooling options for their children (public, private secular, confessional schools) and the duration of this schooling.[275]

It is important to note that statistics on education in Mali are, at best, approximations or educated guesses and data are often dubious. As Dumestre summarizes, it is hard for anyone even slightly acquainted with Mali in the least to believe statistics claiming that 31% of adults (and almost 40% of men) can read and write in French.[276] Lange also recognizes this problem faced by researchers working with statistics in Mali. One has to navigate between *pas encore redressés politiquement*[277] numbers and those that have been "politically adapted." There are also the purposely vague numbers which are unreliable. The manipulation of statistical data is a strategy adopted by the Malian state and various institutions to show a better "performance" on reports intended for its financial backers. These backers are then reassured of the success of their development projects and are thus willing to continue and may increase their funding.[278] For the médersa schooling system, the problem of faulty statistics involves not only all of these previously mentioned manipulations but also the lack of any statistics for the three first decades of independence in Mali:

> The médersa network of schools expanded at about twice the rate of state schools in postcolonial Mali. No records, either official or unofficial, exist which document this rapid expansion, and even after the first official statistics began to appear in the early 1980s, they have been incomplete and inaccurate for several reasons. Firstly, the nature of the phenomenon itself, as something of a grass-roots movement, has meant that médersas have appeared and disappeared with great frequency as young (and sometimes, not so young) educational entrepreneurs have attempted to establish their own educational enterprises. Secondly, from the mid-1980s, when official policy towards the médersas became more firmly formulated, the Ministry of National Education began to list only formally 'recognized'

[274] Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique," 154.
[275] Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique," 161.
[276] Dumestre, "De la scolarité souffrante," 173. I agree with Dumestre's assessment insofar as I am not certain, although this is purely based on approximations of empirical observations, that 40% of men even speak French, let alone read and write it.
[277] "Not yet politically adapted" numbers.
[278] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 153.

> médersas, that is, those which fulfilled newly promulgated standards of operation (...).[279]

An example of this statistical uncertainty can be found in Gérard's dissertation; he worked with the eight médersas of the *arondissement* of Kangaré, six of which are not officially registered with the *Ministère de l'Éducation* and therefore are not counted in any statistics.[280] All statistics used in this dissertation should therefore be viewed with caution since, at best, they are approximate.

In this chapter, I explain the various economic and social factors that influence the choices made by Malian parents with regards to their children's educational path. I demonstrate how Malian parents base their decisions about schooling options on subtle calculations of cost and benefit both money-wise and in social capital. Indeed, Malian parents evaluate the actual cost of sending a child to a specific type of school in relation to the benefits of that child's insertion into specific networks. The choice of school influences greatly the type of network the child will later be able to integrate into and therefore the social benefits his parents and wider social circle might gain. In order to understand the diversification of schooling options available in Mali, I will first discuss the failings of the public school system insofar as its demise also meant that the social capital gained from it declined. The decline of the public school's preeminence in turn led to the rise of other types of schools and their dependent networks. I emphasize the new type of social capital, in terms of religion and of culturally appropriate education, offered by médersa schooling which has proved popular. The combination of an economic predicament in which public school does not lead to employment and the availability of schools that offer a more traditional and religiously-oriented education led Malian parents to develop new strategies with respect to schooling. Making do (*se "débrouiller"*) with the available options, greater numbers of parents have opted for the médersas: schools that offer culturally appropriate knowledge and insertion into new networks.

The Failing Public School System in Mali: Causes and Consequences.

As early as the early 1980s, the *Conseil Supérieur de l'Éducation*, realized that there was a much greater demand for education than the number of places provided by the government in public schools. The *Conseil* also realized that the expansion and "anarchic creation" of alternative educational opportunities such as the médersa school system could be re-appropriated by the government in order to create, at minimum cost for itself, more officially sanctioned schooling options for Malian children.[281] The integration of the

[279] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 209.

[280] Étinenne Gérard, "Le développement des médersas au Mali: Le signe d'une réorientation de la demande scolaire," In *Education, changements démographiques et développement,* ed. P. Livenaus and J. Vaugelade (Paris: Éditions de l'IRD, 1992), 131.

[281] Oumar Issiaka Ba, *Une histoire de l'enseignement au Mali: Entre réforme et réticences* (Paris:

successful and self-sufficient médersa school system into the Malian educational system allowed the government to both partly relieve the pressure on the over-crowded public schools and boost its national statistics on literacy. The last point relates to the Malian government's need for "positive" statistics in order to keep, increase, or attract new subsidies from international agencies and NGOs.

For the increase in enrolment in schools (all types) in Mali, Dumestre cites the following percentages taken from various government agencies: 23% in 1985, 32% in 1995 and 50% in 1998. To me, as to Dumestre, these numbers seem extravagant, to say the least, although they do reflect in some way the effort made by the government, various international organizations, and NGOs to increase the number of children attending school in Mali.[282] However inaccurate these numbers might be, it is clear that there was, to a certain degree, an increase in school enrolment after the "de-schooling" period of the 1980s. Indeed, the 1980s saw what Gérard analyzed as a massive fracture between types of education offered by the government and the social demands for education. During this decade, the percentage of children attending school consistently dropped, from 28% in 1980 to 22.4% in 1989[283] to rise again in the following decade.

To assess the failings of the public school system, I will first discuss the state of public finances in Mali. The crumbling of Mali's economy has had direct effects on the quality of education in public schools which in turn has led to the development of alternative schooling in the form of private schools. This link will be examined in the following section while the last section is dedicated to analyzing the future prospects for education and employment for young Malians and how these opportunities for future education or jobs, in turn, influence educational careers.

Funding Education: The Players, their Goals and the Results.

National economic health has direct consequences on the quality and quantity of the educational opportunities in any given country. As Ki-Zerbo has argued,

> (...) the economy functions as the heart and lungs of the educational sector. Like a heart meeting the constant demands made on it, it provides inputs for the educational system, and expects in turn to be supplied with educated personnel system capable of energizing the economic machine. Unfortunately, to this day the African economy operates rather like a body suffering from heart failure.[284]

L'Harmattan, 2009), 59.

[282] Dumestre, "De la scolarité souffrante," 174.

[283] Étienne Gérard, "Entre État et populations: L'école et l'éducation en devenir." *Politique Africaine* 47, no. 59–69 (1992): 62.

[284] Joseph Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1990), 39.

The combination of population growth rates in Africa, with economic stagnation (partly due to the international recession of the 1980s) and the crumbling of the public educational system led to a situation where countries become "chronic panhandler[s] haunting international bread lines" to finance their school systems.[285] Mali exemplifies this situation. Between 1985 and 1995, the resources provided by the Malian government for education went down significantly: from 3,7% of the Gross Domestic Product in 1985 to 2,2% in 1995.[286]

Here the effects of the Structural Adjustment Plans imposed on many Third World countries by the World Bank and other financial backers must be addressed.[287] The impact of the Plan led directly to the further crumbling of the public educational system in Mali. Since the early 1980s and through the first half of the 1990s, in the midst of recession and financial crisis, Mali implemented the drastic Structural Adjustment programs. The simple premise consisting of balancing the state's spending and its resources led to massive cuts in public spending in all sectors of activity under different guises: early retirements, staff reductions, parsimonious recruiting, pay freezes and even diminution in salaries, etc. In terms of the educational sector, the Structural Adjustment Plan caused the massive early retirement of some of the best-trained and most experienced teachers, and the concentration of most efforts by the state and its partners on primary education, to the detriment of higher education.[288]

Public spending on education has diminished globally in real value although it has slightly progressed in terms of percentage of GDP in Mali. Worse, the proportion of educational spending dedicated to primary schools in sub-Saharan Africa between 1985 and 1995 grew smaller: from 26.5% in 1985 to a meagre 19% in 1997.[289] The World Bank recommends[290] that 50% of the educational spending be dedicated to primary school (to the other levels' detriment) as it is the cheapest level of education to finance in terms of capital (buildings and equipment) and in running costs (salaries, administration, textbooks).[291] In 1998, the partion of the national budget for education going to primary

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[285] Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish*, 40

[286] UNESCO, *Rapport mondial sur l'éducation 1998* (Paris: Éditions de l'UNESCO, 1998), 156. and Dumestre, "De la scolarité souffrante," 176.

[287] It is important to note here that the imposition of the Structural Adjustment Plans marked the start of the reign of the World Bank on education policy, to the detriment of the influence of UNICEF and UNESCO. Education, from this point on, falls under the rule of international economic institutions that seek to make it profitable, hence the "quantitative obsession" that will follow. See Lange, "École et mondialisation," 145-146.

[288] Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 11.

[289] Nolwen Henaff, "Quel financement pour l'École en Afrique," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 1, no. 169-170 (2003): 170-172.

[290] Although it has been explained elsewhere that this was ultimately harmful to the fiscal income of the state. See Fenton, Gardner and Singh, "Rethinking Cuts in Public Higher Education: An American Example," *Education Economics* 9, no. 1 (2001): 53-68.

[291] Henaff, "Quel financement pour l'École en Afrique," 177.

schooling increased slightly to 59.24%[292] demonstrating how Mali has complied with, and even surpassed, the recommendation of the World Bank. The funding of primary schools in Mali, although complying with standards from the World Bank in terms of percentage, is still too low, in real numbers, to offer quality education to the masses.

In 1989, Bamako hosted a national symposium (*États Généraux*) on education in Mali and all participants agreed that the past 30 years of reform in the educational system resulted in failure.[293] In Mali, the World Bank was a major partner in this re-organization and re-investment in primary education, called the Fourth Project for Education.[294] After the "de-schooling" period of the 1980s, the "*partenaires techniques et financiers*"[295] led by the World Bank massively invested in education in Africa in order to increase literacy rates. This "partnership" in education was clearly established at the 1990 *World Conference on Education for All* in Jomtien, Thailand. *Education for All* was understood by all participants at the Conference as a social responsibility necessitating every actor's participation (public, private and associations) and the commitment of international agencies.[296]

The new international strategy for the improvement of education in poor countries was to be implemented by the World Bank, a financial body, rather than by international bodies dedicated to education such as the UNESCO or the ISESCO. Also, the World Bank is a club of rich donors and should by no means be considered representative of any particular group; it is not responsible to any electorate yet its decisions are binding. The Jomtien Conference therefore sanctioned decision-making bodies that are far removed from the primary actors of the education system by confirming the leadership of the World Bank in educational policy. Thus the Conference also sanctioned the greater withdrawal of the state from educational decision making to vest it in international financial backers with little democratic legitimacy. Financial organizations, international NGOs and others have no mandate to define educational policies.[297] One can also note the systematic exclusion of parents and children in this partnership on education, leading to the gap between available opportunities in education and the social demand for it. Considerations at the conference were limited to availability, access, and efficiency in education and left no place for the needs and representation of the population, or societal

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[292] Solomani Sangaré and others, *Genre et fréquentation scolaire au premier cycle de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali* (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, 2000), 23. For details on percentages of budget for each level of schooling, see Appendix O and P.

[293] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 214.

[294] Gérard, "Entre État et populations," 59. The 4ème Projet, as it is called in French, did not take into account Islamic schooling in its assessment of schooling needs in Mali. See chapter two.

[295] "Technical and financial partners" is the common phrase used to refer to the conglomerate of backers investing and invested in education in Mali; the phrase has the merit of reflecting the decision-making power of these institutions in domestic educational policy.

[296] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 146.

[297] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 149.

demands for education. The implied assumption by the "partners" is that demand for education is limited to demography and takes no account of parental strategies in their choices for their children's education.[298] The Jomtien World Conference on Education for All in 1990 redefined international strategies on education and had an important impact on Mali. The Conference meant to emphasize all the partners' (countries, NGOs, international organizations) commitment to primary education and its worldwide goals for the following 10 years.

Due to the international recession and the Structural Adjustment Plans of the 1980s (whose effects were lingering), public spending on education in Mali has diminished. As a further consequence, the general economic climate had brought about the impoverishment of the population and therefore, private spending on education has also tended to decline. At the 10-year mark, most countries, including Mali, had not achieved the goals set in Jomtien despite efforts in this direction.[299] Following the Jomtien Conference in 1990, international agencies took a sudden interest in Islamic education in the form of médersas in Mali. This interest can be explained by the role médersas were now playing in promoting schooling and fighting illiteracy for large segments of the population. These organizations – such as UNESCO, World Bank, UNICEF, United Nation Program for Development – decided to release funds to help and coordinate qura'nic schools and médersas.[300] While private funding for médersas was, in the 1970s and 1980s, abundant, it had dramatically reduced after 1990. Prior to 1990, petro-dollars from (mostly) Arab monarchies, donated via various channels to Malian associations of private educational entrepreneurs, were instrumental in the increase in the number of mosques and médersas in Mali in general and in Bamako in particular.[301] As will be shown in greater detail in chapter four, financial aid, in the form of donations or loans, from Arab and Muslim benefactors was instrumental in the expansion of the Islamic schooling system. I shall limit myself here to a short quote from Brenner which summarizes clearly the allure (to a certain degree) of médersas to the bankrupted Malian state of the 1980s and 1990s: "(...) the médersas were responding to a profound need in the country by providing primary educational skills to a significant portion of its children, and they were doing so at no cost to the state."[302]

Estimates at the Jomtien Conference of thefunding, needed from international organizations involved in educational policy, in order to achieve the stated goal of 100% schooling and literacy (including in Arabic) worldwide between 1990 and 2000 would

[298] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 148-149.
[299] Henaff, "Quel financement pour l'École en Afrique," 169.
[300] Stefania Gandolfi, "L'enseignement islamique en Afrique noire," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 1, no. 169-170 (2003): 261.
[301] Drissa Diakité, "La dynamique sociale des mouvements confessionnels: Tendances et enjeux majeurs pour le développement du Mali," In *Étude Nationale Prospective 'Mali 2025'* (1998), 24. See chapter four for a detailed discussion of Arab aid to médersas in Mali.
[302] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 215.

have been in the order of 5 to 7 billion US dollars per year for 10 years. For sub-Saharan Africa alone, an investment of 25 billion US dollars over 10 years from the international community (not including the spending of the states concerned) would have been necessary to generalize primary school attendance.[303] Although money was indeed invested in the educational system of poor countries by various international organizations, the enormous sums necessary to reach 100% literacy never came. The 1989 Fourth Project and other educational initiatives by the Malian government and financial backers were aimed at a quantitative amelioration of schooling in Mali. The quality of education offered and the social demand for education were not taken into consideration.[304] The consequences of this problem are discussed below. As mentioned earlier, the objectives established at Jomtien were not realized given the shrinking part of public spending going to primary school. Between 1993 and 1995, spending per student as a percentage of GDP/head diminished by 4.3%.[305]

Ever more direct intervention by the "partners in education" in the financing, definition, and the implementation of educational policy, and therefore the extradition of decision-making power to "Northern countries" brought about a uniformity of education in poor, financially dependant countries. As Lange points out, there is an imposition of a new educational world order dictating the diminution of the financial investment of the state in education. This led directly to the diversification of educational opportunities, partly prompted by the withdrawing state but also by the ascent of various social initiatives[306] for community schools, private secular schools and médersas. The Malian government, mindful of ameliorating the educational offerings in the country in terms of numbers by diversifying education, has created a fund to help local communities create their own schools. However, this fund is small and the community still has to finance up to 25% of the schools, which is a significant investment. This policy limits the number of schools that can therefore be created in local contexts. However, the policy allows the government to limit its financial investment in certain schools while improving its statistics.[307] Similarly, public funding for médersas was always limited, partly due to the sheer lack of money from the state, and also because of the ideological contest that *fonctionnaires* of the *Ministère de l'Éducation* saw between public schools and médersas. Public servants were not keen on sharing with médersas the power to shape the ideology of future citizens. Schools are understood as a site of the contest for power itself: the secular state and its values taught in public schools and embodied by the *fonctionnaire* versus the hidden Islamism transmitted in Islamic schools.[308] Despite difficulties (and because of them, up to a point), community schools and médersas bloomed in Mali in the

[303] Henaff, "Quel financement pour l'École en Afrique," 170.
[304] Gérard, "Entre État et populations," 65.
[305] Henaff, "Quel financement pour l'École en Afrique," 173.
[306] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 150.
[307] Gérard, "Entre État et populations," 66.
[308] Gandolfi, "L'enseignement islamique en Afrique noire," 269.

1980s and 1990s in the wake of the country's economic and concomitant educational collapse.

Quality of Education and Economic Hardships of the 1980s and 1990s.

Statistics regarding the percentage of school-aged children actually attending any type of school in Mali already give a sense of the poor state of the educational system as a whole. In order to gain a better understanding of the failure of the public system, it is important to also take into account the drop out rates in public schools. Ki-Zerbo provides figures for all of Africa and one can assume that the situation in Mali is reflected in these data, and maybe even worse.

> It has been estimated that in quite a few African countries the average cost of one success in the primary school leaving examination amounts to 24 pupils/years per boy and 30 per girl. That means that the passing rate among boys is only 25%, while among girls it is even lower – 20%. Now out of these survivors, only a score or so out of every thousand will pass the high school certificate examinations. This is a bare 2% of the survivors who made it from the primary-level into secondary school. Then comes the third round of the marathon; as we have already seen, at the end of the first year, over 50% of survivors at the higher level also drop out. Here also, only 20% of those at the starting line get to finish.[309]

The drastic reduction of spending on primary education in sub-Saharan Africa following the imposition of the Structural Adjustment Plan has had equally drastic effects on the quality of education received. The "quantitative obsession" of governments, NGOs and other international organizations, in the wake of the Jomtien Conference, came at the expense of the quality of education received by all these new pupils. As a result, to this day, Malian public schools do not offer most of their students the possibility of being properly educated and developing intellectually. Schools do not provide a conducive environment for proper learning and work, for either pupils or teachers, even in terms of physical environment. Schools can be squalid and lack latrines, classrooms lack roofs or windows, and furniture is broken or absent.[310] The situation outside the big cities is particularly bad in term of facilities. Many schools are made of mud (which needs, but does not always get, regular repairs) and lack all furniture. Even schools made of cement, due to the absence of electricity and proper ventilation, are uncomfortable; under the Malian sun, temperatures can reach 50 degrees Celsius in these classrooms, as I have experienced. Blackboards are rare and precious commodities[311] (as are textbooks), the absence of which has enormous impact on the quality of education. Classes are constantly

[309] Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish*, 63.
[310] Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 9.
[311] I was often asked by owners of the poorer médersas, for small "gifts" or "to help, if I could" and blackboard paint was the one item that was the most desired.

disturbed by pupils walking around asking each other to borrow items such as pen, pencils, erasers, or rulers as most children are not provided with these supplies by their parents.[312]

In 1985, 1995,[313] and 2005 (2005-2006 school year),[314] the number of pupils per teacher went from 34 to 66 to 89.6 for primary school and from 12 to 25 to 56.7 for secondary school respectively. In certain schools, classes have more than 100 students, such as Médina Koura primary school in Mopti (1st year: 106, 2nd year: 130, 3rd year: 117, 4th year: 119, 5th year: 168, 6th year: 91). This situation is not unique to this school[315] as I have observed similar class sizes in one of the public elementary schools and a lycée in my neighbourhood (Hippodrome). The lowering (in absolute value) of the salaries of teachers and the reduction of teaching personnel resulting in ever increasing teacher/student ratios definitely had a beneficial impact on the cost of the education system evaluated by international organizations and states but had catastrophic consequences on the quality of education provided to children. The motivation of teachers is consequently extremely low and absenteeism is an endemic problem.[316] Given that expenditures in education are mostly due to the fixed costs of payroll, the decreasing of funding stopped the hiring of any new teachers for over-populated classrooms, let alone highly qualified teachers who would require higher pay.

An educational innovation brought about by the "quantitative obsession" of funding agencies and legislative bodies is called the *double vacation* – or *double-sitting* in English. This system involves a rotating schedule for school attendance in order to educate, in the same classroom and by the same teacher, two distinct groups of children. The schedule typically has a "morning class" and an "evening class" which reduces the number of hours spent in class for both groups. The goal and "advantages" are summarized here:

> The main object of *double-sitting* education is to increase the number of places available in schools while limiting the budgetary constraints. The introduction of *double-sittings* allows the use of one ensemble of buildings and installations to receive a greater number of students. This may be of particular importance in urban areas where land is scarse and where buildings are expensive. *Double-sitting* education has allowed many countries to get closer to universal primary and secondary education.[317]

[312] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 254-255.

[313] UNESCO, *Rapport mondial sur l'éducation 1998*, 144.

[314] Numbers based on figures provided in Cellule de planification et de statistique, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale. *Annuaire statistique 2005-2006.*

[315] Dumestre, "De la scolarité souffrante," 175.

[316] Henaff, "Quel financement pour l'École en Afrique," 174.

[317] "L'objet principal de la scolarisation à double vacation est d'accroître le nombre de places disponibles à l'école, en limitant les contraintes budgétaires. L'introduction des vacations doubles permet d'utiliser un seul ensemble de bâtiments et d'installations pour recevoir un plus grand nombre d'élèves. Ceci peut être particulièrement important en zone urbaine, où le terrain est rare et où les bâtiments sont coûteux. La scolarisation à double vacation a aidé de nombreux pays à se rapprocher de l'enseignement primaire

This results in the schooling of double the number of children without any further investment in infrastructure or payroll. 21.1% of public school classrooms (2 700 teachers) practised *double-sitting* in 1998.[318] Dumestre, like many others, refers to this as "truly, a pedagogical scandal which scandalizes no one" and least of all, international organizations prone to boast statistical improvement in school enrolment for poor countries.[319] The author of the UNESCO document on *double-sitting* or even *multiple-sitting*, Mark Bray, does mention potential problems with this system yet, it does not seem to shock him as much as Dumestre:

> However, *multiple-sittings* education might equally cause problems. The school day, especially in systems with three sittings, is often shortened which means that quality is sacrificed to quantity (the pupils loose part of the teaching in class and after-class activities). Moreover, if teachers cover many sittings, they are likely to get tired which might affect the quality of education.[320]

The diversification of educational opportunities, following the withdrawal of the state and the increase in social innovations (and educational demands from civil society), has had mixed effects on the quality of education available in Mali. Demands on education can now be met, up to a point, by the population itself or by private entrepreneurs with the creation of new schools such as community schools and médersas. However, the impact of these schools on the quality of education offered in Mali is harder to assess although the volume of research on these schools is growing. The government of Mali is only partially helpful in assessing the situation insofar as its statistics do not account for the vast number of médersas and community schools, which are not officially registered with the Ministry of Education.[321]

The quality of education in médersas has improved overall due to the demand for that type of education. Médersas improved their teaching methods and curriculum in part to compensate for the failures of the public schools, but also to compete with one another in the education market where parents strategically choose which schools their children will attend. The curriculum of médersas will be analyzed in chapter five, but it is

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et de l'enseignement secondaire universels." Mark Bray, *La scolarisation à double vacation: conception et mise en oeuvre pour un meilleur rapport coût-efficacité* (Paris: Éditions de l'UNESCO, 2009), 21.

[318] Solomani Sangaré and others, *Genre et fréquentation scolaire au premier cycle de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali*, 18.

[319] Dumestre cites the author of a UNESCO report affirming that the solution of *double vacation* allowed the schooling of thousands of students and testifies to the general will of all to solve educational problems in Mali. In Dumestre, "De la scolarité souffrante," 175.

[320] "Toutefois, la scolarisation à vacations multiples peut également poser des problèmes. La journée scolaire, en particulier dans les systèmes à triple horaire, est souvent raccourcie, ce qui veut dire que la qualité est sacrifiée à la quantité (les élèves perdant une part d'enseignement en classe et des activités périscolaires). En outre, si les maîtres assurent plusieurs horaires, ils risquent d'être fatigués, ce qui peut être un autre facteur de dégradation de la qualité." Bray, *La scolarisation à double vacation*, 22.

[321] Lange, "École et mondialisation," 155.

commonly accepted that some médersas offer a very high quality of education. An example of this can be seen in the intense competition for a place at the Médersa of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye[322] or at the Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba. Both schools are well known for the quality of their science curriculum.

Evidently, médersas in Mali compete with other types of schools in terms of their curriculum and the opportunities they offer for higher education and employment but médersas have the added advantage of offering an Islamic religious education. Médersas, however, also compete with each other and it is at this point that the content of religious education becomes salient.[323] The Malian situation regarding contestation between Wahhabis and traditionalists has been explained in chapter two but it is useful to review it here. As early as the 1950s, Wahhabis in Bamako organized themselves under the banner of the *Union Culturelle Musulmane* (UCM) and stated that their goals included combating fanaticism, superstitions, exploitation by charlatans, and purifying Islam. These claims were aimed at reducing the influence of the traditionalists[324], mainly the Quadiriyya and Tidjaniyya brotherhoods. The Wahhabis distinguish themselves from the traditionalists (whom are, in their vast majority, of the Maliki *maddhab*) through ostentatious external signs: crossed-arms during prayer, distinctive clothing, beards, separate mosques and médersas. In many Malian village communities, conflicts between the Wahhabis and the usually more traditionalist population have escalated to the point of violent confrontations; in Warana, in the late 1990s, the local population completely demolished the Wahhabi mosque.[325]

The Wahhabi influence in Islamic education in Mali dates from the opening of the Bamako médersa by the Azharists in the 1950s[326] and has continuously grown over the years. In the 1970s, the Wahhabiyya, under the banner of the UCM, opened a cultural centre and mosque in the Hamdallaye neighbourhood in Bamako and directly controlled three mosques in Badialan II, Jikoroni, and Badalabougou.[327] The association also owned a médersa of 300 students in Niaréla and controlled the École Franco-Arabe of

[322] The school is also free of charge (tuition fees are covered by the Emirati and Libyan financial backers) leading to even more intense competition to enrol. Students are chosen after a standard examination as well as an oral interview with Mahamadou Sissoko, *directeur des études* of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye.

[323] Although some médersas attract students by the sheer quality of the secular education offered, as can be assessed by the enrolment of Christian children in some médersas such as the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye. M. Sissoko, *directeur des études* in this médersa pointed out that there are usually 2-3 Christian students per class (for a total of about two dozen for the entire school).

[324] Wahhabis in Bamako accuse "traditionalists" of *shirk* (association) and *bida'a* (innovation) and they fight against sufism in the form of the cults of saints. They refer to traditionalists as *musherkin* and, in direct opposition to this, call themselves Sunnis (and refuse the term Wahhabi) as defendors of the Unicity of God. Amselle, "Le Wahhabisme à Bamako (1945-1985)," 348-349.

[325] Diakité, "La dynamique sociale des mouvements confessionnels," 15-16.

[326] See chapter two for details.

[327] All of these are neighbourhoods in Bamako. See map in Appendix H.

Ntomikorobougou.[328] Although the military government of Moussa Traoré abolished the UMC[329], Wahhabism continues to grow through private initiatives. Three of the biggest and most renowned médersas of Bamako (with satellites elsewhere in the city and around the country) were founded by Wahhabis: Laji Cheickna Yattabaré founded the Institut Islamique Yattabaré (now owned and directed by his son: Abdul Aziz Yattabaré), Amadou Kansaye created the Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba (now owned and directed by his son Zakariah Kansaye)[330] and the Institut Khaled ben Abdul Aziz founded by Laji Baba Cissé.[331]

Oumar Kane offers a good summary of the differences observed in the religious program of médersas in Bamako:

> In regards to the choice of material used to teach religious courses, it is important to note that it is dependant on the doctrine embraced, in terms of law and theology, by any given médersa. The difference in doctrine partly explains the confusion in the religious curriculum in Mali. Some médersas took from Arab countries the documents that it judged conform to its doctrine without much regards to the educational basis, criteria or rule (age, level and needs of pupils). Other médersas simply mixed various doctrines due to ignorance or just to impose whatever textbook they have got a hold of because of the lack of access to serious documentation.
> Noteworthy here is that the majority of médersas have adopted the maliki school in terms of the law. It is true that the Muslims of Mali, as in the rest of West Africa, are in majority maliki. This explains why we mostly find for sale book of this school such as *al-Akhdari*, *al-Risâla*, *al-Muqaddima*, etc.[332]

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[328] Amselle, "Le Wahhabisme à Bamako (1945-1985)," 346.

[329] See chapter two: all Muslims were to be represented by the unique Muslim association created by the government: *Association Malienne pour l'Unité et le Progrès de l'Islam* (AMUPI).

[330] I have worked in close collaboration with Zakariah Kansaye at Naharu Djoliba and with Abdul Aziz Yattabaré, and his director of studies Mr. Kaba, at the Institut Islamique Yattabaré.

[331] Amselle, "Le Wahhabisme à Bamako (1945-1985)," 347.

[332] "Quant au choix des documents pour enseigner les matières religieuses, il importe de préciser qu'il dépend de la doctrine qu'embrasse chaque médersa en matière de droit ou de théologie. Cette différene de doctrine explique en partie le désordre constaté dans le programme religieux au Mali. Certaines médersas ont en effet pris des pays arabes les documents qu'elles jusgent conformes à leur doctirne sans trop se soucier des bases, critères ou règles éducatifs (âge, niveau et besoins des élèves). D'autres encore ont mélangé par pure ignorance les doctrine, ou se sont contentés d'imposer ce qui est tombé entre leurs mains par manque de documentation sérieuse.
Signalons qu'ici la majeure parties des médersas ont adopté la voie malékite en matière de droit. Il est vrai que les musulmans du Mali, comme de toute l'Afrique noire occidentale, sont en majorité malékites. C'est ce qui explique probablement qu'on ne trouve le plus souvent en vente que des livres de cette voie tels qu'*al-Akhdari*, *al-Risâla*, *al-Muqaddima*, etc." Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 93-94.

Besides the Wahhabis and the traditionalists, another competing Muslim movement in Mali is the *Ansar Din Islami* association founded by Cherif Ousmane Madani Haïdara.[333] The movement, often called Kadiyaniyya in Mali, is related to the Ahmadiyya; they pray in the vernacular language (mostly Bamanankan in Mali) and encourage the mandatory *bahia* (pledge of allegiance) to the imam.[334] The *Ansar Din* médersas in Bamako, although very popular in poorer neighbourhoods partly because of the personal clout of Cherif Haïdara, are considered by inspectors of Arabic from the *Ministère de l'Éducation* as "difficult": they do not easily accept inspections, their teachers are amongst the worst educated and they do not follow the official curriculum.[335] There is also a small Shi'a community in Bamako, mostly in the shadow of the Centre Culturel Iranien. Needless to say, their main opponents are the Malian Wahhabis. The Wahhabis consider Shi'a Islam as a fundamental deviation of the faith and, again, this contest has escalated to actions by the judiciary.[336] The Shi'a community has nonetheless opened one médersa (to my knowledge) in the capital, in the Hippodrome neighbourhood on the commonly known "rue du Bla Bla" (officially, rue Gabriel Cabral) to which I have never had access and will therefore not comment on.

From the 1970s, the radical transformation of the Malian urban public space brought about and encouraged the development of the Islamic institutional infrastructure: the number of médersas and mosques in Bamako was increased rapidly, the space and landscape was "Islamicized". The new médersas and mosques of Bamako were competing with one another to offer conduits for social integration to the growing population of villagers arriving in the city.[337] One of the consequences of the diversified Islamic scene in Bamako is the multiplicity of Islamic associations, often vassals of foreign interests, which also face internal feuds and divisions. This situation is visible in Bamako's landscape by the proliferation of mosques (from 41 in 1960, to 77 in 1968, to more than 200 at the millennium) and médersas.[338] It has already been the case in Mali in general but, the country being highly centralized in the French tradition, the capital city becomes the central playing field for all movements in Mali.

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[333] For more information on Cherif Haïdara and the *Ansar Din*, see Dorothea Schulz, "'Charisma and Brotherhood' Revisited: Mass-mediated Forms of Spirituality in Urban Mali," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 33, no. 2 (2003): 146-171. and Schulz, "Promises of (Im)mediate Salvation."

[334] Diakité, "La dynamique sociale des mouvements confessionnels," 16.

[335] Conversation, in December 2010, with an inspector of Arabic from the Bozola Centre d'Animation Pédagogique (CAP) who himself had 2 *Ansar Din* médersas under his supervision.

[336] Diakité, "La dynamique sociale des mouvements confessionnels," 16.

[337] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 196-197.

[338] Diakité, "La dynamique sociale des mouvements confessionnels," 17.

Education and the Job Market: the Path to Nowhere.

The Malian public educational system produces graduates with knowledge of dubious quality and very few or no job opportunities. Ki-Zerbo does not hesitate to recognize this situation as "mis-education" or even as an absence of education[339] since the knowledge gained is useless and the technical knowledge needed on the job market is absent. Public schools in Mali do not provide the skills needed to find employment on the very limited Malian market but they do provide knowledge for which the students, and the parents, often see no use. As Ki-Zerbo affirms: " Unfortunately, the higher up in the [educational] system one climbs, the less relevant the curriculum gets."[340] The problems in the quality of education in Mali are also reflected in the possibilities for Malian student to pursue further studies abroad. The level of knowledge of Malian students is so low (and it is a known fact abroad), that scholarships for Malians to study abroad are becoming increasingly more scarce. The few Malians who are accepted into foreign universities (including African ones) are now almost systematically demoted at least a year in order to upgrade their knowledge and education.[341]

In 1990, it was estimated that 15 000 B.A. graduates in Mali were unemployed.[342] It is not uncommon in Mali to find university graduates or youth with a *baccalauréat* (high school diploma) washing cars on the street or conducting informal business.[343] A common sight in Bamako are small groups of young men, often well educated, idle and drinking tea on the street in what is locally known as a *grin.* Brenner, explains very clearly what a *grin* is and its social importance in Mali:

> A *grin* consists of a small group of people, usually but not necessarily young, who meet together every day literally to pass the time. Total membership in a *grin* is small, usually no more than six or eight. There is nothing formal about a *grin*; membership can vary, although there seems to be an observable consistency of attendance. People come together for many reasons, because they live near to one another, or because of various shared interests. Some *grins* are mixed by sex, although in the sample under discussion here membership was primarily single-sex and male. Most meet in the proximity of the home of the central member of the *grin*, although some gather at this person's work place, if it is conducive to such a gathering, for example, at a motorbike repair hut. The central member, sometimes referred to as the "*chef*" of the *grin*, is often someone who can afford to provide tea and sugar on a regular basis, although in many *grins*, the members chip in to buy the requisites for tea-making.
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> The preparation and drinking of tea is the focal activity of every *grin*; it would be rare indeed to see a *grin*, which are visible everywhere in

[339] Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish*, 52-53.
[340] Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish*, 63.
[341] Diakité, "La dynamique sociale des mouvements confessionnels," 24.
[342] Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish*, 63.
[343] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 223.

> Bamako, without a charcoal brazier placed at the center of the gathering. In addition to drinking tea, the major activities of the *grin* are talking about anything and everything and listening to music, the cassette player or less frequently the radio being almost as essential as the charcoal brazier.[344]

The idleness of vast numbers of youth in Bamako is the clearest indication of schools' failure to provide skills and knowledge leading to employment as well as a consequence of the dire state of the economy. Everyone can see these groups gathering in the afternoon in Bamako[345] and they are usually frowned upon by older members of society as a waste of time and a reflection of the quality of the education received in public schools. Conversely (and although nothing to my knowledge directly attests to it), médersa graduates are considered above such vacuous idleness and the Malian Wahhabis clearly position themselves against such a practice that, in their view, systematically leads to improper discussions and behaviours.

Although the population has no access to statistics on youth employment, their evaluation of the public school system and the quality of education is informed by the unemployment problems faced by young graduates.[346] Gérard quotes a parent from a rural Malian community on the usefulness of school:

> *"What's the point of sending one's children to school?"* we here now from parents. *"Young graduates are unemployed, kids learn nothing in schools, they go for a few years and then are back, and when they get out, they don't even know how to use a sickle to farm. We pay their studies although we do not get any results. What's the point?"*[347]

This perception that public schools lead to unemployment, lack of useful knowledge, and even possibly inappropriate social behaviours, in turn informs decisions made by parents about whether or not to send their children to school, and, if so, to which school. The

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[344] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 242.

[345] I myself regularly attended a *grin* near my place in Hippodrome (Bamako). I was introduced to the group of young men (some women did join from time to time but were not "permanent" members of the *grin*) by Omar, a friend met in another *grin*, which gathered on the doorsteps of my apartment building, in 2005. The *grin* I attended in 2010 was hosted in front of Van's (Modibo) familial house. As a 28 years old single man, finishing his Master of Law at the University of Mali, son of a rich *fonctionnaire*, Van was the chief of the *grin* since he could afford the tea. The *grin* consisted of about 10 men (at least five of whom were consistently present) in their late twenties who held a university degree or were studying for one. None of them held a formal job and conversations regularly focused on the impossibility of finding a regular job, even with the help of one's familial network.

[346] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 242.

[347] *"A quoi bon envoyer ses enfants à l'école aujourd'hui?"*, entend-on aujourd'hui dans la bouche des parents d'élèves? *"Les jeunes diplômés chôment, les enfants n'apprennent plus rien à l'école, ils font quelques années et sont renvoyés, et quand ils sortent, ils ne savent même plus se servir de la houe pour cultiver. On leur paye des études, alors qu'on n'a rien, pour arriver à ces résultats? A quoi bon?"* Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 496.

quoted parent points to his child who does not know the basics of agriculture, necessary in such a rural setting, although city-dwellers have similar criticisms regarding the uselessness of the education received in public schools. As Brenner states:

> Deciding to send one's child to school, especially in a city like Bamako, was more like making a tactical move in a complex strategic game which one had very little chance of 'winning' but from which one could not comfortably withdraw. Only schooling could lead to regular salaried employment, but the job market had shrunk to such an extent that the majority of young persons leaving school were unemployed. (...) Even if urban populations were becoming suspicious about the official line on schooling, in planning for their children's future, they had few alternatives to investing in their education.[348]

The situation of literate young adults has not improved since Brenner wrote in 2001, whether they are university graduates, have a high school diploma, or a few years of education in the public school system.

The situation of the young men of the *grin* I attended in Bamako in 2009-2010 is representative of the ambivalent thoughts of the population regarding schooling and (lack of) employment. Discussions among members of the *grin* often emphasized the poor opinion their family had of them: as young men with a fairly good education, they were considered lazy by their elders because they sat outside all day drinking tea. However, they all emphasized that they did not always sit at the *grin* by choice but rather because there was no employment opportunities for them. They often complained about the uselessness of their diplomas which were not adapted to Mali's job market. In Van's sarcastic terms: “What Mali really needs is yet another lawyer!” Yet, the choice of a law degree for him was made by his father who, as a Malian of an older generation,[349] still equated a university degree with a direct insertion into the state apparatus. That is, after all, how things had worked out for him: after graduating from the University of Bamako, he made a successful career in the public administration. Van's father path, though, does not represent a typical trajectory any more and none of the *grin* members, what ever their degree, expected to earn enough money to move out of the extended family's compound; they all more or less depended on monetary help from family members to cover their basic needs.

The population is well aware of the chronic unemployment of the youth and understands that schooling children no longer guarantees better job opportunities. The dream of attaining a *fonctionnaire* position upon graduation has faded and public

[348] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 185-186.

[349] Mr. Sangaré was well into his 70s at that time and is now deceased. He was a university student in the last years of colonization and graduated in the first years of Mali's independence when the state apparatus was being put in place. At that time, given the relatively small number of university graduates and the demand for a greater number of *fonctionnaires*, a diploma indeed led to gainful employment in the civil service.

schooling lost its value in the eyes of the population the moment it stopped leading to actual jobs: schooling one's child was not profitable any more.[350] The cost of school (loss of household help or actual income a child can provide, as well as the monetary cost of schooling) was no longer compensated by the benefit potentially reaped by the larger social group. A *fonctionnaire*, for example, can provide an income that sustains up to 20 family members – not mentioning the clientele network which also expects some sort of benefit from this position of (relative) power. In the 1980s, the overall perception in Mali was that the cost of educating a child was too high in relation to the potential benefits brought to the social group and it led to the "de-schooling" phenomenon already mentioned. As Gérard explains:

> In the eyes of the populations – whether or not they have suffered from a decrease in their purchasing power – the sacrifices consented for education was a loss; given the employement of secondary and higher education, the investment in education was not worth it; the compromises made for the obtainment of school capital wasn't met.[351]

Parents started to sense that if public schooling could not lead to jobs anymore, it was better to send children to a médersa where they would, *at least*, learn about religion.[352] That is to say: if, regardless of the type of education received, children were to end up unemployed, médersa schooling would be chosen over public schooling for the religious values it instils in children.

In the past 30 years, médersas have educated thousands of young *arabisants* (as they are known locally), whose knowledge is mostly concentrated in the religious domain, and in Arabic, in a secular country where the official language is French. Given the variety of curriculum found in médersas, the lack of effective control over them by the government, and the long-time absence and currently only partial implementation of a national examination for the médersas, career opportunities for médersa graduates are limited. However, due to the sheer number of médersa students, the pressure on the Malian government to create some educational streams for them has intensified and led to the opening of an Arabic department at Mali's university, although students graduating from médersas are not uniformly tested. The government also accepted all scholarships offered by foreign countries without analysis of their relevance for Mali and took administrative control of their attribution (rather than leave it to the schools, as had previously been the case).[353] As will be shown in greater detail in chapter four, financial

[350] Gérard, "Entre État et populations," 62.

[351] "Aux yeux de la majortié des populations -qu'elles fussent ou non victimes d'une baisse de leur pouvoir d'achat-, les sacrifices réalisés pour l'éducation scolaire étaient alors un perte; compte tenu du chômage des lauréats des enseignements secondaire et supérieur, l'investissement scolaire n'était pas 'rentable'; les compromis réalisés pour l'obtention du capital scolaire n'étaient pas satisfait." Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique," 156.

[352] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 82.

[353] Diakité, "La dynamique sociale des mouvements confessionnels," 29.

aid, in the form of donations or loans, from Arab and Muslim benefactors was instrumental in the expansion of the Islamic schooling system and still plays an important part in financing the system as a whole. These same sources of aid also provide numerous scholarships for Malian médersa students to pursue higher education in Muslim universities abroad. The vast majority of these students pursue degrees in theology or Arab literature.[354] So, even when these students obtain university-level degrees, their degrees are of a limited use. These students form an Arab-speaking group with a religious consciousness which is of little use in the Malian job market. Some médersas students with higher degrees will manage to get one of the few places available in the Government's administration where Arabic is needed (mostly the CPLA, the body of the *Ministère de l'Éducation* overseeing médersas, but also in Foreign Affairs) or find a place as an Arabic teacher in a public or private French-speaking school. Others will work in religious "careers" as imams or preachers[355] and a fair number will become teachers in médersas or try to open one for themselves. The majority of médersas graduates (at whatever level) will enter the informal private sector of the economy[356] where vernacular languages and a strong familial or clientele network are the only credentials needed.

Given the socio-economic crisis, lack of job opportunities for youth is real. This is an identity crisis that Mali has been facing for some time, and the risk of thousands of young people, well educated in fields not directly leading to any career in modern day Mali, being disenfranchised, excluded from the wider society, and turning towards religious activism (in the benign form of preaching and teaching or the more threatening form of Islamism) is significant.[357] However ill trained médersa graduates may be, they have succeeded in creating a new form of community in Mali: a group that shares what Brenner calls a "médersa consciousness". This community is made up of graduates from médersas as well as teachers and owners. They identify médersas with Islam and the Muslim world and position themselves as directly opposed to education *à la française* which is identified with an immoral and unbelieving world.[358] This community is noteworthy in relation to the following section on the importance of the clientele network in Mali. The médersas' extended community has created a new form of networking that provides financial and cultural/religious capital outside and opposed to the state's dominant networks.

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[354] Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 5.

[355] Both teachers and parents tend to see in médersas students future preachers and, therefore, the quality of the overall education in a médersa is often not an important criteria for parents. Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 93.

[356] Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 13.

[357] Diakité, "La dynamique sociale des mouvements confessionnels," 29. However, see chapter five for a detailed discussion of the Arabisants' views and ideas on democracy and the secular nature of the Malian state.

[358] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 83.

In the 1990s, the populations perceived Mali's situation as being dire. As Brenner summarizes:

> By that date, Mali was in a state of extreme economic destitution and ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world, and the incumbent government, which gave every impression of being politically as well as economically bankrupt, was presiding over what Malians perceived to be the progressive disintegration of the institutional infrastructure and social fabric of the country.[359]

It is this in context of economic and moral degeneration that médersas have dramatically grown in number. Médersas position themselves as an escape from this failing system and an answer to social ills. The school market has become, in the past 25 years, a source of enormous profit for entrepreneurs interested less in academic and pedagogical quality and more concerned with the income generated by large number of students attending their schools, which lack even basic facilities such as bathrooms or schoolyards – although the school which have been directly involved in this research are better equipped. Hiring under-educated teachers, often people with only a high school diploma, these entrepreneurs also remove one of the major costs of operating a school: the pay-roll. However ill equipped a school might be or ill-trained its personnel, parents still flock to enrol their children given the lack of other schooling options.[360] This demonstrates the gap existing between the educational offerings and the social demands for education in Mali.

The Monetary and Cultural Cost of Schooling: Parental Educational Strategies.

In Mali, as in most other African countries, education is a rare commodity not accessible to all equally. For the majority, school is very expensive and represents the investment of a large part of the family budget. The chronic instability of the public schooling system in Mali, coupled with economic hardship, is obviously known to parents and is reflected in their choices in the education of their children.[361] This situation has led to a demand for alternative forms of education, such as the médersas. Policy-makers and academics studying educational systems world-wide have generally made two main arguments to support the development and expansion of the private schooling sector. First, by making rich families pay for another type of education, funds are freed to finance public schooling for the poor and, second, the efficacy of the private sector in quality of education and success rates is above that of the public school.[362] Private schooling, in its best and worst forms, has become the solution to the failure of the public school system.

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[359] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 173.
[360] Dumestre, "De la scolarité souffrante," 175-176.
[361] Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 13.
[362] Henaff, "Quel financement pour l'École en Afrique," 179.

In Mali, educational choices and career paths remain in a large part based on pre-determined factors: especially one's father's[363] (and to a lesser degree, one's mother's) educational background and career, geographic location, income, gender, and other characteristics.[364] Geographic location plays a major role in the educational career of a given pupil. For example,

> [c]apital cities are especially well placed, and often they account for 40% to 50% of the secondary school intake. In countries where, as it often happens, 75% of secondary schools are in the two biggest cities and the university system is wholly confined to the capital, the school map contains a predication of the future social structure.[365]

The schooling trajectory of the father has a clear influence on the educational strategies adopted for his child. Fathers educated in the public sector send 82.8% of their children to schools (of all types) against 71.7% for fathers educated in Islamic schools. The former tend to send their children to secular schools (private or public) in a larger proportion than fathers educated in Islamic schools (85.1% to 69.3%). Children of parents educated in public schools graduate in greater proportions than those whose parents went to confessional schools: 32.8% compared to 25%.[366] "[T]he overwhelming majority of parents who send their children to médersas are illiterate, perhaps as many as 80 per cent."[367] In Bamako, parents of children enrolled in médersas usually work in the private (often informal) sector and have received no education in French. The benches of médersas in Bamako are generally filled with children from the poor or working classes, not children from the bourgeoisie who tend to enrol their children in French-speaking schools (public or private).[368]

Parents develop strategies as to "how" to educate and school their children based on their own experiences, or lack thereof, with education and employment opportunities. Schools are part of the social imagination of the population; the perception of schools held by parents and the sacrifice (monetary or otherwise) involved in sending children to school influence the educational choices made by parents.[369] Parents evaluate and choose schools based on a hierarchy of knowledge informed by their own education and values. Here are quotations from parents of school children in the village of Sanankoro gathered by Gérard:

> *"Certain pupils are superiorly educated. It is better at the médersa than at the quar'anic school; but the pupil of a qur'anic school gets more*

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363 I refer the reader back to my discussion of Van and Mr. Sangaré's on educational and career path.

364 Bénédicte Kail, "Une sélection insidieuse. Les savoirs scolaires dans l'apprentissage à Bamako," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 1, no. 169-170 (2003): 280.

365 Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish*, 77.

366 Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique," 159-160.

367 Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 232.

368 Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 13.

369 Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique," 155.

> *benedictions that that of the médersa because he works for the master and his wife. Public school and médersas are similar: you go from one class to the other and finally you get a diploma."* (M, 45, Sanan) Another one adds: *"All three schools are good, but if we can know something some thing in public schools, we can know a lot of things in the others. If you know the two others* (public schools and médersas)*, without the public school, you will not understand."* (M, 45, Sana) Similarly, it is *"easier to understand in the médersa than in qur'anic schools. After three years in the médersa, the pupil can get to some level in the study of the Qur'an, not at the qur'anic school."* (M, 50, Sanan)[370]

Schools are evaluated by parents in terms of the quality of education and the types of knowledge received. Value is seen in learning French as a factor for social mobility and in religious education for learning proper religious values as a way to obtain benedictions.[371] Médersas are the only schools which offer both type of knowledge and their popularity is mostly due to this. They are a deliberate choice made by parents who want their children to gain secular knowledge and religious (and culturally adapted) values. Gérard calls this the *educational syncretist strategy* on the part of parents.[372]

Perceptions of Public Schools: the Importance of Clientele Networks.

Social demands for the diversification of educational options can only be understood, in the context of Mali, with regards to the representations of schools in the population. How the population at large understands schooling in general and public schools in particular, and what is expected from them, is central to the choices made as to how to educate one's children. A discussion of perceptions of schools cannot leave aside an explanation of the advantages brought about by French-schooling in Mali. As has been shown, schooling is a rare commodity in Mali and therefore, knowledge – even more than

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[370] *"Certains élèves sont supérieurement instruits. On l'est mieux à la médersa qu'à l'école coranique; mais l'élève d'école coranique a plus de bénédictions que celui de la médersa, parce qu'il travaille pour le maître et sa femme. L'école publique et la médersa, c'est un peu pareil: tu vas d'une classe à l'autre et finalement tu peux avoir un diplôme."* (H, 45, Sanan) Un autre ajoute: "*Les trois instructions sont bonnes, mais si l'on peut connaître quelque chose sur l'école* (publique)*, on peut connaître beaucoup de choses dans les autres. Si tu connais les deux autres* (enseignements de la médersa et de l'école coranique) *sans l'école, tu ne comprendras pas."* (H, 45, Sanan) De même est-il *"plus facile de comprendre à la médersa qu'à l'école caranique. Au bout de trois ans, l'élève peut parvenir à une étape dans l'étude du Coran, pas à l'école coranique"* (H, 50, Sanan). Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 552.

[371] Benedictions are an important part of the Malian moral economy. One ought to struggle to obtain as many benedictions as possible from one's elders in order to be admitted into paradise upon death. Indeed, benedictions are the "proof" that good actions have been performed and therefore increase one's chances of attaining paradise. Parents also consider that putting one's child in school "counts" as many benedictions since the child in question is more likely to become a "good Muslim" which in turn reflects well on the moral "score" of the parents.

[372] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 552-553.

in other parts of the world – is power. "Education, in this context, becomes subject to power struggles unregulated by any meritocratic criteria. The unfortunate fact is that in most cases, the educational pyramid rests on an exclusively narrow base."[373] In the past, Malians reckoned that French-schooling led directly to a position in the state's administration and therefore to a privileged social class. One without French-schooling could gain some social authority but not a position as a *fonctionnaire,* which was the key to accessing power and money.[374]

Schooling, in the post-colonial state, was the key to social mobility and the ability to access government jobs. Education was therefore not only key for cultural transmission but also to access forums for political and economic competitions.[375] In this context, education in a French-speaking public school was a factor of differentiation in Malian society: it inserted children into networks disconnected from their social milieu. Instead of being a national integration factor, French public schools created a minority elite of educated people. Although this was appreciated by families when the result of this education came in the form of a *fonctionnaire* position, it is less so now that this position is not guaranteed anymore. Public schools still feed this educated French-speaking minority (which is itself smaller than it used to be in the decades following independence) but the population now mostly sees them as disconnected from tradition and proper social behaviours; public schools create a "caste" of disenfranchised and unemployed, if educated, youth.[376]

In Mali, most benefits proceed from the state as the sole centre of power, although a certain amount of challenge to the state's monopoly by groups of merchants or peasants can be detected. In order to gain access to the benefits of the state, one needs to be integrated into the right clientelist network.

> Clientelism ordered social relations throughout the country on all levels of society, and clientelist networks provided the most effective means available of amassing and redistributing social and material resources. Indeed, the colonial and postcolonial state in Mali, as primary distributor of the country's most valuable resources (in the form of education, jobs and wealth), was the focus of the most prosperous and powerful of these clientelist networks, which were plugged into the state through the state bourgeoisie. These networks permeated official administrative institutions, although they were quite separate from them (...).
>
> The social roots of clientelism are no doubt to be found in lineage forms of social organization, and 'family' or lineage connections continued to provide the most fundamental framework of social and political relationships in post-independence Mali. But new frameworks of clientelist relationships also emerged which could cut across lineage associations,

[373] Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish*, 77.
[374] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 180-181.
[375] Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 11.
[376] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 497.

