

**YOUTH, ISLAM, AND CHANGING IDENTITIES
IN BOUAKÉ, CÔTE D'IVOIRE**

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Thesis Abstract

This Ph.D. thesis is based on ethnographic fieldwork carried out amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire, between February 1993 and June 1995. The dissertation is concerned with the description of processes of identification in the context of urban life and international migration within West Africa. The investigation focused on these processes as they unfold in Islamic youth associations, female place-of-origin associations, *madrasas* (Islamic schools), and compound life. Marriage practices, the sociohistorical construction of age groups and gender, and the negotiation of differing worldviews are central to the analysis.

In the thesis I argue that in the contemporary sociopolitical scene in Côte d'Ivoire, Muslims of Malian origin identify with two ensembles of ethnic labels: the Dioula label and several identity labels tied to places of origin in Mali. However, for a number of young men and women, Islam, rather than ethnicity, plays a central role in their self-identity and their sense of belonging. This argument requires an examination of the respective influences of the life course and of patterns of social change in these processes of identification. In order to support this argument, I describe the politics of identity in Côte d'Ivoire in the post-Houphouët-Boigny period, elements of social change over the past thirty years affecting Islamic institutions and the educational trajectories of young men and women, and the logic of marriage practices in an urban setting marked by ethnic heterogeneity. The empirical chapters of the thesis analyse versions of Islam produced within Islamic youth associations and the negotiation of conflicting worldviews in the life trajectories of Muslim women.

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To my son, Zacharie,
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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION: FROM ETHNICITY TO CHANGING IDENTITIES

1.1 First glance at defining the Ph.D. research

In the fall of 1990, I was working on a master's thesis on the construction of the ethnic subject amongst mixed couples (Sepharadic Jewish men and French Canadian women) in Montréal, Canada (LeBlanc 1991). For the Ph.D., I wanted to continue working on the same general topic (ethnicity, migration, and processes of identification), but in a different context. Following a Barthian perspective (Barth 1969)¹, I was very influenced by French and Canadian writings on identity and migration (Camilleri *et.al.* 1990; Catani 1985, 1986; Giraud 1987; Taboada-Leonetti 1989; Meintel 1994; Oriol 1978, 1979, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1989; Peressini 1988, 1991a, 1991b). These authors aim at breaking down the dichotomy between essentialism and constructivism in the study of ethnicity via notions of human agency, process, and creativity. On one hand, they approach ethnicity as process rather than as identity. On the other hand, they focus on the ethnic subject and the creativity of the social agent in negotiating social identities that may at times seem contradictory and conflictual. These approaches, however, tend to leave out the dimension of social constraints. The definition of ethnicity I elaborated in the master's thesis was also influenced by Ludwig Wittgenstein's notion of "family resemblance" (1958), which has been reworked by a number of authors in anthropology (Drummond 1980; Needham 1974) and which offers an alternative to a concept of identity that relies too heavily on essentialism (Gleason 1983). It takes into account the fluidity and the variability of the content of identity labels without reducing them to total chaos. Finally, the

¹ Fredrik Barth's 1969 text marked a turning point in the study of ethnicity. Adopting a transactionist approach, Barth moved the study of ethnicity away from essentialist concerns towards a constructivist perspective. As such, ethnicity was no longer regarded as a given component of people's identity which needed to be described, but, rather as a dimension of social identification which is adopted through contacts and relations between different social groups. In 1994, Barth wrote a revision to his initial version of "ethnic boundaries" in which he revises the transactionist model (Barth 1994).

analysis in my master's thesis remained very much in a discursive paradigm, using discourse analysis as my analytical framework (Foucault 1971).

At the Ph.D. level, I wanted to move away from a discursive analytical standpoint. I decided to shift the focus of the analysis from actor-centred processes to the relationship between individual and collective dynamics by trying to take into account elements of social constraint. This led me from the study of ethnicity as identity processes at the individual and familial level to questions concerning the relationship between ethnicity and religion, ethnicity and trade (economic relations), the politics of identity, and social change. In other words, by moving beyond the conceptual dichotomy between essentialism and social constructivism, I adopt modalities of analysis that take into account elements of historicity (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) while grappling with essentialist dimensions of identity. As such, the constructed character social and cultural histories is highlighted through the interface between actor-centred essentialist identity claims and the immediacy of political stakes and of power relations.

In relation to my master's thesis, my intention was to examine the same research problem outside of the ethnographic confines of Western postindustrial societies. Initially I planned to develop a research project on Egyptian migrant workers in Kuwait. But since in the fall of 1990 the crisis situation in the Middle East regarding Kuwait was intensifying and coming to a head, it no longer seemed realistic to plan a research project in Kuwait. When I started to survey the literature on ethnicity and migration in non-western contexts, Africa loomed predominantly in the picture.

I decided to focus my inquiries on the African continent, and since I wanted to work in a francophone African context, Côte d'Ivoire became an obvious choice as a possible site for fieldwork. Due to French colonial economic policies and to the postindependence economic boom in the country, Côte d'Ivoire has become, in the twentieth century, a major pole of attraction for Sahelian migrants. Due to a series of personal encounters, Malians became the immigrant groups I would study in the Ivorian context. My initial research questions were concerned with modalities of identification regarding ethnicity in the context of international migration in West Africa.

I carried out twenty-two months of research amongst Muslims of Malian origin in the city of Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire². The research started in October 1992 and ended in June 1995. I made four trips to Bouaké: one month in October-November 1992; ten months from February 1993 onwards; five months from December 1993 onwards; six months from January 1995. Between May 1994 and December 1994, I interrupted my Ph.D. studies because I was pregnant.

During the course of my fieldwork, I modified my conceptual scheme in order to integrate elements specific to the West African context. The stakes of ethnicity emerge from histories of the construction of social and political groups. Conceptual questions surrounding the study of ethnicity in Africa articulate with the long-standing experience of contact with the "outside world" (trans-Saharan trade and Islam, transatlantic trade, inclusion in trading routes in the Far East, slave trade, and so forth), colonisation, and the partitioning of the African continent by European powers, as well as the processes of nation-building from the time of independence.

My field research became a balancing act between uncovering the processes of the construction and reproduction of ethnic labels and ethnic groups while using such labels and groups as the initial starting points for the research. To a certain extent, I regarded ethnic labels as an unquestionable dimension of "reality", but I needed a space in which to start understanding processes of identification relating to ethnicity. Malian institutions and individuals of Malian origin (that is, individuals born in Mali and of Malian ancestry, with or without Ivorian citizenship) provided the springboard from which to dive into the research, and, Côte d'Ivoire was the societal context to be observed. However, the contingencies of fieldwork partially resituated my research interests away from national identities (Ivorian and Malian) and towards Islam as a prime locus of identification. As such, my research shifted progressively toward other forms of social identities produced in laminar spaces of identification, such as the "Dioula" label. Such a shift from ethnonational identities to Islam,

² In Bouaké, most Muslims are of Malian origin. There are some individuals of Malian origin who are not Muslims. Some, especially originating from the Kaye region, are Catholics. There is a known community of Catholics in this region. Others are animists (that is, without any negative connotation, individuals who do not partake in world religions and who follow local religious practices and beliefs), mainly in the case of Kado (or Dogon).

the Dioula identity, and identity referents tied to places of origin in Mali also made it necessary to situate the analysis within the national context of the politics of cultural and religious identities in Côte d'Ivoire. This contextualisation has allowed me to address the question of why certain identity referents become socially significant in specific historical contexts whereas others recede into the background.

In light of this, my research moved away from the study of processes of identification relating to ethnicity and migration and toward processes relating to Islam, youth³, gender, and elements of social transformation. As well, the changing political scene in Côte d'Ivoire in the aftermath of the first multiparty elections in 1990, the death of Félix Houphouët-Boigny in 1993, and the post-Houphouët-Boigny political climate came to play a central role in the research and in the writing of the thesis.

1.2 Ethnicity in Africa and African Studies

Besides being a result of fieldwork experience, these shifts in thematic focus (from ethnicity to questions of social change) and in theoretical focus (from actor-centred discursive analysis to the relationship between elements of social constraint, human agency, and collective processes) are also due to my training in London as an Africanist, implying a more classical fieldwork experience, focused on general ethnography, rather than just discursive practices. Moreover, in a British context, I was also exposed to the influence of the Manchester school (Werbner 1984) as one of the sources for the study of ethnicity and urban life in Africa (Gluckman 1958; Mitchell 1956, 1969b, 1974, 1983; Wilson 1942; Cohen 1969, 1974; Barnes 1986; Colson 1960, 1971; Kapferer 1972), and, other authors, who have followed in a similar vein (Schapera 1947; Okamura 1981). These studies emphasise the centrality of social networks and "social situations" as units of analysis when apprehending processes of identification. Moreover, while recognising possible consequences of processes of migration and urbanisation for ethnicity, they highlight the

³ Here, I am using the concept of "youth" in an emic perspective, that is from the standpoint of its definition by the actors involved in the contemporary context of Bouaké. I will examine the modalities of the sociological definition of "youth" in Chapter 4.

instrumentalist dimension of ethnic identities (Cohen and Middleton 1970; du Toit 1978a, 1978b; Skinner 1978; Cohen 1969, 1974; Paden 1970; Shack 1979). In fact, a good number of these studies are framed within the debate about the conceptualisation of urbanisation as a process of "detribalisation." Some authors defend the position that urbanisation results in a distancing from "tribal" identities, whereas others contended that "tribal" identities, while being redefined, were maintained in the context of urban life. Such a debate is no longer central to the analysis of ethnic phenomena in urban centres. In the context of early research on urbanisation, most studies were framed within a dichotomy between rural and urban from which the detribalisation debate emerged. Nowadays, most authors assume that urban life brings about a redefinition of affiliations and sense of belonging that does not necessarily imply a process of detribalisation. The focus lies in elucidating the modalities of ethnic affiliation and the ties between ethnic identities and other forms of social categorisation.

Scholarly treatment of ethnicity in West Africa, among other forms of "localised knowledge" (Fardon 1990; Tonkin 1990) also played a significant role in the redefinition of my research project and analytical framework. The thematic shift from ethnicity to changing identities and Islam, besides reflecting the sociological situation in Bouaké, is in keeping with the development of the study of ethnicity in Africa in the past twenty years. In the context of West African studies, the conceptualisation of ethnicity has fluctuated from seeing ethnic labels as primordial identity and group markers (virtually any classic ethnography could be cited here as an example) to reducing them to the geosocial imagination of Arab and European travellers, geographers and traders (Boulègue and Dramani-Issifou 1989; Comaroff, 1997) and to colonial inventions (Amselle 1990; Bamba and Gonnin 1989; Bazin 1985; Dozon 1985a, 1985b). From the standpoint of constructivism, ethnic labels are also increasingly regarded as historical constructions going back to precolonial times (Chrétien et Prunier 1989; Gallais 1962; Peel 1989), and studied as only one dimension of social identities (Devisse 1989; Coulon 1991).

In fact, the post-Second World War anti-colonialist intellectual atmosphere encouraged the questioning of "tribes" or "ethnic groups" as the basic unit of study in Africanist ethnographies, as well as the notion of

enclosed social systems which had been devised by structural-functional anthropologists. This questioning encouraged the emergence of a constructivist perspective, not dissimilar to theories of ethnicity arising in relation to other ethnographic contexts, and challenged a set of premises which had otherwise gone unquestioned (Amselle 1990; Banks 1996; Calhoun 1994; Cohen 1974; Falk Moore 1994; Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart 1995; Kagabo 1985; Kandé 1985; Comaroff 1984; Tonkin 1990; Meintel 1993). This perspective challenges the idea that social identities are given and rejects essentialist versions of ethnicity in which it is assumed that individuals can have singular, integral, harmonious and unproblematic identities. By the same token, it questions accounts of collective identities based on some "essence," or set of core features, shared by all members of the group and no others.

Contemporary studies that emerge from constructivist notions of ethnicity focus on the historical deconstruction of the appropriation and reproduction of social identities, or the critical histories of processes of ethnogenesis (Peel 1989; Brenner 1993; Launay 1982; Chrétien 1989; Dozon 1985; Bamba and Gonnin 1989; Boulègue and Dramani-Issifou 1989). Other contemporary studies adopt the perspective of the politics of identity (Burnham 1996; Conrad 1995; Frank 1995; Schutz 1979, 1984; Constantin 1989), or the perspective of the relationship between power and social agency (Launay 1995; LaViolette 1995). Finally, studies of ethnicity examine the plurality and situationality of ethnic identities, as well as the multiple levels of expression of ethnic identities ranging from national identities to kin-type identities (Miles 1986).

In light of contemporary studies of ethnicity, my theoretical stand on ethnicity is based on notions of the politics of cultural and religious identities, as well as the historical and social constructivism. Ethnicity is then understood as one possible expression of social identities. Both notions (the politics of cultural and religious identities, and historical and social constructivism) need to be read in terms of the structures of power relations, and social agency. As such, I regard ethnic identities as processual, not primordial, forms of social identification, historically constructed through the dynamics of relations of power. I also regard ethnic identities as systems of sense and meaning, including dimensions of worldview and lifeworld that contribute to the structuration of individuals'

lives, actions, and desires. As such, they are associated with cultural practices (language, forms of marriage and other social alliances, folklore, oral tradition, physical modifications of the body, economic activities, and so forth). But the association between the ethnic label and cultural forms varies throughout history. The ethnic labels given to groups range from the nation to the kin group, and include village identities, regional identities, "tribal" identities, "caste" identities, and "racial" identities. Moreover, as such, ethnic identity referents also provide a sense of communalism and belonging. They are expressed, invoked, and produced at individual and collective levels, implying that they carry dimensions of political categorisation and instrumentalisation, as well as subjective primordialism and essentialism⁴, and elements of structural contingency.

The basic premise of my research was that ethnic identities, as social identities, are in a permanent process of being constructed by self and others, as an individual and as a member of a collectivity. This process is taking place in on-going actions and discourses in a specific political context -- that is an historically situated moment in which a number of social relations of power unfold. Such a theoretical stand has led me to examine ethnic identities in terms of processes of identification rather than as identities-in-themselves. It also led me to examine these processes through the lens of phenomenological concepts such as lifeworlds and worldviews. As such, social identities are equated to both "social acts" and to "lived experience." Moreover, since I did not consider ethnic identity referents as things-in-themselves, but rather as one component of processes of social identification and differentiation, I needed a methodology that did not isolate them from the social context in which they were produced, adopted and claimed. As I will discuss in Chapter 2, I used participant observation to examine how processes of identification pertaining to ethnicity unfold in the society in general rather than how ethnicity may emerge in a specific social situation or practice, such as sports or women's associations, for instance. Again, a phenomenological perspective was particularly indicated to the extent that it allowed me to integrate the different dimensions of social relations

⁴ Primordialist understanding of ethnicity regard them as basic and inherent to an individual's social identity. Essentialism implies that specific ethnic labels are tied to specific cultural practices and "traits".

(subjective or actor-centred dimensions, social constraints and historical contingencies). I will discuss my adherence to a phenomenological perspective later in this chapter.

1.3 From ethnicity to changing identities. Relocating the social spaces of study

I approach these processes of identification at the individual level as well as at the collective and institutional levels. At one level, I conceptualised social identities in terms of the social constraints in which processes of identification are conceptualised as a structure of transformations located within a broader sociopolitical dynamic. At another level, I regarded social identities in terms of individual life trajectories and human agency in the developmental perspective of the life course.

In the first instance, I examined three levels of issues. First, my aim was to identify the different ethnocultural labels adopted by Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké, as individuals and as members of collectivities, and I also asked what are the ethnic categories and cultural practices that were invoked by Muslims of Malian origin when self-identifying, and how these created a sense of belonging and distinctiveness? Second, my interest lay in describing the processes of identification and differentiation through which these categories are constructed and reproduced both in sociopolitical contexts and in everyday life. This second level of analysis raises the question of the "politics of identity," namely the historical conditions under which elements of identification are singled out as a way of distinguishing between self and other (or we and they) in the context of the social relations of power. It suggests that processes of identification pertaining to specific identity labels must be conceptualised as a process located within a broader sociopolitical field. However, as I suggested earlier, ethnic identities cannot be conceptualised only as a possible base for sociopolitical distinction, as they also provide a sense of belonging and a complex of meaning for individual persons and collectivities who adopt these specific labels. The last level of issues that the study addressed was the articulation between these different ties of belonging and complexes of

meaning. Which are the worldviews associated with these ethnic categories and cultural practices? Which life projects emerge from them? Which lifeworlds do they partake of? Here, the analysis spilled into the realm of non-ethnic social identities, namely religion, gender, and sociologically defined age groups.

The centrality of the label "Dioula" and of Islam in processes of identification and differentiation became undeniable given its prominence in the Ivorian politics of identity. The Dioula label became a central element in the research, but only in parallel with a number of ethnonational and ethnocultural identities tied to the Malian sociocultural space.

The Dioula label is already much discussed in the literature about the Mande world and more specifically about social relations in Côte d'Ivoire (Dalby 1971; Hopkins 1971; Launay 1982; Lewis 1970, 1971; Perinbam 1980). However, contrary to the existing focus in the literature on professional specialisation (long-distance trade) and ethnic localism (small ethnic groups found in northern Côte d'Ivoire) in the description of the Dioula label, I contend that in Bouaké, amongst Muslims of Malian origin, the Dioula label, which now evokes Islam, fulfils a strictly symbolic and political role, one that emerged from recent debates regarding the political definition of citizenship in Côte d'Ivoire. In the early 1970s, Barbara Lewis proposed a similar argument regarding the use of the Dioula label in the region of Gagnoa, central west Côte d'Ivoire (Lewis 1970). Moreover, as Robert Launay noted (1982), the role of trade as the pivot of Dioula identity may not be as prominent as it has been historically. However, in Bouaké, the changing relation between the Dioula label and trade is not so much due to the fact that Dioulas are no longer engaged in long-distance trade, as Robert Launay explains in the case of Korhogo (Launay 1982). In Bouaké, a significant portion of individuals of Malian origin, especially individuals of Maraka origin are still very involved in long-distance trading activities. Following a similar logic to that of Barbara Lewis (1996), I will argue in Chapter 3 that this changing relation between the Dioula label and long-distance trade is due rather to the emerging synonymy established among Dioulanness, Islam and foreignness by the national political process. Hence, the issue of changing identities brings forth the question of social change and intergenerational differences in

processes of identification. In fact, prior to leaving for the field, I did not anticipate explicitly working on Islam. I thought that my focus would be more on trade and trading networks⁵, judging from the ethnographic literature on the Mande world (Amselle 1977; Arseniev 1980; Bazin 1970; 1985; Bimson 1978; Bird 1971; Brun 1910; Collomb 1885; Couloubaly 1990; Curtin 1971, 1972; Dalby 1971; Delafosse 1911, 1972; Diarra 1979; Dieudonné 1955, 1959; Diop 1971; Gallais 1962; Girault 1903; Grégoire and Labazée 1993a, 1993b; Green 1986; Harding 1992; Hopkins 1971; Kipré 1992; Labouret 1934; Labazée 1992, 1994; Launay 1972, 1982; Levzion 1972; Lewis 1970, 1971, 1972; Lappinot 1908; McCall 1971; Monteil 1924; Ouattara 1992; Pâques 1954; Person 1963, 1972; Pollet and Winter 1971; Samb 1972; Tauxier 1942; Weil 1972; Wright 1980).

Amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké today, ethnicity is expressed through two forms of ethnic referents: the Dioula label invoked as a pan-regional identity and a number of ethnocultural labels relating to places of origin in Mali. The pan-regional aspect is what comes into play in the political role of the Dioula label. Ethnic identities tied to places of origin in Mali are the basis of people's sense of communalism, as well as of social and economic networks. However, my observations led me to conclude that amongst a certain portion of urban Muslim youth in Bouaké, Islam, rather than places of origin in Mali, has come to be a locus of self-identification and provides a sense of communalism⁶. It became obvious to me that Islam carries a strong sociopolitical significance in Bouaké (see Chapters 3 and 4) and that young people and women are central in the unfolding of these changes. This highlights the role of gender and age in the analysis, in terms of both the social identity referents that people adopt and those society allows individuals to claim.

Women are central in two ways to the processes of identification and change that I identify in this analysis. First, the social role of women is locally constructed as cultural and religious educators in the context of the family and the domestic environment. This prescribed social role for women implies that they are the guarantors of culture and religion despite

⁵ Robert Launay describes a similar shift of his focus of study amongst Dioulas in the Khorogo region (1991).

⁶ Certain authors (see Villalon 1995, for instance) are increasingly noting the specificity of the relationship between religion and ethnicity in Africa. The blurring of the boundaries between ethnicity and religion seems to be related to the historical relevance of specific identity markers.

the fact that ethnic and religious identities follow patrilineal descent. Second, the question of insertion and participation in differing lifeworlds and worldviews is very meaningful and critical for women. Men, for instance, can receive Western-style education and hold office jobs while following a strict Muslim lifestyle and being socially sanctioned as "proper Muslims," as well as being the head of a household that would be regarded as relatively "traditional." But, at present, Muslim women have a harder time negotiating their participation in lifeworlds and worldviews that are, to a certain extent, constructed as opposite or contradictory in the contemporary world. Can a woman attend university, work in an office as a professional, marry a long-distance trader who is not literate, have numerous children and still be regarded as a "proper Muslim" (that is, according to the local construction of what constitutes proper Islam)? Again, this brings up the question of whether a university-educated professional woman would want to marry an illiterate long-distance trader, remain at home and have 8 to 12 children. In either case, it is not very likely. Such questions bring into consideration the social reality experienced by a relatively large number of young women, in their late twenties and early thirties, who are not yet married and do not have children. Can a Muslim woman, in Bouaké, while pursuing Western-style education and inscribing herself within a Western worldview (that is, the local appropriation or construction of Western modernity) expect to marry locally with a Muslim man and to start a family?⁷ In terms of lived experience, these are the contemporary social stakes that concern women because marriage and motherhood are central defining elements of womanhood for Muslim women of Malian origin in Bouaké. In fact, such questions raise issues of the social construction of womanhood or femininity, and manhood or masculinity. I will discuss in more detail these social constructions and processes of negotiation of differing worldviews in Chapters 5 and 6.

Youth, both men and women, make up the second social category central to this thesis. In recent years, a number of authors have noted the historical association between youth and Islam, as well as the sociological significance of youth in contemporary Africa (Brenner 1993; Cissé 1993;

⁷ It should be noted of course that the dilemmas involved in the negotiating differing and contradictory worldviews and lifeworlds are not specific to Muslim women.

Cissé 1985; Cruise O'Brien 1996; Diaw 1992; Last 1992; Launay 1991; Mbembe, 1988; Salvaing, 1992). These analyses are relevant here because a significant portion of young Malian men and women in Bouaké identify first and foremost as Muslims. I will describe these young men and women and their life trajectories in Chapter 4. In the context of urban life, international migration and the changing educational and Islamic institutions, Islam has come to hold a strong appeal for youth in terms of processes of identification. Youth is also relevant in light of the new sociological phenomenon of neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations. In the past fifteen years or so, these associations have emerged in Bouaké and in Côte d'Ivoire as privileged social spaces for the assertion of social identities, a sense of self-worth, and a sense of belonging.

My sense of the centrality of Islam and social changes for this analysis of the contemporary social situation in Côte d'Ivoire, and my focus on young men and women, initially emerged because of the trajectory of my fieldwork. As I will describe in Chapter 2, I inserted myself in the field through a family network and through an Islamic network as an English teacher in a local *madrasa*⁸. Both modes of social insertion positioned me in specific social roles and within specific social networks. I was socialised in the role of a daughter and, as a consequence, as a "proper Muslim woman." Through the *madrasa*, I found myself in a devout Islamic milieu, implying that individuals I encountered and institutions I frequented were following relatively strict Islamic rules of behaviour. Moreover, as I taught English to older *madrasa* students and young teachers, I spent much of my time observing the social world of Islamic youth. At first, these were ways through which I integrated myself in the field. It was later in the fieldwork that I started to comprehend the political and social significance of the roles of Islam, women and youth in the Ivorian context.

⁸ *Madrasas* are also called Franco-Arabic schools. They are schools where Muslim students are taught the Qur'an along with other academic subjects such as Arabic language, Arabic literature, Arab and Islamic history, geography, mathematics, English language, and French language. Such schools strongly emphasise the importance of literacy in Arabic, in contrast with *mory kalan* schools, where the Qur'an is taught following mnemonic methods. I will discuss the differences between these schools and their historical evolution in Bouaké in Chapter 4.

1.4 Theoretical framework

Dimensions of plurality, fluidity, and situationality in social identities are visible at different levels in processes of identification and differentiation. They are present throughout an individual's life course, within a single family, and at the level of immediate social interactions between individuals and between groups. They appear as conditions of the localised politics of identities and within the dynamics of transnationalism and pan-regionalism. They emerge through the modalities of the relationship between cultural practices and identity referents, as well as in the interaction between ethnicity and religion.

In order to conceptualise these elements of plurality, fluidity, and situationality, I adopt an approach to social identities that integrates dimensions of essentialism, constructivism, situationality, and instrumentalism. While adopting a processual and constructivist approach to ethnicity and other forms of social identities, it remains ethnographically necessary to account for the fact that social actors primordialise their identities. In other words, my goal is to consider forms of actor-constructed primordialism without reproducing it at the analytical level. In order to do so, I propose to elaborate an analytical perspective based on the articulation of notions of *procès d'identification*, or processes of identification, (Gallissot 1987) and situationality (Cohen 1974; Okamura 1981), with the phenomenologically inspired concepts of lifeworlds and worldviews (Jackson 1989, 1996; de Certeau 1984), and the notions of life course and life trajectory (Hareven 1977, 1978, 1982, 1987; Elder 1977, 1987; Rosenmayr 1982; Tilly, C. 1987; Tilly, L. A. 1987; Bertaux 1982).

1.4.1 Procès d'identification (Processes of identification)

I use the notion of *procès d'identification*, as it is used by René Gallissot (1987), to underline the dynamics of social relations that act upon the numerous referents of identification in opposition to the fixity of the notion of identity. This concept permits one to capture, at the same time, the constructed dimension of identities and the expanse of power relations that confers differing levels of power on holders of specific social identities.

René Galissot opposes the notion of *procès d'identification* (processes of identification) to that of identity. Using the case of Lorraine identity in France, he explains that the concept of identity masks the interethnic relationships that activate and complexify it through its links with immediate social relations and collective symbolism that characterise these modes of belonging. These dynamic and interactive aspects of the phenomenon of identification are silenced by the concept of identity, which necessitates a circumscribed unit and a finality. Moreover, Galissot considers that in the notion of identity the practice of human actors is seen as pre-determined by the components of specific identities, whereas the perspective proposed by the concept of process of identification shows that these types of phenomena are strongly marked by change and fluidity. They are inserted in a web of social relations and dynamics of demarcation. The notion of process of identification also necessitates a historical framing, recognising the sociohistorical contexts in which the dynamics of identification unfold.

Moreover, the notion of process of identification allows one to move beyond the analysis of the subjective aspects of social identities and towards the macrosocial dimensions of its manifestation, such as the political instrumentalisation of ethnicity or the social meaning of identities. In fact, this double perspective (subjective perspective and macrosociological perspective) is contained within the double meaning of the notion of *procès* in the French language. It evokes, at the same time, the notion of "process" or "dynamic" and the notion of "jural process" or "trial." This second meaning of the notion of *procès* imports a sociopolitical dimension into the study of phenomena of identification and differentiation. In the context of unequal power distribution, the dynamics of social assignations and of discrimination between social groups, as well as practices of exclusion and inclusion, contribute to the maintenance of a hierarchical categorisation of existing social identities within a specific social context (see Chapter 3). As such individuals inserted within minority identities (that is, social identities associated with lesser sociopolitical power) face a need to legitimise, to defend, and to claim their identities, which in a sense are "put on trial." As a consequence of the ambiguity evoked by the notion of *procès*, the fluidity of vectors of identification can be conceptualised in terms of identities tied to specific

life trajectories of an individual and in terms of the dynamics of social relations between social groups. To a certain extent the notion of process of identification integrates the constant movement between the actor-centred dimension of identification and the collective constructions of social identities. However, it does not provide a methodology to consider the relative contribution of each of these levels; this is provided by the notion of life course, which I will discuss later.

1.4.2 Situationality

The notion of situationality (Gluckman 1940; Van Velsen 1967; Mitchell 1967; Cohen 1974; Paden 1970; Okamura 1981) is tied to the notion of processes of identification to the extent that the latter term is geared to the analysis of social situations. This notion combines the analysis of historically situated practice with structural dimensions accounting for the relative social significance of specific social identities in the context of power relations. It also allows one to reintroduce elements of social agency insofar as it takes the actor's perception of the situation (perception of self-identity and other's identity) into account (Barth 1969). In fact, such an approach merges cognitive (actor-centred) and structural (elements of macrosocial constraint) aspects of social identification.

The notion of "situational ethnicity" as inspired by Abner Cohen (1974), provides a way of at least partially comprehending the dynamic aspect of social identities by recognising the centrality of social interaction in processes of self-identification and by underlining the centrality of historical frames of interaction. Ethnicity, as a form of situational social identity, is, in Abner Cohen's terms: "essentially a form of interaction between cultural groups operating within common social contexts" (Cohen 1974: XI). In consequence, the notion of ethnicity becomes relevant strictly when it is extended to denote cultural differences between social groups who are and who see themselves as different and who are in a situation of social interaction. It is useless when applied to "cultural differences between isolated societies, autonomous regions, or independent stocks of populations such as nations within their own national boundaries" (Cohen 1974: XI).

As such, social identities are conceptualised not in isolation, but in permanent relationship with psychological, historical, economic, and political interactions and contingencies. Jonathan Okamura expresses the dynamic character of ethnicity as such:

A situational approach to ethnicity manifests the essential variability in its significance for social relations in different social contexts and different levels of social organisation. Accordingly, such a perspective avoids the problem of reification of the concept of ethnic group that follows from its identification with objectively defined, shared, uniform cultural inventory or with common normative patterns of behaviour that are assumed to be consistently adhered to. (Okamura 1981: 452)

In terms of research perspectives, this approach underlines the relevance of social situations for the analysis of processes of identification and differentiation. It also recognises the possibility that certain ethnocultural characteristics may be invoked within a specific sociohistorical context in order to establish an identity relation between ethnic categories and within the same category. For instance, in the context of Bouaké, a Muslim woman from Jenne may find it sufficient to appeal to the Muslim or to the Dioula label when interacting with a Baoulé. But when facing a Malian from Ségou, she may find that labels such as Banmanan and Songhay are more relevant.

1.4.3 Worldviews and Lifeworlds

The notions of worldview and lifeworld are used in a phenomenological perspective, as it has been utilised in social sciences (anthropology and sociology) rather than philosophy. My use of this perspective is inspired by the work of Michael Jackson (1989, 1996), Paul Riesman (1977), and Michel de Certeau (1984).

These authors do not establish a distinction between worldviews and lifeworlds per se, preferring to use notions of "lifeworld" (in the case of Michael Jackson), "*quotidienneté*" (in the case of Michel de Certeau), and "life as lived" (in the case of Paul Riesman). The distinction I establish between worldview and lifeworld allows me to separate, in cases where it is necessary, practice from beliefs, or day-to-day life from conceptions of

what day-to-day life should consist of. The different forms of social identities (ethnic identities, religious identities, gendered identities, age grade identities) I describe and analyse are regarded both as worldviews and as lifeworlds. As lifeworlds, they are the social spaces in which cultural practices unfold; as worldviews, they are the ideals of practice adopted and claimed by Muslims of Malian origin. This distinction also marks the two levels of processes of identification that are central to my analysis: practices of identification and the perception of these practices. In reality, it is not always possible to demarcate the practice from its perception and *vice versa*. I do not deny this, and I recognise the argument of phenomenology which aims exactly at eliminating this distinction. However, in the case of a study that aims at understanding processes of identification in a context where a number of identity referents are produced, often in contradiction to one another, it is necessary to analyse the ways in which these differing identity referents are negotiated. Such a mode of analysis implies that, at times, practices are divorced from their perception by social actors.

Moreover, the significance of worldviews and lifeworlds emerges from the empirical observation of the multiplicity of identity referents -- it is my sense that individuals, groups, and families are living in a world where one is confronted with a multiplicity of complexes of belief associated with a number of identity labels. Any one individual carries and accommodates numerous identity referents at any one time and throughout his or her lifetime. Amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké, it is ethnographically meaningful that individuals are very conscious of the differing possibilities of life orientations, or worldviews, offered to them.

In phenomenological terms, the goal of empirical research is to recover the sense in which experience is situated *within* relationships and *between* persons if the lifeworld is to be explored as a field of intersubjectivity and not reduced to objective structures or subjective intentions.

Within this framework, the notion of lifeworld refers to the taken-for-granted practices of everyday life (*quotidienneté*, in French), including the behavioural, cognitive and intuitive/emotional dimensions of day-to-day practices as they are experienced in a defined sociotemporal space. It is "the world of our everyday goals, social existence, and practical activity"

(Jackson 1996: 8). A number of authors have used different terms to refer to these elements of everyday lived experience, such as "situation" (Sartre 1956), "environment of a way of acting" (Wittgenstein 1977), "ecology of mind" (Bateson 1973), "fields of intersubjective communication" (Habermas 1987) "lifeworlds" (Schutz, 1970), and "practical sociological reasoning" (Garfinkel, 1967). All these expressions have in common the propensity to move the discussion away from analytical concepts into the realm of lived experience, or what Michael Jackson calls "the domain of everyday, immediate social existence and practical activity" (Jackson 1996: 7). In other words, the invocation of lifeworlds prioritises lived experience over theoretical knowledge.

Worldviews, as components of lifeworlds, are complexes of beliefs that acquire meaning in and through practice. They are ways of organising practices and giving them meaning. They are the ways in which people construct, contextualise and experience their world. They are the elements of social knowledge whereby individuals live.

The theoretical question implicitly raised by the notions of lifeworld and worldview relates to the modalities of their elaboration: in other words, what is the place of human actors in the construction of worldviews and in the production of lifeworlds? How can one apprehend worldviews and lifeworlds without reducing them to objective structures (as does Pierre Bourdieu's notion of habitus or Michel Foucault's notion of discursive formations and discursive practices, for instance) or to subjective intentions as actor-centred approaches do? Failure to raise this line of investigation is equivalent to positing that worldviews are transmitted from generation to generation without any alteration and that lifeworlds reproduce themselves as such. Going back to Maurice Merleau-Ponty and the basis of phenomenology in the social sciences:

To be born is both to be born of the world and to be born into the world. The world is already constituted, but also never completely constituted; in the first place we are acted upon, in the second place we are open to an infinite number of possibilities. But this analysis is still abstract, for we exist in both ways at once. There is, therefore, never determinism and never absolute choice, I am never a thing and never bare consciousness. In fact, even our own pieces of initiative, even the situations which we have chosen, bear us on, once they have been entered upon by virtue of a state rather than an act (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 453).

Worldviews and lifeworlds are produced through the interaction between human agents who possess differing levels of political and economic power. These differing levels of power are historical determinants that result in a series of structural contingencies.

For instance, Islam is a determinant lifeworld and worldview in processes of identification experienced by a certain portion of young Muslim men and women in Bouaké. These young men and women are active social actors in contemporary versionings of Islam (see Chapter 5).⁹ However, Islam, itself, as a referent for social identity, is also historically and socially situated. It acquires its sociopolitical significance in the context of long-distance trade and the relationship between Islamised traders and indigenous populations, in the context of French colonisation in West Africa, and in the postindependence context of nation building in Côte d'Ivoire (see Chapter 3). "Western modernity" is another worldview pertinent to processes of identification in contemporary Bouaké. However, it too does not exist in a sociohistorical vacuum. It has a local meaning through the history of colonisation, the process of decolonisation and the postcolonial relations that characterise Côte d'Ivoire and its neighbouring countries. It also carries a specific meaning for Muslims to the extent that it is embedded in the long-standing power relations between the Islamic world and the Christian world dating from the Crusades. But it also acquires its social pertinence through everyday cultural practices, such as language use, fashion choices, and educational choices of individuals who adopt or reject this worldview.

These two dimensions (structural contingencies and human agency) of the production of worldviews and lifeworlds can be examined through the study of intersubjective experience and socially situated relations of power. In order to do so, I propose to bridge the collective and actor-centred dimensions of processes of identification through the ethnographic description of case studies and personal trajectories read against the background of societal constraints and contingencies of power relations. With a perspective similar to that of Lila Abu-Lughod (1991,

⁹ Here, I am purposefully using the notion "versioning" rather than version to emphasise the procedural dimension of the phenomena described. Versioning implies that it is still being done, whereas version refers to a final product.

1993), I contend that the ethnography of lifeworlds and worldviews acquires a meaning through the reconstruction of the life trajectory of particular individuals. As a consequence, the argument of the thesis is articulated through the description of the contemporary stakes of the politics of cultural and religious difference in Côte d'Ivoire, the description of the objective life conditions of young Muslim men and women in contemporary Bouaké and the narration of young men's life trajectories, the case study of the versioning of Islam in Islamic youth associations as a form of collective identity, and the analysis of women's life course and life trajectories. In particular, the reconstruction of the life trajectories of women and young men (see Chapters 4 and 6) allows me to link their lived experience to the processes of identification that unfold in the context of the interplay between human agency and elements of social constraints.

1.4.4 Life course and personal trajectories

The notion of life course combined with the description of individuals' personal life trajectories is one way in which the interplay between human agency and elements of social constraint can be highlighted. The notion of life course, invoked here, is based on the approach of social historians and sociologists to the study of family history and personal trajectories (Hareven 1973, 1978, 1982, 1987; Elder 1977, 1978, 1987; Rosenmayr 1982; Tilly 1987; Tilly 1987; Bertaux 1982). The life course approach was developed in reaction to the previously used notion of life-cycle (Hareven 1991). Its criticism of the notion of life cycle was aimed at the latter notion's incapacity to elucidate the relationship between social change and individual or family life trajectories because of its inherent dimension of indefinite repetition (cyclicity) throughout history. The notion of life cycle has been used to measure changes in the family unit or in the life of an individual as it moves from stage to stage, without taking into account dimensions of social change (Hareven 1978).

The life course approach is based on three key concepts: the idea of social time, the notion of transition, and the notion of trajectory (Elder 1987). The goal is, then, to identify the social timing of life transitions throughout individual and family life trajectories. Social time (or timing), by opposition to calendar time, is a social construction that combines

biological events (age, birth, death, parenthood) in an individual's life or in the life of a family unit with social markers of history such as the growth and the collapse of local industries, cycles of drought and flood, the emergence of nation-states, and so forth. The notion of life transition is used to highlight the fact that the course of an individual's life trajectory is punctuated by events marking changes in an individual's social status, such as birth and associated rituals, the initiation rites of adolescence, marriage, motherhood, retirement, and death. These events mark transitions towards the different stages of an individual's life. Each stage comprises different social roles, identities, and statuses. This implies that throughout his or her lifetime, an individual may alter his or her social identities and sense of identification. For instance, in the case of Muslims in Bouaké, it is socially sanctioned that younger Muslims may adopt a looser attitude towards the practice of Islam. It is generally assumed that as an individual grows older, his or her religious practices will come to conform more strictly to the prescribed norms. These life transitions are culturally and historically constructed.

Applying the life course approach here, I examined the life trajectories of specific individuals and groups of individuals in relation to historically situated elements of social change. The events that punctuate the life course of Muslims in Bouaké are not the same as the ones which mark the life stages of Baoulés in Bouaké. They are not the same as the ones which marked my own life-stages as a Western woman, as they are possibly not the same as the ones which punctuated the life of Muslims in Bouaké close to a century ago. Moreover, the events that punctuate the life course of Muslim women in Bouaké are not the same as ones which mark changes in social roles and status for men. For instance, in contemporary Bouaké, marriage and motherhood mark one of the significant stages of a woman's life -- that is the passage to adult life -- whereas, for men, marriage is not sufficient to move them into the social category of adults. Being employed and having economic self-sufficiency are necessary for a man to become an adult.

In this sense, the notion of life course allows me to articulate elements of personal history with conditions of social life. It permits me to step beyond the idiosyncratic and anecdotal dimensions of personal narratives because it articulates them with socially defined and regulated

biological functions, age groups, and life stages. Historical moments play a great role in situating individuals in terms of their social surroundings and in the identification of social stakes. Framed within the parameters of the notion of life course, the study of how individuals inscribe themselves within specific lifeworlds and worldviews allows me to link dimensions of personal trajectories and intentionality with relevant elements of social constraint.

In fact, one of the underlying themes of this thesis is the inherent tension within the life course between its dimension of repetition and circularity, and its embrace of social change. It is that which permits me to ask whether the claims of self and collective identities posited by today's youth in Bouaké are the result of social changes or are simply reactions to the local system of gerontocracy that have repeated themselves in different forms with each succeeding generation. Will the youth of today become the elders of tomorrow without developing differences in practice from the elders of today? The goal of the analysis is obviously not to predict what the young men and women of today will do in the future: whether they will evade family-arranged marriages or whether young educated women will manage to maintain a professional life while becoming mothers and wives. The objective is rather to highlight the nexus of tension between these two analytical dimensions of the life course.

1.5 Plan of the thesis

From the discussion of the theoretical concepts used in the analysis of the empirical data, I move, in the second chapter, to the social scape of the city of Bouaké. I position myself in the family, the compound, and the neighbourhood where I lived. I also describe the social spaces which I investigated: compound-family units, voluntary associations, and celebrations marking life-stage transitions in which I participated.

In Chapter 3, I look specifically at how elements of identification underlie and knit together social networks, institutional structures (schools, associations, and trading structures) and individual identities in the case of Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké. I take as a starting point the assumption that specific ethnic labels, the borders of ethnic categories,

and the quality of interethnic relations are constructed within parameters imposed by historical, ideological and political determinants. Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké appeal to two orders of ethnic referents: the Dioula pan-regional label and a number of labels referring to places of origin in Mali. The Dioula label functions as a political label allowing Ivorians to make a distinction between "nationals" and "foreigners", and uniting the political claims made by Muslims to the Ivorian government since the first multiparty national election in 1990. Identity labels referring to places of origin in Mali are at the basis of everyday cultural practices and socio-economic networks. However, a portion of young, urban Muslims identify primarily as Muslims moving away from the ethnic referents invoked by their parents.

The object of Chapter 4 is to highlight some of the main elements of social change that have brought about a shift of identification from ethnicity to Islam among young Muslims of Malian origin. In order to do so, the description focuses on the specific life experiences defining the social position of these young men and women, including conditions of the historical definition of contemporary youth, an urban setting, migration, formal education, the restructuration of Islamic associations, the contemporary economic context in Côte d'Ivoire, and the impact of the recent political definition of the status of "foreigner." These elements of social change are analysed against the background of the growth of Islamic youth associations in the past ten years, the development of Islamic institutions in Côte d'Ivoire since independence, and the contemporary Muslim collectivity in Bouaké and in Côte d'Ivoire.

The case study of an Islamic youth association in Chapter 5 allows me to describe processes of identification as they emerge through discursive productions pertaining to images of Islam, Islamic practices, and "proper womanhood" amongst young men and women. The analysis focuses on versionings of Islam produced in the context of preaching, sermons, Islamic debates, and group discussions.