> such as political or religious affiliations, or classmate friendships (Malian often refer to belonging to the same school class: *la même promotion* (...).[377]

Relations in Mali are vertical: power brokers dispense favours to their familial and c lientelist networks.[378]

Here it is important to consider Malian issues of (perceived) corruption, nepotism, and clientelist networks, which influence both the schooling path and the eventual career of students. The culture of corruption in Mali is rife: the formal economy collapsed in the 1980s, the informal economy is lively and well, and familial networks and clientelism are the basis of most exchanges. As Amselle says, it is considered incongruous, maybe even reprehensible, to not steal from the state as it will otherwise steal from you and your network: "Un individu quelconque en mesure de prélever à son profit et qui ne redistribuerait pas à ses parents ou à ses amis, c'est-à-dire à l'intérieur de son réseau de clientèle, serait consideré au mieux comme un *tubab* (Blanc), au pire serait l'objet de malédictions de la part de ses proches."[379] Even if one manages to get oneself a coveted *fonctionnaire* position, the salaries are nowadays insufficient to sustain large familial and clientele networks and are irregularly paid due to the near bankruptcy of the state. The age-old tradition of commerce in Malian culture, making most Malians potential businessmen, comes in handy here as the informal economy helps *fonctionnaires* do business on the side to make ends meet.[380] It is necessary to quote Amselle at length here as he explains clearly the motivations leading Malians in general to accept and encourage what "Westerners" would call corruption and which they are more likely themselves to call "solidarity" and "redistribution of riches":

> It is contingent on the past, or more accurately on the was this past is constantly reconstructed and re-interpreted, that the behaviour of these entrepreneurs is modelled. If the means used by them to attain their goals are mercantile, the goals themselves are not. The goals are mostly to be placed in the context of the different monarchies and great empires that have existed in the region. Basking in an aristocratic environment and modelling one's behaviour on the norms dictated by *griots* and *marabouts*, businessmen like the rest of the Malian population must convert part of their fortune into social and religious prestige. To do otherwise would meet incomprehension on the part of the majority of the population. The accumulation of riches is indeed not reprehensible in itself in the eyes of

[377] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 174.

[378] Jean-Loup Amselle, "La corruption et le clientélisme au Mali et en Europe de l'Est: quelques points de comparaison," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 128, no. 32 (1992): 638.

[379] Amselle, "La corruption et le clientélisme au Mali et en Europe de l'Est," 629-230. This observation is confirmed by conversations I had with various Malians (as part of the research or in social settings) who find it perfectly acceptable to take advantage of one's position to dispense favour on one's familial and clientele network. Certain people would go as far as to say it is one's duty, as a form of payback for help the network might have provided to get to this position.

[380] Amselle, "La corruption et le clientélisme au Mali et en Europe de l'Est," 635.

> Malians; what is, however, is their retention. If redistribution attracts benedictions from those who receive, greed will provoke maledictions. What is more important to Malians, especially the richer ones, but to avoid maledictions when they have only one worry: to maintain their reputation in eyes of their social milieu.[381]

The pervasiveness and acceptability of this culture of corruption has a direct impact on schooling in Mali and can be seen most obviously in the role of money in the schooling system. First and foremost, money is commonly used in public schools to skew grades by buying exam topics or notes, and even to buy national diplomas such as the *Diplôme d'Étude Fondamental* and the *Baccalauréat*. This practice presupposes that, to some extent, corruption is generalized at all levels: parents, teachers and administrative personnel of the educational system are all implicated. In turn, this corruption participates in the erosion of respect for academic authority and discipline in schools and in the spread of a parvenu mentality amongst the school population. Students learn early on that everything can be bought and sold, bartered and gained illicitly.[382] The venal environment in education in Mali can also apply to private education (although there, standards are usually considered higher). Private schooling in Mali has the potential to be extremely profitable, especially for unscrupulous investors, due to the lack of control of these schools by the state (under the guise of promoting private initiatives in this domain). For certain school promoters, the potential financial gains from the school are a much greater motivator than the desire to ameliorate the level of education in Mali. Schools are therefore opened which are below any academic and basic sanitation standards. A number of private schools practice the systematic inflation of class averages in order to boost their appearance of success and attract more students.[383]

This situation is widely known and acknowledged by the public and again adds to the popularity of Islamic schools whose promoters, directors, and employees are

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[381] "C'est par rapport au passé, ou plus exactement par rapport à la façon dont ce passé est constamment reconstruit et réinterprété, que se modèle le comportement de ces entrepreneurs. Si les moyens utilisés par ces derniers pour parvenir à leurs fins sont bien des moyens marchants, les fins elles-mêmes ne le sont pas. Elles sont bien davantage à replacer dans le contexte des différentes monarchies et des grands empires qui ont existé dans la région. Baignant dans un univers aristocratique et calquant leur conduites sur les normes éditées par les griots et les marabouts, les hommes d'affaires, comme le reste des Maliens, sont contraints de convertir une partie de leur fortune en prestige social et religieux. Procéder autrement susciterait l'incompréhension de la grande masses de la population. L'accumulation de richesses, en effet, n'est pas répréhensible en soi aux yeux des habitants de ce pays; ce qui l'est, en revanche, c'est leur rétention. Si la redistribution entraîne des bénédictions de ceux qui reçoivent, l'avarice provoque au contraire la malédiction. Quoi de plus important pour les Maliens, surtout les plus riches, que d'éviter les malédictions alors qu'ils n'ont qu'un seul souci, celui d'assurer leur réputation au sein de leur milieu social." Amselle, "La corruption et le clientélisme au Mali et en Europe de l'Est," 636.

[382] Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 16.

[383] Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 17.

considered above such shady behaviour due to their perceived strong religious ethical principles. Officially, the Malian Wahhabis position themselves as opposed to such practices regarding money, which appeals to the poorest categories of the population, but they do reproduce clientele networks and relations of dependence within their own structures.[384] Médersas constituencies and networks never directly challenge the power of the state, often choosing compromise over confrontation. However, the benefits of the médersas' networks appeal to the segments of the population marginalized from the French-schooled state bourgeoisie. The "médersa consciousness" of this group creates a marginal space of dissent from the national educational project.[385] However, médersa schooling in Mali can also be extremely profitable, as will be discussed in the following section. Most importantly, it can also provide one with a strong clientelist network channelling massive amounts of money. Donations from Muslim benefactors[386] (private individuals and organizations) play a significant role in the monetary and social capital power struggle of the médersas' constituencies and offer an alternative to dealing with the state-centered political economy common in Mali. In the 1970s and 1980s, as Brenner explains,

> (...) private funds began to flow through clientelist networks that extended beyond the national borders and, perhaps more significantly, which often operated outside the direct control of the higher echelons of the state bureaucracy and *le Pouvoir*. Whereas some Muslim merchants and religious figures used their connections with international Muslim benefactors to initiate or enhance their relationships with representatives of the state, it is also true that a concern to control the flow of these new sources of money was a major factor which influenced the government to modify its Islamic policies.[387]

This interest of the state in Islamic policies in the 1980s, after decades of indifference[388], speaks to the importance of the sums transferred and the growing influence of a competing clientelist network, outside of the state, controlling these sources of money. The visibility of the médersas and therefore the prestige of their constituencies, especially the owners and directors, increased with their numbers and the sums of money now available to them. The quality of a médersa and the social power of a given médersa owner was judged on his ability to attract financial donations – and the all so important scholarships to study abroad – from his international Muslim clientelist network. Now, the availability of such funds to one person also allows him (rarely her) to develop an extensive network of clients in Mali itself.[389] Via these new networks, médersa

[384] Amselle, "La corruption et le clientélisme au Mali et en Europe de l'Est," 636.
[385] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 195-196.
[386] The history and details of which will be explain in chapter four.
[387] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 199.
[388] See chapter two for details.
[389] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 213-214.

constituencies create a "self-contained economic sub-system"[390] in Mali channelling millions in petro-dollars and offering a real alternative to the power structure of the state-controlled economy. Joining these new "médersa networks" offers a new form of social integration in the Malian political economy which was not possible before for marginalized non-French-speaking groups.

The desire to send one's child to a médersa speaks not only to the devaluation of public schooling in the population but also to a social dynamic of (conspicuous) adherence to Islam. Public schools' failure in its social integration function led médersas to use Islam instead.[391] Graduates, their parents, and the school personnel developed (as has been mentioned earlier), a "médersa consciousness", a Muslim identity claimed by a growing number of Malians. They form a new network, clientelist, but perceived as less corrupt insofar as they are backed by religious precepts and references. The possibilities for gaining access into this competing network is key to understanding why parents send *some* of their children to a médersa while not completely disavowing public schools: they still send *others* of their children to public schools. In this way, parents increase the chances and social success (for the child in question and *themselves*) by diversifying their offsprings', and their own, networks.

Monetary Investment in Education by Parents.

Private spending on education, which can amount to as much as 40% of total spending on education in certain poor countries, is mostly provided by parents.[392] In 1994,[393] this proportion was much smaller for Mali. Parents and the larger community supported 15.9% of the budget for primary schools (of all types, including public schools). This included tuition fees for private, but also public, schools, the cost of books and supplies, fees for private lessons, contributions in money or kind for building infrastructure and supplement to teachers' salaries in the form of free accommodation or food.[394] This means that, in 1994, for a total education budget of 24 billion of CFA francs[395], parents invested 3.82 billions of CFA francs directly into their children' education (besides the share of the budget covered by the state which also included taxes paid by these same parents).

Included here are two charts that indicate the sources of revenues for all types of schools in Mali. These detail the income and spending of schools per student and are

[390] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 214.
[391] Brenner, "Médersas au Mali," 139.
[392] Henaff, "Quel financement pour l'École en Afrique," 179.
[393] Last year, to my knowledge, for which a detailed study of the costs of education was undertaken.
[394] Sékou Traoré and Serge Péano, "Le coût de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali," In *Financement et gestion financière de l'éducation: Séminaire panafricain, Dakar, Sénégal, 12-14 octobre 1997,* ed. Serge Péano (Paris: Institut International de Planification de l'Éducation, 1999), 86.
[395] Traoré and Péano, "Le coût de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali," 84.

helpful in comparing different types of schools in terms of their costs of operation, potential net benefit, tuition fees, and other costs for families. Although the exact numbers for the year 1994 are obviously not relevant for the current school year, the proportions are what should be noted: how one category of school compares to another.

Average income and spending per student for the first cycle in 1994 (in CFA francs)

	Public School	Catholic School	Private School	Community School	Médersa	Average
State	16 344	16 017	1 965	1 371	931	14 151
Community	769	157	-	1 024	972	748
Parents	527	4 970	18 192	2 546	5 103	1 771
NGO	284	10 599	227	1 369	2 122	724
Foreign - loans	2 299	9 117	9 231	691	6 463	3 132
Foreign - subsidies	4 805	-	1 454	109	294	4 078
School income	25 028	40 860	31 069	7 110	15 885	24 604
Personnel	13 626	17 831	9 352	4 460	6 332	12 775
Operation	3 021	4 782	3 068	1 694	729	2 827
Investments	8 379	18 246	13 304	998	8 614	8 778
School spending	25 026	40 859	25 724	7 152	15 675	24 380
Supplies (parents)	2 889	3 611	4 558	1 662	2 651	2 937

Translated from: Sékou Traoré and Serge Péano, "Le coût de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali," In *Financement et gestion financière de l'éducation: Séminaire panafricain, Dakar, Sénégal, 12-14 octobre 1997,* ed. Serge Péano (Paris: Institut International de Planification de l'Éducation, 1999), 98.

Average income and spending per student for the second cycle in 1994 (in CFA francs)

	Public School	Catholic School	Private School	Community School	Médersa	Average
State	36 463	39 858	3 938	-	1 910	33 756
Community	50	686	-	-	1 937	220
Parents	796	12 724	68 803	-	8 551	2 356
NGO	1 780	18 595	-	-	3 682	2 628
Foreign - loans	1 332	637	27 024	-	13 852	2 430
Foreign - subsidies	2 599	-	4 255	-	630	2 306
School income	42 970	72 500	104 020	-	30 562	43 696
Personnel	33 820	48 232	31 396	-	11 190	32 698
Operation	3 339	9 662	15 475	-	1 037	3 515
Investments	5 811	14 605	44 895	-	17 927	7 373
School spending	42 970	72 499	92 306	-	30 154	43 586
Supplies (parents)	5 405	5 652	10 377	-	5 564	5 461

Translated from: Sékou Traoré and Serge Péano, "Le coût de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali," In *Financement et gestion financière de l'éducation: Séminaire panafricain, Dakar, Sénégal, 12-14 octobre 1997,* ed. Serge Péano (Paris: Institut International de Planification de l'Éducation, 1999), 100.

First, it should be noted, based on the numbers for 1994, the proportionally small participation of the Malian state in the financing of médersas as compared to all other types of schools (including Catholic and secular private schools). This can be explained by both the desire of médersa promoters to remain independent from the state and the state's official position of dissociation and non-involvement in religious matters. This lack of state income, as compared to other schools, is mostly made up by the relatively low operating costs of a médersa, especially in the payroll since teachers in médersas tend to be less qualified than teachers in public schools. The numbers also indicate, for private secular schools and médersas, that there is a profit to be made by the owner of these schools. In Mali, operating a big school is a profitable activity, as has been noted earlier. Although most médersa owners and founders would not mention financial gains as a reason for founding a médersa, some of them have become wealthy due to this activity. In my conversations with Zakariah Kansaye, son of the founder and now owner (with other members of his family) of the Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba, it became clear that the school (and its numerous satellite schools in Bamako and all around the country) were providing the Kansaye family with a good income allowing for a very comfortable lifestyle. But while this is the case for a renowned médersa such as Naharu Djoliba, smaller médersas do not guarantee a livelihood for their owner. For example, Youssouf

Samaké owns a small médersa (opened by his late father) in Daoudabougou neighbourhood yet, he still has to work as an Arabic teacher in a well-renowned private Lycée of the capital city to make ends meet.

Médersas, as private schools, stem from a community's or, more often, an individual's initiative. Various forms of financial set-ups to open a médersa are created depending on the personal motivations and network of a médersa's owner. Most commonly, the owner will finance the school himself (with the help of his familial network) or get loans from a financial institution.[396] Often, although it is not reflected in the above charts since it does not fall into the category of foreign subsidies or NGO help, promoters will receive financial support from abroad via their clientelist network and this can only be accounted for as the promoter's "personal investment" in such official statistics. Tuition fees paid directly by parents cover most of the operating costs for a médersa although donations from foreign individuals, organizations, or countries are also important.[397] Médersas are also entitled, as are all schools in Mali, to receive textbooks and school supplies distributed by the Malian government via the Inspectors for Arabic. Médersas, again like all other types of schools, can also receive donations in money or kind from NGOs.[398]

The cost of education has been mentioned a number of times as one of the reasons why school enrolment remains low in Mali. Given the difficult economic situation in Mali, families with low incomes (the majority), cannot afford the cost of schools if they have to educate *all* of their children. Beside the fact that tuition fees or the price of schooling materials are too high for many families, the opportunity costs also deter school enrolment, especially for girls. In developing countries such as Mali, children participate early on in the familial economy by either directly earning money or by helping in household chores (freeing other hands for income-producing work). A child in school therefore costs doubly for a family: in tuition fees and in household work not done.[399] However, it appears that parents are willing to pay for their child's (especially the boys but sometimes girls as well) religious education as, from the start, médersas had, admittedly low tuition fees ranging from 250 to 500 CFA francs per child and per month.[400]

Before I discuss the parents' contributions to their children' education in the form of tuition fees for médersas, let me point out that, although public schools are "technically" free and their fees are indeed lower than those for médersas as shown in the tables above, corruption increases the cost of public schools for parents. One of the main

[396] Traoré and Péano, "Le coût de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali," 95.

[397] Such was the case for the Médersa of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye which does not have tuition fees. Private Emirati and Libyan organizations covered all of the operating costs of the médersa.

[398] Traoré and Péano, "Le coût de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali," 95.

[399] Solomani Sangaré and others, *Genre et fréquentation scolaire au premier cycle de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali*, 30-31.

[400] Ba, *Une histoire de l'enseignement au Mali*, 60.

arguments presented by parents against public schools is their enormous cost in the form of abuses committed by state employees which are seen as a form of exploitation by parents.[401] At present, in Mali, sending one's children to any type of school necessarily involves the exchange of money. This becomes the criterion for some parents to determine where to school their children. The estimated cost of education is compared to "(...) an assessment of where their child is most likely to succeed. (...) [T]here does seem to be a general view that children are less likely to fail in the médersa than in the state school, and that even if children can be expelled from the médersas for inability of parents to pay the fees, it is often possible to 'make arrangements' with médersa directors to keep the child in class."[402]

Tuition fees in médersas vary widely, depending on the renown of the school. Here are some examples of tuition fees for médersas visited in 2005[403] and in 2009-2010. The highest tuition fees during my field research in 2005 were those of médersa 4, which were 16 500 FCFA for primary school, 18 000 FCFA for secondary school and 25 000 FCFA for lycée; these amounts convert respectively to approximately 42, 45 and 62$ CAD per year. This médersa, one of the most renowned in Bamako and in the Hippodrome neighbourhood, is considered to be very expensive by other médersas standards. Médersa 5, in Badialan, which used to offer all elementary schooling for free but now has completely closed those classes, charged 20 000 FCFA per year for the lycée level; around 50$ CAD. Those two médersas are in fairly high-class neighbourhoods. But in extremely poor neighbourhoods like Daoudabougou and Sabalibougou, tuition fees for Médersas 1 and 3 were respectively of 9 000 FCFA and 13 500 FCFA, or 22 and 34$ CAD per year.[404] Principals of these médersas explained to me that often children drop out of their schools in the last months of the school year because parents have exhausted their resources and can no longer afford the monthly fees. However, principals also say they accept arrangements with parents for method of payment and can accept 10% of the pupils for free (as was the case for médersa 1). These kinds of arrangements, which are not possible in public schools because of the administration, make the médersas popular in poor neighbourhoods.[405]

In 2009-2010, I found that tuition fees remained similar in these particular schools. I also found that tuition fees varied considerably depending on the renown of a

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401 Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 15.

402 Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 237-238.

403 Due to the Ethics Board's regulations of the overseeing institution, this research required the anonymity of all interviewees and thefore, of all the schools. In the published thesis, from which the following numbers are taken, these schools are referred to by numbers: Médersa 1, Médersa 2, Médera 3, etc. See Appendix A and B for copies of research permissions.

404 Average currency exchange rate from January 1st to December 31st 2005: 1 XOF (francs CFA) = $0.002300 CAD, $1 CAD = 436.262445 XOF (*Historique des taux de change*, www.fxtop.com). As cited in Roy, "Les médersas du Mali," 52.

405 Roy, "Les médersas du Mali," 49.

given school. The exception to this is the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye which, as has been previously mentioned, does not demand tuition fees although it is one of the best Franco-Arab médersas in Bamako. Naharu Djoliba, a well-known médersa of Bamako, asks for fairly high annual tuition fees: 30 000 FCFA for the 1st cycle and 43 500 FCFA for the 2nd cycle and the Lycée (64.73$ and 93.86$ CAD). This médersa also opened 84 free places for orphans for the school year 2010-201. Of equal in renown to Naharu Djoliba, the Institut Islamique Yattabaré is almost equally as expensive annually: 30 000 FCFA for the 1st cycle, 40 000 FCFA for the 2nd cycle and 50 000 FCFA for the Lycée (respectively 64.73$, 86.31$ and 107.89$ CAD). At al-Amir Ahmed ben Abdul Aziz Franco-Arab médersa, in Daoudabougou, parents pay an average of 45 000 FCFA (97.10$ CAD) a year for the 1st and 2nd cycle (there is no Lycée in this school). In Mrs. Coulibaly's Franco-Arab médersa, al-Amal in Djikoroni Golf neighbourhood, my interviewees were uncomfortable about telling me the exact amount of the tuition fees. They talked of contributions from parents of 4 000 to 7 000 FCFA (8.63$ to 15.10$ CAD) per trimester, between 12 000 to 21 000 FCFA per year as would be expected, based on the neighbourhood and the infrastructure, and compared to Médersa 3 in Sabalibougou.[406]

Tuition fees in Bamako's médersas in 2010-2011.

	1st cycle (grade 1 to 6)	2nd cycle (grade 7 to 9)	Lycée (grade 10 to 12)
Médersa du Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye	N/A	N/A	Free
Naharu Djoliba	30 000 FCFA	43 500 FCFA	43 500 FCFA
Institut Islamique Yattabaré	30 000 FCFA	40 000 FCFA	45 000 FCFA
Al-Amir Ahmed ben Abdul Aziz	45 000 FCFA	45 000 FCFA	N/A
Al-Amal	12 000 to 21 000 FCFA	N/A	N/A

All of these numbers represent expensive tuition fees compared to the average of 5 000 FCFA given by Traoré and Péano for 1994. However, one should keep in mind that these schools are the elite schools of the capital city and are therefore not representative of the situation in the country in general or even of Bamako itself where smaller médersas are much more common. On average and as shown by Traoré and Péano's data, médersas are cheaper for parents than other private schools, both in terms of tuition fees and in supplies. Public schools, as well as community schools, are obviously cheaper for

[406] All currency conversion for the tuition fees of the 2009-2010 school year are made according to the historic rate of October 15th, 2010 which is about the date when the school year starts in Mali. The rate is 463.4433444043 XOF (CFA francs) for $1 CAD, $0.0021577611 CAD for 1XOF (CFA francs). (*Universal Currency Converter.* http://www.xe.com)

parents; however, they do not provide the perceived benefit of a religious education which is central to the choice of médersas for most parents.

The Importance of a Religiously/Culturally Appropriate Education.

As previously discussed, children attending médersas tend to be from poor or low-income working class backgrounds and parents often choose médersas for the values they are reputed to instil in their children. Kail hypothesizes that the choice of schooling one's children in a médersa can be seen as a sign that social determinism plays even more of a role in these particular children's career path.[407] As médersas may be considered to be closer than the French public school to a traditional African all-encompassing education, the choice of such a "traditional" education may be the next logical step towards the choice of work in line with the family's tradition. As Kail explains, the choice of Islamic schooling often brings about the practice of traditional artisanal crafts as both entail the transmission and reproduction of *savoir-être* (way of being):

> The discourse of household chiefs showed that it is a logical development. Indeed, when they talk about their children's future, they refer exclusively to commerce and artisan crafts, towards which leads apprenticeships. Moreover, when one chose the médersa for ideological and religious reasons, and not as a reaction against public schools, household chiefs mostly refer to the transmission of a way of being, which is also found in apprenticeship. It is clearly, for them, a mode of socio-cultural and economic reproduction. The centrality of médersa education is fisrt and foremost social.[408]

Indeed, Islamic education as provided in médersas is often considered by parents (although such is not always the case in reality) to be an all-encompassing system fostering and structuring religious, social and cultural values. As such, médersas are thought to teach both moral principles and secular knowledge. It is an education for all aspects of the child: his body, his instincts, his feelings, his intellect, his mind and his soul.[409] Médersas' primary aim has never been to prepare children for the job market (although this is now more so the case) but rather to instill in them religious and moral values. Médersas aim at reinforcing the familial and cultural values of Islam and this approach is often purposely presented as a contrast to the "amorality" of public

[407] Kail, "Une sélection insidieuse," 281.

[408] "Les discours des chefs de ménage rencontrés montrent qu'il s'agit d'une suite logique. En effet, lorsqu'ils évoquent l'avenir de leur enfant, ils font références exclusivement au commerce et aux métiers de l'artisanat, auxquels conduit l'apprentissage. En outre, lorsque le choix de la médersa a été fait pour des raisons idéologiques et religieuses, et non pas en réaction à l'École publique, les chefs de ménage se réfèrent surtout à la transmission d'un savoir-être, que l'on retrouve dans l'apprentissage. Il s'agit donc bien pour eux d'un mode de reproduction socioculturel et économique différent. L'enjeu de la scolarisation à la médersa est avant tout social." Kail, "Une sélection insidieuse," 281-282.

[409] Gandolfi, "L'enseignement islamique en Afrique noire," 262.

education.[410] Religious education is therefore closely linked to morality and an Islamic ethic; moral improvement is central to Islamic education and the pedagogical aim remains to serve God. Cissé refers to the knowledge gained (*tafsir*, *fiqh* and others) as the "theocentric" aspect of Islamic education, for the service of God, while the "sociocentric" aspect of this form of education refers to the moral elevation of the pupil by means of forging his or her personality and integrating him or her into the Islamic community, the *umma*.[411] This is evident in the aims of Islamic schools in Mali which are to: 1) root and reinforce faith in the mind of the students to make it the basis of their behaviours, 2) educate the students in the moral and spiritual virtues promoted by the faith, and 3) direct students towards the Qur'an and the Hadith and to endow them with thoughts and feelings in conformity with the faith.[412] Education in Arabic encompasses knowledge (*ta'lim*), growth to maturity (*tarbiya*) and the development of good manners (*aduba*): "[...] at the heart of the Muslim concept of education is the aim of producing good Muslims with an understanding of Islamic rules of behaviour and a strong knowledge of and commitment to the faith."[413] This understanding of education, shared by médersas educators and parents in Mali, "[...] does not allow for any of the distinctions between education, schooling, teaching, training, instruction and upbringing [...]."[414] This is directly opposed to the parents' perception, especially in rural areas, of public education. Public schools, instead of rooting children into their environment, socially and culturally, alienate them from their family and larger community.[415]

Wahhabi médersas in Bamako directly tap into parental desires have to an all-encompassing education for their children that is framed as a solution to the ills of modern society, without rejecting it:

> In the face of the moral, social, and economic crisis currently hitting Mali and which brings about corruption, depravaty, drug consuption, and illigitimate births, Sunnies propose a solution. They try to convince the youth not to take refuge in the traditional past, in the glorious memories of the great medieval empires of the Soudan, but to get morally re-armed. They posit that their exemplary behaviour, the fact that they do not smoke, do not go to football matches, to dress modestly, among others, is an example for the youth of their neighbourhood.[416]

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410 Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 16-17.
411 Cissé, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique noire*," 62.
412 Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 87-88.
413 Mark J. Halstead, "An Islamic Concept of Education," *Comparative Education* 40, no. 4 (2004): 519.
414 Halstead, "An Islamic Concept of Education," 519.
415 Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 15.
416 "Face à la crise morale, sociale et économique qui frappe actuellement le Mali et qui se traduit par la corruption, la 'depravation', la prise de drogue et les naissances illégitimes, les Sunnites proposent une solution. Ils s'efforcent de convaincre les jeunes de ne pas se réfugier dans le passé traditionnel, dans le souvenir glorieux des grands empires soudanais du moyen-âge, mais de se réarmer moralement. Ils affirment que leur comportement exemplaire, le fait de ne pas fumer, de ne pas aller aux matches de football et de s'habiller simplement, notamment, a valeur d'exemple pour les jeunes de leur quartier."

This offer of an ethical education is posed as a solution to all the problems that plague public schools and these problems are indeed perceived as real and feared by parents. The perceived breaches in educational ethics in public schools are numerous: disrespect for academic authority, lack of discipline, absenteeism, academic program poorly taught or not at all, among others.[417] The parents' choice to send children to médersas is obviously not generally expressed in these terms but, as explained by Brenner, parents are definitely conceptualizing Islamic schooling as part of a larger and more traditional way of socializing children:

> Although most allusions made by parents to the teachings of religion in the médersas were little more than formulaic references to learning one's obligations as a Muslim or to preparing for one's eternal life in Paradise, we have seen that such statements reflect a concern to maintain and reproduce one's own social and cultural condition.
> The overall impression arising from their comments is that the médersa was seen by many parents as a contemporary substitute for the Qur'anic school.[418]

Parents who send their children to médersas often hold the view that a public French-speaking school "perverts" children, making them lazy. The prime evidence of this is the omnipresence of the institution of the *grin* as already mentioned. Public schools are equated with producing youngsters who sit around to chat, drink tea and listen to music all day long. It is assumed by many parents that, if children learn religious principles, they will avoid such improper behaviours.[419] Médersas become a good answer to social ills identified by parents. As a strategic choice by parents, choosing médersas demonstrates the combination of their disappointment in public school and their attachment to more traditional values. These factors have been instrumental in diversifying educational offerings in Mali. Gérard explains how the médersas provide education in the languages of "both worlds": the secular French-speaking world of every day life and the religious, as the Arab-speaking world of piety and religious knowledge.

> In Islam, the important is not to realize to its fullest or best one's life here but to prepare the for the hereafter. Both "worlds" have their attributes, including the language of communication. Symbol of "modernity," the language for writing and communication vector, French deserves more and more to be mastered; sacred language of the Qur'an, Arabic is indispensable to know the verse of the daily prayers, and to be part of that particular rapport with the hereafter. The médersas educate one ion both ways, they give both opportunity. It is as such that they welcome, in Muslim milieu, an increasing number of children.[420]

Amselle, "Le Wahhabisme à Bamako (1945-1985)," 355.

[417] Diakité, "La crise scolaire au Mali," 15.

[418] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 236.

[419] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 233.

[420] "Selon la religion musulmane, l'important n'est pas tant de réaliser au mieux sa vie ici-bas que de

The values taught by médersa teachers and those of Malian parents coincide on various points: the place of man in society is defined in similar terms and the individual is defined by shared characteristics. Integrity, honesty, social harmony, sociability, respect and submission to authority are highly valued; lying, discord, individualism, and initiative outside, on the margins of, or against the group are unacceptable social behaviours.[421] The importance of appropriate socialization is particularly clear when it comes to the education and schooling of girls, the rates of which are systematically lower than for boys in Mali. Parents want their daughters to read and write but they also want them to receive an education adapted to a girl's future life as a wife, mother, and worker in traditionally feminine domains (usually artisan work reserved for women such as dyer, seamstress). Learning about house-keeping and domestic activities, as well as conjugal duties, should be included in school the curriculum according to many parents.[422] "The equation of religious education for girls with the production of submissive and respectful wives (...)"[423] is often a clearly stated reason by parents to send their daughters to a médersa. Again, médersas tap into this demand from parents by generally providing a more "traditional" education and by including sewing classes into their curriculum, for example (as at the Institut Islamique Yattabaré).

Parents also aim to gain social capital when sending their children to a médersa. As has been explained earlier, parental strategies in education take into account the benefits of the larger social group, including the parents themselves. Parents in general want for their children a "socialization which will endorse and reinforce their own social status as elders in the gerontocratic social structure of which they are part."[424] Parents also claim that children who have been educated in médersas do not "forget their parents" as opposed to children schooled in French-speaking schools.[425] Due to enormous economic difficulties faced by the vast majority of families and the absence of a social security net which the state is too poor to provide, children come to be seen as a "living social welfare fund" as they are their parents' only capital.[426] Children educated in médersas participate in the economic well-being of the family if they have an income and they also are considered more respectful of and polite to their elders. In Malian society, Islamic

préparer l'au-delà. L'un et l'autre 'mondes' ont leurs attributs, dont la langue de communication. Symbole de 'modernité', langue d'écriture et vecteur de communication, le français mérite de plus en plus d'être maîtrisé; langue sacrée du Coran, l'arabe est, lui, indispensable pour connaître les versets des prières quotidiennes, et pour s'inscrire dans ce rapport particulier à l'au-delà. La médersa instruit dans ces deux voies, livre ces deux passeports. C'est à ce titre qu'elle accueille, en milieu musulman, un nombre croissant d'enfants." Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique," 157.

[421] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 540.

[422] Solomani Sangaré and others, *Genre et fréquentation scolaire au premier cycle de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali*, 33.

[423] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 234.

[424] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 233.

[425] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 234.

[426] Ki-Zerbo, *Educate or Perish*, 40.

schooling is perceived as a way for parents to enhance their own prestige; educating one's child in a médersa is beneficial to the entire familial group because of the more "traditional" and respectful dispositions instilled in the child.

Avoidance and Substitution in Educational Choices.

As early as the 1980s, the relationship of the Malian population to public schooling changed drastically. The equation of education and work did not hold true anymore and the symbolic link between literacy and power had to be reconsidered as the former no longer guaranteed the latter. Public school was destitute in the minds of a large portion of the population due to its inability to provide quality education, to access a position on the job market, and to provide socially useful knowledge and its application.[427] Public school came to be seen as unprofitable by parents; the financial and human costs of sending a child to school are no longer compensated for by the potential integration into a higher-level, eventually state-centered, clientelist network which brings benefits to the larger social group. Emblematic of this failure is the "teacher", ill-paid *fonctionnaire* educated in French-speaking schools. The teacher represents the social ineffectiveness of this sort of prolonged education.[428]

The educational field that emerged in the 1990s and continues into the new millennium to remedy this situation is increasingly diversified with the increase of options in the private sector and the institutional heterogeneity of the schools escaping state control.[429] Because of its perception of the dubious benefits of public schools, the population cherishes new educational projects, which have led, in turn, to a diversification of the educational field.[430] The multiplication of médersas and other types of private or community schools in the past 30 years is symptomatic of the failure of the public school system to lead the way for educational changes and to re-organize schooling options in Mali. More widely, this new situation shows the crippled state of Mali's institutions, of which Mali's schools are paradigmatic, the negative impact of the structural adjustment plans imposed from the outside, and the re-emergence of a civil society with specific demands after the fall of an oppressive military regime. On this last point, the choice of creating a private religious school, or of educating one's children there, denotes a progressive emancipation from the dominant narrative of the state where one goes to school to become a *fonctionnaire*.[431] Private and religious schools are a way for the population to reclaim schools as their own, reflecting their views, when the public system failed to do so. Médersas answer the education demands of a part of the

[427] Gérard, "Entre État et populations," 62-63.
[428] Gérard, "Le développement des médersas au Mali," 133.
[429] Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique," 154.
[430] Gérard, "Logiques sociales et enjeux de scolarisation en Afrique," 158.
[431] Gérard, "Entre État et populations," 68.

population which recognizes itself in a combined religious-secular all-encompassing education. The choice of a médersa education for one's children stems from adherence to the Islamic principles and ethics taught in these schools but it is also a subversive avoidance strategy on the part of parents. Sending one's children to a médersa becomes a rejection of the ills of public schooling. It is, at the same time, a strategy of substitution[432] insofar as it allows parents to replace a model of schooling in which they have little trust, with a religious education closer to their expectations. In conclusion, Dumestre's tentative link between religiosity and the spread of literacy in the general population is worth noting here:

> We know that the extraordinary development of alphabetization in Germany dates precisely to the diffusion, thanks to printing, of the text of the Bible. Less spectacularly indeed – but the alphabetization was almost completed before the laws on mandatory schooling – the generalization of reading in France was equally linked to religious practices. This phenomenon of a link between alphabetization and religion is found in other regions of the world: in the Muslim world too, reading and writing are encouraged by the prevalence of sacred texts.
> In Mali, where 80% of adults are illiterate, and where Islam counts probably more than 70% of the population, one possible avenue (the only one, surely) for a massive rise of reading would be the very wide distribution, for very little to no cost, of the Qur'an, in Arabic and Bamanankan.[433]

This link between religiosity and literacy has indeed been made by some international agencies that now take into account Arabic as a language of literacy in Mali and actively promote religious education in both the form of Qura'nic schools and médersas, as a way to render reading and writing accessible to a greater number of children.

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[432] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 533.

[433] "On sait que l'extraordinaire développement de l'alphabétisation en Allemagne date précisément de la diffusion, grâce à l'imprimerie, du texte de la Bible. Moins spectaculairement certes -mais l'alphabétisation est cependant presque achevée bien avant les lois sur la scolarité obligatoire- la généralisation de la lecture en France est également liée à la pratique religieuse. Ce même phénomène d'un lien entre alphabétisation et religion se retrouve dans d'autres régions du globe: dans le monde musulman aussi, lecture et écriture sont favorisés par la prégnance des textes sacrés.
Au Mali, où plus de 80% des adultes sont analphabètes, et où l'Islam compte sans doute plus de 70% de la population, une voie possible (la seule sans doute) pour un essor massif de la lecture consisterait en une très large mise à disposition, à frais très faibles ou nuls, du Coran, en arabe et en bambara." Dumestre, "De la scolarité souffrante," 184.

Chapter 4
Going Global: International Funding of Médersas and the Failed Transfer of Ideologies

The long-standing links between the Arab and the sub-Saharan worlds have been explored in chapter two but it is worth reiterating here that Islam has been a major structuring element of trans-Saharan commerce since the Middle Ages. Ties between Arabs and sub-Saharan Africans have been sustained over centuries and have always involved both a commercial and an economic dimension coupled with a scholarly exchange of Islamic ideas and knowledge. In more recent history, Islam has been influential in shaping the relations between African countries that became independent in the 1960s, and Arab and/or Muslim countries. As Otayek and Soares caution, however, this influence should not be overstated:

> However, it is important not to exaggerate the influence of Arab and Muslim countries' policies in sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, only a few countries are (or have been) capable of executing a real "Africa policy." Under Muammar al-Qaddafi, Libya has been long eager to impose its leadership in Africa and it is no less so since resolving its differences with the U.S. and Europe. Once a beacon of Third World anti-imperialism, Algeria has been preoccupied by its own internal problems. Since the death of Nasser in 1970, Egypt, which still capitalizes on the symbolic power of Cairo's prestigious Islamic university, al-Azhar, has lacked the resources to back up any policy pretensions in sub-Saharan Africa. After actively promoting Islamism, Sudan, where Osama bin Laden lived in the 1990s, has been partly rehabilitated by its cooperation with the U.S. in the so-called war on terror but also remains preoccupied with its own problems. Only oil-rich Saudi Arabia and Iran have been able to mobilize considerable economic resources in support of their (opposed) ideological orientations.[434]

It is consistent with Otayek and Soare's conservative estimation of the influence of Saudi Arabia and Iran, that in the Malian context even Saudi Arabia has had little impact on the development of Islam in Mali's médersas. The ideological rivalries amongst Arab and Muslim countries as well as their lack of focus and long term-term commitment, means that of much of the Arab aid to Africa has had a limited impact in Mali (as in the rest of Africa). The massive donations and loans, institutional or private, from petro-monarchies and other Arab states to Africa during the oil boom decade aimed to further the agenda of pan-Islamism and pan-Arabism or pan-Africanism (depending on the donor). However, the Malian example provides good reason to be cautious in assumptions about the effectiveness of this aid in accomplishing its goals.

[434] René Otayek and Benjamin F. Soares, "Introduction," in *Islam and Muslim Politics in Africa,* ed. René Otayek and Benjamin Soares (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), 8.

Indeed, the literature often overstates the importance of this decade (roughly 1973-1983) of close cooperation and plentiful aid from Arab states to African ones. South-South cooperation has been hailed as an alternative model to the North-South axis of economic and international cooperation and relations. It was assumed that the elements of inequality and exploitation would be absent in such a South-South cooperation scheme; Arabs and Africans would cooperate as equals to better the quality of life in Africa.[435] The failure of such a grand ideal was inevitable, as the relations between Africa and the Muslim World remained unequal and Arab aid was never as disinterested as it presented itself to be. Le Vine and Luke briefly explain the three dimensions along which the impact of Arab Aid to Africa has to be relativized:

> The era of Afro-Arab solidarity, widely hailed by statesmen and scholars alike, turns out to have been relatively short-lived, having run its course in a little over ten years. The era began when Arab political arguments gained the additional merit of being supplemented by enormous economic leverage, and appears to be moving to an end as it becomes clear that the price of solidarity for the Africans is much higher than they had expected. (2) The principal factor in the deterioration of Afro-Arab relations has been a basic shift in the international status and mobility of Arab states. Led by their oil-producing states, the Arabs have, in effect, "moved to a better part of town," leaving their former friends behind and taking on the behaviour of their new, rich neighbors. (...) (3) The Arab shift has left erstwhile African friends much worse off than they were before the new era dawned (ca. 1967), turning them into clients and/or dependents where they once had been equals and leaving them doubly vulnerable to political and economic changes in the international environment.[436]

By 1985, the Afro-Arab cooperation heyday was over, although funds, much diminished, continue to flow. Although the monetary amounts transferred are now much smaller the attempted influence of Arab states continued after the bonanza of the oil boom decade ended. While the influence of transnational economics must be understood in this more conservative context, the question of Arab influence on Malian schooling remains pertinent: to what extent are activities and identities in the local Malian setting of médersa schooling influenced by the transnational contacts of its actors and the political interests of distant states?

I argue that Arab aid to Malian médersas, analyzed in terms similar to aid provided by "Western" NGOs has only been partly successful in changing the attitude of civil society.[437] I demonstrate that aid has not been sustained over time on the same scale,

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[435] Charbel Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989), 20.

[436] Victor T. Le Vine and Timothy W. Luke, *The Arab-African Connection: Political and Economic Realities* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979), 97.

[437] Aid effectiveness should be measured by three variables: "(1) the management capacity of the recipient; (2) the aid relationship; and (3) the sustainability of aid." See Jerker Carlsson, Gloria Somolekae and Nicolas van de Walle, "Introduction" in *Foreign Aid in Africa. Learning from Country Experiences*, ed.

limiting its ideological impact. The aid relationship has often been tense as the benefactors from Arab countries rarely consideredthe Malian government or individual Malian Muslims as equals. Malians were always (and only ever considered as) recipients of the aid and seldom consulted as to their specific needs (as is often the case with NGOs). Aid was given to further the agenda of the donor, not of the recipient. However, given the management capacities of individual Malians (less so the state) receiving the funds, Arab aid has been co-opted by the Malian arabisants who have used it to further their own agendas. The arabisants are indeed well-connected to the global *umma*, understanding it so well as to play its inner factions to their own advantage.

I discuss here the various form of aid provided by Arab donors to Mali specifically as well as to African recipients generally. Monetary aid can take four general forms which I will detail here: 1) bilateral aid, which involves an agreement between Mali and one Arab state partner; 2) multilateral aid given by an organization financed by various countries (e.g. Arab League) to Mali; 3) Islamic philanthropic sources of donations; and 4) the globalized personal networks of individual Malian arabisants. I then discuss two case studies of aid to Mali which combine features of the various types of aid (bilateral, philanthropic, and networking). The first case examines aid from Libya; the second case study looks at aid from Saudi Arabia.

Financial Institutions, Islamic Philanthropy and Personal Networks: Mali's Connections with the Global Umma*.*

The basis of modern Afro-Arab relations can arguably be found in the Declaration produced following the 1976 symposium in Sharjah, which itself prepared the way for the Cairo Summit, a few months later. This document established principles to regulate the future dealings between the Arab League and the Organization of the African Union with economic cooperation being central to the implementation of these principles. The objectives identified in the Declaration are as follows:

> 1) Elimination of the vestiges of colonialism still existing in the Arab world and in the southern part part of the African continent. This means giving full support to African and Arab liberation movements.
> 2) Rejection of neo-colonialism in the Arab world and in the African continent, by adopting unified economic and political policies. This would entail close contacts between intellectuals and politicians of the African and Arab communities in order to make it possible for the two groups to arrive at common goals.
> 3) Eradication of backwardness, and economic liberation from the ex-colonial countries. The Afro-Arab Movement should undertake an international role in this respect through participating in the solutions of the world problems and carrying out effective measures for

Jerker Carlsson, Gloria Somolekae and Nicolas van de Walle (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1997), 9.

> liberating the African economy, while adopting a joint strategy for altering the international balance of power.[438]

Although these objectives were not all met, the cooperation between Arab and African states in the following ten years largely followed these lines. The cement for this cooperative relationship was to be found in the negative identification of Zionism with racism and colonization. Arabs and Africans linked the South African and Rhodesian, and Israeli regimes as imperialist.[439] The Arabo-African alliance was intended to combat those three enemies via economic and ideological cooperation.

Institutional Bilateral Arab Aid to Africa.

Following the oil crisis of 1973-1974, revenues for oil-producing Arab countries increased spectacularly and prompted an augmentation in foreign aid to Africa. In terms of government-sponsored financing, this meant an average donation of about 5 billion dollars a year between 1974 and 1977. This represented 30% of the world's public aid.[440] The increased revenues from oil also meant that individuals in oil-producing countries became increasingly rich and also participated in the transfer of capital, although at a private level, to Africa. For Mali, the oil boom decade meant that large amounts of capital were transferred from various Arab sources to varied recipients locally, as Zarour explains:

> It has been calculated that during the decade 1973-1983, well over $600 million was lent or given to the Malian government by several Arab countries and by the Islamic Development Bank, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Although relatively few of the projects financed in this manner could be interpreted as having a specifically Islamic objective, such official aid was looked upon by some with suspicion as a possible conduit for increasing external Islamic influence on the country. Such concerns were only reinforced by the success of the Islamic Revolution in Iran.[441]

Assessing the exact amount of aid provided to Africa in general, and Mali in particular, by specific countries is difficult. However, a number of studies covering such bilateral, multilateral, or other types of donations and loans in the 1970s and 1980s have been produced. St John summarizes the difficulties faced when trying to find out the exact amounts transferred:

> Of all Arab donors, Libya was the most actively involved, politically and economically, in sub-Saharan Africa, especially among states with dominant or large Muslim communities. Unfortunately, the exact nature,

[438] E. C. Chibwe, *Afro-Arab Relations in the New World Order* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), 16.
[439] Chibwe, *Afro-Arab Relations in the New World Order*, 21.
[440] Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine*, 23.
[441] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 198.

> level, or impact of Arab or Libyan aid is difficult to assess. There are serious discrepancies between aid commitments and aid disbursements because many Arab states, particularly Libya, did not translate commitments into disbursements.[442]

This is in line with Mertz and Mertz's assessment of statistics available for Arab aid to sub-Saharan Africa; they are at best published haphazardly and, at worst, not at all.[443] In addition, accountability and any form of paper trail for a number of disbursements are not easily accessible, if at all. I will limit discussions of this financial aid to general trends rather than exact numbers; suffice to say that the estimated sums are much smaller at present than they were in the 1970s and 1980s.[444] The exact numbers are less important here than the acknowledgement that "[s]tates are not simply victims of determinants such as 'civilization' or 'religion.' They can and do use them and shape them in policy formulation and strategic choices."[445]

Prior to 1973, only three oil-producing countries with a low-absorption level[446], Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Libya, had given substantial amounts of money to African countries. Other countries, such as Egypt, were also involved early on in the South-South cooperation.[447] As early as 1963, Nasser's Egypt financed, to the sum of about 4 million dollars, the construction of Bamako's biggest hotel: Hôtel de l'Amitié.[448] From 1966 to 1968, Egypt also financed 125km of paved roads in Mali for about five million dollars.[449] Kane provides an explicit example of the instrumentalization of aid to a specific Malian *turuq* (the Niassène Tijaniyya) by Nasser's Egypt: Nasser provided Ibrahim Niasse (founder of the order) with scholarships to al-Azhar for his sons and followers. The result was as follows:

> In the 1960s, the Niassènne Tijaniyya, which was believed to be the most important Islamic organization in West Africa and which possessed a clientele in all West African countries, was able to help increase the popularity of the Egyptian president in black Africa. Likewise, the

[442] Ronald Bruce St John, "The Libyan Debacle in Sub-Saharan Africa. 1969-1987," in *The Green and the Black: Qadhafi's Policies in Africa*, ed. René Lemarchand (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), 128.

[443] Robert Anton Mertz and Pamela MacDonald Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa* (München: Kaiser, Mainz: Grünewald, Boulder: Distributed by Westview, 1983), 9.

[444] Most owners of médersas interviewed by me (with the notable exception of Mr. Farraj at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye) mentioned and bemoaned the drying up of funding from Arab states in the past two decades.

[445] Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," in *Transnational Religion and the Fading States*, ed. Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori (Boulder: Westview Press (Harper Collins Publisher), 1997), 244.

[446] Countries whose economies cannot absorb the cash influx of oil-revenue.

[447] See Appendix Q for short list of donor countries during the oil boom decade.

[448] Incidentally, this hotel, as most other high-end hotels in Bamako, is now owned by Laïco, a Libyan company with close ties to Qadhafi.

[449] Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine*, 26.

> Egyptians hoped that African students educated in Egypt would become future elites favourable to the Arabs.[450]

The popularity of the Egyptian president also involved a wider dissemination of the pan-Arab secular nationalism he promoted. This threatened Saudi Arabia and its own pan-Islamist policy and sparked a fierce competition between Egypt and Saudi Arabia for influence in the early years of African independence.[451] In the 1950s and 1960s, Nasser, as the champion of pan-Arabist, secular, revolutionary and anti-monarchical politics, enjoyed much popularity abroad, overshadowing the puritanism of Saudi Arabia. In Mali, the Republic, established by Modibo Keita following independence in 1960, had close ideological ties with Nasser's Egypt, but the momentum for his rhetoric could be felt in the entire Muslim world:

> The overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy in Iraq in 1958, the emergence of the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) in 1962 in Algeria, and the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964 with Egyptian support all pointed to the changing political mood and the growing strength of nationalist sentiment within the Arab state system. The creation of a Marxist government in South Yemen, the establishment of a radical regime in Somalia that courted Soviet support, and the overthrow of the Libyan monarchy in 1969 by young military officers also pointed to the growing legitimacy of Nasserite policies within the Arab world and Middle East. In the two decades following the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, Nasser embodied and defined the major shifts in the Arab state system.[452]

As opposed to Libya and Saudi Arabia, Egypt's influence on Mali has very little to do with its financial investment and more with its religious/cultural capital. Yet Egypt's influence on politics and policies in the Muslim world did go beyond the intellectual domination of al-Azhar University.[453] By promoting a secularist, radical republicanism, Egypt prompted Islamic states to invest heavily in ostensibly or vaguely Islamic endeavours in order to increase their influence abroad. Egypt's activities prompted Saudi Arabia to act on the African scene to regain influence and would also influence Libya's policies towards Africa. In the case of the Tijaniyya *turuq* for example, the competition between petro-monarchies and Nasser's Egypt for influence meant funds were flowing from the Gulf despite Saudi disapproval of religious practices such as sufism.[454] However,

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450 Ousmane Kane, "Muslim Missionaries and African States," in *Transnational Religion and the Fading States*, ed. Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori (Boulder: Westview Press (Harper Collins Publisher), 1997), 55.

451 Kane, "Muslim Missionaries and African States," 55.

452 Cary Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm: Religion and Statecraft in Saudi Foreign Policy Strategy," *Transnational Religion and the Fading States*, ed. Susanne Hoeber Rudolph and James Piscatori (Boulder: Westview Press (Harper Collins Publisher), 1997), 220.

453 The influence of al-Azhar University is further discussed in the section dealing with scholarships.

454 Kane, "Muslim Missionaries and African States," 55.

Egypt's defeat in the 1967 war against Israel, the death of Nasser in 1970, and Egypt's expulsion from the Arab League as a result of its peace treaty with Israel in 1979, prompted and confirmed a major shift in the pecking order of the Arab world, bringing Saudi Arabia to the forefront of both religion and politics in the Muslim world.[455]

Iraq, despite the secularist nature of its regime, largely participated in the aid and subsidies to Africa to promote Arabic education. It gave scholarships for Africans to study in Iraqi universities[456] and funded many Islamic centres in Africa. As Kane explains, "(...) this generosity corresponded exactly with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq War. During this period, Iran undertook an intensive propaganda offensive in black Africa against Iraq and the monarchies of the Gulf; Iran counted numerous ardent supporters among young African Muslims, a number of whom had spent time in Iran."[457] A beneficiary of this aid from Iraq was Kansaye senior, the founder of Naharu Djoliba médersa who has hosted Iraqi teachers and sent many graduates, including his own son Zakariah Kansaye, to pursue higher education in Iraq.

Iran, although not an Arab state, needs to be mentioned here, as the ideological influence of the revolution (and, to a lesser extent, of its funding and foreign policy) cannot be understated. Besides the impact of the revolution itself on the political imagination of Muslims all around the world, it also sparked a fierce backlash from other Islamic state (Saudi Arabia first and foremost) to further their own, alternative version of a legitimate Sunni political order. The Iranian revolution was a break in worldwide revolutionary tradition since its intellectual roots were neither in Western liberalism nor Marxism, both of which sought to impose the secularization of the state apparatus (amongst other things). The revolution also toppled the Pahlavi regime, one of the West's closest allies in the Gulf region[458] and the symbol of Western modernization in the Muslim world[459], as Fraser explains:

> Together, the Iranian Revolution, the Western response to the revolution, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan have combined to widen the appeal of Islamic resurgence across the relationship between Islamic societies and the non-Islamic world. More important, the Iranian Revolution assumed a greater importance within Islamic debates about strategies for the reassertion of the autonomy of Islamic societies from Western and other influences.[460]

The Iranians, directly competing with Saudi Arabia for influence all across the Muslim world, have actively promoted their revolutionary model as a challenge to the West and to

[455] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 221.
[456] Mr. Kansaye, owner and director of Naharu Djoliba, studied in Iraq via this program.
[457] Kane, "Muslim Missionaries and African States," 56.
[458] To be replaced in this role by Saudi Arabia, sparking a crisis of legitimacy and influence for the country in the wider Islamic world.
[459] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 213.
[460] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 213.

pro-Western Arab governments.[461] That competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran was transferred into internal debates within the Muslim community in African countries where some young Muslims "(...) eagerly looked to the Iranian Revolution for inspiration for the transformation of their own society at a time when the space for political debate was very restricted, and many Muslims looked to Saudi Arabia for educational opportunities and funding."[462] In Mali as elsewhere, the Iranian Revolution fed the debate, now much more public, as to how Muslim-majority societies were to politically organize themselves. The Revolution offered a possible alternative to the Western world order imposed on countries like Mali in various ways. The Malian arabisants, although never supporting the idea of a state apparatus copied on the Iranian model, were inspired by this Islamization of the political order.