In Chapter 6, the analysis focuses on the description of Muslim women's life trajectories and the ensuing negotiation of differing, often contradictory worldviews and life projects. These descriptions are read against the notion of life course, allowing me to articulate elements of personal history with conditions of social life. In light of this, marriage

emerges as one of the cornerstones of women's lives. I examine how women of different generations, socio-economic statuses, ethnocultural backgrounds, and educational levels negotiate their social positions, as wives, mothers and working women, *vis-à-vis* potential or actual marriage partners.

In the conclusion, I will highlight some of the future implications of the empirical information presented and analysed in this chapter for young Muslim men and women, for the politics of identities in Côte d'Ivoire, and for Islam. Based on these ethnographic observations, I address the question of the relationship between the study of elements of social change and the study of dimensions of continuity tied to the life course.

CHAPTER 2:

METHODOLOGICAL STANDPOINT: SITUATING THE ETHNOGRAPHER AND THE METHODS OF RESEARCH

2.1 Scenes of daily life and context of fieldwork

Leaving rue 28 in the late afternoon and turning into the main street of Air France 1 (or what is left of it after years of municipal neglect) one is overwhelmed by the buzz of activity. Children are leisurely walking back home after a day in school. The children who attend the national French-language schools walk in groups, looking like perfect replicas of one another: small girls in brown and white chequered dresses, small boys in khaki shorts and shirts, blue and white chequered dresses for older girls, blue skirts and white shirts for high school girls, and khaki trousers and shirts for high school boys. Children who attend madrasas also cluster in groups, giggling and horsing around; only their attire is different.¹

Adults are also starting to make their way home, stopping for a beer at local buvettes (open-air bars) or buying a snack (fried ripe plantains, fish, or yams) from the street vendors. They also stop at the local bread shops to buy baguettes (French bread). The vendors, mainly women, set up their stands, wood fires and pots around four in the afternoon and will be there well into the night -- on the weekend, they may still be around at two in the morning.

The main street of Air France 1 is one of the most animated in Bouaké. Throughout the day, one sees a procession of street vendors -- bouillie(gruel) and fried cakes in the morning, at noon attiéké (grated, fermented, steamed manioc served with fried fish) or rice and sauce, the late afternoon snacks, and grilled meat at night. Food stands are interspersed with shoemakers, men selling cigarettes and candy, coffee stands, fresh fruit and vegetable sellers, newspaper agents, and so forth. There are also numerous boutiques (small shops), drugstores, and even a small supermarket at the end of the street opening up onto Place de la Paix.

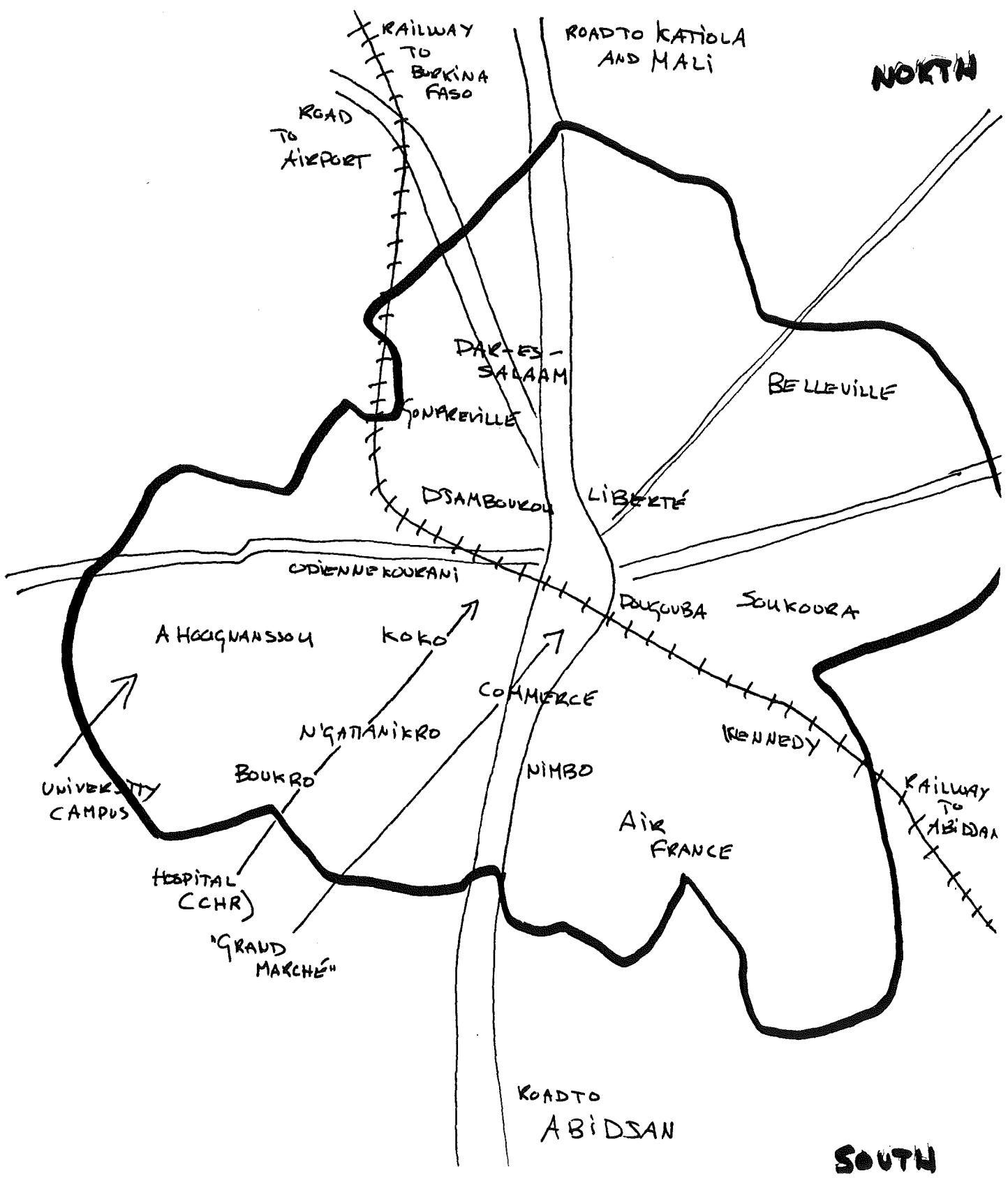
¹ Madrasa students may attend school without a uniform, but usually they are required to wear a calf-length white or purple cotton *boubou* with trousers of the same cloth; female students wear a scarf on their head. If they are not wearing such a uniform, they will certainly be wearing another form of *boubou* or similar local dress. Little boys may be seen wearing Western-style clothing, but female students never do (see Appendix 2).

The sun is a red burning ball in the sky, and the sky looks fuzzy, obscured by the sand lifted by harmattan winds. The air is dry and choking as the cars whiz by. Harmattan is associated with the dry season, which lasts about three months -- roughly from December to March. In Bouaké, in the Guinea-savanna region of Côte d'Ivoire, the days are very hot, but without humidity, and the nights are cold. This season is not as difficult as in Sahelian regions, I am repeatedly told, but it is harsher than on the coast. According to popular wisdom, harmattan is the period of sickness: colds, bleeding noses, aching eyes, malaria, bronchitis, and so forth. This year, it is also towards the end of harmattan that the hardest period of the year will start for Muslims in Bouaké: Ramadan. In the past few years, Ramadan has been starting at the end of harmattan and lasting into the beginning of the hot season. The first rainy season occurs in May-June, followed by a heavier rainy season in August and September.

The Place de la Paix is relatively quiet at this time of the day, except for a few remaining children playing football. This scene is very different from the one encountered in the morning. Place de la Paix is a circus of traffic. It is a large, desolate open space shaded by a few spindly trees and adorned at its southern extremity by a single statue perpetually covered by black plastic and ropes. The wrapped statue is staring at another pedestal, directly opposite at the northern end of the square, this one empty. No statue has been mounted on it, wrapped or not. The wrapped statue is one of the mysteries of Air France. Whom does the statue depict -- the late president, Félix Houphouët-Boigny? The first mayor of Bouaké? No one seems to know for certain, and though there are several theories, apparently no one is inclined to find out for sure. In fact, it is a taboo subject in Air France. What the statue may be and why it remains covered are not subjects for queries; even taking pictures of the statue is not recommended, as Mamadou, one of my fieldwork assistants claimed when I tried to take a picture. It can bring "bad luck."

The landscape of the neighbourhood called Air France 1 coloured my everyday life in Bouaké for twenty-two months, between February 1993 and June 1995. As much as they may have impressed me, even assaulted me at times, these daily scenes became part of the expected, encounters of everyday life. My days came to be regulated by an anticipated progression of sounds, smells, and human activities. The days started with the call of the muezzin from the mosque across the street from

MAP 1: BOUAKÉ



my house and the repetitive brushing noise of small hand-brooms cleaning my courtyard, and ended with the howls of dogs late into the night accompanied by the soft chatting of adults. The five daily prayers rather than the clock came to punctuate periods of the day for me.

I lived in the Air France 1 neighbourhood for the larger part of my fieldwork and the primary social and institutional networks I established in the field stemmed from this neighbourhood².

Air France is a relatively new neighbourhood at the southwest end of the city. It was officially opened in the early 1950s, when the city of Bouaké started selling land titles and expanding the previous size of the city. Bouaké extends on the north-south axis for about 10 kilometres. Bouaké developed as a city around the *grand marché* (central market) at the turn of the century with the establishment of a French military post. It expanded with the construction of the railway from Abidjan to Ouagadougou (see Chapter 3). Contrary to the older neighbourhoods in the city at the margins of the central market (Koko, Djambourou/Liberté and Dougouba), where many buildings were originally of mud-brick construction, buildings in Air France were constructed right away in concrete. By the 1960s, after the city of Bouaké passed a decree requiring the demolition of all earthen buildings, large sections of neighbourhoods such as Dougouba (meaning "old town" in Dioula/Banmanan) were taken down and replaced by newer neighbourhoods such as Sokoura (meaning "new home" in Dioula/Banmanan).³

Still, Air France 1 is centrally situated insofar as it is at walking distance (approximately fifteen to twenty minutes) from the central market,

² However, my Ph.D. project was not conceived as a neighbourhood study. My interest lay in processes of identification as they unfolded and were negotiated in the city at large. Again, Bouaké is significant as an urban milieu attracting a large number of Muslims of Malian origin where conditions of the Ivorian and regional politics of identity are lived, felt, negotiated, produced. From my neighbourhood base, I followed a number of family networks, friendship networks, associative networks, religious networks, and professional networks.

³ I use the expression "Dioula/Banmanan" to establish a distinction between the Dioula language spoken in Côte d'Ivoire as a vernacular (which I will call "Ivorian Dioula") and the language spoken by individuals of Malian origin. The second form is closer to the Banmanan spoken in Mali. It uses less French, it is more complex in terms of syntax, and its vocabulary is larger. Moreover, Ivorian Dioula is devalorised as a linguistic form by individuals of Malian origin. It is considered to be a lesser language, by comparison to Banmanan, which is regarded as the "purest" form. It is to be noted that Dioula and Banmanan languages are both part of the Mande family of languages: including also Malinke spoken in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone.

which is pretty much at the geographical and economic centre of the city. Bouaké's *grand marché* is renowned for its impressive size as well as its variety of products and merchants, and famous for its high level of disorganisation. There are smaller neighbourhood markets in Bouaké, but the most successful merchants do not sell in these smaller markets and some products are not found in these markets (jewellery and wax print cloth, for instance). Air France 1 is also at walking distance (approximately thirty minutes) from Commerce, which is the administrative part of town. In Commerce, one finds the vestiges of French colonial administration and the manifestations of Côte d'Ivoire's insertion into the contemporary global world economy: Ivorian and foreign banks, the central post office, the telecommunications offices and other government-run services, the courts, the *gendarmerie*, European-style supermarkets with French and Lebanese goods, Chinese and Lebanese restaurants, the two largest hotels of the city, French cuisine restaurants, the French expatriates' social club, cinemas showing French, American, and African films (Indian films and Asian kung-fu films are shown in other neighbourhoods), nightclubs, Lebanese appliance stores, video stores, and photography labs.

The Place de la Paix is at the centre of Air France 1, situated approximately between Rue 14 and Rue 18. Air France 1 is the only neighbourhood in Bouaké where the streets are numbered. The numbers start at the central market. Air France 1 ends, more or less, at Rue 30, or at the intersection where the local Air France market starts. What is referred to as Air France 1 by the local population is called "T.S.F." (*Télégraphie sans fil*) in the administrative map of the city. The section of the city called Air France 2 and Air France 3 is labelled "Air France" in the administrative map. The origin of the name "Air France" dates from the colonial era. According to popular lore, the offices, warehouse, garage, and workshop of the Air France airline were situated on the site of the IRDO school in present-day Air France 1. The first plane would have landed around 1924 on that site.

As one progresses through Air France, from the *grand marché* towards the south, the neighbourhoods get less and less densely inhabited, with fewer multifamily compounds and more single-family villas. This housing style progression from the central market to the end of Air France parallels the ethnic distribution (from Dioula close to the market to

other Ivorian ethnic groups moving towards Air France 2 and 3) and to the socioeconomic distribution of the neighbourhood. But, Air France 1 remains an economically diverse neighbourhood. It contains well-off households and very poor households, contrary to a neighbourhood such as Kennedy, to the west, where mostly rich African (professionals and bureaucrats) and foreign (European, North American, and Lebanese) households are found. Residents of Air France 1 are employed in the government-run formal sector, in private industry, in the bureaucracy and the professions, in the service industry (hairdresser, launderer, tailor), in large interregional trading companies, in local crafts (weaving, cloth dying), and in petty trading ventures.

In general terms, the socioeconomic status of a household can be assessed by looking at the presence or absence of running water and electricity in the courtyard, at the type of houses (single-family Western-style villas, single-family compounds, and compounds made up of multiple families), as well as at the type of employment practised by the inhabitants and the level of schooling achieved by the children in the compound. However, one should not assume that living in a Western-style villa and sending one's children to French-language schools, for instance, necessarily implies that the household is richer than a multigenerational compound where the family economic activity is long-distance trade. Here, the question of individuals' inscription and participation in differing worldviews and lifeworlds has to be taken into account (see Chapters 4, 5, and 6 for a more detailed discussion of this issue). For instance, the first type of household (living in a Western-style villa and sending one's children to French language schools) may be surviving on the single salary of the male head, who is a local schoolteacher, whereas the second household may be surviving on the income of a very successful long-distance trader and his sons; in absolute terms, the second household is better off economically than the first one.

Individuals and families from numerous ethnic groups, both Ivorian and from other West African countries, live in Air France 1. But certain sections of the neighbourhood are associated with specific ethnic categories. The ethnic composition of the neighbourhood transforms as one goes from Air France 1 to Air France 3. Dioulas -- defined as Muslim of northern and/or foreign West African origin -- get less and less

numerous as one gets closer to Air France 3. The section of Air France 1 between approximately Rue 3 and Rue 7, is known, in Dioula/Banmanan, as *Maraka kin*, or the Maraka quarter. Marakas make up a large portion of individuals of Malian origin in Bouaké. In Air France 1, a large number of Marakas come from the village of Braouli in Mali. This concentration is largely explained by migration networks and by long distance itinerant trading activities. Air France 1 contains three households that have been receiving newly arriving migrants from Braouli over the past forty years.

The Maraka label in Bouaké is invoked as an ethnic category that refers mainly to individuals who originated from western Mali, parts of Guinea, and parts of Senegal⁴. At the level of ethnic stereotypes circulating in the city, Marakas are distinguished from other ethnic groups making up the Dioula category in terms of language use (a large portion of them are Maraka-language speakers, but there are Marakas who do not speak Maraka but understand it and Marakas who neither speak nor understand Maraka), trading activities (long-distance itinerant trading activities, kola nuts in particular), and a perceived level of traditionalism, assuming that their lifestyle in Bouaké reproduces the same lifestyle as the one supposedly found in their villages of origin (large families, crowded courtyards, lack of formal education, seclusion of women, trading activities, certain facial scarifications, and styles of dressing).⁵

Yet, compared to other neighbourhoods in the city, Air France 1 remains very heterogeneous, socially, ethnically, religiously, and economically. The heterogeneity of Air France 1 can be witnessed as one walks through the neighbourhood. There are three French-language government-run primary schools, four French-language government-run high schools, two *madrasa* (Franco-Arabic schools), and two *mori kalan* (traditional mnemonic-style Qur'anic schools). Within a few streets of Rue

⁴ I am aware that in the literature it is clear that labels such as Dioula and Maraka essentially refer to Islamised trading communities. The different labels come from the fact that specific populations travelled different trading routes, using different languages. But in the context of Bouaké, these so-called professional labels acquire an ethnic dimension. In the present-day context of Bouaké, the Maraka label functions as an ethnic label in the same fashion as Songhay, Fula or Kado labels. It is associated with a number of ethnic stereotypes, with a specific language, and so forth. It is also a basis for communal and associative life. I will discuss the social roles of such ethnic labels in Chapter 3.

⁵ Here I want to emphasise the fact that these are ethnic stereotypes, requiring no correspondence between images of village lifestyle constructed in Bouaké and the actual lifestyle in the villages of origin.

28, where I lived, there is one mosque, one Baptist mission, one Christian fundamentalist centre, another Protestant church, and one Bahai mission. French is often spoken in the streets of the neighbourhood as a *lingua franca*.

Air France 1 is also perceived as a mixed neighbourhood by the inhabitants of Bouaké, contrary to other ethnically marked neighbourhoods such as Dar-es-Salam, Dougouba-Sokoura, Djambourou-Liberté, which are labelled as Dioula neighbourhoods, and neighbourhoods such as Ahougnanssou and N'Gattakro, which are labelled as Baoulé neighbourhoods. Still, the composition of these neighbourhoods is by no means exclusive: non-Dioulas live in Dar-es-Salam despite its overwhelming Dioula character. And some neighbourhoods are claimed as much by the Dioulas as by the Baoulés, such as Koko and Belleville. Besides ethnic labels, neighbourhoods in Bouaké are also distinguished in terms of the socioeconomic status of the inhabitants. For instance, neighbourhoods such as Koko, Dar-es-Salam, Dougouba-Sokoura, and Djambourou-Liberté are regarded as working-class neighbourhoods (*quartiers populaires* in French), whereas Ahougnanssou, N'Gattakro, Nimbo, and Air France are inhabited by more bureaucrats, and one finds more villas in these neighbourhoods. Kennedy neighbourhood is the "white people's" neighbourhood, almost exclusively composed of single family villas.

On the same grounds of heterogeneity, Air France 1 is described by its inhabitants as a neighbourhood that lacks social cohesion. Contrary to neighbourhoods such as Dar-es-Salam and Sokoura, there is no *comité de quartier* (neighbourhood committee) in Air France. These committees act as unofficial civic administrative units between the city council and the general population. They organise popular cultural activities, raise funds for the maintenance of the neighbourhood, and police the neighbourhood. The emic explanation invoked for the absence of a neighbourhood committee and other community-based organisations in Air France 1 is ethnic diversity, and by consequence, the lack of cohesion in the neighbourhood.

2.2 Situating myself and my fieldwork in the cityscape: participant observation as "a daughter" and as a "proper Muslim mother"

Six weeks after my arrival in Bouaké, in February 1993, I established residence in the household of a family of Malian origin, in Air France 1, Rue 28.⁶

To a certain extent, this family lives in an atypical compound. It is neither a villa nor a communal courtyard (called *cour commune* in French). It is also architecturally atypical. It is a two-storey building with a frontal courtyard. Seven upstairs rooms are for the family use; two bedrooms and a storage room are downstairs; four rooms opening onto the street are rented out to businesses (one accountant, one hairdresser, one seamstress and one electrician), and a separate three-room apartment is where I lived. In the household, most of the cooking and daily activities take place on the large balcony on the second floor, whereas in the majority of compounds in Bouaké, cooking is done in the courtyard or in an independently set-up half-open kitchen. The compound has running water and electricity, as well as a phone.

On an everyday life basis, the household where I lived is more or less female-headed. The male head is still alive, but he does not reside in Bouaké on a permanent basis. When there is an extraordinary matter, a member of the family fetches him at his village, but otherwise his first wife runs the household. He has land he inherited from his mother in a nearby Baoulé village and he spends most of his time there with his second wife and their son. He comes to Bouaké for business -- he sells beef to local high schools and he has houses around Bouaké from which he collects rent -- and for Ramadan and Tabaski.⁷ In the case of polygamous households or in cases where male heads of household are long-distance traders, it is not uncommon that older women run the household on an everyday basis. In some cases, male heads of

⁶ The description of the household where I lived will sound a bit impersonal due to the fact that I have consciously refrained from using actual names and patronyms. Because some of the information described and analysed in later chapters is based on the life trajectory of some individual members of this household, I was very concerned about preserving its anonymity. In cases where it was necessary to use names, I have used fictive ones.

⁷ Arabic *Id al-Kabir*, the festival marking the end of the Hajj at Mecca. This festival is celebrated yearly by the slaughter of rams commemorating the story of Abraham.

household share their time between a household in Mali with one or more wives, and a household in Bouaké with one or more wives.

The household where I lived can also be described as an ageing household. Except for a fostered child (the daughter of a very distant niece of the female head), a servant and the daughter of the second wife of the male head, there are no children living in the compound. Over the thirty-three months during which I lived on and off in this compound, there was a permanent flux of inhabitants. The permanent inhabitants were the female head, one of her sons who is in his mid- to late thirties, and a daughter who is in her mid-forties. There are regular short-term visitors who are relatives of the male and female heads of the household. Long-term visitors were the son of a cousin who is attending university in Bouaké, another son of the female head who was doing his baccalaureate, another of her daughters who obtained her baccalaureate, another fostered child (the grandchild of the female head's brother [same father and different mothers]), a number of female domestic servants who regularly get replaced, and an adolescent boy who temporarily sold cold water for the female head of the household. This regular turnover of inhabitants is typical of most households in Bouaké, irrespective of the socioeconomic status and ethnocultural origin of the inhabitants.

Both the female head and the male head of the household are of Malian origin. The female head was born in the Macina region and came to Bouaké when she was a child. The male head was born in Bouaké of a Malian father and a Baoulé mother who converted to Islam. At the turn of the century, when Bouaké expanded from being a local Baoulé village, numerous traders coming by foot from regions of contemporary Mali, parts of Guinea, and Burkina Faso eventually established themselves permanently in Bouaké. Some of them married native women from local ethnic groups (Baoulé, in the case of Bouaké), who converted to Islam. In most cases, the descendants of these couples were fully incorporated into the Malian collectivity; the women changed their names and more or less cut ties with their villages of origin. In the case of the male head of the household where I lived, he maintained ties with his mother's village because his mother was descended from the chiefly family of the village -- this despite the fact that both his parents died when he was an infant and that he was brought up by one of the notable families from the Macina

region in Bouaké. He inherited his mother's land since the Baoulés follow matrilineal rules of inheritance and residence. When he was young, he was a successful tailor, who later engaged in trading activities, and later exploited his mother's land. He sent all his children to national French-language schools.

I came to live in this household through the eldest son of the female head. I had met him during my first trip to Côte d'Ivoire in 1992. Our plane broke down in Accra, which gave us plenty of time to get acquainted. He introduced me to his mother and his siblings in Bouaké and in Abidjan. His mother had been told that one of his foreign friends would be coming in the evening, and judging by the look of horror on her face when she saw me, a white woman of European descent, she obviously expected a "wife-to-be," since my friend is in his forties and not yet married. Once I established that I was already married to a Canadian, who would be eventually coming to visit me, and that I was in Bouaké to do research, her attitude became much more welcoming. She essentially opened her household to me. I realised much later that, as the eldest of his mother's sons, my friend had used his position of power in the family to "place" me, to "foster" me, in his family.⁸ Moreover, in the Dioula tradition, his mother took her role as a hostess seriously.⁹ However, she quickly became more than a hostess; she became a mother to me and later a "wife" to my son, born in June 1994. In order to honour her, I gave my son as one of his names the name of her husband.¹⁰ According to local kinship logic, since he was the namesake of my hostess' husband, my son became her social husband. He also became her contemporary, because I was socially her child: grandparents and grandchildren are symbolically of the same

⁸ As a social convention, eldest sons come to more or less replace their father as figureheads of household and family units. Their power also comes from the traditional power of elders, which one encounters in Mande societies and in most West African societies.

⁹ Dioulas, as long-distance traders, have a long established history of host-guest relationship and reciprocity. Even in the cases where the individuals are no longer involved in trade, elements of inter relation and reciprocity pertaining to host-guest modes of behaviour remain (Lewis 1974).

¹⁰ It is a local practice amongst Muslims of Malian origin that, if one desires to honour an elder, the elder's first name will be given to a newborn child by the parents of the child. Usually, an elder male (father of the newborn's father, traditionally) choose the namesake. In a case when a male newborn is not of the same gender than the person who is to be honoured, the first name of the husband will be given. In my case, as I had a son, I gave Kalifa's husband's name to my son. In the case of a daughter, she would have been called Kalifa.

generation. At the time of my son's *denuli* (celebration held by Muslims for the naming of a child) in Bouaké,¹¹ which took place at the end of my fieldwork, the change in my position towards my hostess and her family was expressed in the words of a woman *jeli*.¹² In recognition of the *denuli* and my imminent departure from the field, my hostess offered my son and me a woven blanket and "praised" me. She got the *jeli* to explain that I had come to her as her son's *protégée*, that she had no choice at the time but to take me in. She never regretted having done so because, in her heart, I went from being a "fostered foreigner" to being a daughter, a daughter who cared for her as well as any could have done for a parent.

As other anthropologists choose to do, I opted for a fieldwork style that was mainly based on participant observation, that is the process of learning about another culture, another group of individuals, by sharing their everyday life on the basis of their own social world. In doing so, my

¹¹ It is common practice in Bouaké that a person who receives the honour of getting a newborn child named after him or her hold a celebration for the naming of the child. Such celebrations are called *denuli*. However, *denuli* may also be held by parents of the child, or grandparents of the child, or more distant members of the family of the newborn child, or friends of the family of the child.

¹² *Jeli* are a Mande *nyamankala* associated with the craft of praise singing (Camara 1976; Dramé and Senn-Borloz 1992; Hoffman 1995; Keita 1995). *Nyamankala* is an historical Mande system of social stratification divided into groups which are professionally specialised (Bird et.al. 1995; Conrad and Frank 1995; N'Diaye 1970; Tamari 1995). Fulas and Songhays inhabiting the region covered by contemporary Mali also have *nyamankala* systems of stratification, but the labels and roles attributed to the numerous categories of *nyamankala* differ. Historically, within the social hierarchy of Mande societies, *nyamankalaw* are situated under freeborn individuals (*horonw*) and above slaves (*jonw*). The most commonly encountered *nyamankalaw* are the categories of blacksmith (*numu*) and bards/praise singers (*jeli*). Depending on the specific cases, *nyamankala* systems stipulate rules of marriages between nobles, *nyamankalaw* and slaves. These rules of endogamy carry a dimension of social reciprocity (*senankunya*), referred to as "joking relationship" in the literature. For instance, historically *numuw* cannot marry Fulas, but they will defend and honour one another. In contemporary Bouaké, *jeliw* serve, in public gatherings and other instances of social interaction, as agents of communication. Historically, nobles did not speak in public. *Jeliw* spoke for them. Moreover, *jeliw* served as public bards praising the exploits of nobles and their ancestral family. This practice has now been extended to any individual. In contemporary public gatherings, *jeliw* praise the individuals present in exchange for money, transmit messages addressed from one person present to another, and distribute gifts from one person present to another. Participants usually instruct the *jeliw* as to what should be said. As a consequence, in social gatherings *jeliw* serve to praise, to resolve conflicts, to distribute gifts, and so forth. *Jeliw* have other social roles, such as serving as nodes in information networks. For instance, if there is a marriage, *jeliw* will be given money and candies by the members of the families involved in the marriage to spread the news of the marriage to members of the extended families and other social networks. *Jeliw* are also the historians of specific events or families in the Mande world. But Bouaké is not renown for the historical craft of its *jeliw*. This is a significant point of contention amongst the *jeliw* in Bouaké. *Jeliw* are also musicians, bards, and dancers.

participation in surrounding activities confirmed and defined a social role for me: that of a "fostered daughter". Much that I learned in daily interaction with the members of my compound and their social networks was learned through a form of socialisation into that role. Lila Abu-Lughod describes a similar process of integration into a Bedouin family unit and knowledge acquisition in the following terms: "By being a daughter, I was forced to learn the standard of women's behaviour from the inside" (Abu-Lughod 1986: 22).

When she understood that I was willing to have her do so, my hostess monitored my behaviour and introduced me to the norms of social life, first as a "proper Muslim woman" and then as a "proper Muslim mother."¹³ To a certain extent, she fulfilled the role of a "key informant" for me, but within the bounds of a mother-daughter relationship. In fact, rather than her following me as I pursued the inquiries of my research, I followed her in her social and family life. My hostess was one of the notables of the Malian collectivity in Bouaké and, as a woman in her early sixties, she leads a very active social life.¹⁴ Through her, I was introduced to the social networks of a number of women's place-of-origin associations¹⁵, and of women's political and religious associations. With her, I participated in social events (marriages, engagements, naming ceremonies, and funerals), religious holidays, association meetings, and everyday visits to the different households with which she is connected.

* * *

At this point in my account, I want to introduce a short parenthetical section by making a foray into the question of ethnographic styles, or what has been criticised in recent literature as the strict separation between

¹³ The local definition of "proper Muslim motherhood" and "proper Muslim womanhood" will be described in Chapters 5 and 6.

¹⁴ The seclusion of Muslim women in Bouaké is very closely tied to the life course. When women have stopped being biologically reproductive, they usually acquire a higher level of spatial and social mobility outside of their compound. I will explain this in more detail in Chapter 6.

¹⁵ I am using the term "place-of-origin associations" to refer to associations in which members are connected through their common place of origin in Mali. These associations also exist amongst Ivorians (referring usually to a village or a region in Côte d'Ivoire) and other West African foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire. I will discuss the social roles of female place-of-origin associations later in this chapter.

"objective modes" and "confessional modes" of ethnographic writing (see amongst others, Abu-Lughod 1991; Dumont 1978; Rabinow 1977; Crapanzano 1977). Two points, inspired mainly by the work of Paul Riesman (Riesman 1977, 1992), need to be highlighted. First, in relation to the notion of reflexivity in anthropology, it is obvious that the process of socialisation described in the preceding paragraphs through participant observation does not assume that the anthropologist is a cultural *tabula rasa*. I came to Bouaké and settled in my hosts' household with a set of cultural assumptions, practices, beliefs, and so forth acquired throughout my personal life trajectory as a Westerner, but as a Westerner with a specific life experience in Canada and in the United Kingdom who opted for anthropology as a profession. I made the choice to see my work as a personal involvement that situated me in a specific epistemological position, that is, a "reflexive anthropology," to use Paul Riesman's terminology. Reflexive anthropology is based on the assumption that the anthropologist, as fieldworker, is engaged in a permanent process of interpersonal negotiation and shared experience with members of the surrounding society. This process of culturally shared interpretation through the practice of everyday life should not be reduced to discursive interpretation, nor to a hermeneutic process of crosscultural communication. The second point that I want to make is that when working from the epistemological standpoint of reflexive anthropology, the information gathered, described, and analysed needs to be read against the account of how, and under what conditions this information was gathered. The empirical information acquires part of its value in light of this interpersonal relationship, presented here, but I also want to highlight some of its orientations and limitations. In my case, they are found in my social roles as a woman, as a proper Muslim mother, and as a youth. The social roles ascribed to me oriented the type of information that I gathered. But, the point is that these social roles (assumed by me) situate the partiality of the description that I produce and thus imply a larger picture. The written ethnographic end product is not about the anthropologist, but about the "world out there" which the anthropologist apprehends from a certain social position. This specific social position is defined not just by the interpersonal relations between the anthropologist and the surrounding society (themselves affected by the anthropologist's life

trajectory and insertion into the field) but also by larger sociohistorical determinants; in this case, the historical definition of social roles amongst Muslims in Bouaké as well as the contemporary sociopolitical scene in Côte d'Ivoire. In other words, my adoption of specific social roles and my participation in defined social networks was particularistic and was a major factor in determining the information gathered, but these social positions remain part of the spectrum of social roles available to young Muslims in Bouaké today.

* * *

In summary, three elements of my insertion in the field significantly influenced my status in the field and the type of information I gathered: my role as a daughter in the household where I lived, my experience of motherhood, and my insertion in the Islamic collectivity as an English-language teacher in a local *madrasa*. These conditions of fieldwork oriented my work towards women's lifeworlds and towards the lifeworlds of individuals (and social institutions) who define themselves as "proper Muslims," as practising, pious individuals (or groups of such) who partake in the production of Islamic worldviews and lifestyles. However, as I will show in Chapters 4 and 6, Islam carries a major social significance as a site of social identification, and women have a specific social relevance in the processes of identification described in the thesis.

In light of my reflexive standpoint and personal inclination, as in the case of Lila Abu-Lughod, it suited me better "to be confined to a small group whose members I could know intimately" (Abu-Lughod 1986: 22). The role of a family member agreed more with my own inclination and my own sense of interpersonal relationships. It was easier for me to become a member of some local social entity, a family in this case, than to adopt the role of a detached researcher. The adoption of such an attitude obviously carried both advantages and disadvantages for my research. The depth and the intimacy of the information I gathered in my roles as daughter and mother are counterbalanced by the fact that I became much less socially mobile in terms of the gendered Islamised social world. Moreover, as soon as I adopted and was ascribed the role of a daughter in the household where I lived, I could no longer consider leaving the household

to experience another one without risking insult to "my family" -- a daughter should not go off and live with other people. Moreover, such an interpersonal involvement also confined me to certain social networks. It is to be noted here that clientelism is a privileged form of social network in the region where I worked and especially amongst long-distance traders. As my hostess's daughter, I could not go "above" her and try to establish social networks outside of her reach. For instance, when I did extensive work in one of the associations of which she was the president, I could not bypass her and try to obtain interviews with members on my own. She more or less had control over whom I was talking to. Moreover, in the context of multiparty-ism in Côte d'Ivoire and the 1995 national elections, tension amongst individuals of Malian origin participating in divergent political and cultural associations was quite high. A large portion of my fieldwork was carried out within such associations. But, since my hostess is active in a number of them, I had to align with her social network in my work; I could not float from one competing association to the next, as I would have been seen as not trustworthy, as a possible traitor. Realistically, I probably could not have done this in any case, because if I wavered too much people would not have talked to me, and as soon as I aligned myself more closely I was known as such to other groups. However, it would be grossly unfair not to point out the advantages of such a patron-client relationship. At first sight, my hostess may have seemed to control my interaction with other women, but she knew who would agree to talk to me and who would not. She also, in many cases, used her social power and social capital to introduce me and to get people to talk to me. And, as a respected elder in the Malian collectivity of Bouaké, despite the fact that she was politically aligned with certain institutions, she was often called upon to act as a conciliator in times of conflict between different factions of the collectivity. I was able to follow these negotiations, and as a result I remained aware of the situations and relations outside of my hostess's political and social network.

Moreover, while I was living in my hosts' household my marital status, my ethnic/racial affiliation, my status as a mother, and my religious affiliation were each transformed and redefined as time went on. While I remained white and was perceived as a "white woman," allowing for a certain level of social flexibility not necessarily available to local African

women, I was also perceived as a different kind of white woman than the majority of white people in Bouaké. In Bouaké, one finds four categories of white people: the long-established French expatriates, the temporary French *coopérants*, the American Baptists, and the various researchers and administrators of the WARDA research centre and ORSTOM, as well as more isolated international aid workers. (The Lebanese are not considered members of the white population of Bouaké, rather constituting a group of their own.) I did not partake in the social life of any of these social units. In fact, I made a point, early on, to distinguish myself from them. It was made very clear to me that I had to situate myself either as a member of the white population of Bouaké or as a member of the local African population. So, I found a niche as "*farafi tubabu*" (the white African) -- that is, a white woman who respects and adopts the ways of the local Africans.¹⁶ A few other Europeans and North Americans had similar status to me: ones married locally to Africans and living amongst Africans, mostly women, as well as young Europeans and North Americans who lived with *jembe* (elongated drum) players in order to learn their craft. I was praised for my attitude and while my work was recognised and, to a certain extent, imaginable by a large number of individuals who had university-educated individuals amongst their family members, it did not confer any specific status on me. Partly due to my own attitude, I was not perceived as an intellectual, with all their local implications of that category (see Chapter 4). Towards the end of my fieldwork, when I was more or less fluent in both language and culture, people often commented: "Ah! *Tubabu musso, a Malien lo*" (The white woman, she is a Malian). This was so to an extent that in some instances I was asked where in Mali I came from, the interlocutor completely bypassing the colour of my skin. By that point, I had become socially assimilated to my hostess' family and her social network.

Throughout the months that I spent in the field, my status changed from a more or less androgynous late adolescent to a "proper Muslim mother." I arrived as a young woman in her mid-twenties, with no obvious spouse, without children, and not confined to a household. I floated between men's and women's worlds, beginning to understand the

¹⁶ *Tubabu* is a Dioula term which initially referred to French people. In this context, its meaning is stretched to refer to all white people, no matter their national origin.

constraints and relationship of each gendered world and of the numerous age grades. A year later, I was pregnant and, under my hostess's close monitoring, I became more aware of locally defined social rules of behaviour. I no longer floated between men's and women's world, and I was no longer taken for a late adolescent. Through pregnancy, my biological gender was crystallising my previously ambiguous social position. My own personal life had changed by becoming a mother, and my status in the field was modified through this. Throughout my pregnancy and my motherhood, as I became much more intimate with women and their everyday life, the social world of men faded into the distance for me. This change of social setting (from floating between the men's world and the women's world to an intimate involvement with the world of women) was partly due to my changing status as a mother and the local definitions of my womanhood. But, the realities of field research also played a part in this shift into the world of women. When I was pregnant, I was at a point in my fieldwork where I could comfortably choose between maintaining a broader approach including male and female social worlds, or penetrating more deeply into one of them, implying that the other would recede to the background. It must be noted that, generally, Muslim men and Muslim women in Bouaké lead segregated lives. I let myself be included and defined as a Muslim woman implying more intimate relationships with women and a very limited access to the social world of men.

Another factor was not of my choosing. I had completed, at the time, a large part of the work I had set out to do with young men: I had done the equivalent of a year's work with young men through the *madrasa* where I taught English and through the numerous Islamic youth associations in which I participated. I had been in contact with most Islamic institutions (national associations, Islamic youth associations, *madrasas*, *mory kalan* schools, students' associations, teachers' association), carrying out interviews with the leaders and participating to their activities. A few weeks before I left the field in April 1994 to go give birth in Montréal, word began to circulate that I had been sent to Bouaké as a spy of the Canadian government to "ruin the name of Islam." Obviously, this was the attitude of a limited number of individuals, and it needs to be understood in light of the sociopolitical context of the time (with the recent death of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, the imminent exclusion of Alassane Dramane

Ouattara from the 1995 presidential election, and the general political climate of instability in Côte d'Ivoire, Muslims felt quite insecure in Bouaké [see Chapter 4 for a discussion of the socio-political status of Muslims in Côte d'Ivoire]). But it seemed that most of my attempts to try to clarify the situation worsened my position rather than helped it. Besides, my status regarding Islam may have seemed ambiguous in any case. While I was not a Muslim and I did not posit as one of the reasons for my presence in Bouaké a desire to become Muslim, I taught in a *madrasa*, I participated in an Islamic youth association as a member, I dressed as a Dioula woman for specific occasions (marriages, naming ceremonies, preaching, funerals, and so forth), I respected Islamic rules when required (to sit with women in public gatherings, not to touch Muslim men, to wear a head scarf and veil when entering Islamic institutions), and I went to the mosque for Tabaski in May 1993 and prayed with the women of my household. So at that time, because of my pregnancy, my own choice, the attitude toward me of some of the institutional leaders of the Islamic collectivity in Bouaké, and the political scene in Côte d'Ivoire, while maintaining my teaching at the *madrasa* as well as my participation to Islamic youth associations, I decided to refocus my work on women's place-of-origin associations, household observations, youth associations, and interviews with young men and young women rather than on explicit religious questions.

2.3 Social spaces of investigation

As I have stated, my fieldwork was carried out on the basis of two primary social networks: my hostess's social and familial network, and an elaborate Islamic network based at the el-Hattidya *madrasa* in Air France 1, where I volunteered to teach English.

I taught English three times a week for approximately a year at the *madrasa*. I was gradually integrated into the life of the school, eventually being invited to the end-of-the-year celebrations and being permitted to frequent the school outside of my teaching hours in 1993. This allowed me to become part of the social network of its directors, as well as some of its teachers and students. This meant that I was expected to regularly visit the households of these individuals and that I would receive their visits.

These visits allowed me to regularly observe everyday life in compounds others than where I lived. With my students, I also experimented with projective methods of investigation. For instance, at the end of seven months, I asked them to produce written pieces discussing their plans and their hopes for the future concerning marriage, children, work and migration.¹⁷ I also asked for descriptions of themselves and their families. Finally, amongst my students, I got my first field assistant, through whom I became acquainted with one of the large remaining trading families in Bouaké, with a number of Islamic youth associations, and with a number of young men in Air France 1. I spent a lot of time during the first eleven months of my fieldwork hanging around with young men¹⁸. In the late afternoon and early evening, young men gather in the streets right outside of compounds or in courtyards to chat, to drink Moroccan mint tea, to listen to music and to the radio, or to play cards.¹⁹

Besides my work with my hostess's and the *madrasa*'s networks, a large portion of my fieldwork was carried out in the context of voluntary associations: Islamic youth associations and other Islamic associations, women's place-of-origin associations, and women's political associations.²⁰ I also carried out a significant amount of work in markets

¹⁷ As I was not fluent in Dioula/Banmanan when I arrived in the field, I taught English to the older students and to the teachers -- mostly young men in their late teens and early twenties -- because they spoke rudimentary French. Children could not speak French, and I had not been extensively trained in teaching English as a second language although I had received advice from English as a second language professors at McGill University. Moreover, the directors of the school expected that I would not be able to handle the children, as I had not been trained as a Qur'anic school teacher.

¹⁸ It is much more difficult to "hang around" with young women of a similar age (late teens and early twenties), as their life is more restricted to the confines of their father's or husband's compound. Young women marry much younger than young men. By their mid-twenties, most Muslim women of Malian origin are married, whereas young men of the same religious and ethnic groups tend to not marry until they are in their early thirties. Moreover, young women tend to be much more inhibited socially, and it was much harder for me to establish a relationship with them. For instance, some unmarried young women in my neighbourhood would come to visit me regularly, but they would just sit in my house staring at the floor and giggling. After a few months, I stopped making an effort to engage them in a discussion and they would just happily sit in my house watching me go about my daily activities, as they would do in any other context. Young women obviously chat at great length amongst themselves, but they are very socially shy in front of others (men, elders or a white female anthropologist). They are less used to having a "public voice" than young men are. It is only indirectly that I could gather information about young women, by observing them when I visited households or when I attended public gatherings.

¹⁹ In Mali, these gatherings of young men are called *grin* (for a discussion of the *grin* and its sociopolitical role in Mali see Brenner 1994 and Cissé 1985)

²⁰ The notion of "voluntary association" is used, as in the literature (see Little 1965; Meillassoux 1968; Shack 1974; Skinner 1978; Wallerstein 1966), in opposition to other

with merchants and with the few remaining trading families in Bouaké. However, as the research came to focus on women, Islam and youth, I stopped investigating the trading milieu in a systematic manner; the domestic family unit and compound life, social events (engagements, marriages and naming ceremonies) and associations became the privileged social spaces of investigation.

I define "domestic family units" as social units inhabiting the same compound and made up of individuals involved in a parent-child relationship, including fathers, mothers, other adults who have responsibility for the education of children in the household, and their children. This definition remains artificial to the extent that the criteria are not all-inclusive or all-exclusive in the realm of practice to the extent that the status of individuals is much more fluid than these criteria may make them out to be. However, such criteria were heuristically meaningful and helped establish a social unit of investigation and to sample families, and it remains feasible to appeal to them to the extent that their variability and their ephemerality is recognised. An older daughter, for instance, may very well fulfil the role of parent regarding her younger siblings. Compounds also are obviously an artificial unit, because families extend far beyond them, but, family members may cover a geographical space that is not manageable in the context of this study; for example, numerous families had children in France, in the United States, in Mali, and in Abidjan. Another element of family composition that is significant here is polygamy. A man might have numerous wives who do not live in the same household in Bouaké, and it was not always possible for me to interview and observe the household of each wife without creating conflicts. For this reason, I limited my work to single household units. However, in cases where co-wives lived together, I was able to include them in the same domestic family unit.

I focused on ten families, including six that I investigated in depth. Besides participant observation, I did in-depth interviews on specific themes with each parental figure (that is fathers, mothers, other adults who

types of associations in which the individual more or less automatically becomes a member throughout his or her life course according to their age grade. Initiation associations and "secret societies" are the two most frequently described such associations in the literature (see Bellman 1984; Bledsoe 1980; Ottenberg 1994; Stone 1994; d'Azevedo 1980; Finnegan 1965; Fyle 1979; Ottenberg 1989).

have responsibility for the education of children in the household, and children in the household children over fifteen years of age). I gathered descriptions of the material culture of the compounds according to a checklist (see Appendix 1). I recorded systematic observations of everyday activities, according to a regular schedule of visits (twice a week for five months, varying the time of day); I participated in events marking the life course transitions of members of the domestic family units, such as births, deaths, marriages, baptisms, engagements, graduations, migration, and so forth.

The focus of the investigation within domestic family units was practices of socialisation and intergenerational relations. Besides establishing the history of the domestic family unit (marriage of the parents, migration if relevant, establishment of the family unit, and genealogy),²¹ I gathered information regarding adopted and transmitted worldviews, education, employment practices and histories, the construction of desires and aspirations as life projects, religious practices, marriage practices, and lifestyle choices in terms of material consumption. These elements were examined from the standpoint of two perspectives, both that of the parents (parental practices, their own desires, their perception of their own history and experience of socialisation, their role in their children's socialisation and life projects, and their vision of their children's practices as parents), and that of the children (perception of their own history and experience of socialisation, and life projects for the future).

I tried to select families that were as diversified as possible in terms of their practice of Islam (that is, absence or presence of professions related to Islam, education associated with Islamic training, adoption of Islamic lifestyle, observance of religious prescriptions and rituals, and so forth), work-related activities and the educational background of the members of the family, place of origin in Mali, ethnic group of the parental figures, period of migration to Bouaké, and family model and residential

²¹ Genealogies as such were very difficult to gather. Informants were very reluctant to list the members of their families, especially their elders. I was given two emic reasons for this reluctance. First, it would be disrespectful for an individual to name his or her elders and to discuss their lives. Second, for reasons of witchcraft and *maraboutage*, individuals are afraid that divulging the names of the members of their families may render them vulnerable to evil forces. They were not afraid that I personally would use the information against them, but they were worried that someone could steal my research material. Nonetheless, I did gather a few genealogies, especially in the context of formal interviews with young men and women.

composition (polygamy or monogamy, one parent or more, nuclear or extended-family). Considering my knowledge of Bouaké and of Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké, I was capable of placing the selected domestic family units within the more general social setting of Bouaké. This information figures extensively in my discussion of youth (see Chapters 4 and 5) and the life trajectories of women (see Chapter 6).

The second social space in which I carried out a large portion of my observation was in the context of social events such as engagements (*konyo*, *wolotlan*), marriages (*konyo*, *furu*, *furusiri*), and naming ceremonies (*denuli*). These social gatherings are some of the public occasions in which Muslim women of Malian origin participate in Bouaké (other aspects of the public life of Muslim women relate to trading activities or work, Islamic-related events, and daily activities tied to the maintenance of the domestic sphere, including daily food shopping at the *grand marché* or at a neighbourhood market, for instance).

I observed and participated in five *wolotlan*, twenty-one *konyo* and thirteen *denuli* between July 1993 and June 1995. In about half of the cases, my participation included my observation of the period preceding the event as well as the event itself. These events are quite numerous throughout the year, though none takes place during Ramadan because it is forbidden to participate in public events involving dance and music while fasting. As a result, the two months or so between the end of Ramadan and Tabaski are the busiest festival months of the year. I lived in Bouaké during three Ramadan periods (1993, 1994 and 1995) and I was in Bouaké during two post-Ramadan periods (1993 and 1995). I gathered most of my information about these public events in 1995 because in 1993 I was less aware of the social significance of such female gatherings. The information gathered in the contexts of these events is at the basis of my understanding of the female life course in Bouaké, of women's life trajectories, and of marriage practices discussed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. My participation in these events also allowed me to understand some of the social networks and social dynamics amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké (see Chapter 3).

At the time of social gatherings to celebrate marriages and birth (there are also gatherings for funerals, but their social organisation is different from marriage and naming ceremonies), only women participate

in such elements of the celebrations as dancing, music, singing by *jeliw*, exchange of gifts, and eating and drinking (no alcohol is ever drunk at such events). Men participate in these events, but separately, and they never partake in the dancing and music playing (except for drum players, who are always men). Amongst the Songhay, musicians are all women calabash players, except for cases where a male *dunu* player is hired.²² Only women *jeliw* perform at these female celebrations. Men partake in the negotiations tied to marriages, in the giving of a name to children, and in the aspects of such events that require the presence of the imam or a formal prayer at the mosque.

In the case of naming ceremonies, men gather for the morning activities (killing of a sheep, prayers, the naming of the child by an imam, distribution of gifts and praising by male *jeliw*, and distribution of mutton, kola nuts, and candies by male *jeliw* to the men present), while the women partake in the afternoon events (dancing with music and female *jeli* songs, praising by the female *jeliw*, distribution of association money, and gifts through the *jeliw*), which last until *fitri* prayer.²³ Women do all the cooking for the midday and evening meals (these meals are cooked in cases where the hosting family can afford to feed the guests). Men remain in the house or the courtyard throughout the day and eat separately from the women, as they do on an everyday basis. In the case of marriages, only men partake in the *furusiri* (the distribution of the bride price, and other gifts between the men of the two families) which takes place on Thursday afternoon, if the marriage celebration lasts for many days.²⁴ The *furusiri* takes place right after the *lansera* prayer at 4:00 pm.

²² *Dunu* is a small armpit drum.

²³ The prayer which takes place at 6:35pm.

²⁴ In the past, or in the idealised past, marriage ceremonies are described by informants as lasting one to two weeks. The variability in marriage practices is often tied to ethnocultural differences. The one to two week-long marriage ceremonies basically involve the following steps: seclusion of the bride-to-be with a female elder who is responsible for the safety of the seclusion and for preparing the food of the bride-to-be (food is provided by the family of the groom-to-be); seclusion of the groom-to-be in the marriage house with visiting male peers; hosting of meals and dancing by each of the two families involved; ceremonial plaiting of the bride's hair accompanied by female dances; *furusiri*; ceremonial washing of the bride's hair and feet with female dances and gift exchange; female elders escorting the bride to the marriage house, including female dances; seclusion of the bride and groom together; end of the seclusion of the newly married couple, marked by female dances; counting of the marriage gifts by the women of both families, and redistribution of a fixed portion of the gifts to different members of each families. In the event of female dances, there was also a meal offered to the guests by the hosts of the dancing. The length of time attributed to each step of the marriage and more specific practices (for instance, the type of

Female gatherings are usually the occasions for the creation of new social alliances (as well as the breaking of some), the maintenance of existing social and family networks, and, at times, the resolution of conflicts between members of the collectivity. Besides the creation of social alliances between families and within families, these gatherings also involve the participation of women's voluntary associations (*ton*) and of *jeliw*.

Finally, the third privileged social space of investigation was voluntary associations as such. I will discuss these associations at some length here since the analysis presented in Chapter 6 is based on my work in voluntary associations, namely Islamic youth associations. My work in this associative context was motivated by three elements: the necessity to create spaces of investigation in the context of urban research, the preponderance of associations in the lives of Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké, and the specificity of Islamic youth associations.

Voluntary associations were a logical site of investigation to the extent that part of the thesis is concerned with processes of identification at a collective level: How do specific social groups reproduce social identities? However, in the first place, it is obvious that a single association or type of association does not necessarily mirror the processes that may be encountered at large in the society. Processes of identification within voluntary associations relate, first, to groups of individuals who are inclined to join such associations. Second, the examination of processes in a socially situated space provides a partial picture which needs to be situated within the larger framework of the politics of identities. Associations simply are a social space in which referents of collective identities are likely to be produced and to be adopted. Nonetheless, in Bouaké, associative life makes up one of the privileged ways of creating communities and a sense of belonging. They also are social spaces that emphasise the local dimensions of social and historical phenomena.

music and songs or the gifts exchanged) differ across ethnocultural groups. Now the events that used to take place throughout one to two weeks often all take place in the space of a single day. Informants explain the changes in the length and amplitude of marriage ceremonies as the result of economic decline. Since there is less money, it is no longer possible to hold two-week long marriage ceremonies.

In Bouaké, voluntary associations are an omnipresent aspect of social life. In a transcultural perspective, associative practices in Bouaké can be described as part of everyday life in a way that one would never encounter in the Western world. I would not say that all Muslims of Malian origin participate in some voluntary association or other; nonetheless, I would be surprised if a large majority of these individuals have not, during some period or other of their lives, participated in associations in some capacity. However, despite the existence of some types of culturally specific association, the intensity of associative practices can be generalised to the population at large, not just to individuals of Malian origin (see Vidal 1991, for a discussion of funeral associations amongst the Baoulés, for instance). Forms of associations that are specific to Muslims of Malian origin include Islamic associations, certain associations tied to places and groups of origin in Mali, and associations emerging from the *nyamankala* system of stratification. In fact, there is a historical dimension to the importance of associative life in the Mande world, which is tied to age grades, as well as to the *nyamankala* system of classification (Dalby 1971; Dieterlen 1955, 1959; Dieterlen and Cissé 1972; Hopkins 1971; Labouret 1934; Monteil 1924; Pâques 1954; Zahan 1960; Gardi 1989; Tautain 1885; Conrad and Frank 1995; Bird *et al* 1995; Tamari 1995; Bellman 1984; Launay 1972; Weil 1972). In this sense, contemporary voluntary associations in Bouaké, as far as Muslims of Malian origin are concerned, have a historical link with the notion of *ton*. *Ton* is a Manding term that can be loosely defined as "association" and which refers historically to initiation associations and secret societies (Bellman 1984), or nonvoluntary associations. However, in the context of urbanisation and with the growth of voluntary associations, the meaning of the term *ton* has been extended to other forms of association, mainly to associations that carry the economic connotation of a rotating credit association (Vuarin, 1994). In the contemporary context of Bouaké, *ton* is used to refer to most associations, whether tontine-like, Islamic, for students, or for merchants.

There exist a large number both of associations and of types of associations. Regarding the participation of Muslims of Malian origin in associations, one will find economic or professional associations (*Association des marchands de Bouaké* [Bouaké's traders' association],

Association des griots de Bouaké [Bouaké's jeli association]) political associations (*Mali mussow ton* [association of women from Mali], *Amical des maliens* [association of Malians, tied to the Malian consulate in Bouaké], *Association des ressortissants du Mali* [associations of nationals from Mali]), place-of-origin associations (*Jennekaw ton* [association of natives of Jenne], *Maraka ton* [association of Marakas], *Association des femmes de la région de Kaye* [association of women native of the Kaye region in Mali], *Braoulikaw ton* [association of natives of Braouli in Mali], *Timbuktukaw ton* [association of natives of Timbuktu]), religious (mosque associations, *Conseil national Islamique* [CNI, National Islamic council], *Conseil islamique supérieur* [CSI, Superior Islamic council], *Conseil supérieur des Imams* [CSI, Superior council of imams], *Ligue islamique des promulgateurs de Côte d'Ivoire* [LIPCI, Islamic league of teachers and preachers in Côte d'Ivoire]), and age-grade associations (neighbourhood based Islamic youth associations, *Association des étudiants de madrasas à Bouaké* [madrasa students' association in Bouaké], *Association des étudiants musulmans de Côte d'Ivoire à Bouaké* [AEMCI, Muslim students' association of Côte d'Ivoire in Bouaké]), and dance associations (Foliba and Didadi). There also are a number of more ephemeral associations that function as tontines. Tontines are funds for mutual economic help or as funds for common economic ventures. Tontines are not specifically associated with Muslims of Malian origin. They exist across West Africa. In most cases, associations are divided along gender lines. Some associations are specifically women's associations, such as specific place-of-origin associations, whereas other associations are often divided into a women's section and a men's section. And, as I mentioned earlier in this chapter, there exists a form of voluntary association that is typically female. These associations are tied to the celebration of events marking the life course. There are male tontines, but they do not play the same social role in ceremonial and cultural manifestations.

Women's voluntary associations are particularly numerous. These associations usually act as social structures of economic and social mutual help, as well as circular systems for the accumulation of social capital through family, friendship, neighbourhood, professional, or political

networks (*mogotigiya*).²⁵ The system of accumulation is based on economic exchange, social networking, ceremonial and cultural manifestations. In Bouaké amongst Muslims of Malian origin in many cases the basis of appeal for these voluntary associations is often ethnocultural elements, such as being from the same region (Didadi includes those from the Sikasso region, *Association des femmes de la région de Kaye*), of the same ethnic group (*Koroborokaw ton*), of the same village or of the same city (*Braoulikaw ton, Jennekaw ton*).²⁶ In these associations, women pay membership dues or *bolomafara*²⁷ which are redistributed to the members on a more or less systematic, rotating basis at the time of engagements, marriages, naming ceremonies, *sarakabo*,²⁸ travel, pilgrimages to Mecca, and family disasters. Depending on the socioeconomic standing of the membership of specific associations, women may contribute 250 francs CFA (in cases where women members do not have a regular source of income outside of petty trade practised from a domestic basis) to 10,000 francs CFA (in cases where the members are successful traders or bureaucrats).

²⁵ The same form of female voluntary associations exist in other parts of West Africa, notably Mali and Senegal (Meillassoux 1963; Meillassoux 1968; Iteanu 1983; Vuarin 1994; N'Dione 1992). These associations are one of the main actors in public ceremonies and celebrations such as engagements, marriages and naming ceremonies. The circular system for the accumulation of capital can be seen when one examines the *cahiers de cérémonie* (ceremony notebooks) in which the association notes the members present at each manifestation, the dues paid by each member, and the total of the money distributed to the host and to other participants. Robert Vuarin has carried out a study of these notebooks in Bamako (Vuarin 1994). I have conducted a survey similar to the one discussed by Vuarin in two female voluntary associations; this will be subject of a forthcoming work.

²⁶ The social and political role of voluntary associations in urban settings has been extensively studied in Africa. In most cases, these associations function on an ethnic basis. Their ethnic basis has been examined within the scheme of two dominant perspectives (Coleman 1955; Mercier 1961; Cohen and Middleton 1970; Little 1965; Meillassoux 1968; Mitchell 1969a). First, in the context of early urbanisation, some authors debated whether the constitution of such associations corresponded with a process of detribalisation in the city or a process of reasserting and recreating original ethnic ties. Other authors understood ethnic voluntary associations as cadre of political and social actions in an urban environment. Barbara C. Lewis (1970) and Emmanuel Ibo Baingui (1982) studied the cases of two postindependence politically influential national voluntary associations: the *Association des transporteurs de Côte d'Ivoire* and the *Association des Originaires de Côte d'Ivoire* respectively.

²⁷ Contributions collected on a monthly or weekly basis or on a sporadic basis, at the time of specific events.

²⁸ Muslim sacrifices made at the time of funerals on the third, seventh and fortieth days after a death.

The high number of associations in Bouaké at this time is most likely due, in part, to the development of multiparty-ism, which has created a context of democratisation and has also involved decentralisation of the government's control over voluntary associations.²⁹ Voluntary associations existed and were legally allowed in Côte d'Ivoire before 1990, but the number of official voluntary associations was limited by the government's selective recognition. For instance, in the case of Malian political associations (that is, associations that claim to politically represent the Malian population in Bouaké), before 1990 only the *Amicale des Maliens* was permitted to officially exist. However, in the aftermath of 1990, an alternative Malian association was created (Association des ressortissants du Mali), and in 1994, during the election campaign, Malian associations multiplied at an astonishing rate (many of them being very ephemeral) due to the competition for political and economic resources. At the time, four additional female associations emerged out of the *Amicale des Maliens*. In addition, in light of the changes in the electoral code in 1994 that took away the vote from non-Ivorians (originating from CEDEAO countries) living in Côte d'Ivoire (see Chapter 3), taking away the political power of the *Amicale des Maliens*, male and female members of the *Amicale des Maliens* created a new association of Ivorians originally from Mali who could vote. These brief comments highlight the fact that the scope of associative life must be read not simply in terms of a propensity to associate formally, but also in light of governmental restrictions and regulations regarding these associations.³⁰

A further justification for my decision to conduct a large part of my work in voluntary associations relates to the fact of doing fieldwork in an urban context. In a large and heterogeneous urban centre, the anthropologist has to devise ways of creating spaces of encounter with individuals of the surrounding society. Besides adopting the role of a daughter in a family unit, integrating myself into already-established

²⁹ Multiparty-ism and democratisation were requested by the late French president François Mitterrand in 1989 in the context of structural adjustment and political liberalism plans imposed on Côte d'Ivoire (Lewis, 1996). Côte d'Ivoire held its first multiparty national election in 1990.

³⁰ Another instance of the input of political restriction on associative life in Côte d'Ivoire is the 1963-1964 period when the Ivorian government, in the aftermath of political unrest, kept a close watch on voluntary associations, especially on any associations that had an explicitly ethnic base, even disbanding them in some cases (Zolberg 1969).

institutional spaces (*madrasas* and voluntary associations) was one way of doing so.³¹

Furthermore, in the contemporary context of Bouaké, voluntary neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations were constructed as a social phenomenon. That is, Islamic youth associations were perceived by inhabitants of Bouaké as a new and fast-growing social phenomenon. The study of these associations fell within the parameters of the processes of identification that I had observed at a more general level: an apparent shift from ethnicity to Islam amongst certain urban Islamic youth (these elements will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4). These associations became privileged sites in which to study and describe processes of identification tied to Islam amongst young men and women (a detailed description of the versioning of Islam taking place in these associations is presented in Chapter 6).

Following a more or less exhaustive survey of voluntary associations in Bouaké, I carried out detailed investigation in three types of voluntary associations: national and political associations (*Mali mussow ton*),³² women's place-of-origin associations (*Jennekaw ton*, *Braoulikaw ton*, *Timbuktukaw ton*)³³ and religious associations (*Association des*

³¹ I could have also chosen to focus my work in *madrasas*, where I already had a strong foothold, but associations were more accessible to me, as more detailed work in *madrasas* would have required the capacity to speak and understand the Arabic language which I did not have. In most associations, however, I could function in French language or in Dioula/Banmanan.

³² *Mali mussow ton* is the association of Malian women tied to the Malian consulate in Bouaké. It is the women's section of the *Amicale des Maliens*. The woman who had been recognised as the female elder of the community died in the early 1990s and, as she was honorary president of the association, the association stopped being active. In 1993, the *Mali mussow ton* was reactivated by two female *jeliw*. This association functions as a political representative of the Malian community in Bouaké, along with other competing associations since 1990. This role was emphasised in the wake of the 1995 presidential election. It also functions as a female tontine-like association.

³³ The *Jennekaw ton*, *Braoulikaw ton*, or *Timbuktukaw ton* function both as cultural associations (highlighting cultural events specific to the place of origin -- for instance the celebration of the the anniversary of the Birthday of the Prophet Mohammed by the *Jennekaw ton*), and as tontine. Most of them emerged from the initial *Sudankaw ton* (association of natives from the Sudanese region of West Africa, refering to French colonial Sudanese region), which was created initially as a women's dance association. In fact, the initial role of these female associations was to be dance assocations. In 1968, at the time of the visit of Modibo Keita (first president of Mali) in Baouké, the *Sudankaw ton* was officially recognised when the PDCI (Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire, ruling political party) asked that members of the *Sudankaw ton* dance for the Malian president. The *Sudankaw ton* was subsequently divided into a number of more localised associations, probably due to the increasing number of migrants from the Sudanese region (Mali, parts of Burkina Faso, and Guinea), and to internal divisions within this collectivity in Bouaké. From

Musulmans d'Air France 1 [AMAR, association of Muslims in Air France 1], *Association des Jeunes Musulmans d'Air France* [AJMAF, association des jeunes musulmans d'Air France 1],³⁴ *Conseil National Islamique*³⁵ and *Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Bouaké* [association of muslim women in Bouaké]).³⁶

In these eight voluntary associations, I carried out the following work:

- 1) Regular participation in the meetings and activities of the associations, especially in the cases of the Mali mussow ton, the Jennekaw ton and AMAR where I was a contributing member. In the case of the women's section of the Malian association and of AMAR, I provided detailed description of meetings and special activities of the associations, including participants, their role, their relationship inside and outside the association, the material settings, the purpose and structure of the meetings and activities, the topics of discussion and the emerging discursive logic, and so forth (see Appendix 2).
- 2) Interviews with leaders of the association in order to identify the purposes and the history of the association, and some of the cultural logic associated with them.
- 3) Interviews with members of each association in order to discuss their motivation for participation, their interpretation of the purpose and the history of the association, and to identify some of the cultural logic associated with them. I was not able to conduct interviews with all the

their initial role as dance and music groups, place-of-origin voluntary associations took on economic roles (as tontines or mutual economic support associations) as well as political roles (as supporters of the different political parties). The political roles of these associations became very obvious during the pre1995 national election period.

³⁴ *Association des Musulmans d'Air France 1* and *Association des Jeunes Musulmans d'Air France* are both Islamic youth associations. These associations emerged in the past fifteen years or so in Côte d'Ivoire and in the past ten years in Baouké. I will discuss the social phenomena of Islamic youth associations in more detail in Chapter 4.

³⁵ The *Conseil National Islamique* (CNI) is one of the two national umbrella Islamic associations in Côte d'Ivoire. The CNI was created in Abidjan in 1993, in the aftermath of the first multiparty elections. I will describe Islamic associations in more detail in Chapter 4.

³⁶ The *Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Bouaké* was created in Bouaké in 1994 as the women's section of the CNI. It replaced *Coordination* which had been criticised as "being too bureaucratic" and not close enough to religious leaders. Most of its leading members belonged to the bureaucratic class (meaning that they are highly educated, speak French often as a mother tongue, and work in offices or as professionals). Still, the leaders of *Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Bouaké* are more or less the same as the leaders of *Coordination*. However, in 1995, the new association made efforts to include women's mosque-based associations into its structure and activities.

members of each association. In fact, most of these "interviews" took place in an informal setting during association activities, since formal interviews as a method of research were useless -- individual members resisted quite strongly this mode of interaction. In many cases, they were wary of my position as a white person; in the 1994, 1995 pre-election context (I will discuss this specific political context in Chapter 3), as both Muslims and "foreigners," they were suspicious of my motivation. Moreover, in the general atmosphere of suspicion due to *maraboutage* and other witchcraft practices, individuals tend to be quite secretive in response to direct inquiries about themselves, as they are afraid that the information may be used to bewitch them. Under these conditions, it became obvious very fast that interviews could only be obtained if I could use my own personal network to insert myself in a patron-client relationship with the person to be interviewed. I refused to do so. As a consequence, I mostly conducted informal discussions in the context of personal visits or participation in association activities.

4) For each association, I made sociograms of each association based on the formal structure of power (president, vice president, and so forth), on the frequency of participation (core members who come to all the activities, members who come occasionally, and individuals who may come for specific events), and on competing factions within the association. These sociograms allowed me to retrace the social networks of the members, their relationship amongst themselves, and their relationship to other social institutions and spaces.

Finally, as accompanying methods to my research, I carried out the following work:

1) Linguistic work:

- a) Learning of Dioula\Banmanan in an informal setting in the participation of everyday life, and formally at the *madrasa*. (My students taught me Dioula/Banmanan in exchange for their English classes.);
- b) Sociolinguistic work on kinship terminology, on age grade terminology, on specific terms such as *sya* and *nyamankala*, and on terms describing emotional states; I also compiled a lexicon Dioula terms of Arabic origin used in everyday language;

c) Language learning with a field assistant through the transcription and translation of taped sermons in Dioula\Banmanan;

2) Surveys

a) Household survey in Air France 1 in October 1993 (I surveyed the households of three streets. As a statistical survey, this was not useful. But it allowed me to get a better idea of the make-up of Air France 1, confirming that the neighbourhood is spatially organised along ethnic lines. The survey really served as a stepping-stone for discussion with my assistant and other inhabitants of the neighbourhood. The results offered information about the ethnic spatial distribution of the neighbourhood. Through this process, I also learned about certain ethnic stereotypes, such as *brousseman*, which is a pejorative term used to describe natives of Côte d'Ivoire as "noncivilised" individuals who "have a village in Côte d'Ivoire," or *tabushi* (meaning "of mixed blood"), which is invoked to designate individuals of Malian origin born in Côte d'Ivoire, implying that they are less knowledgeable of cultural practices originating from Mali than their elders born in Mali.);

b) Survey of *madrasas* in Bouaké, interview with the directors of the four largest *madrasa* in the city, and observation of daily activities in these *madrasas* ;

c) Survey of Islamic associations in Bouaké;

d) Survey of Islamic youth associations in Bouaké;

e) Survey of place-of-origin associations in Bouaké;

f) Survey of dance associations in Air France 1;

g) City-wide *vox populi* survey on the definition of the term "Dioula." With the help of four individuals, I gathered 340 answers. The questionnaire included questions about family name, age, sex, place of birth of informant, place of birth of parents, neighbourhood of residence, profession, ethnic group of informant and his or her parents, and definition of the term "Dioula," including differences amongst the different category of Dioula if appropriate. With this, I generated definitions of the term Dioula from the perspective of Dioula and non-Dioula (see, Chapter 3);

h) Survey of the written press (Fraternité Matin, La Voix, Nouvel Horizon) from 1993 to 1995 on articles mentioning Islam, foreigners,

migration to and from Côte d'Ivoire, Dioulas, Malians, the 1995 elections, and the Alassane Dramane Ouattara affair in 1994. (I hired an assistant to summarise articles and photocopy the most relevant ones. After having surveyed the summaries, I chose the articles that were the most salient examples of the main discursive tendencies. Of course, these discursive tendencies are representative of a certain portion of the Ivorian population only, namely bureaucrats, government officials, and literate individuals.);

- 3) Recorded and transcribed life histories of four women, one female *jeli*, two male *jeli*, and three men;
- 4) Oral history of Air France and of the Malian collectivity of Bouaké;
- 5) Taping of Islamic "texts": ten sermons, two end-of-the-year celebrations in *madrasa*, six Islamic debates, three group discussions organised with the members of AMAR;
- 6) Taping of *jeli* discourse at engagements, marriages and naming ceremonies.

2.4 Concluding remarks

The intimate writing-style used in this chapter, in part, reflects the epistemological standpoint I have adopted in the field and in my thesis. Since the critique of the nature and politics of representation in anthropology in the nineteen-eighties has "thrown" the anthropologist back into the world -- the anthropologist can no longer speak from the objective point of Archimedes -- he or she needs to be situated in terms of the field relations and their implications beyond the field (Marcus 1986; Abu-Lughod 1991). I adopted first and foremost the role of a daughter then an English teacher, and eventually the persona of the researcher. Rather than strictly lending authority to the knowledge I have acquired in the field, the acknowledgement of my positionality locates knowledge within the social spaces where it was gained (Riesman 1977, 1992). As such, knowledge extends beyond the confines of the intersubjective (between the anthropologist and the local people) experience of fieldwork; this knowledge talks and shares in the experience of Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké.

While I remained conscious of my position in the field, I used methods of investigation and analysis which allow me to move beyond the immediacy of this intersubjective experience. I went back and forth between subjective experience (mine and the people I worked with) collective experience -- that is, processes of identification which take place in a social setting encompassing more than one individual such as the family, associations, schools, and so forth -- and elements of structural determinism (such as institutional changes and political events). In a phenomenological perspective, I focus on the daily experience of processes of identification. I use the concepts of lifeworld and worldview to capture the social spaces and practices in which these three dimensions of social life meet. As a general rule, phenomenology rejects the distinction between the subjective interpretation of the world and objective conditions of social life, considering that the social world is made up, at the same time, of these different levels of social life.

As a tool for representing these different levels of investigation (subjective experience, collective processes of identification and structural constraints), I privilege the narration of individual life trajectories and everyday life. Narrations of people's life trajectories are present throughout the thesis (Chapters 4, 5 and 6). Appealing to Lila Abu-Lughod's notion of "ethnographies of the particular", I rely on a logic of particularity rather than one of generalisation; however, this is not a position which privilege micro-analysis over macro-analysis. On the contrary, in the words of Abu-Lughod (Abu-Lughod 1991: 150), "the effects of extralocal and long-term processes are only manifested locally and specifically, produced in the actions of individuals living their particular lives, inscribed in their bodies and their words." The argument here is for a form of writing that might convey this epistemological standpoint better. Following the same epistemological logic, I also used the description of an extended case study in Chapter 6 to examine the specificity of collective processes of identification. However, both types of particular description need to be read against the background of recent historical, institutional, and political changes.

The choice of specific spaces of investigation (domestic family unit and compound life, female social events marking life-transition stages, and voluntary associations) and the methods used to investigate them

allowed me to bridge collective and individual dimensions of processes of identification. Surveys, recordings of sermons, systematised observation during meetings and events, observation of everyday life, and semidirected interviews allowed me to highlight elements of their collective unfolding; while the recording of life histories, open-ended interviews and participation in people's lives focused on the manifestation of general social processes in the life of single individuals.

Framed within such an epistemological and methodological perspective, the concepts of life course analysis and processes of identification are theoretical tools which best account for the triangular relation I examine between modalities of identification at the level of particular people, modalities of identification in collective social settings, and structural contingencies. While the notion of processes of identification integrates the constant movement between the actor-centred dimension of identification and the collective constructions of social identities, recognising the sociohistorical contexts in which the dynamics of identification unfold, life course analysis provides a framework to elucidate the relationship between social change and individual life trajectories.

In the next chapter, I will examine processes of identification tied to ethnicity amongst Muslims of Malian origin. Such modalities of identification are read against the background of recent historical context of multiparty-ism and post-Houphouët-Boigny politics. In the remaining chapters, I will turn to questions of Islam, youth, and social change.

CHAPTER 3:

BOUAKÉ GEOSOCIAL MAKE UP, SOCIOCULTURAL CITYSCAPE, AND FIELDS OF IDENTIFICATION

Bouaké does not emerge from the bush as Yamoussoukro does with its basilica, standing out of the countryside like a vision from another world. Nor is it like Abidjan, where one is assaulted by noise, people, and the fast pace of life. Coming into Bouaké by car or bus or train from the south, the city at first looks very much like another one of the villages dotted along the main highway. But soon, at the pont bascule, or weighing station, there is a police checkpoint ; officially the police are looking for arms and drugs, but in fact, they are seeking bribes. From there on, the density of the population and activity increases gradually. Neighbourhoods such as Air France 3 emerge at a distance from the bush to the right and to the left of the national highway.

The first urban sight one really encounters in Bouaké is Commerce, the Western-style commercial neighbourhood. The Rue du Commerce, the central artery, has all the necessary features to reassure the Western traveller who intends to remain for an extended stay. At the end of the Rue du Commerce stand the Tour de la télé-communication and the cathedral. They perch at the top of a hill, marking the end of the Western quarters. Beyond are the central market and the numerous African neighbourhoods. If one continues north, one passes through a busy commercial neighbourhood next to the central market,¹ then by the road leading to the Centre Régional Hospitalier (CHR) and the airport.² After approximately fifteen minutes of driving, the urban landscape fades back into the bush as the main road heads towards the northern and western regions of the country. One can drive through Bouaké without noticing much of the cityscape. But, if one decides to stop in Bouaké, the city quickly becomes much more than what one sees on the Rue du Commerce.

¹ In most cities of Côte d'Ivoire, the central markets have been rebuilt as highly organised concrete structures. In Bouaké, the market has never been rebuilt. It is made up of open-air sections, sections built in concrete, and sections in wood, or corrugated iron. Parts of the market regularly burn, the destroyed segments are rebuilt in their initial location without any thought of a total reconstruction of the market, despite local discontent with its aged and dangerous structure.

² Since 1996, the CHR has become a CHU (Centre Hospitalier Universitaire), that is a teaching hospital.

3.1 Introduction

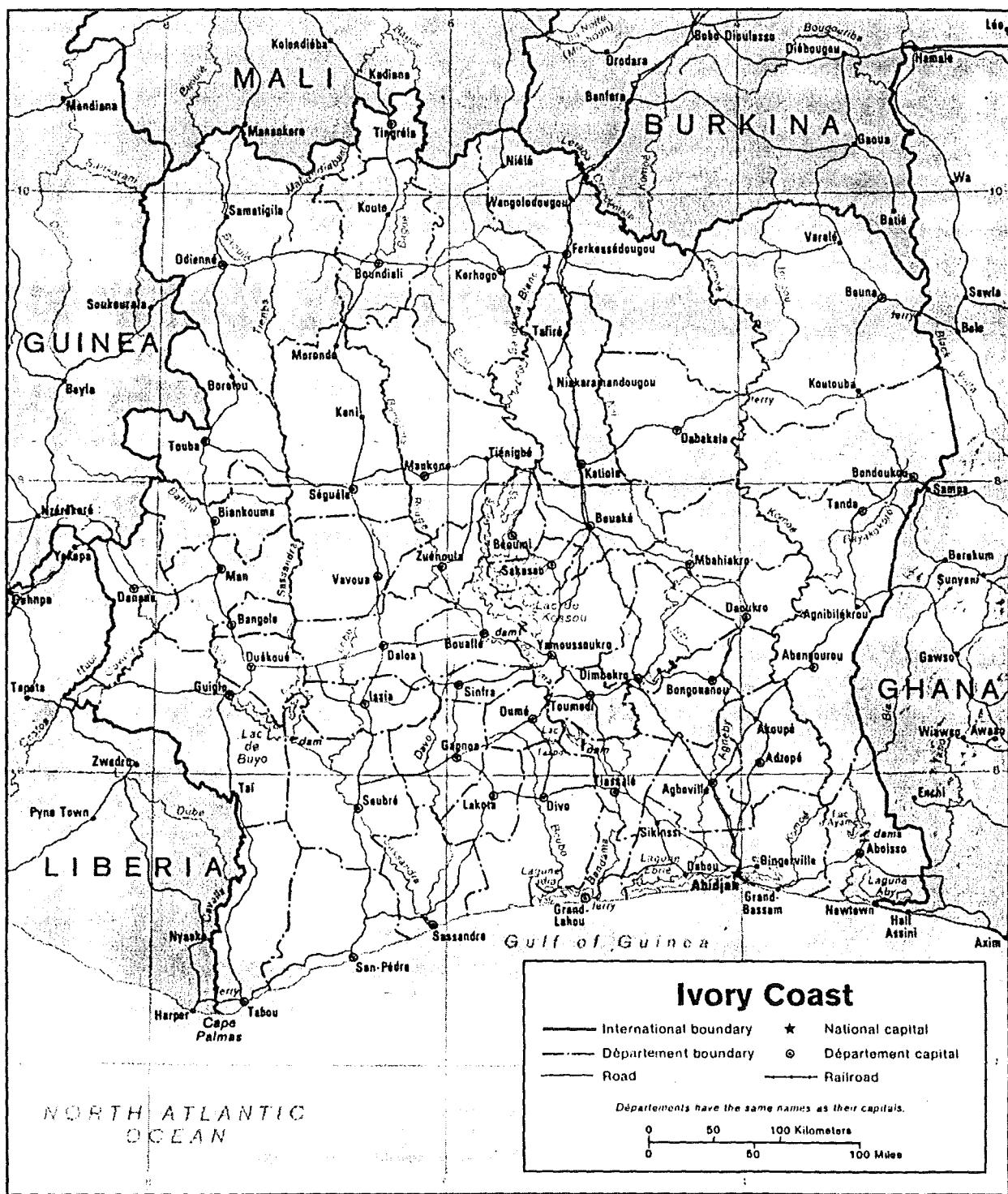
I remember the first time that I drove into Bouaké in 1992 with my friend, the eldest son of my host family, and one of his sisters. My heart was racing, and I kept thinking: "This is where I've set out to spend the next two years of my life. What will it be like? What if I do not like it?" I had spent a week in Abidjan sorting out some administrative matters and getting acquainted with the city, Côte d'Ivoire, the researchers at ORSTOM-Petit Bassam, and members of my host family living in Abidjan. I was very excited, taking in as much as I could of the images racing past the car window, ignoring my friend's sarcastic comments about the city. His bored monologue and the regular rhythm of his sister's breathing, as she slept in the backseat of the car, contrasted markedly with my own feeling of edginess -- the thought of standing on the threshold of a new experience, a new phase in my life.

My first impressions of the city are ones of contrast: between Western-style modernity and African local traditions,³ between the bureaucratic and trading or artisan lifestyles, and between Muslims and "pagans" and/or Christians. Images were forming in my head: women in *boubous* (long local gowns worn by men and women) and *complets trois pagnes* (three piece outfits of local cloth), business men in Western-style suits, prominent local merchants wearing long embroidered *boubous*, of tiny Renault 4's, large Mercedes, 4X4, beat-up taxis, and *bakas*;⁴ the smells of baguettes and French pastries mixing with those of fried fish, *aloko* (fried plantains), gas, and dust and heat.

³ Modernity and tradition as both lifeworlds and worldviews are strongly present in social life in Bouaké. These two emic idioms, referring to complexes of meanings and practices, are frequently used to make sense of the world by inhabitants of Côte d'Ivoire, and they are often expressed in emic distinctions between Western and African, "civilised" and "uncivilised" (*civilisé \broussard*, in French language), and Western-style business and joint-family trading activities. While they must be accorded consideration as emic points of view, and while Islam in many cases mediates these largely opposed worldviews, I have decided to exclude them as explanatory concepts because, first, they carry a heavily evaluative or ethnocentric burden, and second, as I will show in Chapters 5 and 6, they are neither all-inclusive nor all-exclusive. Islam is a central player in the articulation of these two worldviews. Moreover, as social idioms, their expression often hides other dimensions of social relations that are more instructive for the nature of the analysis elaborated here, such as elder/junior relations of power, the social role of women, life course, and modalities of social exclusion and inclusion.

⁴ Mini-vans which are used for public transport, costing half the price of a taxi ride (75F CFA, after the 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc).

MAP 2: CÔTE d'IVOIRE



My first impressions of Bouaké were exaggerated images, overemphasising the apparent lifestyle dichotomies and crystallising them into stereotypical images of Western modernity and African traditions. Still, they were in part true to the reality of social life in the city, and later I came to understand these contrasts in the context of the politics and history of social relations in Bouaké and Côte d'Ivoire.

In this chapter, I address the question of the historical significance of specific social identities. I focus mainly on issues tied to ethnicity, while I will examine the question of religious identities in Chapter 4. Within a constructivist perspective, I take as a starting point the assumption that specific ethnic labels, the boundaries of ethnic categories, and the quality of interethnic relations are constructed within parameters imposed by historical, ideological and political determinants. This implies that, while ethnic identities are constructed, they are not random. They acquire meaning through historical and political events, which, in turn, become meaningful through the actions of social actors.

Following this perspective, I present a bird's-eye view of the city of Bouaké from the standpoint of its demographic, geographic, social and ethnic composition. I trace back the historical constitution of the city, its specificity in relation to Côte d'Ivoire, and its place in the history of settlement and migration in the region. Against this descriptive background, I discuss the contemporary stakes of the politics of cultural and religious differences in Côte d'Ivoire. Conditions of multiparty-ism combined with the post-Houphouët-Boigny political context brought about a relation of synonymy between the Dioula label, the Muslim label, and the foreigner label.

It is within this historical and political trajectory that Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké inscribe themselves and are ascribed to a number of fields of identification. Fields of identification are social spaces of identification which articulate historical trajectories and dynamics of differentiation between self and others with daily practice. They carry the historical and political conditions of the construction of ethnic-related identities that are defined through the dynamic relation between processes of self-definition and ascription by others. These are experienced and reproduced through social and economic networks, and institutional

structures (schools, associations), which, in turn, inscribe individuals within specific lifeworlds and worldviews.

3.2 Bouaké, diversity as experienced In daily life

Bouaké is a city of approximately 400,000 inhabitants at the margins of the savanna at the heart of Baoulé land.⁵ What is now Bouaké was the site of a Baoulé village, Gbékékro, until the creation of a military post by Captain Benoît in 1898. It was at that time that itinerant trading groups such as the Dioulas of Maraba-Diassa settled near the site of the military post, along with the Dafings, the Djiminis and the Lagbanos (Recensement démographique de Bouaké 1958; Crédit et développement de la ville de Bouaké 1953-54). It was only with the implantation of the French colonial military forces and the ensuing pacification of the Baoulé population at the turn of the century, from 1900 to 1917 (Forlacroix 1972; Zolberg 1964), that the city of Bouaké grew as an urban centre (de Salverte Marmier, 1962-64).

Through this historical trajectory, as are most urban centres, Bouaké became highly marked by diversity and the coexistence of multiple lifestyles, worldviews, and behavioural norms. In Bouaké, the diversity exists at numerous levels. This diversity is as visible at the level of social relations as at the level of individual existential choices. The diversity is experienced within the webs of social relations, within the restricted life of social groups, within the same family, and even within a single individual. As I indicated in Chapter 2, there are a number of parallel systems of education, a range of religious institutions, a wide spectrum of forms of household, and a multiplicity of economic activities.

In Côte d'Ivoire, there is a national government-run French-language education system including schools from primary to university level. There are private secular schools and private religious schools run by Ivorian or foreign groups. The French expatriates have a private

⁵ Benoît Loovoet (1989), based on the electoral census of 1985, counted 333,309 inhabitants in the city of Bouaké. According to the 1988 census, Bouaké had 329,850 inhabitants (Zanou 1991). Taking into account problems relating to the national census, the mobility of migrant population and the last decennial electoral census in 1985, it is reasonable to assert that the city may have up to 400,000 inhabitants.

schooling system (primary schools and the *lycée français*), in principle not closed to the public but most of the students are children of expatriates (French, Lebanese, English, Canadian and American). American Baptists have a school that serves the children of missionaries across West Africa. Finally, Muslims have a separate schooling system made up of *mory kalan* schools (mnemonic-style Qur'anic schools) and *madrasas* (Franco-Arabic schools).

The city's religious diversity encompasses the different moments in West African history: witchcraft, Islam, Catholicism, and more recent religious movements such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Baptist fundamentalists, Pentecostal churches, and Bahaïs. Its material presence ranges from Baoulé sacrifices laid at street intersections to imposing mosques and the cathedral.