The Maghreb has long considered West Africa as a potential influence zone due to its geographical and cultural proximity. As such, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria participated greatly in the financing of educational and cultural enterprises south of the Sahara.[463] Morocco, although not an oil-producer itself, also funded a number of religious institution in West Africa, with which it has had long-standing relations, and also provided scholarships to well-renowned Moroccan universities.[464] Again, Kane explains how the Moroccan aid to West Africa responds to larger concerns than merely the education of young African Muslims:

> In 1985 a major conference on the Tijaniyya was organized in Fez, where the main parent zawiya of the Tijaniyya is based, by the Moroccan minister of religious affairs. Hundreds of leaders of African turuq were invited to the conference, and afterwards a number of associations were created, such as the Association of Ulema (...). Large sums of money were also freed up by Morocco to finance the black African turuq. This conference, (...), was organized precisely at the moment when most of the black African states had come out in support of self-determination for Western Sahara. It seems that the king of Morocco attempted to use the West African tariqa leaders in order to persuade black African diplomats to favor his annexation of Western Sahara.[465]

In this particular case, the instrumentalization of a religious gathering for political reasons on the part of Morocco is obvious. The political instrumentalization of Islamic aid is clearly a widely shared feature of Arab-African economic, cultural and political relations, from the independence of African states until the decrease in oil revenues for Arab states in the 1980s.

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461 Otayek and Soares, "Introduction," 9.
462 Otayek and Soares, "Introduction," 9.
463 Jalel Bahri, "Le lycée de Rakada. Une filière de formation pour les arabisants d'Afrique noire en Tunisie," in *Le Radicalisme islamique au sud du Sahara.* Da'wa*, arabisation et critique de l'Occident*, ed. René Otayek (Paris: Karthala, 1993), 75.
464 Kane, "Muslim Missionaries and African States," 56.
465 Kane, "Muslim Missionaries and African States," 56.

Other smaller national funds also lent money to Mali on preferential conditions, such as the Abu Dhabi Fund. Mali was the biggest African recipient of money from the Abu Dhabi Fund for development in Africa, with 14.6% of the total.[466] The Kuwaiti Fund gave $901,02 million dollars to non-Arab African countries as of December 31st 1984. Of this, Mali was the third largest recipient (after Senegal and Tanzania); it received 7,8% of the aid in question for a total of 70,2 million dollars.[467]

I have so far discussed bilateral donations to Africa as the preferred means to distribute development assistance for most Arab countries. Indeed, as explained by Mertz and Mertz, bilateral relations have clear advantages for donor countries:

> The preference for bilateral aid derives primarily from the fact that *aid is a key element of foreign policy* [emphasis added]. Indeed, for the Arab donor states, financial assistance is relatively a far more important instrument of foreign policy than is the case among Western or Communist nations. The Arab states have little else they can or wish to offer as assistance. Accordingly, many Arab donors desire to maximize their political and administrative control over the allocation of their financial assistance, particularly in areas of geographic priority. Bilateral assistance usually affords a donor greater specificity and leverage to further national interests than comparable support for a multilateral institution. At the same time, bilateral channels allow maximum exposure and public relation impact of aid if that is an objective, yet provide complete discretion should that be preferred.[468]

However, aid given by specific countries such as Saudi Arabia and Libya (which is discussed later) in bilateral agreements was not the only method used by Arab countries.

Multilateral Arab Aid Organizations.

Institutional aid to African countries in the years following the oil boom of 1973 came from various multilateral organizations.[469] Three major multilateral Islamic institutions focus on aid to Muslims: the Islamic Development Bank, the Islamic Solidarity Fund (ISF) and the Muslim World League.[470] The first one focuses on economic and social development and foreign trade; the second, on welfare programs and educational and cultural Islamic enterprises; the third, the Muslim World League, is discussed further in the section dealing with Saudi Arabia specifically. The Islamic Solidarity Fund funded, for example, the Islamic University of Say, in Niger, where numerous graduates from Malian médersas have pursued higher education. The ISF also

[466] Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine*, 124-125.
[467] Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine*, 132.
[468] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 17.
[469] See Appendix R for list of bilateral, multilateral, and Islamic Institutions.
[470] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 51.

funded a number of Islamic Research Institutes in various sub-Saharan African countries including one in Mali.[471]

The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (ABEDA) is another Arab-sponsored multilateral aid donor in Africa. The ideals of the ABEDA, in terms of loans and grants to Africa were summarized by Chedly Ayari, President of the Bank in the 1980s: aid and projects would impose no religious, political, commercial or military constraints on the partners. Aid would be given based on extremely advantageous conditions, as close to donations as multilateral agencies are likely to provide. The recipients were to be the most impoverished African countries and the aid should focus on payment balance, basic infrastructures, agriculture, industry, communications and telecommunications, human resources development and technical assistance.[472] Mali was also the second largest beneficiary (after Tanzania), with 8.1% of the total of aid provided by the OPEC Fund for International Development.[473]

The following table gives a general idea of the aid provided by Arabs to non-Arab African countries. The numbers cited include aid from national funds as well as bilateral and multilateral organizations.

Arab Aid to non-Arab African countries[474]
(in millions of US dollars)

Recipient country	1973-1976	1977-1980	1981-1984	Total
Angola	-	26,8	24,9	51,7
Benin	14,7	33,6	51,9	100,2
Botswana	5,4	37,3	52,5	95,2
Burkina Faso	34,2	101,3	196,2	331,7
Burundi	18,2	58,2	92,0	168,4
Cameroon	110,9	97,6	114,1	322,6
Cape Verde	23,3	26,8	66,0	116,1
Central African Republic	11,6	6,2	34,0	51,8
Chad	85,4	57,2	31,9	174,5
Comoros	21,5	73,5	52,7	147,7
Congo	61,1	57,0	50,5	168,6
Ivory Coast	57,0	1,0	91,4	149,4
Ethiopia	22,1	5,3	18,5	45,9

[471] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 59.
[472] Chedly Ayari, *La Coopération Arabo-africaine Face aux Défis des Années 80* (Khartoum: Banque Arabe pour le Développement Économique en Afrique, 1985), 34.
[473] Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine*, 167.
[474] Ayari, *La Coopération Arabo-africaine Face aux Défis des Années 80*, 60.

Gabon	88,4	49,1	12,3	149,8
Gambia	18,2	64,1	36,9	119,2
Ghana	123,3	60,5	144,2	328,0
Guinea	118,4	488,1	221,8	828,3
Guinea-Bissau	14,5	56,4	59,4	130,3
Equatorial Guinea	16,7	1,5	10,2	28,4
Kenya	94,1	233,8	105,0	432,9
Lesotho	4,7	27,1	15,2	47,0
Liberia	5,6	44,5	8,3	58,4
Madagascar	46,1	107,1	59,5	212,17
Malawi	4,5	1,8	1,0	7,3
Mali	**179,7**	**155,4**	**227,9**	**563,0**
Mauritius	12,7	10,1	44,9	67,7
Mozambique	33,7	54,1	50,9	138,7
Niger	49,3	195,0	298,9	543,2
Nigeria	0,1	2,1	0,1	2,3
Uganda	201,0	105,3	116,3	422,6
Rwanda	32,6	54,5	45,1	132,2
Sao Tomé and Principe	11,2	3,4	7,5	22,1
Senegal	202,7	176,5	395,6	774,8
Seychelles	-	25,2	44,2	69,4
Sierra Leone	37,8	29,4	76,0	143,2
Swaziland	8,4	-	-	8,4
Tanzania	110,6	117,2	120,0	347,8
Togo	11,9	22,0	50,0	83,9
Zaïre	353,0	85,0	10,0	448,0
Zambia	161,7	133,3	260,5	555,5
Zimbabwe	-	5,5	161,2	166,7
Other	207,4	302,3	182,1	691,8
TOTAL	**2 613,7**	**3 192,1**	**3 641,6**	**9 447,4**

Sahelian countries,[475] which also suffered a major drought while trying to cope with the impact of the economic crisis of the 1980s, were major recipients of Arab aid. The decade 1973-1984 saw an Arab investment of about 10 US dollars per Sahelian per year. This represents one of the highest aid rates in the world at the time.[476] The table above shows how Mali was, overall, the third largest recipient of Arab funds during the oil boom after Senegal and Guinea (both neighbouring countries to Mali).[477] In 1987, official Arab aid to Mali was as follow:

Sums from the various bilateral and multilateral sources of funding (1987)

	Sums (in millions of CFA francs)					
SOURCES	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	Total
Algeria	2 924	5 465	4 174	-	-	12 562
Egypt	-	-	5	-	-	5
United Arab Emirates	157	1 016	2 543	951	2 795	7 461
Saudi Arabia	2 249	1 889	7 240	4 094	5 198	20 671
Iraq	2 874	-	-	-	-	2 874
Kuwait	625	3 794	3 935	507	4 786	13 648
Libya	123	-	-	123	-	246
Qatar	341	51	-	-	-	392
Syria	105	-	-	-	-	105
Arab Development Bank	1 345	1 644	1 720	1 724	-	6 432
Islamic Development Bank	280	419	980	1 140	1 664	4 484

(Source: B. D. Traoré, *Le panislamisme en Afrique noire (cas du Mali)*, Mémoire de fin d'études, ENSUP à Bamako-1987).[478]

The data presented thus far regarding cash transfers, in various forms and from both countries and multilateral institutions reflect the enormous amounts invested by Arab states in Africa. However, the data also serve to highlight the importance of Mali as one of the main recipients of such funds. Indeed, in regards to its population, level of poverty, or political importance, Mali has received a disproportionate amount of aid from the Muslim world compared to other African countries. As Mertz and Mertz explain: "(...) the geographic distribution of aid is a highly sensitive gauge of donor national interests and the relative importance of bilateral relations with various countries."[479] Although the oil bonanza did provide Arab states with the opportunity to make large sums available to garner support for their foreign policy, Arab states remain developing countries and resources are limited. The concentration of their resources on strategic countries and populations is revealing of the donors' ambitions and objectives. This point is further explored for the particular cases of Saudi Arabia and Libya in the second section.

[475] Sahelian countries are: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Niger and Senegal.
[476] Ayari, *La Coopération Arabo-africaine Face aux Défis des Années 80*, 38.
[477] See Appendix S for another classification of African recipients of Arab funds.
[478] Cited in Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 185.
[479] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 25.

Islamic Philanthropy.

Non-state sponsored Muslim aid to Africa needs to be analyzed here as a number of médersas in Bamako receive funding from individuals or non-governmental organizations. The size of these donations is even harder to track than those made by state-sponsored agencies, and their ideological content can also be more difficult to assess. As explained by Rudolph, in Muslim-majority societies, many "of the functions associated with a modern welfare state have traditionally been performed by institutions sponsored by pious laypersons and religious orders. To what extent these institutions represent the virtues of generosity and fellow feelings and to what extent they represent institutional and political self-interest is often unclear."[480] It is therefore necessary to discuss here Islamic philanthropy and Muslim conceptions of charity to better understand how "Muslims organize the transnational transfer of religious resources".[481]

Humanitarian Islamic aid on a global scale developed largely in the 1970s and was aimed mainly at Afghanistan, which was fighting the Soviet invasion at the time, and at sub-Saharan Africa. Africa, then as now, was the region of the world with the most "conversion potential." This, combined with Africa's catastrophic economic situation, made it an obvious choice for Islamic humanitarian aid. Later, the democratization process happening in Africa in the 1990s, coupled with the disengagement of the state from a number of social programs under the pressure of Structural Adjustment Plans, left the field open for transnational Muslim entrepreneurs to offer the basic services so much in need in Mali.[482] Islamic NGOs are voluntary associations "(...) in which Islam is an important inspiration to do good and an identity marker that distinguishes them from NGOs with similar orientations and objectives. Islamic NGOs comprise communities of interest with diverse motives and objectives, including social, political and economic interests."[483]

These NGOs participate in traditional relief like other faith-based or secular NGOs but often

> [...] combined their humanitarian aid with an 'Islamic' agenda. For example, while providing assistance to widows and orphans, they may promote proselytizing and provide Islamic education. They often coordinate their activities with local Muslim organizations, granting them technical assistance and financial support for mosque and school construction or sponsoring preachers trained in the Arab world.[484]

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[480] Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," 253.
[481] Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," 253.
[482] René Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation: l'Islam Subsaharien à la Conquête de Nouveaux Territoires," *Revue Internationale et Stratégique* Vol. 4, No. 52, (2003): 59-60.
[483] Mohamed M. A Salih, "Islamic NGOs in Africa: The Promise and Peril of Islamic Voluntarism," *Occasional Paper (*Centre of African Studies, University of Copenhagen, 2002): 1.
[484] Otayek and Soares, "Introduction," 10.

This generation of Islamic NGOs must be understood in the context of the neoliberal trend and the disengagement of African states from key sectors of social services such as health and education.[485] The diminished impact of the Malian state as an educational provider has opened the door to private entrepreneurs financially backed by Arab NGOs to enter the field as I have discussed in chapter three. The following is a list of some international Islamic NGOs operating in Africa.[486] The list is not exhaustive but does give general indications as to donor and recipient countries.

Major Transnational Islamic NGOs and countries of operation[487]

Transnational Islamic NGOs	
Islamic African Relief Agency (ISRA) (Denmark)	Chad, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, Sudan and South Africa
The Islamic American Relief Agency (IARA), (USA)	Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Somaliland, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda
Muslim World League (Saudi Arabia)	Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Moroni Comores, Mozambique, Nigeria, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda
World Islamic Call Society (Libya)	Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Guinea Konakry, Libya, Malawi, Morocco, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda
World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) (Saudi Arabia)	Africa is served through the Sudan office
League of Islamic Universities (Saudi Arabia)	Egypt, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda
Organisation of Islamic Conference (Iran)	Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Moroni Comores, Mozambique, Nigeria, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda
International Islamic Council for Da'wa and Relief (Egypt)	Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Guinea Konakry, Libya, Malawi, Morocco, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda
International Muslim Relief Network (USA)	Somalia, Sudan
International Islamic Charitable Foundation (Kuwait)	Chad, Ethiopian, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Somalia, Somaliland, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda

[485] Otayek and Soares, "Introduction," 10.
[486] See also Appendix R, listing some Islamic International Institutions as donors in Africa.
[487] Salih, "Islamic NGOs in Africa," 18. Repetitions and typos are in the original.

International Islamic Relief Organisation (Saudi Arabia)	Burkina Faso, Egypt, Gambia, Mauritania, Malawi, Morocco, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda
Ibrahim Bin Abdul Aziz al Ibrahim Foundation (Saudi Arabia)	Kenya, Somalia, Sudan
Human Concern International (Canada)	Benin, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan
Mercy International (USA)	Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan
Horn of Africa Relief Agency (HARA), (Kenya)	Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Somalia, Djibouti
Islamic Relief Worldwide (USA)	Egypt, Ghana, Sudan
Al Haramin Islamic Foundation (Saudi Arabia)	Kenya, Sudan, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda
Islamic Relief Worldwide	Mali, Sudan
Al Tawhid Foundation (Uganda)	Uganda, Sudan, Tanzania
World Ahlubait Islamic League (UK)	Tanzania, (with strong business interests in the UK, USA, Canada, Finland, Sweden, Tanzania, United Arab Emirates, India and Pakistan)

As reported by Salih, Islamic NGOs in Africa have grown at twice the rate of secular and (other) religious NGOs between 1980 and 2000: from 138 to 891. In Mali, Islamic NGOs went from representing a little more than 15% of all NGOs to 28% of all NGOs on the ground between 1980 and 2000.[488]

> Closely articulating humanitarian actions and religious proselytism, Islamic organizations, will extend their activities South of the Sahara, with the stated goal of competing with Western NGOs suspected – not without reasons sometimes – of instrumentalizing identically the humanitarian aid for religious goals. Straightaway, these organizations posit their transnational character, like the most important among them, the International Islamic Relief Organisation.[489]

Islamic philanthropies tend not to be part of hierarchical or monocratic systems; they often spring up from vague but shared conceptions of the *umma* by a few individuals rather than being established by an overarching authority. They are typically local initiatives, outside of any state networks. "A well-known set of models – mosques, *madrasas* (religious schools), hospitals, bookstores – is replicated in segmentary fashion by disparate actors on the basis of individual and institutional funding. They often rely on

[488] Salih, "Islamic NGOs in Africa," 6-8.

[489] "Articulant étroitement action humanitaire et prosélytisme religieux les organisations de secours islamiques vont étendre leurs activités au sud du Sahara, avec pour objectif affirmé d'y concurrencer les ONG occidentales, soupçonnées – non sans raison parfois – d'instrumentaliser identiquement l'aide humanitaire à des fins religieuses. D'emblée, ces organisations affirment leur caractère transnational, à l'image de la plus importante d'entre elle, l'Organisation internationale islamique de secours." Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 59.

compliance of individual pious Muslims with the qur'anic imperative to offer *zakat* – charitable donations."[490] Indeed, due to the absence of a properly Islamic state in many regions, *zakat* has become a voluntary donation, as opposed to a mandatory religious tax, levied on individual Muslims and re-distributed by Islamic NGOs and not state officials.[491]

Zakat has been studied and debated upon in Islamic jurisprudence, leading to a conception of it as a model of pre-modern Islamic social welfare:

> This policy was to be centred upon the collection and distribution of *zakât* as legal alms as well as the establishment of a *bayt al-mâl* or Public Treasury. Revenue collected by the *bayt al-mâl* was regarded as wealth to be treated as Allah's wealth or the Muslims' wealth, and it implied that revenues collected into the *bayt al-mâl* was Allah's trust and the common property of all Muslims, the ruler being merely in the position of a trustee.[492]

Different schools of jurisprudence have developed different understandings of *zakat* as well. In Maliki law, for example, "(...) *zakât*, which is levied on both apparent and non-apparent property, should be paid to state officials and thus would be part of the Public Treasury. However, according to Shâfi'î doctrine, *zakât* on non-apparent property was under no circumstances part of the Public Treasury while *zakât* on apparent property might only be held as a trust and, as such, was not a part of the Public Treasury."[493] Theoretically speaking therefore, and in one way or another, *zakat* should be the basis of an Islamic social welfare system and, as such, be collected and re-distributed by the Islamic state. However, as of now, there is no such Islamic state – or at least none that conforms to the apologetic of Islamic economics.[494]

Wealth, in Islam, is not considered a morally dubious thing in itself. Indeed, economic inequalities have long been recognized as part of any society. There is no shame nor guilt in the accumulation of riches in Islam.

> Zakat is a reminder that all wealth belongs to God; but there are several verses in the Quran that tolerate economic inequalities even though the dignity and fundamental equality of all human beings as children of Adam are also recognized. Islam accepts – so the argument runs – that there are inevitably differences among human beings that will in nearly every society result in economic inequalities. Wealth is to be cherished in moderation, but not to be (as we might say today) fetishized. (...) Provided that believers obey the rules enjoined, there is no need for them to feel

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490 Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," 253.

491 Holger Weiss, "*Zakât* and the Question of Social Welfare. An Introduction Essay on Islamic Economics and its Implications for Social Welfare," in *Social Welfare in Muslim Society in Africa*, ed. Holger Weiss (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2002), 20-21.

492 Weiss, "*Zakât* and the Question of Social Welfare," 17.

493 Weiss, "*Zakât* and the Question of Social Welfare," 18.

494 Weiss, "*Zakât* and the Question of Social Welfare," 7.

> guilty about their inability to measure up to an ideal morality: there is no need for the well-to-do either to give away all their wealth, or to feel guilty about not being poor.[495]

However, as Weiss cautions, wealth is acceptable and even "good" only insofar as it is not cherished for its own sake. *Zakat*, the obligation for a Muslim to donate at least part of his or her wealth for charitable use, is a reminder to Muslims not to cling to their riches and to perform good deeds, which renders riches "good." Insofar as wealth is earned by morally acceptable means, is not ostentatious, and is used to performed good deeds, it is considered "Islamically sound."

There is no clear separation between economic and humanitarian principles in Islam as both derive from Islamic sources of law: "According to Islamic primary sources, humanitarianism is an integrated part of Islamic alms or *zakat* (the third of the five pillars of Islam). As part of an elaborate welfare system, *zakat* is by most Muslims considered the cardinal Islamic principle of humanitarianism and solidarity."[496] This obligation to donate for *zakat*, and despite the punctual attempt by political bodies to organize the collection and distribution of it, prompt a now long-standing tradition of private or semi-official charitable and pious foundations.[497] In non-Muslim societies, or in secular Muslim-majority states such as Mali, Islamic NGOs have taken over the role of collecting and distributing the *zakat*.[498] Islamic NGOs, due to the lack of a clearly delimited proper Islamic state, aim to reach the entire *umma* which is by definition a supranational community.[499] *Zakat* should usually be re-distributed in the community where it has been collected. However, it is licit to transfer *zakat* moneys to other territories as long as it serves the aim of spreading Islam.[500] As such, alms from Arab countries can be donated in Mali for example, when it aims at *da'wa*, Islamic education and the construction of mosques.

Islamic NGOs were and still are actively involved in the development and/or improvement of Islamic schooling in Africa. "Donor support includes upgrading of school structures and materials, import of Islamic teachers from other part of the same country or abroad, payment of subsidies and provision of food."[501] It is the aim of *zakat*, given the modern economy, to provide the basic social welfare services that the state might not be able to provide on its own:

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495 Jonathan Benthall, "Financial Worship," in *The Charitable Crescent. Politics of Aid in the Muslim World,* ed. Jonathan Benthall and Jérôme Bellion-Jourdan (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 15.
496 Salih, "Islamic NGOs in Africa," 1.
497 Holger Weiss, "Preface," in *Social Welfare in Muslim Society in Africa*, ed. Holger Weiss (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2002), 5.
498 Weiss, "*Zakât* and the Question of Social Welfare," 20.
499 Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 52.
500 Weiss, "*Zakât* and the Question of Social Welfare," 22.
501 Salih, "Islamic NGOs in Africa," 13.

> *Zakât* is identified as enabling the fulfilment of basic needs of the poor with regards to the provision of social welfare. 'Basic needs' are defined as necessities required for achieving sufficiency, such as food, accommodation and clothes, *without extravagance and parsimony* and social solidarity *according to prevalent customs*. [...] In addition, *zakât* money can be used in establishing service projects such as building schools, hospitals, orphanages and libraries.[502]

The intense competition between Arab countries and individuals in the domain of humanitarian aid to Africa explains the proliferation of Islamic NGOs as well as their relative success. The competition, not to say rivalry, led to a degree of sabotage between Islamic NGOs on the ground trying to gain precedence over one another.[503] Nonetheless, capital and knowledge were transferred from Arab countries to sub-Saharan Africa, and vice versa.

Grassroots Networks: International Aid at a Personal Level.

The limits of the institutional pan-Islamism discussed previously should not obscure the mobilizing potential of the transnational flux of people, ideas, and money outside of the official circuits. The intensification of informal networking speaks to a form of integration "from the bottom" between Malian arabisants and the global *umma*.[504]

> Analysts have pointed out a long time ago the patterns of transnationalism and the increase of exchanges between the Muslims of sub-Saharan African and Muslims from the Arab world or of Asia. [...] One has even qualified of "Islamic mode of diplomatic action" these dynamics are informal, outside the state, parallel, in the grey zone between legal and illegal activities, by-passing the official diplomatic circuits and "giving a headache" to state apparatus. Ignoring borders, colonizing the gaps left by an fragmented international system, the Islamic dynamics of transnationalism unravel a complex network where the religious and the economic, the political and the charitable, are constantly interacting and participate in the "production of globalized differences" to which refers Arjun Appadurai.[505]

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502 Weiss, "*Zakât* and the Question of Social Welfare," 22.
503 Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 59.
504 Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 56.
505 "Les analystes ont depuis longtemps attiré l'attention sur la transnationalisation croisssante des échanges entre musulmans d'Afrique subsaharienne et musulmans du monde arabe ou d'Asie [...]. On a même pu qualifier de "mode islamique d'action diplomatique" ces dynamiques informelles, infra-étatique, parallèles, à cheval sur le légal et l'illégal, comme sur l'interne et l'externe, qui court-curcuitent la diplomacie officielle et "donnent le tournis" aux appareils étatiques. Se jouant des frontières, colonisant les interstices d'un système international éclaté, les dynamiques islamiques de la transnationalisation dessinent un écheveau complexe où le religieux et l'économique, le politique et le caritatif sont en interaction permanente et participent de la "production globalisée de la différence" dont nous entretient Arjun Appadurai." Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 56.

Médersas' constituencies, the arabisants, have created links with a global community of Muslims with whom they communicate and constantly exchange information, techniques and knowledge. Indeed, as Kavas has observed in the médersas that he studied, teachers and other employees have extensive epistolary relations with Arab scholars and colleagues abroad. Of 34 teachers in Bamako's médersas with whom Kavas conducted interviews, 12 sustained a correspondence with former teachers or fellow students in Arab countries.[506] The affinities embodied in these networks are economic, social, cultural and religious. These networks, as has already been partly shown, are *de facto* international and conceptually transnational. They have provided some Malians with one more choice on which to base their actions and in which to ground their identities.[507] Owners, promoters, principals and teachers of Malian médersas maintain close relations, by various means and made that much easier with internet,[508] with individual or institutional donors from the Maghreb and the Middle East.

These multiple relations guarantee, up to a certain point, the independence of the arabisants from both Malian policies regarding national education as well as from donor organizations or individuals by varying the sources of income.[509] This can be understood as, on a relatively small scale, the integration of the global *umma* at the grassroots level.

> [N]olens volens, the arabization, whether it is conceptualized as religio-linguistic conversion or symbolic frame of references, is in effect an immersion into the Arabic-speaking world and a communion with the Islamic universalism exalted in the Qur'an. This hypothesis acquires even more substance if one takes into account the informal Islamic networks (international brotherhoods, *da'wa* movements, transnational familial networks, notably between East Africa and the Arab Peninsula, parallel and illegal commercial networks, charitable NGOs ...) which completely evades the control of "the top" and draw in a dotted line new Islamic, outside the state, diplomatic channels.[510]

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[506] Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 287.

[507] Kane, "Muslim Missionaries and African States," 47.

[508] It is how I remain in touch with a number of the Malian participants in this research sine I have left Bamako in December 2010.

[509] Ferdaous Bouhlel Hardy, "Les Médersas du Mali: Réforme, Insertion et Transnationalisation du Savoir Islamique," *Politique Étrangère*. Vol. 4 (2010): 827.

[510] "[N]olens volens, l'arabisation, qu'elle soit conversion religieuse-linguistique ou référent symbolique, est en effet immersion dans le monde de l'Arabophonie et communion à l'universalisme islamique exalté par le Coran. Cette hypothèse acquièret davantage de consistance si l'on prend en considération l'écheveau des flux informels islamiques (internationales confériques, movements prosélytes, réseaux familiaux transnationaux, notemment entre l'Afrique de l'Est et la Péninsule Arabique, filières commerciales parallèles et illégales, ONG caritatives...) qui échappent totalement au contrôle de "haut" et dessinent en pointillés une "diplomatie" islamique infra-étatique." René Otayek, "Introduction," in *Le Radicalisme islamique au sud du Sahara.* Da'wa*, arabisation et critique de l'Occident*, ed. René Otayek (Paris: Karthala, 1993), 18.

This is the case with some grassroots donations from individual members of the Saudi royal family. In that particular case, differentiating between personal alms-giving and state interests is excessively difficult. Malian operators prompted and financially supported by Saudi donors opened some médersas, such as the Institut Khaled bin Abd al-Aziz, in Bamako.[511] The Saudi royal family, and other wealthy individuals, are, as private citizens, great philanthropists. They have contributed to numerous international Islamic projects including schools and mosques worldwide as well as cultural centres.[512] Although I cannot provide the financial details of the participation of this Saudi royal philanthropy, it is quite clear (and partially acknowledged by the principal of the school) that a Franco-Arab médersa called al-Amir Ahmed bin Abdul Aziz received, for its creation in 1974 and maybe for its running costs, money from the Saudi Prince whose name it has taken. Private donations from Saudi Arabia, although, again the exact sums are not known, are most easily traceable insofar as links with wahhabi organizations and individuals are well-known. As such, schools like Institut Khaled bin Abd al-Aziz, the Institut Islamique de Yattabaré, Naharu Djoliba, and al-Amir Ahmed bin Abdul Aziz[513] are known to have ties with Saudi individuals for funding although their network should not be understood as limited to the Saudi connections.

However, accounting for all these private donations, even in the limited case of Mali, is extremely difficult as a lot of donations are made privately, if not anonymously, and most researchers have faced difficulty in talking to donors as well as to recipients about the exact amounts involved. With the oil boom decade, "(...) private funds began to flow through clientelist networks that extended beyond the national borders and, perhaps more significantly, which often operated outside the direct control of the higher echelons of the state bureaucracy and *le Pouvoir*."[514] Malian officials and other secularists were always wary of such private donations as they went unaccounted for. For these officials, a

> [...] widespread concern was the money which changed hands privately between Arab or Muslim donors and local recipients, and which went to build many new mosques and médersas. Most persons responsible for the construction of such establishments, many of which were quite ostentatious in style, were very careful not to disclose their financial affairs in public, thus fueling speculation about precisely how much money was received, where it came from, and how it was expended.[515]

Most médersas, as I have previously discussed, are created from the funds of the Malian owner or via donations from the community and running costs are covered by tuition fees. Despite that, médersas in general are the Malian educational institutions (including public schools and private Catholic or secular schools) that receive the most funds from

[511] Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 191.
[512] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 111.
[513] The name "Institut Islamique" often denotes Saudi links for the school's funding.
[514] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 199.
[515] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 198.

international private donors. Private donations represent 42% of the running costs per student in the primary cycle of a médersa and almost 50% per student in the secondary cycle in 1994.[516]

International networks in Arab countries (and others) also provide Malian médersas with much of their pedagogical material and textbooks. The edition and distribution of Malian textbooks is insufficient in all domains, let alone in Arabic and Islamic sciences and therefore, books are imported from abroad. The material, however, is often delivered irregularly and not in sufficient numbers for each student to have his or her own. This is also the case for textbooks in public schools.[517] Teachers and other médersas employees often sustain long-standing correspondence with interlocutors in Arab countries, as I have already mentioned. One of the aims of such correspondence is to receive teaching materials, textbooks, and new publications which are not easily available in Mali.[518] In numerous médersas in Bamako, textbooks are provided free of charge although in limited numbers to students. The influence of the Arab benefactor providing the books (such as Saudi Arabia, Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, the Sudan, Kuwait, or Iraq) passes through the content of the textbooks that are distributed. At Naharu Djoliba, Mr. Kansaye estimates that 90% of textbooks were donated by Iraq and others by an Italian NGO – neither of which indicates where they were published. At the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye, the books in use – though limited in number – were printed in Mali, which is uncommon, with funding from Canada.

The images and topics covered by these textbooks often do not resonate with the reality of a young Malian student, the commonly shared Malian values and the images of the child's direct physical environment. From a religious perspective, textbooks from Morocco have the advantage of containing *fatwas* from the Maliki school of jurisprudence (*maddhab*) which is most commonly found in Mali while those from Egypt usually contain *fatwas* from all four schools of law. Books from Saudi Arabia contain exclusively *fatwas* from the Hanbali school.[519] I provide here a short passage citing the provenance of a number of textbooks used in Bamako's médersas in 2005:

> In the Médersa 2, big posters of Qadhafi hang in all classrooms which may indicate that the school benefited from Libyan donations in money or in textbooks – most likely, since this school was best equipped with textbooks of all those visited during fieldwork – but the owner of the médersa was careful to avoid this conversation with me. The textbook used for intiiation to reading in Médersa 8 is published in Tangiers; it was edited by Dâr al-fikr for the 20th time in 1960. The intiation to reading textbooks used in Médersas 1 and 3 were edited for the first time in 1997 in Casablanca by Dâr al-kitâb. These books, entitled *Attilawa al Iffriquia lile madariss al arabia*, are meant for for Arabic students in Senegal, Mauritania, Mali,

[516] Traoré and Péano, "Le coût de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali," 99-100.
[517] Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 202.
[518] Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 287.
[519] Roy, "Les médersas du Mali," 57-58.

> Ivory Coast, Guinea and Morocco. It is a collection which provides one textbook for each of the first 5 years of schooling. Lastly, as a textbook for religious education in the 3rd grade, all the médersas I visited had access to a little stapled booklet of the 30th part of the Qur'an. This booklet of 49 pages, is edited by Dâr al-fikr in Beirut.[520]

The *Attilawa al Iffriquia lile madariss al arabia* collection is still used at all levels of the fundamental cycle at the Institut Islamique de Yattabaré. Books, therefore, clearly participate in the diffusion of ideas from the Arab countries to the Malian médersas constituencies via their content. This process is further analyzed in a later chapter.

The translocal circulation of Islamic knowledge is made even clearer by the case of international studies and scholarships. Various Muslim countries have had, for a long time, an influence on the global *umma* via their renowned centres for *du'at* (preaching) formation. Al-Azhar University in Egypt, Qarawiyine University in Fès, the Zaytouna College in Tunis, and many others have attracted hundreds of sub-Saharan Muslim students over the years.[521] As early as the 1960s, Modibo Keita, the first President of independent Mali, struck a deal with Nasser's Egypt in order for the latter to provide Malian students with 12 scholarships each year to pursue higher education at al-Azhar University.[522] Each year, graduates from Malian médersas receive between 60 and 80 official scholarships to pursue higher education in the universities of Libya, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, the Sudan, and the Islamic University of Say, in Niger.[523] 62 Malians students attended the Zaytouna, which was to become the Lycée Rakada later on, between 1968 and 1986.[524] Even Iran, which has been very active since the Revolution, has recruited sub-Saharan students by offering scholarships via its

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[520] "Dans la médersa 2, de grandes affiches de Kadhafi sont exposées dans toutes les classes ce qui laisse supposer que des dons en argent et en matériel scolaire - plus probablement, puisque c'est la médersa la mieux pourvue en manuels scolaires de toutes celles visitées lors des recherches de terrain - viennent de la Libye bien que le promoteur n'ait pas voulu aborder cette question. Le manuel d'initiation à la lecture utilisé dans la médersa 8 provient de Tanger; il a été édité par la maison Dâr al-fikr pour la 20e fois en 1963. Les manuels d'initiation à la lecture utilisés dans les médersas 1 et 3 sont édités pour la première fois en 1997 à Casablanca par la maison Dâr al-kitâb. Ces manuels, intitulés *Attilawa al Iffriquia lile madariss al arabia,* sont destinés aux élèves du Sénégal, de la Mauritanie, du Mali, de la Côte-d'Ivoire, de la Guinée et du Maroc. Il s'agit d'une collection comportant un manuel pour chacune des cinq premières années de scolarisation. En dernier lieu, en guise de manuel pour l'enseignement religieux de la 3e année du primaire, les élèves de toutes les médersas visitées ont accès à un feuillet broché de la 30e partie du Coran. Cette publication, comportant 49 pages, provient de la maison d'édition Dâr al-fikr de Beyrouth." Roy, "Les médersas du Mali," 58-59.

[521] Hanspeter Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," in *Le Radicalisme islamique au sud du Sahara.* Da'wa*, arabisation et critique de l'Occident*, ed. René Otayek (Paris: Karthala, 1993), 37.

[522] Louis Brenner, "La culture arabo-islamique au Mali," in *Le Radicalisme islamique au sud du Sahara.* Da'wa*, arabisation et critique de l'Occident*, ed. René Otayek (Paris: Karthala, 1993), 167.

[523] Hardy, "Les Médersas du Mali," 827.

[524] Bahri, "Le lycée de Rakada," 95.

Ministry of Education.[525] The following table gives a general indication of the number of Malian students studying abroad with scholarships at the moment when Arab aid peaked in Mali. However, it should be noted that these numbers only represent some of the students abroad, as statistics are not available for all countries or for each school in these countries.

Malian scholarship holders in Arab universities[526]

Year / Country	1987-1988	1988-1989
Islamic University of Say (Niger)	2	Unknown
Algeria and Tunisia	10	12
Egypt	20	20
Kuwait	0	2
Morocco	74	14
Unites Arab Emirates	Unknown	10

In 1985, Amselle reported an impressive number of students from Bamako's médersas pursuing higher education in various Arab countries. The Institut Islamique de Yattabaré had sent 50 students to Medina's university, 25 to Cairo, 10 in Libya and five in Algeria by 1985. Naharu Djoliba was also sending students abroad with scholarships from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Kuwait.[527] Of the 34 médersa teachers interviewed by Kavas in the 1990s, eight received an education in an Arab university: two in Egypt, two in Saudi Arabia and one in each of the following countries: Libya, Algeria, the Sudan, and Mauritania.[528]

At the present time, the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye offers two scholarships to Libya for the two graduating students with the highest scores at the *baccalauréat* examination. Mr. Sissoko, director of studies at the Centre, adds that for the 2010 cohort, seven out of the 32 students who passed the examination went on, through various means, to pursue higher education in an Arab country. Mr. Kansaye, of Naharu Djoliba, prides himself on having found two scholarships for medical school and two for computer sciences in the Sudan for his students. He has also found five scholarships for al-Azhar university, which, he insists, were not all in theology. Mariam Coulibaly, owner

[525] Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 37.
[526] Roy, "Les médersas du Mali," 62.
[527] Amselle, "Le Wahhabisme à Bamako (1945-1985)," 350.
[528] Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 291.

of the médersa al-Aman has been a beneficiary of such scholarships: she went on to study psychology at al-Azhar upon graduation from Naharu Djoliba. Kansaye mentioned numerous times the fact that it is much more difficult, today, to find such scholarships for deserving students and gave as an example of the past ease in finding scholarships, the one his father had secured some 45 years ago for a Naharu Djoliba student to the Sorbonne, in Paris. In 2010, the Institut Islamique de Yattabaré sent two students to al-Azhar University to study theology and one to Saudi Arabia according to Mr. Kaba, director of study of the Institute and himself a graduate from Medina's Islamic University.

I have obtained some data as to the number of Malian students with a *baccalauréat* (therefore, not graduating from a médersa) who received official scholarships to pursue higher education in the Maghreb countries (possibly in French, in this case).[529] Between 1999 and 2010, thirty nine Malian *bacheliers* went on to study in Tunisia. Between 2000 and 2010, two hundred and five *bacheliers* received scholarships to Morocco and five hundred and fifty two, to Algeria. Médersa graduates and *bacheliers*, with no distinctions here, also received ninety three official scholarships for al-Azhar University, in Cairo, between 1996 and 2010. However, the chief of the Section des bourses of the Ministère de l'Éducation did acknowledge the fact that it is a relatively small number of scholarships from Arab countries that passes through the Ministry. More often than not, promoters of médersas find scholarships for their students outside the official circuits and, furthermore, the renown of a médersa is heavily based on its capacity to attract such scholarships.

Although I have provided some data, it is impossible to know the real number of students who leave for these same universities by their own means. As explained by Brenner,

> The official data only take into account the scholarships offered via the official circuits (annexe B) while a lot of the scholarships are offered "in private," via the personal networks of the principal of the médersa with Arab institutions or individuals or via influential and/or rich Malian merchants. Moreover, a lot of people manage to get to an Arab country entirely on their own.[530]

In all cases, these students, while they are abroad and after they have returned to Mali, participate, by the relations they maintain with other arabisants inside or out of Mali, to a

[529] Information was obtained at the Ministère de l'Éducation of Mali, Division de l'Enseignement Supérieur, Section des bourses. I was not alllowed to actually photocopy the documents in question, likely because the name of each student having received one such scholarship was on the documents.

[530] "Les données officielles ne prennent en compte que les bourses délivrées via les circuits officiels (annexe B) alors que beaucoup de celles-ci passent par le privé, soit grâce aux contacts personnels des directeurs de *médersas* avec des institutions ou des donateurs arabes, soit par le fait de personnalités ou de commerçants maliens. En outre, beaucoup s'arrangent pour se rendre dans les pays arabes entièrement de leur propre initiative." Brenner, "La culture arabo-islamique au Mali," 177.

vast transnational network of educated, Arabic speaking, Islam-conscious network of people exchanging ideas, knowledge, books, and money.

Thus we see that funding from Arab countries assists in the expansion of the médersas school system by various means and, most importantly, by building actual schools and funding the running costs of others. Important sums were transferred from Arab countries to Africa in general, and Mali in particular as one of the biggest recipients of such aid, during the oil boom decade between 1973 and 1983. However, this kind of help mostly benefits larger médersas, which tend to have more extended networks in both the Malian government and Arab countries, allowing them to cast a wider net to access these subsidies. Libya has directly financed the construction of three médersas in Mali: two in Bamako and one in Ségou,[531] and I have discussed médersas funded in various ways by Saudi Arabia. The effect of the transnational contacts between Malian arabisants and scholars, funding agencies, and governments of the Arab world was also mitigated by the relatively brief period during which contacts were heavily sustained. As shall be demonstrated later, the monetary investments of Arab countries in Africa, and the ideological transfers, can hardly be considered perennial. The following section analyzes in more detail the ideological content of the Saudi and Libyan aid to Islamic schooling in Mali. The section will show how heavy monetary investment does not systematically lead to the ideological transfer the donor might be expecting.

The Ideological Dimension of Aid: The Cases of Saudi Arabia and Libya.

By the end of the 1970s, seven years after the oil boom and following the Iranian Revolution, no Arab country, neither secular republics nor Islamic monarchies, had managed to create one centre of power within the Islamic World. Competition for influence between various Arab states continued through the 1980s[532] and Islamic ideology became a more obvious dimension of this competition between the two major players: Libya and Saudi Arabia. As explained by Fraser,

> (...) the foreign policies of the Qadhafi regime in Libya and the Saudi monarchy had emphasized the growing importance of religion in the statecraft of Arab politics prior to the Iranian Revolution. (...) However idiosyncratic the activities of Saudi Arabia and the Qadhafi regime may have appeared to observers, in retrospect, their activities before the Iranian Revolution would seem to have helped to set in motion the Islamic resurgence that would begin to assume greater importance after 1979. [533]

Here I focus on the impact of Saudi and Libyan aid as these two countries, during the decade which saw significant widespread Arab aid to Africa, were the biggest donors and

[531] Kavas, *L'Enseignement islamique en Afrique francophone*, 183 and 185.
[532] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 214.
[533] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 214.

also the countries with the clearest ideological dimension attached to their aid. I rely on older research here to account for Libyan and Saudi aid to Africa and Mali during the years of the oil boom, which represents the vast majority of the help ever given by Arab states. The aid given in the oil boom decade is commonly assumed to have had a long-lasting effect its recipients. Before explaining why this emphasis on the ideological impact of Arab aid appears to be false in the present day, I delimit the supposed ideological baggage transferred from Libya and Saudi Arabia to Mali via bilateral or philanthropic aid and individuals' globalized networks.

"United States of Africa": Libya's Vision.

In order to better understand the implications of the various connections between Libya and Mali, it is necessary to first give an overview of the historical threads shaping the Libyan leader's understanding of state, Islam, pan-Arabism and pan-Islamism in the 1970s. Lemarchand summarizes how the idea of an Arab nation, or of the *umma,* is central to Qadhafi's dealings with Africa in general:

> The answers lie not in history as much as in Qadhafi's highly selective *vision* of history. The Arab nation is the only truly significant historical reality; the persistence in Africa of a state system inherited from the West has no historical validation, any more than do the forms of nationalist self-expression that brought it into existence. Both are the product of Western imperialism, whose impact on the contemporary map of Africa is consistently denied in the name of a higher historical reality, the *umma*, that is, the community of believers. Reconstruction of the *umma* is the paramount objective; in pursuance of this ultimate goal all means are legitimate.[534]

Qadhafi's constant efforts towards more integration, either in the Arab world, in Africa, or along the lines of religious affiliation, partly have their roots in Libya's long-standing social ethos embodied by the austere fundamentalist revivalism of the Senussiyya brotherhood. The Senussiyya brotherhood aimed at creating a Muslim sense of solidarity across state borders and racial boundaries. As explained by Lemarchand, "[T]here is a striking historical parallel between the ninetheenth-century expansion southward into Chad of both the Senussiya and its Libyan-based Ottoman overlords on the one hand, and Qadhafi's relentless efforts to push his way into the Tibesti and beyond, by hook or by crook."[535] The foreign policy of Libya under the rule of Colonel Qadhafi is difficult to comprehend; trying to make sense of the policy shifts is even harder.

> Qadhafi violates geographical and conceptual boundaries, and the second of these transgressions argues for considerable caution in explaining the

[534] René Lemarchand, "Introduction," in *The Green and the Black: Qadhafi's Policies in Africa*, ed. René Lemarchand (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), 4.
[535] Lemarchand, "Introduction," 3.

> first. The image he projects evades all conventional categories of statesmanship and diplomacy. It incorporates the notions of *mahdi* and desert warrior, of pan-Arabist and Islamic reformer, of revolutionary fanatic and compulsive meddler, of mad dog and terrorist. His ability to slip from one category to another does more than create puzzlement; it also gives Libyan foreign policy its presumed singularity.[536]

Yet, Qadhafi's policy towards Muslim countries in West Africa (excluding the special case of Chad) and in Mali in particular has been quite consistent over time, albeit rooted in the dual role of the Islamic discourse in foreign policy. In the Libyan Jamarihiyya's dealings with Muslim-majority countries in sub-Saharan Africa, a double code was used: a revolutionary discourse about politics and Islam for the consumption of the masses and a formal diplomatic discourse for state-to-state dealings. The dosage of each discourse was "(...) a function of political structure of the target state."[537] Joffé aptly summarizes Libya's political ideology, in which its foreign policies are rooted:

> Particularly since 1974, certain common strands can be identified which stem directly from the domestic role played by Islam in Libya. Libyan foreign policy is anti-Zionist, anti-imperialist, supportive of radicalism in the African world, and integrative in its efforts to obliterate colonial boundaries. Practically all these objectives combine a Nasirist legacy with Islamic legitimization and are often buttressed by specific Islamic objectives involving the extension of Islamic values. They derive from the three basic principles of the September revolution-freedom, unity, and socialism-reinterpreted to accommodate the post-1973 Islamization of ideology through the *Green Book* and the Third Universal Theory.[538]

If Islam is indeed an important dimension of Libya's foreign policy in Africa, it is, however, only one of several influential factors such as positive neutrality, pragmatic analysis of the strategic interests of Libya, and Arab Unity. Islam was never central to the point of making Qadhafi systematically support the "Muslim party" in international or internal disputes (as seen in the fact that Qadhafi sided with Christian Ethiopia against Muslim-majority Eritrea).[539]

The Jamahiriyya claimed to have resolved the false dichotomy between *dawla* (the state) and *din* (the religion); a 1973 speech by Qadhafi in Zuwara legitimized the new state by reference to the Qur'an. "The Zuwara speech called for an Islamic legal code, the elimination of dissident ideologies and ideas that threatened Libya's Islamic and Arab heritage, the evolution of concepts of popular freedom and the extension of the

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536 Lemarchand, "Introduction," 1.

537 E.G.H. Joffé, "The Role of Islam," in *The Green and the Black: Qadhafi's Policies in Africa*, ed. René Lemarchand (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1988), 46.

538 Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 47.

539 St John, "The Libyan Debacle in Sub-Saharan Africa," 127.

revolutionary process to the administration of the state."[540] However, Qadhafi's religious ideology places himself and the Jamahiriyya outside the boundaries of Islamic orthodoxy and is akin to heresy to many. The correlation made by the Libyan state ideology between a direct political democracy and individual responsibility in religious matters is based on his interpretation of surah 42, verse 36[541]: "فَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَمَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَلَى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُونَ (Whatever ye are given (here) is (but) a convenience of this life: but that which is with Allah is better and more lasting: (it is) for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord)."[542]

Qadhafi's Green Book became the guideline for the application of the Qur'an as sole law for society and direct democracy, applied through the creation of the popular conferences. When the Colonel declared the Islamic Revolution in 1978,

> (...) he widened his attack, arguing that the traditional corpus of Quran, *sunna* and *hadith*, which together with the intellectual practice of *qiyas* (reasoning by analogy) and *ijma* (consensus) form the basis of the four major schools of Islamic law, constituted *shirk* (error) since the Quran, the sole repository of the word of God had been thereby placed at the same level as manmade criteria (*sunna, hadith, qiyas* and *ijma*).[543]

It follows from this that *shari'a* law is not considered as different from other systems of law created by man and therefore, unless the specific law is directly derived from the written word of the Qur'an, it has no claim to religious sanction.[544] For Qadhafi, and therefore the country as a whole, *ulama* have been made redundant since every Muslim has access to the Qur'an, directly, for guidance and to independent reasoning, *ijtihad*, to make sense of it. This interpretation of Islam, heretical to many, has put Libya and its leader at odds with both the local *ulama* and the learned men of al-Azhar and Saudi Arabia as well as with the Iranian revolutionary Islam which is itself a theocracy relying on a class of theologians.

Despite these religious divergences, Libya is still associated with the United Arab Emirates in a bilateral commission for the construction of mosques and Islamic cultural centres.[545] In Bamako, the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye is the result of the Libyan-Emirati cooperation: it was created by these two countries and ran by Mr. Farraj, a Libyan detached from the headquarters office in Tripoli who also ran a similar centre in Rwanda. Mertz and Mertz describe the objectives of the Centre Culturel Islamique of Rwanda: "According to an official of the Commission, the principal purpose of this center is to enable the local Muslim community to strengthen and protect its identity in the face

[540] Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 42.
[541] Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 39.
[542] http://www.quranenglish.com/tafheem_quran/042.htm
[543] Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 44.
[544] Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 44.
[545] Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 39-40.

of Christian evangelical activities aimed at conversion."[546] There is no reason to believe that the objective is not the same in Bamako and that Mr. Farraj, after directing the Kigali centre, would implement the same ideal in Bamako. The model of the "cultural center" is an improvement on the Egyptian model: the centres are multiplexes including a médersa, a conference hall, a mosque, a dispensary, a library and other social and sanitary installations. They are built and run with Libyan finance and the quality of their maintenance is often highly satisfactory when compared with local standards.[547] Also in Bamako, the establishment of a Libyan Islamic cultural centre and of an Arab-Islamic school followed the approval of an economic and cultural agreement between Libya and Mali in 1973.[548]

Qadhafi sees no contradiction between Arab nationalism on the one hand and Islamic unity on the other since, in Libya as opposed to elsewhere in the Mashreq or the Maghrib, they actually do coincide. Islam, in Qadhafi's Arab republic, "(...) was frequently described as a revolutionary and progressive force, whose universality and egalitarianism justified its adoption as a more powerful political ideology than either capitalism or communism."[549] The World Islamic Call Society, as an NGO entirely financed by Libya, has as its ultimate goal the creation of a universal Islamic *umma*, which, in the case of Libyan ideology, has both a religious and a political component.[550] And because Arab nationalism and Islamic unity are both central to Libya's interior and foreign policy, it is no surprise that teaching Arabic, and therefore investments in education, is central to Libya's involvements abroad. Indeed, as I further discuss in chapter five, the language of the Qur'an represents a central vector in the transmission and diffusion of the Arabo-Islamic culture.[551]

Quoting St John, "(...) it appears that Libya contributed at least $500 million through bilateral and multilateral channels from 1973 to 1979. (...) In terms of recorded sums, Libya ranked second to Saudi Arabia as an Arab donor of African aid. Overall, Africa was a far more important region, relatively speaking, to Libya than to any other Arab donor."[552] Via the Banque Extérieure Arabo-Libyenne (BEAL), Libya provided preferential loans to Mali for 11,9 million dollars, making it the third recipient in Africa after Chad and Uganda, between 1973 and 1981.[553] Most data that are available regarding Libyan aid to sub-Saharan Africa are partial or unconfirmed but the general aim of the aid can be deduced. "Much of the aid appears to have been provided to build and equip Islamic cultural centres (Gambia and Togo), Arab and/or Islamic schools and institutes

[546] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 120.
[547] René Otayek, *La Politique africain de la Libye* (Paris: Khartala, 1986), 85.
[548] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 92.
[549] Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 42.
[550] Salih, "Islamic NGOs in Africa," 20.
[551] Otayek, *La Politique africain de la Libye*, 84.
[552] St John, "The Libyan Debacle in Sub-Saharan Africa," 128.
[553] Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine*, 209.

(Mali, Gambia, Guinea, Niger and Upper Volta) and mosques (Benin, CAR and Niger), and to provide several hundred Islamic missionaries and teachers of Islam and Arabic language (Gambia, Niger, Togo and Uganda)."[554]

One of the major donor organizations acting as a vehicle for the dissemination of Libyan ideas about Islam, as the Society often acts as the cultural extension of the Libyan economic foreign policy, is the Islamic Call Society.[555] Although most of the organization's budget was aimed at Europe, in the 1970s, Sahelian countries did receive 4% of the funds Libya channelled through the organization.[556] The objective of the Islamic Call Society is threefold: predication and education, communication, and financial aid. The first goal involves sending missionaries abroad and the attribution of scholarships to foreign students in order to attend a Libyan university to study Arabic or Islamic sciences.[557] The activities of the Society are varied and go beyond purely religious motives. It provides emergency aid, organizes conferences, puts out radio broadcasts, and is involved in the publishing and distribution of religious literature. Its main goals are to send missionaries, to organize and manage cultural centres and mosques (funded by Libya) and to teach Arabic abroad.[558] Mattes, however, comes to the conclusion that the Islamic Call Society partly fails in its endeavour, and as such pales in comparison to the educational opportunities provided by Egyptian universities.[559]

Another organization central to Libya's foreign policy, although its activities are based on Libyan territory, is the Faculty of the Islamic Call (*Kulliyat ad-Dawa al-Islamiyya*). It was created in 1970, at the same time as the Islamic Call Society with which it is associated, and is based on the campuses of the universities of Benghazi and Tripoli. "The faculty is specifically designed to cater to the needs of foreign students of Islam in Libya, particularly those intended to be employed in the Islamic centers created by the Islamic Call Society. It also specializes in the teaching of Arabic and enrols around 150 students annually."[560]

These two Libyan institutions, the Society and the Faculty, had a quasi-monopoly on the educational and missionary enterprises of the Libyan government. However, other Libyan universities receive foreign students and educate them in Islamic law, history and Arabic literature. These universities work in tandem with the Faculty of the Islamic Call and the Islamic Call Society; the latter provides the scholarships for students to attend the

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554 Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 90.

555 The Centre pour l'Appel Islamique of Bamako is located in ACI 2000 neighbourhood, directly in front of the Embassy of the United States of America. It is a compound including a mosque, a library and a lecture hall (as far as I have been able to tell from my visit there).

556 Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 49.

557 Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 43.

558 Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 49.

559 Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 50.

560 Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 49.

former.[561] The first numbers available regarding foreign students in Libyan universities are from the University of Benghazi in 1971-1972: there were 984 foreign students (11 Malians) studying mostly Arabic and Arabic literature as well as Islamic law.[562] In 1977-1978, the University, renamed Qar Yunis, had 1 055 foreign (only one Malian) students enrolled; 350 of them had Libyan scholarships.[563] Between 1982 and 1986, three Malian students held scholarships to study at Qar Yunis.[564]

The promotion of Arabo-Islamic culture in Sub-Saharan Africa comes second, after the struggle against Israel but prior to aid to national liberation organizations, in official Libyan foreign policy. Libya used a double language to better advance its agenda on the international scene: one aimed at informal modernist associations and NGOs and another on the official diplomatic circuit. In the case of the former, the code exalts the Islamic character of the Libyan leader and of the Revolution while, to the second, Libya is presented as a regular nation-state. Depending on the interlocutor, the two discourses of legitimation alternate: one religious and the other one purely politico-economic.[565]

However controversial Libyan Islam can be, it was not the distinctive feature of Libyan help to Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. Rather, the clearly distinctive feature of this Islamic aid was the extent to which "(...) assistance was linked to the development of economic relations, the provision of secular economic support, and the pursuit of often aggressive political goals."[566] Qadhafi's pan-Islamic policy was complemented by a pan-Africanist vision, which involved grand plans for the African Union but started by co-operation in the Sahel region. Hence, in the late 1990's, Qadhafi pushed again for more Sahelian integration with the creation of the Community of Sahel and Sahara States (COMESSA), which united Libya, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, the Sudan and the Central African Republic.[567] In 1999, Qadhafi officially called for the unification of the African continent into the United States of Africa and the creation of an African Congress to be operative by 2000.[568] This never came about but Libya's policy in the first decade of the 21st century was still partly aimed at unifying the continent, starting with Libya's neighbours to the South.

Assessing Libya's real influence on the politics and the socio-cultural scene of West African countries was made extremely difficult by the intricacies, secrecy, and shifts of Libyan politics. Otayek summarizes the various fronts on which Libya operated, under-

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561 Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 37-38.
562 Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 41 and 58.
563 Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 41 and 61.
564 Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 62.
565 Otayek, *La Politique africain de la Libye*, 79-80.
566 St John, "The Libyan Debacle in Sub-Saharan Africa," 127-128.
567 Asteris Hularias, "Qadhafi's Comeback: Libya and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s," *African Affairs* 100 (2001): 16.
568 Hularias, "Qadhafi's Comeback," 17.

cover or overtly, and explains the limits of researching the impact of Libyan proselytizing in Africa:

> Between the official diplomacy and the exchanges outside the state's institutions, between the echo of the "Islamic Legion's" interventions and the discretion with which the education of arabisants is undertaken in Libyan universities, between the publicly announced aid and the secret that surrounds the activities of the "Jihad till" which one cannot even be certain of the links it has with the Islamic Call Society, it is extremely difficult to get a somewhat clear image of the results of Libyan proselytism South of the Sahara.[569]

The effect of Libyan economic and cultural/religious foreign policy in the 1970s, during the oil boom, remained minimal partly due to the very radicalism of the Libyan message.[570] Elements of Islamic thought imbedded in the political system of Libya were often considered akin to heresy and Malians were not fond of such extremes. As Joffé recapitulates:

> The role of Islam in Libyan foreign policy (...) has done little to popularize Libyan policies towards unity, either in the Arab world or in Africa. Nor has it persuaded other progressive regimes in Africa to adopt its principles. In fact, it has provided support to those states [such as Mali] fearful of Libyan interventionism in Africa, for, in addition to the threat of Libyan radicalism, there is now the added danger of heretical interpretations of Islam for other Muslim states or of an Islamic cultural invasion for non-Muslim African states.[571]

The Islamic bent of Libya's foreign policy was therefore bound to have little influence in a country like Mali where extremist views (revolutionary or other) on religion have little popular appeal.

Libya's aggressive military intervention in Chad, its neighbour South of the Sahara, pushed aid recipients to distance themselves from Libya, if only for fear of political and military mingling. In 1981, Mali cut all diplomatic relations with Libya, as did many other African countries. The closer, geographically, to Libya and the more sizable a country's Muslim population was, the faster links were severed after the invasion of Chad as many countries, like Mali, feared such military intervention on their own territory.[572] The politically subversive groups that Libya was rumoured to encourage in

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569 "Entre la diplomatie officielle et les échanges infra-étatiques, entre le retentissement donné aux interventions de la "Légion islamique" et la discrétion dans laquelle s'effectue la formation d'arabisants dans les universités libyennes, entre les flux d'aides publiquement annoncés et le secret qui entoure l'activité de la "Caisse du Jihad" dont on ne sait à peine qu'elle a des leins avec la Société pour l'appel à l'islam, il est difficile de se faire une idée à peu près clair des résultats du prosélytisme libyen au sud du Sahara." Otayek, *La Politique africain de la Libye*, 88.

570 Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 50.

571 Joffé, "The Role of Islam," 50.

572 St John, "The Libyan Debacle in Sub-Saharan Africa," 132.

various Sahelian countries in the name of pan-Islamic and pan-Africanist affinities were threatening to West African governments.[573] The fear that Chad was a first step towards Qadhafi's dream of an Islamic republic of the Sahel, and the growing concerns over the Islamic Legion, were instrumental in severing diplomatic relations between Mali and Libya. In Mali's médersas, although Libyan money was always welcomed, Qadhafi was unable to introduce his ideology. As explained above, the Libyan departure from Muslim orthodoxy (orthopraxy) was worrisome to Malians as much as to other Muslims. The deviation from the norm was usually too great for it to be entirely, or even partially, implemented in Malian médersas.

Rumours of massive recruitment for the Islamic Legion were common in the Sahel region, including Mali, where the dissatisfied Tuaregs of the North were a prime target for recruitment. "By the spring of 1987, the Islamic Legion included thousands of Africans, including twenty-five hundred Sudanese. Meanwhile, speculation heightened as to whether the objectives of the Islamic Legion had been broadened to include the establishment of an international revolutionary force.[574] However, with the exception of the case of Chad, Libya's direct intervention in West African politics was over-stated and the intelligence report of Western agencies on the topic were often considered to be more guesswork than fact. Libya's subversive role in Africa seemed to be much more limited than thought (or imagined) by Western governments. In terms of co-opting aid from Western donors, over-stating the fear of Qadhafi became a useful tool for poor West African countries: the United States was willing to invest in Mali to limit the supposed influence of Qadhafi's terrorist activities.[575]

The falling revenues from oil in the 1980s further strained the relations between Libya and recipient countries such as Mali and limited Libya's capacity to continue pumping money into the Sahel as part of a wider cultural and religious foreign policy. As St John explains

> [f]rom a peak of $22.6 billion in 1980, Libya's oil revenues dropped to around $10 billion in 1985, with 1986 estimates at around $4.5 billion. One small example of the negative effect of Libya's plummeting oil revenues had on its foreign policy was the bitterness expressed by the governments of Mali and Mauritania when their nationals were included among the foreign workers expelled in August-September 1985 as part of an austerity program.[576]

At the turn of the millennium, Mattes suggested that Libya's influence on sub-Saharan students attending universities in Libya was mitigated by the students' situation as pawns in the political twists of African politics. African students were sometimes used as

[573] Omari H. Kokole, "The Islamic Factor in African-Arab Relations," *Third World Quarterly* 6, 3 (1984): 699.
[574] St John, "The Libyan Debacle in Sub-Saharan Africa," 135.
[575] Hularias, "Qadhafi's Comeback," 7-8.
[576] St John, "The Libyan Debacle in Sub-Saharan Africa," 134.

scapegoats or leverage material in relation to Libya's relations with their home country and could be expelled from Libya at any moment.[577] Such expulsions of Sub-Saharan workers and students happened again between 2008 and 2011[578], further straining relations between Qadhafi, "king of kings" of Africa[579], and his "subjects". These expulsions obviously tarnished Qadhafi's reputation in sub-Saharan Africa and in Mali in particular. It became difficult for Malians to give credit to talks of Arab or Islamic or African Unity when their compatriots were being expelled *en masse* by the spokesman for such ideologies. Qadhafi's death, however, was deeply felt in Mali. Reports of special prayers dedicated to him in Mali's mosques were common in newspaper. Some médersas employees with whom I exchanged e-mails since then have mentioned worries regarding funding and scholarship from Libya. The general tendency seems to be to assume their end which will greatly affect the arabisants community of Mali. However, assessing the impacts of the cuts in funding from Libya will require further research over the next few years.

Saudi Arabia and the Wahhabiyya.

Saudi Arabia's religious capital in the Muslim world, in addition to its status as the guardian of the holy sites, is due to the perception of how "Islamic" the regime is. In the case of Saudi Arabia, the policies applied at home influence international perceptions of the kingdom and therefore its influence in the wider Muslim world. The Islamic nature of the government and the active enforcement of Islamic law on proprietary behaviour is key to Saudi Arabia's religious capital[580] even though many Muslims and a majority of Malian (as will be seen later), would not want this form of government in their own state. Saudi Arabia's status as the religious leader of the Muslim world rendered the kingdom obligated to be the "provider" for the poorer Muslim states.

> Given the role of alms-giving in Islamic culture and Saudi Arabia's status as guardian of the holy sites, it was incumbent upon the Saudi monarchy to maintain its Islamic credentials by adopting that role. Where other wealthy Arab producers – Kuwait, Oman, Abu Dhabi, and the Unites Arab Emirates – could limit their largesse, Saudi Arabia's status as a religious leader has made it difficult for the Saudis to limit their role as provider to the Arab World. Thus, even as the oil crisis enhanced Saudi Arabia's influence within the Arab world, it also created a wider web of responsibilities for the guardian of the holy sites of Islam.[581]

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577 Mattes, "La *da'wa* libyenne entre le Coran et le Livre Vert," 50.
578 Abdoulaye Diakité, "Expulsion des Maliens de la Libye: La rançon des pétrodollars de Kadhafi," *Afribone*, January 28th, 2011.
579 "Gaddafi: Africa's 'king of kings,'" *BBC News*, August 29th, 2008.
580 Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 234-235.
581 Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 224.

Fraser limits his comments to the Arab world, which of course received a great share of Saudi Arabia's donations, but Africa in general, and Mali in particular, also benefited from the bonanza following the 1973 oil boom. The hold of the Saudi kingdom on some of the greatest oil-reserves in the world has given the kingdom an influence and centrality in world affairs that has little correlation to its tiny population and overall state of under-development at the time of the oil boom. The money the State gets from selling its oil also allows the kingdom to fund organizations and other states in order to increase its influence.[582]

The monetary "investment" of Saudi Arabia, as a country backing international organizations, in Africa dates to the early 1970s:

> King Faisal was travelling to countries of Black Africa before the Ramadan/Yom Kippur War, and since that watershed the Saudis have been strong backers of Arab and Islamic development agencies such as the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development and the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank. Pakistan is the non-Arab country which has benefited the most from this largesse, with countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Mali, Niger and Uganda also getting their share.[583]

Following the oil boom of 1973 until the end of the decade, Saudi Arabia provided about 40%, representing 22 billion dollars, of the total of Arab aid to sub-Saharan Africa. In 1976 and 1977, the kingdom was the world's second largest donor of official development aid after the United States of America.[584] The Saudi Fund was a major lender to non-Arab African countries during the oil boom decade. As of December 31st, 1984, it had given a total of 915,53 million dollars to projects in 26 African countries. Mali was the second biggest recipient of this help (after Senegal); it received 11,6% of the total for a sum of 106,5 million dollars.[585] In Bamako, Saudi Arabia paid $ 4.2 million US dollars for the construction of the Grand Mosque.[586] This is important as Zarour convincingly argues:

> One can get a precise idea of Saudi Arabia's official aid policy towards non-Arab Africa when the distribution and the destination of the loans of its national agency are analyzed in terms of volume. Given that the Saudi Fund is directly dependant on the Saudi government through which is attributed all Saudi aid, the choice of countries and of the sectors that are supported necessarily reflect the general lines of Saudi Arabia's policy in Africa.[587]

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582 Louis Turner and James Bedore, "Saudi Arabia: The Power of the Purse-Strings," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 54, 3 (1978): 406.

583 Turner and Bedore, "Saudi Arabia: The Power of the Purse-Strings," 417.

584 Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 13.

585 Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine*, 139.

586 Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 110.

587 "On peut se faire une idée précise de la politique d'aide officielle de l'Arabie Saoudite en Afrique non-arabe lorsque l'on analyse le volume, la répartition et la destination des prêts de son agence nationale. Étant donné que le FSD est une organisation directement dépendante du gouvernement à travers laquelle est attribuée l'aide saoudienne, le choix des pays, et des secteurs assistés reflète forcément les grandes

Saudi Arabia has massively invested in the diffusion and spread of the conservative version of Islam it itself practices via support to proselytizing in Muslim-majority countries not yet significantly influenced by Wahhabism.

> The vast majority of Saudi aid to Africa is extended to Islamic countries. Of the $ 437 million in bilateral aid committed through 1979, $ 306 millions (70%) went to member states of the Islamic Conference. [...] While these projects are top national priority for the recipients, multifaceted and sustain Saudi participation in a country's development seems to have been reserved exclusively for Islamic countries, such as Cameroon, Guinea, Mali, Niger and, under Amin, Uganda.[588]

However, if the massive influx of petrodollars in the 1980s and 1990s has allowed the Saudi kingdom to invest heavily in its influence abroad, this export of Islamic extremism also had internal repercussions which ought to be briefly discussed. Focusing its attention on projects in the Islamic world outside of the kingdom itself allowed the regime to avoid internal criticism and control its domestic opponents:

> The support and funding of religious movements, schools and charities also have an important domestic dimension. By exporting the message and its carriers, the Saudi government was able to contain and control potential opponents and divert their attention away from the kingdom and its "unholy alliance" with the West, and from allegations of corruption and profligacy.[589]

In this case, the kingdom's policy towards Islam is mostly "defensive." Islam, as a complete system of law and a universal moral code, fulfils all individual requirements as well as guards and strengthens traditional societal and familial values. In a society like Saudi Arabia, facing great stress due to political turbulence in the region and social pressure for reforms, Islam becomes a defensive philosophy to calm the stresses caused by modernization, secularization, atheism and materialism.[590]

Donations, aid money, bilateral and multilateral loans, and other private endowments in provenance from Saudi Arabia are difficult to track and it is not my purpose here to account for all of them. The concern here is to see what ideological content was conveyed to Malians with the funds coming from Saudi Arabia. After 1973, three formal institutions, supported financially and ideologically by the monarchy, were devoted to the cause of the Saudi *da'wa*: The Muslim World League based in Mecca, the Islamic University of Medina, and the World Association of Muslim Youth, based in Riyadh.[591] "Relying on their status as Guardians of the Two Holy Places (Mecca and

lignes de la politique de l'Arabie Saoudite en Afrique." Zarour, *La Coopération Arabo-Africaine*, 141.

[588] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 108-109.

[589] Michaela Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 79, 1 (2003): 84.

[590] Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 103.

[591] Reinhard Schulze, "La *da'wa* saoudienne en Afrique de l'Ouest," in *Le Radicalisme islamique au sud du*

Medina), the Saudis have long used their vast resources to fund and support the Muslim World League (*Rabita al-'Alam al-Islami*) and the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), both of which seek to promote Saudi interests, the Saudi monarchy, and particularly conservative ideas about Islam."[592] The kingdom is heavily involved in educational projects abroad in various forms: building of mosques, of Islamic cultural centres, and in the financing of schools and universities. Saudi Arabia provides foreign students with generous scholarships and assistance programs to pursue higher education in the kingdom's universities. The Saudi government is also involved in the publication and distribution of copies of the Qur'an, of religious textbooks and of the works of Islamist intellectuals.[593]

The Muslim World League, financed by Saudi Arabia, is very active in the propagation of the *da'wa* in Africa, and elsewhere. Although the League technically has no formal affiliation with the Saudi government and has 50 independent national and institutional members, it cooperates closely with and echoes faithfully the Saudi government's positions in political and religious domains.[594] Through its international extensions, the League aims at propagating Islam as well as increasing the status of the Wahhabi monarchy abroad. As such, it is used by Saudi Arabia as a propaganda tool closely interconnecting official and unofficial diplomacy in the Muslim world.[595] The League is one of the most conservative Islamic aid agencies providing development assistance to sub-Saharan Africa. Although the League is not as well endowed as other Arab non-governmental of multilateral agencies, its importance should not be under-estimated:

> The League's significance lies first in its stated objectives. These represent a public expression of a "fundamentalist" Islamic worldview of dichotomous relations between Muslims and non-Muslim countries and of the role of Muslim minorities in non-Muslim states. [...] Second, the League's public statements are full of missionary zeal and denunciations of anti-Islamic elements and outline a strategy to "win Africa for Islam." Third, while impossible to measure precisely, there is evidence to suggest that the League, if not an actual instrument of Saudi government policy, represents the views of a portion of the Saudi leadership and may have a hand in shaping the attitudes and policies of the Saudi Arabian government toward Africa. Moreover, the League cooperates closely with the Saudi government in carrying out its aid program in Sub-Saharan Africa.[596]

Within the League, however, sub-Saharan African countries are under-represented in its worldwide involvements. For example, the League supervised the construction of 120

Sahara. Da'wa*, arabisation et critique de l'Occident*, ed. René Otayek (Paris: Karthala, 1993), 29-30.

592 Otayek and Soares, "Introduction," 9.

593 Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," 84.

594 Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 66.

595 Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 61.

596 Mertz and Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa*, 61.

mosques worldwide between 1976 and 1981. Only fifteen of these were constructed in West Africa; five of them are in Mali (including the Friday Mosque of Bamako). By 1987, the influence of the League in West Africa was marginal due to a lack of resources to create new projects and continue funding those started between 1975 and 1987. At the end of the 1980s, the League's contributions to West Africa were marginal compared with sums given by the League to Asia, Europe and America although this inequality is somewhat tempered by the direct aid given to Mali by the Saudi government.[597]

Part of Saudi Arabia's influence in the sub-Saharan Muslim world is in its Islamic universities: they host a great number of foreign students who are taught the "real Islam" and then return with highly valued diplomas to their countries of origin and often disseminate the ideas learned in Saudi lecture halls. The "inter-Arab Cold War", to use Schulze's phrase, between Saudi Arabia and Nasserian Egypt fuelled the need for institutions of higher learning in the kingdom capable of competing with the renown and appeal of Egypt's al-Azhar university. In 1960, King Saud created the Islamic University in Medina with the task of preparing missionaries of Saudi ideology – the university was to become the bastion of the Wahhabiyya in the Hijaz – who would return to their countries of origins and disseminate the ideology. The first faculty to open was that of *shari'a* law, as the mastery of Islamic law was understood as the foundation of the moral renovation in non-wahhabi communities. In 1963, the *da'wa* Faculty was opened as well as the *usul ad-din* Faculty (foundation of religion).[598]

As for primary and secondary education, Prokop is very clear as to the aim of the kingdom: "The evolution of education in Saudi Arabia, the structure of the educational apparatus, and the content of teachings in Saudi schools, in Saudi-financed schools abroad and in the books widely distributed throughout the world, have been circumscribed by the concern to preserve the religious foundations of the regime."[599] Prokop, herself quoting governmental documents from the Saudi Ministry of Education, describes the clearly stated goal of the educational system of Saudi Arabia:

> Education should "promote a spirit of loyalty to Islamic law by denouncing any system or theory that conflicts with it and by behaving with honesty and in conformity with Islamic tenets"; it should "awaken the spirit of Islamic struggle, fight our enemies, restore our rights, resume our glory and fulfil the mission of Islam" and "project the unity of the Muslim nation".[600]

There is no reason to assume that Saudi Arabia does not push for the same goals in domestic education that it finances abroad. Given the overall goal of Saudi education, it is

[597] Schulze, "La *da'wa* saoudienne en Afrique de l'Ouest," 33-34.
[598] Schulze, "La *da'wa* saoudienne en Afrique de l'Ouest," 24-25.
[599] Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," 77.
[600] Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," 79, quoting from E*ducational Policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* (Riyadh: Ministry of Education, 1978), 5, 6-9.

evident that religious subjects would constitute a large portion of subjects taught in schools. An overview of the timetable and curriculum of Saudi schools is informative here as it reflects very much on the timetable and curriculum of Malian médersas financed by Saudi Arabia.[601] The traditional Islamic sciences, Qur'an, *tawhid* (Oneness of God), *tajwid* (recitation), *tafsir* (interpretation and commentary of the Qur'an), *hadith* (records of the sayings and doings of the Prophet), and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) are taught in Saudi schools at all levels. In elementary schools, about 30% of class hours are dedicated to such religious topics, and there is a slight decrease in secondary school. To this must be added history classes and Arabic literature classes which are both heavily influenced by Islamic teachings. At home as abroad, Saudi education is centred on teaching the religious dogma upholding and legitimizing the regime: in the early 1990s, religious institutions in Saudi Arabia were educating 25% of the student body.[602]

The teaching methods used in Saudi Arabia and imported by Malian students having received an education in the kingdom reflect the nature of Islamic-based knowledge and the central importance of obedience. Students owe obedience to their teachers, children to their parents, and the citizen to his ruler (unless the ruler is deemed un-Islamic). Obedience at all level brings benefits to all: a unified and safe society and reward from God. The pedagogy used in schools reflects this emphasis on obedience with the centrality of rote learning:

> Religious subjects in particular place heavy emphasis on rote learning; lessons are very repetitive and often use complex language not always appropriate to the age of the students. This philosophy of teaching inculcates passivity, dependence, an *a priori* respect for authority and an unquestioning attitude. Many Saudi students and professors complain that there is too little emphasis on analytical and creative thinking. Interaction between the teacher and his/her students is limited; debate is often absent as the sources of knowledge, the Qur'an and the Sunna, are considered inviolable.[603]

As I have shown previously, the Malian educational system is plagued with the same problems although more interactive teaching methods are applied, up to a point, in certain médersas.

Any finances from Saudi Arabia are rendered even more "effective" by the cultural and religious capital attached to them due to the simple fact that it is Saudi money.

> The Saudi royal family has been remarkably astute in using its role as guardian of the holiest sites of Islam to secure the stability of the kingdom. As Wahhabis – strict and puritanical adherents of the oneness of God – who have assumed the symbolic leadership of Sunni Islam, thereby

[601] See chapter three for details of curriculum in Malian médersas.
[602] Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," 78-79.
[603] Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," 80.

> displacing the Hashemite dynasties that had exercised leadership for several centuries, the Saudis have used their control over the religious sites to consolidate their status as leader within the Islamic world.[604]

This religious capital of the Saudi Kingdom has allowed it to be a major actor shaping events and ideas circulating in the Islamic and Arab world from the time oil revenue allowed active participation on the international scene up until the present.[605] In the sphere of education, Saudi Arabia has clearly tried to spread its influence by disseminating its own version of a "pure" Islam:

> Saudi-financed schools abroad recruit their students from all over the globe and train a new generation of mosque leaders and clerics who, once returned to their own countries, open schools or religious centres spreading the Wahhabi-inspired worldview from Morocco to Indonesia, thereby creating a transnational network. The kingdom also sponsors several pan-Islamic organizations, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the World Association of Muslim Youth, to promote the Saudi version of Islam.[606]

However, the Saudi interpretation of Islam is alien to most countries to which it has been exported and Mali is no exception. The nature of Saudi Wahhabism and its strictly puritanical dimension make it unpalatable to vast numbers of Muslims worldwide. Rejection of Sufi practices and the labelling of Sufi practitioners as heretical and polytheists guarantees issue with mainstream Islam in West Africa in general and Mali in particular where Sufism, if not strictly practiced by the majority, is an inherent part of the local Islamic culture. The Saudi/Wahhabi message does not resonate with the majority of Muslims although it does have an impact on fringe movements, often at odds with their local governments, and can create instability.[607]

By the turn of the 1990s, Schulze was able to summarize the influence of Saudi Arabia, via its various satellite organizations, as lacking any popular base in the West African population:

> [I]n Africa, no Muslim community has yet produced a social group powerful enough to sustain the Saudi worldview. The new intellectuals mostly align themselves on Libya or Iran. It is in the education they received in these countries that they find the legitimacy to fight the traditional *ulamas*' power [...]. Given this opposition between intellectuals and traditional *ulamas* in West Africa, and given the absence of a structured body of salafis reformists, the Muslim World League has been unable, as of yet, the means to implement a dynamic *da'wa* policy.[608]

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[604] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 216.
[605] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 216.
[606] Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," 84.
[607] Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," 85.
[608] "[E]n Afrique, aucune communauté musulmane n'a produit de groupe social puissant à même de soutenir la vision saoudienne du monde. Les nouveaux intellectuels s'orientent plutôt vers la Libye ou

The spectacular wealth brought by oil revenues made Saudi Arabia's potential influence, in terms of religion, in Muslim societies worldwide, difficult to understate. Yet, as summarized by Turner and Badore, Saudi "(...) leaders were not able to translate their economic importance into a political importance beyond the very narrow confines of the Middle East."[609] In the 1990s, the policy adopted by the Saudi government regarding the exportation of its Islamic message and, most importantly, of the messengers backfired, limiting the influence Saudi Arabia could enjoy as guardian of the holy sites and "true" Islamic regime.

> Many of the so-called "Arab-Afghans" returned to the kingdom after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and came to form the core of the militant domestic opposition. Their return was shortly followed by the Kuwait crisis and the ruling family's decision to invite the "infidels" to defend the country; hence the Saudi regime and its Western allies became the new focus of criticism and the new target against who *jihad* was to be waged.[610]

The incapacity of the Saudi government to actually defend the holy sites without American help and its request that a non-Muslim ally force (i.e. the American troops) be stationed on Saudi territory were blows to Saudi Arabia's reputation in the Muslim world.

The Africa-oriented policies of Saudi Arabia and Libya, as the two biggest donors of Arab aid to sub-Saharan Africa clearly show the limits inherent to giving aid to achieve increased influence and support. Besides competing with each other for influence in sub-Saharan countries, Libya and Saudi Arabia also have to compete with an array of other Arab countries which all have claims to some degree of cultural-religious capital. I have mentioned the role of various Arab countries and of specific centres of Islamic higher learning in a previous section but I think it useful to put them here in comparison to Libya and Saudi Arabia's attempts at influence in sub-Saharan Africa:

> In regards to cultural cooperation, let us highlight that Libya seems to suffer from the comparison with states such as Saudi Arabia, for example, or even more, with Egypt. The renown of al-Azhar or of Medina remains incomparable and their prestige cannot be matched in the eyes of African Muslims. Moreover, Egypt can boast a historical capital that make it "the" reference in the religious domain. The presence of several thousands sub-Saharan African students in Egypt's universities speaks to this. To a lesser degree, al-Qarawiyin in Fès, al-Zitouna in Tunis and even the university of Constantine represent competing grounds to the role Libya aims to play. At the doctrinal level, the rise of Wahhabism supported by Saudi Arabia, as

l'Iran. C'est dans la formation qui leur est dispensées dans ces pays qu'ils trouvent la légitimité leur servant à combattre le pouvoir des *oulémas* traditionnels [...]. Compte tenu de cette opposition entre intellectuels et *oulémas* traditionnels en Afrique de l'Ouest, et de l'absence d'un corps structuré de savants réformistes dits salafis, la Ligue n'a pas encore su trouver les moyens d'imprimer une réelle dynamique à sa politique de *da'wa*." Schulze, "La *da'wa* saoudienne en Afrique de l'Ouest," 35.

[609] Turner and Bedore, "Saudi Arabia: The Power of the Purse-Strings," 407.

[610] Prokop, "Saudi Arabia: the Politics of Education," 84.

> well as the progress, slow but real, of fundamentalist or "integriste" movements (the Muslim Brotherhood in particular) represent obstacles to the diffusion of Libyan ideology.[611]

Due both to the nature of the religious field in Mali and to the internal issues of the donor countries and funding agencies, aid has been scattered and often missed its target. As explained by Otayek:

> [...] from Libya who is incapable of transferring into real influence the confused aid that it provides to sub-Saharan Africans to Saudi Arabia who struggles to efficiently control the wahhabi networks disseminated a little everywhere and whose princes' magnificence suffers from the comparison with the destitution of the missionaries of the *Jamaat at-tabligh* who have an increasing presence in Africa, to the unsuccessful attempts to coordinate the *da'wa* on the African scale, everything leads to a continued indocility of "African Islam" towards solicitations from the North or the East.[612]

Clearly, the divisions within the Arabo-Islamic world make the idea of the integration of the global *umma* a dream. The lack of integration "from the top" is exemplified by the failed government-sponsored attempts at coordinating Arab aid to Africa. However, a more effective yet on a much smaller scale, integration "from the bottom" does indeed happen in the form of informal networks of individuals. These globalized networks of individual Muslims worldwide do in effect integrate the global *umma* much more effectively that the state-sponsored activities which often remain disconnected from the life of individual Muslims.

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611 "En ce qui concerne la coopération culturelle, soulignons que la Libye semble souffrir de la comparaison avec des États comme l'Arabie saoudite par exemple ou, plus encore, l'Égypte. Le rayonnement d'al-Azhar ou de Médine reste incomparable, et leur prestige inégalé aux yeux des musulmans africains. De plus, l'Égypte peut se prévaloir d'un capital historique faisant d'elle "la" référence en matière religieuse. La présence de plusieurs milliers d'étudiants d'Afrique subsaharienne dans les universités égyptiennes en témoigne. A un degré moindre, al-Qarawiyin à Fès, al-Zitouna à Tunis, voire l'université de Constantine représentent des foyers concurrents du rôle que la Libye entend jouer sur ce plan. Au niveau doctrinal, la montée du wahhabisme, soutenu par l'Arabie saoudite, comme les progrès, lents mais réels, de mouvements fondamentalistes ou intégristes (Frères musulmans, en particulier) représentent autant d'obstacles à la diffusion de l'influence idéologique libyenne." Otayek, *La Politique africain de la Libye*, 91-92.

612 "[...] la Libye qui n'arrive pas à convertir en influence réelle l'aide, désordonnées, qu'elle prodigue aux musulmans subsahariens, à l'Arabie Saoudite qui peine pour contrôler efficacement les réseaux wahhabites disséminés un peu partout et dont la manuficence des princes souffre de la comparaison avec le dénuement des missionnaires de la *Jamaat at-tabligh* de plus en plus présent en Afrique, en passant par les tentatives peu réussies de coordination à l'échelle africaine de la *da'wa*, tout concourt à entretenir l'indocilité de l'islam "africain" aux sollicitations venues du Nord ou de l'Est." Otayek, "Introduction," 17.

The Over-Stated Effect of Aid and the Failure to Change Local Perspectives.

Any discussion of the transnational characteristics of Islam in Mali cannot leave aside an examination of Afro-Arab relations. Islam is an intrinsic aspect of relations between Africa and the Middle East, and the recent Islamization in Mali is often seen as a result of the politico-religious influence of Arab states. However, I argue that the impact of these relations on Islam as it is conceptualized in Mali is over-stated (see Otayek, 1986). It is partly over-stated because of the fear (propagated by Western scholars and policy makers) of networks of terrorism, stemming primarily from Libya (following the Lockerbie crash) and from Saudi Arabia after September 11. The supposed existence of Libyan and Saudi networks in Africa became a security concern for Western states and the United States in particular which invested heavily in the Pan Sahel Initiative from 2002 to 2004 and its successor, the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative.[613]

The impact of Arab aid to Mali has to be relativized with respect to the diversity of Arab ideologies (religious and political) of the Arabs. If they have, at times, agreed on some broad diplomatic goal in Africa, Arab states have never been able to present a unified front as to their foreign policy (worldwide and in Africa). The capacity for intervention and influence of Arab countries has often been over-estimated. Arab states were and remain developing countries with limited financial and technical resources. Finally, and this will be discussed further in the the following chapter, the strength of Mali's internal Islamic dynamics are often downplayed, giving undue weight to the external (i.e. Arab) dynamics at play in the local field of Islamic schools in Mali.[614]

While funnelling great sums of money to Africa, Arab donors are competing amongst each other for influence in the Muslim world. Fraser offers a summary of the issues faced by Arab states, which prevent a concerted ideological and economical offensive in Africa:

> The deepening divisions in the Arab World and in the Arab League that had been occasioned by the uneven impact upon Arab societies of the oil price increases of 1973, and the Egyptian decision in 1979 to sign a peace treaty with Israel, were both indications of the far-reaching changes that were occurring in the Arab state system. The lack of momentum on the Palestinian issue; the undisputed military superiority of Israel over its Arab neighbors; the failure of efforts to forge a common Arab position in dealing with external actors, particularly the Soviet Union and the United States; and the expulsion of Egypt from the Arab League as a result of its separate peace with Israel – all were symptomatic of the state of pan-Arab politics by 1979. (...) In effect, by 1979 the Arab world was a maelstrom in which many of the regimes appeared to be losing their room for manoeuvre.[615]

[613] Otayek and Soares, "Introduction," 6.
[614] Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 53.
[615] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 215.

The lack of a common pan-Arab strategy for aid in Mali certainly limited the impact of aid but the lack of consultation with Malian recipients was also problematic. Indeed, I have shown how Arab states and individuals financed various Malian institutions in order to better further their own agenda. The Islamic solidarity professed by Arab donors was met with disillusionment by African recipients who deplored their insufficiency and the ideological strings attached to this aid (as can be noted, they reacted similarly to Western aid). The concentration of Arab aid in the Islamicized countries of the Sahel speaks to the ideological bent of Arab aid[616] as has been shown. The needs, experiences, and perceptions of Malians, as the recipients of Arab funds, were rarely taken into account. Brigaldino makes the following point regarding Western aid to Malian NGOs:

> Involving and considering recipient experiences and perceptions in the design and management of aid greatly enhances aid effectiveness. Currently, Mali is rarely well incorporated. Nor does it command significant influence in aid relationships. Meeting recipients' aid objectives and beneficiary interests has yet to feature prominently among the goals of development assistance.[617]

The ideological impact of Arab aid, Libyan and Saudi aid in particular, in Mali is therefore limited by the lack of account given by the benefactor to local concerns over development, aid, education, and Islam. Islamic aid to Mali can therefore be considered as having failed insofar as the Saudi-type wahhabiyya or the Libyan revolutionary pan-Islamism/pan-Arabist never materialized broadly in the Malian Muslim population or specifically in médersas, Mali's most conservative Muslim arena. Arab aid in sub-Saharan Africa is too episodic and too rarely implemented using religious and cultural *cooperation* to allow it to be effective.[618]

The impact of Arab aid can be analyzed in a manner parallel to the impact of international aid to Africa: the rise and fall of the NGO sector. In the 1990s, money flowed towards NGOs in Africa which were seen as the panacea for all of Africa's ills: "a 'magic bullet' that would find its target no matter how poorly fired."[619] During that decade, NGOs were the fastest growing industry in Africa and academic research on NGOs grew accordingly, most often praising the system for its effects. For example, many Western countries, directly or via state-sponsored NGOs, have provided assistance for democracy-building in many African countries in the past two decades.

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616 Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 55.

617 Glenn Brigaldino, "Managing European Aid Resources in Mali," in *Foreign Aid in Africa. Learning from Country Experiences*, ed. Jerker Carlsson, Gloria Somolekae and Nicolas van de Walle (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1997), 142.

618 Otayek, "Introduction," 10.

619 Jim Igoe and Tim Kelsall, "Introduction: Between a Rock and a Hard Place," in *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: African NGOs, Donors and the State*, ed. Jim Igoe and Tim Kelsall (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 1.

> The U.S. government currently devotes more than $500 million annually to such activities, with a number of U.S. agencies (primarily the U.S. Agency for International Development – USAID) and U.S.-funded nongovernmental organizations (such as the National Endowment for Democracy, the Asia Foundation, and the Eurasia Foundation) responsible for developing and implementing suitable programs. Many other bilateral donors, including most of the major European countries as well as Canada, Australia, Japan, and others, have also moved into the democracy arena. A number of international institutions have followed suit, among them the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and others.[620]

In democracy assistance in Mali, USAID is very active while the Canadian government, in order to promote good governance, created and is funding the Malian Bureau of the Auditor General. Other institutions and countries also participate. I argue that this enthusiasm for the NGO sector in the West, and therefore for the concept of money transfers to promote change of behaviours, can be linked to understandings of the over-stated effect of Arab aid on conceptions of Islam in Mali. The equation, praised in the case of NGOs, that one could change mentalities and modes of behaviour by pumping money into the country led academics and specialists in the field to over-state the influence (presumed negative) of petro-dollars on Malian médersas. Indeed, transnational religious actors can, as actors in civil society, be conceptually linked to NGOs and analyzed in similar terms.

> Few would challenge the claim that nonstate actors such as environmental and human rights NGOs operating in world policy space and multinational industrial, financial, and service firms operating in a global economy are components of transnational civil society. But modern mentalities often perceive religious actors in transnational space as a different breed, a different order of being from NGOs and multinational firms. NGOs and multinationals are seen as denizens of modern society; NGOs are seen as occupying public space, while religions reside – or ought to reside – in private. [...]
>
> The modern sociological imagination objects to the idea that religious formations are components of civil society on other grounds, that religious affiliations are assigned by ascription, that they are inherited identities rather than chosen ones.[621]

The constituencies of Malian médersas embody the religious identities that are subject to construction and redefinition at a personal, collective, or institutional levels, as I will explain in the following chapter. Organized groups as well as individual Malian Muslims

[620] Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway, "Introduction," in *Funding Virtue. Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion*, ed. Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), 5.

[621] Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," 246.

linked to other Muslims through various globalized networks should be considered key actors of civil society. Given the failure of the secular regimes to deliver long-promised development and their participation in increasing worldwide and countrywide inequalities, organizations from the civil society that are faith-based, such as médersas and Islamic NGOs, have grown exponentially to fill in the gap left by the states and secular NGOs.[622]

NGOs receive funding from states that inevitably have an agenda. In many ways, NGOs become part of the implementation of this agenda, willingly or not, by receiving these funds. One such example is the case of American NGOs in Iraq:

> Furthermore, if the current conflict in Iraq is any indication, the line between the state and the NGO sector is becoming increasingly irrelevant – as is the line between the state and the private sector. In June of this year (2003), President George W. Bush informed American NGO leaders that they were in fact "an arm" of the U.S. Government—and that they had an important job to promote U.S. interests in Afghanistan and Iraq. Furthermore, NGOs receiving funding from the U.S. Government were not to speak to reporters or publicly express critical opinions of U.S. Foreign policy.[623]

I have already shown how the Libyan and Saudi governments use their theoretically non-governmental organizations as extensions of their formal foreign policy in a way similar to the one described here for American NGOs in Iraq. Western NGOs have also shamelessly meddled in internal affairs in certain countries and have almost officially become part of the foreign policy of other countries. It is therefore logical that the same assumption would be made for aid money coming from Arab States.

> (...) donors interfere in the internal affairs of African countries all the time. In Mali (Docking) western NGOs and western governments have meddled in the internal affairs of the Malian government in order to promote the privatization of the cotton industry. In Tanzania (Igoe) the Canadian Government has taken an active role in local civil society in Hanang District and the direction of indigenous NGOs operating there. In Kenya (Pommerrolle) the Moi administration accused human rights NGOs of being puppets of western donors. Almost anyone who has worked in development and/or governance in Africa could mention numerous other examples.[624]

It is inevitable that, if Westerners assume "their NGOs" were doing such things and having an impact in the countries where they were active, that they would also assume Arab states and policies were having similar success. In the 1980s, a time that saw a

[622] Saad Eddin Ibrahim, "Civil Society, Faith-Based Organizations and Development in the Arab World," in *Sustainable Development in a Globalized World. Studies in Development, Security and Culture*, ed. Björn Hettne (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 207.

[623] Igoe and Kelsall, "Introduction: Between a Rock and a Hard Place," 5.

[624] Igoe and Kelsall, "Introduction: Between a Rock and a Hard Place," 24.

massive expansion of the médersas, their recognition by the Malian government, the heyday of the NGO sector and the ever increasing interference of the World Bank (via the Structural Adjustment Plan) in Mali's political life, all policies, social and economic, were framed in terms of development, imported from abroad, and implemented by foreign "experts."[625] Westerners analyzing the situation of Islamic education in Mali tended to apply this model to Arab investment and aid in Mali: as the importation of Arab-Muslim ideas and ideologies to be implemented by religious experts from or educated in the Arab World.

However, the debacle of the NGO sector shows how all this aid changed very little in the daily reality of the recipient countries' populations. Indeed, the situation has become so bad that, in 1997, the impact of international aid (including Arab aid) to Mali was summarized as follow:

> What emerges from this quick overview of Mali's financial situation is that integration into the world market has so far failed to reduce the country's highly dependent international position. Development aid has either failed to reduce such dependency or it has been misused and misappropriated to such a degree that its overall development effect has been insignificant.[626]

In this way, the impact of most of the bilateral and multilateral aid from Arab countries to Africa in the oil boom decade has been limited by the characteristics intrinsic to developing countries' levels of cooperation. Indeed, the lack of consultation with recipients in Mali, and between Arab states due to their competing agenda and ideologies, limited the impact of the aid on Malian society. The impact of Arab funding in Africa more widely was further diminished by the limited time during which sums were available. Indeed, when the international economic crisis started in 1981, African countries were badly hit and needed, more than ever, foreign aid. Yet, Arab countries also saw a dramatic regression of their growth rates and were unable to continue funding projects in Africa at the same level. When, in 1983, the world entered a timid economic recovery, oil-producing Arab states were experiencing the worst year of the decade for economic growth.[627]

Chedly Ayari, former President of the ABEDA, an expert on Afro-Arab aid, reflects on the problems inherent to this South-South axis at the end of the prosperous years of the boom:

> [...] we realize at the same time that the Arab-African cooperation is a cooperation between developing countries which have a limited economic weight. We also discover that the financial and monetary affluence enjoyed

[625] Louis Brenner, "Muslim Schooling, the State and the Ideology of Development in Mali," in *Africa, Islam and development: Islam and development in Africa - African Islam, African development*, ed. Thomas Salter and Kenneth King (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, Centre of African Studies, 2000), 237.

[626] Brigaldino, "Managing European Aid Resources in Mali," 131.

[627] Ayari, *La Coopération Arabo-africaine Face aux Défis des Années 80*, 17.

> by some countries of the Arab community – notably the Arab countries of the Gulf, oil producers – does not translate into much economic power nor an aptitude to productivity, nor even a technological, technical or commercial capacity which remains the precinct of developed countries of the West and out of reach of the Arab-African community, no matter the finances or the liquidity of the richest of them.[628]

Clearly, Ayari makes a distinction between the sums that are indeed available in the Middle East and invested in Africa, and the transmission of knowledge, may it be technical or conceptual, necessary for actual development. He makes the point, and I agree with him, that Arab donor countries were limited, by their own underdeveloped state, in the effect their aid could have on foreign countries. The limited funds the Arab countries were able to provide proved insufficient to sustain the massive economic crisis affecting Africa in general, and Mali in specific. The Bretton Woods institutions, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, were the sole organizations capable of sustaining the local economies further reducing the practical impact Arab aid could have had on the ground. Arab aid became, at best, a useful supplement to the essential help of the World Bank and Western countries.[629]

That being said, Arab aid to Mali's médersas and other Islamic institutions can be considered, in many cases, a success from the point of view of the Malian social actors involved in these schools. Malian arabisants co-opted the funding from Arab donors in order to develop their own conceptions of Islam and of how to be a Muslim in a secular democracy such as Mali. If the Arab countries often used the Islamic dimension to justify other political aims in Africa, African countries also used this dimension strategically to better capture some Arab funds dedicated to the *da'wa*:

> What is fascinating in the process, in regards to the question which concerns us here, is that it is presented, by the Arabs at least, as the actualization of centuries-old links which have united Arabs and Africans and in which Islam would have been the cement before being temporarily severed by European colonization. The argument is made even more functional by its legitimating principle: for the Arab states who, in competition for the *da'wa*, instrumentalize it in order to push their national strategies; for sub-Saharan states, to whom the appropriation of an Islamic

[628] "[...] nous prenons en même temps conscience du fait que la coopération arabo-africaine est une coopération entre des pays en développement ayant un poids économique limité. Nous découvrons aussi que la richesse financière et monétaire dont jouissent certains pays de la communauté arabe – notamment les pays arabes du Golfe, producteurs de pétrole – n'implique guère ni puissance économique, ni aptitude à la productivité ni même capacité technologique, technique ou commerciale qui restent l'apanage des pays industrialisés d'Occident et qui demeurent hors de la portée de la Communauté arabo-africaine, quels que soient les avoirs financiers et quelles que soient les liquidités monétaires dont jouissent les plus nantis dans cette communauté." Ayari, *La Coopération Arabo-africaine Face aux Défis des Années 80*, 16.

[629] Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 55.

> rhetoric grants a privileged access to Arab aid, increase their redistributive capacities.[630]

This appropriation of aid money by the Malian actors of the médersas enabled them to extend their own constituency, therefore forming a a group with relatively definite attributes, called the arabisants, who are now numerous enough to weigh in on all the civil and political debates of Mali. Indeed, Malian arabisants are active agents in co-opting moneys from Arab (and non-Arab) countries to finance their own agendas. The arabisants, by their link with the *umma* and with secular government officials in Mali, place themselves in the position of mediator between their country and the rest of the Muslim world. The arabisants promote the Islamic image of Mali abroad, which allows Mali access to greater sums of petrodollars. In this way, it would be false, as Otayek has argued, to see Mali or other African recipient countries as passive victims of the hegemonic ambitions of the Arabo-Islamic world: African states have become masters at playing off inter-Muslim rivalries to advance their own interests by manipulating the sacred to political and economic ends.[631]

An example can be found in the way Libyan aid was sought by poor African countries as a strategy to ultimately get aid from Western agencies.

> In the 1990s Cold War strategies in Africa largely evaporated. Though Western European countries and the United States continued to play a significant role in mediating regional disputes, responding to humanitarian emergencies and supporting regional co-operation, the level of direct, largely unconditional economic and military support that characterized relations with Africa during the East-West confrontation became a thing of the past. African states were no longer able to play out superpower rivalries (...) Developing relations with pariah states [such as Libya following the Lockerbie bombing] was one of the few options available to African policy-makers to regain some of the bargaining power they had lost with the end of the Cold War.[632]

Whether the funds come from Arab sources or not, poor countries have become adept at playing the donor organizations off against one another. The Malian government has used this strategy to secure money from both Arab and Western sources, while médersas

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630 "Ce qui est intéressant dans ce processus, au regard de la question qui nous préoccupe ici, est qu'il est présenté, du moins par les Arabes, comme l'actualisation de liens pluriséculaires qui auraient unis Arabes et Africains et dont l'islam aurait été le ciment, avant d'être provisoirement occultés par la colonisation européenne. L'argument est d'autant plus fonctionnel qu'il fait figure de principe légitimant: pour les États arabes, qui, en rivalités pour la propagation de la *da'wa* (l'appel à l'islam), l'instrumentalisent au service de leurs stratégies nationales; pour les États subsahariens, auxquels l'appropriation d'une rhétorique islamique procure un accès privilégié à l'aide arabe, de nature à accroître leur capacités redistributives." Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 54.

631 Otayek, "Religion et Globalisation," 62.

632 Hularias, "Qadhafi's Comeback," 14.

owners also play different cards with different donors: the Islamic-card to Arab donors and the alphabetization and promotion of schooling card to Western governments and NGOs. However, for the case of Libya, such leverage cannot last long: "Although sub-Saharan African states, in desperate need of international leverage and financial assistance, can be expected to continue to seek closer relations with Tripoli, they neither constitute significant markets for Libyan oil nor produce the consumer and capital goods that Libya needs."[633] Add to this the now full-blown civil war in Libya and the removal of Qadhafi as head of state and it is unlikely that such an active Africa- and Islam-oriented foreign policy will remain on the agenda.

The arabisants have succeeded so well in making their institutions a part, in their own right, of the Malian educational system that when, in the 1990s, Arab aid began fading away, other international partners began to donate funds to Islamic schooling. Indeed, following the Jomtien Conference of 1990, UNESCO, the World Bank, UNICEF, and others started funding médersas in Mali as key participants in the alphabetization and promotion of schooling in Mali.[634] Some médersas, such as Naharu Djoliba, stated receiving aid from western NGOs: Mr. Kansaye is building new classrooms with funds from an Italian NGO and receiving textbooks from a Canadian one. Although Arab aid has not been as influential as previously assumed, it should not be under-stated either: Arab money did build mosques and médersas; Egyptian, Saudi, and Libyan teachers do participate in the improvement of Malian médersa schooling; and the students coming back from Arab universities sustain the imagined splendour of the "heartlands" of Islam. All in all, Arab aid to Africa feeds the demand for more Islamic education, as discussed in chapter three.[635]

[633] Hularias, "Qadhafi's Comeback," 23.
[634] Gandolfi, "L'enseignement islamique en Afrique noire," 261.
[635] Otayek, "Introduction," 11.

Chapter 5
Standardization of Knowledge and Islam Mondain: The Education of a Young, Modern, Democrat, Muslim, Malian Citizen

In a manner similar to the rise of indigenous NGOs in Africa in the 1970's, médersas have taken advantage of the crumbling of the Malian state to forge their own Malian understanding of their Islamic identity. Igoe and Kelsall explain the circumstances of the creation of new forms of associations in Africa during this period:

> Certainly the state, crippled by its own internal contradictions, was in retreat in many African countries by the end of the 1970s. This condition was often compounded under Structural Adjustment in the 1980s. It was in these circumstances that the actual and potential role of NGOs became more visible. Beyond the crumbling state structures, researchers discovered that Africans were getting on with their lives, devising new ways of making an income and organizing community associations. The first became known as "informal economic activity," and the second as "associational life," or "civil society." Gradually, these phenomena came to be seen as the keys to Africa's regeneration. The informal economy was represented as a seedbed of dynamic indigenous capitalism, and associational life as a site of empowerment and bulwark against authoritarian rule.[636]

The massive expansion of the médersa school system in these years can be analyzed in the same terms: indigenous social innovation leading to the creation of a group consciousness as well as an economic enterprise by which people ameliorated their conditions of living. Religious identities such as those developed by the actors of the médersas school system can become potent and active in civil society. Malian arabisants have succeeded in making their particular discourse about Islam part of the wider public debate in Mali. The link between religious associational life and civil society has long been established in the West:

> Before the onset of modernization processes in the second half of the twentieth century gave new life and meaning to religion, the nineteenth-century United States provided dramatic evidence of how religious formations helped to shape civil society. Both Alexis de Tocqueville and Max Weber, observing America's low stateness [*sic*] seventy-five years apart, noted the proliferation of voluntary associations, clubs, and marching societies.[637]

The members/participants of this new group of consciousness and active grouping in Malian civil society, I have already called "arabisants." To re-state, the arabisants should be understood as a distinct (although variously integrated in the wider social scene) social

[636] Igoe and Kelsall, "Introduction: Between a Rock and a Hard Place," 12.
[637] Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," 247.

group marked by their Islamic identity and knowledge, the use of Arabic in every day life, their rejection of traditionalist Islam and their universalist and transnationalist vision of Islam.[638]

I demonstrate here how Malian arabisants are active agents creating and re-creating their tradition, religion, political views, and their behaviour in the world. Mamdani has complained about the passive role often ascribed to Muslims worldwide:

> When I read of Islam in the papers these days, I often feel I am reading of museumized [*sic*] peoples, of peoples who are said not to *make* culture, except at the beginning of creation, as some extraordinary, prophetic act. After that, it seems they – we Muslims – just *conform* to culture. Our culture seems to have no history, no politics, and no debates. It seems to have petrified into a lifeless custom. Even more, these people seem incapable of transforming their culture, the way they seem incapable of growing their own food. The implication is that their salvation lies, as always, in philanthropy, in being saved from the outside.[639]

I seek, in this chapter, to point out the ways in which Malian arabisants are active agents in changing, re-defining, adapting, and interpreting their own culture, history, and religion in order to fully enjoy the advantages of the modern world while conforming to the moral imperatives of their faith. Malian arabisants, while taking full advantage of all funds coming from abroad (as discussed in chapter four), are fully engaged in redefining ways of being a Muslim in a modern secular democracy like Mali. I will now demonstrate how Malian arabisants have very much developed their own understanding of what it is to be Muslim, Malian, moderate, modern, and globalized. Malian arabisants ask themselves, and are now in the process of answering, the following questions in the words of Bayat:

> The pertinent question is not whether Islam and democracy are compatible (least of all because of the contested meaning attached to both Islam and democracy), but rather how and under what conditions Muslims can *make* their religion compatible with desired notions of democracy; how they can legitimize and popularize an inclusive reading of their doctrine in the same way that democrats have been struggling to broaden narrow (white, male, propertied, and merely liberal) notions of democracy.[640]

Those involved in Islamic education throughout the Muslim world have been answering these questions and, as such, have been "drawn squarely into the reflexive questioning and public-cultural debate so characteristic of modern plural societies."[641]

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[638] Adriana Piga, "Introduction," in *Islam et Villes en Afrique au Sud du Sahara: Entre Soufisme et Fondamentalisme*, ed. Adrianna Piga (Paris: Karthala, 2003), 17.

[639] Mahmood Mamdani, "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism," *American Anthropologist* 104, 3 (2002): 767.

[640] Asef Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 187-188.

[641] Robert W. Hefner, "Introduction," in *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*, ed. Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 2.