In Bouaké, one can find a very varied range of compounds and households. There are young men who have temporarily migrated for work and who rent a room in a multi-household compound or stay with a member of their family in Bouaké. Another group of temporary migrants to the city are students (high school and university students) who live with a *tuteur*⁶ or in university residences.⁷ There also are families who rent one or more rooms in multi-household compounds without electricity or running water. They may get their water from a well in their compound or in an adjacent one. Some multi-household compounds have running water and/or electricity. There are single-family or extended-family compounds with or without running water and/or electricity. Some such households experience a very heavy flow of temporary inhabitants due to their role as the landing point for new migrants to the city. Others live in up-market habitations, Western-style villas or apartment complexes. At the very bottom of the scale, one encounters individuals and families who are

⁶ The French term *tuteur* refers to the practice of fostering one's children for reasons of education. The fostering takes place between rural and urban centres in Côte d'Ivoire, between urban centres in Côte d'Ivoire, and between Côte d'Ivoire and other West African countries. Considering the changing status of foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire since the 1990s and the increase of the cost of education for foreigners, foreigners foster their children to their country of origin for education in Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Guinea. Fostering children for education reasons is not the only form of child fostering encountered in Bouaké. From poorer neighbouring countries, children are fostered as domestic labour. Children also migrate to Côte d'Ivoire as fostered children given to a childless relative, or to young brides as an accompanying young sister.

⁷ The Bouaké campus of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire was opened in 1993

squatting in existing compounds or on vacant lots, but the practice of squatting is not as frequent as it is in Abidjan. At the edge of the city, in new neighbourhoods, there are more cases of illegal occupation of the land.

Inhabitants of Bouaké also practise a wide range of economic activities. They may be employed as professionals (doctors, lawyers, teachers, secretaries, and so forth), in the government bureaucracy (government-run services and industries, governmental offices), or in local industries (cotton, textile, tobacco, oil, and rice).⁸ A number of inhabitants of Bouaké work in the artisanal sector as weavers, circumcisors and healers, marabouts, *jeliw*, blacksmiths, and so forth. Other inhabitants have Western-style businesses (music stores, photography studios, hairdressing salons, supermarkets, bookstores, hardware stores, neighbourhood stores). Many have stalls in one of the city markets; others sell on an itinerant basis around the city, and yet others sell from their compound. There also are joint-family trading businesses dealing in local produce (kola nuts, rice, and sugar). Trading activities are omnipresent in Bouaké. The large central market includes a large number of these activities. For most economic activities that stand outside of Western-style salaried employment (professions, bureaucracy, factory owners and employees), there are both activities established in fixed locations and activities practised on an itinerant basis. For instance, hairdressers may work in or own a Western-style hair and beauty salon; they may have a stall at the central market or at a neighbourhood market; they may practise their trade on an itinerant basis with clients acquired by word of mouth. The sale of cigarettes is another example of such a gradient. At the top end, there is the wholesale dealer who buys directly from the factories in town and who has a warehouse located in a concrete building at the edge of or in the central market from which the merchandise is distributed to neighbourhood stores, to sellers travelling by bicycles around the city or in villages nearby, to sellers who own *buvettes* or coffee stands, and to sellers who set up metal boxes by the road with their merchandise and sell

⁸ In the terminology of the Ivorian government, these three types of employment are termed as "secteur moderne." According to the authors of the *Plan Quinquennal de Développement Économique, Social et Culturel 1981-1985*, the urban economically active population employed in this sector of the national economy would have been, in 1980, one person out of 5 and, in 1990, one person out of 6 (Lootvoet 1989).

single cigarettes. Owning a wholesale business at the central market implies a different economic status than owning a stall or just having a spot at the edge of the market, and in order to build a warehouse in the market, traders have to obtain a license from the city of Bouaké. Owners of warehouses usually sell cigarettes and candies, cloth, children clothing, and kitchen ware. In many cases, owners of wholesale businesses belong to long-distance trading families settled in Bouaké or in Mali. Owners of stalls usually have a permanent, assigned wooden structure on which they set their merchandise. They usually bring their merchandise back home at the end of the day. Sellers with fixed locations usually placed their merchandise at the margins of the markets somewhat outside of the enclosed limits of the market. In most cases, they own a small wooden table on which they set up their merchandise. Others sit on the ground and offer their merchandise in metal containers. There is a daily fee of 100F CFA to sell in the markets around Bouaké; employees of the city go around daily to collect the fee.

The diversity of lifeworlds, lifestyles and worldviews is regulated by the rhythms of everyday life, repeating themselves in daily, weekly and yearly cycles. Some of these rhythms affect the entire population of the city, whereas others are embedded in the lifestyle of only a certain portion of the population. Standing by a main road, one will see more or less the same procession of individuals day in and day out from morning to night: workers going to work at sunrise; children and bureaucrats a little later in the morning; women going to the market in midmorning for the daily food; children and adults going back home for lunch and the afternoon rest; children, workers and women going out again to go to school, work, or the market, adults and children going home after school and work, evening errands and visits. On Friday afternoons, Muslims are seen going to mosque *en masse*, and Sundays are marked by church-going and frequent Christian street parades. Activities tied to Muslim holidays (Ramadan, *Donda*,⁹ the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca, and Tabaski) and Christian holidays (Christmas and Easter) punctuate the yearly rhythm of the city. Agricultural cycles make an impact too. Commerce adjusts to these cycles as well -- for instance, during the month of Ramadan,

⁹ *Donda* is the holiday celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed.

compound-based female petty traders make *nyamakuji* (ginger juice) and *daji* (a drink made from the flowers of *Hibiscus sabdariffa*) to sell at the entrance of mosques when the fast is broken every evening. When it is mango season (May, June, and July), they sell mangoes. After the rainy season, they roast and sell sugar-coated groundnuts.

3.3 The historical construction of an ethnic cityscape

Until French colonisation and pacification of local populations in the forest zone, the major urban centres of Côte d'Ivoire were situated in the northern region of the country: Korhogo, Kong, Odienné, and so forth. The *pax colonia* opened new trading routes towards the southern end of the country and changed the location of commercial centres from north to south (Launay 1982; Lewis 1971). Traders from the northern Ivorian cities and from other regions in Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso, who previously had obtained their trading products (namely kola nuts) in towns bordering the forest, were able to move into the forest zone along with newly established military posts. Moreover, the migration of northern populations towards the south was later encouraged by the expansion of coastal production centres as well as by the settlement of European planters and businessmen in the forest area. The effects of the shift in the location of urban centres from North to South is seen in urbanisation levels throughout the country. Between 1955 and 1988, the level of national urbanisation grew from 11 percent to 39 percent (Zanou 1991), but in 1988, to the north of the Biankouma-Sakassou-Bondoukou demarcation between the forest and the savanna, which geopolitically demarcates south from north in Côte d'Ivoire, urbanisation barely reached 11 percent (Zanou 1991), implying that the northern cities had lost their central role as poles of urbanisation in the country.

From the status of a marginal military post and, later, a small regional town, Bouaké became, in the twentieth century, the second largest city in Côte d'Ivoire after Abidjan. By 1948, there were 24,000 inhabitants in Bouaké, following Abidjan (the administrative and economic capital of the colony), with 49,000 inhabitants (Lewis 1971). Nowadays, Bouaké is still the second largest city of Côte d'Ivoire after Abidjan, which

had 1,929,079 inhabitants according to the 1988 census (Zanou 1991). According to the 1988 census, only five cities in Côte d'Ivoire were inhabited by more than 100,000 inhabitants: Abidjan, Bouaké, Daloa, Korhogo and Yamoussoukro (Zanou 1991). The department of Bouaké is 75 percent urbanised (Zanou, 1991).¹⁰

In the 1950s, Côte d'Ivoire witnessed an urbanisation boom with the development of the country's infrastructure. This process had already been accelerated in Bouaké by the construction of the railway between Abidjan and Ouagadougou in 1913. At the time, a number of factories were opened in the city. They specialised in the processing of tobacco, cotton, oil, and rice. One of the main cloth-producing factories, Gonfreville, was also created in the early decades of the century. Bouaké became the hub for the commercial production of the region, as its infrastructure was much more developed than in the case of Man, Daloa, or Korhogo. Bouaké's main market also became one of the largest in West Africa due to the influx of trading populations and goods from the North.

The demographic effect of these economic and social changes (the pacification of the forest zone, the construction of the railway from Abidjan to Ouagadougou, and the implantation of an industrial structure) was the penetration of new migrant populations into the interior of the country. These migrants came from the existing northern trading towns of Côte d'Ivoire as well as from other regions in Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso. In contrast to cities like Korhogo, in the north, where individuals and families from Sudanese regions had migrated in the seventeen century, Malians in Bouaké belong to a migration wave dating from the turn of the twentieth century.

Foreigners have made up a significant portion of Ivorian society since early on in the days of French colonisation. In 1958, they already made up twenty-five percent of the Ivorian population (Zolberg 1964). Approximately twenty-one to twenty-two percent of the population of Côte d'Ivoire was of "foreign origin" in 1975 (Zachariah and Condé 1980; Fargues 1982)¹¹. And twenty-six percent of these foreigners were born in

¹⁰ Bouaké is the name of an administrative department and a city. The city of Bouaké is the economic and administrative centre of the region.

¹¹ It is important to note that these numbers are somewhat difficult to evaluate to the extent that, to start with, the determination of who constitutes a "foreigner" is difficult to determine (see, Fargues, 1982). For instance, is it someone born in a foreign country or someone

the Côte d'Ivoire (Zachariah and Condé 1980). According to the 1988 census, in a population of 10,815,964 inhabitants, twenty-eight percent (or 3,039,035 individuals) of the national population were of foreign origin (Recensement général de la population et de l'habitat 1988). Of these 3,039,035 foreigners, forty-three percent were born in Côte d'Ivoire (Bredeloup 1996). In present-day Côte d'Ivoire, most of the migrants of international origin are found in the departments of Abidjan, Bouaké, and Abengourou (Zachariah and Condé 1980).

Moreover, the economic functions foreign migrants assumed in Ivorian society were very much dictated by the stereotypes regarding professional specialisation and degrees of "Westernisation" that French colonisers developed while they administered Côte d'Ivoire. *Commis*, schoolteachers, shopkeepers were drawn from Senegal and Dahomey (now Benin) due to the lack of educated Ivorians; Fanti fishermen from Ghana came to fish along the coast; Yorubas, Dioulas, Marakas, and Yarse traders settled to trade. And, Burkinabès made up a steady stream of agricultural workers (Zolberg 1964).

In fact, international migration has historically played a central role in the economic growth of Côte d'Ivoire (Fargues 1982). Dating from the European Middle Ages, traders from the Sahelian regions travelled to Côte d'Ivoire to sell salt and to buy kola nuts. Since the turn of the century, there has existed a long history of labour recruitment, in the forms of colonial forced labour and the *Service Interprofessionnel pour l'Acheminement de la Main-d'œuvre* (SIAMO), which coordinated the movement of isolated individuals, from as far north as Burkina Faso's Mossi regions, towards the centres of production, mainly for the construction of the railway and the opening of large colonial plantations (Blion 1995; Cordell *et. al.* 1996). Since the closing of SIAMO in the 1970s, immigration in Côte d'Ivoire has not been regulated (Fargues 1982). Moreover, the progressive restriction of foreign migration into Ghana and Gabon from the late 1960s onwards has positioned Côte d'Ivoire as the principal country of immigration for temporary and permanent foreign workers from the Sahelian region, mostly Burkinabè (Blion 1995).

who lives in Côte d'Ivoire, but does not have Ivorian citizenship? The discussed literature implies that a "foreigner" is an individual who does not hold Ivorian citizenship. However, since the consulted demographic literature is made up of commentaries on the actual census, it is difficult to determine what was intended by "foreigners" by the official census.

About fifty percent of foreign migrants live in urban centres, as compared to twenty-seven percent of Ivorians. Most Ivorian cities contain about thirty to thirty-three percent of foreigners. About one quarter of the international migrants in Côte d'Ivoire are of Malian origin (Zachariah and Condé 1980; Fargues 1982). Burkinabè make up the most numerous group of international migrants. However, compared to individuals from Burkina Faso, Malians tend to constitute a more permanent group of migrants, along with Guineans (Zachariah and Condé 1980; Fargues 1982). Moreover, Burkinabè migration to Côte d'Ivoire tends to be directed towards rural milieu. In the 1970s, ninety percent of Burkinabè migrants settled in rural areas as agricultural workers (Blion 1995). The migratory direction of Burkinabès has not changed much since.

Abidjan is the main urban centre that attracts international migrants but, in terms of migrants of Malian origin, Bouaké is more important. In 1981, Malians made up approximately nineteen percent of the population in Abidjan and thirty-six percent of the population in Bouaké (Zachariah and Condé 1980).¹² In the 1988 census, the proportion of the Malian population in Bouaké had not changed much (Zanou, 1991). According to common stereotypes produced by individuals of Malian origin, Bouaké is the "Malian city" in Côte d'Ivoire or, as it is referred to locally, *Petit Mali*. As I mentioned earlier, the concentration of Malian migrants is in large part due to the location of Bouaké along the traditional trading route from northern Africa to the coast of West Africa (see, Etude régionale de Bouaké, 1966; Dureau, 1985; Fargues, 1981-1982).

As itinerant traders, numerous Malians, as well as some Guineans and Burkinabè, have followed the precolonial trading routes. In many cases, it is as kola, leather, cloth, rice, sugar and salt merchants that these migrants settled in Bouaké. In a study of the financing of artisanal and trading activities in four major cities of the interior of the country conducted in 1984-85, Benoît Hootvoët found that Malians remained highly

¹² These statistics refer to the number of individuals residing in Abidjan and Bouaké born in Mali. They do not take into account the descendants of Malian migrants who acquired Ivorian citizenship. The inclusion of these people to the total number would inflate considerably the assumed thirty-six percent. The significance of adding this group to the number of individuals born in Mali lies in the fact that despite the different citizenship (Malian and Ivorian), in most cases, Malians in Bouaké and individuals of Malian ancestry with Ivorian citizenship partake in the same lifeworlds, worldviews, and networks.

represented in commercial activities (Hootvoët 1989).¹³ In Bouaké, Malian men, as the most numerous group, made up 29.21 percent of traders by comparison of 10.04 percent for Baoulé men and 11.36 percent for Burkinabè men. Malian women made up 19.83 percent of traders¹⁴, Baoulé women 31.68 percent, and Burkinabè women 9.24 percent.¹⁵

Besides a basic survey of trading activities in the *grand marché*, I did not conduct a statistical study of trading activities in Bouaké. However, based on my observations, I can say that two elements differentiate the trading activities of individuals of Malian origin from those of other ethnocultural groups. (In this case, the category "of Malian origin" is better replaced by "originating from the historical Mande empires" to the extent that the trading practices that demarcate individuals of Malian origin in Bouaké are also found amongst Guineans and Burkinabè of Mande origin, namely Maraka, Malinke and Dafing, as well as Fula).¹⁶ First, individuals of Mande origin in Bouaké are still involved in long-distance trade, mainly kola nuts, rice and sugar. Kola nut traders are concentrated in the Djambourou neighbourhood. Their warehouses line several streets in this neighbourhood. Most of them are of Maraka origin. In fact, in Bouaké, amongst individuals of Mande origin, long-distance traders are

¹³ It is to be noted that despite their historical role in long-distance trading activities, individuals of Malian origin are also highly represented in trading and artisanal activities due to policies of Ivoirisation of economic and administrative cadres instituted in the 1970s, which have contributed to the expulsion of foreigners from national industries, business and bureaucratic jobs. For instance, in 1981-82, only 5.42 percent of workers in the Gonfreville textile factory were foreigners of African origin: none worked at SODESUCRE factory in Katiola, none worked at COTIVO in Agboville; and only 1.42 percent of the workers at UTEX in Dombokro were foreigners of African origin (Hootvoët, 1989). Gonfreville, SODESUCRE, COTIVO and UTEXI were all factories run by the Ivorian government. Gonfreville has since been closed and reopened as a private factory.

¹⁴ The participation of women of Malian origin in trading activities is lower than that of men. This is due, in part, to their religious affiliation with Islam and to specific cultural prescriptions that encourages women's seclusion in the domestic sphere. Moreover, amongst certain ethnic groups originally from Mali (mainly Maraka, Fula, and Songhay) women are discouraged from participating in trading activities. When they trade, they do so strictly from within their compound or through children.

¹⁵ These numbers do not take into account individuals of Malian ancestry who have obtained, over the years, Ivorian citizenship. Malians and Ivoirians of Malian ancestry, to a certain extent, partake in the same lifeworld and socioeconomic networks around long-distance trading activities.

¹⁶ When I refer to individuals originating from the historical Mande origin, I am thinking of the geographic areas and the ethnocultural groups included in the Ghana empire, the Mali empire, the Segou empire, and the Songhay empire. However, this label is used differently from the use of the Mande label when describing the population of Côte d'Ivoire, which refers to southern and northern Mande (Loucou 1984).

largely of Maraka origin. Amongst the general population in Bouaké (Mande and non-Mande), when one is thinking of long-distance traders, Marakas automatically come to mind. Marakas make up the largest ethnocultural group involved in long-distance trade and, in many cases, their trading ventures are still structured along joint-family businesses. Besides the kola nut traders, there are four remaining joint-family trading business dealing in rice, sugar, and auto-parts, based in Bouaké today. Three are Maraka and one is *numu* (the Mande blacksmith "caste" category). There are also a number of long-distance trading families. By contrast to joint-family trading business, these trading families do not trade exclusively in one type of good and the trade is not necessarily controlled by the elder of the family; usually, members of the older generations help younger men get started in their own trade. The Dramé family in Air France 1 is a good example of such trading families and how their business has undergone changes over time. The male head of the family migrated to Bouaké in the 1940s from the Macina region, Mali. He built a cigarettes and candy trading business based in Bouaké. When he retired and moved back to Mali in the 1980s, he passed on his business in Bouaké to two of his sons, who were made responsible for maintaining the multigenerational household in Bouaké. The elder Dramé had built a warehouse in the *grand marché* and owned three trucks. He financed the trading venture of a son who settled in Chicago and another one who travels between Mali and Hong Kong. His two sons in Bouaké helped two younger brothers start their own trading ventures in second-hand clothing and beauty products.

To the goods originally traded by long-distance traders (kola nuts, salt, fish, leather, cloth), a number of new goods have been added, in particular sugar, rice, beauty products, and auto-parts. And, the initial sub-Saharan and trans-Sudanic trading routes have been extended to include Europe, North America, Saudi Arabia and the Far East (especially Hong Kong). Long-distance trade is also practised by women. They usually trade in cloth, clothing, jewellery, food products, and Western products. They are not involved in the kola nut trade, nor do they belong to joint-family trading businesses. Women tend to trade on their own or to be organised in joint ventures with other women. However, most women are

not long-distance traders but are based in Bouaké (in one of the markets, as door-to-door traders, or in their own compound).

The second characteristics that demarcates individuals of Mande origin in Bouaké is that of those who are not primarily traders, most will more likely than not be involved in trade of some sort anyway, no matter what their primary professional activity. Bureaucrats are also traders, students sell in their schools, housewives sell from their compound, and retired professionals and artisans often become traders.

As the case of the Dramé family indicates there certainly is a steady flow of movement between both countries (Mali and Côte d'Ivoire). This flow is made up of people, goods and information. People travel back to their place of origin to marry, to have children, and to attend family events (funerals and marriages). It is frequent that young men of Malian origin established in Bouaké get a bride in their village of origin in Mali. Some young men spend half the year in Bouaké as traders and artisans and return to their village of origin to cultivate their land. *Madrasa* teachers go to Côte d'Ivoire to teach. Parents foster their children in Mali or in Côte d'Ivoire for educational and economic reasons. People retire in Mali. People go to Mali to consult healers. Material goods and agricultural products are bought in Côte d'Ivoire to be sold in Mali and vice versa. And information travels along these networks as well.

Malians were still migrating to Bouaké while I was in the field, despite the fact that amongst individuals of Malian origin the idea of "return to the place of origin" was frequently discussed. I often heard individuals of Malian origin claiming that there was a steady return migration stream towards Mali as a result of changing economic conditions in Côte d'Ivoire and the instability of the political situation, mostly regarding the status of foreigners. I have encountered a few cases of families returning to Mali, but there is no indication of a general exodus towards Mali.

3.4 Defining Dioulaness

Contrary to the situation in northern urban centres (such as Korhogo) in Côte d'Ivoire where religion no longer carries the social significance in processes of social identification it used to have (see

Launay 1982), religion is significant as a marker between the different social groups in Bouaké. Moreover, the omnipresence of Christian/witchcraft¹⁷ and Islamic worldviews, landmarks, and cultural manifestations is a metaphor for the politics of identity in Côte d'Ivoire. As a specific space, Bouaké marks the encounter of the southern Christian, forest world and the northern Muslim, savanna world. Islam is associated with the northern region of the country and other countries bordering the northern region (Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea), whereas Christianity is associated with the southern part of the country. The symbolic opposition between the north and the south, between Islam and Christianity, and between the forest and the savanna is contained in the political distinction between "national" and "foreigner," a distinction that has become a dominant aspect of the definition of relations of power in national politics. This political distinction, that is expressed through the "Dioula" and "Baoulé" ethnic labels, is materially present in Bouaké where each side confronts the other on an everyday basis.

3.4.1 Baoulé and Dioula

The specificity of the history of the urbanisation process in Bouaké¹⁸ created an ethnic space dominated by two ensembles: Baoulé and Dioula.¹⁹ The Baoulé label, on the one hand, refers to the majority, indigenous group in Bouaké. When the French colonised the forest region, Baoulé made up the largest local group in the region of Bouaké. In the

¹⁷ I put Christianity and witchcraft together because, in the context of Bouaké, both types of religious practices are constructed as counterposed to Islamic practices by Muslims. Muslims would refer to any non-Muslims as "those who do not pray" whereas non-Muslim would identify themselves as Christians and/or "pagans". However, this is not to say that Muslims do not also engage in practices which would be associated with witchcraft. This is in fact a source of division amongst Muslims, as *maraboutage* is largely identified with syncretism. (I will discuss this in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5).

¹⁸ Due to a different settlement history, in other urban centres, the dominant groups are different. For instance, in the city of Korhogo, where the Senufo are indigenous to the region, the dominant groups are Dioula and Senufo (Launay 1982). In the centre-west, in Gagnoa, the indigenous group is Bété, and the two dominant groups are Bété and Dioula (Lewis 1971).

¹⁹ There are a number of other ethnic groups present in Bouaké, originating from other parts of the country, from other neighbouring West African countries, from France and other European countries, from Lebanon, and from the United States, as in most large urban centres in Côte d'Ivoire. Lebanese and French are the two most numerous groups of non-African foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire. There are approximately 100,000 Lebanese in Côte d'Ivoire and 25,000 to 30,000 French expatriates (Dozon 1994).

early eighties, in Bouaké, the Akan, of which the Baoulés represented 84 percent, made up fifty-one percent of the population (Loucou 1984). In the department of Bouaké (excluding the city of Bouaké), Baoulés made up ninety-nine percent of the Akan population which in turn made up ninety-two percent of the inhabitants of the department (Loucou 1984). They constitute the ethnic group that embodies the sociopolitical majority in Côte d'Ivoire due to their ties to political power. The first president of the republic, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who remained in power for thirty-three years (1960-1993), and his successor, Henri Konan Bédié, are of Baoulé origin. Baoulé are classified as belonging to the Akan ethnolinguistic group (Loucou, 1984). As such, they originated from Ghana. They are witchcraft practitioners/believers and/or Christians. Baoulé are yam farmers. They are also associated with the *coco* and coffee plantation economy, upon which the economy of the country is based. As artisans, they mastered the art of raffia weaving as well as gold and bronze working.

On the other hand, the Dioula label in Bouaké encompasses the "foreign" population that migrated from the northern Ivorian cities or from northern countries (Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso). The label refers to Islamised Manding-speakers who are associated with long-distance trade in West Africa, and who adopt Mande and Islamic identity referents through specific dress codes, other body adornments, and behaviour. They also speak a Mande language (Dioula, Banmanan, or Malinke).

Two elements need to be highlighted at this point. First, as Robert Launay showed, the association between Dioula as a whole and long-distance trading activities may be more symbolic, or imagined, than material (Launay 1982). However, as I explained earlier, a large number of individuals of Malian origin or ancestry (mainly of Maraka origin) in Bouaké are still involved in trading activities along trans-Sudanic routes.²⁰ Second,

²⁰ Different trading groups followed different trading routes, exchanged different trading goods, functioned with different types of trading socioeconomic structures, and were identified with different labels. Six such groups originating from the historical groups can be identified: the Dioulas, who are the original Malinké traders from the Bamako region; the Marakas, who originated from the Niger bend and from Nioro; the Diawanbè, who are Fula traders; the Arma or Chérif, who are the Songhay traders covering the Macina region and the Niger River routes; the Yarse, who originally traded in the Voltaic region; and the Dafing traders from the Black Volta region (Perinbam 1980; Gallais 1962). In Bouaké, Marakas are known for their kola nut trade, which is still very much structured around the "joint family" as units of production. Marakas are also linked with the diamond trade across Africa. Some Maraka families in Bouaké maintain diamond routes all the way down to the Central African Republic.

trading activities as such are not necessarily a marker differentiating Baoulé from Dioula, especially in the contemporary economic context in which trading activities become a generalised strategy of economic survival. It is the type of trading activities and the modalities of the trade that demarcate Dioula from Baoulé. While Dioula are associated with long-distance trade, Baoulé's trading activities tend to be restricted to the Baoulé region and to rural-urban trade such as the selling of bush meat or agricultural products (especially yams) in urban centres²¹.

In the context of social relations specific to the city of Bouaké, the ethnic labels serve, as a basic distinction between the Muslim, foreigner itinerant-trader Dioula and the witchcraft practitioners/believers and/or Christian, native Baoulé. Embodying the national symbolic majority and being the local demographic majority, the Baoulé make up the ethnic group against which individuals of Malian origin, as Dioula, define themselves. This does not preclude the fact that there are ethnically exogamous marriages uniting Dioulas and Baoulés. In fact, amongst the first Malian men to migrate to Bouaké as traders at the turn of the century, a good number of them married local Baoulé women.²² In cases of exogamous marriages between Malian men and Baoulé women, women converted to Islam and to Dioula cultural practices while men acquired rights to land in their wives' villages.²³ Such exogamous marriages are no longer culturally and religiously visible insofar as children have been assimilated to Muslim and Dioula practice, but one can retrace them in cases where the family still has rights to land in neighbouring Baoulé villages.

The main elements of distinction between Dioula and Baoulé are situated within the domain of religious practice (Islam by opposition to Catholicism and/or witchcraft practices), the consumption of alcohol (which is prohibited for Muslims and associated with Christianity and witchcraft), and specific cultural practices such as language, rules of marriage and divorce, patrilineal descent amongst Dioula, and matrilineal descent

²¹ Information about the contemporary trading activities of Baoulé in Bouaké is based on personal communication with Susan Warga. When I was in the field, Susan Warga was conducting doctoral research amongst the Baoulé population in Ouassou and Bouaké.

²² Other Malians were already married to Malian women at the time of the migration or acquired Malian wives after their establishment in Bouaké.

²³ Cases described here are ones in which Baoulé women converted to Islam and assimilated to the cultural practices of their husbands.

amongst Baoulé . Dress codes and modifications of the body are central markers of cultural and religious distinctions between Baoulé and Dioula , such as the wearing of prayer shawls and the use of henna on the hands and feet by Dioula women, and the shaving of the head at the time of mourning amongst Baoulé men and women. As far as local forms of local dress for women are concerned, the northern Muslim population's stereotypical dress is made up of *boubous* (half-length or full-length), a cloth wrapped as a skirt, head scarf, and prayer shawl (see Appendix 2). Depending on the local fashion and on the age of the wearer, styles of *boubou* range from simple square with holes for the head and arms to a tailored gown with flounces at the bottom and at the sleeves. The prayer shawl can take numerous forms: the basic scarf covering head and shoulders, the Arab-style *hijab*, and the Wahhabi full-length black robe covering the body. These variations are primarily due to fashion, doctrinal distinctions within the Muslim collectivity (non-Wahhabi and Wahhabi), and transnational ties (especially with Saudi Arabia). The local Baoulé population wears a different type of local dress: *complet trois pagnes* or the *pagne* (piece of cloth wrapped as a skirt) and T-shirt, with short hair (see Appendix 2).²⁴ The *complet trois pagnes* is made up of three pieces of factory-printed textile with local designs (wax prints or roller prints), each measuring approximately two meters: one worn as a skirt, one tailored into a blouse, and one worn as a head scarf or as a waist scarf. In the case of men, dress codes are less indicative markers of ethnicity to the extent that men, irrespectively of ethnic origin, more frequently wear Western-style clothes. However, Muslim men are likely to wear local dress, such as the *jeleba*-style gown or the male *boubou* .

3.4.2 The "Dioula" label

²⁴ The French word *pagne* has three local meanings. It is a piece of clothing (a wrapped skirt). It also refers to a type of textile: factory printed textile. There are two types of factory-printed textiles: wax prints which have been produced in northern European countries since the mid-nineteenth century and imported to West Africa, and roller print, which is produced locally . Wax print is usually sold by the meter, as in the case of *basin*, whereas roller print is sold by the *pagne* unit of measure (approximately two meters). The prints in both cases are usually of local design ranging from traditional designs (Akan designs, for instance) to figures of the Pope or of the late Félix Houphouët-Boigny. (For details regarding the distinction and the history of wax print and roller print see Bickford 1994 and Kroese 1976). Lastly, the French word *pagne* refers to a local measure (two meters) used in the sale of factory-printed textiles.

The Dioula label relies for its significance on Islamic practice, the status of foreigner and inter-regional itinerant trading activities. As such, it circumscribes an extended collectivity. Contrary to identity referents referring to places of origin in Mali, Dioulanness, as such, is not the basis for associative practices (in formal associations as well as in social and economic networks) amongst individuals of Malian origin in Bouaké. For instance, Dioula associations are nowhere to be found in Bouaké. On the other hand, there is no sense of a need to "pass on," or to reproduce, a Dioula identity or elements of Dioulanness from one generation to the next.

Cultural practices associated with the Dioula label are relevant to the extent that they allow for a distinction to be made from the local majority group (Baoulé). However, with a closer focus such practices lose any sense of specificity. The Dioula label corresponds to general tendencies (Islam, family units based on polygamy and extended family ties, migration/itinerancy, and trading activities) that would also apply to labels such as Wolof, Hausa or Fulbe. Mamdou Saliou Baldé (1976) notes a similar phenomenon of assimilation to a Dioula category amongst the majority of international migrants in West Africa who speak a Manding language. As such, in Côte d'Ivoire, a Senegalese Wolof and a Burkinabè Mossi could be included in the Dioula category granted that they display Islamic practices. Individuals who have converted to Islam, but who are considered to be members of the native population of the territory covered by Côte d'Ivoire, such as Baoulé, Bété, or Agni, will not be included within the Dioula category despite their religious affiliation. Their cultural practice does not conform to other necessary conditions of inclusion into the ethnocultural category of the Mande world (encompassing contemporary Mali, parts of Burkina Faso and Guinea), nor does it include the use of a Mande language (Banmanan, Malinke, or Dioula).

Thus, the reproduction and the assertion of the Dioula identity referent depend on the social context of interaction in which individuals, groups, and institutions find themselves (Cohen 1974; Okamura 1981). The Dioula label, as a situational process, refers to a more or less bounded collectivity of individuals, depending on the context of interaction and the power relations implicated in its specific adoption or ascription. The reference to the Dioula category rather than other ethnocultural

categories is characterised by a relational process between individuals who are perceived as members of the categories "us" or "them". This dynamic between the "us" and the "them" is very fluid. It is made up of successive enlargements and contractions of the unit of reference. Individuals adopt and are given a range of statuses: foreigner, Muslim, Dioula, Malian, Songhay, Malinke, *Fula*, *Numu*, *Jeli* and so forth, according to the collectivity in face of which they are situated and situate themselves (Launay 1982; Lewis 1971). For instance, in contrast with a Baoulé, an individual of Malian origin will be allocated into the category of "foreigner," "Muslim" and/or "Dioula" and may find it sufficient to adopt such labels. However, amongst Dioula, distinctions are made between Dioula of different geographical origin within Côte d'Ivoire and between Ivorian Dioula and foreign Dioula. As an example, *Jennekaw* (people from Jenne in Mali) may be hesitant to marry their children with *Odiennekaw* (people from Odienné in Côte d'Ivoire) because amongst individuals of Malian origin, *Odiennekaw* have the reputation of treating their wives and their wives' family badly. In a marriage between two Malians of differing ethnic origins, the distinguishing level will be one referring to regional labels such as Kado (or Dogon), Banmanan, or Maraka, which are tied to the Malian geosocial landscape. A marriage between two Malians of Songhay origin may necessitate a distinction between *nyamankalaw* (hereditary professional specialisation), and so forth.

The distinction between native and foreign Dioula remains artificial to the extent that native Dioula originally migrated from the northern regions that presently make up Guinea, Mali and Burkina Faso. But their migration was part of a migratory movement that was prior or contemporary French colonisation in the region and antedates the migration of contemporary "foreigners." It is interesting to note here that some Malians wishing to obtain Ivorian citizenship and having the same patronym as some of the native northern Dioula families will claim the same genealogical ancestry as these long-established families in order to establish their right to the national identity. For instance, men with the Silla patronym, born in Mali, may illegally obtain a birth certificate that includes them in the same kin group as the long-established Silla families in Odienné.

It should be underlined that "being of foreign origin" does not necessarily translate into a certain legal status. Numerous native Dioula, despite their ownership of Ivorian national identity cards, may be regarded as "foreigners," in contrast with "native" populations such as the Baoulé or the Attié. The question of nativeness is also subject to debate to the extent that contemporary West African foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire contest the claim to nativeness established by some groups, asserting that the territory covered by the contemporary state of Côte d'Ivoire is a land which has almost no native population, except maybe for the Attiés on the coast. Certainly it is true that the Baoulé originated from the territory included in the contemporary state of Ghana and themselves migrated to what is now Côte d'Ivoire several hundred years ago. This point of view implies that nativeness is strictly a question of order of migration in an historical continuum, and that no "real" claims to nativeness and national identity can be made on these grounds.

3.5 Dimensions of Dioulaness

In the literature, as a social category, the label "Dioula" covers a spatially and temporally diversified semantic field; it is described as a professional category, as an ethnic category and, at the limit, as a religious category (Dalby 1971; Hopkins 1971; Launay 1982; Lewis 1970, 1971; Perinbam 1980; Person 1972). The literature is characterised by a debate between a position contending that the Dioula label is primarily a professional label, referring to inter-regional itinerant traders, that has have acquired an ethnic dimension with time, and the opposing assertion, the Dioula label refers primarily to an ethnic group whose economic activities have predominantly concentrated on trade (Dalby 1971). Both positions address the situation of Dioula in the northern region of Côte d'Ivoire, establishing a distinction between Dioula in the northeast of the country and Dioula in the northwest of the country. The debate about the historical roots of the Dioula label specifically addresses the historical developments of the northern region of Côte d'Ivoire, where initially small communities of Mande traders established themselves as foreigners in villages occupied by native populations, such as the Senufo around Korhogo.

These Dioula communities are products of historically remote migration movements dating back a few centuries. Such communities have a long-standing history of communal life which confers on them a sense of localised ethnicity (Launay 1982). They originated from the early Mande trading clans of the Upper Niger, in contrast to Dioula from other assimilated origins, such as Senufo, Kulango, Abron, or Mossi (Perinbam 1980).

As long-distance traders, northern Ivorian Dioulas, when regarded as an ethnic category, have a long tradition of migration, specific relationships to local communities, and a defined code of behaviour towards strangers, or *dunan*, in their role as hosts, or *jatigi* (Launay 1982). Such a migratory tradition is significant in processes of social identification and differentiation. Longstanding existing Dioula communities in Côte d'Ivoire tended not to assimilate themselves to surrounding cultural practices. They served as an intermediary between local populations and other regions with which they traded and their region of origin. Their social structure is described as consisting of an enduring institutional trading network supported by normative prescriptions ensuring ethnic boundary maintenance (Lewis 1972). As such, they are tolerated and welcomed by the local authorities due to the revenue generated by trade (Launay 1982). In the literature, they also are represented as differentiated from other Mande-speakers through their clan names (of Soninke origin), their greater mobility, their customary laws which were influenced by Malikite tenets, and their family organisation and kinship structure, which are characterised by numerous shallow lineage segments scattered across national borders in opposition to the large, stable descent group structures of other Mande-speaking groupings (Person 1972; Perinbam 1980).

However, Barbara Lewis notes that within the southern Ivorian context, these prescribed elements of behaviour are not necessarily expressed in practice (Lewis 1972). She insists on the distinction between shared elements of culture as determinants of group formation and actual prescriptions requiring certain practices. Moreover, I would emphasise that such an ethnocultural description does not conform to the forms in which the Dioula label is used amongst the Malian population in Bouaké. The Malian migrant community in Bouaké, in contrast, results from a far

more recent migration movement, dating from the turn of the century, which implies different modes of relating to the native population. The dialectical relationship between individuals of Malian origin and local populations is embedded in the postindependence processes of nation building.

In this context, a third dimension of the Dioula label emerges, distinct from immediate and concrete ethnic and professional ties. This further shift in the meaning of the term resulted from the establishment of trading collectivities in the southern forest zones of the country (Lewis 1971; Launay 1982). In this case, the Dioula label is no longer invoked in reference to a small collectivity, putatively traceable to a limited number of lineages (Launay 1982), but rather in reference to an aggregate of individuals who are marked by a number of common characteristics: namely, Islam, the status of foreigner, ethnic and/or kin origin within the Mande world, Dioula language and itinerant trading activities. It is in this sense that, in the context of Bouaké, the Dioula label is evoked primarily as a pan-regional identity. Robert Launay defined the characteristic of this third version of the Dioula label in the following terms:

What does it mean in Côte d'Ivoire nowadays to call oneself, or someone else "Dyula"? In the first place, the original meaning of the term -- 'trader' -- has not lapsed. Nevertheless, the use of the term as an ethnic category label has spread far beyond the confines of the area where Manding-speakers lived as minorities before the colonial period. Precisely because of its new found currency, the label has taken on somewhat different meanings for different people in different places, [It is a] global category lumping together peoples who heretofore, or in their home regions, considered themselves distinct, but who, as immigrant strangers, are seen -- and may well see themselves -- as relatively similar both culturally and socially. (Launay 1982: 106-7)

In this perspective, Dioula identity functions as a pan-regional identity in the same way that Hausa identity does in northern Nigeria and Fulbe identity does in northern Cameroon (Burnham 1996; Schutz 1984). Such pan-regional identities appear as superstructures of identification, more or less divorced from distinct ethnocultural practices and from day-to-day practices of identification. Each pan-regional label is embedded in a historical trajectory and in an identity register which extends into a multi dimensional geohistorical space. In other words, such pan-regional ethnic labels

function similarly but are distinguished by the sociohistorical context in which they are reproduced.

In contrast with other pan-regional identities related to processes of urbanisation, or urban assimilation, of regional rural populations, such as the case of the Fulbe identity in northern Cameroon (Schutz 1984), the Dioula label by definition refers to an urban population. Historically, itinerant traders were urbanised to the extent that they established themselves in centres of highly concentrated population in order to conduct their trade. They differentiated themselves locally from the native "bush" people.

To summarise, throughout Côte d'Ivoire, the Dioula label carries a multiplicity of meanings depending on regional history (Arnaud 1987; Person 1968). In the Malinke region, towards the northwest and Odienné, it is more or less a professional category. In the Senufo region, towards Korhogo, it refers to the Malinke minority who settled as traders, weavers, blacksmiths, and *marabouts*. In both cases, it refers to a small number of families with the same patronym (Kondé, Kourouma, Konaté) who were the first Dioula traders to establish themselves in the region between Kankan (in contemporary Guinea) and Kong (Loucou 1984). In the southern region of the country, the label functions as a pan-regional identity, including both national or international northern-born population. These distinctions are marked by a historically grounded dynamic of distinctions between foreigners and natives due to spatial separations resulting from itinerant trading activities and due to the establishment of political borders emanating from colonisation and the construction of contemporary independent political states.

In Bouaké, it has taken on the role of an urban, pan-regional identity which is closely tied to the dynamics of national and inter-regional politics of identity. As a consequence, the Dioula label, as it is used in Bouaké, includes individuals of highly diversified geographical regions in West Africa. Individuals claiming and being ascribed to the Dioula label may be of Ivorian origin, mainly from the northern regions and towns such as Odienné, Korhogo, Kong, and Touba, or they may originate from countries north of the Côte d'Ivoire: Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso.

In the context of a Bouaké-wide *vox populi* survey on the meaning of the term "Dioula" which I conducted with the help of field assistants in

1995, the following definitions of the "Dioula" label were proposed by Dioula (translated from Dioula/Banmanan or French):

A Dioula is a trader.²⁵

A Dioula is a Malinké trader.

It's the language that traders used in the olden days to carry on their trading. Today, it's an ethnic group. It's the ethnic group of the Malinké people.

Before, it used to mean trader. Now, it's an ethnic group. It's the ethnic group of everyone who speaks Malinké.

There are two aspects: a popular definition and a more specific one. In the popular definition, Dioula are the same as Muslims, so that if a non-Muslim converts to Islam, you'd call him a Dioula. Therefore a Muslim and a Dioula are considered to be the same thing. In a more specific, even rigorous manner, the word "Dioula" comes from Malinké: *dioulaya* means "trade". A Dioula is therefore someone who trades.

Everyone who speaks Dioula is Dioula.

They're Muslims. In essence, a Dioula is a transformed Bambara. Their origin is in Segou (Mali). For this reason the Malians mock those who speak Dioula.

There are two types of Dioula : Muslim Dioula and non-Muslim Dioula .

The expression "Dioula" means "trader". It's generally ascribed to people who come from the north of Côte d'Ivoire, the Malinké . A Dioula is anyone who trades in black Africa. There are several types of Dioula , especially in the western part of Africa: Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Niger. In Mali, there are two groups of Dioula . Muslim Dioula , who are generally Maraka , are found throughout almost all of Africa and even in Taiwan, the United States, China, France, and Japan. They take advantage of their activities there to spread Islam. The non-Muslim Dioula are the second type of Dioulas in Mali. They're called Banmanan . They are mostly petty traders. In Côte d'Ivoire, the Muslim Dioula are from the north. The non-Muslims are southerners. They have been introduced to trading later on. They are also from Senegal, Gambia, and Gabon.

²⁵ In French-language national schools, students are exposed to a definition of the Dioula label from their early years onwards: in books used, these Dioulas are defined as traders.

Dioulas are traders. They are originally from Mali. But they have been in Côte d'Ivoire since the beginning of the twentieth century. So, they're Ivorians. But today there are several ethnic groups who trade, so they're all Dioula .

The Dioula is a trader and a Muslim.

Here, [a Dioula] is a trader who's a foreigner.

I need to note here that in Mali, as I was repeatedly reminded by Malians in Bouaké, the expression "Dioula" strictly refers to traders. According to informants, the Dioula label in Mali carries no connection to ethnicity. In their opinion, the ethnic dimension of Dioulane is strictly an Ivorian phenomenon.