Educating the Young: Course Material, Pedagogy and the Rationalization of Knowledge in Bamako's Médersas.

In the so-called "information age," the unprecedented access to sources of information and Islamic knowledge throughout the Muslim World and in certain segments of the population in Mali has significantly changed relations in terms of religious authority. Government officials, the more traditional Islamic scholars, and the established religious leaders have seen their authority over religious knowledge questioned and eroded as they lost their monopoly over literate culture.[642] Muslims everywhere are now more self-reflexive about their own faith and question it, with the aid of the didactic material they now have access to, in order to reflect upon it and defend their faith (in an argument) if need be. In the words of Eickelman: "It is no longer sufficient to 'be' Muslim and to follow Muslim practices."[643] One now needs various types of knowledge in order to become a productive citizen of Mali as well as a different approach to knowledge that has not traditionally been found in qur'anic education: one where understanding and reasoning is emphasized over memorization.

The Official Program of the Ministry of Education and the Domestication of Islamic Schooling.

The domestication of médersas, reminiscent of attempts at the domestication of Islam under the French colonial authorities, by the government of Mali was a multi-step process which should not yet be considered successful from the official point of view. The history of the official integration of médersas into the Malian educational system has been well covered by many authors and discussed in chapter two.[644] I will therefore limit myself to the main events leading to full integration insofar as they led to creation of more Islamic schools and exemplify the standardization of Islamic knowledge within the médersas.

Under French colonial rule, as well as during the first three decades of independence in Mali, successive governments, after their attempts at suppressing médersas (arabo-islamic) failed, developed a new policy, coined "malign neglect" by Louis Brenner.[645] As I have demonstrated in chapter two, successive governments after independence mainly ignored Islamic médersas by denying them the status of educational

[642] Dale Eickelman, "Inside the Islamic Reformation," *The Wilson Quarterly* 22, 1 (1998): 82.
[643] Eickelman, "Inside the Islamic Reformation," 85.
[644] For an in depth discussion of the historical process of domestication of the médersas in Mali in the 1980s and the resistance of médersa owners, see Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 257- 273.
[645] Louis Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," in *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*, ed. Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 202.

institutions. When the government had to notice them, it would be primarily to malign the médersas. That was the case, until the 1980s when the financially bankrupt Malian state realized that médersas offered the opportunity to educate large numbers of children while also attracting funds from external donors. The first indication that the government of Mali was taking the médersas into account in its larger plan for education in Mali was the transfer of responsibility: oversight of the médersas was transferred from the Ministry of the Interior and its Religious Affairs Department to the Ministry of Education in 1982. In 1985, the government of Moussa Traoré formally integrated médersas into the state's education system by granting them the status of primary schools in which Arabic was the language of instruction and religious education was part of the curriculum.[646] Malian arabisants and their médersas were made (although they did not let it happen easily) to be pawns in the fight for legitimacy by the Malian dictatorial government of Moussa Traoré. Indeed, where the state lacked legitimacy, it tried to co-opt the Islamic schooling system by organizing it, officializing it, and secularizing it.[647]

The government of Mali enforced the implementation of a uniform curriculum for all Malian médersas as well as uniform testing of médersa school children (in officially recognized schools) for the *Certificat Primaire* (Primary Certificate, after grade 6) and the *Diplôme d'Études Fondamentales* (Fundamental studies diploma, after grade 9). These examinations are a way for the government to both assess the quality of the students and influence that quality by using the results as leverage.[648] The attempt by the Malian state (by no means yet completed) to manage and regulate all of modern Islamic education in the country had unintended consequences similar to those Hefner sees happening throughout the Muslim world.

> For state officials intent on managing religious education, the benefits of objectifying Islam seemed obvious. Religious knowledge could be packed into curricular modules and disseminated in mass educational programs. In doing so, it was hoped, the political message of that knowledge could also be stabilized and made regime-friendly. But marketing mass religious education in this way encouraged other actors to think of religion in a similarly disembedded, formulaic, and political manner. It was not long, therefore, before other, nonstate actors began to create modular Islams of their own. The result was that the religious market-place became more pluralized and competitive.[649]

In 1985, in its attempt to regulate the curriculum of Islamic schools in order to standardize religious knowledge and practices, the Malian government inadvertently created a notable degree of opposition in the médersa constituencies who organized themselves, sometimes

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[646] See Appendix M for a copy of the official decree of 1982 and Appendix N for the decree of 1985.
[647] Otayek, "Introduction," 13.
[648] Dinie Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon: The Role of Arabic in Contemporary Mali" (PhD diss., University of Leiden, 2005). 105.
[649] Hefner, "Introduction," 33.

in opposition to the government, to propose their own vision of modern Islamic education. The *Union Nationale des Médersas*, founded by the owners of Naharu Djoliba, the Institut Islamique of Yattabaré, al-Mohamediyya, and al-Hilal al-Islamiyya, was created to propose a "counter-" program to the government after the forced introduction of the official curriculum in 1985. The final result was a compromise: less religious class time than wanted by the médersa constituencies but more than wished for by the government, and even then, a number of médersas refused to apply the program.

The integration of the médersas into the educational system of Mali was met with ambivalence on the part of médersa owners. On the one hand, recognition of the médersas brought many advantages, not least among them that it would make the system of Islamic education perennial. The recognition of the médersas also meant that their examinations would be recognized, therefore allowing students more opportunities for higher education. That, in turn, would boost enrolment since career opportunities would now become a possibility for médersa graduates. On the other hand, recognition meant a greater control over the médersa system by officials from the Ministry of Education. Médersas were used to having complete autonomy and control over the content taught in their classrooms (facilitated by their financial independence due to tuition money or donations from Arab states) but recognition necessarily brought about a standardization of the curriculum in order to bring it closer to the curriculum of public schools. The recognition of diplomas delivered by médersas also entailed the same process of standardization, since students would need to be tested on the same topics as those of public and private French schools. Furthermore, official recognition allowed the state to take control of the financial channels for funding and scholarships that médersa owners had developed over the years (and it has been argued that such was indeed the goal of the government).[650] The negotiations, and their results, between the Malian state and the owners of médersas, represented by the *Union Nationale des Médersas*, over this integration are aptly summarized by Brenner:

> What ensued was a long series of confrontations, relieved by an occasional pause for negotiations. In effect, the Ministry of Education sought to impose this transition unilaterally through a series of decrees, whereas many of the madrasa directors had no intention of being bullied. Negotiations could be fraught, as some directors accused the entire project of being "against Islam," but eventually a set of criteria were established according to which madrasas would be formally recognized as teaching establishments. Their students would be set examinations, in Arabic, equivalent to those set for the state schools. However, the madrasas remained fully private, fee-paying institutions and they received no financial assistance from the state.[651]

[650] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 214.
[651] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 214-215.

This *étatization* of Islamic schooling is a typical feature of the modern state in many countries, although the dates and modalities vary from one place to another. It is largely acknowledged that schooling (who is educated, how, and what is taught) "(...) has played a central role in the making of modern nations, citizens, and religion."[652] This new policy sparked intense debates within the médersa constituencies and the national association of médersa owners. The Institut Islamique de Yattabaré and Naharu Djoliba were at the forefront of the struggle between médersas and the government over the curriculum for Islamic schools; the time constraints on the teaching of religious material was and still is at the centre of the struggle.

After the coup of 1991 and the fall of Moussa Traoré's regime, the *Centre pour la Promotion de la Langue Arabe* (CPLA) was renamed (although the old name continues to be used much more frequently) as the *Division du Contrôle et de l'Animation du Système des Médersas* (DCASM). This new title, as is made evident by its name, foreshadowed a new policy by the now democratic government to impose its control much more actively on the médersas. One of the ways it has done so is to grant official recognition to only those médersas which strictly follow the official curriculum for médersas and who regularly subject themselves to inspection.[653] A number of schools have agreed to do so but later in 1991, Tidiane could still claim that médersas in Bamako, such as the Institut Islamique Khaled ben Abdul Aziz, were still applying the Saudi program in their classes.[654]

Conseillers d'arabe (Arabic inspector), from the local *Conseil d'Animation Pédagogique* (CAP) are sent to médersas in an effort to enforce government control.[655] The inspectors from the CAP, within the numerous schools under their responsibility, visit classes unannounced, assess the quality of education provided in the school and make recommendations as to how to improve the quality if necessary. However, as Aboubacar Touré, *conseiller d'Arabe* at the CAP of Bozola (in Bamako), explained to me, his recommendations are rarely taken into account for various reasons all ultimately related to the lack of leverage on the médersas: 1) He alone is in charge of many schools which he cannot visit as often as he should; 2) the CAP provides no financial help to address the problems faced by médersas; 3) additional training for teachers is not offered by the CAP (but by the *Académie d'Enseignement*) and is rarely available;[656] and 4) a médersa's

652 Hefner, "Introduction," 13.

653 Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 102.

654 Cheick Amadou Tidiane, "Les Jeunes et les Médersas. Étude de Cas: L'Institut Islamique Khaled ben Abdul Aziz" (M.A. Thesis, University of Bamako, École Normale Supérieure, 1991), 16.

655 I have explained the organigram and function of the CAP in chapter two.

656 At the *Académie d'Enseignement de la Rive-Gauche*, Mr. Tounkara provided me with the following list of training sessions offered for médersa teachers: animation techniques and methods for 82 French teachers (May 14th to 18th 2007), Initiation to the approach "School, friend of children, friend of girls" given by the UNICEF for 200 médersas teachers (September 11th to 14th, 2007), Didactic training for 25 médersa high school teachers (December 17th to 22nd, 2007), Training in school administration for 55

official recognition is rarely taken away by the government and he therefore has little leverage. Despite this, all officially registered médersas I visited in Bamako claim to be visited by an Arabic inspector from their local CAP once a month.

The standardization of knowledge and its attempted domestication by political authorities is further exemplified by the testing of médersa students who are now subjected to the same examinations as all other Malian students, albeit in Arabic.

> [...] teachers in madrasas may have a general impression of every student, but cannot know their individual progress. Instead, madrasas assess students' knowledge with uniform exams for the entire class. In 6th, 9th, and 12th classes, exams are the same for all (recognized) madrasas across the country. With diplomas attached to the exams in the 6th, 9th, and 12th classes, the students' level of knowledge is "objectively" defined in relation to one another.[657]

As a result of this increased bureaucracy, the traditional, personal, three-way, relationship between the teacher, the student, and knowledge found in qur'anic schools has been completely changed in the setting of médersas.

Compared to the struggles over the content of the médersas' official curriculum at the fundamental level, the implementation of uniform testing went relatively easily. Such is not the case for the *baccalauréat* examination which, like the curriculum for lycée médersas, has been subject to intense controversy. Between 1985 (official recognition of médersas as educational institutions) and 1993, the *baccalauréat* examination and the attached diploma delivered by médersas were recognized by the Malian government. After that date, which coincides with the change of regime in Mali and the instalment of the democratically elected government of Alpha Oumar Konaré, the right to grant *baccalauréat* diplomas was taken away until further negotiations on the content of the curriculum could be completed.

> The new Minister of Education interrupted the official organization – and, implicitly, recognition – of the *baccalauréat* in 1993, "awaiting the elaboration of official programs for the secondary madrasa education." The stated reason for the government not to recognize the madrasa *baccalauréat* any longer was the level of French in the madrasas, which was considered insufficient for access to higher education in Mali. It thus appears that the question of the *baccalauréat* could really be a means of pressure on the madrasa directors to further francophonize [*sic*] their teaching if they want to become fully recognized educational institutions.[658]

médersa principals (February 13th to 24th, 2008), and Didactic training for 40 teachers (in 2009). Since 2009, PHARE (American NGO discussed previously in chapter three) offers most of the training sessions available to médersa teachers.

657 Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 68-69.

658 Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 105.

During this time, médersa students had only two options to receive an officially recognized *baccalauréat* diploma which would grant them access to institutions of higher learning in Mali. Firstly, they could transfer, before the *baccalauréat* exam, to a public school or a private (French) school and take the examination as a student from that type of institution. This was only possible for students who either had an extremely good level in French for various reasons, or those who could afford intense private tutoring in French before the examination.[659] In any case, it meant that the student in question had to leave the Arabo-Islamic education path altogether, which often defeated the purpose of sending them to médersas in the first place.[660] Second, a student could attend the médersa Franco-Arabe of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye. With a *Dimplôme d'Études Fondamentale* from officially recognized médersas, children could be accepted, for free, at the Centre Culturel, the only médersa granting a *baccalauréat* recognized by the government prior to 2007. As I have already discussed, the Centre Culturel was originally founded with funds from a Lybian-Emirati organization as a genuine Arabo-Islamic médersa but changed to become a Franco-Arab médersa in 1996 following a takeover by the Malian government. Although the school remains private and the funds still come from abroad, the government co-opted the school and changed the language of instruction to French; Arabic and religious courses were reduced to only two hours a week.[661] However, the number of students who could enrol at the Centre Culturel was minimal when compared to the number of students coming out of médersas all over Bamako and Mali. This was an untenable situation in the long term.

French is clearly part of the curriculum of médersas as well as, historically, a major bone of contention between médersa owners and the Ministry of Education and a tool in the struggles between the two. I have chosen to discuss the question of French here briefly, and will discuss it further on the section addressing specifically the question of the curriculum, because the teaching of French relates directly to the future opportunities of médersa students on the job market and has been instrumentalized by the government as well as by the médersas.

> French is taught in all madrasas for at least two hours and usually no more than five hours a week, starting in the 3rd to 7th class depending on the madrasa. According to the official curriculum for madrasas, students have to study French at least once a week, but unlike in public schools, French is not the language of instruction. It is taught as a foreign language subject, sometimes next to English in higher classes. Many madrasas bear the name *madrasa franco-arabe*, but the teaching of French is as compared to Arabic is always limited. In addition, teachers of french in madrasas often have no diploma from a French school so that the level of French is generally low. One madrasa director expressed the attitude towards the teaching of French in madrasas as follows: Since French is the

[659] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 107.
[660] See chapter three on educational strategies adopted by parents.
[661] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 107.

> official language of the Republic of Mali, it is taught in madrasas for two hours a week, which is deemed sufficient to achieve the basic knowledge required to fulfil one's duties as a citizen.[662]

Two médersas Franco-Arab I have worked with, at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye and al-Amir Ahmad ben Abdul Aziz, use French as the language of instruction for their students and the level is, as far as I could assess it, adequate. Mr. Sissoko, director of studies at the médersa of the Centre Culturel Islamic de Hamdallaye, explained to me that, now, Arabic is only used in this médersa in "religious" classes and nowhere else. All the other classes are offered in French only. However, there is no doubt that the poor level of French achieved by médersa students overall is a significant problem which is well known to the médersa constituencies and has been addressed sporadically.

The question of French has become, for both some médersas and the Ministry of education, a privileged site of power struggles. The government can withhold official recognition of médersas based on the quality of French taught in médersas or refuse their candidates for the *baccalauréat*. For example, the government of Mali now requires médersa students to undertake an *année préparatoire* during the lycée before taking the *baccalauréat* examination – unless they are registered as "free candidates," i.e., not associated with a specific school. That preparatory year is intended to improve the level of French for médersa students. The Institut Islamique of Yattabaré has implemented this preparatory year which comes as no surprise since Mr. Abdul Aziz Yattabaré personally participated in the elaboration of this program. The Franco-Arab médersas I have worked with do not require the *année préaparatoire*. The Naharu Djoliba Institute has not applied it so far and has therefore not entered any students for the *baccalauréat* examination. Mr. Kansaye has refused since 2002 to apply the program (although he does follow it very closely except for the *année préparatoire*) because, he insists, the *année préparatoire* is not good for his students who end up wasting a year since their level in French is already acceptable. However, he did tell me that he would implement it for the 2011-2012 school year so his students will have access to higher education. For médersas, as will be addressed below, French has become one of the major factors in the "identity crisis" of a system where religious and Arabic education is left aside in order to move to a more standardized program of education leading to a recognized diploma and granting access to higher education and the Malian job market.

Despite the *année préparatoire* imposed on médersa students, results for the *baccalauréat* remain dismal, a fact that is blamed on the lack of mastery of French by a number of médersa principals and directors of studies. The following table of results, for a selection of médersas in Bamako, at the national *baccalauréat* examinations was based on data reported to me directly or to the Ministry of education in the school's annual report.

[662] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 68.

Rate of passage at the national *baccalauréat* examination.

	Number of candidates	Series[663]	2009-2010 school year
Lycée privé franco-arabe Kankou Moussa[664]	42	LL	18.60%
Lycée Privé franco-arabe Maahad al-Ouloum al-Islamiyat[665]	23	SH	29,16%
Lycée Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye[666]	34	SB, SE	24.00%
Lycée Sabil el-Nadjah[667]	312	LL, SH, SB, and SE	14,64%
Institut Islamique de Yattabaré	NA	NA	30.00%

In light of this table, however, one should keep in mind that the national passage rate for the *baccalauréat* in 2009-2010 was 29%.[668] For an example of the examination for students in the 12th grade, the *baccalauréat* exam, see Appendix T. This copy of the 2010 Ministry of Education-approved examinations for the Language and Literature stream and the Social Sciences stream in Arabic was provided to me by Abdul Aziz Yattabaré, owner and director of the Institut Islamique in Médina Coura and the director of the National Association of Médersa Owners. Despite these results for the *baccalauréat*, one should note that, at the national examination for the *Diplôme d'Études Fondamentale* (DEF, after grade 9), médersas do comparatively quite well, as is evident by the following numbers for the 2009-2010 school year in the CAP of Torokorobougou, which can be considered as representative of the situation in Bamako. The percentage of passage for the médersas at the DEF is 58,2% while it is of 12,6% for public schools, 29,5% for private schools, and 30,8% for community schools.[669]

[663] Series are the specialities chosen by students in their last year of lycée and for which a different *baccalauréat* examination is offered. LL = Language and Literature; SH = Social Sciences; SB = Biological Sciences; SE = Exact Sciences.

[664] Lycée privé franco-arabe Kankou Moussa, *Rapport de Fin d'Année 2009-2010* (Bamako, 2010).

[665] Lycée Privé franco-arabe Maahad al-Ouloum al-Islamiyat, *Rapport de Fin d'Année 2009-2010* (Bamako, 2010), 7.

[666] Lycée Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye. *Rapport de Fin d'Année2 009-2010* (Bamako, 2010), 10. Mr. Sissoko, director of studies at the Centre Culturel Islamique was keen to point out that, for the 2008-2009 school year, the students had done much better with 61% admitted for the SB series and 69% for the SE series. He could not explain this significant drop in the percentage of admission.

[667] Lycée Sabil el-Nadjah. *Rapport de Fin d'Année 2009-2010* (Bamako, 2010), 9.

[668] David Dembele, "Baccalauréat 2010 : un taux d'admission de 29% contre 34,90% l'année dernière," *Journal du Mali.com,* August 6, 2010.

[669] Centre d'Animation Pédagogique de Torokorobougou. *Rapport de Fin d'Année 2009-2010*, (Bamako, 2010), 19.

The question of language – Arabic for education and French in order to succeed on the job market – takes on tremendous importance in Malian médersas. Indeed, the requisite knowledge of both languages and the place of each in their respective spheres is a constant subject of debate within the médersa constituencies as well as in the offices of the CPLA within the Ministry of Education. It relates to the position médersa constituencies take vis-à-vis tradition and modernity, where Arabic is made to stand for tradition and French for modernity without mutual exclusion but rather as complementary. Knowledge of French allows for full participation in the public sphere as well as in the job market while knowledge of Arabic (here associated with knowledge of Islam) renders one morally stronger to face the challenges of modernity. As Lukens-Bull explains in the case of *pesantren* in Indonesia (and therefore dealing with the use of English rather than French): "English was viewed as the language of modernity and globalization; without it one cannot escape the peripheral position in the world economic and political order. Arabic was viewed as the language of worldwide confessional community (...)."[670]

Course Material and Pedagogy in Bamako's Médersas.

Médersas, as explained previously, were meant to combine the best of both types of schools found on Mali's territory historically: French schools developed by the colonizing authorities and qur'anic schools (and *majlis*) which have a long established tradition locally. The innovative nature of médersas in Mali, as a response to deep social changes, is evident in both the structure and the pedagogy of these new schools,[671] and in how they define themselves in opposition to and also as inspired by qur'anic schools as well as French schools.

The differences between médersas and traditional qur'anic schools, although they both aim at transmitting Islamic knowledge, are mostly in the "very different 'structures of thought' concerning the nature of Islamic knowledge itself, and how and to whom it should be transmitted."[672] In Mali's médersas, three types of knowledge are to be found. Firstly, religious knowledge is gained in courses covering the Qur'an, the *hadîth*, theology, jurisprudence, qur'anic recitation, the life of the prophet, and other related topics. Second, Arabic is covered, as both the sacred language of Islam and a modern tool of communication, in various courses touching on grammar, morphology, reading, writing, and rhetoric. Last, most domains of scientific knowledge are covered in classes on the natural sciences (biology, botanic, geography), on the exact sciences (mathematics, physics, chemistry), and on the social sciences (history, sociology, philosophy).[673]

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[670] Ronald Lukens-Bull, "Two Sides of the Same Coin: Modernity and Tradition in Islamic Education in Indonesia," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 32, 3 (2001): 361.
[671] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 202.
[672] Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 7.
[673] Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 92.

Traditional qur'anic education and modern Islamic schooling differ greatly in their use of languages and the understanding of Arabic as a language of communication as well as the sacred language of religious knowledge. The first developers of médersas in Mali introduced Modern Standard Arabic as a language to be learned in its own right as well as the language of instruction for both secular and religious subjects which were to co-exist in the busy schedule of médersa students. This is very important: Arabic is learned for its own sake, not solely as the language of religion (although it remains important). This approach is in striking contrast to traditional religious education where the mastery of Arabic (if ever mastered) was chiefly to memorize religious texts.

> The first goal to be achieved in modern Arabic education is the acquisition of Arabic, and not the memorization of religious texts, even if proficiency in Arabic is ultimately understood as a tool for better access to religious texts. The first goal of teaching Arabic is also reflected in the nature of texts studied in madrasas. Texts differ substantially from those studied in traditional Islamic education, where most texts are authentic religious texts and all texts are written in classical Arabic. In madrasas, the texts employed for the teaching of Arabic are *composed* for the teaching of Arabic, and moreover, geared to the children's perception of their environment. They are easily accessible and imitable both through their content and the use of a simplified form of Modern Standard Arabic, and become increasingly complex in higher classes.[674]

In principle, all course material is taught in Arabic except for French (which is learnt as a second language) but, in reality the use of vernacular languages is common in the lower years since students entering the médersa usually do not speak Arabic. The use of vernaculars gradually diminishes during and beyond first grade. As Bouwman, who wrote a dissertation specifically on the use of Arabic in Malian schools, explains, the first years of schooling present a particular challenge for teachers since children do not speak Arabic at all prior to coming to school. However, students of the lower classes master "(...) the Arabic alphabet, reading, understanding, grammar, and lexicon."[675] This is done in a slow, progressive manner where young students are introduced to essential words used in the classroom in Arabic but where the use of vernaculars still dominates for explanations.

> In lower classes, meta-communication between teacher and students during lessons is partly in Arabic and partly in a Malian language, but teachers try to speak in Arabic to children as much as possible from the 1st class. To this end, they teach children in 1st class all words and expressions necessary for meta-communication, such as "get up", "sit down", "read", "good", "wrong", and especially the "ana, mu'allim!" ("Me, teacher!"), which children shout enthusiastically in chorus to get a turn whenever the teacher

[674] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 70.
[675] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 67.

> asks a question. In this way, and even with a very limited lexicon, children are led to use Arabic as a language of communication early on.[676]

The use of vernaculars can happen until quite late in a child's education if the Arabic word is considered very difficult to grasp but it is unlikely to happen at the lycée level when students know enough Arabic for any explanations to be limited to this language.

When students become more proficient in Arabic, instructors' use of vernaculars becomes very rare, typically limited to explaining complicated terms. "In higher classes Arabic is taught according to the traditional Arabic language subjects, which comprise *naḥw* (syntax) and *ṣarf* (morphology), sometimes named together as *qawâ'id* (rule of grammar), and *'adab* (literarture); as well as the modern language subjects *inshâ'* (essay writing), *imlâ'* (orthography), *muḥâdatha* (conversation), and *mufradât* (lexicon)."[677] Kane has pointed out the specific difficulties of teaching Arabic as well as Islamic knowledge to Malian children as opposed to Arab children in a plea for an adaptation of médersas' pedagogy to the local specificities. The simple fact that Arab children know Arabic prior to entering school, as opposed to Malian children, requires adaptation in the pedagogical methods. Furthermore, a Malian médersa student will not speak Arabic outside of school and has therefore limited access to various stimuli to improve his grammar and vocabulary. Actors in the Islamic environment in Mali, including preachers on television or in mosques, typically speak in Arabic, but at a level that is inaccessible to the child, disallowing access to an Islam-impregnated environment.[678]

The difficulties faced by médersas in terms of languages are not limited to the use of Arabic as the language of teaching as it is not students' first language (francophone public and private schools face the same problem) or the use of vernacular language in the lower classes. As I have touched upon previously, French language has become an issue in médersas as well. Médersas that want their students to have access to higher education and/or the job market in Mali have been keen to emphasize French as a useful tool. More and more hours of class have been dedicated to French and some médersas (in increasing numbers although I do not have precise statistics), such as al-Amir Ahmad ben Abdul Aziz, revert to using French as the language of teaching in their médersas except in religious classes. In either case, whether they augment the number of hours dedicated to French class or whether they drop the use of Arabic as the language of teaching, these médersas participate in the standardization of knowledge in Mali. Indeed, by letting go of hours previously dedicated to religious education (the only hours that can be cut to make more space for French according to the official program) or completely transferring to French, médersas are partly relinquishing one of their primary aims as institutions of religious education and moving towards the application of a standard Malian program of education.

[676] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 69.
[677] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 67.
[678] Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 99-100.

Common textbooks found in médersas all over Mali are the *al-Tilâwa al-Ifrîqiyya li-l-madâris al-'arabiyya*,[679] a series of five volumes in Modern Standard Arabic published in Morroco. The series aims directly at West African children who are not Arabophone, evident in the way the alphabet is presented:

> The first volume starts the first lesson with the introduction of the Arabic letter *bâ* together with all short and long vowels. All other letters (consonant) and tokens of the Arabic alphabet are introduced one letter at a time in a single lesson in the subsequent 39 lessons. The letters are not introduced according to alphabetical order, but according to the degree of difficulty, i.e. difficulty of pronunciation for non-native speakers and distance from letters common in most other languages. With the introduction of each new letter, the lessons introduce new words containing both the new letter and the previously introduced letters. Each lesson is accompanied by colourful pictures that reveal the meaning of the new words and the content of the stories.[680]

This method of teaching the alphabet is strikingly different from the one used in qur'anic schools where letters are introduced in the order in which they appear in the first verses of the Qur'an and are not accompanied by any explanations about the meaning of the words. From the first to the fifth booklet of the series, texts are composed for Arabic learners; from the fifth booklet on, texts from authentic Arabic literature, accompanied by biographical notes on the author, are introduced. At the end of the fifth book, students are proficient enough in Modern Standard Arabic to have conversations about their daily lives and various other topics; Arabic grammar is mastered and the vocabulary used by students is extensive.[681]

Interestingly, and before moving on to the religious content of classes in Bamako's médersas, the *al-Tilâwa al-Ifrîqiyya* series is, if moralizing, purged of most explicit references to religion except for short mentions of basic Islamic practices of fasting during Ramadan and the *hajj*. Even in the cases where Islam is clearly the topic of the lesson, it is "(...) treated as a set of ritualized practices and as part of a general culture (...)."[682] The books do transmit moral values (love of parents, school, punctuality, obedience, respect, care for people and animals, and carefulness regarding various dangers) which are not up for discussion but none of them are explicitly framed in a religious discourse. The characters in the books are chiefly presented as good citizens "(...) who live according to their duties as subject of the (monarchic) state rather than as Muslims who live according to their duties as devote believers."[683] This speaks clearly to a "this-wordly" orientation of Islam within the textbooks where one is (re-)presented first

679 "African reader for the Arabic madrasas."
680 Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 70-71.
681 Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 71-72.
682 Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 72.
683 Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 72.

and foremost as a citizen whose behaviour must respect the demands of the state and then as a Muslim whose practice must not infringe on the citizen's duties.

The religious education provided in médersas, like the schools themselves, is a hybrid product which combines subjects taught in traditional qur'anic schools with a modern pedagogy. As Bouwman explains:

> The religious subjects taught are similar to those in traditional Islamic education and comprise Koran, *fiqh*, *ḥadîth*, *tafsîr*, *sîra* (the life of the prophet Muhammad), *tawḥîd*, *tajwîd* (the art of Koranic recitation), and Islamic history. The reading of the Koran is taught from the 1st class, whereas other religious subjects are taught from the 2nd or 3rd classes. Unlike traditional Islamic education, religious subjects are studied next to each other at the same level and from early years.[684]

This contributes to the standardization of knowledge insofar as various religious topics are treated here as independent subjects which ought to be learned by students regardless of their overall knowledge of religious duties and their personal achievements in piety. This is particularly striking in the case of the class on jurisprudence. Most Malian médersa offer such a class in which rites and obligations are taught as well as the legal procedural steps for commercial exchanges, marriage, and other social activities. However jurisprudence is taught completely separately from its basic sources, the Qur'an and the hadiths, which are themselves taught as independent classes.[685] Historically,

> [t]he study and transmission of religious knowledge (*'ilm*) have always been at the heart of Islamic tradition. Islam is a religion of the Book and religious commentary, and most Muslims regard religious studies as a form of worship in its own right. [...] Like Aristotle in the ancient world, Muslim authorities also regarded ethical education as essential for the formation of virtuous subjects and the maintenance of the common good.[686]

Although, as I explain here, the modes of transmission of religious knowledge have significantly changed within the setting of médersas, the ideal of creating a virtuous, complete, individual is still very much at the heart of the educational enterprise and also something sought after by parents of médersa students. In modern médersas, the traditional idea of a progressive learning of religious topics depending on the student's personal moral development and knowledge is completely dropped; as is the practice in traditional qur'anic schools of children's memorization of the Qur'an, followed by the study of other religious texts.

In médersas, students learn by heart some of the *sûra al-Fâtiḥa* as well as other shorter *sura* which are necessary to properly perform the daily prayers, while some other *sura* which do not require memorization are simply written on the board and explained.[687]

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[684] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 67-68.
[685] Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 97.
[686] Hefner, "Introduction," 4-5.
[687] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 79.

The focus, especially in the lower class, is not a proper recitation but rather on the basic knowledge of the relevant passages for everyday purposes such as prayers.[688] The recitation lessons (*tajwîd*), due to time constraints, are mostly intended to teach children how to approach and read the Qur'an with the necessary reverence while the *fiqh* classes, although involving much discussions in both Arabic and vernaculars, do not involve any memorization. In no way do the médersas of present-day Mali offer a religious education that can compare to the advanced knowledge students can gain in the traditional system of qur'anic schools and *majlis*.[689]

The content of religious courses in Bamako's médersas is basic and non-controversial: it is meant to give the students a basic knowledge of their religion allowing them to perform adequately their daily duties as Muslims. Mr. Sissoko, director of studies at the médersa of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye, when discussing the curricular activities of the school, brushed off the topic of religious courses in a single sentence: "We teach the student how to pray correctly, not much more." Despite the fading away of some traditional instruction in Islamic knowledge, the formation of a virtuous person, knowledgeable in religious matters as well as secular ones is still very important to the médersa constituencies although it does not always translate into the number of hours that both parents and educators might wish be spent on religious topics weekly.

The official curriculum for the médersas[690] does provide details for the program to be applied in médersas' religious classes. As the following examples show, all the topics covered are basic and uncontroversial, allowing the student a better understanding of Islam, historically, theologically and in practice as standard set of beliefs and practices worldwide. The reading of the Qur'an, in elementary school (from grade 1 to 9) is undertaken by médersa students in the Qur'an class and the distribution of the suras over the years is as follow:

> 1st grade: From the beginning of Sura al-Fatihah to Sura al-Zalzalah (17 suras[691] recitation of Qur'an through Tajweed, along with memorization).
> 2nd grade: From the beginning of Sura al-Bayinah to end of Sura al-`Ala (12 suras[692] recitation of Qur'an through Tajweed, along with memorization).

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688 Kane, "L'enseignement islamique dans les médersas du Mali," 94.

689 Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 203.

690 Produced by the Ministry of Education of Mali in partnership with various médersa owners and which I bought at the Institut Islamique of Yattabaré.

691 First term: Sura al-Fatihah; Sura al-Nas; Sura al-Falaq; Sura al-Ikhlas; Sura al-Masad; Sura al-Nasr. Second term: Sura al-Kafirun; Sura al-Kawthar; Sura al-Ma`un; Sura Quraysh; Sura al-Fil; Sura al-Humazah. Third term: Sura al-Asr; Sura al-Takathur; Sura al-Qari`ah; Sura al-`Adiyat; Sura al-Zalzalah; General Review.

692 First term: Sura al-Bayinah; Sura al-Qadr; Sura al-`Alaq; Sura al-Tin.
Second term: Sura al-Sharh; Sura al-Duha; Sura al-Layl; Sura al-Shams; Sura al-Balad.
Third term: Sura al-Fajr; Sura al-Ghashiah; Sura al-`Ala; General Review.

3rd grade: From the beginning of Sura al-Tariq to end of Sura al-Naba (9 suras[693] recitation of Qur'an through Tajweed, along with memorization).
4th grade: From the beginning of Sura al-Mursalat to end of Sura al-Ma`arij (8 suras[694] recitation of Qur'an through Tajweed, along with memorization).
5th grade: From the beginning of Sura al-Haqah to end of Sura al-Taghabun (6 suras[695] recitation of Qur'an through Tajweed, along with memorization).
6th grade: From the beginning of Sura al-Munafiqun to end of Sura al-Mujadalah (7 suras[696] recitation of Qur'an through Tajweed, along with memorization).
7th grade: Sura al-Dhariyat – Sura al-Tur – Sura al-Najm – Sura al-Qamar – Sura al-Rahman – Sura al-Hadid – Sura al-Waqi`ah.[697]
8th grade: Sura al-Ahqaf – Sura Muhammad – Sura al-Fath – Sura al-Hujurat – Sura Qaf.[698]
9th grade: Sura al-Shura – Sura al-Zukhruf – Sura al-Dukhan – Sura al-Jathiyah.[699]

The *tawhid* classes,[700] where religion is first "explained" to médersa students, is taught in a different class from the Qur'an itself and so are classes pertaining to Islamic law,[701] Islamic ethics,[702] hadiths and *tafsîr*. Again, I argue that the division of Islamic knowledge into classes where topics are neatly divided and coexist on the same level as secular

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693 First term: Sura al-Tariq; Sura al-Buruj; Sura al-Inshiqaq; Sura al-Mutafifin.
Second term: Sura al-Infitar; Sura al-Takwin; Sura `Abasa.
Third term: Sura al-Nazi`at; Sura al-Naba; General Review.

694 First term: Sura al-Mursalat; Sura al-Insan; Sura al-Qiyamah.
Second term: Sura al-Muddaththir; Sura al-Muzammil; Sura al-Jin.
Third term: Sura Nuh; Sura al-Ma`arij; General Review.

695 First term: Sura al-Haqah; Sura al-Qalam.
Second term: Sura al-Mulk; Sura al-Tahrim.
Third term: Sura al-Talaq; Sura al-Taghabun; General Review.

696 First term: Sura al-Munafiqun; Sura al-Jum`ah.
Second term: Sura al-Saff; Sura al-Mumtahinah.
Third term: Sura al-Hashr; Sura al-Mujadalah; General Review.

697 First term: From the beginning of Sura al-Dhariyat to when He (Glory be unto Him) says: "and to Him is the End and Beginning…." the 25th verse from Sura al-Najm.
Second term: From His saying (Glory be unto Him) in Sura al-Najm: "How many is there an angel in the heavens..." to His saying (Glory be unto Him): "So which of your Lord's bounties will you both deny?" verse 40 from Sura al-Rahman.
Third term: From His saying (Glory be unto Him) in Sura al-Rahman: The guilty will be recognized by their mark…" verse 41 to the end of Sura al-Waqi`ah.

698 First term: From the beginning of Sura al-Ahqaf to verse 29 of Sura Muhammad.
Second term: From verse 29 from Sura Muhammad to the end of Sura al-Hujurat
Third term: From the beginning of Sura Qaf to its end.

699 First term: From the beginning of Sura Fusilat to His saying (Glory be unto Him): "Perhaps you may be guided…" from Sura al-Zukhruf.
Second term: From verse 11 of Sura al-Zukhruf to verse 93 from Sura al-Dukhan.
Third term: Beginning from verse 94 of Sura al-Dukhan to the end of Sura al-Jathiyah.

700 See Appendix U for the details of the program.

701 See Appendix V for the details of the program.

702 See Appendix W for the details of the program.

classes participates in the standardization of knowledge by placing them all on the same plane. A look at the timetable from Naharu Djoliba and the Lycée of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye[703] clearly indicates that, from the point of view of the student, religious topics take up few slots in an otherwise quite busy week in school. Furthermore, a series of studies undertaken in the early 1990s at the *École Normal Supérieure* of Bamako under the supervision of Mamadou Lamine Traoré and with funding from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies[704] have shown that médersa students of the second cycle (7, 8 and 9th grade) tend to consider "religious topics" as the easiest classes, the ones in which they do not have to invest much effort. The coexistence of religious and secular topics is nowhere as evident as in the Islamic ethics course where recommendations for the behaviour of children are taken indiscriminately from religious ethics and local cultural practices.

Very importantly, when considering Islamic education as provided in Mali's médersas, one should keep in mind the differences in method as compared to traditional qur'anic education: memorization's centrality fades to make place for the understanding of the texts. This is only possible possible when students have mastered Arabic, which is done in médersas, as opposed to qur'anic schools which have never taught Arabic as a living language. "The relevance of proficiency in Arabic in relation to its role as a tool to a better understanding of Islam is also a central issue in the contemporary Islamic discourse in Mali."[705] This perspective leads to a situation which most médersa owners and founders I have spoken to would not admit: a lessening of the centrality of Islam in médersa education, accompanied by a shifting emphasis towards a mastery of Arabic as a spoken, living, language.

> Through modern language teaching methods and material geared to the teaching of Arabic and not Islam, students acquire considerable proficiency in Arabic to which those educated in traditional Islamic education cannot compare. By contrast, although the teaching of Islam is considered important in madrasa education, too, the knowledge of Islam acquired is limited as compared to traditional Islamic education. Students neither read nor memorize entire books of the Islamic literature.[706]

Despite this fact, however, médersa education is still chosen by parents because of the common assumption that Arabic education is an Islamic education, and one that can also afford children a chance on the job market by teaching them various skills, and also French.

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[703] See Appendix X for the weekly timetable of these two médersas. Photocopied for me by Mr. Kansaye at Naharu Djoliba and Mr. Sissoko at the Centre Culturel.

[704] See for example Tidiane, "Les Jeunes et les Médersas." and Hamadoun Tolo, "Les Jeunes et les Médersas. Cas de l'Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba de Bamako" (M.A. Thesis, University of Bamako, École Normale Supérieure, 1991).

[705] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 80.

[706] Bouwman, "Throwing Stones at the Moon," 188.

The Rationalization and Generalization of Knowledge.

The very idea of teaching religious classes alongside secular ones,[707] the sometimes forcible imposition of a national curriculum for médersas during the 1980s and 1990s, and the push by both the government and médersa entrepreneurs to make Islamic schooling available to an ever wider public has led to the standardization of religious knowledge. The rationalization process I discuss here refers to the ever greater integration of the médersa school system "into the contemporary political economy, financially, pedagogically, socially, and even politically."[708] The change in both the method and the content of Islamic teaching in Mali's médersas can be summarized as follow:

> [A] new rationalized epistemology began to appear that eroded esoteric concepts of knowledge. Of course, the divine revelation of the Qur'an continues to provide ultimate guidance for the behavior of Muslims, and also is considered superior to all secular forms of knowledge. But according to this rationalized epistemology all knowledge, both secular and religious, is acquired by means of the intellect and humans are not seen to have access to other forms of secret or hidden knowledge. Religious devotion becomes separated from the process of acquiring knowledge as such. [...] religious and secular topics are taught side by side, and all knowledge is equally available to everyone (at least in theory).[709]

As opposed to the idea that the Islamic content of a médersa education has been diluted by this standardization, the process of integration of the médersas into the state's educational system, started in the 1980s and still at work today, can alternatively be seen as a victory by the médersa constituencies who, after decades of operating at the margins of the social sphere, have successfully imposed their presence upon Malian society and the state. Conversely, the integration process can also be seen as a victory for the state, which appropriated for itself a functional system of education in the development of which it has not invested any of its own resources.[710] The sometimes conflictual development of the official curriculum of the médersas can be seen as a step in the process of standardization and rationalization of Islamic knowledge as explained by Brenner:

> It was through these conflicts and tensions [over recognition, curriculum, and examinations] that Muslim schooling began to be integrated into the national system of education in Mali. The "rationalization" of Muslim schooling refers to the gradual and conflictive [*sic*] process through which the madrasa constituencies and the state gradually accommodated

[707] See Appendix Y for the official report card delivered by the Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba as exemplifying both the division in religious knowledge in separate classes as well as their teaching side by side secular topics.
[708] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 222.
[709] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 220-221.
[710] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 215.

> themselves to one another. And this transformational process was unavoidable if Muslim schooling were to become relevant to the contemporary social and political context.[711]

This recalls Bayat's theory of the "socialization of the State"; a process which he defines as "(...) conditioning the state and its henchmen to societal sensibilities, ideals, and expectations."[712] This question shall be further addressed below when discussing the social activism of the Malian arabisants by which they seek to influence the state to provide the space for Muslims to be pious within the bounds of a liberal democracy.

Although Islamic knowledge is gained via formal education in médersas where accredited (or not) textbooks are in use, the market of Islamic reading material is much wider and includes publications of all types to which people have access now that literacy is more common.

> Mass schooling has created a wide audience of people who read but are not literary sophisticates, and there has been an explosive growth in what a French colleague of mine, Yves Gonzalez-Quijano, calls generic "Islamic books" -- inexpensive, attractively printed texts intended for such readers. Many address practical questions of how to live as a Muslim in the modern world and the perils of neglecting Islamic obligations, and not to appeal to reason and moderation.[713]

Formal education, TV and radio shows, public sermons, and popular literature on religious subjects are both symptoms and causes of a growing movement in the Muslim population in Mali, and worldwide, towards competing discourses of authority and of an ongoing debate about faith. In sub-Saharan Africa generally, and Mali is no exception, the rise in popularity of printed Islamic literature should be considered alongside the rise of newer media, such as audio and video cassettes, CDs and DVDs.[714] Only recently has Mali seen enough growth in literacy rates for printed media to become influential in the public debate. The most popular genre of Islamic literature is small booklets addressing the basics of Islamic doctrine and the "uncontroversial rules for proper worship and ritual purity."[715] They are usually written in simple Arabic, French, or Bamanankan for a public which has only basic reading skills. Other types of booklets show great concern for "proper everyday behaviour, alongside ritual observance, as a prerequisite for the attainment of both individual salvation and the common good (...)."[716] The concerns expressed in this literature speaks clearly to the idea of an Islam mondain – a this-worldly

[711] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 213.
[712] Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic*, 204.
[713] Eickelman, "Inside the Islamic Reformation," 85.
[714] Francesco Zappa, "Between Standardization and Pluralism: The Islamic Printing Market and its Social Spaces in Bamako (Mali)," in *Media and Religious Transformations in Africa*, ed. Benjamin Soares and Rosalind Hackett (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, Forthcoming), 1.
[715] Zappa, "Between Standardization and Pluralism," 8.
[716] Zappa, "Between Standardization and Pluralism," 8.

oriented practice rendering daily life morally pure – which will be addressed in details in the following section. It also speaks to the standardization of religious knowledge and practices among Malian Muslims insofar as it generalizes uncontroversial practices that all Muslims can agree upon while leaving aside particularities belonging to different traditions historically found in Mali.

De Jorio has provided a useful overview of the scholarship on the public sphere in Mali and came to the conclusion that

> [t]he expansion and diversification of participation have affected not only secular organizations such as women's groups and parties but also religious organizations, so some scholars have talked of the widening of Mali's religious sphere. [...] Muslim intellectuals and clerics have become more vocal and often influential in public politics [...]. They have effectively managed public media and imposed themselves as important and critical reference-points in a number of national debates [...] Furthermore, ordinary Malian Muslims are increasingly engaging in critical reflections on religious texts and participating in religious and political debates. This is particularly the case for debates on issues affecting people's everyday lives such as women's status, women's relations with men, and the relationship between Malian households and the state.[717]

The widening of the public discourse by Muslims and about Islam in Mali is closely linked to the increasing numbers of educated Muslims in the country, as well as to the general liberalization process that followed the fall of Moussa Traoré's dictatorship. In a quasi-circular fashion, the exponential growth of the médersa system is also symptomatic of the the general trend for Muslim voices to be ever more present in the Malian public sphere.[718] One feeds on the other, the bigger the group, the more influential the group becomes which, in turn, attracts more people to the group. "What was clearly occurring in Muslim societies, however, was a pluralization of religious authority and, with it, an intensification of debates over Islam's social meaning and the authorities by whom it is to be defined."[719] However, this diversification of authoritative sources also implies some erosion of traditional authority. Traditional scholarly elites have become marginalized or bypassed completely by pious Muslims who now have direct access to Islamic knowledge both via the médersas and the wider accessibility of Islamic literature. Zappa points out that, "In many cases, one further outcome of these processes seems to be a standardization of religiosity, entailing the adoption of more literalist [*sic*], rigid and impersonal understandings of religious doctrines, as well as a pressure towards a more uniform practice of Islam."[720] The standardization of religiosity and the uniformization of practices

[717] Rosa De Jorio, "Between Dialogue and Contestation: Gender, Islam, and the challenges of a Malian Public Sphere," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15, 1 (2009): S95-S96.

[718] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 215.

[719] Robert W. Hefner, "Public Islam and the Problem of Democratization," *Sociology of Religion* 62, 4 (2001): 495.

[720] Zappa, "Between Standardization and Pluralism," 15.

are consequences of the expanded public sphere in Mali and the widening of the debate about Islam insofar as it fosters a shared, conventional, Muslim identity purged of its particularistic traits.[721]

It is useful to discuss Hirschkind's view of the modern public sphere of Islam as having both a deliberative aspect and a disciplinary function. According to him,

> [a]nalyses focusing on the deliberative aspect have emphasized the possibilities of argument, contestation, and dialogue that have been afforded by the advent of universal modern literacy, the diffusion of printed texts, and the operation of electronic mass media. Following conventional histories of Protestant revolution, this scholarship has given particular emphasis to the role of print and other media technologies in propelling a democratization of religious authority.[722]

The disciplinary functions in the public sphere of Muslim-majority societies are clearly observable in the expansion of media technology bringing about a concomitant expansion of authoritative religious discourse leading to subjection to this authority and a uniformization of the model of moral behaviour.[723] Hirschkind posits that both approaches – the deliberative and the disciplinary – are relevant to the study of the public sphere in Muslim-majority societies insofar as the authoritative discourse of religious leaders about Muslim virtues creates "the ethical conditions for a domain of public deliberation and argumentation (...). In contrast to a space for the formation of opinion through inter-subjective reason (Habermas 1989), this area is geared to the deployment of the disciplining power of ethical speech, a goal that takes public deliberation as one of its modalities."[724]

This process can clearly been seen in action within the Islamic education system of Mali. As early as 1991, Brenner identified the changes in the socialization of Malian children that would inevitably occur due to the increasing number of médersas. Although he did not coin a term for the still amorphous changes that were about to happen, Brenner described them as a profound epistemological shift in the way Islamic knowledge is understood and how Islam itself would be perceived.[725] Ten years later, in 2001, Brenner explained this epistemological shift as the move, within Islamic education in Mali, from an esoteric *episteme* to a rationalistic *episteme*; this was the central argument of *Controlling Knowledge*. In 2001, Lukens-Bull identified similar processes in Indonesia's *pesantren* : "As part of their appropriation of the material of modernity and their subsequent reinvention of modernity, these [religious] leaders have created an educational

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[721] Benjamin Soares, *Islam and the Prayer Economy: History and Authority in a Malian Town* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 239-240.

[722] Charles Hirschkind, "Civic Virtue and Religious Reason: An Islamic Counterpublic," *Cultural Anthropology* 16, 1 (2001): 3.

[723] Hirschkind, "Civic Virtue and Religious Reason," 3.

[724] Hirschkind, "Civic Virtue and Religious Reason," 4.

[725] Brenner, "Introduction: Essai socio-historique sur l'enseignement islamique au Mali," 3.

system to address both the educational needs of a modernizing society as well as guard it against perceived moral decay."[726] I have shown here how these processes, the rationalization of knowledge and the adaptation of curriculum to the demands of a modern society, happened in Bamako's médersas as well as in the larger Malian public sphere. Médersas, as educational establishments attended by an ever greater number of Malians, are prime institutions for social and religious mediation insofar as they have prepared successive generations of youth to enter the public sphere. As Brenner explains, médersas in Mali are giving local youth the tools to debate and question, as well as the limits and the format of this questioning, "(...) the challenges posed by contemporary conditions in Mali, and to speak and act as Muslims in the public arena."[727] Although I do not directly discuss here the reception of all this information by the student body, and that would certainly be an interesting line of enquiry to follow, I discuss in what follows here the ways Muslims who are working in médersas or are former students present themselves in the social sphere.

Creating Citizens: Islam Mondain in Bamako's Médersas.

As a group, Malian arabisants should be understood and analyzed as a "youth movement." The arabisants are very much connected to the wider world and their identity cannot be completely separated from global trends. I argue that the médersa constituencies should be understood as a social movement endowed with agency and made up of individuals who aim at modernizing Islamic schooling in Mali. It is a grassroots movement of typically younger people, re-thinking religious knowledge and its place in society. To better grasp the extent of the connection between Malian arabisants and the global *umma* and the new identities and sensibilities created by such connection, I will use the analytical category developed by Herrera and Bayat which they coined "Muslim Youth." I will address questions of religion and politics: how do arabisants understand their religious practices and beliefs and articulate them in the Malian public sphere, itself democratic and pluralistic?

Clearly, a number of individuals who cannot be classified as "young" are involved in the médersa system and they often hold positions of authority, if only as owners, principals or teachers in médersas. However, by the very fact that we are talking about schools, the bulk of the people concerned are young. Also, because the médersa system is constantly growing, the younger generation of graduates and students is always larger than the group preceding it. As such, and although médersa actors grow old like everyone else, the arabisants should be considered a youth movement:

> While often referred to as the *builders of the future* by the power elite, the young are also stigmatized and feared as "disruptive" agents prone to

[726] Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad*, 8.
[727] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 222.

> radicalism and deviance. Although gender, class, and cultural division may render untenable a homogenous treatment of youths, or even call into question "youth" as an analytical category, it is equally true that the young undeniably share a certain important habitus and historical consciousness that is recognized by both the young themselves as well as by the political establishment and moral authorities.[728]

Mali, as many other countries in the Third World, is part of what is called the "extreme youth bulge societies" in which the 15 to 29 years old cohort represent more than 50% of the total population.[729] As I have explained in chapter three, the economic situation in Mali leaves a great number of youth without formal employment or opportunities and the Malian arabisants, despite their parents' hopes, face the same issues. In Mali, following the democratic transition, more than half the population was younger than 18 years old. Economic reforms and austerity measures have reduced the already scant available job opportunities, leaving the majority of Malians un- or under-employed. The devaluation of the currency by half has increased the hardships of poor families (bread for example, doubled in price overnight).[730] Economic conditions have not improved much (if at all) since the devaluation in 1994 and young médersa graduates suffer from Mali's economic stagnation. The arabisants of Mali share many characteristics with the Muslim youth worldwide with whom they are in constant relationship, as I have previously discussed. Their situation within their own society needs to be constantly re-negotiated and their responses are varied.

> Muslim youth today are struggling to assert their youthfulness, claim rights, and make life transitions in a highly fraught post-9/11 global moment in which they are subject to media scrutiny, surveillance, a range of policy interventions to contain them, influence them, and cultivate in them a strong Islamic identity. But these youths diverge radically among themselves in how to turn their common sentiments into action, how to respond to their status of "subordination."[731]

The facts that the arabisants are young, lack "a future" and face few opportunities to secure a paying job, combined with their clearly Islamic identity might be interpreted to suggest, in the common rhetoric of the post-9/11 world, that Malian arabisants are extremists in the making. Most studies tend to treat young Muslims as either "subjects to

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[728] Asef Bayat and Linda Herrera, "Introduction," in *Being Young and Muslim. New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North*, ed. Linda Herrera and Asef Bayat (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3-4.

[729] Bayat and Herrera, "Introduction," 4.

[730] Benjamin F. Soares, "'Rasta' Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali," in *Being Young and Muslim. New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North*, ed. Linda Herrera and Asef Bayat (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 243-244.

[731] Bayat and Herrera, "Introduction," 10.

stimulate neoliberal development, or as essentially religious and ideological beings with either politically radical or benign tendencies."[732]

Islam Mondain: Moralizing Secular Life.

I have already touched upon Malian arabisants' internal moral debate over considerations of tradition and modernity. Building upon Lukens-Bull's explanation of the re-invention of both tradition and modernity in Indonesia's *pesantren*, I will discuss Islam mondain as a useful conceptualization of the changes in religious practices taking place within segments of the Muslim community in Mali and worldwide. Soares and Osella define Islam mondain as: "(...) the complex ways of being Muslim in the contemporary world in which Muslims reflect upon being Muslims, upon politics, morality, family, consumption, employment, media, entertainment, and so forth (...). *Islam mondain* does not privilege Islam over anything else, emphasizing instead the actual world in which Muslims find themselves."[733]

Lukens-Bull has clearly explained how one of the key issus in modern Islamic education is the idea that both tradition and modernity can and are re-imagined and re-invented and that one cannot be conceptualized as such without the other. Modernity has to be imagined as subject to traditional morality which, in turn, needs to be re-invented to suit present needs as a buffer and temper for modernity: "Both modernity and tradition are negotiated in terms of each other."[734]

> In the case of modernity, before it can be redeemed – in this case made Islamic – it must first be found in need of redemption. That is, modernity must be found un-Islamic or at least potentially dangerous to Islam [yet desirable]. It must then be found redeemable. These are acts of imagination. [...]
>
> In order to construct an Islamic modernity, Islamic tradition must be imagined as compatible with modernity. This implies an active reworking of the concepts involved. Things that are truly compatible do not need to be proclaimed as such. [...]
>
> Once modernity and tradition have been so imagined, they are susceptible to being (re)invented.[735]

The result of such re-working of ideas about modernity and Islamic tradition can be found in the idea of Islam mondain, first utilized by Haenni and Holtrop to describe the practices of Egyptian youths. When talking about 'Amr Khâlid and his sermons, Haenni

[732] Linda Herrera, "Young Egyptians' Quest for Jobs and Justice," in *Being Young and Muslim. New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North*, ed. Linda Herrera and Asef Bayat (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 127.

[733] Benjamin Soares and Filippo Osella, "Islam, Politics, Anthropology," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 15, S1 (2009), S12.

[734] Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad*, 7.

[735] Lukens-Bull, "Two Sides of the Same Coin," 368.

and Holtrop insist that the content of the sermons is highly adapted to a new kind of public in Cairo. This public, mostly composed of youth, is interested in the piety displayed and advocated by 'Amr Khâlid yet is unwilling to renounce the material and social benefits of modernization. The issue is not to preach the rewards in the afterlife to the under-privileged bystanders of globalization but rather to moralize the daily life of the youth reaping the benefits of improved economic conditions: a youth " [...] parfois dorée, éduquée toujours, moderne sur de nombreux plans et, en tous les cas, en proie à des dynamiques d'individuation qui ne peuvent pas ne pas marquer leurs attentes religieuses."[736] Applied more widely, Islam mondain is a form of self-fashioning that allows for the participation in and the producing of modernity as well as being "(...) socially and ethically compatible with the neoliberal economy."[737] Modernity comes to be understood as a mentality; the debate is no longer about changing institutions and the political structures (over which Malians, like Indonesians, often feel they have little control) but rather about changing one's heart and mind, one's personal dispositions. "By shifting the focus of modernity to mentality, the *pesantren* community can imagine a modernity in their own image. Of course, they want the technology and the benefits of some of the institutional changes associated with modernity. However, in terms of the mentality of modernism, they wish to define an Islamic modernity."[738]

Loimeier, a scolar of religion at the University of Florida, is confident that parallels can be drawn between developments currently happening in the Muslim world and the Protestant Reformation as it happened in 15th and 16th century Europe. Although he points out important differences due to historical context and specificities in theological thought, Loimeier argues that current reforms happening in the Muslim world are similar in character, expression, and direction to the Protestant Reformation.[739] He points out various factors or traits that are shared by some Muslim groups today and Protestants historically, such as the importance of urban centres "dominated by an early bourgeoisie with a comparatively high level of literacy" allowing access (and a right to attempt interpretation) to the Holy text.[740] This is referred to, in Christian terms, as the "priesthood of all believers" while Robinson makes the point that there is such a thing as the "caliphate of Man."[741] Recent development in reformist Islamic thought brought about a new emphasis on *ijtihad* and an active enquiry in and renewal of faith and, "[...] at the heart of this activism, and the energy it created, was the placing of the responsibility of

[736] Patrick Haenni and Tjitske Holtrop, "Mondaines spiritualités... 'Amr Khâlid, 'shaykh' branché de la jeunesse dorée du Caire," *Politique Africaine* 87 (2002): 46.
[737] Otayek and Soares, "Introduction," 19.
[738] Lukens-Bull, *A Peaceful Jihad*, 129.
[739] Roman Loimeier, "Is there something like 'Protestant Islam'?" *Die Welt des Islams* 45, 2 (2005): 220-221.
[740] Loimeier, "Is there something like 'Protestant Islam'?" 228.
[741] Francis Robinson, "Other-Worldly and This-Worldly Islam and the Islamic Revival," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 14, 1 (2004): 51.

fashioning Islamic society on each individual Muslim."[742] Activist Islamist and reformist thought in Islam is therefore clearly situated within a this-worldly and individual responsibility which results in an almost ascetic yet mundane (grounded in worldly concerns) piety.[743]

In turn, this points to the "internalization" of faith, where the proper inner dispositions of faith are cultivated within the believer him/herself as opposed to the outer display of religiosity. This has long been identified as one of the characteristics of the Christian Reformation and, as I have pointed out earlier, it is a trait also found in what I have referred to as Islam mondain. The stress is taken away (although it remains important) from communal practices and placed on the individual's actions and religiosity.[744] This approach clearly speaks to the emphasis that Islam mondain puts on the way a Muslim should live life in accordance with his/her faith; it is the details of one's every day activities that are to be addressed in religious terms, as opposed to only the weekly communal practice of Friday prayer. This is not to say, of course, that communal practices are to be dropped altogether in Islam mondain.

Even more to the point here, Loimeier clearly points out the centrality of education in the Christian Reformation; individual religious practices and access to the Scriptures occur when the believers can read and are given the analytical and theological tools to "properly" interpret the text.

> The aim of education was to increase the individual and autonomous capacity of judgement of each single Christian: Reformation was a pedagogical and educational process. In the new understanding of the faith, religious knowledge (and not the authority of institutions) became a major asset, and religious knowledge was defined through the emphasis put on the paramount importance of knowledge of the Bible [...].[745]

As such, fluency in Modern Standard Arabic, the religious content of courses where material is explained rather than memorized, as well as the knowledge gained in secular classes in Malian médersas can be compared (or at least, put in parallel) with the centrality of education in the Christian Reformation. Indeed, mastery of Arabic means that Malians, more than ever before, can read the Qur'an *and understand the words*. As a result of this lexical understanding, Malian arabisants are also able, with the help of the analytical and theological tools gained via religious or secular class material, to attempt to interpret the text *on their own*. This has been advanced, in the Moroccan context, as an important reason for the current changes Muslims are experiencing as civic and political actors. Benthall points to the fact that educated Muslims who can read and interpret the

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742 Francis Robinson, "Other-Worldly and This-Worldly Islam and the Islamic Revival," 51.

743 Olivier Carré, "À Propos de Weber et de l'Islam," *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions* 61, 1 (1986): 147.

744 Loimeier, "Is there something like 'Protestant Islam'?" 229 and 231.

745 Loimeier, "Is there something like 'Protestant Islam'?" 233-234.

Qur'an for themselves tend to be more critical of regimes and other authorities who claim to be "Islamic" since they can now assess their Islamic quality.[746]

The centrality of the printed word as the foremost media allowing for the Reformation to gain ground has been well explored and cannot be overstated.[747] A "media revolution" is also central to the propagation of reformist thought throughout the Muslim world. In the words of Eickelman, a leading expert in Islamic education:

> Like the printing press in the 16th century, the combination of mass education and mass communication s is transforming this world, a broad geographical crescent stretching from North Africa [I would add sub-Saharan Africa here] through Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and across the Indonesian archipelago. In unprecedented large numbers, the faithful – whether in the vast cosmopolitan city of Istanbul or in Oman's tiny, remote al-Hamra oasis – are examining and debating the fundamentals of Muslim belief and practice in ways that their less self-conscious predecessors would never have imagined. This highly deliberate examination of faith is what constitutes the Islamic Reformation.[748]

The spread of literacy in Arabic has led to the concomitant production of books, booklets and pamphlets on religious topics, as well as to written discussion in public media (such as newspapers) of religion throughout the Muslim world. Related to the spread of literacy, with a technological twist, is the proliferation of websites pertaining to Islam where both texts and practices are discussed and debated at length. Other new technologies such as cassettes, CDs, DVDs, and video also participate in making religious knowledge accessible to an ever wider public.[749]

Groups of Muslim youth worldwide, in conversation with one another but not as an organized or centralized movement, have reformulated their religious practices and sociability towards Islam mondain, referring to a moralization of the mundane not completely unlike a re-invention of the Protestant ethic. Islam mondain offers a model for virtuous socio-economic comfort, and an islamization of the benefits of globalization and modernization which renders them morally pure. It is the moralization of daily life for people disenchanted by the failures of the state and moving away from a religio-political ideal (although not setting aside all activism, as will be addressed below) to focus on self-improvement and the correct practice of Islam within the current political and economic circumstances.[750] This development is similar, I argue, to the process taking place in Indonesian *pesantren* described by Lukens-Bull, where the constituencies of these Islamic schools (which, like Malian médersas, teach a secular curriculum) "(...) want the technology and the benefits of political and economic modernism (...); however, with

[746] Benthall, "Financial Worship," 8.
[747] Loimeier, "Is there something like 'Protestant Islam'?" 242.
[748] Eickelman, "Inside the Islamic Reformation," 82.
[749] Loimeier, "Is there something like 'Protestant Islam'?" 243.
[750] Otayek and Soares, "Introduction," 18.

respect to the mentality of modernism, they wish to define an Islamic modernity."[751] The situation in Southern Mali is also similar to that observed by Deeb in the suburbs of Beirut where "conservative" Shia Muslims are creating for themselves an "enchanted modernity." In that particular case, Deeb insists that the "dual emphasis on both material and spiritual progress [are] necessary to modern-ness."[752]

The display of "cool" fashion accessories, often emphasizing a certain monetary ease that may or may not be there in reality, is one of the obvious ways in which young Muslims in Mali participate in the global youth culture. If it can sometimes be judged harshly as superficial and very un-traditional by many Malians, it is internally justified, within the arabisant community, when coupled with obvious piety, disposition, and knowledge of religious duties. One is morally justified to display one's riches as long as they are complementary to the moral order upheld by a pious Muslim in his every day life. "En lieu et place, 'Amr Khâlid propose un modèle de richesse vertueuse et de salut par les oeuvres, réinventant pour l'occasion une certaine forme d'éthique protestante qui fait aussi du riche le 'favori de Dieu', comme le dit sans ambages un de ses supporters ayant bien compris l'essence de son message."[753] In the case of Malian arabisants, although few of them can be considered rich (except for a few médersa owners such as Yattabaré and Zakariah Kansaye), this new approach to worldly possessions legitimizes, in Islamic terms no less, the desires of Malian youth to fully participate in the material benefits of the modern world without jeopardizing their morality.

I have seen this process at play on numerous occasions, especially in terms of "cool" dress codes for male youth and of the ubiquitous fancy cell phone for all. There was no end to the comments regarding my lack of a fancy cell phone: mine did not even take pictures, to the great amazement of young people in Mali. Médersa students (and teachers, often) are closely attuned to fashion trends promoted by American hip-hop stars; baggy pants sometimes worn blow the hips (or, at least, allowing boxer-shorts to be visible) and baseball caps are fairly common sights in classrooms and prayer halls while steel-toe Timberland boots are lined up at the entry. One such example is Zakariah Kansaye, the influential and fashionable owner and director of Naharu Djoliba, and owner of other médersas, who is in his late thirties, as far as I could judge. He met with me for interviews sporting Timberland boots, baggy pants, and a puffy down jacket. In this attire, he would have fit right in most big Western cities and he clearly was completely at ease with his looks while hosting me at the school, in his office as owner-principal of a médersa.[754] This desire to participate in the worldwide trendy, technology-savvy, youth

[751] Lukens-Bull, "Two Sides of the Same Coin," 360.

[752] Lara Deeb, *An Enchanted Modern. Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 5.

[753] Haenni and Tjitske Hotrop, "Mondaines spiritualités..." 47.

[754] I will not discuss here the way in which Malian women assert their piety at the same time as their "modern-mindedness" but would like to point out that the *abbaya*, the headscarf, and sometimes even the *niqab* are used by Malian women as a modern form of dress appropriate for pious Muslims. Note

culture is by no means considered by most to contradict the proper behaviour and disposition of a pious Muslim. Adeline Masquelier describes the youth of Niger, neighbouring country to Mali, as sharing a great number of these characteristics; they too see no particular conflict between their love for hip-hop and baseball caps and their genuine concerns with what happens in the prayer halls they regularly attend. To these pragmatic modern young Muslims, some Islamic practices are restricted to a purely religious sphere while hip-hop is part of a secular sphere, and they carefully and aptly negotiate their way between the two spheres.[755] The specific question of the hip-hop sub-culture is irrelevant here although it is a trend that exists locally. Nonetheless, Malian arabisants can be understood as differentiating *up to a point* between a pious private religious domain and an active participation in the public secular domain of Malian life in a way that is similar to the practices of Nigerien youth as described by Masquelier.

The full-fledged participation of the arabisants in consumerism and modern representation of themselves while, at the same time, claiming a religiosity and piety which is more self-reflexive than ever before, fits nicely into Bayat's definition of a youth movement. As he explains, in regards to post-Islamist youth movements in Iran and Egypt:

> In fact young people in both countries tended to reimagine [*sic*] Islam in ways that suited their youthful sensibilities, a practice that inevitable fragmented religious perceptions and defied religious authority's narrow and exclusive interpretation. [...] The assertion of youthful aspirations, the defence of their habitus, lay at the heart of their conflict with moral and political authority. [...] Yet this subculture too shape within, not against or outside, the existing regime of moral and political power[...][756]

I have shown in chapter two how the first founders of médersas in Mali can certainly be viewed as the type of actor Bayat describes: young men positing a novel approach to the widely shared moral and political tenets of their society and asserting their novel vision in the face of both religious and political authorities. This is still the case of the arabisants today who present themselves as having specific sensibilities shared by what is mostly a young group of men and working with the authorities (by no means always successfully) to make their values and beliefs recognized by the larger society.

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that these garments are recent introductions in Mali and therefore can in no way be considered, in the local settings, as traditional.

Some médersas, like the one at the Centre Culturel Islamique, require their students to wear uniforms. There, the uniform for girls consists of a ankle-length beige *pagne* (traditional Malian dress for women covering the legs, which is in line with Malian sensibilities) and a short-sleeved, white and blue, printed blouse. Some girls wear headscarves, but not all.

[755] See Adeline Masquelier, "Securing Futures: Youth, Generation, and Muslim Identities in Niger," in *Being Young and Muslim. New Cultural Politics in the Global South and North*, ed. Linda Herrera and Asef Bayat (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 225-239.

[756] Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic*, 190.

The Fallacy of Poverty, Ostracism, and Muslim Piety Leading to Extremism and Terrorism.

There is a tendency, in academic scholarship as well as in the "security organizations" of various countries, to equate economic deprivation with a propensity towards terrorism and political violence. As Burgoon summarizes: "(...) economic conditions such as poverty and income inequality very much matter for terrorism by affecting levels of deprivation, feelings of injustices, and, hence, political tension – a view supported by studies of attitudes, actions, and aggregate patterns of terrorism."[757] He goes on, via convoluted statistical calculations, to explain how more social policies (affecting social security, unemployment, and health and education spending) correlate with fewer terrorist incidents and vice versa.[758]

> In particular, various social welfare policies can be expected to reduce *poverty, inequality, politico-religious extremism*, and general *economic insecurity*, thereby diminishing preferences for terrorism, but they may also increase *capacities* to organize and carry out terrorism. The balance of these implications, I shall argue, is that social policy should tend to reduce terrorism.[759]

Against Burgoon, I assert that Malian arabisants should not be assumed to be, or to have the potential to be, Muslim extremists based on their shared characteristics. It was recently made clear, following the Gallup World Poll, that differences in social class, employment, education, and political system were not factors related to one's radical or moderate views.[760] In an elaborate statistical analysis of incidents of terrorism worldwide in relation to democracy, Li has proven that the link between terrorism and democracy is a complex one where lack of the latter cannot be simply equated with more of the former.[761]

In fact, similar to most young Muslims worldwide, Malian arabisants have simple goals which are much more worldly: find a job, obtain a certain material comfort, get married, and live what they consider a "decent life." The focus of religious practices has shifted from an other-worldly focus to a this-worldly focus where individuals are personally responsible for creating an Islamic environment for themselves. Importance is placed on the daily life of individual Muslims and the ordinary things on which he/she has an influence: family, children, domestic life, love, sex, career, education, etc.[762] Malian

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[757] Brian Burgoon, "Social Welfare Policies and Political-Economic Roots of Terrorism," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, 2 (2006): 176.
[758] Burgoon, "Social Welfare Policies and Political-Economic Roots of Terrorism," 177.
[759] Burgoon, "Social Welfare Policies and Political-Economic Roots of Terrorism," 178.
[760] Bayat and Herrera, "Introduction," 5.
[761] Li Quan, "Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, 2 (2005): 294.
[762] Francis Robinson, "Other-Worldly and This-Worldly Islam and the Islamic Revival," 56-57.

arabisants, as a young group from (relatively) poor socio-economic backgrounds have tended to focus their attention on pragmatic questions yielding direct benefits in their everyday life. This emphasis does preclude, up to a point, active engagement in the reform of the larger political system and rather focuses on the co-existence of the political order (of what ever type) with the "proper" life-style of a pious Muslim.

The economic liberalization of the 1990's in Mali and the consequential opening of the market to greater imports suddenly opened new possibilities for consumerism for young Malians: desirable goods and ways of life were seen on national television, in American films, in the new European-style shops opening in Bamako, and embodied in the Malian migrants visiting home.[763] The desire to be part of the globalization of trends and ideas from the West was to be reconciled, for Malian arabisants, with their active participation in the global *umma*. Malian arabisants, similar to worldwide Muslim youth, are heavily influenced by the international flux of ideas in both the practices and pretensions to modernity and the definition of an Islamic identity for themselves. Whether moderate or radical, modernist or not, principled or pragmatic, Muslims distinctively adapt themselves and modernity to make sense of what it is to be a young, modern Muslim.[764] As Hefner convincingly argues, political ideals informed by Islam or Islamic identities are highly diversified so as to "(...) reflect competing views as to how Muslims should respond to the challenges of the late modern world."[765]

I find it useful here, prior to delving into the specific reality of Malian arabisants, to discuss the "Afrobarometer" and the very interesting data it provides. The Afrobarometer is a cross-national survey that was conducted from 1999 to 2001 and which measures the social, political, and economic atmosphere in various African countries, including Mali. More specifically, it surveyed the "religious identifications and attitudes to democracy" in four African countries, including Mali where 90% of respondents self-identified as Muslims.[766] The survey found that: "Some 71 percent of Muslims and 76 percent of non-Muslims agree that 'democracy is preferable to any other form of government' (...). (...) Once broken down by country, the data reveal that Muslims in Uganda and Mali express *more* support for democracy than non-Muslims."[767] However, Muslims and non-Muslims in Africa tend not to stress the same characteristics of democracy as most important: African Muslims are more likely to stress "political and economic equality, power-sharing, and social justice"[768] as the main features of a democracy as opposed to direct participation. This reflects the desire of Malian arabisants to create a pious and righteous environment, one where the state affords the possibility for

[763] Soares, "'Rasta' Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali," 244.
[764] Bayat and Herrera, "Introduction," 20-21.
[765] Hefner, "Public Islam and the Problem of Democratization," 493.
[766] Michael Bratton, "Briefing: Islam, Democracy and Public Opinion in Africa," *African Affairs* 102 (2003): 494.
[767] Bratton, "Briefing: Islam, Democracy and Public Opinion in Africa," 494.
[768] Bratton, "Briefing: Islam, Democracy and Public Opinion in Africa," 496.

the virtuous Muslim to live his life righteously as opposed to the state enforcing a pious life-style. Democracy as understood by Malians tends to be largely communitarian: "It centres on a set of political values such as 'equality and justice,' 'mutual respect,' 'unity' and 'working together,' which describe an idealized version of political community derived from the country's past."[769]

Robert Pringle, former ambassador of the United States to Mali, makes an interesting point linking Malians' attachment to democracy to a long history of consultation and conflict resolution in the region. A reference I have often heard from the mouths of government officials, médersa owners, or other Malian friends, and that Pringle also refers to, is the "Constitution of Sunjata" as a historical example of democracy in Mali.

> The centerpiece of this tradition [historical tradition of democracy and conflict resolution] is the epic of Sunjata Keita, who overcame exile and physical handicap and founded the Mali Empire in the 13th century. Sunjata's story, primarily oral and circulated in numerous versions, has played a role in West Africa similar to that of the Homeric epics in Western civilization.
> [...] According to one of several versions of the epic, Sunjata gathered his chiefs on the slopes of a mountain not far from Bamako after his final unifying victory, and each chief presented Sunjata with his spear, in a symbolic act of submission. Sunjata then assumed the title of *mansa*, often translated as "emperor," and returned all the spears, signifying that the chiefs would rule autonomously. Today, some Malians see this oral constitution as equivalent to the Magna Carta.[770]

Besides this foundational myth of democracy as a local attribute via the well-known stories of Sunjata, Malians also refer to their long tradition of *senankuya*, in Bamanankan and *parenté à plaisanterie* in French,[771] as a tool for conflict resolution and therefore part of the "natural" Malian tendency towards democracy. This joking relationship refers to the special link between pairs of families (based on their last names) where members can poke fun at and insult each other, and even be quite nasty to one another, without any offence being taken by either parties. These families also owe each other assistance in difficult times and are responsible for mediating conflicts in each other's families. These links are found both within and between different ethnic groups and help situate, upon the simple statement of the name, what the relationship between individuals ought to be.[772]

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[769] Michael Bratton, Massa Coulibaly and Fabiana Machado, "Popular Views of the Legitimacy of the State in Mali," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 36, 2 (2002): 208.

[770] Robert Pringle, "Mali's Unlikely Democracy," *The Wilson Quarterly* 30, 2 (2006): 34.

[771] Sometimes translated as "joking relationships" or "joking kinship."

[772] I was given a Malian name when I first was in Mali in 1996: Awa Diabaté. The Diabaté family is traditionally one of *griot* and of smiths. It has a joking relationship with all Fulanis. Introducing myself by my Malian name to my interviewees allowed me to be immediately integrated into a web of relationships, giving both my interviewee and myself a place where to start the conversation and

This system is incredibly elaborate, tying together families across ethnic lines and West African borders and deserves much closer study. However, suffice to say, that this practice is still very much alive in Mali today and is often considered, by both Malians and Malianists, as one of the most ingenious tools in conflict resolution developed in the region. As Pringle points out: "(...) this traditional practice seems to relieve tensions among Malians, perhaps because it is well understood as a substitute for tribal hostility. In a more subtle way, joking relationships are an affirmation of a broader Malian identity."[773] This method of conflict resolution and the myth of Sunjata, as well as the mix of ethnic groups in Mali, participate in a Malian foundational myth in which democracy is claimed as a local historical practice. Given this vision that Malians have created of themselves as long-term democrats, interest in their democratic government (from me, other researchers, journalists, NGO workers, and other non-Malians) is not surprising. Malians are, in Pringle's words, "(...) mildly annoyed by the assumption that Mali's democracy is "Islamic" and by the implication that any Muslim country with a democracy qualifies for freak-show status."[774]

The Afrobarometer, in studying the link between religiosity and attachment to democracy in Nigeria, made a surprising finding which can also be applied to the Malian arabisants:

> Among nominal Muslims, we detect a clear, strong, and positive relationship between religiosity and support for democracy [...]. In other words, the more often Muslims attend prayer meetings at a mosque, the more likely they are to support democracy. This important finding clearly calls into question any effort to portray all mosques as hotbeds of anti-democratic rhetoric or to stereotype fervent Islamists as automatically opposed to democracy.[775]

I will argue, in the following section, that this finding about Nigerian Muslims very much applies to Malian arabisants and their commitment to democracy in Mali. Devout Muslims in Mali tend to be more educated than the average Malian, often due to their training in a médersa. The same Afrobarometer has found that while religious affiliation makes very little difference in support for democracy, the one single element that does prove to influence such support is education. The survey has found that "(...) the difference in support for democracy between the least educated and the most educated Africans interviewed is a much larger 19 points"[776] as opposed to the five points

positioning ourselves in relation to one another. In such context, I was often reminded of my "slave" status by Fulani respondents and friends or asked to sing in public (which is certainly not one of my talents) as some sort of "roasting."

[773] Pringle, "Mali's Unlikely Democracy," 35.

[774] Pringle, "Mali's Unlikely Democracy," 37.

[775] Bratton, "Briefing: Islam, Democracy and Public Opinion in Africa," 499.

[776] Bratton, "Briefing: Islam, Democracy and Public Opinion in Africa," 500.

difference by religious affiliation. This suggests that educated, pious Muslims such as the Malian arabisants are likely to demonstrate strong support for democracy.

Case in point: Modern, Democratic, Muslims.

Democracy in Mali was strong from twenty years and the country wass heralded as one prime example of a Muslim-majority country to have well handled the democratic transition until the military coup of March 22nd, 2012. Western governments and international funding agencies are keen to reward such good behaviour: "Indeed, Mali has become the darling of the development community, held up as an example of how good government is fundamental to national development, and supported by dozens of international agencies and NGOs that have rushed to take part in the Malian democratic 'success story'."[777] The opening of the political sphere after the coup of 1991, which overthrew the military dictatorship of Moussa Traoré and established the current democratic republic of Mali, was accompanied by an expansion of the public debate in Mali. Freedom of expression and of association became dear to most Malians and an impressive number of both secular and religious associations sprung up.[778] The media landscape was liberalized as well and debates about politics and religion opened up in public forums. Add to this elections considered open and fair by most international institutions, the liberty to run for office, an independent judiciary and the absence of censorship and Mali covers the formal requirement to be considered a democracy.

In the early years of the millennium, Mali was held to be the only Muslim-majority country sustaining a free democracy (things have since then evolved quickly) and the Freedom House has come to the conclusion, after surveying 47 Muslim-majority countries, that Mali was the only one qualifying as "free."[779] The former ambassador of the United States of America to Mali, Robert Pringle, remarks that despite Mali's ranking as fourth poorest country in the world by the 2005 United Nations Human Development Index, and the ongoing political turmoil or outright civil wars in various neighbouring countries, "in a single decade Mali has launched one of the most successful democracies in Africa. Its political record includes three democratic elections and two peaceful transitions of power, a transformation that seems nothing short of amazing."[780] An impoverished Muslim-majority country has led the way in the development of a strong democracy in both the Muslim world and Africa. Indeed, Malians are proud of their

[777] Timothy W. Docking, "International Influence on Civil Society in Mali: The Case of the Cotton Farmer's Union, SYCOV," in *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: African NGOs, Donors and the State*, ed. Jim Igoe and Tim Kelsall (Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 2005), 198.

[778] Soares, "'Rasta' Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali," 243.

[779] Abdelkérim Ousman, "The Potential of Islamist Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 18, 1-2 (2004): 87.

[780] Pringle, "Mali's Unlikely Democracy," 31.

democratic credentials and have used them to their advantage on the world scene for international aid:

> Malians have made the most of their dependence on foreign aid by managing and manipulating their aid donors, a complex and fluctuating congregation of foreigners with the World Bank in the lead. [...] In so doing, they employed all the diplomatic skills and persistence derived from centuries of multiethnic politics. They are developing a reputation for signing aid agreements and then avoiding implementation if it requires doing something distasteful. [...] Malians are quite aware that the donors are not about to abandon democratic Mali, especially with conflicts raging nearby in the once-prosperous Ivory Coast. As one leading Malian academic told me, "For us, democracy is as good as money in the bank."[781]

Malian arabisants are just as aware of this situation as are other Malians and play it to their advantage. In order to attract money from Western democracies, médersa constituencies play up their support of democracy. They have succeeded sufficiently in this endeavour to attract funding from Italian, Turkish, and Canadian NGOs and government-sponsored organizations. I have already discussed the "discovery" of médersas by Western donors in chapter four; let me simply remind the reader that Naharu Djoliba is a net beneficiary of some Italian NGOs now invested in religious education as a form of development – something that would not have been conceivable if the médersa constituencies were not considered to be supporters of the democratic project in Mali.

One of the minimum requirements to ascertain the actuality of a formal democracy, as explained by Habermas, is the necessity of a "civil culture and organization greater than itself" and beyond the formal structures of government.[782] Political theorists have defined the minimum requirements for a democracy and here, I quote Sen and Scanlon simplifying Rawls' elaborate theory:

> Democracy, Rawls has taught us, has to be seen not just in terms of ballots and votes – important as they are – but primarily in terms of "public reasoning," including the opportunity for public discussion as well as interactive participation and reasoned encounter. Democracy must include, to invoke a Millian phrase, "government by discussion." [...]
>
> [...] Reasonableness requires the political willingness of individuals to go beyond the limits of their specific self-interests. But it also makes social demands to help fair discernment, including access to relevant information, the opportunity to listen to varying points of view, and exposure to open public discussions and debates. In its pursuit of political objectivity, democracy has to take the form of constructive and efficacious public reasoning.[783]

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[781] Pringle, "Mali's Unlikely Democracy," 39.

[782] Hefner, "Public Islam and the Problem of Democratization," 496.

[783] Amartya Sen and Thomas Scanlon, "What's the Point of Democracy?" *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 57, 3 (2004): 9.

The creation and sustainability of such a public domain involves, to return to Hirschkind's position, both deliberative aspects and disciplinary functions. He has convincingly argued that these are present in contemporary Muslim societies in similar ways as they were in the early modern Christian societies (though he sees this field of enquiry – preparation of the liberal citizen for public life – as in need of further research). Following Burchell (1995), Hirschkind explains how civility and proper behaviour in the public sphere depended on the enforcement of "Christian techniques of ethical discipline, enacted through education and institutions of social discipline (e.g. police, schools, factories), as well as through techniques of self-fashioning promoted in manuals and treatises."[784] Talal Asad puts it simply: orthodoxy is "not merely a body of opinion but a distinctive relationship – a relationship of power (...) to regulate, uphold, require and adjust *correct* practices, and to condemn, exclude, undermine, or replace *incorrect* ones."[785] Applied to a Muslim-majority public sphere, Hirschkind argues:

> While the ethical and social norms of conduct of such citizen were oriented around the notion of a broad unity of practising Muslims, an umma, they also were grounded in the political technologies of modern national citizenship. That is, while da'wa provided conceptual resources grounded in a long tradition of Islamic practice and scholarly inquiry [*sic*], these resources were put to novel uses within a contemporary situation shaped by modern political institutions, pedagogical techniques, and media forms, as well as by notions of civic responsibility grounded in the idea of national citizenship.[786]

In their attempt to dominate the public sphere, the various discourses, sometimes vehemently opposed to one another, and the power dynamics at play are not evidence of a closed, "backward", entrenched social sphere but rather the consequence of the opening, and the active and lively, participation of citizens in this public sphere.

I have shown in the previous section that most Malians (60%) support democracy and are also generally satisfied (60%) with "the way democracy works in Mali." Yet, these two groups are not identical as 44% of Malians who support democracy are not quite satisfied with its performance in Mali.[787] Bretton *et al.* point to the rural poor as a significant segment of this group[788] but I would add the arabisants who, as I have shown, support democracy yet are still active on the political scene in order to render it "more Islamic" or even just "more Islamic-friendly." Zappa provides an interesting rendering of a conversation he had with the owner of an Islamic bookshop in Bamako and his family:

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[784] Hirschkind, "Civic Virtue and Religious Reason," 5.
[785] Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam," *Occasional Paper series* (1986): 14.
[786] Hirschkind, "Civic Virtue and Religious Reason," 11.
[787] In light of the events of March 22nd, 2012, these criticisms of democracy expressed by Malians will need to be analyzed in more details as they may have led, indirectly and in combination with other factors, to the military coup.
[788] Bratton, Coulibaly and Machado, "Popular Views of the Legitimacy of the State in Mali," 211.

> While all the family members I met proudly professed their espousal of Wahhabi doctrinal trends, they also exhibited a concern for pluralism and emphatically underscored, at least in my presence, their lack of militancy for an "Islamic state." In informal conversations, they often compared the sincerity of the growing religious commitment of many Malian Muslims to what they described as the rather hypocritical observance of the Saudis, arguing that democracy and freedom of expression is more effective than government-enforced orthodoxy in shaping pious Muslim citizens.[789]

I have also heard this type of remark regularly in Bamako. Some individuals have used the defamatory term "les barbus"[790] to refer to Saudis and Malians claiming to be Wahhabis,[791] a judgement on their ostentatious piety which can therefore not be considered sincere. Dismissive comments were also regularly made in front of me by young Malians regarding the rough patch of skin on the forehead of some Muslims (arguably due to assiduous prayer) who were also considered Wahhabis. As noted in the previous chapter, Saudi ideology has had a difficult time taking hold of Malian Muslims who prefer liberty of choice in matters of religion: they tend to support the government that offers the possibility of being a "good" Muslim without actually enforcing it. As Soares explains, "despite these criticisms of the postcolonial state, it is striking that most Malian Muslim religious leaders and other ordinary Muslims are not usually calling for the implementation of *shari'a* unlike elsewhere in the Islamic world or even in other places in West Africa such as Nigeria."[792] These leaders and pious Muslims might very well, however, use Islamic legal principles to dictate their own private affairs (marriage, divorce, inheritance, business, etc.).[793] Brenner has also emphasized this state of mind in his 2001 study of Malian arabisants who, in his words, "seem to be much more prepared to compromise with the secular state so long as basic Muslim values are not abused."[794] This is precisely an example of Islam mondain which is still very much valid today: living as a pious, "good," Muslim in one's private life while accepting, if not respecting, the secular nature of the Malian state.

Even the very few Malian proponents of the implementation of *shari'a* law within the state legal system frame their argument in democratic terms:

> Today most advocates of the reinstatement of Muslim law, or even of the establishment of an Islamic state, while never abandoning their adherence to divine writ, nonetheless argue their position with reference to democratic principles. The most popular of such "democratic" arguments

789 Zappa, "Between Standardization and Pluralism," 4.
790 "The bearded-ones."
791 Although they would refer to themselves only as "Sunnis."
792 Soares, *Islam and the Prayer Economy*, 213.
793 Soares, *Islam and the Prayer Economy,* 213.
794 Brenner, *Controlling Knowledge*, 305.

> is to insist that Mali's legal infrastructure and political institutions should reflect the fact that 80 percent of its population is Muslim.[795]

The case has been made that discourses on democracy tend to present civil society as "the virtuous incarnation of 'the people'" although the accuracy of a such a conceptualization is debatable.[796] It is clear, however, that Malian arabisants want, by their attitudes towards both religion and politics (and how they should interact), to present themselves as virtuous citizens safeguarding both the moral code of the nation as well as full participants in its political institutions. Despite confrontations with the government, it is necessary for civil society's functioning that a good relationship is maintained with the authorities although it may also remain critical of them. "If the relationship with the state is too close, organizations from within the civil society eventually become co-opted. If they distance themselves too far from the state and define themselves in opposition to it, then very little can be accomplished. To sustain the optimum balance is a continuous struggle, even in the most mature democracies."[797] This has certainly been a struggle that the médersa constituencies have faced when dealing with the Malian government over questions of curriculum and standardized examinations. Control and independence between the médersa system and the government, including outright opposition and take-overs at times, are evidence of a healthy democratic debate in Mali over the role and place of education rather than the systematic confrontation with the state by radically inspired Muslims. This debate also speaks to my classification of Malian arabisants as a youth group insofar as they, as members of a subculture, seeks to assert themselves and their sensibilities in a way that defies traditional authorities (political or religious).

Many Muslim-majority societies have seen the development of such civil culture; Mali experienced a broadening in public discourses about society and politics including groups which rooted their arguments in religious traditions such as the arabisants, prior to and even more so after the opening of the political sphere in 1991. As explained by Hefner: "Civil Islam is an emergent and highly unfinished tradition associated with a broad assortment of social movements. One of its most consistent themes, however, is the claim that modern ideals of equality, freedom, and democracy are not uniquely Western values, but modern necessities compatible with, and even required by, Muslim ideals."[798] The arabisants of Mali are clearly part of such civil Islam movements insofar as they are not challengers of the current political structure but rather are supporters of its continuation and improvement, although they often make their point in religious terms.

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[795] Brenner, "The Transformation of Muslim Schooling in Mali," 217.

[796] Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, "Toward Civil Society Realism," in *Funding Virtue. Civil Society Aid and Democracy Promotion*, ed. Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000), 294.

[797] Ibrahim, "Civil Society, Faith-Based Organizations and Development in the Arab World," 206.

[798] Hefner, "Public Islam and the Problem of Democratization," 498.

Again, Hefner emphasizes not so much a blind adoption of Western concepts, but a local re-working of democratic ideals:

> Although democratic, the political discourse these Muslims are forging is not merely derivative of Western liberalism. One reason this is so is that democratic Muslims look to their religion to provide some of the terms for this new public ethic. [...] In its emphasis on public virtue and justice, for example, civil Islam, if anything, recalls earlier Western traditions of civic republicanism (elements of which run though some variants of Western "communitarianism" today) rather than secular liberalism.[799]

Malian arabisants, like all other Malians, are active participants in the modernization of the country and the modern political culture of Mali. Indeed, as I have shown, médersa owners are deeply embedded in the international economic order and are, in that sense, very much modern entrepreneurs. The médersas themselves, through their curriculum, transmit modern knowledge if only in science and via modern pedagogical tools. While Malian arabisants are modern they are also wary of "too much modernity" in the form of excessive secularization imposed and financed by Western countries and NGOs. The choice, for the arabisants, is never between modernity or Islam but rather between an Islamicized modernity and a Westernized modernity. In the words of Soares and Osella: "(...) Muslims produce themselves as 'modern' in everyday life and have moved to provincialize 'Western' modernity."[800] Even critiques directed towards the "West" generally should not be understood as a rejection of modernity *per se* but rather as a re-evaluation of its tenets in order to render it conform or acceptable in light of the Islamic canons.[801]

Muslim Citizens of Mali.

Questions of economic, social, and political marginalization are important to address here since, although coming to divergent conclusions, some research claims to establish a link between marginalization and extremism. Conventional wisdom tends to understand Muslim religiosity, poverty, unemployment and social ostracism as the most direct route to Islamic extremism. Arguments regarding the link between democracy and terrorism are also commonplace yet are often contradictory. One such argument finds that democracy reduces the risk of international terrorism since the democratic structure of government offers possibilities for dissent to be expressed in non-violent manners. Another argument maintains that democracy actually encourages and facilitates terrorism by providing significant individual liberties allowing for the recruiting and planning of terrorist activities.[802] I argue here that the relative poverty of Malian arabisants, their

[799] Hefner, "Public Islam and the Problem of Democratization," 499.
[800] Soares and Osella, "Islam, Politics, Anthropology," S5.
[801] Otayek, "Introduction," 12.
[802] Li Quan, "Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?" 278.

historical estrangement from the Malian state, and their overtly pious behaviour and moralizing religious discourses should not be considered as signs of (potential) extremism but rather as a different mode of engaging with society at large and the state in particular.

An Islamic veneer applied to the current political system of Mali is as much as most arabisants prefer. The Malian state, since independence, has readily used an Islamic veneer on occasion in order to co-opt the approbation of certain groups of Muslims within the country. Typical of this (limited) association of the theoretically secular Malian state with Islam is the official announcement by the government's offices of the start and end of Ramadan while not enforcing any specific behaviour during the month. Every head of state in Mali, whether democratically elected or not, has also been careful to publicly present himself as a pious Muslim.[803] Many Malians have praised in my presence Moussa Traoré's habit of attending Friday prayer every week in Bamako's Friday mosque. However, the Traoré regime is often accused of infringing upon the secular constitution of Mali to grant a greater place to Islam in the public affairs.

> The evidence for a deteriorating official secularism ranged from the amount of air-time granted to Muslim religious programmes in the state-owned media and the insistence of the President that his cabinet members attend Friday prayers in Bamako's central mosque, to legislation closing bars and nightclubs during Ramadan [quickly overturned after his demise] and the government's initiative in establishing Mali's national Muslim organization, the *Association malienne pour l'unité et le progrès de l'Islam* (AMUPI).[804]

These types of policies, under Moussa Traoré, were not completely discontinued with the advent of democracy, and tensions between the "hardcore" Malian secularists and arabisants still exist. But the establishment of an Islamic state is not part of the debate for Malian arabisants; an Islam-friendly government is as much as they ask for while many would also make do, as they have told me, with a government that ignores them, as has historically been the case.

The arabisants, due to their increasing numbers and their increasing economic weight in Bamako, now form a group powerful enough to pressure and influence, up to a certain point, the state.[805] This is reminiscent of the very interesting idea of "socialization of the state" which has been developed by Bayat where the citizens influence (or attempt to influence) the state.[806] Malian arabisants, by insisting on the Muslim "quality" of Malian citizens, seek to change the state (but not its structures) so it becomes more representative of their beliefs and values. They advocate what Bayat has termed "a pious society in a secular democratic state."[807]

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[803] Soares, *Islam and the Prayer Economy,* 236.
[804] Brenner, "Constructing Muslim Identities in Mali," 72.
[805] Piga, "Introduction," 18.
[806] Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic*, 204.
[807] Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic*, 189.

The concept of citizenship in the modern nation state is not called into question by young Malian Muslims and most of them do support the democratic system and its values. However, they are critical of and disappointed with the leaders of the state and the collective well-being of Malians[808] and that is why their activism takes place. Malian arabisants have no political project involving an overthrow of the current system but they are disappointed by the system and want to moralize it. The arabisants are there at the forefront of a return to religion which has been well observed in Mali: "One can see many youth's attention to the practice of religion in regular ritual prayer, frequent visits to the mosque, assiduous fasting during Ramadan, and other signs of public piety (...). One can also see this turn to religion in the way many Malians invoke Islam in their collective actions, particularly through activism in some of the new Islamic associations."[809] Most Malians would agree that, despite an increase in Islamic religious activities in Mali, radical Muslims are a very small minority.[810] In Mali, the arabisants, as a social, multipurpose movement aiming at the moral conquest of civil society,[811] mostly operate at the fault line between the state and civil society, in the domain of education. They do not aim to directly challenge the established structure of the state but rather to find a place for themselves within the structure, or in the gaps it leaves.

[808] Soares, "'Rasta' Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali," 246.
[809] Soares, "'Rasta' Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali," 247.
[810] Soares, "'Rasta' Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali," 248.
[811] Bayat, *Making Islam Democratic*, 195.

Conclusion

Malian médersas and their constituencies are very much rooted in a Malian Islamic consciousness (communal, authentic, and local) yet, at the same time and not in contradiction, they are well-connected and worldly, using every opportunity to broaden their networks. Médersas transcend the borders of the Malian state and provide direct institutional contact between "the people" and a world of ideas, institutions, and money, all of which are united through their shared identification with Islam. I refer to the members/participants of this new group of transnational Islamic consciousness, which is active in Malian civil society, as arabisants. Although variously integrated into the wider social scene, the arabisants should be understood as a separate social group marked by their Islamic identity and knowledge, their use of Arabic in every day life, and their simultaneous rejection of traditionalist Islam with their advocacy of a universalist and transnational vision of Islam.[812] For Malian arabisants, the desire to be part of the globalization of trends and ideas from the West must be reconciled with their active participation in the global *umma*. I demonstrate how Malian arabisants reconcile, although it is clearly a work in progress, their various identities as young, modern, Muslim Malians. They are less influenced by the massive influx of money and ideology from the Arab world than has previously been assumed and more developed in their own understanding of what it means to be Muslim, Malian, moderate, modern, and globalized than has been recognized.

I suggest that the specific formation of the educational system in Mali is related to the development of the uniquely Malian configuration of what it is to be an arabisant. I have provided a detailed discussion of the history of the educational systems in the territory of Mali during French colonization as well as the constant struggle by political authorities – be they French or Malian – to control Islamic knowledge and its transmission. Beyond the simple transmission of Islamic knowledge, médersas are institutions of socialization where a model of behaviour for individuals in society is also passed down to students. This socialization outside the confines of the state is threatening to the political authorities of colonial rule and post-independence. Such authorities have always aimed to regulate, limit, confine, and control Islamic education. Despite the regulations and deterrents however, the demand for Arabic-language religious education has never diminished amongst West African populations generally and Malians specifically. Furthermore, both French and Malian authorities insisted on heavily regulating education. Therefore, the owners, principals, and teachers involved in Islamic médersas undertook (of their own volition as well as forced by the authorities) the process of rationalization of Islamic knowledge and the self-restructuring of the methods and content of their schools. As a result of this confrontational relationship, despite moments of cooperation between the various stakeholders involved in the governing of Islamic education, the arabisants re-invented Islamic education to better fit a modernized

[812] Piga, "Introduction," 17.

environment in need of strong Islamic ethics. In this paradigm, Arabic and Islamic knowledge switches from esoteric sciences – with the confection of amulets, numerology and the science of magic squares[813] – to a rationalized approach to Islamic sciences and knowledge as is found in Islamic médersas.

This rationalization of Islamic knowledge in Malian schools also relates to my discussion of the educational strategies employed by parents on behalf of their offspring, strategies in which the religious component is of significant importance. As early as the 1980s, the relationship between the Malian population and public schools changed drastically: the equivalence between education and guaranteed work no longer held true, and the symbolic link between literacy and power had to be reconsidered as the former no longer guaranteed the latter. Many in the population believed public schools to be obsolete because of their lack of an ability to provide quality education that would not only give one access to the job market but also provide socially useful knowledge and skills.[814] The financial and human cost of sending a child to school was believed to be no longer compensated for by the potential integration into a higher-level, eventually state-centered, clientele network that would bring benefits to the larger social group. In order to bypass the failures of the public school system, private and religious schools are seen as a means for the population to reclaim schools as their own, as they better reflect their own needs and views. Indeed, médersas answer the educational demands of a part of the population which recognizes itself in a combined religious-secular, all-encompassing educational system. The choice of a médersa to educate one's children stems from the adherence to Islamic principles and ethics taught in these schools, but it is also a strategy of avoidance (of public schools) on the part of parents. This decision is, at the same time, a strategy of substitution[815] insofar as it allows parents to replace a model of schooling in which they have little trust with a religious education closer to their expectations.

In order to further my argument about the local, and yet rooted in the global Islamic discourse, identity of the Malian arabisants, I discuss the transnational characteristics of Islam in Mali, which necessarily involves an analysis of Afro-Arab relations. Islam provides an integral nexus of relationships between Africa and the Middle East. The recent Islamization in Mali is often seen as a result of the politico-religious influence of Arab states, particularly the competing states of Libya and Saudi Arabia, who were major players in Arab aid to Africa from 1973 to 1983, and who both backed their struggle for influence with large sums of petro-dollars. Saudi Arabia and Libya were instrumental in setting in motion a worldwide resurgence of Islam in politics. This was brought about, although in different ways for each country, by the emphasis put on religion in the foreign policy of Libya and Saudi Arabia.[816] As I have shown, public as well

[813] Mommersteeg, "L'éducation coranique au Mali," 46-47.
[814] Gérard, "Entre État et populations," 62-63.
[815] Gérard, "L'école déclassée," 533.
[816] Fraser, "In Defence of Allah's Realm," 214.

as private, aid for poor African countries such as Mali was an integral part of the foreign policy of Arab states in the 1970s and 1980s. They provided funds to build Islamic schools, mosques, cultural centers and other institutions.

However, I argue that the impact of these international (official or not) relations on Malian conceptualizations of Islam has been overstated (cf. Otayek 1986). Despite large sums invested in cultural/religious capital as well as religiously dedicated real-estate in Bamako, the influence of Arab donors on the conceptualization of Islam in the constituencies of Bamako's médersas remained limited. I argue that the impact of Arab Aid can be analyzed in a manner parallel to the impact of international aid to Africa: the rise and fall of the NGO sector. In the 1990's, money flowed towards NGOs in Africa who were seen as the panacea to all of Africa's ills: "a 'magic bullet' that would find its target no matter how poorly fired."[817] I make the case, using the methodological tools developed to assess the efficiency of the NGO sector in Africa, that the impact of Arab Aid has been similarly unable to profoundly affect how Muslims in Mali understand themselves, their place in the world, their religion and their political system.

The local histories, politics, and power relations found in Mali greatly influenced the development of a local, yet standardized (even by international standards), understanding of Islamic knowledge. Indeed, the various confrontations between the government of Mali and the médersa constituencies regarding the official curriculum and examinations to be imposed on médersa students participated in creating and making explicit a local understanding of Islamic knowledge. This standardization of religious knowledge, taught in Mali's médersas on the same footing as secular topics, in turn participated in the development of a new Islamic mentality in Mali, one that is this-worldly oriented, activist yet non political *per se*, focused on rendering the individual's daily life morally pure. This standardized version of Islam is referred to as "mondain." Yet, this mentality is not typical or unique to Mali only, and clearly participates in the larger debate within the Muslim *umma* about the relation between piety, modernity, globalization and democracy. Malian arabisants, in parallel as well as in collaboration with the global *umma*, are defining new ways to observe and practice their faith within the confines of the secular democratic state.

Islam mondain as it is found in Mali leads me to argue that Malian arabisants should not be assumed to have the potential to be Muslim extremists based on their shared characteristics with extremist groups. In fact, Malian arabisants have simple goals which are mostly worldly: to work, get married, and to live a satisfying life. They do not call into question their participation in the modern nation state nor do they deny the concept of citizenship into that nation. Young Malian Muslims tend to support the democratic system and its values. Democracy in Mali is as strong as ever and the country is heralded as the one Muslim-majority country to have successfully handled the democratic transition. However, this is not to say that Malians are not engaged in social

[817] Igoe and Kelsall, "Introduction: Between a Rock and a Hard Place," 1.

activism, rather that their activism is specific to their needs as Malians and not constructed along the lines of global Islam. I show how Malian arabisants are critical of and disappointed with the leaders of their state and the collective well-being of Malians[818] and demonstrate that this is the sphere in which their activism takes place. However, I am unwilling to suggest that this frustration with the state of Malian politics led the arabisants to take part in the military coup of March 22nd, 2012, in which civilians have played no role. I am also unwilling to assert any direct connections between the arabisants of Southern Mali and the various Islamic groups active in Northern Mali.

The arabisants, both due to their increasing numbers and also to their increasing economic weight in Bamako, now form a group powerful enough to pressure and influence, up to a certain point, the state.[819] Malian arabisants have no plans for a political project involving an overthrow of the current system, but they are disappointed by the system and want to moralize it. The arabisants are at the forefront of a return to religion which has been well observed in Mali: "One can see many youth's attention to the practice of religion in regular ritual prayer, frequent visits to the mosque, assiduous fasting during Ramadan, and other signs of public piety (...). One can also see this turn to religion in the way many Malians invoke Islam in their collective actions, particularly through activism in some of the new Islamic associations."[820] Islam in Mali is claimed and celebrated as both a factor of internal cohesion and of social peace and as a key factor in international and transnational solidarity.[821] Asef Bayat explains how "social Islam" has come to play an increasingly important role in society; a role that fosters competition in providing social security networks and influences the government towards more social policies:

> No doubt Islamist movements, notably that of "social Islam", represent a significant means through which some disadvantaged groups survive hardship and better their lives. Islamist movement contribute to social welfare primarily by direct provision of services, such as health care, education and financial aid, as well as involvement in community development and social networks, most of which are established in local, non-governmental mosques. In addition, Islamist movements tend to foster social competition, wherein other religious and secular organizations are compelled to become involved in community work. Finally, governments, in order to out-manoeuvre the Islamists and regain legitimacy, are often forced to implement social policies in favour of the poor.[822]

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818 Soares, "'Rasta' Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali," 246.
819 Piga, "Introduction," 18.
820 Soares, "'Rasta' Sufis and Muslim Youth Culture in Mali," 247.
821 Piga, "Introduction," 18.
822 Asef Bayat, *Social Movements, Activism and Social Development in the Middle East*, (Geneva: United Nation Research Institute for Social Development, 2000), 14.

Although Bayat makes this case in regards to Islamist movements in the Middle East, his analysis can be applied to arabisant groups in Bamako providing for-profit or non-profit community services such as private médersas. However, the case of the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye, co-financed by Libya and the United Arab Emirates best exemplifies Bayat's description of social Islam. The Centre Culturel makes available free of charge, as has already been explained, beside the médersa, a mosque, a dispensary, a library, and seminar rooms. Within the boundaries allowed by the secular state of Mali, médersas in general, with the prime example of the Centre Culturel Islamique, provide specifically Islamic social services. It is made Islamic by the religious convictions held very publicly by many of the social actors involved, the Islamic-based funding for the enterprise and the provision for affordable services.

I have explained how Malian arabisants, due to the specific historical settings and knowledge imparted to them, are active participants in the modernization of the country and the modern political culture of Mali, while at the same time remaining connected to a globalized Muslim world. Médersa owners are well-embedded in the international economic order and are, in that sense, very much modern entrepreneurs. The médersas themselves, through their curriculum, transmit modern knowledge, often science-based, via modern pedagogical tools. These examples by which Malian arabisants are modern should be counterbalanced, however, by their caution expressed towards "too much modernity" in the form of excessive secularization imposed and financed by Western countries and NGOs. The choice, for the constituencies of Bamako's médersas, was never between modernity and Islam but rather between an Islamicized modernity and a Westernized modernity.[823] A pious orientation in one's personal life, rendering the benefits of modernity and globalization morally pure, has provided Malian arabisants with an answer, which I refer to as Islam mondain, to this choice. By creating an extensive médersa system over the years, in collaboration and confrontation with the successive governments in Mali and abroad (via NGOs), Malian arabisants have answered the need for a new definition of what it is to be a modern Muslim democrat in a secular democracy. I have shown how médersas have allowed and still encourage the development of a new mentality giving Malian Muslims the tools necessary to re-define themselves in their own environment. Malian arabisants have reformulated their religious practice and sociability towards Islam mondain, a term which refers to a moralization of the mundane not completely unlike a re-invention of the protestant ethic. Islam mondain offers a model for virtuous socio-economic comfort, and an Islamization of the benefits of globalization and modernization which renders them morally pure and therefore, Islamically acceptable.