From the point of view of non-Dioula , Dioulane is mainly associated with astute (at times regarded as illegitimate and illegal), large-scale, itinerant trading practices, Islam, the status of foreigner, a number of family values including a hyper-valorised sense of the family and the importance of having numerous children, and traditionalism in the sense of remaining closely tied to practices associated with local African traditions such as dietary taboos, dress codes, and so forth.²⁶ In the Bouaké-wide *vox populi* , definitions of the Dioula label offered by non-Dioulas ranged as follows:

The term "Dioula" means the Malinké people.

Someone who speaks Dioula is a Dioula.

It's an ethnic group in Côte d'Ivoire. The people are originally from Mali. They're also called Malinké. They are usually Muslim and above all traders and transporters.

²⁶ I want to emphasise that the distinction between elements of tradition and of modernity as they are imputed to different ethnic categories reflects the relationship between Côte d'Ivoire and northern Sahelian countries in terms of levels of development. Within the paradigm of Western capitalist development and modernity, Côte d'Ivoire has constructed itself as a national entity closely tied to France and, by consequence, as a modernised nation relying on modern education (i.e., Western-style education) and a modern economy (i.e., based on salaried employment and urbanisation, despite the centrality of plantation economy in Côte d'Ivoire). Côte d'Ivoire's modern character is presented in contrast to the economic and sociocultural "backwardness" of countries like Mali, Guinea, and Burkina Faso. In response to this stereotype of "under development," individuals of Malian, Burkinabè and Guinean origin tend to describe Ivorians as individualistic and untrustworthy, as Westerners are also described by Northeners.

Dioula is, in fact, a language that was born from the mixing of traders coming from the north of Africa. But today, you call Dioula anyone who practises the Muslim religion.

They're Muslims.

The Dioulas are descendants of Mohammed.

They're Muslims who trade.

They're Muslims from Katiola in Mali.

A Dioula, that's someone who prays and who speaks Dioula. That is to say, someone who says "A ni sogoma."²⁷

It's an ethnic group.

They're traders.

The Dioula are the pre-eminent traders of Africa.

Among us, the Dioula are foreigners. We call foreigners Dioula .

Our first slaves were called Dioula .

The Dioula were the first adversaries of our ancestors.

The Dioula are those who arrived latest on our territory.

Despite its enduring predominance in discourse, I argue in the rest of in this chapter and throughout the thesis that the close tie of synonymy between a Dioula identity and trading activities is breaking down in Bouaké. The sociopolitical relevance of the Dioula label in fact lies in its relationship to Islam rather than to trading activities. This is not to say that Dioulas no longer trade, but rather that historical contingencies have lessened the social significance of trade in processes of identification.

Due to the present economic situation in Côte d'Ivoire which was precipitated by the international crisis in cocoa and coffee prices in the mid 1980s and which was aggravated by plans for structural adjustment, trading activities have been adopted up a portion of the population that previously did not engage in trading activities. Individuals who would have otherwise been employed in local industries or in government

²⁷ Morning salutation in Dioula/Banmanan.

agencies are turning to trade as their economic activity. In Bouaké, for instance, one of the large local factories, the Gonfreville textile factory, a major source of employment for the region, closed in 1992-93. It reopened in 1994, but with a significantly reduced labour force. The loss of employment in the urban sector has extended beyond industrial workers. There is also a significant decrease of employment amongst the educated class and bureaucrats. The Ivorian government no longer guarantees employment in the public sector for university graduates. For instance, in 1992, approximately two hundred and fifty graduating medical students were without employment. In a socioeconomic context where trading activities make up a large portion of the local economic activities, it becomes very likely that individuals without employment or with reduced salaries will turn towards trading activities.

I often heard the following type of comment, from both Dioulas and from non-Dioulas, about "Ivorians", meaning the groups which are identified as originally from the Ivorian territory -- in the case of Bouaké, the Baoulés: "They are not good traders. They do not like trading and they never had a sense of trade. But because of the present situation, everybody trades: Dioula , Baoulé , Bété , everybody." However, in the case of Bouaké, the loss of Dioula monopoly over trading activities noted by Robert Launay in the case of Dioulas in Korhogo (Launay 1982) needs to be weighed against the fact that Dioulas still control some aspects of long-distance trade (mainly kola nuts and sugar), that there are still joint-family trading ventures, and that trading activities remain for young Dioula men and women the privileged "fall back" economic option when other professional projects have failed (see Chapter 4). Moreover, Benoît Hootvoet's comparative study of trading and artisanal activities in four cities of the forest zone (Bouaké, Agboville, Dimbokro, and Katiola) shows that foreigners who fall under the Dioula social category (Maliens and Burkinabè) remain the most represented in trading activities (Hootvoet 1989).

3.6 The politics of cultural and religious identities in post-Houphouët-Boigny Côte d'Ivoire

In summary, the significance of the "Dioula" label has gone through four stages that grossly fit the four political periods that have marked Ivorian history: the pre-colonial period, the colonial period, the Houphouët-Boigny period, and the post-Houphouët-Boigny period. From identity referents tied to small communities in the northern region in the pre-colonial period (Person 1968,k 1972; Launay 1982; Lewis 1971), to an enlarged pan-regional label used in the southern region during the colonial period, and the sense of a politically integrated collectivity within the national scene that emerged during the Houphouët-Boigny era, the "Dioula" label is increasingly tied to the political meaning of "foreigners".

From the time of independence (1960) until the first multiparty elections in 1990, Côte d'Ivoire was run by the *Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI) under the rule of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who remained president until his death thirty-three years later. Constitutionally, Côte d'Ivoire is a democratic republic. However, Houphouët-Boigny and the PDCI ran the country under the ideology of single-party democracy, that is the notion of maintaining single-party politics until Ivorians are sufficiently politically mature to assume a democratic process. As the result of the movement towards democratisation in the late 1980s in eastern Europe and Africa, as well as numerous strikes, demonstrations, and violent incidents (mostly by students) in Côte d'Ivoire, the Ivorian government (controlled by the PDCI since 1960) had to concede multiparty-ism and the free expression of the written press, which had disappeared with independence in 1960.

Félix Houphouët-Boigny's presidential role and political stratagems, coupled with the economic role of Baoulé as coca and coffee planters in the south-west, in the Baoulé region in the centre, and in Agni territory in the east meant that Baoulé, who are also the largest ethnic group in the country, have come to be the politically dominant group (Chauveau and Dozon 1987; Zolberg 1964).²⁸ On the basis of his role in the *Syndicat Agricole Africain* from 1944 onwards, Houphouët-Boigny managed to unite the Ivorian educated elite and the planter bourgeoisie, forming the political leaders of the movement toward

²⁸ Between 1947 and 1956, at the eve of independence, Baoulé made up 19 percent of the total population in Côte d'Ivoire, followed by indigenous Mande (Malinké, Bambara, Dioula, and Mahou) at 15.2 percent and Senufo at 13.1 percent (Zolberg 1964).

independence (Zolberg 1964; Dozon 1994). He also integrated some of the dominant social groups (both ethnic groups such as the Baoulés and Dioulas, and non-ethnic organisations such as the *Association des Originaires*, *Association des Transporteurs*, and so forth) under the centralising force of the PDCI. Moreover, he relied on a political and economic system of clientelism that appealed to both southern populations and northern populations. This system of clientelism was based on the model of ethnic relations which had been constructed under French colonial administration. J.-P. Chauveau and J.-P. Dozon describe the French colonial model of ethnic relations in the following terms:

The original importance of the "planter bourgeoisie" and the role of the eastern coastal societies in the development of colonial Côte d'Ivoire explains the preponderance of Akan (specifically the Baoulé) in the structure of the state as well as the marginalisation of and the demands made by ethnic groups of the western forest (especially the Bété) and the discreet but decisive mediating role played by northerners (who were particularly numerous in the army). (Chauveau and Dozon 1987: 230) [My translation]

Finally, up through 1990, Houphouët-Boigny consolidated his political rule by means of political repression and intrigues in order to eliminate political opposition. These political processes have brought about a "baoulisation" of Côte d'Ivoire on the basis of the plantation economy (Bakary-Akin 1991; Bakary 1990; Chauveau and Dozon 1987; Dubresson 1987).

Through these stratagems, Félix Houphouët-Boigny managed to maintain religious and interethnic peace in the Côte d'Ivoire despite the high level diversity found in Côte d'Ivoire.²⁹ A common way of capturing the interethnic peace during Félix Houphouët-Boigny's years in power is the following saying: "Muslims could be found praying in churches and Christians would attend prayers at the mosque."

But, the precarious balance of the socio-political relationship between Muslims and Catholics, northerners and southerners, in the country seems to have been due more to Félix Houphouët-Boigny's political astuteness rather than to any process of national integration,

²⁹ Scholars count up to sixty ethnic groups in Côte d'Ivoire, divided into four main ensembles: Akan/Twi, Kru, Mandé, and Volta (Zolberg 1964; Loucou 1984). These estimates are based on Maurice Delafosse's initial estimation of the number of languages in Côte d'Ivoire (Delafosse 1904).

based on the respect for different ethnic groups' cultural practices and sociopolitical position in the country (Chauveau and Dozon 1987). Moreover, the national political project of one-party government centred around one man corresponded with the ideology of modernity, as a political goal, produced by a large number of newly independent African states in the 1950s and 1960s (Zolberg 1964). In such a logic, the maintenance of cultural and ethnic ties among people living beyond the confines of villages was perceived as anti-democratic and anti-modernising by political leaders of the time. In light of this logic, allegiances to the state were to be constructed outside of ethnicity.

In spite of an ideological stand based on local ideals of modernity and a number of political stratagems, ethnicity has remained one of the central factors in the construction of Ivorian politics of identities. Numerous social and political conflicts have historically taken an ethnic coloration in Côte d'Ivoire dating back to the early days of the independence process (Chauveau and Dozon 1987; Dozon 1994; Lewis 1996; Zolberg 1964). In 1958 political conflicts took the form of violent attacks by Ivorian *originaires* (that is, ethnocultural groups which are considered and who regard themselves as indigenous to present-day Côte d'Ivoire) against Togolese and Dahomeyans, who, as a result of French colonial policies, had cornered the market on white-collar jobs in Côte d'Ivoire (Zolberg 1964). Even earlier, in 1938, the colonial administration, under pressure from the coastal populations, proposed a policy of ivoirisation of cadres in favour of local Ivorian *originaires*, to the disadvantage of immigrants from parts of West Africa where Western education had been established longer (Chauveau and Dozon 1987). One could also argue that the second round of ivoirisation of political and economic cadres instituted in the early 1970s by the PDCI was following the same line of logic: "jobs for the Ivorians."

Tentative Agni efforts to secede from the Ivorian state, as well as Baoulé-Bété conflicts over control of the south-west plantation region that emerged politically in the first multiparty democratic elections in 1990, and which were violently re-enacted in the 1995 national elections, were other forms of the ethnic dimension of political conflicts. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, a number of political confrontations between Agnis, Baoulés, and Bétés centred around claims of "nativeness" and access to land in the

plantation region of the country. Historically, the Agni were economically supplanted by the Bétés, who in turn were eventually supplanted by the Baoulés (for a detailed description of the relationship between political rule and the plantation economy, see Dubresson 1987; Chauveau and Dozon 1987; Dozon 1994). Empirical studies show that Burkinabè may be beginning to economically supplant Baoulés in the south-west by buying plantations on a large scale (Ronan Ballac, personal communication 1994).³⁰

Northerners were also active players in these ethnopolitical conflicts. Dioulas attempted a political coup in 1963. Later, Malinkés and Dioulas politely resisted Baoulé political domination through the *Charte du Grand Nord* in 1972. This political movement called for the unification of the northern region with states to the north along the lines of *Afrique Occidentale Française* stretching to Niamey. Through this movement, northerners expressed their discontent with the centralisation of the Ivorian government in the southern region and the consequent marginalisation of northern populations from the national political process. This movement of resistance to Baoulé political domination reactivated a lot of resentment from the southern population, including Baoulés, Bétés, and Agni. These Southerners felt that northerners were "invading" the plantation economy and that Dioulas were at the source of political corruption in the country.

Other more recent examples highlight a similar dynamic relation between "natives" and "foreigners". Along the coast of Abidjan, historically inhabited by Ebriés, Ewe fishermen originating from Ghana embodied the status of "foreigners" because of their significant numbers (Delaunay 1994). And more recently, in 1994, violence against Ghanaians in Abidjan as well as in some cities of the interior was sparked by conflicts over football matches.

These few examples schematically highlight how the political significance of the status of "foreigner" as well as the groups to which the status has been ascribed have fluctuated throughout history. These fluctuations reflect the political and economic climate of the country (Dozon 1994).

³⁰ While I was in the field, Ronan Ballac was preparing a Ph.D. thesis in demography at ORSTOM. He was working on migration movements in the south west Ivorian region, mainly around Sassandra.

The beginning of a concerted effort by the national government to establish the parameters of a political distinction between "nationals" and "foreigners" was enacted in the early 1970s, when the Ivorian government instigated measures for the ivoirisation of economic and administrative cadres. The Ivorian government had already forbidden in 1965 the possibility of dual citizenship. This measure created a discrepancy between the legal status individuals could acquire through citizenship and the reality of numerous West Africans foreigners who frequently shared their lives between Côte d'Ivoire and a neighbouring country (Bredeloup 1996). In 1991, the Ivorian government established a system of *carte de séjour*, based on the French model, which imposes a system of control over the long-term residence of foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire. The measure stipulates that foreigners residing in Côte d'Ivoire must buy yearly cards that protect their residential status. Previously, West African foreigners had been able to reside in Côte d'Ivoire without formal control and at no cost. The *carte de séjour* measure did not restrict the presence of foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire as much as similar measures have in neighbouring countries, such as the 1969 Alien Compliance Order in Ghana, which led to the expulsion of numerous foreigners (Blion 1995). But the cost of a *carte de séjour* (5,000F CFA a year for any individual over the age of sixteen) renders its acquisition difficult for foreigners and thereby makes the status of foreigners more precarious. Many foreigners perceive the *carte de séjour* as a discriminatory measure. The police in most cities have also been accused of harassment concerning the *cartes de séjour*. It is not uncommon in Bouaké to see policemen stopping taxis and *bakas* to check the residence status of their occupants. Usually these checks are accompanied by a police truck waiting to be filled by individuals who do not have *cartes de séjour* or whose *cartes de séjour* have expired. This is apparently a relatively new phenomenon. There also are reports of physical harassment by policemen of foreigners in their homes or at their workplace, mostly at the central market.

Moreover, since 1990 elections, the political process has established a relation of synonymy between the labels "Dioula," "foreigner," "northerner" and "Muslim". A Dioula informant captured the 1990s context in the following words: "Here, anything that isn't Ivorian is Dioula." Politically, over the last two national elections, "foreigners" have

more and more been injected at the centre of national debates. They have become a topic of contention and national division. At the time of the first multiparty elections in 1990, "foreigners" became a political issue in light of the voting-card scandal. The *Front Populaire Ivoirien* (FPI), the opposition party led by Laurent Gbagbo, accused the PDCI of distributing voting cards to foreigners in exchange for their electoral support (Dozon 1994; Lewis 1996; Bredeloup 1996). Gbagbo and the FPI, who have always been opposed to the presence of foreigners (ironically, for them "foreigners" are mainly Baoulé, in the context of the Bété-Baoulé competition for the control of the plantation economy) in the south-west region of the country and to (non-Baoulé) foreigners' right to vote, expressed latent elements of Ivorian nationalism as a political stratagem. In this context, Houphouët-Boigny won the elections (legitimately or not) with the support of the Baoulés and of the northern population, mainly Senufo and Malinké (Dozon 1994).

The political process involved in the definition of a national identity was heightened in 1994 when, in light of the upcoming 1995 presidential and national elections, the Ivorian government, led by Henri Konan Bédié, promulgated a new electoral code (Appendix 3). In fact, by broaching the question of clientelism and foreigners, the succession struggle that followed Houphouët-Boigny's death broke down the political coalition between Baoulé and northerners that Houphouët-Boigny had established and maintained since the 1950s (Lewis 1996). After a short period of rivalry in the late 1993 and early 1994 between Bédié and Alassane Dramane Ouattara (prime minister at the time), which resulted in the dismissal of Ouattara from his ministerial position and his effective expulsion from Côte d'Ivoire, Bédié assumed the presidency until the 1995 presidential elections. The 1994 electoral code regulated access to an Ivorian identity card and took away the right to vote from nationals of the CEDEAO residing in the Côte d'Ivoire, since 1960, nationals from the CEDEAO have had a right to vote in Ivorian national elections. The 1994 electoral code stipulated that only Ivorians living in Côte d'Ivoire for five continuous years and born both of an Ivorian mother and an Ivorian father could vote in Côte d'Ivoire and could run for political office, including the presidency. This electoral code politically rallied southerners around the existing xenophobia against northerners, that is Dioula , foreigners and

Muslims. With this law, Bédié also eliminated his main political enemy: Ouattara was excluded from the presidential run since his mother is Burkinabè. Ouattara left Côte d'Ivoire and joined the IMF in Washington.

Already in 1992 and 1993 some Ivorians were starting to express concern about the number of Muslims in the country and their alleged support for Ouattara, as a "Burkinabè" and as a Muslim.³¹ For these Ivorians, the 1994 electoral code was the result of a necessity to safeguard the "*conscience nationale ivoirienne*" (the national Ivorian consciousness). In fact, the electoral code brought about a political polemic about the proper place of "foreigners" in Ivorian society. The Ivorian written press echoed these concerns by a debate centred on questions of "*vrais Ivoiriens*" (real Ivorians), "*Ivoiriens de souche*" (Ivorians from the root), "*Ivoiriens pur sang ou de première classe*" (pure-blooded or first class Ivorians), "*Ivoiriens de fibres multi-séculaires*" (century old Ivorian soul), "*demi-Ivoiriens*" (half-Ivorians), "*Ivoiriens de circonstance*" (Ivorians by circumstances), "*Ivoiriens de seconde zone*" (second-zone Ivorians), and so forth.

There was a popular anxiety, expressed clearly in evangelical Christian discourses, mostly in the south-west, that Muslims were becoming a majority in Côte d'Ivoire.³² It was assumed that Muslims would vote for Ouattara because he is a Muslim of Burkinabè origin. The fear was that if Muslims were to vote for Ouattara, he would win the presidential election (Lewis 1996). Muslims, both foreigners and nationals, in Côte d'Ivoire make up forty percent of the potential electoral body (Blion 1995). Moreover, in the aftermath of the first multiparty national elections in 1990, in the media and in popular discourse the issue of "Islamic fundamentalism" became a social stake.³³ Muslims were characterised as having become more fundamentalist in their practice and

³¹ It is necessary to point out that I am using the idioms "Muslims", "Northerners", "Dioulas" and "foreigners" as they are invoked in popular discourse, media discourse, and political discourse. Each idiom may be used in different context, but essentially they are invoked as synonyms of one another. When Christian evangelists in the South West expresses a fear of Muslims, it expresses, by extension, a fear of Northerners, of foreigners and of Dioulas.

³² Christian evangelists in Bouaké also perpetuate an anti-Muslim discourse (private discussion with Jean-François Werner, researcher at ORSTOM-Bouaké, May 1995).

³³ Here, when I use the term "Islamic fundamentalism", I am using it in an emic manner. It was the term that was used in Ivorian media and popular discourses.

in their discourse.³⁴ Islamic associations were described as "multiplying very quickly." The apparent multiplication of Islamic associations, actual or fictive, must be considered in light of the 1990 democratisation, which allowed for the relaxation of control on all forms of association, implying that associations with interests opposed to those of the ruling party could assert themselves legally (see Chapter 4 for more details).

The 1994 changes in the electoral code were perceived by northerners as an expression of xenophobia against them, that is, against the Dioula population (Lewis 1996; Bredeloup 1996; Blion 1995). Already considering the last presidential elections, the *cartes de séjour* and the new electoral code, Dioulas felt that their position in Côte d'Ivoire was increasingly precarious. Even the appointment of Alassane Dramane Ouattara as prime minister by Houphouët-Boigny was problematic because he was a Muslim and northerner. In the context of plans for structural adjustment in Côte d'Ivoire, Ouattara was given a mandate to collect back taxes and to clean up the administration (Lewis 1996). Ouattara was also responsible for the institution of the *carte de séjour* (Blion 1995). The reaction from northerners to this appointment was that the PDCI was using a Dioula to do the "dirty work."

As a result of the electoral code change and of the exclusion of Ouattara from Ivorian politics, some members of the PDCI quit the ruling party and created a second opposition party in 1994: the *Rassemblement des Républicains* (RDR), which supported Ouattara, despite the fact that Ouattara never formally came forward as a presidential candidate. The RDR came to be seen as a Dioula party by Ivorians. This does not mean that all Ivorian and foreign Dioulas who supported the PDCI shifted their support to the RDR. Houphouët-Boigny had created enduring economic and political alliances with the northern populations throughout his lifetime. Moreover, for elder Malians, the PDCI was still referred to as the PDCI-RDA, alluding to the historical political ties between Côte d'Ivoire and the French Sudan. Many of them expressed a concern with what they perceived as a new tendency "to go right and left" depending on the stake

³⁴ At no time did Muslims ask for the creation of a Muslim state in Côte d'Ivoire. And at the time, anti-Muslim discourses were not necessarily concerned with the alleged claim for the creation of such a state.

of the moment, without showing real allegiance to a specific political party.³⁵

However, a large number of Muslims remain dissatisfied with their place in the country's politics and social institutions. CNI (*Conseil National Islamique*), for instance, claims that Muslims are under-represented at the national level and that the country's image as a Christian country does not reflect the Muslim reality. Moreover, the general opinion amongst Muslims is that the Ivorian government is aiming at dividing the Muslim community within the nation, in order to weaken it. Still, in Côte d'Ivoire, there are no Islamic political parties and there are no local Islamic newspapers. Saudi Islamic newspapers and Malian Islamic newspapers, such as *al-Farouq*, are circulated, but there are no Ivorian-based Islamic newspapers. The general attitude of Muslims is to try to negotiate within the established system rather than counter it. Even the CNI, which is very critical of the established government and is one of the main defenders of unity amongst Muslims, takes an attitude of negotiation with the national government.

Again, the attitude of Muslims (that is, to try to work within the established system rather than to oppose it) must be understood in light of the history of the relationship between Muslims and state power in Côte d'Ivoire. Despite the fact that he defined Côte d'Ivoire as a Catholic country, Félix Houphouët-Boigny made a point of consulting with Muslims and including them in the political process. This was necessary because Muslims make up a large portion of the population in Côte d'Ivoire, between twenty and forty percent (Coulon 1988), with a much stronger presence up to 90 percent in the northern region. In the case of Bouaké, I would think that Muslims are between forty and fifty percent of the population.

Houphouët-Boigny's political stratagem is translated into the fact that Muslims and Islamic institutions remain highly visible within the Ivorian political life. Each Muslim holiday is advertised and discussed in the national newspapers (*Fraternité Matin* and *La Voix*), as well as on national television; preaching and other special events are advertised and described. The same can be said for other Islamic events such as national

³⁵ The emic expression "to go right and left" does not refer to the conservative right and the socialist left, but to a tendency to shift political allegiances in all directions.

or local conferences. Since 1975, Ivorian national television has offered a programme on Islam (Allahou Akbar) every two weeks which is often conducted in Dioula language. In 1991, Alassane Dramane Ouattara established Tabaski as a national holiday, for which employees of the state ... are be paid as they are for Christmas, New Year and Easter. It is also accepted that Muslims may not work the day following the end of Ramadan, though employees of the state are not paid.³⁶ However, contrary to other neighbouring countries with a distinct Muslim majority (Mali, for instance), nightclubs and bars are not legally forced to close during Ramadan.

Finally, as an element of cultural communalism and self-identity, the Dioula label, and especially its Islamic component, may become a stepping stone for a feeling of unity amongst Dioulas that can be translated into political actions. In such a context, the Dioula label acquires the role of a political identity that is at the root of social claims. Such political identities are adopted at the time of specific social events and political events (Oriol, 1988). Here, the "Dioula" label becomes synonymous with "Muslims." For example, in the 1970s, in the northern part of the country, Islam provided such a sense of unity amongst the Senufo and Dioula populations, focused in the *Charte du Grand Nord*. Moreover, in the aftermath of the first multiparty national elections in 1990, national Islamic associations under the guidance of the Conseil National Islamique (CNI) have been lobbying the national government in order to acquire a certain level of recognition relating to education, equity pay for Imams, Islamic holidays, and governmental assistance in the organisation of the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca.

In fact, Islamic teaching institutions, Muslim marriages, and mosques exist outside of the Ivorian system of laws and social institutions. Regarding marriage, the only form that is legally recognised in Côte d'Ivoire is monogamous civil marriage, as in the case of Western countries. The numerous marriages which take place under the auspices of Islam are not legally sanctioned, and polygamy is illegal in Côte d'Ivoire. Likewise *madrasas* stand outside of the national schooling system. As a consequence, a large portion of Muslims of Malian origin in

³⁶ The status of *Donda* remains controversial as a national holiday to the extent that Wahhabis refuse to recognise its holiday character.

Bouaké live outside of the national legal system, which only sanctions certain forms of social institutions. Moreover, the Ivorian government has made no effort to maintain specific ties with Islamic countries. To this day, it does not have an embassy in Saudi Arabia, despite the large number of Ivorians who make the pilgrimage to Mecca and who study in that country. It has also balked regarding the implantation of Saudi institutions in Côte d'Ivoire: in 1986, Saudis wanted to build an Islamic university in Abidjan, but the Ivorian government refused.

3.7 "Being Malian": Practices of Identification within regionalised ethnocultural lifeworlds

Once settled in Bouaké, Muslims of Malian origin maintain certain elements of their identities of origin while adopting and being inscribed within the parameters of the national Dioula identity. The historical trajectory that brought about the construction of Dioulanness in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the expression of other ethnocultural and religious referents, implies that each idiom of ethnic identification is evoked in distinct domains of social relations and social significance.

Out of these numerous referents of identification, when considering contemporary processes of identification amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké two types of identity referents can be distinguished: the numerous ethnocultural referents tied to places of origin in Mali, and the Dioula label with its implications of "Muslim" and "foreigner." In terms of the politics of identities in Côte d'Ivoire, the "Dioula" label is ascribed to individuals of Malian origin. But on an everyday basis, through the expression of social networks and the production of ethnocultural practices, the identity referents with which individuals of Malian origin in Bouaké identify are ones associated with places of origin in Mali and ancestral identities, such as Malian, Maraka, Songhay, *numu* (blacksmith), and so forth.

They organise and give sense to lifeworlds and practices, as well as offer an existential basis for the production of a sense of belonging and communality (Oriol 1984; Jackson 1996; Meintel 1993).³⁷ These identity

³⁷ It should be noted here that I am specifically not referring to Bourdieu's notion of habitus,

referents orient the immediacy of social networks, act as worldviews and life projects, define individuals' social roles and status, and impute meaning to everyday practices. Besides their unfolding in the context of Bouaké, these identity referents are defined by a historical web of power relations referring to a social collectivity situated outside of the Ivorian geopolitical space. Adopting and reproducing a Songhay or a Maraka identity, amongst others, carries a meaning beyond the configuration of power relations and processes of nation building in Côte d'Ivoire or in Mali for that matter.

The main elements of differentiation and identification invoked in the reproduction of such identities (as stereotypes and/or as dimensions of everyday life practices and lifeworlds)³⁸ are ones relating to language, myth of origin and ties to Islam (see Chapter 5), professional specialisation (found in *nyamankalaw*, attitudes to trading activities, and professional stereotypes)³⁹, marriage rules associated with exogamy or endogamy, specific rules for the performance of rites of passage through the life

which, in my opinion, remains too objective -- in the sense of standing outside of the human agent -- and predetermined. The notion of habitus does not account for the origin (or historical elaboration) of practices included in this concept. Phenomenological notions of lifeworlds propose an interactive model between structural elements of social life and actions of the human agent. They do so to the extent that lifeworlds are the social spaces of the unfolding of these different forces.

³⁸ I am establishing a distinction between stereotypes and dimensions of everyday life practices because both play a role in the construction of social categories. By stereotypes, I refer to the perception members of a specific social category have of members of other social categories. These perceptions are usually based on concrete elements of practice. But these elements acquire a status in the process of differentiation that extends beyond their actualisation in everyday life practices. For instance, Fulas are described as very traditional in light of their attitudes to education, number of children, women's seclusion, and marriage. Fulas may still practise *balmafuru* (consanguine marriages) as a privileged form of marriage and may prefer to send their children to *madrasas*. However, in practice, this does not exclude the fact that some Fulas marry outside of the ethnocultural group and have been educated in French, no longer speaking the Fulfulde language. Ethnocultural stereotypes, in Bouaké, are based on professional specialisation, bodily aesthetic, attitudes to exogamous marriage, psychological traits, levels of "civilisation," and relationship to Islam.

³⁹ In Bouaké, a number of stereotypes exist regarding professional specialisation. For instance, Marakas are long-distance traders; Hausas are circumcisors and practitioners of traditional medicine; Nigériens are healers practising bleeding; Bellas are cart-pushers; Anango (Nigerians) are photographers, young Senegalese men trade in art, and so forth. In most of these cases, the stereotype corresponds with lived experience. Still, not all Marakes are long-distance traders and not all Bellas are cart-pushers. Moreover, in popular stereotypes, Marakas and Fulas are perceived as "traditional" people. They are described as practitioners of *balmafuru*, and female seclusion and exclusion from economic activities. Social stereotypes amongst the Muslims of Malian, Burkinabè and Guinean origin assert that Marakas and Fulas have numerous children and that they tend to exclude them from formal education in French.

course (baptism, engagement, marriage, and death), the adoption of particular body adornment (tattoos, clothes, jewellery, make up, henna), gender relations, attitude toward women's seclusion, economic roles attributed to women, modes of social stratification, music and other forms of artistic production, perceived levels of "traditionalism," and lack of "civilisation."⁴⁰

In the Dioula/Banmanan language, these identity referents are captured by the term *sya*. *Sya* is the Dioula/Banmanan expression closest to the concept of ethnicity. It demarcates the "us" category, expressed in idioms such as "we have the same customs," "we are the same thing," "*am féri*" (our home) and "*am mogo*" (our people). The "us" category evoked by the notion of *sya* ranges from the opposition between Africa and Europe to elements of biological or social kinship, including elements of communal identity expressed through regional or village identities (Leimdoufer 1994). These elements intersect with one another. *Am fei*, for instance, refers as much to a geographical category as to a social category. *Am fei* is the village or city of origin but it can also refer to the individuals who inhabit this space, which would make it equivalent to *am mogo*. Again, *am mogo* can refer to a social category as well as to a geographical space. But a *Jenneka* (a person from Jenne) can also define himself or herself as Maraka, Songhay, or Banmanan which are ethnic labels (*sya*). In this respect, I would argue that ethnic idioms refer to a sense of belonging that is described through labels ranging from nationhood to the family, including the geographical place of origin of the individual or of the individual's family, or the geographical and cultural region in which this site is situated. However, such a definition of *sya* is not complete to the extent that it also encompasses the history of the relationship between social categories, referring to the system of *nyamankala* (or Mande social "castes"). Once again, these *nyamankala* labels also include a geographical element. There are villages of *numuw*

⁴⁰ To be "traditional" does not necessarily imply that one is not civilised. To be "civilised" may refer to Western modernity, but also to Islam. In the case of Fulas and Marakas, their perceived status as "traditional" does not imply that they are "non-civilised," because they are also perceived as "traditional Muslims," that is individuals who tend to adhere very strictly to a Muslim lifestyle. However, to be "non-civilised" or to lack "civilisation" refers mainly to *Brousseman*, "pagans" who are very rural. Bellas and Dogons (who are called "Kados" by most Malians in Bouaké) are described as *Brousseman*. They are described as not knowing the "modern" ways of life associated with a city lifestyle and Islam.

(blacksmiths) or villages of *jeliw* (public singers). Claiming to be from Kita, for instance, can be synonymous with asserting a *djeli* identity. In fact, these elements of social identification are apparently tied to one another. Certain family names are associated with certain ethnic categories, and with certain geographical spaces (villages, regions, cities). Each category is not exclusive of the others. For instance, Silla is a Maraka name, usually referring to *garankew* (leather workers) originally from the Nioro region, but nowadays Marakas originate from numerous regions of Mali. People with the Kanté *jamu* (patronym) are Banmanan *numuw* originating from the region of Ségou. People with the Diabaté *jamu* (patronym) are *jeliw* from Kita and the Kaye region in Mali.

As a consequence, as elements of identification, *syaw* are used in reference to modern national state identities (Malian, Ivorian), to pan-regional identities (Dioula, Koroboro, or Maraka), to localised ethnic categories (Songhay, Banmanan, Kado), to places of origin (followed by the Manding suffix *ka* which means "people from" and which can be added to almost any geographical location --*Bouakeka*, *Jenneka*, *Braoulika*, *Lajneka*,⁴¹ *Odienneka*, *Mankonoka*), to *nyamankala* (*numu*, *djeli*, *furnay*),⁴² and to kinship categories expressed through family names or *djamu* (Silla, Traoré, Touré, Courouma, Coulibaly). In other words, in order to establish social ties and to set borders between social categories, one can appeal to several sources of identity: the place of origin of one's family, to a Songhay identity, to a *jeli* identity or to one's family name such as Traoré, Kanté, and so forth.⁴³

These different *syaw* carry a number of prescriptions regarding social relations. Some are tied to the *nyamankala* system which regulates rules of marriage between social "castes." Other prescriptions are linked to

⁴¹ Meaning 'from Guinea'.

⁴² It is to be noted that, in different languages and in reference to different ethnic groups, *nyamankala* categories are referred to in different idioms. For instance, the category of leather worker is called *sakkeeBe* for the Fula, *bella* or *garasa* for the Touaregs, *garasa* and *arma* for the Songhays, *arma* for the Songhays, *jambu* or *goòn* for the Kado (Dogon), *hanu* for the Bwa, and *garanke* for the Manding (Gardi 1989). Certain *nyamankalaw* exist amongst certain groups and not amongst others, such as the *bossow* or fishermen amongst the Songhay. Moreover, in different ethnocultural groups, *nyamankalaw* do not necessarily play the same social roles. Amongst Malinkés, *jeliw* are public bards, singers and musicians, whereas they do not play music or sing amongst the Songhay. Amongst the Songhay, musicians and singers are *worossow* (children of slaves).

⁴³ *Sya* identities are acquired through the patrilineal descent line: children are from the same *sya* as their father.

the relations of *senankunya* (called "joking relationship" in the anthropological literature) that have historically evolved between the members of different ethnocultural categories.⁴⁴ For instance, individuals with the Kanté *jamu*, referring to the original Mande *numuw*, should not marry individuals of Fula origin because Fulas are socially inferior to *numuw*, due to the historical conquest of Fula groups by the Banmanan empire of Ségou. But Fulas can expect a certain level of protection from *numuw*, since the groups share a *senankunya* relationship. Again, individuals of Bella origin cannot marry Tamacheck, because Bellas are the traditional slaves (*jonw*) of Tamacheks. Nowadays, in urban settings, these prohibitions are often ignored at the time of marriages, but people are still aware of them. Fulas may in fact marry *numuw*, but the members of each social category will still tease one another in social settings, referring to their *senankunya* relationship. As Jean Gallais argues in the case of Mali (Gallais 1962), *sya* social categories, which are tied to places of origin in Mali, have historically been constructed by elements of economic activities and specialisation (certain trading routes, fishing activities, specialised agricultural methods), by elements of mythology (the Sunjata legend and so forth), by the privileged relationship different groups have had with religion (Islam and ritual differences between *féticheurs*, or diviners), and by elements relating to the organisation of intragroup and intergroup social spaces of interaction (production units, village organisation, clan structures, and regional interaction).

Sya categories traditionally carry a number of prescriptions regarding the social behaviour of the members of the different groups. However, due to urbanisation and other recent social changes, these prescriptions are no longer necessarily translated into practice amongst all ethnocultural groups. In an urban setting, *numuw*, for instance, no longer necessarily work as blacksmiths nor hold a number of supernatural powers due to their ties with fire and iron. For the same reasons, *garankew* may no longer work leather. In fact, in Bouaké, *garankew* tend to play the same social roles as *djeliw*. Still, certain groups maintain their historical roles. *Worossow* (children of slaves), for instance, who are not necessarily considered as *jonw* (slaves), can still transgress certain recognised social

⁴⁴ Jean Gallais offers a good historical overview of the unfolding of these relationships in the Macina region of Mali (Gallais 1982).

rules without suffering repercussions, due to their historically lower status in the social hierarchy. For instance, during a wedding ceremony amongst *Jennekaw*, while men were doing the *furusiri* (sealing of the marriage through the exchange of the bride price and other gifts following the late afternoon prayer), elder *worosso* women were dancing in front of the men to the sound of female calabash players. Their dances were explicitly sexual and very provocative. Recognised social rules were transgressed at two levels: women dancing in the presence of men, especially during a religious ceremony, and older women enacting explicitly sexual acts in their dance. But as *worossow*, these women can act in this manner without any penalty.

At each level of identification, there exists a range of elements of distinction that may be invoked according to the local, historical context of social interaction and power relations. These elements of differentiation and identification ultimately refer back to systems of social stratification and to relations of power. They are based on socially and historically constructed stereotypes of elements of cultural practices, such as linguistic particularities (accent, syntax and vocabulary) or particular forms of rites of passage throughout the life course (marriage, baptism, funerals) or in terms of ethnic particularities (ethnoprofessional specialisation, perceived attitudes to Western modernity, perceived attitudes to Islam).

Moreover, ethnocultural practices associated with different groups and ethnic labels both allow a distinction to be created and maintained by ethnocultural groups and reproduce the group's sense of communality. For instance, at the time of *Donda*, the Songhay collectivity from Jenne in Bouaké assembles to celebrate with public prayers and festivities. For individuals of Malian origin other than Songhay in Bouaké, such manifestations are specifically Songhay.⁴⁵ Bamouïé Maïga, the president of the association of young men from Jenne (*Jenneka kembelew ton*), which organised the celebration for the yearly *Donda* (celebration for the anniversary of the birthday of the Prophet Mohammed), described the role of this celebration for the *Jennekaw* in the following terms:

⁴⁵ Robert Launay has noted a similar use of *Donda* celebrations to mark distinctive identities (1991). Whereas in Bouaké, *Donda* celebration distinguishes *Jennekaw* from other Muslims, in the Korhogo region, it is celebrated to assert the distinctivity of specific villages or wards (*kabila*).

The goal of the association is to gather the necessary sum of money to hold the annual festival celebrating the birthday of the prophet Mohammed. We help the older men's association with the logistics of the festival. Each year, there are financial difficulties because the older men, two or three days before the celebration, are still going around to find some money. The older men also gather money, but because they have children, they are heads of families, it is more difficult for them to have the available money. For this reason the original association has been divided into two associations. The older men meet the first Friday of each month to read the Qur'an. The younger men created a new association, in agreement with the older men, in order to gather the money, to prevent the last-minute problems regarding the organisation of the celebration. Each month, the members give 700F CFA: 600F the first meeting of the month and 100F the second meeting of the month. We meet every two weeks. The celebration is very important for the people of Jenne. Even the ones who are not in Jenne, even in France and in America, celebrate the birthday of Mohammed because they do not want to forget the family, our people, our origin. It keeps them from scattering all over the place and from losing touch. (interview with Bamouïé Maïga, May 21, 1995).

Place-of-origin associations, or ethnic voluntary associations, are one of many social spaces in which identities tied to the place of origin in Mali are produced and maintained by Muslims of Malian origin.⁴⁶ The *Jennekaw ton* exemplifies the collective unfolding of processes of identification tied to the places of origin in Mali.⁴⁷

The *Jennekaw ton* is made up of three sub-groups: the women's association, which meets to celebrate social events and which plays the role of a mutual economic and social support system (tontine-like); the older men's group, which gathers semi-monthly to read the Qur'an and other Islamic texts; and, the young men's group which was created to help organising and financing of the celebration of *Donda*. A young women's

⁴⁶ These associations unite individuals from the same place of origin in Mali. But, these associations are strictly concerned with the economic and social life of individuals in Côte d'Ivoire. Côte d'Ivoire has a long history of such home-based associations which rely on ethnocultural elements of common identity. These associations are not only made up of individuals from countries other than Côte d'Ivoire. There are similar associations uniting Ivorian groups. In fact, such associations (*Association des originaires de Côte d'Ivoire*, *Associations des Transporteurs de Côte d'Ivoire*, and *Association des Ressortissants du Sudan*) have played a significant role in Ivorian national politics and in the creation of the PDCI (Lewis 1970; Baingui 1982).

⁴⁷ In Chapter 6, I will discuss the individual unfolding of such identities.

group had sprung up from the initial women's section, but since its leader left Bouaké for Abidjan in 1994, it folded.⁴⁸

The *Jennekaw ton* is organised around the household of one of the leading merchants and transporters of the *Jennekaw* community in Bouaké. The community of individuals from Jenne remains small enough for its members to be in more or less regular contact. A newcomer from the Jenne region would invariably get into contact with one of the long-established households. Otherwise, he or she would be regarded very suspiciously by the established community, who would eventually hear about the newcomer.

Amongst the *Jennekaw* who settled in Bouaké with their families, the *Jennekaw ton* fulfils the following sociocultural roles. First, it maintains a network of kin and social relations, which translate into the sense of a *Jenneka* community. This network acts as a system of social and economic support for its members. For instance, my analysis of the women's association notebooks in which contributions to celebrations are noted⁴⁹ show that the 108⁵⁰ female members are all connected through kinship (actual or fictive) or friendship with the five initial families. Second, the *Jennekaw ton* reproduces cultural practices specific to the members of the association and to its community of origin in Mali: public festivities at the time of the *donda*, modalities of marriage ceremonies, rules of endogamous marriages, Songhay language, artistic productions in the form of dance, music and songs, and the Songhay *nyamankala* system. Both dimensions of the *Jennekaw ton* contribute to the maintenance of ties of belonging and a sense of communality through shared and regular activities.

⁴⁸ Here, "young women" refers to women in their thirties and forties. This age range is in keeping with the local definition of age groups and age grades (see, Chapter 4).

⁴⁹ All associations have these notebooks. A designated member of the association is responsible for writing down the exact contribution of each member at the time of specific events, such as marriages, naming ceremonies and engagement parties. The amount of the contribution is usually fixed. The more economically successful associations also hold weekly, monthly or by-monthly meetings during which the members of the association are expected to contribute a regular sum of money. This sum may vary according to the economic status of the members from 250F CFA to 10,000F CFA. These contributions are noted in a separate notebook and are redistributed to members of the association in a rotating fashion, each member having their turn, as in a tontine.

⁵⁰ Based on the celebration notebooks for the years 1994 and 1995, I have counted 108 different contributing members. However, the core of the association is made up of approximately 30 women who are at the centre of most activities and of the decision-making process.