I have also demonstrated how Malian arabisants have had to cope with greatly varied circumstances over time in order to develop their current understanding of what it is to be a modern Muslim. Ousman makes his point in regards to Islamism, but I contend that his reading applies equally well to Islam mondain: a worldly oriented piety rendering

[823] Lukens-Bull, "Two Sides of the Same Coin."

daily life morally pure. The following summarizes the different forces that came to shape Muslim activism and specifically, Islamism:

> Western colonization of the Islamic world and the sudden impact of the globalization process on the ill-equipped and unwary Muslim nations have left far-reaching consequences and bear a good deal of responsibility in the recurrence of contemporary Islamic movements. In the same line, of reasoning, the policies of the international financial and trade institutions have created dehumanizing conditions of abject poverty in many Muslim countries, destroyed the web of public services in the sector of education, health and social welfare, and perpetuated disparities and inequalities among the citizens, leaving them without hope. This environment has contributed enormously to the emergence of Islamists and predisposed them to fill the vacuum left by the states, which abnegated their traditional functions.
>
> The rich countries of the gulf also played a role in the resurgence of Islamism. The oil boom coupled with the emergence of Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia and the creation of the Muslim World league in 1962 to counter secular nationalism and communism facilitated largely the expansions of Islamism all over the world through financing of Islamic movements and their social, educational, financial and other missionary and community programs.[824]

As I have shown, all of these external factors were influential in shaping Islam in Mali although I make the point that it did not lead Southern Malian arabisants towards Islamism but more towards Islam mondain. I addressed the question of French colonial rule and its impact on the development of Islamic education in the colony; I discussed the impact of Structural Adjustment Plans imposed by international institutions on the various educational opportunities offered to Malians; and I analyzed the impact of international funding, especially from Saudi Arabia and Libya, on conceptions of Islam in Mali. Although I do not want to minimize the importance of all these external influences, I have demonstrated that Malians remain active agents, rather than mere recipients, in the (re-)definition of Muslim piety in a modern secular democracy.

This research thus contributes to a theoretical and anthropological study of Islam as a lived faith in a secular democracy; this is central to an understanding of the developing relationships between Islam, modernity, and secular democracy across the Muslim world. It also speaks to the very current issues faced by Muslims living in "Western" countries and vice versa. This research illustrates the agency of the Malian arabisants in defining their relationship to modernity and democracy, and thus engages with various studies which have identified other Muslim communities in the world also engaged in such a re-definition of themselves and of their tradition. As opposed to common perceptions of Islam and Muslims found in Western media where Muslims are passive recipients of their own tradition and of other people's ideologies, I insist on the

[824] Ousman, "The Potential of Islamist Terrorism in Sub-Saharan Africa," 68.

active role of the local arabisants of Bamako in shaping an Islamic community in their image: pious, politically engaged, concerned with the moral upbringing of future generations as well as of their economic survival, responsible citizens of a secular state. As Rudolph has argued, "political actors have choices; historical events and ambiguities in the social structure offer them alternatives. Religious identities are part of a bundle of identities defining historical actors. Elements in the bundle acquire greater or lesser saliency [*sic*] depending on the ebb and flow of historical events and actors' attempts to situate themselves."[825] Religious identity is only one in the repertoire of identities Malians commonly refer to; the Afrobarometer has found that beside their nationality, Malians refer to themselves first and foremost by ethnic group (40%), religious group (23%), social class (16%), occupation (7%), political association (5%), gender identity (4%), voluntary association (3%).[826] One can certainly assume that, in their daily lives, Malians combine and re-combine these identities depending on the circumstances. It remains, however, that Malians arabisants, as pious Muslims in a secular democracy, have developed their own identity. They have re-created themselves as a self-conscious group which primarily identify as Muslim, and which practices what I have called Islam mondain.

[825] Rudolph, "Dehomogenizing Religious Formations," 243.
[826] Bratton, Coulibaly and Machado, "Popular Views of the Legitimacy of the State in Mali," 201-201.

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APPENDIX A

Ethics Board approval from Université Laval (2005)

UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL

Vice-rectorat à la recherche
Comité d'éthique de la recherche

Sainte-Foy, le 20 juin 2005

Madame Émilie Roy
Madame Monique Cardinal
109 Jean-Duceppe
Joliette (Québec)
J6E 7Y8

Objet : Projet de recherche intitulé: L'enseignement religieux comparé dans les médersas officiellement reconnues et les institutions informelles au Mali **(Numéro d'approbation : 2005-090)**

Madame,

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche de l'Université Laval a pris connaissance du projet de recherche cité en objet et l'a trouvé conforme sur le plan déontologique. Le Comité prend acte que le consentement sera recueilli de façon verbale. Par conséquent, le Comité approuve ledit projet pour une période d'un an, soit jusqu'au 1er juillet 2006. Par ailleurs, le Comité demeure en attente de la lettre du Ministère de l'éducation du Mali vous donnant accès aux écoles qui lui sont affiliées.

Note : il est important de retourner au Comité la version finale du feuillet d'information mentionnant le numéro d'approbation du CÉRUL ainsi que la date d'approbation se trouvant sur la présente lettre, faute de quoi le projet pourrait sembler ne pas avoir été approuvé par le Comité.

Le Comité d'éthique devra être informé et devra réévaluer ce projet advenant toute modification ou l'obtention de toute nouvelle information qui surviendrait à une date ultérieure à celle de la présente approbation et qui comporterait des changements dans le choix des participants, dans la manière d'obtenir leur consentement ou dans les risques encourus. De plus, le Comité devra être avisé en cas d'interruption du projet et recevoir un rapport final lors de la fermeture.

Le projet devra être réévalué un an à partir de la date d'approbation, le chercheur indiquant brièvement l'évolution et le déroulement de sa recherche, le nombre de participants recrutés et si les perspectives de cette recherche se déroulent tel que prévu. Un formulaire de demande de renouvellement est disponible sur le site Internet du Comité à l'adresse suivante : http://www.vrr.ulaval.ca/deontologie/cdr/for.html

Veuillez agréer, Madame, nos sentiments les meilleurs.

Édith Deleury
Présidente
Comité d'éthique de la recherche de l'Université Laval

Maison Michael-John-Brophy
Québec (Québec) G1K 7P4
CANADA

(418) 656-2131, poste 4506
Télécopieur : (418) 656-2840
cer@vrr.ulaval.ca
www.ulaval.ca/vrr

APPENDIX B

Research authorization - Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique of Mali (2005)

MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION
CNRST ***Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique***

BP : 3052 Tél : 21 90 85 Fax : (223) 21 84 46/21 66 98, Bamako, Mali
E-mail : cnrst@ afribone. net. ml

//-)UTORISATION DE RECHERCHE N° 16-2005-MEN / CNRST

Le Directeur du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique (CNRST), autorise : Mlle,

Nom : **ROY**
Prénoms : Emilie
Nationalité : Canadienne
Adresse au Mali : Alexis S. Sanou, Lycée Kodonso, Bamako, MALI
Adresse à l'étranger : 109, Jean- Duceppe, Joliette, QC. J6E 7Y8
A effectuer des recherches dans (la) les régions(s) de : Bamako
Cercle(s) de : Bamako
En compagnie de : seule
De : 18 Mai 2005 **Au :** 10 Juin 2006
Adresse de l'organisme dont relève le chercheur : Université Laval, Qc, G1K 7P4
Prénoms et Nom du chercheur principal : Dr. Monique Cardinal
Correspondant Scientifique au Mali : Université de Bamako (FLASH)
Domaine de recherche : Histoire / Sciences des Réligions
Thème et titre du projet : L'enseignement dans les médersas
Objectif du projet : Rédiger un mémoire de maîtrise
Source(s) de financement : Bureau International (Université de Laval)

NB : Pour la délivrance de l'autorisation de recherche, l'intéressé(e) doit déposer au CNRST un dossier comprenant :

- frais de dossier 5 000 fcfa
- un avant-projet ou un projet de recherche
- une demande d'autorisation de recherche timbrée à 100 fcfa
- une attestation d'une institution malienne d'attache
- trois (3) photos d'identité

Bamako, le 7 Juin 2005
P/Le Directeur Général /P.O
Le Directeur Général Adjoint

Dr. Aly Yéro MAIGA
Chevalier de l'Ordre National

CNRST, Rue 268 Porte 238, N'GOLONINA, BOZOLA, BAMAKO – MALI

APPENDIX C

McMaster University Research Ethics Board approval (2009)

McMaster Research Ethics Board

McMaster University Research Ethics Board (MREB)
c/o Office of Research Services, MREB Secretariat, GH-305/H, e-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS CLEARANCE TO INVOLVE HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

Application Status: New ☑ **Addendum** ☐ **Renewal** ☐ **Project Number** 2008 157

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:

Islamic Education and Identity Construction in Mali

Faculty Investigator (s)/ Supervisor(s)	Dept./Address	Phone	E-Mail
C. Rothenberg	Religious Studies	24363	rothenb@mcmaster.ca
Student Investigator(s)	**Dept./Address**	**Phone**	**E-Mail**
E. Roy	Religious Studies	289-440-5410	mil_555@hotmail.com

The application in support of the above research project has been reviewed by the MREB to ensure compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the McMaster University Policies and Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants. The following ethics certification is provided by the MREB:

☐ The application protocol is approved as presented without questions or requests for modification.

☐ The application protocol is approved as revised without questions or requests for modification.

☑ The application protocol is approved subject to clarification and/or modification as appended or identified below:

COMMENTS AND CONDITIONS: Ongoing approval is contingent on completing the annual completed/status report. A "Change Request" or amendment must be made and approved before any alterations are made to the research.

See attached

Reporting Frequency:	Annual:	Other:

Date: January 20, 2009 **Dr. D. Maurer, Chair/ Dr. D. Pawluch, Vice-chair:** D Maurer

APPENDIX D

Research authorization - Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique of Mali (2009)

MINISTERE DES ENSEIGNEMENTS SECONDAIRE, SUPERIEUR
ET DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE
CNRST *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique*

BP : 3052 Tél : 221 90 85 Fax : (223) 221 84 46 / 221 66 98, Bamako, Mali
E-mail : cnrst_mali@yahoo.fr

AUTORISATION DE RECHERCHE N° 0369697-197/09/MESSRS/CNRST

Le Directeur du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique (CNRST), autorise : Mlle,

Prénoms: EMILIE
Nom: Roy
Nationalité: Canadienne
Adresse au Mali : s/c Alexis Sanou, Lycée Kodonso, Djélibugu, Bamako, Mali (66989322)
Adresse à l'Etranger: 109 Jean-Duceppe, Joliette, Quebec, J6E 7Y8, Canada
A effectuer des recherches dans (la) les régions(s) de: District de Bamako
Cercle(s) de: District de Bamako
En compagnie de: seule
Du: le 09 Février 09 **Au:** 31 Décembre 2010
Adresse de l'Organisme dont relève le Chercheur: McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada
Prénoms et Nom du chercheur principal: Dr. Celia Rothenberg
Correspondant Scientifique au Mali: Université de Bamako (FLASH), Bamako-Mali
Domaine de recherche: Sciences des Réligions
Thème et titre du projet: Islamic Education, International Funding and the Construction of Islam in Mali
Objectif du projet: Rédiger une thèse de Doctorat
Source(s) de financement: Personnelle

NB : Pour la délivrance de l'autorisation de recherche, l'intéressé(e) doit déposer au CNRST un dossier comprenant :
- **frais de dossier 10 000 f Cfa**
- **un avant-projet ou un projet de recherche**
- **une demande d'autorisation de recherche timbrée à 200 f Cfa**
- **une attestation d'une institution malienne d'attache**
- **trois (3) photos d'identité**

Bamako, le 9 février 09
P/ Le Directeur Général / P. O
Le Directeur Général Adjoint

Le Directeur Général Adjoint

Pr. Aly Yéro MAIGA
Chevalier de l'Ordre National

CNRST, Rue 268 Porte 238, N'GOLONINA, BOZOLA, BAMAKO – MALI

ENGAGEMENT

La délivrance de l'autorisation de recherche implique impérativement pour le chercheur :

1. Avant de sortir du territoire national malien, le dépôt d'un RAPPORT PRELIMINAIRE d'au moins trois (3) pages au CNRST.

   Ce rapport doit contenir les matériaux de recherche, la méthodologie utilisée, les problèmes rencontrés, les perspectives et les suggestions. Tout rapport insuffisant sera cause de non renouvellement de l'autorisation de recherche.

2. La remise au CNRST dans les meilleurs délais de :
   - Deux exemplaires du rapport définitif détaillé ;
   - Deux exemplaires de tout document publié sur la recherche effectuée.
3. Dans le cas des recherches Archéologiques et Minières, le chercheur s'engage à ne sortir du territoire malien aucun matériel archéologique et minier sans autorisation expresse de l'autorité compétente sous peine de s'exposer à des poursuites.

Tout chercheur qui ne respecterait pas le présent engagement ne sera plus autorisé à effectuer des recherches au MALI.

AMPLIATIONS :

- CNRST.....2
- Dtion Générale de la Police Nationale..... 1
- Dtion Nat. des Collectivités Territoriales..... 1
- Inst. Malienne d'attache.....1
- Intéressé (e).....1

LU ET APPROUVE

BAMAKO, LE 03/02/03

LE CHERCHEUR

APPENDIX E

Overview of interview questions (non-exhaustive)

1. Background questions:
    a. Were you born in Mali?
    b. What year were you born? Before of after the independence of Mali (1960)?
    c. Would you qualify your parents as observant Muslims?
        i. Please tell me how you would judge this.
    d. Would you qualify yourself as an observant Muslim?
        i. More or less observant than your parents?
        ii. Please tell me about any differences in practices, knowledge, or beliefs of Islam between you and your parents.
    e. Did you attend a Qur'anic school at any point in your life?
        i. Please tell about your learning experience in this school.
        ii. Please tell me about your teacher in this school.
    f. What type of school did you attend (if any) at the elementary level (French colonial, public school, private Catholic, médersa)?
        i. Did you graduate from this school?
    g. What type of school did you attend at the secondary level (French colonial, public school, private Catholic, médersa)?
        b. Did you graduate from this school?
    h. Did you attend a post-secondary institution?
        i. What type of institution?
        ii. In Mali or in another country (which one)?
        iii. What was your major?
        iv. In what language did you study?
    i. How did you pay for any education you received?
        i. Did your parents pay?
        ii. Did you work?
            c. Did you receive a scholarship (from whom)?

2. Employment at the school:
    a. Are you an employee of the school or do you own the school?
    If employee:
        d. What motivated you to become a teacher?
        e. How long have you been working at this school?
        f. What made you choose this type of school rather than public school or other private schools?
        g. How did you come to be hired in this school?
        h. How much do you get paid to fill your function?
    If owner:
        i. Did you found the school?
        j. What motivated you to found this school? What was your goal?
        k. Did a member of your family found the school? What was their motivation for founding the school?

l. How did you personally came to be the owner of the school?

b. What is your function at the school?

i. What topic do you teach?

ii. How do you approach you task as a teacher?

iii. What administrative function do you have?

iv. Please tell me about you experience as an employee in this school.

c. How did your academic formation prepare you for this function?

d. How many hours a week do you teach?

e. How many students are there in your class?

3. Funding of the school

a. What proportion of the functioning budget of the school is covered by the students' tuition fees?

i. How much is the tuition fees for students?

ii. Does it vary depending on the grade?

iii. Does the school have any problem getting paid?

iv. Does the school make accommodations for students who have problems paying?

b. Does the school receive any funds from sponsors within Mali?

i. Does the school have subsidies from the government of Mali?

a. Please tell me how you came to receive those.

b. Please tell me what these subsidies represent in your budget.

ii. Does the school receive subsidies in kind (land, books, furniture)?

iii. Does the school receive funding from private donors with Mali?

a. Please tell me how the school (or you) came in contact with this private donor.

b. Please tell me what these donations represent in your budget.

c. Does the school receive any funds or donations in kind from international donors?

i. Are these donors private individuals, non-governmental organizations, or governmental agency?

ii. What country do these donations come from?

iii. How did the school come to receive these donations?

a. Please tell me how the school (or you) came in contact with this private donor or organization.

iv. How much of the budget of the school do these donations represent?

d. Do you think that the provenance of the funds or of the school material influences the curriculum of the school?

4. Curriculum of the school

a. What language is used in this school for teaching?

i. If it is a mix of languages, could you give me a percentage of time for each language, or how it is divided by course of grade?

ii. Please tell me about the reasons for this use of languages in the school.

b. Is the school officially registered with the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale du Mali?

i. Does the school follow the official curriculum for médersas produced by the Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale du Mali?

a. If yes, what are the advantages of following this curriculum? What is good about it and what are the problems?

b. If no, what are the reasons for not using the official curriculums? What is problematic with it?

ii. Does a government agency inspect the school regularly?
a. How often?
b. Did the school pass all inspections, were there any recommendations?

c. Can you give me a list of the course offered in this school by grade?
i. How many hours are dedicated to religious instruction?
a. According to you, is it enough? Or too much?
ii. What do you teach the students specifically in these courses?
m. What school of jurisprudence is emphasized in these courses and in the textbooks?
n. Do you think it reflects the composition of the Muslim community in Mali?
iii. Can I look at the textbooks used for these courses?
a. Where do the textbooks come from, are they donations?

d. Do you the curriculum of the school is a function of the international donations?

APPENDIX F

Letter: Pr. Berthe, Dean of the Faculté des Lettres, Arts et Sciences Humaines of the Université de Bamako

MINISTERE DES ENSEIGNEMENTS SECONDAIRE, SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

UNIVERSITE DE BAMAKO

Faculté des Lettres, Langues, Arts et Sciences Humaines

Tél.: 20-223-16-88
Fax : 20-223-20-78 B.P. E 36 37
Bamako - MALI

REPUBLIQUE DU MALI
Un Peuple-Un But-Une Foi

ATTESTATION DE RECHERCHE

Je soussigné, Professeur Salif BERTHE, Doyen de la Faculté des Lettres, Langues, Arts et Sciences Humaines (FLASH) de l'Université de Bamako, atteste que Madame Emilie ROY, candidate au doctorat au département d'Etudes Religieuses de l'Université McMaster (Hamilton, Canada) est en séjour de six mois (de janvier à juin 2009) de recherche au Mali sur le thème : « Islamic Education, International Funding and the Construction of ».

La Faculté des Lettres, Langues, Arts et Sciences Humaines de Bamako est son établissement d'accueil.

En foi de quoi, je lui délivre la présente attestation pour servir et valoir ce que de droit.

Bamako, le 30 JAN. 2009

LE DOYEN

P^r. Salif BERTHE

APPENDIX G

Letter of introduction: Director of the Académie d'Enseignement de la Rive-Gauche.

Contacter les Directeurs des CAP de Bozola, Hippodrome, Lafia Soug
Voir le Directeur de l'Institut Islamique d'Hamdallaye -
NB : les congés du 1er trimestre débutent le jeudi 23 déc 2010 à partir de 12H -

MINISTERE DES ENSEIG
SUPERIEUR ET DE LA RE
UNIVERSITE DE BAM
Faculté des Lettres, La
Arts et Sciences Humain
Tél.: 20-223-16-88
Fax : 20-223-20-78 B.P. E 36 37
Bamako - MALI

ATTESTATION DE RECHERCHE

Je soussigné, Professeur Salif BERTHE, Doyen de la Faculté des Lettres, Langues, Arts et Sciences Humaines (FLASH) de l'Université de Bamako, atteste que Madame Emilie ROY, candidate au doctorat au département d'Etudes Religieuses de l'Université McMaster (Hamilton, Canada) est en séjour de six mois (de janvier à juin 2009) de recherche au Mali sur le thème : « Islamic Education, International Funding and the Construction of ».

La Faculté des Lettres, Langues, Arts et Sciences Humaines de Bamako est son établissement d'accueil.

En foi de quoi, je lui délivre la présente attestation pour servir et valoir ce que de droit.

Vu et Accord
P/ La Directrice Pa

Ministère de l'Education Nationale
Gouvernorat du District de Bamako
Le Directeur Adjoint
Académie d'Enseignement de Bamako-District Rive gauche

Bamako, le 30 JAN. 2009

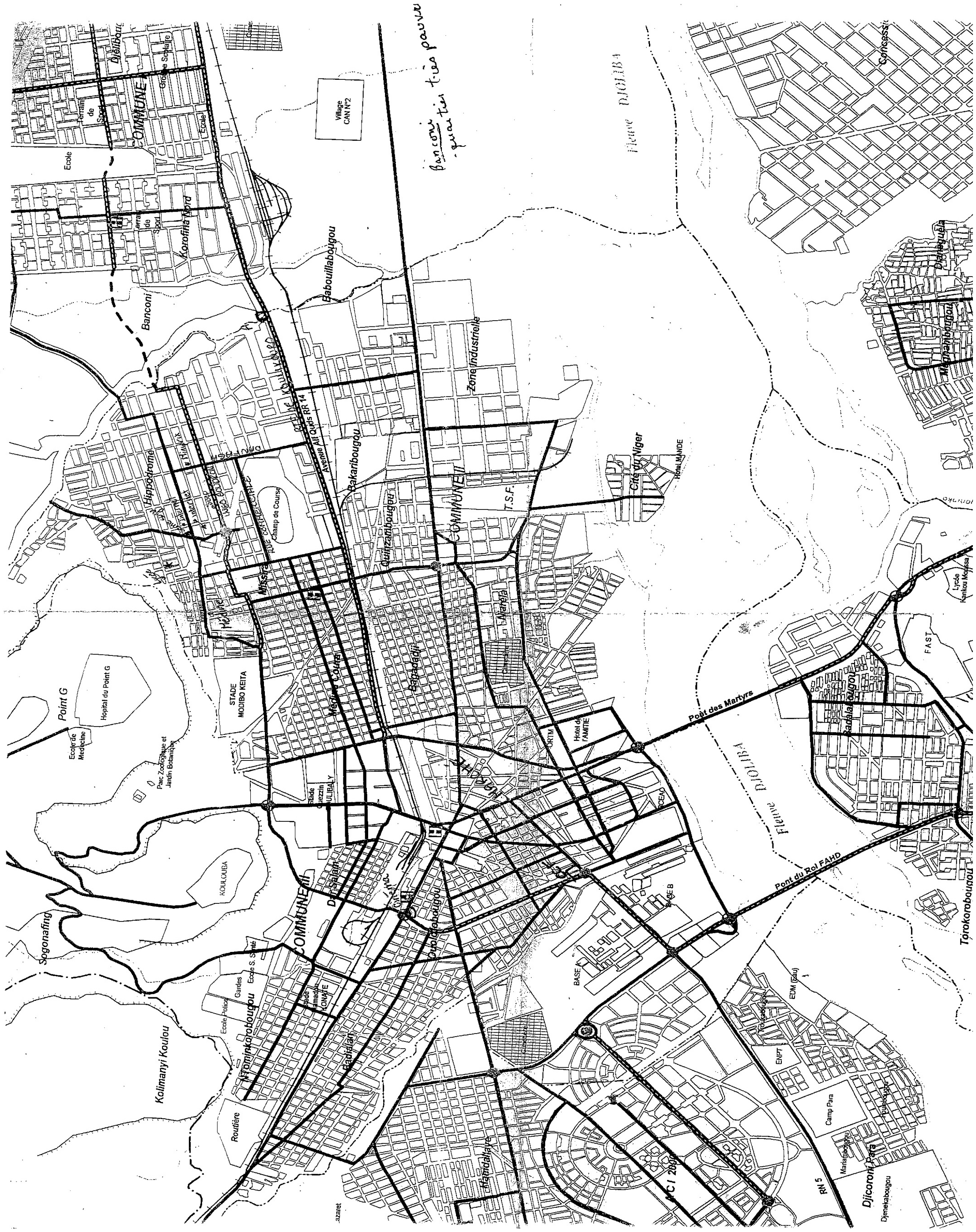
LE DOYEN

P. Salif BERTHE

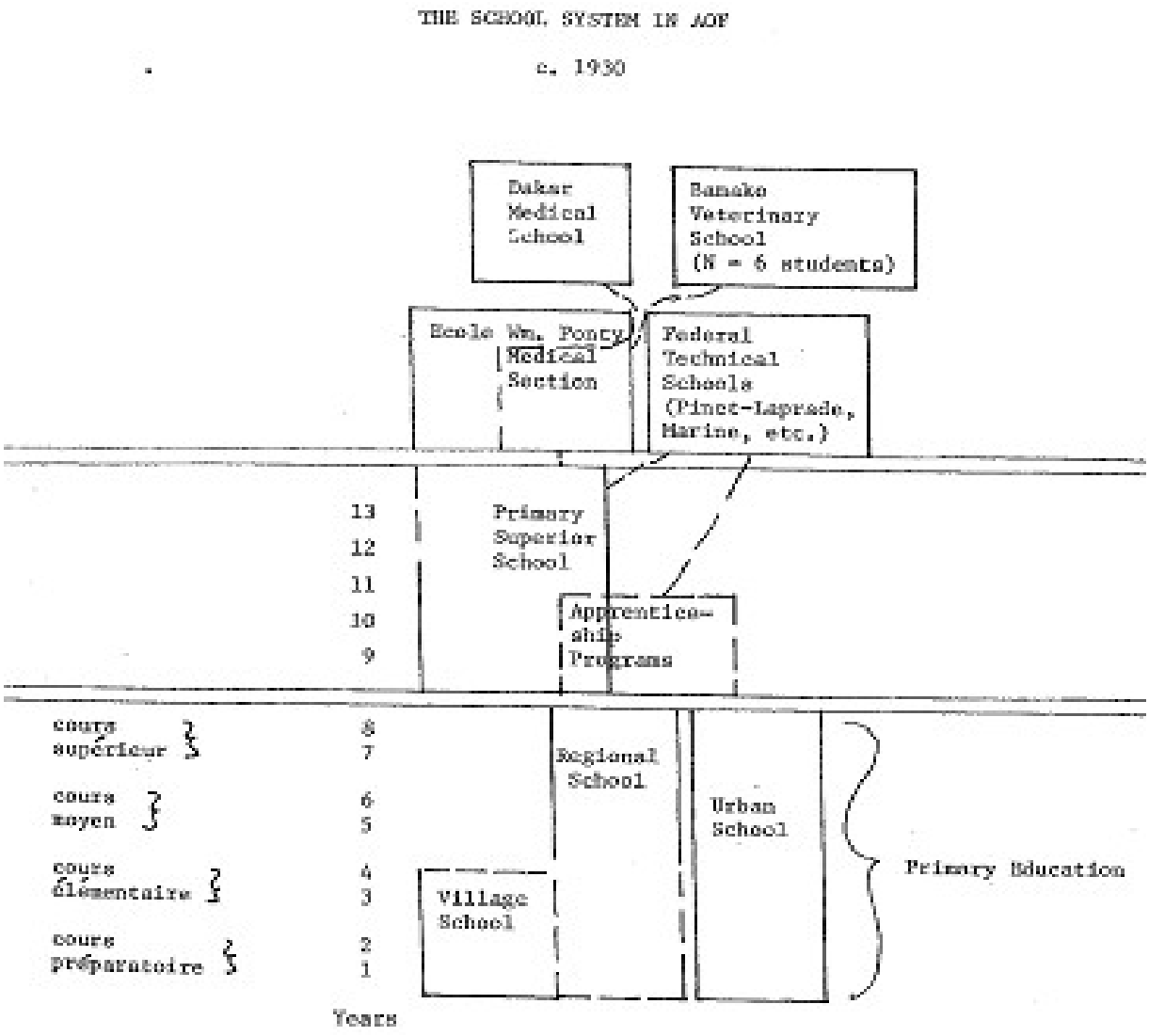
UNIVERSITÉ DE BAMAKO
LE DOYEN
Faculté des Lettres, Langues, Arts et Sciences Humaines

APPENDIX H

<u>Map of Bamako (central)</u>



APPENDIX I



Source: Gail Paradise Kelly, *'When I Become a Fonctionnaire:' School Knowledge in French West Africa, 1918-1938* (Buffalo, NY: State University of New York in Buffalo, 1984), 3.

APPENDIX J

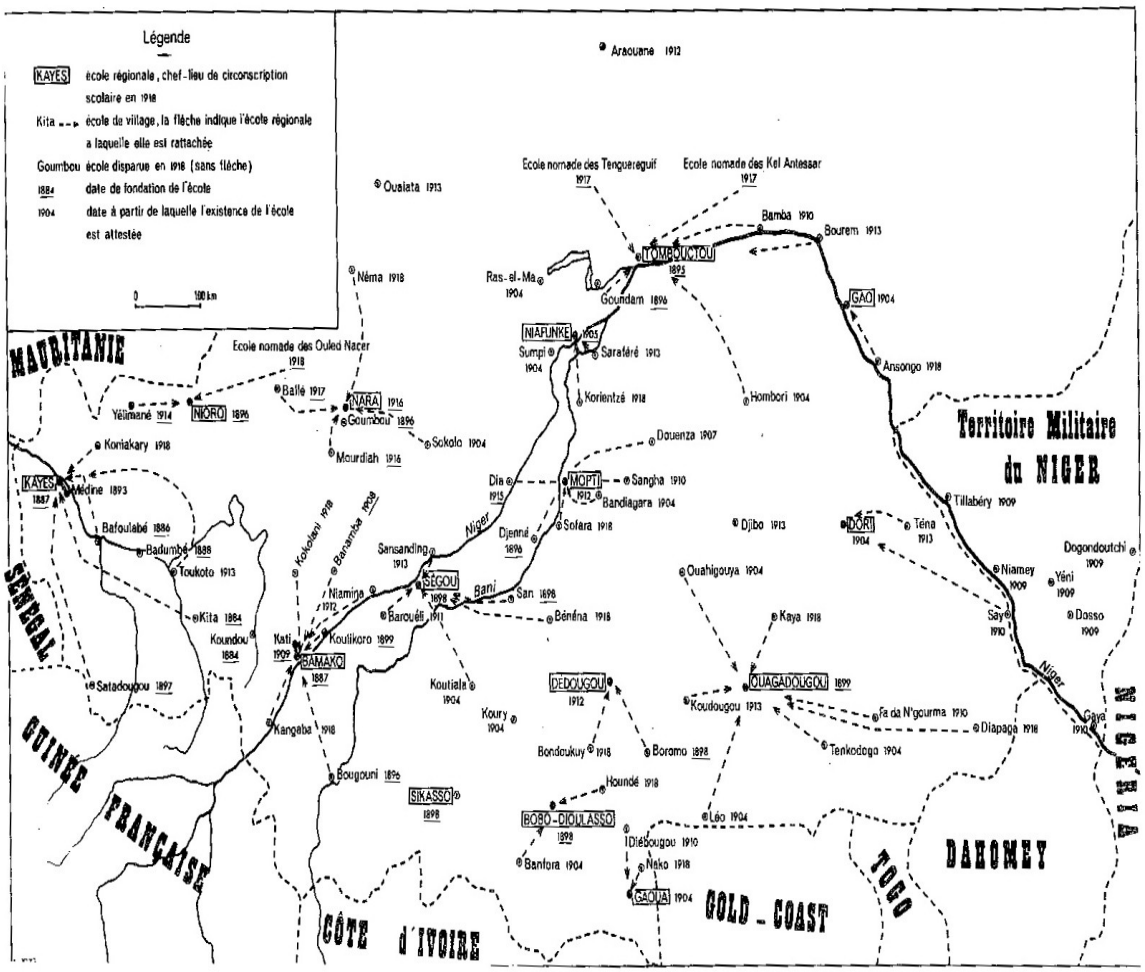
APPENDIX No. 1. STATISTICS FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR.—1933–1934.

(Schools and Numbers of Pupils.)

Colonies.		Village Schools, Preparatory and Elementary.		Regional Schools.		Urban Schools.		Higher Primary Schools.		Technical Schools.		Schools.		Totals. Pupils.			Adult Courses.		Half-caste Orphanages.		Private Schools (Mission, etc.).		Franco-Muslim Schools.		Population.
		Sch.	Pupils.	Sch.	Pupils.	Sch.	Pupils.	Sch.	Pupils.	Sch.	Pupils.	Sch.	Class.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Course.	Pupils.	Sch.	Pupils.	Sch.	Pupils.	Sch.	Pupils.	
Dakar	B.	5	239	—	—	4	680	1	57	1	48	12	44	1,024	265	1,289	5	164	—	—	1	203	—	—	69,102
	G.	—	—	—	—	1	263	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	571	—	—	
Senegal	B.	61	4,433	13	3,355	4	2,444	1	161	1	28	83	229	10,393	685	11,078	65	2,645	—	—	9	379	—	—	1,318,287
	G.	—	—	—	284	2	401	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	424	—	—	
Mauretania	B.	6	146	2	290	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	436	—	436	4	125	—	—	—	—	1	95	350,000
	G.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Sudan	B.	48	4,478	19	5,806	3	47	1	217	1	101	67	185	10,688	1,056	11,744	54	2,275	1	69	—	—	2	167	2,906,675
	G.	8	1,056	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	
Niger	B.	21	1,370	4	820	—	—	1	49	5	279	31	57	2,518	92	2,610	7	262	1	27	—	—	—	—	1,720,736
	G.	—	12	—	80	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	29	2	—	—	—	
Dahomey	B.	39	2,772	9	2,848	—	—	1	87	1	52	51	121	5,759	1,318	7,077	—	—	—	—	17	3,096	—	—	1,133,224
	G.	—	402	—	897	1	174	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	1,462	—	—	
Ivory Coast	B.	43	3,839	19	4,156	—	—	2	245	2	106	67	156	8,306		9,307	36	1,581	1	12	17	1,749	—	—	3,876,900
	G.	—	486	—	513	1	58	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	1,001	—	—	—	1	84	2	212	—	—	
Guinea	B.	34	2,746	8	2,771	2	35	1	110	1	79	46	103	5,722	836	6,558	18	761	1	37	13	989	—	—	2,220,464
	G.	—	345	1	469	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	44	—	—	—	—	
Total	B.	247	20,022	74	20,046	13	3,206	8	926	13	693	365	895	44,846	5,253	50,099	189	7,813	4	144	57	6,416			
	G.	8	2,301	1	2,243	5	929	—	4										2	157	17	3,051			
General Total	1933	261	20,967	74	20,453	19	5,141	8	974	12	575	374	873	43,176	4,734	47,910	206	7,852	6	300	67	8,061	3	232	13,616,223
	1934	265	22,323	75	22,289	18	4,135	8	930	13	693	365	895	44,846	5,253	50,099	189	7,813	6	301	74	9,467	3	262	13,595,338

Sources: William Bryant Mumford, *Africans Learn to be French. A review of Educational Activities in the Seven Federated Colonies of French West Africa and Algiers undertaken in 1935* (New York, NY: Negro University Press, 1970), 170-171.

APPENDIX K



Source: Bouche, Denise, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920: Mission civilisatrice ou formation d'une élite." (PhD diss., Université de Lille III, 1975), 657

APPENDIX L

Statistiques de l'enseignement privé musulman, publiées par le gouvernement général, pour les trois années 1907, 1908 et 1909 (a).

Colonie	Nombre total d'élèves dans les écoles coraniques			Nombre d'élèves fréquentant accessoirement une école française			Nombre de filles dans le total		
	1907	1908	1909	1907	1908	1909	1907	1908	1909
Sénégal	9.082	10.717(b)	10.933(b)	871	1.037	789	21	554	354
Haut-Sénégal-Niger	10.176	10.622	14.424	91	114	167	55	61	207
Territoire militaire		3.413			5				
Guinée	28.023	23.754	23.777	99	115	115	799	312	312
Côte d'Ivoire	1.544	20	2.397	3					13
Dahomey	1.705	1.775	1.558	65	88	608	15	23	50
Mauritanie	235	235	1.297	10	10	19			
Total	51.275	50.536	54.386	1.149	1.369	1.698	885	950	936

(a) Gouvernement général de l'Afrique occidentale française. Situation générale de l'année 1907. Id. 1908. Id. 1909. Gorée. Imprimerie du gouvernement général, 1908, 1909, 1910. Trois années seulement conservées à Dakar sous la cote P° II 8° 42. Statistiques hautement fantaisistes. Cf. Invraisemblance des chiffres fournis pour la Mauritanie. Erreur certaine pour la Côte d'Ivoire en 1908, résultant probablement d'une erreur de transcription, etc...

(b) Chiffres fournis par le lieutenant-gouverneur du Sénégal, télégramme n° 640, 15 novembre 1909. A.R.S. J 8599.

N.B. - On connaît le jugement de Marty (Annexe 4 à son rapport du 20 novembre 1913. A.R.S. J 8612b) "Avant 1912, les statistiques des écoles coraniques sont inexistantes ou très incomplètes".

Source: Bouche, Denise, "L'Enseignement dans les territoires français de l'Afrique Occidentale de 1817 à 1920: Mission civilisatrice ou formation d'une élite." (PhD diss., Université de Lille III, 1975), 754

APPENDIX M

Lettre: Chief of Cabinet, M. Traoré, to the Directeur Général de l'Enseignement Fondamental
May 20th 1982

MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION NATIONALE

REPUBLIQUE DU MALI
Un Peuple - Un But - Une Foi

N°1109/MEN-CAB

Bamako, le 20 MAI 1982

Le Ministre de l'Education Nationale

à Monsieur le Directeur Général de l'Enseignement fondamental

BAMAKO

J'ai l'honneur de vous informer et pour dispositions à prendre que le Conseil des Ministres du 21 Avril 1982 a décidé de la prise en main par l'Education Nationale des "Medersas". Leurs implantations doivent obéir aux mêmes règles que pour les écoles laïques. Pour cela le texte sur les écoles fondamentales devra être repris afin d'y insérer la création des "Médersas".

P/LE MINISTRE P.O
LE CHEF DE CABINET

MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION
Enseignement Fondamental
ARRIVE N° 1973 DEP
Bamako, le 20 05 1982

MINISTERE DE L'EDUCATION NATIONALE
REPUBLIQUE DU MALI
UN PEUPLE-UN BUT-UNE FOI
LE CHEF DE CABINET

Source: Photocopy given to me by a contact at the Centre pour la Promotion de la Langue Arabe (CPLA), Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, in June 2005.

APPENDIX N

Governmental Decree of April 30th, 1985

SISSOKO
IDENCE DU GOUVERNEMENT
---oooOooo---
ETARIAT GENERAL DU GOUVERNEMENT

REPUBLIQUE DU /)/)ALI
---oooOooo---
UN PEUPLE- UN BUT- UNE FOI

/_)ECRET /)/° 112 /PG-RM

PORTANT ORGANISATION DES MEDERSAS PRIVEES.

-=-=-=-=-=-=-

/_E PRESIDENT DU GOUVERNEMENT,

VU a Constitution,
VU a loi n°86/AN-RM du 21 Juillet 1961 portant organisation de la liberté eligieuse et l'exercice des cultes dans la République du Mali ;
VU l'ordonnance n°20/CMLN du 20/4/1970 portant réorganisation de l'enseignement en République du Mali ;
VU l'ordonnance n°38/CMLN du 11 Décembre 1970 modifiant la liste des Directi Nationales du Ministère de l'Education Nationale ;
VU a loi n°80-14/AN-RM du 26 Mai 1980 complétant l'ordonnance n°38/CMLN du 11 Décembre 1970 fixant la liste des Directions Nationales du Ministère de l'Education Nationale ;
le décret n°57/PG-RM du 20 Avril 1970 portant réglementation de l'Enseignement Fondamental ;
VU le décret n°118/PG-RM du 20 Septembre 1971 portant réglementation de l'Enseignement privé en République du Mali ;
VU le décret n°195/PG-RM du 10 Juillet 1978 fixant les modalités de création extension, transfert ou suppression d'Ecoles publiques d'enseignement Fondamental ;
VU le décret n°154/PG-RM du 12 Juin 1981 portant organisation et modalités de fonctionnement de la Direction Nationale de l'Enseignement Fondamental
VU le décret n°322/P-RM du 31 Décembre 1984 portant nomination des membres du Gouvernement ;

STATUANT EN CONSEIL DES MINISTRES

/_) E C R E T E :

ARTICLE 1 : Les Médersas privées relèvent de l'autorité du Ministre chargé de l'Education Nationale.

ARTICLE 2 : L'arabe est la langue d'enseignement dans les Médersas privées. langues, et le Français y sont introduits comme disciplines.
/maternelles

ARTICLE 3 : Les Médersas privées sont des Ecoles Fondamentales ; l'Enseigne- religieux y est autorisé.

ARTICLE 4 : Les Médersas privées sont organisées suivant le décret n°57/PG-R 0 Avril 1970 exception faite des articles 4-5-3 et 28.

ARTICLE 5 : Les dispositions du décret n°118/PG-RM du 20 Septembre 1971 ant réglementation de l'Enseignement privé en République du Mali, ainsi celles du décret n°195/PG-RM du 10 Juillet 1978 fixant les modalités de tion, extension, transfert ou suppression d'Ecoles publiques d'Enseigne- Fondamental sont applicables aux Médersas privées.

ARTICLE 6 : Dans le cadre des conventions prévues à l'article 10 du décret PG-RM du 20 Septembre 1971 les Médersas privées sont représentées par sociation Malienne pour l'Unité et le Progrès de l'Islam.

.../...

-2-

TICLE 7 : L'organisation interne et les modalités de fonctionnement des
lersas privées sont déterminées par arrêté du Ministre chargé de l'Educa-
on Nationale.

TICLE 8 : Le Ministre de l'Education Nationale est chargé de l'exécution
présent décret qui sera enregistré et publié au Journal Officiel.

KOULOUBA, le 30 AVRIL 1985

LE PRESIDENT DU GOUVERNEMENT

MINISTRE DE L'EDUCATION NATIONALE

GENERAL SEKOU LY

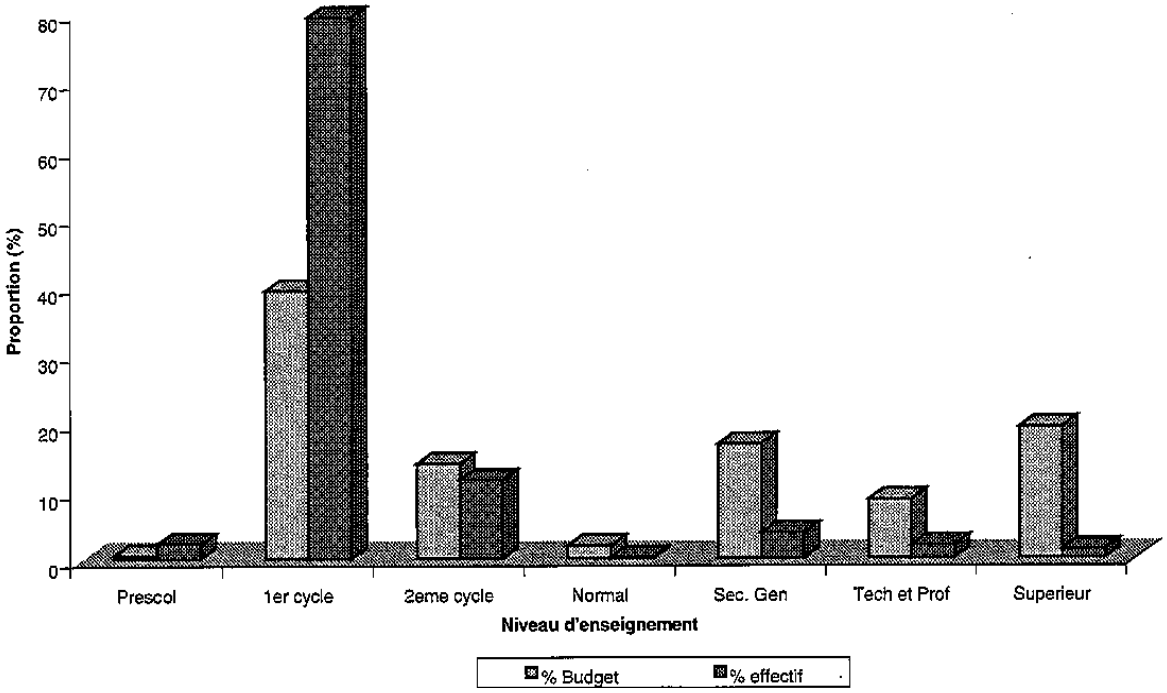
GENERAL MOUSSA TRAORE

Source: Photocopies given to me by a contact at the Centre pour la Promotion de la Langue Arabe (CPLA), Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, in June 2005.

APPENDIX O

National budget for education percentage per level of study

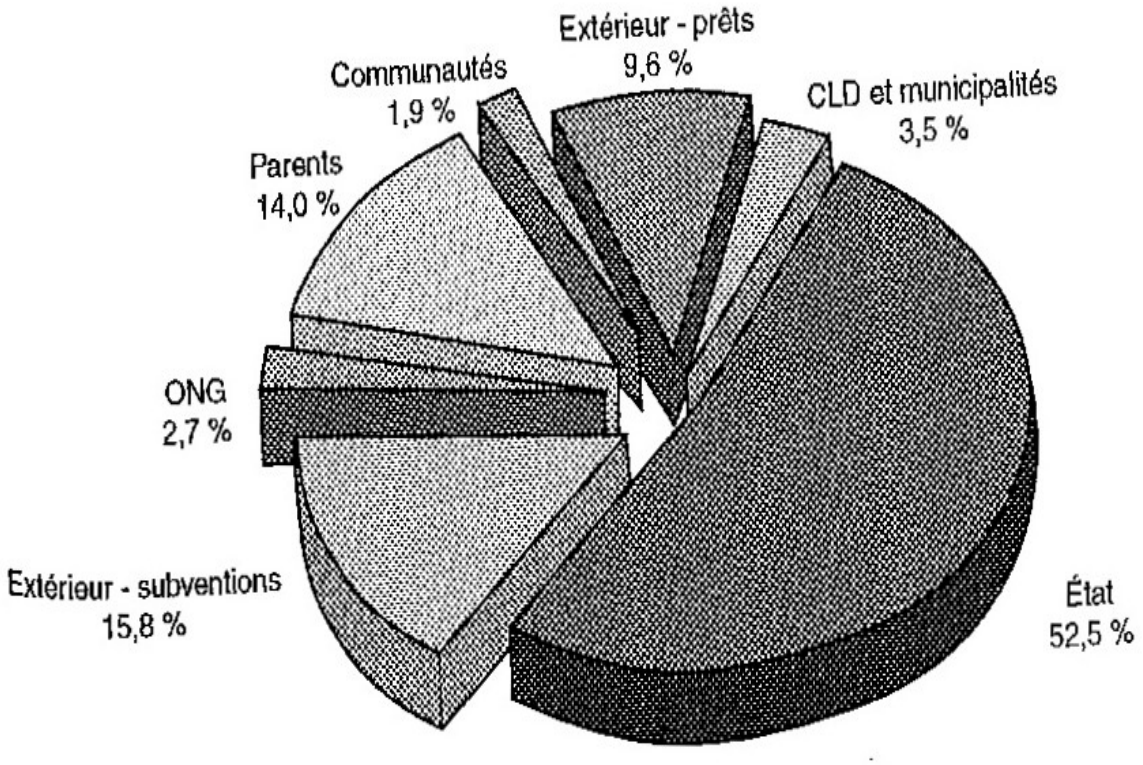
Figure 1.7 Dépenses budgétaires par niveau d'enseignement



Source: Solomani Sangaré and others, *Genre et fréquentation scolaire au premier cycle de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali* (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, 2000), 23.

APPENDIX P

Sources of financing for the Malian educational system in 1994



Source: Sékou Traoré and Serge Péano, "Le coût de l'enseignement fondamental au Mali," In *Financement et gestion financière de l'éducation: Séminaire panafricain, Dakar, Sénégal, 12-14 octobre 1997,* ed. Serge Péano (Paris: Institut International de Planification de l'Éducation, 1999), 87.

APPENDIX Q

Total Flows of Official Aid by Donor Country: 1973-1980 ($ Million)

TABLE 1
Total Flows of Official Aid by Donor Country: 1973 -1980[1]
($ Million)

Commitments

	1973	1974	1975	1976
Algeria	26.9	65.3	83.7	80.9
Iraq	115.2	545.0	434.9	301.3
Kuwait	815.3	1,473.8	2,865.7	2,833.4
Libya	507.3	563.9	684.6	406.9
Qatar	113.4	266.7	456.6	343.9
Saudi Arabia	673.1	2,438.1	2,964.8	4,159.1
UAE	425.3	951.7	1,297.8	1,518.4
Total	2,676.5	6,304.5	8,788.1	9,643.9

Disbursements

	1973	1974	1975	1976
Algeria	29.8	51.5	42.2	66.6
Iraq	10.6	440.2	254.4	254.7
Kuwait	566.0	1,191.8	1,682.5	1,875.7
Libya	403.8	263.4	362.7	363.2
Qatar	93.7	217.9	366.7	240.3
Saudi Arabia	334.9	1,622.1	2,466.5	2,817.2
UAE	288.6	749.4	1,206.5	1,143.3
Total	1,727.4	4,536.3	6,381.5	6,761.0

TABLE 1 (continued)

Commitments

	1977	1978	1979[2]	1980[2/P]	Total
Algeria	83.9	263.5	79.5	98.7	782.4
Iraq	228.9	602.3	1,227.4	1,124.0	4,579.0
Kuwait	2,118.8	1,413.0	942.4	1,263.8	13,726.2
Libya	372.8	953.9	139.0	744.4	4,372.8
Qatar	203.4	253.9	73.4	327.3	2,038.6
Saudi Arabia	3,694.2	3,767.0	1,678.0	2,543.0	21,917.3
UAE	1,395.5	1,047.9	1,238.6	1,229.3	9,104.5
Total	8,097.5	8,301.5	5,378.3	7,330.5	$ 56,520.8

Disbursements

	1977	1978	1979[2]	1980[2/P]	Total
Algeria	71.0	56.2	271.8	83.2	672.3
Iraq	114.2	239.0	846.9	828.6	2,988.6
Kuwait	1,905.0	1,562.8	1,054.7	1,192.0	11,030.5
Libya	266.1	576.7	104.8	280.9	2,621.6
Qatar	255.4	138.5	277.2	298.7	1,888.4
Saudi Arabia	2,678.4	1,761.4	2,297.5	3,033.0	17,011.0
UAE	1,329.5	829.3	1,114.0	1,174.3	7,834.9
Total	6,619.6	5,163.9	5,969.9	6,890.7	44,047.3

1 Does not include contributions to the IMF Oil Facility but includes contributions to the World Bank.
2 For 1979 contains only sketchy information on non-concessional flows. For 1980 includes only concessional assistance.
P = Preliminary

Source: OECD

Source: Robert Anton Mertz and Pamela MacDonald Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa* (München: Kaiser, Mainz: Grünewald, Boulder: Distributed by Westview, 1983), 128-129.

APPENDIX R

Arab-Sponsored Bilateral and Multilateral Financial Institutions

TABLE 4
Arab-Sponsored Bilateral and Multilateral Financial Institutions

Name of Fund	Location	Year Established[1]	Original Authorized Capital ($ Million)	Current Capital ($ Million)	Geographic Focus and Purpose
A. *Bilateral Funds*					
Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development	Abu Dhabi	1971	128.2	512.8	Arab countries only until 1974. Now Africa, Asia and Islamic countries anywhere.
Iraqi Fund for External Development	Baghdad	1974	169.3	677.0	All developing countries.
Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development	Kuwait	1961	172.5	7,400.0	Arab countries only until 1974. Now all developing countries.
Saudi Fund for Development	Riyadh	1974	2,900.0	8,000.0	All developing countries.
			$ 3,370.0	$ 16,589.8	
B. *Multilateral Institutions*					
1. *Arab Regional Institutions*					
Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development	Kuwait	1971	350.0	1,300.0	Members of the Arab League

TABLE 4 (continued)

Name of Fund	Location	Year Established[1]	Original Authorized Capital ($ Million)	Current Capital ($ Million)	Geographic Focus and Purpose
Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development	Khartoum	1977	517.0	517.0	Members of the Arab League
Arab Monetary Fund	Abu Dhabi	1975	910.6	988.0	Members of the Arab League
OAPEC Special Account to Ease the Burden of Arab Petroleum Importing Countries	Kuwait	1974–76	36.9	fully disbursed	Arab petroleum importing countries
Gulf Organization for the Development of Egypt	Riyadh	1976–79	2,000.0	fully disbursed	Further Egypt economic development
			$ 3,814.5	$ 4,841.9	
2. *African Regional Institutions*					
Special Arab Aid Fund for Africa	Cairo	1974–76	200.0	360.0	Non-Arab African countries
Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa	Khartoum	1974	231.0	378.25	Non-Arab African countries

TABLE 4 (continued)

Name of Fund	Location	Year Established[1]	Original Authorized Capital ($ Million)	Current Capital ($ Million)	Geographic Focus and Purpose
Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to African and Arab Countries	Cairo	1976	28.5	28.5	Least developed Arab and African countries
			$ 459.5	$ 766.75	
3. *Islamic Institutions*					Aid Muslim countries and communities.
Islamic Development Bank	Jeddah	1975	859.6	2,550.0	
Islamic Soldarity Fund	Jeddah	1974	not applicable	62.8[2]	Aid Muslim countries and communities.
Muslim World League	Mecca	1962	budget not available		Aid Muslim communities
			$ 861.1	$ 2,612.8	
4. *Other Multilateral Institutions*					
OPEC Fund for International Development	Vienna	1976	800.0	4,000.0	Program and project lending to "most seriously affected" developing countries
			$ 800.0	$ 4,000.0	

1 Years of operation if no longer in existence.
2 Sum of annual donations: 1974/75 – 1979/80.

Source: Reports of various funds and institutions.