3.8 Conclusion

In summary, the history of settlement in Bouaké and in Côte d'Ivoire since French colonisation has altered historical migratory patterns to the extent that certain ethnocultural groups, namely long-distance Islamised traders, that had previously remained at the margin of the forest zone, settled in southern areas of today's Côte d'Ivoire. Encouraged by colonial and national economic policies, other northern populations joined the initial trading communities in the forest zone throughout the twentieth century. By 1965, over one million Africans, born in regions north of the forest zone, inside and outside of contemporary Côte d'Ivoire, had settled in the region (Lewis 1970). This movement of populations has brought about the redefinition of the emic use of the Dioula label. Moreover, these "foreign" populations played, and still do, an ambiguous role in the post-independence process of nation-state building in Côte d'Ivoire. While fulfilling a central role in Ivorian economy, as plantation labourers and as long-distance traders, they remain the social groups against which the political process constructs Ivorian national religious and cultural identity. Since the 1990s, the issue of foreigners has been projected into the centre of the political debates. Through this process, a relation of synonymy has been established between the "Dioula," "Muslim," and "foreigner" identity labels.

These colonial migratory transformations, along with the creation of a commercial and industrial infra-structure, have contributed to the development of the city of Bouaké. From the 1920s onwards, groups from the northern region settled in Bouaké, especially from the region that is now Mali. As such, Bouaké became a city more or less divided between Baoulés and Muslims, in large part of Malian origin.

At the level of processes of identification pertaining to the individual, Muslims of Malian origin identify in relation to two forms of ethnic labels: the Dioula label and ethnocultural identity referents tied to places of origin in Mali. At the same time, each of these two levels of identification is enmeshed into different geosocial spaces: that is, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, interconnected relations of power, and a specific historical trajectory.

Where Dioula identity is mostly a political identity, ethnocultural identities tied to the place of origin in Mali organise everyday life for most Muslims of Malian origin in Mali. However, the relation, at the same time dichotomous and continuous, between the site of emigration and the site of immigration conceals the in-between spaces where, in a historical trajectory, different referents of identity are articulated in order to produce new complexes of identification. In this case, these elements are tied to religious identity (Islam), to age grades, to gender differentiation, and to the *nyamankala* tradition. Moreover, historical trajectories imply that each idiom of ethnic identification is evoked in distinct domains of social relations and social significance.

However, despite its dissociation from specific cultural practices, the dimension of communality invoked through the Dioula label is not restricted to discursive practice, that is, the establishment of borders between "us" and "them" through the use of ethnocultural labels. To a certain extent, the Dioula label has come to carry a significance at the level of social practice as well. In the context of Bouaké's sociocultural heterogeneity, it is likely that individuals originating from different ethnocultural groups find themselves in a position of having to negotiate elements of communality in their practice. For example, at the time of a *wolotlan* (engagement party) amongst the Malinkés (from the Kaye region in Mali), members of the groom's family and of the bride's family exchange kola nuts and soap. Amongst the Songhay of Jenne, they exchange only kola nuts. As a consequence, at the time of a *wolotlan* between a Songhay family and a Malinké family, in most cases the exchange is restricted to kola nuts. So, to a certain extent the Dioula identity becomes a sociocultural space in which individuals from different groups negotiate elements of communality that, despite the fact that they often end up being reduced to common denominators, may generate a new cultural identity.

This phenomenon is specifically remarkable in the case of a portion of urban youth, among whom the Dioula label is evoked as a label of communality. Elements of self-identification amongst some young urbanites are expressed in the phrase: : "*Nous les petits Dioulas*" (We the little Dioulz). In these cases, being Dioula is more significant than being Songhay, Maraka, or Fula. Furthermore, this use of the Dioula label, Islam, rather than *sya* identity referents, has come to play a central role as

a determinant of cultural practices and as a locus of self-identification. In a context of high ethnic heterogeneity and of spatial and social distance from practices tied to the place of ancestry in Mali, youth who are intrinsically urban, that is who were born and brought up in Bouaké and who do not have a sense of "having a village," are turning to common referents of identity in order to create a sense of belonging. Islam is at the centre of these processes of identification.

CHAPTER 4:**SHIFTING IDENTITIES:
THE YOUNG,
SOCIAL CHANGE, AND ISLAM IN THE CITY****4.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, I have sketched out the forms of social identities, lifeworlds, worldviews, and networks tied to *sya* categories that are claimed by Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké. However, for a certain portion of young Muslims, Islam, rather than *sya*, is a focal point of self-identification, as well as the basis for social organisation and a sense of belonging. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the historical conditions of the salience of Islam as a lifeworld and as a worldview. One manifestation of this identity shift is the recent creation and growth of neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations. Over the past fifteen years, these associations have come to replace young Muslims' dance associations and ethnocultural associations in the different neighbourhoods of Bouaké. Young men and women from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds participate in Islamic youth associations.

I will emphasise nonetheless that Islam is one identity alternative amongst others for young Muslim men and women, even if it is a very salient one. As I will show in Chapter 6, the acquisition of Western-style education and inscription within a "Western modernity" worldview remain significant lifeworlds. Moreover, Christianity is also a potent worldview for urban youth who are not Muslims.¹

¹ A number of authors have also noticed that Christianity plays a significant role as an identity referent amongst young men and women in other African contexts (see Gifford 1994; Mbembe, 1985, 1988 for instance). I have not conducted fieldwork in the context of Christian churches and their rapport with youth, but Christian churches are very active in Bouaké and young men and women are major actors in their activities. This is to say that the specificity of the centrality of religion as an identity referent amongst certain youth may not be entirely limited to Islam. However, the specificity of Islam in this case is the historical conditions under which Islam acquired its significance for contemporary young men and women.

The salience of Islam amongst urban youth in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere in the world may be associated with a number of global conditions, such as the global position of Islam as a world religion and the role of some Arab countries as influential political players on the international scene since the 1970s. However, the purpose of this chapter is to highlight the specificity of the case of Bouaké by describing local historical conditions which account for the centrality of Islam as a lifeworld and worldview for a number of young men and women today.

This chapter fulfils five objectives. First, I will define the social position of these young men and women through the description of the social construction of age categories and life course transitions. Second, I will show that, at a local level, this identity shift is primarily due to the process of international migration, the conditions of urban life, structural changes in the past forty years affecting educational (both Western-style and Qur'anic-style) institutions in Côte d'Ivoire, and the restructuring of Islamic associations since 1990. These four elements of social change have brought about a distantiation between these youth and their parental (and ancestral) identities tied to places of origin in Mali. Changes at the level of Islamic institutions have gathered a number of national Islamic associations around specific sociopolitical claims. Third, I will present the case studies of the life trajectories of three young men, showing the place of Islam in their everyday life (as a prominent lifeworld and worldview). (In Chapter 6, I will present detailed life trajectories of young women. Both chapters need to be read as complements to each other.) In the fourth section of the chapter, based on the previous description of individual experiences of identifying as Muslims, I will address the issue of the definitions of Islam and Muslimhood for Muslims in Bouaké and Côte d'Ivoire, and I will describe modalities of differentiation within the Islamic community of Bouaké. This will allow me, lastly, to situate neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations, and to discuss their history, memberships and structures.

The structure of this chapter is somewhat atypical to the extent that I present the narration of the life trajectories of three young men in the middle of the chapter rather than at the end. I have chosen to do so in order to re-emphasise my framework of analysis, which necessitates a movement back and forth between individual experience -- in other words,

the analysis of actor-centred experience -- and structural elements -- that is, historical and political conditions that account for the relative position of individuals or groups of individuals relative to the dynamics of power relations in specific social contexts (Marcus 1986; Gallissot 1989). I have already addressed, in the conclusion of Chapter 2, the necessity to use reconstructed individual life trajectories in combining these dimensions of the analysis (Abu-Lughod 1991). Moreover, such a mode of presentation also fits within the logic of the argument of the thesis. Chapter 4 is a transitional chapter between questions tied to ethnicity and Islam. Chapters 2 and 3 describe dimensions of ethnic, political, religious, economic and social stratification out of which Islam acquires a specific social meaning in Bouaké and Côte d'Ivoire. Thus, this chapter focuses, first, on elements of distinctivity of certain young Muslims and the general Islamic environment in Côte d'Ivoire, from there it examines the specificity of life experiences, which opens the way to a discussion of processes of differentiation amongst Muslims, and neighbourhood-based Islamic associations in Bouaké. The analysis in the remaining chapters of the thesis strictly focuses on the social dimensions of Islam in processes of identification. (However, by doing so, I do not wish to deny its other dimensions, intellectual, spiritual, doctrinal or aesthetic.)

4.2 "Youth": the sociohistorical definition of age groups

When discussing the question of youth, the first question to come to mind is the definition of the sociological categories in question, that is, "young" and by extension the "old" or "elders."

In general terms, age categories and stages in the life course are defined sociologically and historically (Bayart *et. al.* 1992; Cruise O'Brien 1996; Last 1992). Sociologically, age categories acquire a significance according to the historically constructed relationship between the different age groups, implying that the different historically constructed age categories are associated with differentiated social roles and statuses. These roles and statuses correspond to relative power within a given societal setting. As a consequence, age categories vary across cultures and change over time.

In Africa, age groups are a significant element of social identification and stratification. And socially constructed age categories are often associated with differentiated power throughout the different stages of the life course. Sociopolitical power is associated with age, with "growing older."

Moreover, "being young" in Bouaké today is likely to imply a different set of socioeconomic conditions than a century ago, or even just a generation ago. The social stakes facing the youth of today are not the same as the ones with which the youth of the independence era reckoned. Young men and women today have grown up in the context of a declining economic and political system. Born in the 1960s and 1970s, they have experienced the aftermath of the 1983-84 cocoa and coffee crisis in Côte d'Ivoire; the last decade of structural adjustment, which translated into significant cutbacks of state spending, especially regarding education; the intense period of major public works projects started in the 1980s, which drained the remaining state funds; and the 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc which diminished, amongst other things, the possibility of studying abroad (Fauré 1989; Dozon 1994). Young men and women today have, in numerous cases, reached a relatively high level of schooling (high school level if not university in Western-style schools, and the equivalent of high school levels in the *madrasa* system), but they are often without employment. Young men are not in a position to set up an independent household and get married. By comparison, their parents' generation became adults in a context of relative prosperity, especially during the economic boom of the 1970s in Côte d'Ivoire (Fauré 1989).

Moreover, "becoming an adult" today in Bouaké implies different stages than in the past. Historically in West African societies, the life course was marked by ritualised stages often enacted through age grades or secret societies. In Bouaké amongst Muslims of Malian origin, group initiation rites marking the passage from childhood to adulthood have not existed for approximately the last thirty years. This rite used to include seclusion in an excision or circumcision house for a specific period of time, dressing in special clothes, offerings of gifts, and celebrations with music, dances and food. Amongst Muslims, the core of such group initiation rites was excision for young women and circumcision for young men. Both rituals still exist, but they are now performed on an individual basis and at

a very young age, usually during the first two years of life. Mothers prefer to circumcise or excise their newborn child within the first month of their life because during that period the mother rests at home, permitting her to tend to the child full time.² The majority of children of Malian origin in Bouaké are still being circumcised or excised. Almost all baby boys are circumcised. Some of the young men who had not been circumcised at a young age will have the operation before they get married. The baby girls still get excised, but with less frequency than in the case of circumcision for baby boys. Young women who were not excised as infants, may either get excised when they have their first child, or as teens in a group with cousins and/or sisters, but there will not be public celebrations for the event. It seems that this is often the case with the individuals who were born while the practice was changing. Some young men in their early twenties were not part of group circumcisions as adolescents, as their elder brothers had been. When their age group came of age to be circumcised, the practice was withering in Bouaké, so they were not circumcised. But, in their late teens, many felt compelled to do so and went to a Hausa circumcisor.

In Bouaké today, the life course of an individual is marked by birth, rituals marking the birth (naming ceremony, and/or *denuli*), weaning (marking a significant transition in the mother-child relationship), schooling, work, marriage, parenthood, end of productive period (biological reproduction and economic productivity), and death. . The significance and the order of the stages vary amongst men and women

² After a birth, women are entitled to a period of forty days of rest. I am describing the prescribed practice. Obviously, all women do not get to enjoy this forty days of rest. It depends on her family responsibility and on the number of children she has in her care at the time of the birth. If the woman can go back to her mother's house for the birth, she will more or less enjoy the forty days. In principle, new mothers must remain in their room for ten days with the child. Then, the child is given a name and his or her head is shaven. It is at this time that the mother and child can go out in the courtyard. During this period, the new mother may receive visitors, but she cannot go on visits outside of the courtyard. The new mother is also exempt from domestic work except for the care of her child: washing the baby, the baby's clothes and nappies. It is also often during this period of isolation and rest that the newborn child will be circumcised or excised depending on the sex. It is argued that the mother has the leisure time to attend to the child's pain and discomfort. And since the mother does not go out of the courtyard, she will not need to strap the child on her back, which cannot be done after the circumcision or the excision of a child.

Of course, if a woman remains at home and she does not have help in her courtyard, through a servant, a co-wife, her mother-in-law, or other women, she will not be able to rest after the birth. Often poorer women and more socially isolated women, two situations that often go together, will be washing their birthing cloth and be cooking a meal for their husband a few hours after birthing.

(see Figure 1). The main element of variation concerns the passage to adulthood.

Figure 1 Stages and rituals of the life course

women:

birth -> naming, excision and *denuli* -> weaning -> schooling (*madrasa*-style or Western-style) -> marriage -> motherhood -> menopause -> death

men:

birth -> naming, circumcision and *denuli* -> weaning -> schooling (*madrasa*-style or Western-style) -> employment (economic autonomy) -> marriage -> fatherhood -> end of economic activity -> death

For men, "becoming an adult" translates into economic autonomy and marriage, whereas for women, it corresponds to marriage and motherhood. As a consequence, what is at stake for young urban men and women today is employment and marriage. In the context of economic and political instability, most young men and women are concerned with finding work and getting married. The major issue is what happens to the growing number of at least partially educated young men and women in Côte d'Ivoire.

In linguistic terms, the life course of the individual is divided into several categories (see Figure 2). Each age group has a specific term, often further distinguished by gender.

Based on these two dimensions (life course and linguistic terms) of the construction of age categories, three criteria emerge in the sociohistorical definition of age groups. First, age groups are generally defined, in broad terms, by biological age. For instance, youth covers the period from thirteen to forty-five years old. For young women, it is reduced to the period between approximately thirteen to twenty-three to twenty-five years old. Women grow socially older faster than men because they marry younger than men as a general rule. Ideally, a wife is ten to fifteen years younger than her husband. Social behaviour is the second criterion which defines membership in an age group. One man of forty-five years old can be a *kembeleni* (young unmarried man) at the same time that another

man of forty-five can be seen as *chekoroba* (old man) if he displays certain types of behaviours. One becomes *koro* (old) when one asks to be called so, when one looks old (that is, having white hair, and a beard, for men), when one dresses like an

Figure 2: Terminology of age categories

| <u>Dioula/Banmanan term</u> | <u>English equivalent</u> |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <i>den</i> | > child, general, and female, 0-12 |
| <i>denmissen</i> | > small child, general, male and female, 0-5 |
| <i>deninani</i> | > infant and baby, and female, 0-2 |
| <i>denfitini</i> | > child, male and female, until puberty, 0-12 |
| <i>sunguroni</i> | >unmarried pubescent female, 12-20 |
| <i>borotigini</i> | > young married female, 15-35 |
| <i>kembeleni</i> | > unmarried young male, 15-35 |
| <i>chemisseni</i> | > married young male, 20-40 |
| <i>mussokoroba</i> | > old female, postmenopause |
| <i>chekoroba</i> | > old male, no longer economically active |
| <i>mussokoroni</i> | > very old female, 70 years old and over |
| <i>chekoroni</i> | > very old male, 70 years old and over |

old person (that is, wearing a prayer veil for women, wearing African-style cloth and *boubous*), and/or when one remains at home without working. In terms of behaviour, youth is defined by types of outings (going to bars, or the cinema, visiting friends, and so forth), specific associative behaviours (for instance, *grin*, or informal neighbourhood male associations, amongst young men),³ music and dancing to Western,

³ Louis Brenner (1994) defines *grin* as "a social institution which has emerged in urban Mali in recent decades, and may indeed be unique to that country. It refers to a small group of people, usually but not necessarily young, who meet together every day literally to pass time" (p.3). Augustin Cissé offers a similar definition of *grin* : "groupes de 3 à 10 personnes se retrouvant régulièrement autour du thé ou de la table de belote " (Cissé

Caribbean, and popular African-styles music (*zouk*, *zouglo*), and clothing which is often modelled on ideals of Western fashion. Finally, age groups are associated with specific rights and statuses. The passage from youth to adulthood is determined by socioeconomic autonomy, signalled by marriage and the capacity to establish an independent household. This autonomy leads to the capacity to make decisions for oneself and for others. This level of autonomy is different for men and for women. To a certain extent, women rarely acquire economic autonomy, and when they do, they are still under the control of their husband. In cases where women are economically active (mostly in trade), the money they earn is their own and is used for the needs of the household only in cases where the husband is incapable of providing for his family's needs. In certain cases, women acquire autonomy and a significant voice in the decision-making process because they fulfil the role of economic provider. In the context of the gerontocratic Dioula society, youth is equivalent to powerlessness. It is thus desirable to move from the status of youth to the status of adult.

4.3 The specificity of lived experience

A number of elements of social life mark the specificity of young Muslims in Bouaké for whom Islam is a primary locus of identification. Their lived experience and life trajectories demarcate them from their elders and from other young men and women who live in lifeworlds and according to worldviews similar to their parents'. On the one hand, Islam acquires meaning for these young men and women in the context of the contingencies of international migration and subsequent urban life in Bouaké. On the other hand, over the past forty years in Côte d'Ivoire, a number of structural changes pertaining to education (Western-style and *madrasa* -style) and to the organisation of the Muslim collectivity have brought about a significant experiential gap between these young Muslims and their elders.

4.3.1 Distantiation from the place of origin and urban heterogeneity

International migration from Mali to Côte d'Ivoire, which was experienced by the parents or by previous generations, has resulted, in some cases, in a gap between the lifeworlds of some young men and women, and their parents. These youth are distant, spatially and culturally, from their ancestral lifeworlds and worldviews.

One should note that in general in the case of Malians, international migration does not imply a material and symbolic break between the ancestral place in Mali and Bouaké. The long-standing history of long-distance trade favoured the maintenance of material and symbolic ties. Besides long-distance trade, there are a number of practices that encourage the maintenance of ties between the place of origin and the place of immigration, such as the practice of returning to one's mother's house to give birth to a first child, the practice of getting a bride in the ancestral village, the different practices of child-fostering, and the permanent flow of child and adult labour across the national borders. Medicinal products and other material goods, especially those tied to female bodily aesthetic, are also regularly acquired from Mali. People also return to Mali regularly for *indigenat*, or medicinal therapies based on plants and other natural resources (for instance, in the Macina, rivers are central to certain forms of *indigenat*), spiritual and ancestral rituals, and *maraboutage*. However, the young Muslims in question stand at the margins of these material and symbolic ties between the place of origin in Mali and Bouaké.

These young men and women are also characterised by their lack of awareness of cultural practices tied to their parents' place of origin in Mali. Such practices include artistic productions ranging from music and dance to bodily aesthetic, culinary practices, traditional trades such as weaving, agriculture, blacksmithing, long-distance trade, and *griotisme* (or, praise singing.) In most cases, they could not perform cultural rituals on their own, such as *denuli* (a female celebration associated with the naming ceremony) or *konyo* (a female celebration of marriage ceremony). However, when discussing a transgenerational cultural shift, one should beware of the limitations of notions of "loss of culture." These young men

and women may not be presently aware of their parents' ancestral cultural practices, but this observation does not translate into asserting that they are irreversibly cut off from their ancestral culture. First, it is possible that they will acquire some knowledge of ancestral cultural practices as they grow older. For instance, frequently at the time of life-stage rituals such as marriage and parenthood, individuals seek to reaffirm and/or recreate their ancestral "traditions" (LeBlanc 1991). Moreover, it has been shown in numerous cases, and it is now widely accepted that "traditions" can be invented (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), or that individuals can conceive of new cultural practices as ancestral traditions. The contemporary significance of such a cultural gap between these young Muslims and their elders is that they presently partake in distinct cultural lifeworlds. This is notable to the extent that a large number of other young Muslims partake in the same cultural lifeworlds as their parents.

The date of family migration also plays a role in the process of distantiation from their place of origin in Mali experienced by these young men and women. In some cases, the family has been established in Bouaké for about two generations or, in other cases, the family migrated very recently. This implies that, despite the maintenance of significant material and symbolic ties between the place of origin and Bouaké, there might have been a withering away of cultural knowledge associated with the ancestral place of origin in Mali.

However, the experienced cultural gap between these youth and their elders is principally due to recent structural changes in Western-style and *madrasa*-style educational systems. Often the young Muslims in question do not speak their parents' mother tongue, such as Songhay or Maraka (except in the case of Fulas, regardless of the time of migration, because amongst Fulas it is frequent that the mother speaks neither Dioula nor French.⁴ Young educated men and women usually speak Dioula/Banmanan with their parents, using a significant amount of French. Even at that, the parents consider that they speak a lesser form of Banmanan than that spoken in Mali. Their parents refer to their Dioula language as *tabushi kan* (*kan* means "language" and *tabushi* literally

⁴ In Bouaké, amongst Fula, it is frequent that young women only attend *madrasa* schools for a few years. They rarely attend national French language schools. They spend most of their adolescence at home with their mothers.

means "mixed race"), which implies in this case that the children do not possess the "pure" form of the language, according to the parents. By extension, it refers to individuals whose family originated from Mali but who do not speak their family's language of origin, who have Ivorian Dioula as a mother tongue, who are not enmeshed into a social network extending back to Mali, who have never been to Mali, who know little about Mali, and who are not particularly interested in Mali and their place of origin. In cases where their parents speak French, it is frequent that young men and women do not really speak Dioula/Banmanan. With their friends and at school, they speak French or Arabic, depending on whether they were educated in the national French-language schooling system or in the *madrasa* system. In most cases, their parents do not speak Arabic because they were schooled in *mory kalan*-style schools rather than in *madrasa*-style schools. (I will come back to this later.) In cases where the language of teaching used in *madrasa* schools is not Arabic language, it is Dioula language.

Moreover, the young Muslims described here usually do not participate in ethnocultural associations which are centred around places of origin in Mali. They participate in Islamic associations, as I will discuss later in this chapter. Or, in the case of youth who were educated in national French language schools, they tend to participate in Western-style associations such as the Lion's Club or the Rotary Club. Such Western-style associations are more relevant to their present lifeworld. These associations are made up of bureaucrats, professionals, and entrepreneurs. Such associations provide socioeconomic networks which are relevant to these young men's and women's aspirations for the future - - that is, finding salaried work or entering a Western-style profession.

The youth in question also stand outside of the political and social structures of their ancestral place in Mali. They stand outside of structures of social stratification such as kin or descent groups, *nyamankalaw*, and free/slave status. For instance, in their view, their social status is not defined by membership of a specific kin group within a specific village or quarter. Their social status is much more defined by local dynamics of class structures established through access to certain types of employment. They are aware of such village-based ancestral structures, but their practices are not modelled on them. For example, they are aware

of marriage taboos but it is likely that they will not respect them, unless they were made to enter into a form of *balmafuru* (or, consanguine marriage.)⁵ Through their trajectory of education, they also stand to a certain extent somewhat at the fringe of elder/junior hierarchies. Traditionally, as in most African societies, knowledge is acquired through lifetime experience and such knowledge confers a higher social status. As such, knowledge belongs to elders. But with the recent democratisation of Western-style schooling and the restructuring of Qur'anic schooling, young men and women are accessing a form of knowledge that stands outside of their elders' reach and which is highly valorised by Ivorian society.

Urban life, coupled with the transgenerational experience of migration within the family, is another dimension of the life experience of these young men and women which favours Islam as a locus of self and collective identification. Urban life is marked by a high level of social and cultural heterogeneity (I have described the specificity of Bouaké's social composition in Chapter 3). This implies that a large number of individuals originating from different places and possessing differing cultural practices coexist and need to relate to one another. In Bouaké today, for young Muslims of Malian origin who are distant from their ancestral cultural practices, two alternatives emerge: Dioula identity and Islam. On the one hand, "being Dioula" already implies "being Muslim." Moreover, I have shown in Chapter 3 that, in the present context in Bouaké, the Dioula label is devoid of a basis in cultural practice. Dioula/Banmanan language can

⁵ The term *balmafuru* means consanguine marriages between cousins. *Balma* means "kin." In contemporary Bouaké, *balmafuru* has acquired a meaning beyond consanguine marriages. It can also refer to other forms of endogamous marriages between individuals from the same village of birth, from the same ancestral village, from the same ethnic group, with the same patronym, or belonging to the same "fictive kin." By the notion of "fictive kin," I refer to individuals who consider themselves to be siblings despite the absence of blood ties between them. This relationship can be due to historical ties between groups, such as ties of *senankoya* (joking relationship) or life circumstances. For instances, if A grew up in a multiple family courtyard where B's family also lived, A and B will consider that they are siblings or children of siblings. And, if they marry, the marriage can be regarded as *balmafuru*. *Balmafuru* also invokes the practice of "arranged marriage," that is marriages contracted between the parents of the spouses without their initial consent. However, *balmafuruw* are not necessarily arranged marriages. And, arranged marriages, which are more frequent than not, are not necessarily *balmafuruw*. Nonetheless, in Bouaké, marriages between paternal cross-cousins (the traditional form of endogamous marriages) still exist. Such marriages are mostly performed by individuals of Maraka, Fula and Songhay origin. In fact, among the general Muslim and Dioula population in Bouaké (and Côte d'Ivoire), Marakas and Fulas are described as "traditional" because of the persistence of consanguine marriages amongst these groups, amongst other criteria.

provide a cultural basis for the Dioula identity. But since it is the vernacular language of Côte d'Ivoire, it lacks cultural specificity. And a significant number of these young Muslims speak only "market Dioula" that is, a very simplified form of Dioula/Banmanan in which a large number of French words are used. As such, the Dioula identity is not an effective means of social organisation to the extent that it refers to a very fluid group of individuals and that there are no form of instituted social organisation centred around the Dioula label. On the other hand, Islam, as a result of the recent restructuring of associative and educational Islamic institutions, is much more effective as a means of collective identification and social claims. In fact, in this context of cultural distantiation, Islam frequently is the only element of community between these youth and their elders -- even if, as I will show in chapter 5, the version of Islam that is privileged by youth in Islamic youth associations differs from and is often contrasted with the elders' practice of Islam.

4.3.2 Structural changes

4.3.2.1 Changes affecting Islamic education

Over the past forty years or so, the Qur'anic schooling system in Côte d'Ivoire has undergone a shift from *mory kalan*-style teaching to the growth of *madrasas*, similar to the process that took place in Mali (Brenner 1991, 1993).⁶ The first *madrasa* school to be opened in Bouaké started in 1948 in Soukoura neighbourhood with Kabine Djani, a Guinean, as its director.

Madrasa schools are Franco-Arabic schools teaching Islam as well as other academic subjects such as mathematics, Arabic language, Arabic grammar and Arabic reading skills, geography, Islamic history, French language, and in some cases English language. *Madrasas* also organise celebrations -- such as activities for the end of the academic year, Tabaski and Ramadan celebrations -- host students' associations, and sponsor

⁶ In Mali, Louis Brenner noted the existence of two types of *madrasa* schools (Brenner 1991). The first type were Franco-Arabic schools instituted by the French colonial administration in Jenne and Timbuktu to train colonial administrators. The second type were *madrasas* created under local African initiative. From the 1940s onwards, African Muslims hoped to create schools in which students could be taught Islam and the Arabic language using reformed pedagogical technics. When I refer to the growth and development of *madrasa* schools in Bouaké, I am using the term *madrasa* in the second sense.

Islamic conferences and competitions. In *mory kalan* schools, students are taught strictly Qura'nic texts following the mnemonic method. The student graduates when he or she can recite the whole Qur'an. *Mory kalan* schools are usually situated in the compound of a local imam or at a neighbourhood mosque. They are neither structured around a centralised academic curriculum, nor time table (Konan-Dauré and Désalmand 1983). Usually, the only pedagogic method which they use is mnemonic. *Mory kalan* schools still exist in Bouaké, but with a significantly impaired reputation and in a somewhat reduced number.⁷

Most *madrasa* schools in Bouaké emerged from *mory kalan* schools. For instance, the el-Hittihadiya *madrasa* in Air France 1 was created in 1974 when the imam of the mosque on Rue 18 (Air France 1), who ran a *mory kalan* school in his compound asked a rich local long-distance trader to help him build a school. The imam also asked one of his uncles who was the director of a relatively well established *madrasa* in Braouli (near Ségou, Mali) to send someone to help him teach the students. The imam and the family of the merchant are also from the village of Braouli. The director of the *madrasa* in Braouli sent one of his trained teachers to become the director of el-Hittihadiya *madrasa*, and this man subsequently asked a colleague from the same *madrasa* in Braouli to come and assist him. In 1995, there were three paid teachers at el-Hittihadiya *madrasa*: one from Mali, one from Guinea and one from Bouaké. The other teachers were ex-students or older students. At the time, there were about 150 students at the school.

Besides an extension of the academic content, the shift from *mory kalan* schools to *madrasas* implied the implantation of new pedagogic skills modelled both on Western and Arab models of classroom teaching. The Western classroom teaching model emerged from the experience of colonisation. The adoption of Arabic (mostly Saudi) pedagogic skills is tied to the presence of West African students in Arab countries and the involvement of international Islamic institutions in Islamic schools in Bouaké. For instance, in 1992, *madrasa* teachers were invited to participate in a national conference on pedagogic skills organised by the international Organisation Culturelle Islamique (OCI). The growth of

⁷ While I was in the field, there were approximately 30 *mory kalan* schools in Bouaké.

madrasas also necessitated new infrastructure, including the construction of larger schools, the acquisition of large blackboards, desks, and school supplies (books, pens, pencils and notebooks). School directors (usually trained in Mali, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, or Kuwait) and trained teachers (usually trained in Mali, Guinea, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Morocco, Mauritania, or Sierra Leone) were also hired and given a regular salary. Poorer *madrasas* often revert to using upper level students or ex-students as unpaid teachers. Most *madrasa* teachers and directors in Bouaké belong to the Ligue des Promulgateurs de Côte d'Ivoire (LIP-CI).

The Ligue des Promulgateurs de Côte d'Ivoire, established in Bouaké since 1989, is quite active in Qur'anic schools and in other Islamic associations. The national association was created in 1988 in Abidjan. It is made up of *marabouts* as well as Qur'anic and *madrasa* teachers. It is linked to equivalent Saudi associations. It serves as much as an association of teachers as an association of preachers. LIP-CI is affiliated with CNI; in Bouaké, some of the founders of CNI are members of LIP-CI. In 1993, the executive committee of LIP-CI was also the executive committee of CNI in Bouaké. LIP-CI is concerned with the inclusion of *madrasa* schools into the national schooling system. The association wants to build a school that could be included within the national schooling system. LIP-CI's role is:

to maintain the Islamic faith, because people have started to lose their belief. It is necessary to show Muslims how to differentiate between the practices that are in agreement with the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed, blessed be he, and the ones that are not. This is the most important task in the present context, where many new practices are being adopted by Muslims. Such a task is to be accomplished by bringing Muslims together through preaching and teaching; to explain the principles of Islam to the population at large; to provide preachers when there is an event requiring a preacher; to co-ordinate Qur'anic teachers in the city; to create a link between Islamic associations in Bouaké, and between Islamic associations in Muslim countries and Islamic associations in Bouaké; and to supervise religious matters. (Issa Kourouma, general secretary, LIP-CI)

Aside from LIP-CI, the four largest *madrasas* in Bouaké have student associations that at one time were represented in a city-based association (Association des Élèves Franco-arabes de Bouaké), which aimed at

creating links with other Islamic countries, mainly in the Middle East, in order to send students to study there or to obtain financial support and bursaries. When I first settled in Bouaké in 1993, it still held regular meetings, once a fortnight, but by the middle of the year, its activities had ceased.⁸ The largest *madrasa* (Dar-el-Arkame), in Sokoura, boycotted the activities of the association, and this ruined any chance of survival for the association. The Association des Élèves Franco-arabes de Bouaké never received direct financial support from Saudi Arabia or from Kuwait, but it managed to receive Islamic newspapers.

Madrasas are neither part of the national schooling system nor are recognised nor financed by the Ivorian government. Except for the largest and most successful *madrasa* in Sokoura, whose sources of financing were not clear to me, *madrasas* in Bouaké are all privately financed by the students' fees or by private contributions from rich notables of the community.⁹

In 1995, when I left Bouaké, there were five large *madrasas* in Bouaké: Assakafatou el-Islamaya in Sokoura, el-Hittihadiya in Air France 1, el-Makasside el-Islamaya in Dar-Es-Salaam, Sabil el-Fahou in Djambourou, and Ada Awatou el-Islamaya in the Zone Industrielle. Two of these *madrasas* offered an Arabic baccalaureate and el-Makasside el-Islamaya was trying to institute a baccalaureate programme. It is also expanding materially. El-Hittihadiya in Air France 1, however, is experiencing a decline in status, possibly due in part to disorganisation at the level of the school directorate. The director died in 1994 after a long sickness and a long stay in Mali. The assistant director, who was put in charge, lacked motivation due to the loss of his colleague and to numerous deaths in his own family in 1994 and 1995 (his father died in Mali in 1994 and one of his younger brothers died at Mecca in 1995).

⁸ When I went back to the field in January 1995, some of the ex-members of the Association des Élèves Franco-arabes de Bouaké had become active as *madrasa* students through the AEEM-CI.

⁹ I judge a *madrasa*'s success in terms of the number of baccalaureate degrees and bursaries for study abroad obtained by the students. At this particular Sokoura *madrasa*, the director of the school was very reluctant to talk to me. I conducted an interview with him, during which he refused to speak any language other than Arabic. He allowed me neither to speak to members of his staff nor to attend classes. Students and staffs from other large *madrasa* schools in Bouaké claim that this *madrasa* is financed, in part, by Saudi institutions, I could not verify these claims. In fact, the source of financing in *madrasa* schools was a very touchy subject in general.

These five large *madrasas* enrol between 150 and 500 students each. There were also approximately 12 smaller *madrasas* in Bouaké at the time. Some of these smaller *madrasas* were identified as Wahhabiyya schools. (I will discuss the question of the Wahhabiyya movement in Bouaké later in this chapter.)

Students from all the *madrasas* of Bouaké who obtain an Arabic baccalaureate can apply for bursaries to study abroad in countries where there are Islamic higher education institutions. The most prestigious destinations are Saudi Arabia and Egypt. From the accounts that I gathered, just a few students a year get such bursaries in Bouaké. There is no written record of the number of such bursaries being allocated on a yearly basis: official bursaries are tabulated, but there are also private bursaries which are hard to assess. Of the other students who obtain an Arabic baccalaureate, it seems that approximately four out of ten become Qur'anic teachers. The majority of the students who study abroad come back to Bouaké to become *madrasa* teachers. However, opportunities for such employment remain limited.

In fact, in the Muslim collectivity of Bouaké, it seems that contacts with Arabic countries are mainly maintained and furthered through *madrasas*.¹⁰ The largest *madrasa*, Dar el-Arkame in Sokoura, is directed by a man from Jenne, Mali, who studied in Saudi Arabia, and who maintained contact with that country. Some of his students obtain bursaries to study abroad in Islamic universities and schools. The large Assakafatou El-Islamaya *madrasa* in the Zone Industrielle also has some contacts with Muslim countries. Some of its teachers have been trained in Egypt and Mauritius. Despite active Saudi involvement in sub-Saharan Africa since the 1970s, Bouaké does not seem to be a target for Arab investments. A few instances of money being given by rich Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to Islamic groups in the past two decades were recounted to me by informants, but I neither witnessed evidence of such exchange, nor found any written documents about such transactions. The exchanges between Islamic countries and Muslims in Bouaké seem mostly to be taking place at the level of information and propaganda. Islamic groups in Arabic countries send Islamic newspapers

¹⁰ In 1993, the Ivorian government officially established contacts with Arab countries by opening a consulate in Saudi Arabia.

to some associations in Bouaké, and international Islamic associations such as OCI hold national conferences and training sessions in Côte d'Ivoire. Also, the training of Islamic students abroad implies that, upon returning to Bouaké, these young men and women are likely to import different points of view and philosophies regarding to Islam. The Wahhabiyya movement in the 1940s and 1950s was a notable example of the implantation of foreign Islamic doctrines by students in Côte d'Ivoire and in Mali (Kaba 1974; Amselle 1985; Triaud 1986).¹¹

Due to the paucity of written documents and to the scarcity of research about Islam in Côte d'Ivoire (Kaba 1974; Launay 1982, 1992; Lewis 1970), it is difficult to identify with certainty the historical reasons for such a shift to *madrasa* schooling from *mory kalan* over the past forty years. However, based on field accounts and the historiography of similar developments in Mali (Brenner and Last 1985; Brenner 1991, 1993), it is possible to highlight a few of the circumstances that could have brought about such a shift. Besides religious eschatology, the educational reforms were inspired by Near Eastern examples and the return of students from such countries. Over the last four decades, a number of students from *madrasa* schools in Bouaké have been trained at upper levels (post-baccalaureate) in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco, Mali, Mauritius, and other Islamic countries. Having been formally and "properly" trained, these youth, upon coming back to Bouaké, are in a position to spread an "educated" form of Islamic practice and to encourage the institutional organisation of believers. The Wahhabiyya movement was a significant player in such educational reforms in the 1950s in Bouaké and elsewhere in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali (Brenner 1991; Kaba 1974; Triaud 1986; Amselle 1985). Moreover, Muslims, under French colonial rule, noticed the effectiveness of French-language teaching methods used by the French administration in local colonial schools and saw the necessity of systematising their teaching methods. Both these elements in the rise of

¹¹ As Jean-Louis Triaud points out (1986), the use of the term Wahhabiyya in a West African context is contestable, as well as in Saudi Arabia. In the Saudi context, it refers to orthodox Sunni. In West Africa, it is used in the context of larger reform movements inspired by the students of al-Azhar in Cairo. The term was also used by the French colonial administration to divide the Muslim community. For the non-Wahhabis, it evokes a negative connotation (as I will show later in this chapter). Nonetheless, the term carries a strong popular meaning and is used to refer to reformed orthodox Muslims who were initially inspired by the ex-students of al-Azhar.

madrasa-style teaching unfolded in the 1950s context of internal resistance to the attitudes of the French colonial administration toward Islam (Brenner 1991).

4.3.2.2 Changes In the national educational system and the "salaried" worldview

In the aftermath of World War II, Western-style education was also restructured and democratised. The effect of such educational changes was that the life trajectories and expectations of young men and women today in Côte d'Ivoire differ from their parents', mostly regarding the use of the French language as an everyday language and appeal to salaried employment as a privileged lifestyle model.

The development of the Western-style schooling system in Côte d'Ivoire, as in other former French colonies in West Africa (especially Senegal) can roughly be divided into three phases (Bakary 1993; Moumouni 1964; Konan-Dauré and Désalmaud 1983). From 1817 to the end of World War II, aside from the Catholic mission schools, a colonial public schooling system was implanted for the purpose of forming a local indigenous subaltern elite, trained to support the colonial system. It was modelled on a policy of assimilation to French language and French culture, contrary to the English model implanted in Ghana and Nigeria, which relied on native languages. These French colonial schools were very slow to develop and very selective. Most of these schools were located in Senegal and Dahomey (contemporary Benin). These schools were referred to as "chief's schools". In fact, a large number of the leaders of the independence movements in West Africa were trained in these schools, especially at the William Ponty in Senegal. In the second phase, at the time of World War II and the beginning of African nationalist movements of independence, the number of schools and the total number of students grew two-to three-fold. African students who received scholarships went to pursue their studies in France; by 1959, there were a thousand Ivorian students in France (Zolberg 1964). It was also the time during which teaching was africanised by being adapted to African reality, and that teaching institutions multiplied. To a certain extent, in educational milieus, an "African identity", which was to be a springboard to independence, was constructed. Lastly, from the late 1950s onwards, the schooling system in Côte d'Ivoire was significantly expanded as a result of

independence and political autonomy. The democratisation of primary education was one of Houphouët-Boigny's political objectives. The schooling system was more or less modelled on the French system, including the French schooling cycle -- CP1 or *cours préparatoire 1*, CP2 or *cours préparatoire 2*, CE1 or *cours élémentaire 1*, CE2 or *cours élémentaire 2*, CM1 or *cours moyen 1*, CM2 or *cours moyen 2*, CEPE or *certificat d'études primaires et élémentaires*, 6ème, 5ème, 4ème, 3ème, 2ème, *Baccalauréat* -- and the French diplomas system -- CEPE or *Certificat d'études primaires et élémentaires*, BEPC or *Brevet d'études du premier cycle*, *Baccalauréat* -- with French as its language of instruction. Côte d'Ivoire also instituted a national university in Abidjan, and later a campus in Bouaké, and a number of national training centres. This expansion of the Ivorian schooling system led to the over-expansion of the elite class, which was employed by the *fonction publique* (national bureaucracy), through the training of large numbers of lawyers, doctors, engineers, economists, scientists, pharmacists, and so forth.

The expansion of formal education is a significant marker of the process of the democratisation of education in Côte d'Ivoire. In 1922, 1 out of 100 of school-age children attended school; in 1935, 1 out of 50 children attended school; and, in 1948, 1 out of 20 school-age children

Figure 3: Education and literacy in French, national %

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|--|
| Education beyond primary level: 31.7% |
| Education at upper levels (university and technical schools): 2.5% |
| Literacy: Ivorians: 53.5% |
| Non-Ivorians: 25.2% |

Source: Zanou, 1988

attended school (Zolberg 1964: 29). In the late 1980s, 1 out of 3 children of school age attended school. (Figure 3 shows the levels of education and literacy in French language within the country in 1988.)

I do not have current statistics regarding access to Western-style education by individuals of Malian origin. Within the categories of the census, some of them would fall within the "Ivorian" category, and the remainder is not differentiated by place of origin. Also, since children tend to migrate frequently between Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso, it is hard to calculate the actual numbers of children of Malian origin in Ivorian schools. However, it is obvious that most *madrasa* students in Bouaké are of Malian origin because Malians make up a very large portion of the Muslim collectivity in the city. Moreover, since the late 1980s, in the context of the government's structural adjustment policies, children of foreign origin no longer have free access to French-language national schools in Côte d'Ivoire. I suspect that for this reason some children have been taken out of national schools in Côte d'Ivoire and sent to attend school in Mali or elsewhere. Also, children used as domestic labour make up a large portion of the migrant population from Mali in Bouaké. These children are neither schooled in *madrasas* nor in the French-language national schools.

Western-style education, since the colonial period, expresses a persisting and very strong social symbolism, as well as being a source of political and economic power in Côte d'Ivoire (Bakary 1993). For young men and young women in their twenties and thirties in Côte d'Ivoire today, Western-style education is a springboard to penetrating the sociopolitical elite and to accessing to a privileged lifestyle (Bakary 1993; LePape 1986; Fauré 1989; Cruise O'Brien 1996; Bazin and Gnabélé 1994). This lifestyle corresponds to guaranteed, state-funded education at an upper level, as well as guaranteed employment in the national bureaucracy after one's studies. (The national bureaucracy includes all levels of governmental offices, hospitals and health-care facilities, and nationalised industries -- oil, coffee, cocoa, rice, textiles, water system, electricity, and so forth.) The social and political significance of the national bureaucracy in Côte d'Ivoire, as in other African countries, emerges from the role of the state as the principal local employer (Bakary 1993). Moreover, this model of socioeconomic success opens the possibility for a continuity between administrative employment in the national bureaucracy and a political career in the country.