Source: Robert Anton Mertz and Pamela MacDonald Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa* (München: Kaiser, Mainz: Grünewald, Boulder: Distributed by Westview, 1983), 134-136.

APPENDIX S

African Countries Ranked by Amount of Consolidated Bilateral Aid Commitments: 1973-1980 ($ Million)

TABLE 15
African Countries Ranked by Amount of Consolidated Bilateral Aid Commitments: 1973–1980[1]
($ Million)

Country	Amount	Country	Amount
1. Sudan (a) (b)	$ 1966.4	24. Togo	22.9
2. Mauritania (a) (b)	887.3	25. Mozambique	21.7
3. Somalia (a) (b)	704.8	26. Rwanda	18.5
4. Uganda (b)	183.3	27. Botswana	18.3
5. Guinea (b)	171.9	28. Burundi	18.1
6. Zaire	166.4	29. Equatorial Guinea	16.2
7. Mali (b)	136.3	30. Lesotho	10.6
8. Senegal (b)	117.8	31. Benin	10.5
9. Zambia	109.8	32. Upper Volta (b)	7.4
10. Madagascar	84.0	33. Mauritius	5.8
11. Cameroon (b)	78.3	34. Cape Verde	4.7
12. Djibouti (a) (b)	77.2	34. Sierra Leone	4.7
13. Gabon (b)	75.8	36. Central African Republic	4.0
14. Chad (b)	75.1	37. Ethiopia	2.2
15. Tanzania	70.0	37. Seychelles	2.2
16. Ghana	63.8	39. Zimbabwe	0.1
17. Niger (b)	62.8	40. Angola	0
18. Congo	58.2	40. Ivory Coast	0
19. Gambia (b)	55.4	40. Malawi	0
20. Comoros (b)	50.8	40. Sao Tome e Principe	0
21. Kenya	45.4	40. Swaziland	0
22. Liberia	30.7		
23. Guinea-Bissau (b)	26.1		

(a) = Member of the Arab League (b) = Member of the Islamic Conference
1 = Preliminary data for 1980 only.

Source: Robert Anton Mertz and Pamela MacDonald Mertz, *Arab Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa* (München: Kaiser, Mainz: Grünewald, Boulder: Distributed by Westview, 1983), 165.

APPENDIX T

Malian *Baccalauréat* examination, 2010 (SH serie and LL serie)

Baccalauréat Malien

Session de Juin 2010

Epreuve de :Géographie **Coeff.4**

Série : SH **Durée : 3h**

امتحان الشهادة الثانوية العامة

المادة:جغرافيا(علوم إنسانية)

يختار الطالب موضوعا واحدا فقط

السؤال الأول :

تحدث عن تاريخ التعمير السكاني للولايات المتحدة

(20 درجة)

السؤال الثاني:

وضح عدم التوازن في توزيع سكان روسيا

(20 درجة)

السؤال الثالث:

بسبب الليبرالية فإن الصين تمكنت من إقامة نهضة اقتصادية وسيطرت كذلك على نموها السكاني. **بين ذلك.**

(20 درجة)

Baccalauréat Malien
Session de Juin 2010

Epreuve de :Histoire **Coeff.4**
Série : SH **Durée : 3h**

امتحان الشهادة الثانوية العامة

المادة: تاريخ (علوم إنسانية)

يختار الطالب موضوعا واحدا فقط

السؤال الأول:

أجر دراسة مفصلة حول أزمة قناة السويس

(20 درجة)

السؤال الثاني:

بعد خمسين عاما من الاستقلال فإن الدول الأفريقية الفرنكوفونية لاتزال تواجه مشكلات عديدة. **وضح ذلك** .

(20 درجة)

السؤال الثالث:

عند الاحتكاك (الاتصال) بالإسلام والمسيحية، فإن تغييرات كثيرة دخلت على الديانات التقليدية. **بين ذلك** .

(20 درجة)

Ministère de l'Éducation de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales

Centre National des Examens et Concours de l'Éducation

République du Mali
Un Peuple – Un But – Une Foi

EXAMEN : *Baccalauréat malien* **BAC 2010**

SERIES : *SHT* **SESSION :** *Juin 2010*

ÉPREUVE DE : *Mathématiques* **DURÉE :** *2 heures* **COEF:** *2*

Exercice 1 ——— [*5 points*]

1°/ Calculer la fonction dérivée de chacune des fonctions suivantes :

$f : \mathbb{R} \to \mathbb{R} : x \mapsto (2x+1)(x^2-3x)$ (*1pt*) ; $g : \mathbb{R} \to \mathbb{R} : x \mapsto \dfrac{x^2-2x-1}{x+1}$ (*1pt*)

2°/ Résoudre dans $\mathbb{R}$ les équations suivantes :

a) $\ln(x+3) = \ln(2x-1)$ (*1pt*) ; **b)** $2e^{2x} - 3e^{x} + 1 = 0$ (*1pt*) ;

c) $2(\ln x)^2 - 5\ln x + 3 = 0$ (*1pt*)

Exercice 2 ——— [*5 points*]

Un informaticien désordonné dispose de 25 CD enregistrables. Il a enregistré des documents sonores sur 5 d'entre eux, des fichiers texte sur 6 CD et des images sur 7 CD. Les autres CD sont vierges.

L'informaticien choisit simultanément 3 CD.

1°/ Combien de tirages distincts peut-t-il effectuer ? (*2pts*)

2°/ Quelle est la probabilité de tirer 3 CD contenant des documents sonores ? (*1pt*)

3°/ Quelle est la probabilité de tirer 2 CD contenants des fichiers texte et 1 CD contenant des images ? (*1pt*)

4°/ Quelle est la probabilité de tirer au moins un CD vierge ? (*1pt*)

Problème ——— [*10 points*]

Soit f la fonction numérique de la variable réelle définie pour tout x par :

$$f(x) = \frac{2}{3}x^3 + x^2 - 4x + 1$$

On désigne par $\mathscr{C}$ sa courbe représentative dans un repère orthogonal $(O ; \vec{i}, \vec{j})$.

1°/ a) Calculer $f'(x)$ (*1,5pt*) ; **b)** Étudier le signe de $f'(x)$ (*1,5pt*)

2°/ En déduire le sens de variation de f ; on dressera le tableau des variations de f. (*3pts*)

3°/ Déterminer une équation de la tangente (T) à $\mathscr{C}$ au point d'abscisse 1. (*1pt*)

4°/ Tracer $\mathscr{C}$ et (T) dans le même repère $(O ; \vec{i}, \vec{j})$ (*3pts*)

EXAMEN :.	Baccalauréat Malien			BAC
SERIE :	SH T	SESSION :	Juin : 2010	
EPREUVE DE :	PHILOSOPHIE	DUREE :	4Heures	COEF : 4

امتحان الشهادة الثانوية

المادة: الفلسفة (علوم إنسانية)

يختار الطالب موضوعا واحدا فقط

الموضوع الأول:
هل يبعد فكرة اللاشعور حرية التصرف لدى الإنسان؟

الموضوع الثاني:
هل يمكن القول – دون تناقض – بأن الإنسان من نتاج التاريخ وفي نفس الوقت هو يخلق التاريخ؟

الموضوع الثالث:

أبرز القيمة الفلسفية من هذا النص بعد دراسته المنسقة:

" الدولة ليست حكما مفروضا على المجتمع من الخارج، وليست أكثر من ذلك حقيقة الفضيلة والمثالية والعقلانية، كما يزعم هيغل. إنها في الواقع من نتاج المجتمع في فترة معينة من تطوره.من الاعتراف أن هذا المجتمع ورط نفسه في تناقضات مع نفسه لا يمكن حلها؛ لكونه قسم نفسه إلى معارضات لا يمكن الوفاق بينها أو تداركها؛ لكن لكي لاتحترق الخصوم، طبقات المصالح الاقتصادية المناقضة والمجتمع في حرب عقيمة؛ فإن الحاجة تتطلب حكومة – تبدو في الظاهر –فوق المجتمع ويجب أن توقف هذه الخصومة وتعيدهم إلى حدود النظام. وهذه الحكومة نتجت من المجتمع، لكنها تجعل نفسها فوقه، وتصبح بذلك يوما بعد آخر غريبة عليه. هذه هي الدولة.
ف . أنجيلس (أصل الأسرة، ملكية خاصة أم ملكية الدولة)

Année scolaire 2009-2010	**Baccalauréat Malien**		Session de juin 2010
Série SH	*Epreuve de Biologie*	**Coef : 2**	**Durée : 2heures**

Le candidat traitera l'un des 2 sujets au choix.

SUJET 2

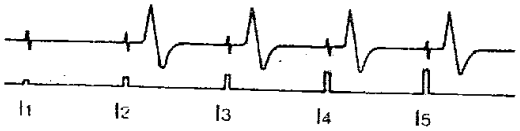
I- 10pts

1- Citez les phases de la mitose dans l'ordre de déroulement de cette division. **2pts**

2- Expliquez sommairement les 4 phases de l'ovogenèse. **4pts**

3- En épluchant des oignons on verse des larmes. Comment appelle- t-on cette réaction ? **1pt**

4- On applique successivement à une fibre nerveuse des excitations convenablement espacées d'intensité croissante I_1, I_2, I_3, I_4, I_5. On obtient les enregistrements représentés sur la figure ci-dessous.



Déduisez de l'analyse de cette figure 2 propriétés de la fibre nerveuse. **3pts**

II- 10pts

On vous propose les observations suivantes relatives à la vision.

a- Le jour tous les objets sont vus nets et avec leur couleur.

b- Si on demande à un individu d'identifier la couleur d'une craie placée latéralement dans son champ visuel, il en est incapable.

c- La nuit, si on fixe une grosse étoile, on aperçoit de petites étoiles à la périphérie du champ visuel ; par contre ces petites étoiles disparaissent si on cherche à les fixer.

d- « La nuit tous les chats sont gris » dit un adage populaire.

1- Nommez la membrane nerveuse de l'œil. **1pt**

2- Quels sont les 2 types de cellules visuelles ? **2pts**

3- Analysez les observations proposées et déduisez-en le rôle des cellules visuelles dans la vision. **(4+3) pts**

Année scolaire 2009-2010	**Baccalauréat Malien**		Session de juin 2010
Série SH	*Epreuve de Biologie*	**Coef : 2**	**Durée : 2heures**

Le candidat traitera l'un des 2 sujets au choix.

SUJET 1

I- 11pts

1- Quels sont les 3 constituants essentiels d'une cellule eucaryote ? 1,5pts

2- Citez les 2 types de fibres nerveuses. 1pt

3- Nommez les cellules visuelles responsables de la vision des couleurs. 0,5pt

4- Reproduisez puis complétez le tableau suivant. 8pts (4x2)

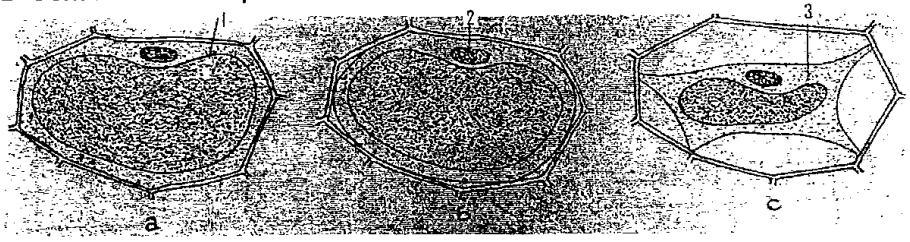
Gamètes / caractères	Spermatozoïde	Ovule
cytoplasme		
Mobilité		
Réserves nutritives		
Nombre émis		

II- 9pts

On immerge des cellules de racine de blé dans de verres de montre contenant des solutions de saccharose de concentrations différentes (milieux a, b et c).
Toutes ces solutions sont légèrement additionnées de rouge neutre. On note après observation l'aspect des cellules dans les milieux a, b et c (voir schémas ci-dessous).
L'organite 1 (sur les schémas) se colore en rouge plus intense que le milieu extérieur.

1- Identifiez les structures désignées par les chiffres 1, 2 et 3. 1,5 pts

2- Commentez les aspects observés dans les milieux a, b et c. 7,5 pts



B. **Put the verbs in brackets into the correct form (gerund or infinitive). (2 pts)**
1. It isn't good for children (eat) too many sweets.
2. Kady likes her children (go) to the dentist every six months.
3. The doctor advised Mamadou (give up) (play) soccer.

C. **Copy the dialogue and supply the missing part.** (2 pts)
Dentist: Half of your front teeth are damaged. What did you use to eat?
Patient: _____.
Dentist: How often did you go to see a dentist?
Patient: _____.
Dentist: OK. Today I am very busy. You come back in a week.

III. **TRANSLATION** (4 pts)

A. **Translate into English** (2 pts)
Beaucoup de personnes souffrent des maux de dents. Certains même perdent les leurs avant la vieillesse. Les dentistes recommandent des visites régulières d'une ou de deux fois par an. Maintenant ils ont des nouvelles techniques pour soigner les dents.

B. **Translate into French** (2 pts)
From "Before the advent of modern dentistry ..." to "... crooked, or missing teeth."

IV. **COMPOSITION** (5 pts)
Choose only **one** topic.
A. Many people prefer to treat their diseases with traditional medicine.
What are the advantages and drawbacks of this medicine?

B. Write and complete the university admission form for Mariam Sylla.
She is a student in SHT, Lycée Bilaly Sissoko, Bamako. She passed the DEF exam in 2007. She was born on Monday, October 8th 1992 in Bamako. Her phone number is 76013418. She speaks Bamanan, French, English and German. She likes reading.

(The form covers personal details: name, sex, family status, date of birth, religion, address and phone number; schooling and exams passed; languages; hobbies.)

CENTRE NATIONAL DES EXAMENS ET CONCOURS DE L' EDUCATION	REPUBLIQUE DU MALI UN PEUPLE-UN BUT-UNE FOI
EXAMEN : BACCALAUREAT MALIEN	**SERIE : LLT Arabophone**
EPREUVE / Français LV1	**SESSION : Juin 2010**
DUREE : 4 H	**COEFF : 4**

Toutes les questions sont obligatoires

TEXTE :

Le roi était un jour au milieu de ses courtisans, quand on vint lui annoncer que les douleurs de Sogolon commençaient. Il renvoya tous les courtisans, seul Gnankouman Doua resta à ses cotés. On eut dit que c'était la première fois qu'il devenait père, tellement il était agité et inquiet. Tout le palais gardait un silence parfait. Doua, de sa guitare monocorde, essaya de distraire le souverain ; ce fut vain. Il dut même arrêter cette musique qui agaçait le roi. Soudain, le ciel s'assombrit, de gros nuages venus de l'Est cachèrent le soleil : on était pourtant en saison sèche. Le tonnerre se mit à gronder, de rapides éclairs déchirèrent les nuées ; quelques grosses goutes de pluies se mirent à tomber, le soleil parut de nouveau.

C'est en ce moment qu'une matrone sortit de la case de Sogolon, accourut vers le vestibule et annonça à Naré Magan qu'il était père d'un garçon. Le roi ne réagit point, il était comme hébété. Alors Doua comprenant son émotion, se leva, fit signe à deux esclaves qui se tenaient déjà près du Tabalé royal : les coups précipités du tambour royal annoncèrent au Manding la naissance d'un prince ; les tam-tams du village répondirent et ainsi le même jour, tout le Manding sut la bonne nouvelle.

. Œuvre source ?

QUESTIONS

Compréhension

1- Donnez un titre au texte (2 points).
2- Relevez dans ce passage les phénomènes naturels annonciateurs d'un fait surnaturel dans la vie de tout le Manding. (2 points)
3- A partir de vos connaissances littéraires et historiques sur les traditions, donnez le nom du bébé don il est question dans le texte. (2 points)

Grammaire

1- Donnez le temps, le mode et l'infinitif des verbes suivants : vint ; devenait ; parut ; dut. (4 points)
2- A quel temps se trouve la première phrase du texte ? Réécrivez – la au conditionnel présent. (2 points)

Vocabulaire

Expliquez les mots suivants: s'assombrir ; le vestibule ; le Tabalé (3 points)

Essai : En une dizaine de lignes, racontez un fait extraordinaire dont vous avez été témoin. (5)

BACCALAUREAT MALIEN

SESSION DE JUIN 2010

EPREUVE D'ANGLAIS

SERIE: SH (LV1) DUREE: 2 H COEF. : 2

WHY VISIT A DENTIST?

Before the advent of modern dentistry, people commonly suffered toothache and tooth loss from their youth on. Many were disfigured by dark, crooked, or missing teeth. Toothless senior citizens suffered malnutrition and early death because they were unable to chew. Today, most dental patients can be free of toothache, keep their teeth throughout their life, and have a pleasing smile. How did modern dentistry achieve these three remarkable feats?

Preventive dentistry, emphasizing education and regular checkups, has been a key factor in avoiding toothache and tooth loss. Thus, some have benefited so much from education in oral hygiene that they rarely need dental treatment. Nevertheless, many people avoid the dentist. Some neglect dental treatment out of indifference. Others are deterred by the expense. Still others are afraid. Whatever your circumstance, it is worth asking: What can the dentist do for me? Is a visit worthwhile? To appreciate the importance of preventive dentistry, we need to understand what dentists are trying to prevent.

Dentists can help to prevent the torment of toothache and tooth loss. With your cooperation, dentists try to fight the effect of plaque, a soft film of bacteria that sticks to your teeth. The bacteria thrive on food particles. They convert sugar into acids that attack the tooth enamel, making it porous. Eventually caries, or tooth decay, results when the porous area collapses to form a cavity. You feel no discomfort at this stage, but when the decay reaches the central pulp of your tooth, you may suffer acute pain.

The bacteria that form plaque have another way of tormenting you. If plaque is not carefully brushed away, it hardens to form a calcified deposit called calculus, or tartar, which may inflame the gums and make them pull away from the tooth. This results in a gap between tooth and gum where trapped food provides a feast for bacteria that may infect your gums. Your dentist can help control this condition, but if this is not cared for, the tissue surrounding your teeth may become so damaged that your teeth actually fall out. More teeth are lost this way than through tooth decay.

Note

Advent: arrival Feat: an exploit

Thrive: to prosper Decay: deterioration

QUESTIONS (20 pts)

I. READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (6 pts)

A. Multiple choice questions (2 pts)

Copy the complete sentence containing the correct answer.

1. What happened to people before the advent of modern dentistry?
   a. They didn't suffer toothache.
   b. They didn't suffer tooth loss.
   c. They suffered toothache and tooth loss.
   d. They didn't cure toothache.

2. People suffered from toothache ...
   a. when they were a baby.
   b. when they were young.
   c. since they were young.
   d. when they were old.

3. People suffer acute pain when ...
   a. there is a cavity.
   b. there is tooth decay.
   c. the tooth enamel is attacked.
   d. the tooth decay reaches the central pulp.

4. The teeth fall out if ...
   a. Plaque is not brushed away.
   b. There is a tartar.
   c. The gums are infected and not cared for.
   d. The gums are pulled away from the teeth.

B. <u>True/False questions</u> (2 pts)

Copy the true sentences and correct the false ones.

1. Toothless senior citizens suffered malnutrition because they lacked food.
2. Preventive dentistry helps avoid toothache and tooth loss.
3. Dentists cannot help to prevent the torment of toothache and tooth loss.
4. The bacteria convert acids into sugar that attack the tooth enamel.

C. <u>Answer the following questions</u>(2 pts)

1. What disfigured people?
2. What are the three remarkable feats according to the author?

II. <u>VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR</u> (5 pts)

A. **Copy down each word from the list on the left with the correct definition from the right.** (1 pts)

A	B
Checkup	the firm flesh in which the teeth are set
Torment	the hard, glossy surface of teeth
Enamel	extreme pain of body
Gum	a medical examination

BACCALAUREAT MALIEN			
SERIE: LL	SESSION DE:JUIN 2010	DUREE: 3 H	COEF: 3
LV2 ANGLAIS			

THE ELECTRONIC COTTAGE

Advances in computer and telecom technologies – especially the advent of the personal computer – augur a radical transformation in white-collar work patterns. "Because of the low cost of almost powerful computers, many people's jobs are going to be independent of where they are physically," explains Jack Niles, director of information technology at the University of Southern California's Center for Futures Research. By decade's end, Niles predicts that more than 10 million people may abandon fulltime office work for a life in the "electronic cottage."

But for some the era of "telecommuting" is already at hand. Take science-fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke, author of more than 50 books, including "2001: A Space Odyssey."

Clarke lives in Colombo, Sri Lanka, half a world away from his business associates – editors, publishers and film producers. But for Clarke, the 12,000-mile distance is no problem at all. Because of the Indian Ocean satellite," he says, "I can get through to anywhere in the world as quickly as I can dial a number. I use a modem, connect my computer to the international telephone circuit, and send my articles to New York editors in seven minutes instead of seven days."

Notes:
white-collar work: travail de bureau
pattern: schema
at all: du tout
away from: loin de

QUESTIONS (20 points)

I. READING COMPREHENSION (6 pts)

A. *Multiple – choice questions: Copy the complete sentence containing the correct answer.* (2 pts)

1. Cottage means ... house.

a. big
b. small
c. tiny
d. huge

2. Jack Niles works at the ..telecom technologies

a. electronic cottage.
x b. telecom technologies.

c. information technology.
d. University of California.

3. Arthur C. Clarke wrote ... books.

a. science fiction
b. electronic cottage
c. computer and telecom
d. computer science

4. Arthur C. Clarke lives in ... Sri Lanka

a. the Indian Ocean.
b. the United States.
c. Sri Lanka.
d. Southern California.

B. True/False questions: Copy the true sentences and correct the false ones. (2pts)

1. There is a big change in people's work because of computer and telecom technologies.
2. Jack Niles predicts that many people will work alone.
3. One of Jack Niles' books is called "2001: A Space Odyssey." (T)
4. Distance is a handicap for Clarke to send his articles.

C. Answer the following questions. (2 pts)

1. How many people may abandon fulltime office work for a life in electronic cottage?
2. Which Ocean separates Colombo from the rest of the world?

II. VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR (5 pts)

A. *Copy down each word from the list on the left with one from the right so as to make pairs of synonyms.*

A	B
cottage	permanent
advent	call
fulltime	small house
dial	arrival

B. Look at the picture and write four sentences about it. *(2 pts)*

LV2 - LL - 2010

Baccalauréat Malien
Session de Juin 2010

Epreuve de : Linguistique (Arabe) Durée : 2H
Série : LL Coeff. : 2

امتحان الشهادة الثانوية

المادة: لسانيات (قسم أدبي)

أجب عن جميع الأسئلة

السؤال الأول:

هل اللسانيات علم ؟ إذا كان الجواب : نعم ، بين ذلك.
هل يمكن الاتصال بدون اللغة؟
كيف تفرق بين لغة الحيوان ولغة الإنسان؟
ماهو علم اللغة العام؟ وعلم اللغة التطبيقي؟ (12 درجة)
ما هو علم التراكيب (نظم الجملة)؟
ما هو علم الدلالة؟
ما ا لفرق بين اللغة واللهجة؟

السؤال الثاني:

عرف المعجم وأنواعه.
اذكر مدى تأثير اللغة العربية في لهجاتنا المحلية، مع ذكر بعض الكلمات العربية الدخيلة فيها. (04 درجات)

السؤال الثالث:

في رأيك، ما الفائدة من دراسة اللغات الوطنية في المنهج؟
(04 درجات)

Ministère de l'Éducation de l'Alphabétisation et des Langues Nationales

République du Mali
Un Peuple – Un But – Une Foi

Centre National des Examens et Concours de l'Éducation

EXAMEN : *Baccalauréat malien* *BAC 2010*

SERIES : *LLT* SESSION : *Juin 2010*

ÉPREUVE DE : *Mathématiques* DURÉE : *2 heures* COEF: 2

Exercice 1 ——— [*3 points*]

Calculer les limites suivantes :

a) $\lim_{x \to +\infty} (-x^2 + 10x + 4)$; b) $\lim_{x \to +\infty} \frac{3x-4}{1-2x}$; c) $\lim_{x \to -\infty} \frac{2x^2-5x+1}{4x-7}$

Exercice 2 ——— [*6 points*]

Déterminer les ensembles de définition de chacune des fonctions f, g et h définie par :

$f(x) = x^3 + x^2 - x + 1$; $g(x) = \frac{3x+6}{x+4}$; $h(x) = \frac{x+1}{(2x-6)(x-1)}$.

Calculer leurs fonctions dérivées.

Exercice 3 ——— [*6 points*]

(U_n) est une suite numérique de premier terme U_0. On considère les cas suivants :

1°/ Si (U_n) est une suite géométrique de premier terme $U_0=16$ et de raison $q=\frac{1}{2}$

a) Calculer U_1, U_2, U_3 et U_4

b) Pour quelle valeur de n a-t-on : $U_n = \frac{1}{2}$? $U_n = \frac{1}{8}$?

2°/ Si (U_n) est une suite arithmétique de raison r telle que : $U_0=1$; $U_1=3$; $U_2=5$

a) Calculer la raison r de cette suite

b) Calculer U_3, U_4, U_5 et U_6

Exercice 4 ——— [*5 points*]

Le tableau ci-dessous donne la répartition des notes obtenues en mathématiques au baccalauréat par les 80 élèves d'un lycée.

Note	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	18
Effectif	2	2	5	10	9	10	12	10	7	5	5	1	1	1

1°/ Construire le diagramme en bâton de la série (3pts)

2°/ Calculer la note moyenne obtenue. (2pts)

Baccalauréat Malien
Session de Juin 2010

Epreuve de : Histoire et Géographie **Coeff.2**
Série :LL **Durée : 2h**

امتحان الشهادة الثانوية العامة

المادة: **تاريخ وجغرافيا** (قسم أدبي)

التلميذ يختار مجموعة واحدة فقط

المجموعة الأولى:

1- المادة: **تاريخ**
بين دور ألمانيا الهتلرية في إشعال الحرب العالمية الثانية
(15 درجة)

2- المادة: **جغرافيا**
قدم جبال (أبلاش) Appalaches في الولايات المتحدة.
(05 درجات)

المجموعة الثانية:
1- المادة: **جغرافيا**
بين أسس القوة الاقتصادية للولايات المتحدة
(15 درجة)

2- المادة: **تاريخ**
اذكر أهداف منظمة الأمم المتحدة.
(05 درجات)

EXAMEN :	Baccalauréat Malien			BAC
SERIE :	LL	SESSION :	Juin : 2010	
EPREUVE DE :	PHILOSOPHIE	DUREE :	3Heures	COEF : 3

امتحان الشهادة الثانوية

المادة: الفلسفة (قسم أدبي)

يختار الطالب موضوعا واحدا فقط

السؤال الأول:

ما التصورات التي توحيها إليك هذه الفكرة: " الطفولة هي حقيقة الإنسان "

السؤال الثاني:

" الله هو الكائن الذي ينقصني لأفهم القضايا التي لا أفهمها "
هل توافق على هذا الرأي؟

السؤال الثالث:
" العقل يهين كل تعصب " ما رأيك في هذا؟

3-استخرج الصور البلاغية من هذه العبارات:
ولقد تحلق في الهواء – وتمر واثبة – وتخالها حينا قذيفة مدفع – وضربها عند اللاعبين حرام .
4- ما رأيك في ألفاظ الشاعر وتراكيبه التي أدى بها هذه الأفكار؟
5- إلى أي مدرسة شعرية ينتمي مثل هذا الشعر؟

السؤال الثاني:

" لقد حظيت المقالة في العصر الحديث شهرة ورواجا لم يسبق لها مثيل في تاريخ النثر العربي"
في ضوء هذا التعليق، ابسط القول في المقالة : تعريفها – أنواعها – موضوعاتها – خصائصها – وعن أهم روادها في الأدب العربي الحديث.

السؤال الثالث:

" الشاعر الأفريقي يعبر عن شعره من خلال اللغات الأوربية مع ذلك لم يسمح له أن يخرج من ثقافته المحلية وتعلقه بوطنه الأم فعبر عن مشاعره الثورية والزنجية والافتخار بها"
تحدث من خلال دراستك لهذا الأدب، عن اتجاهات الأدب الأفريقي اللاتيني وعن خصائصه مبينا بعض الأدباء الأفارقة ونماذج لأدبهم.

APPENDIX U

Program for *tawhid* for the Malian official curriculum for médersas

1st grade:
a) First term: Teaching "There is no deity but God and Muhammad is His messenger"; Love of Allah (Glorified is He!) and His Messenger (s); Allah (Glorified is He!) created the creation; Images from the blessings of Allah (Glorified is He!) to His servants (like the blessing of hearing or sight); Thanking Allah for His blessings.
b) Second term: Faith in Allah (Glorified is He!); Faith in the Messenger(s); Faith in the Glorious Qur'an and caring for it; Introduction/explaining the Islamic religion.
c) Third term: Saying the "Bismillah" before any action (like the Bismillah before eating for example); Praising Allah (Glorified is He!) after every action (like saying Praise be to Allah after eating for example); Love of the Parents and respecting them; Love of all people.

2nd grade:
a) First term: The meaning of "there is no deity but Allah" and His love; Faith in Allah (Lord of the Earth and the Sky and what is [between them]); Meaning of Muhammad the Messenger of Allah; Faith in the comprehensiveness of his message to all people; The obligation to act upon that which the Messenger enacted; Love of the Prophet and his family.
b) Second term: Acknowledgement of Allah's divinity and the proofs for this; Meditation on the greatness of Allah; Islam, the religion of brotherhood and humanism; Some of the commands of Allah that are to be acted upon, such as prayer, fasting, respecting to parents etc.; Some of the prohibitions that Allah has [prohibited us from] acting upon, such as abandoning prayer and ingratitude to parents, lying and theft.
c) Third term: Loving the Glorious Qur'an and acting upon it; Honouring the human intellect; Faith in the Last Day and being ready for it.

3rd grade:
a) First term: Introduction to Islam; Pillars of Islam; Introduction to Faith; Pillars of Faith; What is Excellence (*Ihsan*)?
b) Second term: Sincerity in worshipping Allah (exalted is He!); Obedience to Allah and obedience to the Messenger (s); Obedience to parents; Benefits of religiosity.
c) Third term: Love of Muslims and cooperation among them; Faith in the Messengers; The names of some of the messengers (the Holders of Power i.e. *`Ulu al-`Azm*).

4th grade:
a) First term: Divisions of *tawhid*: lordship, divinity, the [divine] Names and Attributes; The pillars of the Islamic religion and their meaning (Islam, Faith, Excellence (*Ihsan*)); Polytheism (*shirk*) and its divisions (greater and minor [*shirk*]).
b) Second term: Faith in the angels; Names of some of the angels; Difference between the Jinn and the angels; Stepping away from the accursed Satan and avoiding him; Faith in the heavenly books; The Qur'an and its perfections.
c) Third term: Meaning of faith in the messengers and prophets; Necessary and impossible attributes of the messengers; The invitation of the messengers; Miracles.

5th grade:
a) First term: Introduction to *Tawhid* – the ruling of its learning – its blessing – its fruits;[827] Liberation from worshipping the creation; Meaning of *Tawhid* – division of *tawhid* in three: *Tawhid* of knowledge and proofs, Lordship, The Names and Attributes; Meaning of polytheism and its divisions; Greater and minor polytheism and the difference between them; Beseeching other than Allah.
b) Second term: The ruling on polytheism and the reason for it; The Qur'an's care for monotheism; The ruling of the monotheist and the reason for that – the ruling of the hypocrite; Meaning of the rebel (*taghut*); Conditions of receiving the blessings of "*la ilahah ila Allah*"; Knowledge – sincerity (*ikhlas*) – doing the obligatory acts.
c) Third term: Principle of faith – People of faith; Introduction to Islam and its pillars; Introduction of excellence; Things that which take a Muslim out of religion; The ruling of the one who is outside of religion [because of some blasphemous beliefs, practices etc.].

6th grade:
a) First term: Faith in the Names of Allah and His Attributes; Necessary Attributes and their establishment in relation to Allah (Glory be unto Him) and the proofs for it; [Divine] Unity – Power – Will – Perpetuity; Opposing events [that happen] – Upholding the Self – Knowledge – Life; Hearing – seeing – the word [or taking]; That which must be rejected in Allah in terms of deficiency (the impossibilities in relation to him).
b) Second term: Faith in Allah; Some of the angels and their jobs/actions [i.e. duties or roles]; Difference between the angels and the Jinn; Satan and his actions; Safeguarding from Satan; Faith in the heavenly books.
c) Third term: Faith in the messengers and prophets; The difference between a prophet and messenger; Necessary and permissible attributes in relation to the messengers and those that are impossible [in their attribution] to them; The Holders of Power among the messengers; The names of the Last Day; Heaven and its doors; The Hell fire and its doors.

7th grade:
a) First term: Allah, the Creator of Existence/Being and what is in it; Pillars of Islam; Knowledge of Allah and love and obedience of Him; Introduction to the Messengers and the Heavenly Books.
b) Second term: Obligatory Attributes of Allah; Impossible Attributes of Allah; Permissible Attributes of Allah.
c) Third term: Islam and Faith; The Messengers and Prophets, the difference between messengers and prophets; Excellence of Islam and its characteristics. Islam, the religion of submission and love.

8th grade:
a) First term: Miracles of the Messengers; Levels of Religion: Submission (Islam), Faith and Perfection; Islam – Doctrine, Worship and Spiritual Path (*Suluk*).
b) Second term: Islam the religion of monotheism (*tawhid*); Angels and the reason for their existence; The Jinn and Devils.
c) Third term: Rewards and Punishments; Heaven and Hell.

9th grade:
a) First term: Sincerity in worshipping Allah and the reason of His unity; Merits of monotheism and what covers up sins; Chapter of the one who realizes/reaches monotheism and enters paradise without being accounted for (i.e. judged by Allah).

[827] Approximate translation, this is not clear.

b) Second term: Chapter of fear from polytheism; Chapter of supplications until testimony (there is no deity but Allah); Chapter of interpreting monotheism and the testimony that there is no deity but Allah.
c) Third term: Chapter of what has come about development and perfection; Chapter of who is blessed by the tree or rock or things similar to that.

APPENDIX V

Program for Islamic Law for the Malian official curriculum for médersas

1st grade:
a) First term: Ritual purity (place, clothes and body); Minor ablution (*wudu*') (practice); Supplication of the minor ablution (memorization); Prayer: how to perform it (practice).
b) Second term: Major call to prayer (*adhan*) – minor call to prayer (*iqamah*) – the righteous deeds; Training for the major call to prayer, the minor call to player and the five prayers (*al-salawat al-khamsah*); Example (al-Fatihah and a sura from the Qur'an).
c) Third term: Supplication [of] kneeling down (*ruku*`) – prostration – *tashahhud*; The five prayers The number of all the *ruku*`.

2nd grade:
a) First term: Review of what was studied in the first year; Ritual purity; *al-Istinja'* [i.e. rules pertaining to washing or cleaning with water after going to the bathroom] and *al-Istijmar* [i.e. rules pertaining to cleaning with stones or non-liquid substances like paper tissues after using the bathroom]; Continuing the training for the minor ablution (practical).
b) Second term: Necessary [aspects] of the minor ablution; [Those things which] void [the minor ablution]; Obligatory prayers; The number of its rakats/units; (Continuing the training for prayer).
c) Third term: After the prayer (instructional and practical).

3rd grade:
a) First term: Reviewing what was studied in the second grade; Ritual purity and its divisions [or categories]; Water purification; Earth purification; Manners for the Call of Nature; The absence of speech during the call of nature.
b) Second term: Latency in the call of nature; *Istinja* and *istijmar*; Things which are forbidden to do *istijmar* with; Minor ablution – its conditions – its requirements – things which make it void.
c) Third term: Major and Minor call to prayer; Conditions of Prayer; Its pillars – [things that make it] void; The Abrahamic prayer; Some of the supplications after prayer.

4th grade:
a) First term: Ritual Purity: Its meaning – its importance in Islam; Ritual Impurities and things that are not part of it; Prayer and the conditions for its correctness; Divisions of water and explaining its full ruling; *Tayamum*: its reasons [as to when and why one should undertake it] – its types – the types of level [unclear] – its necessities – quality of the intention – its traditions – its recommendations – deficiencies.
b) Second term: Wiping over wounds and splinters; Prayer: obligatory conditions – ruling of the one who abstains from it – its merits – its usefulness – commanding the child to it; Times of prayer – performance – making up [for the missed prayer] – its delaying; Necessities of prayer – its traditions – its merits; The ruling of the one who leaves something from the necessities of prayer and its traditions.
c) Third term: Congregational prayer – its ruling – its merit; Merit of the mosque; Conditions for the prayer leader and the one being led; Equality in the lines [of congregational prayer]; Rulings pertaining to the late prayer.

5th grade:
a) First term: Reviewing what was previously studied in the fourth year; Divisions of [the different kinds of] water; Wiping over sandals; The mannerisms of the one walking towards prayer; Attribute of prayer; Hated

things (*makruh*) in prayer; Prostration of forgetfulness [when one is confused in the units in prayer]; Congregational prayer; Of the first people to lead the prayers.
b) Second term: The place of the one being led [in prayer] in relation to the leader [of the prayer]; When those being led in prayer open [or begin] their actions; The belated prayer; What excuses one from Friday and congregational prayers; Friday prayer.
c) Third term: Prayer of the sick person; Prayer of the traveller; Prayer in a muddy place; The traditions and narrations; The *Witr* [in prayer]; Times in which it is forbidden to pray.

6th grade:
a) First term: Friday prayer; Prayer of the two festivals; Prayer of the eclipse of the sun and moon; Prayer for rain; Prayer for the burial [of the dead].
b) Second term: *Zakat*: its introduction – its legitimacy from the Qur'an and Sunna; The ranks [of people] in which *zakat* is taken out of – its spending; *Zakat al-Fitr*; Fasting: its meaning – legitimacy of fasting – its conditions, its pillars, its obligations [i.e. things that are obligatory when fasting], its "voiders" [i.e. things that make it void].
c) Third term: Hajj: its meaning – its pillars – its obligations – [things that render it] void; *Umrah*: its introduction – its pillars; Difference between Hajj and Umrah.

7th grade:
a) First term: Ritual Purity
1. Ritually pure water – *al-Istinja'* [i.e. rules pertaining to washing or cleaning with water after going to the bathroom] and *al-Istijmar* [i.e. rules pertaining to cleaning with stones or non-liquid substances like paper tissues after using the bathroom].
2. Minor ablution (*wudu*') and its laws, and wiping over the slippers.
3. Major ablution (*ghusul*) and its laws, and *tayammum* (purifying with earth) and its laws.

b) Second term: Prayer
1. The times of the five obligatory prayers.
2. The call to prayer (*al-adhan*) and the call to establish prayer (*al-iqamah*) [or the major and minor calls for prayer].
3. The attributes of prayer and its laws.
4. The Minor Call to Prayer and Congregational Prayers: The prostration of forgetfulness and Friday prayer.

c) Third term: Prayer of travellers; The prayer of the two festivals [i.e. *fitr* and *adha*]; Prayer during eclipse and fear; Prayer when seeking rain (*al-istisqa*).

8th grade:
a) First term:
1.The book of burials.
2.Fasting and its laws in detail, religious seclusion (`*itikaf*) [i.e. for three nights, one stays only in the mosque during Ramadan].

b) Second term: *Zakat*, its varieties and its laws.
c) Third term: The Hajj, `*Umrah* and its laws in detail.

9th grade:
a) First term: Marriage and its laws; Divorce and its laws.
b) Second term:
1. Menstrual waiting period (*al-`iddah*) and its varieties, and *istibra*' [i.e. immediate purification process after the excretion of sperm before undertaking the major ablution]
2. Jihad
c) Third term: Sales and its varieties.

APPENDIX W

Program for Islamic Ethics for the Malian official curriculum for médersas

1st grade:
a) First term: Manners of greeting; Greeting one's parents in the morning and when coming back home; Greeting of a Muslim [unclear script]; Greeting of friends; Greeting of elders on the road; Manners of discourse.
b) Second term: Cleanliness: the cleanliness of hands, cleanliness of clothes and tools; Brushing; Bathing; Minor Ablution; Trimming the nails; Wearing sandals; Abstaining from sitting on mud; Renewing clothes – washing clothes; Not putting tools on the road.
c) Third term: Observing one's health – not drinking contaminated water; Not eating foods exposed to dust and flies; Not eating hot [burning] food; Sweeping the classroom and the yard; Washing fruits before eating them; Not to breaks sweets and hard things with one's teeth.

2nd grade:
a) First term: Rising to one's obligations in its appropriate time; [this line not legible]; Straightness when sitting down to read and write; Attendance in the classroom and in class lines; Listening to the teacher; Thinking before answering; Commitment to Islamic principles; Obedience to parents – obedience to the teacher and principle or the person responsible – obedience to the adviser; Giving one's face, smiling and speaking good words.
b) Second term: Manners of eating: saying the *bismillah* (in the name of Allah) before and *al-hamdulilah* (praise be to Allah) in the end, cleaning one's hands before and after – avoiding blowing on food; Eating from the closest spot [i.e. eating from the part of the plate that is closest] – eating with the right hand – taking small bites [during a meal] – chewing well – not talking while eating – ceasing to pay attention and looking at the face of others – avoiding eating while on the road – avoiding eating what is not yours – reverence to the elders and respect towards them; Starting with "*salam*" – opening room in a gathering and on the road.
c) Third term: Manners of walking – paying attention when walking – travelling on the right side – not playing on the road – moderation in speed; Manners of speaking and words – truthfulness – avoiding lies – avoiding gossip – avoiding screaming when talking – ceasing swearing – stopping excessive swearing to God – listening to the one speaking to you; Avoiding theft/stealing; Avoiding gossip.

3rd grade:
a) First term: [not legible]; None of you shall have faith unless one loves; A Muslim is at peace with other Muslims; Being humble until no one exalts [in pride]; Whoever prohibits friendship prohibits good; The toothbrush purifies the mouth; The best of you is the one who teaches and learns the Qur'an; Reviewing the lessons of the first term.
b) Second term: [the following are the first parts of maxims in Prophetic *hadiths*]
Satisfaction of Allah in the satisfaction of the parents…
A believer is unto a believer like a building…
God blessed when he spoke …
Fear injustice…
No prayer [is accepted] for the one who did not do the minor ablution…
Oh slave name Allah …
If one of you drinks do not breath in the [air from the] cup…
General review of all lessons in the second term.
c) Third term: [the following are the first parts of maxims in Prophetic *hadiths*]

Prayer is the pillar of religion…
Removing something harmful from the road is charity …
Gossipers do not enter paradise
Food for two days is enough for three …
If one of you hits another, avoid [hitting] the face…
Woe unto the one who speaks and lies …
General review in all lessons in the third term.

4th grade:
a) First term: [the following are the first parts of maxims in Prophetic *hadiths*]
If a dog licks a cup wash it seven times
One who is humble in prayer perfects…
For any disease Allah has sent, He has also given a cure
A careful review after every lesson
b) Second term:
The best of words are four: Glory be unto Allah – all praise to Allah – There is no deity but Allah – Allah is the Greatest
The one who cuts off [relations] will not enter heaven…
Enough a sin is for a man who repeats [everything he hears]…
Whoever travels the road will receive knowledge…
General review
c) Third term:
Allah loves it when one of you works …
Do you help and provide for the weak among you…
General review

5th grade:
a) First term: Truthfulness and lying; Family ties; Authorization and the spreading of peace; Manners of speaking – manners of eating and drinking; Manners of visiting [in general] and visiting the sick; Righteous/Kind talk – good character; God curses the transvestites [literally those who make themselves look like the other gender]; Shall I not tell the greatest of sins?
General review.
b) Second term: Kindness to parents; Choice of friends; Anger and gentleness; Friendliness to animals; Backbiting and gossip – I was ordered to fight people [until they said there is no deity by Allah]; Speech and advice of the Messenger (s); General Review.
c) Third term: Right of the Muslim over another Muslim; [the following are parts of *hadiths*]:
The hadith "tell me about Islam a word…"
The Muslim is the brother of [another] Muslim…
Religion is an advice…
I see if you prayed the prescribed [prayers]…
People are equal…
It is a sin to repeat everything that one hears…
General review

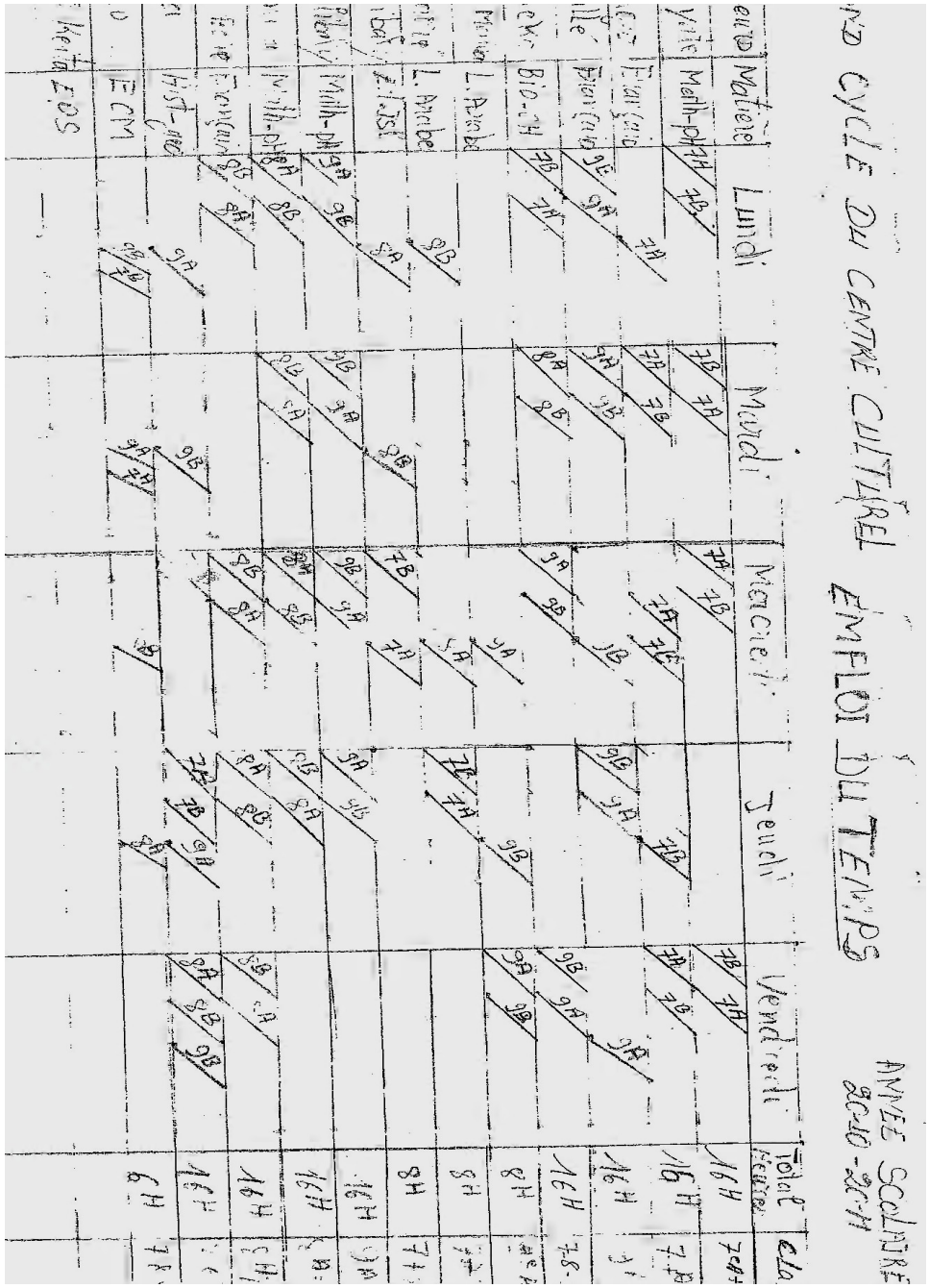
6th grade:
a) First term: Cooperation – satisfaction – gifts – self-confidence; Security – patience – humility – sincerity; Verily actions [depend] on intentions; Fear God wherever you are; General review.
b) Second term: [the following are *hadiths*]

"from the believer is relief [offered]"
For every disease that Allah sends …
Do you held and provide …
Verily Allah prescribed perfection…
What has been forbidden to you, abstain from it…
In the body is a embryo, if it is healthy …
Allah is good, he only accepts good…
I was ordered to fight people until…

General review.
c) Third term: [the following are *hadiths*]
Richness is not in having a lot …
Whoever of you sees wrong [should fix it with his hands]…
Do not be jealous and do not dispute [the actual word used does not exist in the Arabic language, it was a typo, so I used the word which I think they were trying to use]
Reviewing all of the lessons of the year.

APPENDIX X

<u>Weekly schedule for the Lycée of the Centre Culturel Islamique of Hamdallaye and for the Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba.</u>



CEE CENTRE CULTUREL ISLAMIQUE EMPLOI DU TEMPS ANNÉE SCOLAIRE 2010-2011

Matière	Lundi	Mardi	Mercredi	Jeudi	Vendredi	Total
Bio	8BT, 8ET	8BT, 8ET	8ET, 8H	8BT	8BT	16 H
pH-cH	8ET, 8BT	8BT, 8ET	8BT, 8ET		8ET	14 H
Math	8ET, 8BT	8ET, 8BT	8ET, 8BT	8ET, 8ET	8ET	18 H
pHiio	8BT				8ET	6 H
pH-cH	8E, 8B	8E, 8B		8E	8B, 8E	14
Bio	8B, 10A, 10B	10B, 8B	8B, 8E	8B, 10A		18 H
Math	8E, 8B	8B, 8E	8E, 8B	8E	8E	16 H
Français	8E	10A	10B, 8B	10B, 10A	8B, 8E	16 H
pH-cH	10B	10A	10B, 10A	10A, 10B		12 H
Math	10A, 10B	10B, 10A	10A	10B	10A, 10B	16 H
Hist-géo	10A	8E		8ET, 8B, 8BT	10B	12 H
Anglais	8ET		10B	8B, 8E, 8BT	8BT, 10A	12 H
L. Arabe		8B	8E	8BT	10B, 10A	12 H
L. Arabe	8E	8ET	8B			12 H
Informatique	8B	8E	8BT	10A, 10B	8ET	12 H
ECM	10A		8E, 8ET	8B	8BT, 10B	6 H

الأيام	7:30 المدرس	7:00 الصف	8:00 المدرس	8:00 الصف	9:00 المدرس	9:00 الصف
الاثنين Lundi						
الثلاثاء Mardi						
الأربعاء Mercredi						
الخميس Jeudi						
الجمعة Vendredi						

(Photocopied for me by Mr. Sissoko at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Hamdallaye and Mr. Kansaye at Naharu Djoliba in the fall of 2010.)

APPENDIX Y

Sample report card from the Institut Islamique Naharu Djoliba.

REPUBLQUE DU MALI
UN PEUPLE - UN BUL - UNE FOI

MINSTER DE L'EDUCATION NATIONALE
ACADEMIE D'ENSEGNEMEN DE BAMAKO

INSTITUT ISLAMIQUE DU FLEUVE DJOLIBA
BP.823 BAMAKO

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

جمهورية مالي
شعب واحد - هدف واحد - عقيدة واحدة
وزارة التربية والتعليم الوطنية
الأكاديمية التعليمية باماكو
معهد نهر جوليبا الإسلامي وفروعها
ص ب: ٨٢٣ باماكو

Nom et Prénom : ..... الاسم واللقب : .....

Classe : ..... الفصل : .....

Note de 20 à 10 الدرجة الكبرى 20 والدرجة الصغرى 10

كشف درجات الشهادة : ..... دور : .....

RELEVE DES NOTES D'EXAMEN SESSION DE : .....

الملاحظة Observation	درجات الشهادة Notes d'examan رقما	ضاربا Coef	رقما	MATIERES	المـــــواد
				LANGUE ARABE	اللغـــــة العربية
				CORAN ET TAFSIR	القـــرآن والتفسير
				HADITH	الحـــــديث
				TQWHID	التـــــوحيد
				FICHOU	الفقـــــه
				HISTOIR UNIV ET ISLAMIQUE	التاريخ العالمي والإسلامي
				BIOLOGIE	الأحـــــياء
				PHISIQUE ET CHIMIE	الفيزياء والكيمياء
				FRANÇAIS	الفرنســـية
				ANGLEIS	الإنجليـــزية
				MATHEMATIQUE	الـريـاضيـات
				GEOGRAPHIE	الجغـرافيـة
				PHILOSOPHIE	الفـلسـفة
				GESTION	عـلوم الإدارية
				CONDIUTE	السلـــوك
				TOTAL	المجمـــوع :
				MOYENNE	المعـــدل :

TOTALE GENERAL ..... المجمـــوع العام
MOYENNE ANNUELLE ..... المعـدل العـام
MENTION : ..... التقـديـر العـام

الختم والتوقيع

رقم الشهادة .....

توقيع رئيس اللجنة :

BAMAKO le : - - - - - - - - - باماكو : / / هـ

(Given to me by Mr. Kansaye, owner of Naharu Djoliba, in November 2010.)