It goes without saying that, within this salaried model, any type of manual employment is rejected by these young Western educated men and women, who are defined as "intellectuals" (LePape 1986). "Intellectuals" are individuals who work in offices, whether they work as typists or as university professors.

However, since the 1980s, with the economic crisis and ensuing measures of structural adjustment, Western-style education as the privileged route to salaried employment declined significantly for young men and young women. This is not to say that the level of enrolment in national schools is dropping, but that the possibility of pursuing one's studies at an upper level (university or technical schools) and to find employment within the national bureaucracy is less likely. With its structural adjustment plans, the Ivorian government has enacted significant cutbacks in education and in employment in the national bureaucracy (Fauré 1989). For instance, schooling at university level is no longer fully financed by the state (including the cost of studies and the cost of living). There are still bursaries allocated by the state to students, but the number is limited, the competition is fierce, and the fairness of attribution is questionable. Moreover, employment in the public sector is no longer guaranteed after one's university training.

Thus, the major issue has become what happens to the growing number of at least partially educated young men and women in Côte d'Ivoire today. Few of them can now hope to find employment in the public sector. The industrial sector has also been reducing employment. The alternatives are unemployment, work in the informal sector in petty trade, hustling, dependence on family, marriage (mostly in the case of women), migration abroad (especially in Europe or North America), and activating family socioeconomic networks and/or other forms of clientelism in order to penetrate trading activities or to apprentice in traditional trades, such as blacksmithing, weaving, tailoring and cloth dyeing. But, in many cases, "traditional trades" are no longer an alternative because these educated young men and women did not grow up in a context allowing them to practise these trades, which they find, in many cases, beneath their status as "intellectuals" in any case (LePape 1986).

In summary, like other Ivorians, these young men and women live with the consequences of economic and political mismanagement. A

large number of them were brought up to expect certain conditions of acceptable standards of living, implying a university education -- either abroad in France and/or in North America, or fully financed university education in Côte d'Ivoire -- and state-guaranteed employment following their studies, or the possibility of further training abroad. They were also brought up in families (their own or foster ones) where older siblings benefited from the period of prosperity in Côte d'Ivoire. But, under conditions of structural adjustment, this is no longer the situation for a large number of Ivorians. University education no longer is automatically financed by the state and employment is no longer guaranteed after the acquisition of a higher degree. Moreover, economic opportunities are not as significant as they were in the 1970s and early 1980s. These young people also must reckon with the breakdown of the university-level educational system: persistent university strikes leading to the cancellation of the academic year since 1990, over crowding of the classrooms, reduction of state bursaries (in the fall of 1997, the Ivorian government was considering the abolition of such funding), and new policies regarding academic performance, implying some arbitrary exclusions from the national educational system.

4.3.2.3 Impacts of changing educational systems, *madrasas* and national French-language schools

In Côte d'Ivoire, compared to some other West African countries, such as Senegal and Benin, Western-style education developed relatively slowly as a democratic national system. The process was significantly accelerated in the post-independence period since education was one of the PDCI's priorities. As a consequence, young men and women in their twenties and thirties today remain amongst the first generation in Côte d'Ivoire to have had access to democratised education. Some of their elders have certainly been educated in Western-style schools, but not in high numbers. Moreover, colonial schools in Côte d'Ivoire essentially served as training centres to produce local support staff to the colonial administration (clerks, secretaries, translators). Also, a large number of these young men and women's parents were born and brought up in Mali. Malian levels of formal education and literacy are much lower than in Côte

d'Ivoire. And, a good number of Malian migrants to Côte d'Ivoire are traders, artisans and agricultural workers, with a very low level of literacy.

The Islamic schooling system has also significantly changed over the past 40 years in Bouaké. The trend, at the moment, is to transform *madrasa* schools into national schooling institutions, as was the case in Mali in 1985 (Brenner, 1994). The return of African students from Islamic countries has also played a significant role in the transformation of Islamic education in Côte d'Ivoire. Such contacts between Côte d'Ivoire and Islamic countries are in large part at the root of a process of "arabisation" amongst Muslims in Côte d'Ivoire. "Arabisation" can be defined as the centrality of the Arabic language, reformed Qur'anic teaching methods, and the siding with Islamic causes against the Western world (Brenner 1993).

These institutional changes imply that the life trajectories and the life expectations of today's youth are divergent from their parents'. This means that, when examining the shift of identification from ethnicity to Islam, education (Western-style and *madrasa* -style) in its experiential dimension introduces the younger generation to a number of worldviews -- that is, Western-modernity, salaried employment, and "arabisation" -- which might not be present in their parents' lifeworld. While such an experiential discontinuity does not necessarily translate into intergenerational conflicts, it implies that elders and youth need to accommodate the differing lifeworlds in which they live and worldviews they adopt. Parents tend to privilege the worldviews proposed by the reformed Western-style and *madrasa* -style educational systems, lending legitimacy to the social position of their children. They regard formal education, especially in the case of Western-style education, as the privileged means to access regular employment in the civil service, in the private sector or in liberal professions.

Young women are central to the dynamics of social change tied to transformations in both systems of education. Many of the practices which are subjected to transformation and which may ultimately lead to processes of accommodation concern women: Can a woman work outside her compound, have a limited number of children, and remain a "proper Muslim woman"? Can a woman choose a lifestyle, adopt a worldview, which stands outside of ones privileged by "her people", by her family and

remain marriageable? How do "traditional" mothers bring up daughters who choose a lifestyle outside of the boundaries defined by traditional roles? How do successive generations of women relate to the apparent conflict between their worldviews? Which are the significant, pivotal events in a woman's life? How do women experience marriage and the changes which such an union may bring about in their lifestyle? Women explain their life choices through what kind of logic: through the reproduction of family values schemes and/or ethnic worldviews, through the reproduction of Islamic worldviews and values, or through the production of a "modernity" logic? I will address these questions in Chapters 5 and 6.

4.3.2.4 Restructuration of the Islamic associative setting

The Islamic community in Côte d'Ivoire has developed an extensive institutional structure over the past 40 years or so in Bouaké, including local, regional and national institutions. Besides *madrasas* and *mory kalan* schools, there are numerous mosques and Islamic associations. There is one large city mosque in Dougouba neighbourhood behind the *grand marché*, and all the neighbourhoods have local Friday mosques as well as mosques in individual compounds. The largest mosque and all the neighbourhood mosques have male and female associations responsible for the running of the mosque and events involving the community of the faithful. Most mosques have women's associations that are mainly concerned with the socioreligious life of the neighbourhood. Most of the time, the women who participate in these associations are older women who have passed childbearing age. These associations gather money for marriages, baptisms, funerals, and other activities that include a component of economic assistance. The members of these associations may also congregate to welcome worshippers who have participated in the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca, and they co-ordinate the organisation of special religious celebrations that take place at the mosque. For instance, at the time of all-night-long prayers at the mosque, during Ramadan or for *Donda*, women members of these associations will organise food and refreshment. The money will be taken from the common funds gathered from individual members' dues or from a special collection. The men's association will organise the prayers and the

preaching: they will choose a preacher or they will invite one, and they will manage the material side of the event (sound and lighting systems, and so forth). The mosque's men's associations are concerned with religious matters and the running of the mosque. They will appoint imams, muezzins, mosque *jeliw*, and the like. They also organise preaching for special events and they may gather to read the Qur'an. These mosque-based associations usually unite women or men of the same neighbourhood who worship together. As most neighbourhoods will have more than one local mosque, each mosque's association will most likely unite the individuals who live in neighbouring streets. The elder members intervene in cases of neighbourhood-based conflicts amongst individuals. They also serve as means of communal integration for newcomers to the neighbourhood, and they maintain a network of information inside the neighbourhood. News of social events such as marriages, births, and deaths, as well as special celebrations and events, will be transmitted at the mosque during the early morning prayer by one of the local *djeliw* and the members of the mosque association will make sure that individuals who are absent will find out. The first such association was created in Koko and then in Dar-es-Salaam. Currently, these Islamic associations are present in all the neighbourhoods where mosques and Muslims can be found. All the Muslim inhabitants of the neighbourhood can participate, even if they only go to the mosque for Ramadan and Tabaski, but only a portion of the neighbourhood Muslims participate on a regular basis.

As I have also mentioned, there also are a number of national Islamic associations which were created under the rule of the PDCI -- such as the CSI (Conseil Supérieur Islamique) and Coordination (the regional Islamic association in Bouaké that was tied to the CSI and replaced by the CNI in 1994) -- and which have had branches in Bouaké for a few decades. However, the beginning of the 1990 democratic movement has brought about the development of existing Islamic associations. Since then the Muslim collectivity in Côte d'Ivoire has been transformed to the extent that new institutions claiming national representation have emerged. The process of multiparty-ism has encouraged the growth of associative structures, which have been taken out of the exclusive control of the national government and have, as a result of this, multiplied. Until 1990, any association which was not recognised by and, consequently,

under the control of the ruling party was deemed illegal; and, the members of such associations could be arrested and imprisoned. Such a proliferation of Islamic associations has brought about a restructuring of the Islamic collectivity, as well as the concentration of Islamic social claims around the CNI and subsidiary associations (such as the Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Bouaké), LIP-CI, and the AEEMCI (Association des Élèves et des Étudiants de Côte d'Ivoire.)

These Islamic associations are relatively successful in their social claims and certainly provide a viable locus of identification for young urban Muslims. Since the 1990s, Islamic associations are organised on a stratified basis, from national associations all the way down to neighbourhood associations. For instance, the CNI is a national association. It places itself under the rule of the Conseil National des Imams. It has a number of regional equivalents in some of the major cities of the country, such as the CNI in Bouaké and the Islamic women's association of Bouaké. Other regional associations are aligned with the CNI, such as LIP-CI in Bouaké. And a number of local associations are satellite associations to the national CNI, such as AMAR in Air France 1, Bouaké. The AEEMCI has a similar pyramidal structure, starting with the national association and going down to local associations in the various cities. However, some Islamic associations are not part of these large national structures.

Before 1990, there existed only one national Islamic association (CSI) that was officially recognised by the national government. The CSI was created in 1979 under the initiative of the Union Culturelle Musulmane, an international organisation that was active in Côte d'Ivoire at the time. Now there are two national Islamic associations that claim to represent the Islamic collectivity of Côte d'Ivoire: the CNI and the CSI. Both associations have representative bodies in most of the sizeable cities of Côte d'Ivoire. In Bouaké, the CSI has no office. But, at the time of the 1995 electoral campaign, it became more active in Bouaké. For Ramadan, the president of the association came to Bouaké to preach at the Grande Mosqué in Dougouba and to distribute sums of money and cartons of sugar to the different Islamic associations around the city. This visit was boycotted by the members and supporters of the CNI in Bouaké. The CSI's visit to Bouaké was seen as motivated by a political desire to

acquire votes for the PDCI in anticipation of the upcoming elections. The CNI has had an office in Bouaké since 1994. Its local president is a *madrasa* teacher whose family, which originated from Odienné, is well connected politically and religiously in Côte d'Ivoire.¹²

CNI and CSI are competing for the status of national umbrella Islamic association across Côte d'Ivoire. The overt conflict between the CNI and the CSI was well publicised in Fraternité Matin (the official PDCI national newspaper) and La Voix (the newspaper of the Front Populaire Ivoirien, the second largest political party in Côte d'Ivoire). The conflict between CNI and CSI began with the creation of CNI in 1993. The seeds of the creation of CNI were sown at a general meeting in Abidjan in 1992 during a meeting of the Organisation Culturelle Islamique. During that meeting, the imams of Côte d'Ivoire and other Islamic leaders expressed their concern about the president of CSI who was accused of embezzling money from CSI, and asked that he resign from his position. Dissidents from CSI met later at the main mosque in Adjamé to form a new association and to elect a president. The national armed forces intervened, and acts of violence were committed against the participants at the meeting. Houphouët-Boigny personally apologised and officially recognised the new association by sending three ministers along with the Minister of Defence to its inaugural meeting in January 1993. Subsequently, CSI brought CNI to court on grounds that the latter association had no right of existence as CSI already existed, as the official representative of the Islamic community in Côte d'Ivoire. It was subsequently under the claim of multiparty-ism that the CNI was permitted to proceed and to establish representation throughout the country.

¹² The position of the family of the CNI's local president was made clear at the time of his mother's funeral in April 1995. His father was a wellknown imam in Bouaké and his wife's father is a well known *marabout* in Mali. I attended the third day after the funerals, which is the first day of *sarakabo* (donations). These days of donations are occasions of social meeting and of honouring social obligations. Members of the family of the deceased person, friends, members of associations to which members of the family of the deceased belong, and social and religious "clients" of the family (in other words, the members of the deceased family's social networks) come to offer their condolences to the family of the deceased as well as sums of money. When I attended the *sarakabo*, in the morning, the family courtyard in Koko was already full of women, and the tarpaulin outside, reserved for the men, was already quite full. The main moment of the *sarakabo* takes place in the afternoon after the *lansera* prayer (16:00). The morning attendance is only in preparation for the afternoon event. Present were also a number of local and national political figures and members of the religious elite in Bouaké (imams, *madrasa* teachers, LIP-CI members).

The PDCI's relationship to the CNI and the CSI is ambiguous and wavering. Under the rule of Houphouët-Boigny, the PDCI, as the ruling party since independence, recognised the CNI and engaged in negotiations with it. The CNI has been lobbying the national government in order to acquire an educational status for Arabic teaching and Qur'anic schools similar to national French-language education, which would imply that these centres for Islamic teaching would have to modify their curriculum to include a larger portion of French teaching, mathematics, and so forth. It would also imply that an Arabic baccalaureate would be equivalent to one in national French-language schools. Moreover, Ivorian university education, as well as government jobs, would be open to Qur'anic school students, which is not the case at the moment. At the present time, students desiring to pursue their studies beyond the *madrasa* level have to enrol in universities in Saudi Arabia or other countries where Islamic universities can be found. The CNI is also lobbying for the guarantee of salaries to imams and for governmental contributions, both logistical and material, to the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca. In 1995, leaders of the CNI were sent on the pilgrimage as representatives of the Ivorian government. CSI, on the other hand, is the sole recipient of governmental money allocated to Islamic groups and plays the role of international governmental emissary to other Islamic instances. In the opinion of the members of the CNI, the CSI is the instrument used by the political power in place to divide Muslims across the country.

The relationship between the CNI and the ruling party does not seem to have been severed under the Bédié administration to the extent that in 1994 for the first time, the PDCI collaborated with the CNI in the logistical and material organisation of the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca from Côte d'Ivoire. However, the CSI remains the PDCI's official Islamic organisation. The CSI was the main recipient of funds from the PDCI during the 1995 pre-electoral period. In addition, the PDCI's official newspaper and the television channel seem to side with the CSI in times of conflict and in exposing "scandals" within the CNI. PDCI-controlled media also advertise only events that are organised by the CSI, especially at times of conflicting events for Ramadan and Tabaski. Still, the CNI runs the Islamic programme Allahou Akbar on national television.

In Bouaké, since 1994, CNI has an active subsidiary association: Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Bouaké (AFM).¹³ As in the case of the CNI, it was created in 1993 to replace the women's section of Coordination. The CNI in Bouaké replaced Coordination in 1994 on the grounds that the latter association was made up predominantly of bureaucrats who were not sufficiently aware of issues of concern to Muslims in Côte d'Ivoire and did not include enough Islamic experts -- such as teachers, preachers and imams, and the Conseil Supérieur des Imams.¹⁴ The executive committee of AFM is mostly made up and run by professional women (midwives, doctors, office workers, governmental workers, schoolteachers), who are in large part ex-Coordination members, and by female Qur'anic teachers (only one, but she is very active).¹⁵ Women of other socioeconomic backgrounds also participate, on a less regular basis, in the AFM as representatives of more locally based Muslim women's associations, essentially mosque-based associations. Moreover, core members of AFM are not of the same age group as members of mosque-based associations. Mosque-based associations tend to be made up of older women in their fifties and up, but women participating in the AFM are younger -- the average age of the members is in their forties.

Despite its emergence prior to the beginning of multiparty-ism, ASEMCI is a major player in processes of identification pertaining to young Muslims. As a national Islamic students' association, it plays an educational role (the teaching of Islamic practice) across the country, which becomes increasingly significant in light of the centrality of Islam in

¹³ In many cases where a national or regional association exists and is run by men, there is an equivalent women's association.

¹⁴ It is true that there are a number of Islamic experts in CNI and AFM, nonetheless bureaucrats remain highly represented in both associations. In the context of multiparty-ism, a significant focus of dissension and distinctivity between CNI (and AFM) and CSI is allegiance to the PDCI.

¹⁵ Amongst Islamic women's associations, CSI draws most of its support from the main mosque's women's association in Sokoura. This became obvious at the time of the electoral campaign when most of the money distributed by the CSI to local Islamic associations in Bouaké was given to this women's mosque association.

It should be noted that the different associations do not necessarily overtly display or assert their affiliation with one of the two national associations. In some cases they do, as in the case of LPI-CI, AMAR and AFM with CNI. In other cases the affiliation is not stated, but the analysis of social networks and examination of the sources of funding renders the affiliation obvious. Yet, other local associations function outside of the conflict between CNI and CSI.

processes of identification and of the restructuring of Islamic education and associations. In many cases, it has also been the springboard for the creation of neighbourhood-based Islamic associations.

It was during the early 1970s that an interest in creating such an association emerged. At first, the PDCI opposed the creation of a new Islamic association and proposed that Muslim students join the MEECI (Mouvement des Élèves et des Étudiants de Côte d'Ivoire), which was until 1990 the official youth movement of the PDCI. Muslim students refused because they considered that their goals were religious and not political, as in the case of the MEECI. Between 1972 and 1978, young Muslims created the JEMCI (Jeunesse Estudiantine Musulmane de Côte d'Ivoire), which served as a springboard for the establishment of AEEMCI. In 1978, the PDCI decreed that the AEEMCI was henceforth to be the official Islamic association for students in the country.

In keeping with its educational purpose, the association holds annual national conferences and seminars on Islam and its practice. It organises Arabic language classes for non-madrassa students, who otherwise are not taught Arabic. It holds weekly Friday prayers in the lycées where it is established and on both university campuses (Abidjan ad Bouaké). And, it conducts yearly classes on the preparation for Ramadan and Tabaski in lycées and on campuses. Besides uniting Muslim students, AEEMCI has for its main objective the promotion of the understanding of Islam by students who are in French-language national schools. On paper all Muslim students can belong to this association (French-language national school students and madrassa students alike), but, in practice, local and regional branches are mainly found in French-language schools and at both campuses of the national university. University students are very active. In 1993, AEEMCI sought to create a common association with the Association des Élèves Franco-arabes de Bouaké. Only two madrasas, Assakafatou el-Islamaya in the Zone Industrielle and El-Makasside el-Islamaya in Dar-es-Salaam, participated in the activities of AEEMCI. In 1995, some students from Assakafatou el-Islamaya were very active in AEEMCI and in the planning of internal elections and concurrent activities.

4.3.3 Islam as an alternative

The impact of the structural changes described above on the life trajectories and life expectations of young men and women today has been that their lifeworlds and worldviews differ significantly from their parents' and from other Muslim youth who have had different life trajectories -- that is, young men and women who have not received a formal education in *madrasas* or in national French-language schools -- and who remain materially much closer to their place of origin in Mali). In the case of Qur'anic schools, the shift from *mory kalan*-style schools toward *madrasa*-style schools had for effect the creation of a gap in the conceptualisation of Islam between today's young Muslim men and women and their parents. Their experience of Islamic worldviews relies on formal training and knowledge of the Arabic language. (I will discuss this in more detail in Chapter 5.) The specificity of youth educated in national French-language schools lies mostly in their use of the French language as an everyday language, and their appeal to salaried employment as a privileged lifestyle model.

However, as a result of the 1983-84 economic crisis and subsequent measures of structural adjustment, young men and women educated in national French-language schools experience a certain frustration because it is no longer likely that they will obtain salaried employment. In this perspective, Islam becomes a likely alternative to worldviews based on notions of Western modernity. In fact, in the contemporary literature, Islam often is considered as an alternative to the predicament of contemporary African youth, that is, young men and women who are powerless in the context of a gerontocratic society and who must reckon with the partial decay of state and political apparatus (Cruise O'Brien 1996; Young and Kanté 1992; Villalon 1994). However, in the case of Bouaké, this would be only a partial explanation to the extent that local factors also position Islam as a privileged worldview and lifeworld, such as the experience of migration within the family, the heterogeneity of urban life, as well as changes within the national Islamic institutional structure, which have placed Islam as a central player at the national level.¹⁶ The restructuring and the expansion of national Islamic

¹⁶ Young men and women have been politically active in Côte d'Ivoire but this political involvement has mostly been seen amongst university students. Since the 1990 strikes

associations provides a relatively cohesive environment (despite the division between CSI and CNI) in which young Muslims can acquire a sense of purpose and community.

In summary, Malian identity and related *sya* labels, Dioula identity, Ivorian citizenship, or "being Westernised" might be viewed as likely to present compelling worldviews for young men and women today. However, in the contemporary sociocultural context of Côte d'Ivoire, they do not carry the same sociopolitical power as Islam. Mali and related *sya* identities can be significant to processes of identification, but only to the extent that they translate into a pride in originating from Mali and the great Malian empires. The Dioula label is only significant for these young men and women to the extent that Dioulanness is associated with recent sociopolitical claims on the part of Muslims. Ivorian identity, despite citizenship, is not an option because Muslims are increasingly defined as "foreigners" by the political process since 1990. For some, Western modernity is perceived by many in the light of the apparent bankruptcy of a Western model of economic and social development, especially in the aftermath of the 1983-84 coffee and cacao crisis.

4.4 Unfolding Identities: 3 case studies

At this point in the chapter, as a transition between the description of the social position of the youth and the discussion of processes of identification tied to Islam, I will present 3 case studies of young men and the place of Islam in their lives.¹⁷ Such a discussion will allow me to exemplify the processes which I have described in the preceding sections of the chapter. The three young men presented here do not exhaust the possibilities of life trajectories amongst young Muslim men in Bouaké, but

and the first democratic elections in Côte d'Ivoire, students have acquired a political role. The student strikes and violence brought about the recognition of official multipartyism in Côte d'Ivoire. Since then, students at the national university campuses in Abidjan and Bouaké have repeatedly gone on strike demanding better conditions on the campuses and changes in the present educational apparatus.

¹⁷ I have chosen to restrict my examples to case studies of young men since Chapter 6 is strictly concerned with the description of women's life trajectories and worldviews. Both sections of the thesis (this section and Chapter 6) should be read as in parallel.

they are distinctive enough to highlight the main points that I have made so far in this chapter.

1) Ahmed Toure

Ahmed is twenty-four years of age. He is his father's first son. He was born into one of the remaining large joint-family trading businesses in Bouaké. His paternal grandfather migrated to Bouaké when he was a young man to get away from colonially imposed forced labour and taxation in Braouli, his village of origin in Mali. He built a family-based business trading in sugar and rice. Now, the family controls a large part of the trade of sugar and rice in Bouaké and has a branch of the business in Abidjan. The business is run on the extended-family model. The junior men of the family work for the business in exchange for food and lodging, brideprice, and education for their children.

Ahmed was educated in a local *madrasa*, where he eventually took a teaching position, but he left after two years because of the lack of pay. He is presently unemployed and he divides his time between helping in the family business in Bouaké, trips to towns in the northern region of the country for the family business, teaching at the local *madrasa*, and "hanging out" with his male friends in the neighbourhood.

Ahmed is in a sense a stereotypical Dioula youth -- in local parlance, "*un petit Dioula* ." He fits the model of traditionalism held by other young individuals who adhere to a Westernised lifestyle in that his lifeworld stands outside of the French language national system of education and the Ivorian version of a Western lifestyle. But his lifeworld is also distant from the place of origin of his family in Mali. He does not know Braouli. His mother, of Malian origin, was born and raised in Dimbokro, a small town close to Bouaké. He is what his elders and newly arrived migrants from Mali would call a *tabushi*. Most of Ahmed's friends would fall in the same category. They are all "Dioula , " but not necessarily of Malian origin -- they may be from Burkina Faso, from Guinea, or from Senegal. His two best friends are from Mali and Burkina Faso. Having been educated within the *madrasa* schooling system, Ahmed speaks basic French, but he writes it with difficulty. His social life is organised around the young men and women who attended school with him or who are associated with his family. Most of the time, he wears a *boubou* and

another forms of local dress. He expects to find some work locally as he is presently helping out with the family business. He would like to find salaried bureaucratic employment, but he knows that it is out of his range since he has not been trained within the French-language national schooling system. His greatest hope, like numerous young men his age, is to migrate to Canada or the United States. In ten years' time he hopes to marry a young Muslim woman. He would like to marry a young woman in her later teens who is not highly educated, if at all, and who will be a good housewife and mother. His lifeworld is very much divided along gender lines. He lives in a world of men, beside, but not necessarily with, women.

His everyday life is organised around Islam. His day is timed by the five daily prayers. His free time is spent listening to Islamic preaching and reading Qur'anic texts, or teaching occasionally at the neighbourhood *madrasa*. Outside these Islamic activities, he plays and follows closely football, but he does not go to movies, discos, bars, and so forth. He regards such activities as anti-Islamic and at the root of society's decadence. His lifeworld is based on Islam. For instance, in terms of attitudes toward marriage, he wants to marry a Muslim woman (of any ethnic origin) and have children who will be brought up according to Islamic tenets and, despite his expressed preference for monogamy, he remains open to the possibility of having four wives in keeping with Islam. Ahmed is also one of the leading figures in his neighbourhood's Islamic youth association.

The Islamic lifeworld in which Ahmed participates is one based on notions of universalism and of distance from "tradition." He does not believe in ethnic divisions within the Islamic world: any true Muslim is as good as any other. He believes one should not try to maintain ethnic distinctions through marriage and other forms of social alliance. The basic identity distinction is one relating to "being Muslim" or "not being Muslim." He rejects the imposition of *balmafuru* on these grounds.¹⁸ In this sense, he establishes a difference between his practice (including that of his peers), and the practice of his elders, whom he considers to be more

¹⁸ It is to be noted that in October 1997, Ahmed was forced by his family into a *balmafuru* with the daughter of one of his paternal uncles. I will come back to the issue of power and marriage practices in Chapter 5.

entangled with "tradition" and ethnic segregation. Elders stick more closely to traditional, i.e. "village", practices regarding rules of endogamy and marriage rites, dress codes, performance of dance and music, and so forth. By contrast, he sees himself as belonging to a group of youth who have been trained systematically into the "proper" rules and precepts of Islam.

2) Sekou Haidara

Sekou is twenty years old. He was born and grew up in Bouaké. His mother was born in Jenne, Mali, from where she migrated when she married his father. His father was born in Bouaké but of Maraka parents from Gao. His father was a successful trader dealing in varied goods (shoes, leather, garments, hats, and other Western goods); by his forties, he owned a number of trucks, but with old age, his economic status dropped significantly, and he now lives on the income from the courtyards that he owns around Bouaké. Sekou's mother has always practised petty trade, mainly incense (*ussulan*) and cooked food, from their house. Sekou would like to visit Jenne because this is where his mother was born. He has Ivorian citizenship through his father, but he considers that his ancestry is in Mali. He would like to learn about his origins because sometimes he feels that he is not Ivorian. He considers that Côte d'Ivoire offers him better economic opportunities, but he feels that he does not belong in this country. He speaks neither Maraka nor Songhay, his mother's native tongue. With his parents, he speaks market Dioula, using a lot of French words. In fact, he considers that his Dioula is not very good.

Sekou is the second-to-last child of his mother's ten children. He has four more half-siblings, children of his father, who are younger than him. He grew up in Koko neighborhood in his father's compound. As did all of his older siblings, he went to the national French-language schooling system. His father felt that Western-style education was essential to guarantee the future of his children, although he himself did not receive an education, and cannot read French.

Sekou's aspiration for the future is to pursue his studies at university level and to become an agronomist or an optician. But, in 1995, he still had not obtained his baccalaureate despite the fact that his parents and older siblings had managed to place successively him in three different

schools to redo his last year of schooling. If he does not get his baccalaureate, he wants to practise long-distance trade, as does one of his older brothers -- who travels regularly to Burkina Faso to buy goods that he sells in Bouaké.

Long-distance trade is a frequently mentioned economic option, in cases of failed education, by young men like Sekou. This kind of trade follows the same routes as the traditional long-distance trading activities (which are still practised, mainly in kola nuts, diamonds, fish, sugar and rice), but for these young Western-educated men, the hope is to trade in Western goods and to eventually extend their trading networks beyond West Africa and to the Far East, South America, or North America. They see themselves as *hommes d'affaire*, or Western-style businessmen, rather than as *dioula tche* -- traditional West African long-distance traders.

Sekou received no formal training in Islam. He learned to pray with his father at home. One summer, when he was six years old, he attended summer classes at a *madrasa* in Koko, as do numerous children who are educated in national French-language schools. He does not pray regularly; he may pray a few times a week, but he does not respect the five daily prayers. He decided to pray with his arms crossed, following the Wahhabiyya doctrine. His parents are not Wahhabis, but he decided to follow one of his cousin's practice of Islam. This does not affect his relations with his family. He goes to the mosque only for Tabaski and Ramadan with his father and older siblings living in Bouaké. But he does not fast during Ramadan -- he claims that he has not acquired the habit yet; he is too used to smoking and eating.

In 1988, he became a member of the AEEMCI and he participated in a seminar in Abidjan. But, since 1992, he has not been a member of AEEMCI. Also, when he spent a vacation in Odienné a few years ago, he joined a neighbourhood Islamic youth association there. But he does not agree with the philosophy of neighbourhood-based Islamic associations in Bouaké. He believes that, as a young man, he needs to experiment with ways of seeing the world other than Islam. For him, it is all right to go to nightclubs and to drink alcohol, so that he will know what it is like. He does not want to regret not having tried these things while he was young. Participation in such associations also demands a lot of time and at the moment he does not feel that he is capable of respecting his religion as he

should. To him, it would be dishonest to participate in such an association just to please people.

At eighteen years of age, he decided to get circumcised. Like a few young men his age, he did not get circumcised earlier on. His older brothers were circumcised in the context of a group initiation ceremony, but when his time came, such ceremonies were no longer practised in Bouaké. But, because he is from a Muslim background, he decided to get circumcised at one of the local clinics. He also feels that he could never marry a Muslim woman if he were not circumcised.

Sekou clearly does not live according to a Muslim worldview at the moment. Besides not regularly respecting Islamic rituals, he drinks alcohol and he regularly frequents bars and nightclubs. Until very recently, he made a bit of money on weekends working as a DJ in one of the nightclubs in the Commerce quarter. He also has numerous female lovers. However, he claims that being Muslim is central to him and to his sense of self. It is one thing that he has in common with his parents. And, because he came from a Muslim family, he considers that he needs to follow what his parents did. Moreover, being born into a Muslim family gives him a feeling of belonging with his family and to the larger community of Muslims around him. It also provides him with a sense of self and a potential philosophy of life. He admires his mother for being a good Muslim, and his greatest dream is to send her to Mecca. To him, the most important thing that a parent gives to his or her child is education. Education includes religion, formal schooling, and teaching good behaviour at home. Children must learn that they were created by God, and for that they must know their religion. They can play around, but, at a certain moment they must recognise their religion. Still, Islam as a lived experience remains a thing of the future for Sekou. He considers that with age his practice will change. He asserts:

Youth means that I cannot categorically follow the precepts of Islam. But when I grow older and have my own family, I will require of myself that I be stricter in my religious practice. I will also require that my wife and children be good Muslims.

This discourse of later "internal conversion" is very common amongst young Muslims (see Chapter 5 for more details). Older Muslims also

assume that youth are necessarily less orthodox than elders, and that orthodoxy comes with age.

For Sekou, it is a prerequisite for marriage that his future wife be Muslim. It does not matter to him whether she is Baoulé, Gouro, Songhay, or Maraka, but she has to be Muslim. Even if she is a Christian, as long as she converts to Islam at the time of marriage, it does not matter to him. In fact, at the moment, he dates women from all sorts of origins. It is common that young men are very lax about the origin of the women they date informally but, when the time for marriage comes, they usually become very selective regarding their potential wife's religion and origin. As do most young men his age, Sekou wants to marry for love, unless his mother wants to "give" him a wife. He would accept an imposed wife to please his mother because none of his older siblings have agreed to marry a wife given by their mother. He wants to marry young, so that he can be relatively close in age to his children. He wants to be able to discuss matters with his wife on equal terms. But he wants to be autonomous before he gets married. He hopes to be able to provide for his wife and child. He privileges the Western model of family life, referring to monogamy, a wife who is close in age to him and who has a job besides domestic work, and few children.

3) Issouf Bâ

Issouf is thirty years old. He lives in his father's compound in *Maraka kin* (Maraka neighbourhood), Air France 1. Both his parents are Fula, born in Mali. Issouf has been working in a primary school as a French-language teacher for three years. He married two years ago and has a young child, but he still lives with his aged parents and some of his siblings because, since he just started working a few years ago, he does not yet have the economic means to establish an independent household.

He married a young Fula woman from his father's village in Mali. For this reason, in the context of Bouaké, his marriage is considered to be a *balmafourou* (a consanguine marriage). Issouf's wife was not educated in Western-style schools. She can neither write nor read French, and she barely understands it. She attended a *madrasa* in Mali for a few years. She is in her early twenties. She remains in her father-in-law's compound to help with daily domestic chores.

Issouf's life trajectory is framed within a discursive logic of internal conversion (see Chapter 5 for discussion and more examples). When he was in high school, he noticed that he had become very different from his parents. He was very "Westernised," attending cinemas and *buvettes* (open-air drinking bars), wearing Western-style clothes, speaking only French, and going out with young women. As he puts it, he realised his mistakes and decided to go back to Islam and to his parents' way of life. However, since he does not speak Fula very well and since he does not know much about his parents' traditional culture, Islam is the sole element he has in common with them, and it is something he can perfect in Bouaké. "Going back to Islam" has brought him closer to his parents, as well as to a more "respectable" way of life. Issouf works in a French-language national school, but he tries to respect an Islamic way of life (saying prayers, fasting during Ramadan, celebrating Islamic holidays, following dietary taboos, not drinking alcohol) and to assert his religious identity. Except when he is working, he wears a white *jeleba*-style *boubou* all the time. Most of his friends are Qur'anic-school teachers and members of Islamic youth associations in the neighbourhood. He is learning Arabic at a local *madrasa* in Air France 1, which offers evening courses for students from French-language schools, and he is trying to learn to read the Qur'an in its original language. He has not benefited from formal Islamic training in a *madrasa* because his father believed that to attain employment his sons needed to be taught within the French-language national schooling system. Frequently in Fula families, male children are sent to French-language national schools, whereas female children are sent to *madrasa*.

One element Issouf sees as central to his Islamic identity is the necessity to maintain a separate life from women. He adheres to an Islamic logic of sexual segregation; in his opinion, sexual segregation is the only way to guarantee a proper respect for Islamic practice. It prevents one from being tempted to engage in actions that are not sanctioned by Islam, such as extramarital relations. For this reason, he prefers that his wife not work outside of the compound and that she lead a secluded life with his own mother. His wife and his mother participate in the activities of an Islamic youth association in *Maraka kin* that adopts an attitude of

sexual segregation, separating women and men for the regular meetings and during general activities.

A few years ago, Issouf was one of the four founding members of a neighbourhood-based Islamic youth association. He was the first president of the association and he is now an active member. When he was a student, he also was a member of the AEEMCI branch in his *lycée* in Bouaké.

* * *

In the three cases briefly presented here, Islam is the cornerstone of identity processes. However, Islam as a worldview is not defined singularly. The versions of Islam elaborated by these three young men, as well as by other youth, are multifaceted.¹⁹ Whereas Issouf adheres to a version of Islam that is closer to reformed visions of Islam, Ahmed subscribes to an "educated" notion of Islam and Sekou conceptualises Islam as an ideal lifestyle for the future. Issouf and Ahmed's notions of Islam remain quite similar to the extent that they both emphasise the necessity to read Arabic so as to read the Qur'an in its original form. Ahmed acquired such knowledge through his formal education in the *madrasa* system, whereas Issouf acquired it, as an adult, by participating in evening or Sunday classes. For both, Islam is also at the centre of their lifeworld, whereas for Sekou, it remains an ideal. Sekou's Islam is tied to the Ivorian model of modernisation which, in turn, is based on a locally perceived notion of Western modernity, linked with enduring ties between Côte d'Ivoire and France. Ahmed and Issouf's Islam is one based on a logic of universalism and an "educated" practice of Islam. Both are seen as modern, as products of a process of modernisation, in relation to "tradition," but again "tradition" is not the same for each version of Islam. Sekou considers Ahmed and Issouf's lifestyles to partake of "traditional" lifeworlds, whereas for Ahmed, the traditional world, from which "his Islam" is moving away, is one associated with village practices in Mali and with the practices reproduced by elders in Bouaké. Issouf conceives of an Islam that is seen as the ideal "traditional Islam" of his elders, an Islam closer to his ancestral origins.

¹⁹ In Chapter 6 I will present other versions of Islam as they unfold in women's lives.

The plurality of the versionings of Islam points to the historical contingencies of identifying as a Muslim in Bouaké today. Moreover, the "educated" version of Islam which is exemplified by Ahmed's experience corresponds to the versioning of Islam which has recently emerged in neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations. Neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations constitute the most visible sociological manifestation of the centrality of Islam as a marker of identification amongst young men and women. In the last two sections of this chapter, I will, first, consider the modalities of differentiation amongst Muslims in Bouaké in order to depict the general Islamic environment in which young Muslims are identifying today. Second, I will retrace the history of neighbourhood-based associations, describe their members, and briefly examine their internal structures. In Chapter 5, I will describe in more detail the "educated" version of Islam that is produced within Islamic youth associations and which is socially significant to the extent that it is articulated around a rejection of the Western world and a critique of the "traditional Islam" associated with elders.

4.5 Identifying as a Muslim In Bouaké

In this section, I will first briefly address the questions of who is defined as a Muslim and what is defined as Islam, in both emic and etic perspectives. Second, I will describe historical conditions of religious stratification and social division amongst Muslims.

4.5.1 Who Is a Muslim and what Is Islam?

I will opt for sociological definitions of Muslims and Islam, as Robert Launay does (1991, 1992), and define as Muslim anybody who claims to be a Muslim, whether practising or not, and Islam as any one of the definitions offered by these individuals. As such, Islam is apprehended as an identity label, to the same extent that ethnicity would be. But, as Robert Launay specifies:

In this sense the category "Muslim" functions much like an ethnic label; just as forms of speech, dress, etc. ... , may symbolise ethnic identity, but are not equivalent to it, so Islamic rituals might symbolise Muslim identity without defining it. Whether Islam is conceived as a faith in the full sense of the word -- a question of interior commitment - - or as an identity label, it is either more than or less than -- in any case other than -- a moral community. (Launay 1991: 20)

In this perspective, Islam is seen as a lived experience implying lifeworlds and worldviews. Then, the questions to be addressed are which practices and rituals are defined as Islamic and by whom? And, how do Muslims in Bouaké establish distinctions amongst themselves?

In the contemporary context of Bouaké, there are a number of elements that socially distinguish Muslims from non-Muslims. Respect of the *Sunna* is the basic condition that needs to be fulfilled to be regarded as a Muslim -- that is the five daily prayers, fasting during Ramadan, and abstention from drinking alcohol and consuming ritually unclean meat. Nonetheless, the five daily prayers remain the central identity marker differentiating Muslims and non-Muslims. The basic question a Muslim asks to identify another Muslim is: *A seri ke wa walima a te seri?* (Does this person pray or not?). "Praying" here means praying according to Islamic rites. I would argue along with Robert Launay (1991) that prayers are central markers between Muslims and non-Muslims because their performance is socially visible. The same could be said of the practice of spitting during Ramadan; despite the fact that it is not prescribed by Islam and that many Islamic scholars criticise public spitting during Ramadan as unclean, numerous Muslims in Bouaké spit constantly during Ramadan to publicly display their respect for the fast -- the logic is that nothing should be ingested while the sun is up, even saliva. Other markers distinguishing Muslims from non-Muslims are the celebration of Muslim calendar holidays and participation in the Muslim ceremonies that punctuate the life course (*den sereli* or baptism, *furu* or marriage, and *suko* or funerals).²⁰ Parenthetically, Bouaké, in the social representations of both Muslims in the city and other Ivorians, is regarded as an orthodox Islamic city -- that is,

²⁰ In Bouaké, the historical distinction between *mory* (scholar) and *tun tigi* (warrior) found in the Mande world is not present, contrarily to the case of Kérou (Launay, 1991).

Muslims in Bouaké are regarded as particularly faithful to their religion. And in fact, Bouaké is one of the centres of Islam in Côte d'Ivoire today.

4.5.2 Modalities of differentiation amongst Muslims: the questions of religious stratification and social divisions amongst Muslims in Bouaké

Historically, a number of elements can be evoked when describing processes of differentiation amongst Muslims, such as the four legal schools, the different Sufi brotherhoods, mystic orders, and reform movements (Lewis 1970). In Bouaké, three principal elements emerge through processes of differentiation amongst Muslims in Bouaké today: the Wahhabiyya/non-Wahhabiyya distinction; levels of education in formal Islamic training and knowledge of Arabic; and levels of "Arabisation" as displayed by dress and other elements of material culture. To a certain extent these three modalities of distinction are tied to one another (the Wahhabiyya movement is associated with the Arab world, the idea of formalising Islamic education emerged in great part from the original Wahhabiyya movement of the 1950s, and so forth). However, it is beyond the scope of this study to try to disentangle the historical continuities and discontinuities that may or may not tie together these three modalities of identification. In the context of this study, I discuss them as separate factors because they are relevant in different social situations.

Sufi brotherhoods (or, in Banmanan/Dioula, *syaw* or *Islamaya brofaraw*), such as the Qadiriyya and Tijaniyya brotherhoods, are not particularly present in Bouaké's Islamic religious setting. Amongst the individuals and institutions that I have frequented during my fieldwork, distinctions between Muslims are not expressed on the basis of other brotherhood than the Wahhabiyya brotherhood: in fact, names of other brotherhoods were never mentioned.²¹ In Bouaké, brotherhoods, except for Wahhabiyya, are regarded by most Muslims as a Senegalese phenomenon. Each time, and in very diversified contexts, that I inquired

²¹ I am aware of the fact that brotherhoods may be "secret" or "secretive" institutions and that one should not necessarily expect that they will be mentioned publicly. Still, considering the level of intimacy with the everyday life of numerous Islamic youth that I achieved, I would have been able to "observe," in some fashion or other, participation in brotherhoods if this was the case.

about brotherhoods, I was sent to the Senegalese quarter in Soukoura neighbourhood where one can find Senegalese brotherhoods.

The most socially significant distinction amongst Muslims in Bouaké is between Wahhabis and non-Wahhabis, or between "people who pray with their arms crossed" and "people who pray with their arms aside their body." Note the absence of a specific label for non-Wahhab Muslim. This un-named portion of the Muslim collectivity in Bouaké is perceived, and considers itself, as the majority in the city and in Côte d'Ivoire.

The basic distinction between Wahhabis and none Wahhabis is not specific to Bouaké. It is present in other cities such as Korhogo, Dimbokro, Agboville, and Abidjan (Lewis 1970; Launay 1992). In fact, the greatest diversity of the different branches of Islam is found along the north-south commercial axis between Mali and Abidjan. Due to the historical link in West Africa between Islam and long-distance trade, Islamic movements and doctrines have penetrated and settled in Côte d'Ivoire in major commercial centres along the railway, where Dioulas of heterogeneous origin are found in large numbers (Lewis 1970; Nicolas 1981; Coulon 1983; Amselle 1977). As one of the main trading cities in Côte d'Ivoire, Bouaké was the centre for the implantation of Wahhabiyah in the country. In the 1940s and 1950s, the Wahhabiyah community in Bouaké was the largest in the region (Kaba 1974; Triaud 1979).

Both Wahhabis and non-Wahhabis are opposed to doctrinal and practical divisions within the Muslim collectivity. They both claim to follow the rules and precepts of the Qur'anic texts in the strictest and simplest manner, closest to that of the Prophet's original Islamic community. Both contend that divisions and conflicts between Muslims result from lack of knowledge or false knowledge, and they believe that misunderstandings result from not knowing how to read the Qur'an. In this sense, each branch claims orthodoxy and rejects the other branch on grounds of heterodoxy. Still, Wahhabis are identified by non-Wahhabis as an austere "reform" movement -- that is, a movement that claims its religious practice is devoid of the perversions that have been instituted over time and which are practised by the majority of believers.²²

²² It is to be noted that in French, the word locally used to refer to such reform movements is *fondamentalisme*. Public discourses about *fondamentalisme*, that is, Islamic *fondamentalisme*, emerged mostly in the aftermath of the 1990 elections. At the time, non-Muslim Ivorians perceived the rise and growth of numerous Islamic institutions

However, the distinction between Wahhabis and non-Wahhabis, as in the case of Muslims in the Korhogo region (Launay 1991), is not socially expressed through debates about doctrinal differences, but through the outward practice of the religion: ways of placing the arms during the prayer, personal appearance and dress, and different attitudes to women. These means of asserting distinctiveness from the majority Muslim collectivity are based on notion of "humility" and the rejection of ostentation in prayer, *saraka* (monetary and material gifts on the third, seventh and fortieth days after a death), clothing, women's behaviour, and saint worship. Prayer is the central element of distinction between Wahhabis and non-Wahhabis. The majority of Muslims follow the Malikite rite praying with their arms outstretched, whereas Wahhabis pray with their arms crossed in the fashion of other Sunnite orders. Wahhabis perform communal prayers at the time of Ramadan.

Wahhabis are opposed to Sufi brotherhoods, to ethnic and *nyamankala* distinctions and to *maraboutage*, as well as to practices such as the extensive distribution of *saraka*. Their attitude to financial contributions and spending performed during funerals is more restrained than the majority of Muslims. Non-Wahhab Muslim in Bouaké exchange great sums of money and distribute food at the third, seventh and fortieth days after a death -- public events associated with these days are called *sarakabo* in Dioula/Banmanan. Wahhabis are very critical of such practices, considering them to be perversions of the original religious doctrine. They tend to restrict the exchange of money, and there is no food offered during *sarakabo*.

Regarding women, the attitude of Wahhabis is associated with women's seclusion and strict gender segregation: women are clothed from head to toe in a black robe with face covering; they are not allowed to be seen by men other than their husband, their father, or their male siblings; and their circulation outside of their compound is very restricted and controlled by their father, male siblings, or husband. As a consequence, they are not present at public and social events. In terms of specific dress code and personal appearance, Wahhabi men tend to grow a beard which they never cut, wear a white skull cap and a white *jeleba* -style gown.

(associations and schools) as a *menace fondamentaliste*, that is, a "fundamentalist threat." (see Chapter 3 for more details)

Also, Wahhabi men never touch women except for their wife, mother, and children; they never shake hands with women in public, for instance.

While it is important to recognise that the distinction between Muslim groups (Wahhabis and non-Wahhabis) can take the form of a very rigid division, this distinction can also, in many cases, remain fluid and malleable. For instance, there are families in which members, even those living in the same compound, do not follow the same rules of religion in practice. Some may follow Wahhabi practice whereas others follow the practice of the Muslim majority. One may also encounter couples who do not worship in the same manner, but this is more rare. Some Islamic institutions also have mixed membership in terms of mode of Islamic belief and practice. There are mosques, Islamic associations, and Qur'anic schools which are specifically Wahhabi, such as the Anas Boun Malik *madrasa* on Rue 4 in Air France 1 and one of the small *madrasas* in Belleville neighbourhood. There also are two well-known Wahhabi mosques in Bouaké: one in Djambourou neighbourhood, the first to be built, and one in Belleville. In most non-Wahhabi institutions, one will also encounter Wahhabis, either as students or members of associations.

The first national Wahhabi association (Organisation des Musulmans Orthodoxes de la Côte d'Ivoire) was not a prominent force in national questions concerning Muslims while I was in Bouaké. Moreover, the Wahhabi/non-Wahhabi distinction is not invoked in national Islamic associations such as LIP-CI, CNI, or CSI. Wahhabis participate in such associations on the same footing as non-Wahhabis. The president of LIP-CI in Bouaké, in 1993, was a Wahhab.

Islamic youth associations also stand outside of the Wahhabiyya and non-Wahhabiyya distinction, despite the fact that their principles resemble those made by the early Wahhabiyya movement in Mali and Côte d'Ivoire (Kaba 1974; Triaud 1979; Amselle 1985). In the context of the 1950s, the Wahhabiyya movement appeared as an ideology of resistance chosen mainly by young Muslims to fight against the gerontocratic character of their community. Moreover, it also opposed itself to westernisation and to French domination. This movement was based on the necessity to learn to read the Qur'an in its original Arabic and to reform the existing Islamic schooling system. These claims are very similar to the version of Islam which is produced within the context of

Islamic youth associations (see, Chapter 5 for a detailed analysis). However, neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations should not be examined through the Wahhabi/non-Wahhabi dichotomy. I believe that their development is specific to the 1990s Ivorian context. Some associations' memberships are made up of a significant number of Wahhabis, but I would argue that the presence of Wahhabis in these neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations is rather due to the location of specific associations. Usually, neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations gather the inhabitants of a few streets in the neighbourhood where they are established. Thus, these associations gather individuals who, as neighbours, participate in the same social networks, have grown up together, go to school together, and so forth. In these cases, the presence or the absence of Wahhabis is not due to doctrinal orientation, but to facts of daily life. For instance, AJMAF (Association des Jeunes Musulmans d'Air France) is more or less made up of inhabitants of Rue 1 to Rue 14, whereas AMAR (Association des Musulmans d'Air France) covers the streets numbered 18 to 30. AJMAF is located in the Maraka quarter of Air France 1, and in Bouaké, a large portion of Wahhabis are of Maraka origin.²³ So, a large number of the members of AJMAF are Wahhabis. The association does not regard itself as Wahhabi per se -- despite the fact that the Wahhabi element in its membership may partly explain some of the doctrinal orientations of the association, especially regarding gender relations and status. (I will discuss the question of gender segregation later in the chapter.)

In fact, outside of public discourses and perceptions, the Wahhabi/non-Wahhabi distinction is relevant only in certain specific contexts, especially regarding the choice of *madrasa*, and the construction and direction of mosques. In other types of context, other elements of solidarity and particularism are appealed to.²⁴ In Côte d'Ivoire today, socio-religious differentiation is not played out at the level of religious

²³ In Mali and in Côte d'Ivoire, adherence to Wahhabism has been highest amongst prosperous long-distance merchant groups and communities (Triaud 1986; Launay 1982; Amselle 1985). In Bouaké, this is the case with the Marakas. In terms of ethnic stereotypes, Marakas are regarded, and more often than not consider themselves to be "the traders", the group with the longest standing, most prosperous trading tradition. As a group, they are very highly represented amongst trans-regional (extending to Gabon and Central African Republic, Saudi Arabia, and Hong Kong) itinerant traders.

²⁴ Louis Brenner has noted the same phenomenon in Mali (1993).

doctrines, but rather in terms of the relationship to national political power (inclusion/exclusion on grounds of "being Muslims" and "being citizens").

Considering the conflicting, often violent, relationship between various Muslim sects elsewhere in the world (Algeria, northern Nigeria and Afghanistan, to name a few), it is surprising to notice that, first, the boundaries between forms of worship are not so rigid and, second, that, despite mutual rejection and criticisms, there is a conscious commitment to mutual peace and tolerance.²⁵ This is despite the fact that amongst the general public in Bouaké, Wahhabis certainly have a bad reputation.²⁶ This is typical description of Wahhabis by a non-Wahhab:

Wahhabis are not good because their women cannot go out and they are forced to be covered. And, the men are hypocrites who use extreme control with their wives while they constantly womanise outside of the household. (Amina, aged 62, Air France 1)

But they are tolerated, and Wahhabis themselves tolerate non-Wahhabis. It can also be pointed out that "tolerance" is a privileged Ivorian political theme. "Peace, tolerance and discipline" was a much-emphasised motto of the late Félix Houphouët-Boigny and has been perpetuated by his successor Henri Konan Bédié.

The attitude of tolerance is explained, by individuals questioned about it, in reference to past conflicts. According to local oral renditions, in the 1940s, a young man named Ladjî Tiekodo²⁷

who was born in Marabadiassa and who resided in Beoumi, went to Mecca. From Mecca, he brought back Wahhabism to Côte d'Ivoire. He settled in Bouaké. At that time, in Bouaké, there were armed confrontations between his group and the other Muslims at the *wolofo* (Senegalese mosque).²⁸ Similar confrontations took place

²⁵ Here, tolerance does not necessarily imply respect. It only means that acts of violence and overt aggression are not performed and sanctioned as they were, and still are, in other contexts, such as Algeria or Iran.

²⁶ Barbara Lewis noted that amongst her informants in the South West in 1968-69, the term Wahhab was an insult and a calumny (Lewis, 1970). It is not quite the case in contemporary Bouaké to the extent that Wahhabis now are quite well established, religiously and financially, in Côte d'Ivoire.

²⁷ *Ladjî* in Dioula is the equivalent of *Al Hajj*, that is a man who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca. It is also used when one's piety is emphasised. The female equivalent is *Hadja*, the equivalent to *Al Hajja*.

²⁸ The term *wolofo* refers to both Wolofs and Senegalese more generally. In this context, it is used to refer to Senegalese in general. The same can be said for the use of the term

in Marabadiassa. There were even confrontations as far as Burkina Faso.²⁹ (Siaka, age 35, Dar-es-Salaam)

Félix Houphouët-Boigny had to intervene along with the French colonial army in order to close off the Senegalese mosque³⁰ and to stop the armed confrontations.³¹ As a result of the horror of such an event in which many people died, Muslims around Bouaké now advocate tolerance. Moreover, since the 1990s, there has been a concerted effort amongst Muslims in Côte d'Ivoire to unite their actions rather than to remain divided, especially in a context where they perceive that the Ivorian government is trying to divide them.³² The CNI is a major player in this concerted effort.

Other modalities of identification and differentiation amongst Muslims in Bouaké today are tied to "Arabisation." Following Louis Brenner (1993), "Arabisation" refers to the diffusion of modes of schooling, religious practice, religious ideologies, and material culture (mostly expressed through clothing-styles) originating in the Arab world. In Chapter 5, I will discuss in detail the question of formal Qur'anic education. The use of the Arabic language is regarded (by the local population) as a

Anango, which refers to Yoruba, but which has been extended to refer to all Nigerians.

²⁹ Lansiné Kaba, in his history of the Wahhabiyya movement in West Africa, recounts the same story (1974). Al-Hajj Tiekodo Kamagaté, a former long-distance trader, after visiting Mecca in the late 1930s and residing in the saintly city for a few years, returned to Bouaké in 1944 as a learned scholar and a trader. He used young male traders, in contrast with their elders, to establish his doctrine. He organised evening preaching so as not to conflict with working hours. He had two goals: to suppress the accretions in Islamic practices made by Sufis, and to develop a sociopolitical consciousness amongst Muslims to counteract the French. He was arrested by the French in 1948 and confined in Marabadiassa in 1949. But the movement persisted in Côte d'Ivoire. However, the armed confrontation in Bouaké could not have taken place under Tiekodo's direction because it took place in the late 1950s and at the time Tiekodo had already been interned by the French colonial administration.

³⁰ This old mosque in Sokoura is called the "Senegalese mosque," but today this name bears neither on the doctrinal orientation of the mosque nor on the ethnic origin of the worshippers. The inhabitants of this section of the neighbourhood worship at the mosque and its imam is of Malian Maraka origin. Individuals who do not inhabit the neighbourhood may elect to worship at this mosque for the Friday prayer simply because they appreciate the sermons of the imam, rather than because of some ethnic element. However, it is possible that in the 1950s, the *wolofo misiri* was associated with Tijaniyya, which would explain why Wahhabi and Sufi confrontations might have taken place at this specific mosque.

³¹ Violent confrontations in mosques between Wahhabis and non-Wahhabis were frequent at the time because one of the stakes was the control of mosques through the nomination of imams (Amselle, 1985).

³² Similar efforts to break down the Wahhabi/non-Wahhabi divide have been seen in Burkina Faso (Dao 1991).

central indicator of arabisation. A high level of Arabisation is usually highly regarded by Muslims in Bouaké to the extent that it symbolically establishes ties with Mecca. However, in certain contexts, it may be regarded as a form of snobbism and a rejection of local models. For instance, students of the Dar el-Arkame *madrasa* in Sokoura have a reputation for being "pretentious" on grounds of being closer to Middle Eastern Islam.³³

4.6 Islamic youth associations

Aside from Islamic youth associations, other existing forms of youth association are Christian youth associations (especially Protestant ones), dance associations performing traditional African music and dances (some of them have been very successfully commercialised), sports associations, students' associations, and Western-type associations such as the Lion's Club and the Rotary Club. There are no initiation associations in Bouaké today in which Muslims participate. As in other parts of the country within Muslim communities, these associations were abolished in the 1940s (Launay 1992).

In Bouaké, and in Côte d'Ivoire as a whole, there exist two types of Islamic youth associations. First, there are two national Islamic youth associations: AEEMCI and AJMCI (Association des Jeunes Musulmans de Côte d'Ivoire). I have discussed the socioreligious role of AEEMCI previously in this chapter. AJMCI is an umbrella association aimed at uniting the actions of neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations. It was created in 1992. Both associations appeal to a national membership and are explicitly politically aligned and involved. In both cases, the

³³ Dar el-Arkame is the largest *madrasa* in Bouaké. It is one of two *madrasas* where students can obtain an Arabic baccalaureate. It has also the widest curriculum. Its founder and director was trained in Saudi Arabia and seems to maintain good ties with Saudi institutions. Moreover, the school is known for its overt alignment to an "Arab form" of Islam: the rules of language use in the school are very strict (only Arabic is allowed to be spoken in the school), the dress code is also very strict. Students and teachers wear *jeleba*-style *boubous* and Saudi-style head scarves for men. The snobbism of the school is associated with these cultural codes of behaviour: wanting to be identified with Saudi Arabian Islam by opposition to local Islam. Moreover, it does not help that the director, who is of Songhay origin from Jenne, refuses to speak Dioula, despite living for decades in Bouaké. He speaks only Arabic or Songhay.

leaders of the association claim that they are strictly religious associations, but if one retraces the social networks and the activities of the association, their political involvement in Ivorian national politics is obvious. However, neither association is tied to the PDCI in the way that the CSI is.

The second type of Islamic youth association is the neighbourhood-based associations. In Bouaké, neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations are perceived by both Muslims and non-Muslims as a growing societal phenomenon. Islamic youth associations started to develop about ten years ago and increased noticeably in number since then. Indeed, it seems certain that, on a neighbourhood basis, such associations have come to replace other forms of youth association in which young Muslim men and women used to participate, especially dance associations.

In Air France 1 in June 1995, for instance, there were three neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations: Association Musulmane d'Air France (AMAR), Associations des Jeunes d'Air France (AJMAF), and a third such association which was created in March 1994: Association des Jeunes Musulmans de N'gattanikro (the section of Air France between Kennedy and the railway. In "Dioula neighbourhoods" such as Dar-es-Salaam or Sokoura, the number of Islamic youth associations is much higher; in Sokoura alone, one can count at least fifteen such associations.

This growth of Islamic youth associations must be understood in the context of the 1990s democratisation, the national restructuring of Islamic institutions, the centrality of Islam in processes of identification affecting young men and women, and the return of students from Islamic teaching institutions abroad, as well as the global influence of Islam since the 1970s. In an emic perspective, their growth is explained through the eschatological nature of Islam as the "true religion." It is commonly said that, because Islam is the "true religion", young men and women are realising that they should turn to their religion.

There were close to thirty neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations in Bouaké in 1995. It must be noted here that these associations, for the most part, were recently created, and they may be short-lived. Some associations I was able to study closely saw their level of activities decline between 1993 and 1995. And, it was in some cases impossible to locate some associations that supposedly had existed

previously. However, this is not to say that these associations necessarily have a short life span or that their contemporary popularity is only a passing phenomenon. In some cases, older associations are replaced by new ones, have changed their names, or have merged to form larger ones. This is the case in Sokoura neighbourhood, where seven of the existing Islamic youth associations created an umbrella associations (Union des Jeunes de Sokoura). Some of these neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations have also emerged out of existing Qur'anic students' associations. Finally, some Islamic youth associations have decided to join the Bouaké branch of the national Islamic youth association (Association des Jeunes Musulmans de Côte d'Ivoire). This association was formed in the context of the restructuring of Islamic institutions in the 1990s (the period following the institutionalisation of multiparty-ism in Côte d'Ivoire), and it replaced the Union des Jeunes Musulmans de Bouaké which had been created in 1975.

Most Islamic youth associations were created through a desire to enhance the practice of Islam amongst Muslim youth and to unite Muslim youth of the same neighbourhood. For instance, the history of the creation of AMAR (Association des Musulmans d'Air France), which was created in 1992, was summarised by one of its founding members, Amadou Bâ, as follows:

When my grandmother died we held a preaching for young Muslims in the family compound. People really appreciated it. In Air France 1, there are numerous young Muslims, but they are not together. So Assa, a young sister of mine, because I am her older brother, asked me whether I could help her create an Islamic youth association for young Muslims in the neighbourhood. She came to me to give me some suggestions as to how we could go about it. I asked a few young men to come around and to discuss the possibility of such an association. I also asked a member of LIP-CI who is quite involved with young men in the neighbourhood to attend the meeting. He has helped us since then and still participates in all the activities of the association. When we first discussed the possibility of an association, we all wondered whether it would lead to anything. We decided to try to hold a first meeting in the compound here. But it rained. We tried again the next day. A lot of people came. We wrote names down and we made a list of members. We also decided on the name of the association. We had to include Air France in the name because the association is in Air France. We called it AMAR: Association des Musulmans d'Air France. The members of AMAR

then went to AJMAF (Association des Jeunes Musulmans d'Air France) which is situated in another part of Air France 1. AJMAF has existed for a year at that time. The executive committee of AJMAF lent us its constitution. We saw that they stated that women and men should not hold meetings together because it would be contrary to Islam. But, in AMAR, since women created the association, since they gave us many ideas, and because they are very numerous in the association, we decided that they should have power in the association and that they should participate with men. Men and women need to work together so that women can be sensitised to the precepts and rules of Islam. In AJMAF, they do not play a role. In AMAR, they are at the basis of the association and they gave a lot to the association. So, we borrowed some things from AJMAF's constitution when we wrote AMAR's constitution, and we left some aside. Now, we hold meetings, we organise preaching, we teach, we visit people, and new members come to the association. Because there are numerous Qur'anic teachers in AMAR, they can tell us what to do and what not to do. In the neighbourhood, there are numerous Muslim youth who do not pray, but they do not know why. There are also numerous Muslim youth who celebrate Christmas because there are numerous Christians in the neighbourhood. But these young Muslims do not celebrate Tabaski as they should. The objective of AMAR is then to make young Muslims aware of their religion. People in general agree with AMAR's activities because it is important that young men and women know and practise their religion. Slowly, young people will improve their behaviour, with the help of God, because people cannot change just like that.

Amadou Bâ's account of the creation of AMAR is similar to the history of other Islamic youth associations. The main themes are lack of knowledge of Islamic practice and lack of unity amongst Islamic youth within the same neighbourhood. AJMAF (Association des Jeunes Musulmans d'Air France) was created by the same type of impetus. Its first president, Bamba Sow, recounted AJMAF's history in the following words:

AJMAF was created on the twentieth of July 1989 after four young men got together and noticed that young people in the neighbourhood were not interested in Islam. They did not model their behaviour after the principles of Islam: they drank alcohol, they fornicated, they were adulterous, they did not respect their parents, they did not go to mosque very often and so forth. They then decided to make an association in which youth would gather together, get to know one another, get to know Islam and call upon other youth to follow them.

This logic of creation is not specific to Air France -- I collected similar creation histories within Islamic youth associations in Sokoura and Dar-es-Salaam neighbourhoods.

"Loss" and "decline" are prominent components of the discourses produced by young Muslims regarding Islamic practices in Bouaké.³⁴ Within this logic, the "loss" or "decline" of faith is explained through a lack of distinction between "Islamic practices" and practices linked to "ethnic distinctiveness," or "local tradition," or "Western modernity" (I will discuss this in Chapter 5). Thus, Islamic youth associations have two main objectives: fulfilling an educational role and a uniting\proselytising neighbouring Muslim youth. The educational role of Islamic youth associations is central to the extent that numerous members of Islamic youth associations were educated in national French-language schools, which means that they have not received a formal Islamic education. Most associations are made up of *madrasa* students (ex-students and teachers as well) and national French-language schools' students and graduates.

Islamic youth associations have regular meetings, organise conferences and preaching, and hold Qur'anic and Arabic-language classes for young women (who are often joined by elder women) and young men of the neighbourhood. To celebrate the anniversary of the creation of the association, they perform Islamic theatre and invite preachers, proselytise, and wash mosques. They raise money through membership dues, extraordinary events, and private funding, but this last form of financial resource is scarce.

Islamic youth associations in Bouaké assert neither an ethnic affiliation nor a doctrinal affiliation. As I will argue in Chapter 5, a logic of ethnic specificity is contrary to the universalistic logic of identification produced in the context of Islamic youth associations. Members of Islamic youth associations may identify themselves as Dioulas, but I have never encountered distinctions within the groups based on places of origin or nationality. For instance, there is no "Malian Islamic association" or "Songhay Islamic association" in Bouaké. In the context of these groups, the Dioula label is invoked only in contrast to the local/Catholic/Baoulé

³⁴ I am putting the words "loss" and "decline" into quotes because the loss or decline of Islamic practices refers to the expressed perception of members of Islamic youth associations. They are not invoked as an historical phenomenon that I have researched.

category. The two main elements of cohesion within Islamic youth associations are a common religion and spatial proximity. Elements of differentiation within these associations are based upon varying notions of Islam and relating behavioural principles.

Young women and young men participating in these associations are usually between the ages of thirteen and forty. The age category of the members more or less fits the social definition of "youth". Older women (mothers, or older sisters of members) also frequently participate in the activities of these associations, often taking the literacy classes offered. Women are much more numerous than men in Islamic youth associations, but young men are in control of the structure, the functioning, and the decision-making, despite the fact that young women are often at the origin of such associations. Members usually all originate from a Muslim family, even if they may not have followed Islamic religious practice very closely. There are some cases of conversion, but they are relatively rare. The members are usually relatively well educated. Men are usually students at *madrasas*, in French *lycées*, or at university. Most of them are unemployed, except for a few long-distance and local merchants. Traders and local merchants are usually not very active members to the extent that they travel and that their work keeps them busy. Some male members are also apprentices with tailors, mechanics, electricians and the like, but they do not constitute the largest category of members. Female members, in most cases, are *madrasa* students or at home with their mothers. There are some women who were educated in national French-language schools and who work as bureaucrats, but they are not numerous. Most members are not yet married, except for women (who tend to marry about ten years younger than men). Married women participate, but when they have their first child, they usually stop attending the meetings.

Core male members, that is, members who participate regularly in the activities of the association and who hold offices in the association, are typically *madrasa* students or teachers, or university students in Bouaké, in most cases, unmarried and unemployed. A few unmarried women employed in Western-style jobs are also very active as core members.

Ahmed and Issouf are typical members -- refer back to the case studies previously discussed. Young men with life experiences similar to Ahmed and Issouf make up the majority of the core membership of

neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations. Young men whose attitude toward and practice of Islam resemble Sekou are usually not core members; it is likely that they will not belong to such associations. Occasionally, they might attend sermons and special events organised by Islamic youth associations. In most associations, there are between ten to twenty core male members. They fill positions such as president, vice-president (in some cases, there are two or more vice-presidents), secretary and vice-secretary, treasurer and vice-treasurer, religious advisor and assistant religious advisor (often more than one), cultural advisor and assistant cultural advisor (often more than one), and so on. This implies that in a neighbourhood like Air France 1, where there were three active Islamic youth associations in 1995, there were around fifty to sixty young men in a similar position to Ahmed and Issouf who were active, regular participants.

These associations are usually highly structured, with a constitution written in French or Arabic and an established power structure. Members are not democratically elected for such positions; usually they are nominated by consensus. These positions are usually reserved for individuals such as *madrasa* teachers, upper level *madrasa* students, or ex-*madrasa* students who can read and write Arabic. Only men hold these positions, except when there is a parallel structure for women. Members pay weekly or fortnightly dues (between 50F CFA and 200F CFA), and sometimes an additional annual membership fee (around 2,000F CFA). Meetings are held every week or fortnight. There are both general meetings and closed meetings for the central committee.

Some associations separate men from women, whereas other associations maintain that men and women should not be separated, granted that each gender respects the other and that each gender remains within its appropriate space (social and geographical). For instance, as we have just seen, AMAR has adopted a philosophy of gender integration in opposition to its predecessor in Air France 1 (AJMAF). As Amadou Bâ explained in his account of the creation of AMAR cited earlier in this chapter, the founding members of AMAR decided that AMAR would not separate men and women.³⁵ AJMAF, by contrast, has created a structure

³⁵ As a matter of fact, when AMAR was created, AJMAF proposed that both associations join to make only one larger association. The founding members of AMAR declined the

of gender segregation in which there are two parallel structures: one for men and one for women. Bamba Sow, the first president of AJMAF, contends:

The association is made up of men and women, but men and women are never together, except in the case of extraordinary events, such as preaching. There can be preaching organised by a woman for the women exclusively, but usually such activities are organised for the women and the men as long as they respect their own space. But the association's meetings which take place every two weeks, are held separately for men and women. Men and women are separated because Muslim women are to be honoured. Physical contact and proximity between young men and young women can bring about feelings which develop into love and desire. This is bad because in such cases the young woman is not respected and honoured. Therefore, by holding separate meetings, there is less chance that such relationships and feelings would be encouraged and experienced.

But members of AMAR contend that, in order to further knowledge of Islam and to follow Muslim principles of life, young men and young women need to work together. However for certain activities, AMAR members have chosen to segregate men and women. At the time³⁶ of the celebration of the first anniversary of the association, an Islamic play, performed by the members of AMAR, was included in the three-day programme. The executive committee had a long debate, informed by the "religion committee" of the association, about whether men and women should act together in the play.³⁶ The debate touched on the following issues: In Islam, men and women are allowed to perform in plays together. "Traditionally", however, men and women do not appear in the same play; still, most of the members of the executive committee agreed that they firmly held the belief that men and women need to be integrated into the same activities and that there is nothing religiously objectionable for men and women to appear in the same play. But the force of public opinion

offer. They did not overtly express the reasons for their refusal, but they were essentially concerned about the issue of gender segregation, which they did not want to reproduce in AMAR.

³⁶ The members of this committee are *madrasa* teachers or ex-*madrasa* students. When they do not feel confident about their own decisions regarding religious matters within the association, they appeal to imams, members of LIP-CI, or *madrasa* directors to confirm or reject their decision. The "religion committee," which is found in most associations, has a very prestigious reputation within most associations.

prevailed, and the final decision was that only men would perform in the play because, despite their firm beliefs, the members of the executive committee were concerned that seeing men and women performing in the same play might shock the audience and give AMAR a "bad reputation." Thus was not desirable, especially at the time of the celebration of the association's first anniversary.

Regarding the question of gender segregation, Abdoulaye Touré, one of the member of AMAR's executive committee, explained:

It is a misconception of Islam and of the teachings of the Qur'an to think that it is asked that men and women always be spatially separated. They should learn to act respectfully of one another and to follow Islamic rules of behaviour. Moreover, it is not by being separated from men that women will learn to become good Muslims. They need to follow an example. And, how are they to follow it if they are not in contact with men?

In his opinion, and in the opinion of his peers in AMAR, gender segregation is found in cases where individuals have not been properly taught the Qur'an. Regarding AJMAF, Abdoulaye Touré believes that their misconception is due to the fact that the founding youth (four young men) attended the national French-language schooling system and have not learned to read and understand the Qur'an in a *madrasa*, as he and most of the other members of AMAR have done.

However, a philosophy of gender integration does not include any element of gender equality. The necessity of creating a structure in which men and women gather and work together is motivated by the notion that women, being inferior to men, especially in matters relating to Islam, are more likely to emulate and learn proper practice and behaviour if they act along with men than if they are separated from men. Women will learn from the example of men. Still, even in cases of gender integration, men and women remain spatially separated while participating in the same event. Men sit on one side of the occupied space and women on the other. They will usually not speak to one another during the event, unless necessary.³⁷ And, despite constant encouragement from the men to

³⁷ During the period that I participated regularly in AMAR's activities, I progressively became assimilated with the local women. I saw my social space being redefined to the extent that young men with whom I had daily contact would refrain from even greeting me when I would enter the context of AMAR meetings or events. From the position of a "non-gender

speak up and voice their opinion,³⁸ women will tend not to intervene and to remain passive during the events, except for some women who have bolder personalities or some status due to their level of formal training in the *madrasa* system.³⁹

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined the life experience of young men and women who identify primarily as Muslims. I have described the historical conditions which account for the shift in their identity and life experience from *sya* --as their parents experience it -- toward Islam. In the case of these youth, these conditions brought about an experiential gap between themselves and their parents, and between themselves and other youth who grew up in lifeworlds similar to their parents -- due to closer ties with places of origin in Mali. This experiential gap is due to international migration and differentiated educational trajectories, which impacted on modalities of social identification. The life experience of these youth made it difficult for them to relate to worldviews and cultural practices tied to their ancestral place of origin. In light of this, the structural changes affecting Islamic institutions offered an attractive and relevant alternative for these young Muslims. The development of the *madrasa* system -- as well as the recent history of Islam in West Africa -- offered an alternative to the national French-language schools, and worldviews associated with Western modernity. The growth and the multiplication of Islamic associations, in the aftermath of multiparty-ism, provided an outlet for the

specific" individual who could sit with the men, I came to be repositioned in the space in between the two sets of floor mats, one for men and one for women, which was more attuned to my real social position at the time, allowing me to float from one space to the next. Progressively I sat more and more at the edge of the women's floor carpet until I became pregnant and sat amongst the women, eventually becoming as anonymous as most women present.

³⁸ This statement has to be qualified, because while men may encourage women to speak up and voice their opinion, they will, in the same breath, say that women have no knowledge of Islam and that they do not know what they are talking about.

³⁹ In AMAR, for instance, the three most vocal women were the president of the women who had a very boisterous personality, the young woman who asked her brothers to create the association and who worked as a secretary and another young women who was teaching at the *madrasa* in Air France 1 and who was referred to as "Hadjia", indicating that her knowledge and practice of Islam was highly regarded.

expression and the versioning of Islamic identities. And, the gathering of national Islamic associations around a number of sociopolitical claims gave a certain social weight to Islam in the context of the recent political definition of Ivorian identity.

However, I showed that in order to fully understand the specificity of these processes of identification, it is necessary to examine them in light of the life trajectories of particular individuals, which, in turn, must be read against the background of historical changes. Individuals might be inscribed within the same worldview and experience similar processes of identification, but the specificity of their trajectories might differ. Ahmed, Sekou and Issouf, all three, share in the centrality of Islam as a marker of their identity. However, whereas Islam constitutes a lifeworld for Ahmed and Issouf, it remains only a potential worldview for Sekou. Both Ahmed and Issouf partake in a similar version of Islam, but they came to it through very different processes. Ahmed, because his family and his social network, as well as his education in a *madrasa*, grew up in an Islamic lifeworld. Issouf came to it later in life, when he faced the eventuality of marriage, and after he re-evaluated his own life project. Still, all three grew up in the same historical and political context -- marked by the democratisation of Western-style education and the restructuring of Islamic institutions -- and they entered their twenties in the post- 1990 era.

The centrality of Islam in processes of identification is, in large part, socially expressed through the development and growth of neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations. Moreover, Islam as a referent of identification is expressed through a plurality of forms. However, a central feature of the version of Islam that characterises the young Muslims of today in Bouaké is the emphasis on formal education and knowledge of the Arabic language. In the context of a gerontocratic milieu and a decaying state apparatus, knowledge becomes associated with power to the extent that these young men and women, through education, are accessing a form of knowledge that stands outside of their elders' reach and outside of traditional means of knowledge acquisition. The difference between young people today and their elders is that valued knowledge (both knowledge that guarantees employment and knowledge that forms good Muslims) can now be acquired through schooling, rather than through life long experience. Formal education, Islamic-style and/or

Western-style, also opens the door to varied worldviews and to different forms of employment. While I have focused on young men in this chapter, these changes are particularly significant for young women who, in some cases, through education, face the possibility of entering social roles which stand outside of traditional domestic and trading roles. I will discuss this in more details in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

In the next chapter, I will describe and analyse the versioning of "educated Islam" which is produced within the context of Islamic youth associations. This version of Islam exemplifies the relationship established between social power and knowledge. It also examines processes of identification as they unfold at a collective level.

CHAPTER 5:

PROCESSES OF IDENTIFICATION AND VERSIONING OF ISLAM: A CASE STUDY OF THE Association des Musulmans d'Air France (AMAR)¹

5.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, I have explained that neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations are the most socially visible manifestation of the centrality of Islam as a dominant worldview and lifeworld for a number of young men and women. The definition and practice of Islam that emerge within these associations are not the only versioning of Islam claimed by youth in Bouaké today. In general terms, for Muslims in Bouaké, Islam refers to a specific set of practices: *Sunna*. However, the Muslim community in Bouaké is neither homogeneous nor monolithic: as I have already shown in Chapter 4, two central elements mark distinctions within the Muslim community of Bouaké, namely Wahhabiyya and levels of arabisation. The versioning of Islam put forward in neighbourhood-based associations addresses mainly the question of levels of arabisation.

In light of this, in this chapter, I will analyse the adoption of identity logic and the production of worldviews amongst young men and young women in these associations. I will describe processes of identification as

¹ As mentioned before, I have opted to use the term "versioning" instead of "version" in order to underline the processual dimension of the phenomenon described. Also, the notion of versioning automatically invokes the social agents that are at the source of these processes. With the discussion in Chapter 4 and in the present chapter, I will elaborate a description of these social actors. Nonetheless, an element needs to be highlighted. Despite the fact that women participate in AMAR along with men, their role is lesser in the versioning of Islam elaborated in this association, as in other neighbourhood-based Islamic youth association. As I will show in this chapter, the differential role of men and women is due to the image of women constructed in these associations (as well as in the society at large) as "second-class" Muslims. With the notion of versioning, I also want to emphasise the fact that I am recognising the multiple notions of Islam which are produced in the context of Bouaké. However, these numerous versionings of Islam stem from the observation of the variety of religious ideas and practices relating to Islam and not from a notion put forth by Muslims that their version of Islam is one interpretation amongst others. It is obvious that for each Muslim the version of Islam to which they subscribe is regarded as the "truth." Other interpretations are regarded as ignorant.

they emerge through versionings of Islam, Islamic practices, and concepts of "proper womanhood." The analysis focuses on oral texts produced about Islam in the context of preaching, sermons, Islamic debates, and group discussions. However, these discourses are understood in relation to other forms of social practice. Moreover, in this chapter, I am not adopting the perspective of discursive analysis (see Chapter 1). Rather, I regard discourses as one social practice amongst others. However, as a social practice, discourses about Islam are particularly relevant to the case analysed to the extent that discursive practices are the privileged activities of Islamic youth associations in the form of preaching, sermons, teaching of Arabic language, reading of the Qur'an, and proselytising activities.

Images of Islam are produced through a logic that conceptualises Islam as a universalist worldview and as a mediator between "the local/tradition" and "the global/modernity/Western world"². At first sight, Islam may seem to be conceptualised within a dichotomous frame of thought opposing tradition and modernity, with Islam standing between as a mediating logic. However, while Islam may be seen as a third option to modernity and tradition, it is also defined through notions of modernity and tradition. In this view, modernist forms of Islam emerge, as well as traditionalist ones. This distinction is expressed in terms of "universalism" versus "cultural specificity" and "ethnic distinctiveness." At this level of conceptualisation, an element of intergenerational difference is injected into the versioning of Islam: young men and women, because of their access to formal Islamic education, represent themselves as the carriers of a modernist, universalist Islam ("educated Islam"), which differentiates itself from the Islamic practices adopted by older generations.³ And women have an ambiguous role within the versioning of educated Islam as upholders of the faith on the one hand and as perpetuators of "practices of tradition" on the other hand.

² Again, I have put these notions in quotation marks because they are used as idiomatic notions rather than as analytical concepts. In the remaining part of the chapter, I will use them without the quotation marks, but they are still used as idioms rather than as analytical concepts.

³ I am using the notion of "educated Islam" in order to refer to the form of Islam that is privileged within neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations. This is an etic term. Informants never use this term. They simply refer to Islam. But, in order to simplify the analysis, I decided to devise a term that could allow me to refer to the versioning of Islam produced in Islamic youth associations without having to explain it all the time.

In order to illustrate this logic of identification, the discussion centres on the case study of one neighbourhood-based Islamic youth association, AMAR. AMAR both differs from and is similar to other neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations. I will highlight the specificity of AMAR in order to situate it within the general description of Islamic youth associations that I have offered in Chapter 4. The use of one case study, in contrast with a discussion that aims at generalisations, allows me to examine closely dynamics of processes of identification at a micro level. As such, it provides an intermediate social space between dimensions of human agency and structural contingencies. Also, because Islam provides both a locus for self-identification and a sense of community for youth, it is necessary to examine processes of identification at the level of individual persons as well as the group. In Chapter 4, through the description of individual life trajectories, I have examined processes at the level of the social actor; in this chapter, the case study constitutes a social space for the examination of group dynamics.

During the first year that I spent in the field, I surveyed a large number of Islamic youth associations in the different neighbourhoods of Bouaké. Through my teaching at the El-Hittihadiya *madrasa*, I was invited by my students to attend the Tabaski preaching in May 1993, and I became an active member of the Association des Musulmans d'Air France (AMAR). From May 1993 to June 1995, when I was in Bouaké, I attended most of the activities of AMAR as a member. I participated in weekly meetings, both the general meeting and the executive committee meeting. From 1995 onwards, I also attended the Saturday tea discussions organised, on a rotating basis, in the compounds of members of the association. I partook in the association's special events as well as the preparation of these events: the first-anniversary of AMAR, LIP-CI's conference at the el-Hittihadiya *madrasa* in 1993, Tabaski preaching in 1993 and 1995, and Ramadan preaching in 1994 and 1995. I organised a number of group discussions with the members of the association: two group discussions with all the members and two group discussions with the women's section of the association. I also had numerous informal and formal discussions with individual members and officers in the context of the association's activities and in other social events in the neighbourhood. I was more or less in daily contact with a large number of the members through my

teaching and as a resident in the neighbourhood. My work with AMAR was supplemented by my attendance at preaching organised in Air France by other Islamic associations and by the two local *madrasa* schools. I also conducted extensive interviews with the leaders and members of the second-largest and oldest associations in Air France 1, the Association des Jeunes Musulmans d'Air France (AJMAF.) I attended most of the special events sponsored by AJMAF. Lastly, I participated in some of the Islamic women's associations' activities based in Air France and in Bouaké more generally (at the mosque in Rue 28, and in the Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Bouaké.) My work on Islamic youth associations was complemented by observation of everyday Islamic rituals and practices as well as my attendance at Islamic holiday preaching and mosque prayers. I will also use some of the material that I have gathered through systematic interviews with youth in Air France 1 in the analysis of this chapter.

I have divided the analysis as follows. First, I will describe AMAR, and offer a general background to the structure, functioning, and membership of AMAR. Second, I will describe the conditions of the production of discourses about Islam in AMAR. Then I will define the "youth" in question. In the last three sections of the chapter, I will deconstruct the logic of the versioning of "educated Islam" elaborated within Islamic youth associations such as AMAR: namely, the triangular relationship between tradition, modernity and Islam; the logic of universalism and intergenerational relations; and the place and status of women in this versioning of Islam.

5.2 AMAR: presentation of a case study

It is a little after eight o'clock in the evening in April 1995 when I leave my compound. I wave at my female host who is crossing the tarmac on her way back from the evening prayer at the Rue 28 mosque. I head away from the tarmac onto the back streets of Air France 1. It is very dark and, as I get farther from the tarmac, I can only distinguish moving shadows and hear distant evening noises coming from beyond the walls of the compounds lining the streets. The street scene is momentarily revealed as the headlights of passing motorcycles and cars show children playing and adults sitting on chairs just outside their compounds.

Turning on to the next street, I meet some of the women members of AMAR on their way to the weekly general meeting. They greet me and I walk alongside the small group. They are all quite young, in their mid-teens. Before adopting the appropriate solemn and withdrawn composure for the meeting, they giggle and tease one another. They tease one of the women present about her weight, enumerating what she ate that day. This child-like teasing and buoyancy will recede as we approach the courtyard on Rue 22 where the meeting is regularly held, but they will be kept up in a subdued form all through the evening, even as the meeting is running.

The young women's heads are all well covered and they wear local dresses, jelebas or boubous, which cover them down to the ground. And most of them wear a knitted wool hat covering their hair under their prayer shawl. These young women tend to dress this way on an everyday basis. One would not wear special clothes for a general weekly meeting. Still, tonight they are more conscious of the need to be well covered and to prevent their scarves from falling off their heads, or their clothes from slipping down their shoulders, as they would tend to let them do in the context of everyday life.

The Bâ courtyard on Rue 22 is the official space of AMAR. Its executive committee is run from this courtyard and its meetings are held there. In fact, the association originated amongst the inhabitants of the courtyard. As is the case each week, the ground in the compound is covered by two ensembles of plastic mats, one for the men and one for the women. The few men who have already arrived are chatting amongst themselves, while others are watching television in an adjacent room or finishing their daily homework. The women are sitting at the far end of the courtyard, near the older women who live in the compound. The new arrivals will chat a while with the older women, who are dozing off for the evening. The women who are present are sitting, chatting, and knitting or performing other female handiwork.

At least thirty minutes after its scheduled starting time, the meeting begins. One of the men present opens the meeting with Islamic benedictions and the president presents the order of business. As is the case for most meetings, there are approximately thirty to forty individuals presents: about fifteen men and the rest women. There is a bit of coming and going, but most of the individuals remain present for the entirety of the meeting. There is a constant hum of chatter coming from the women's side of the courtyard and, at times, from the men's side.

The women often stand somewhat outside of the discussion. Because I have attended many such meetings, sitting with the women, I know that the women do not hear clearly all that is said. Parts of the discussion take place specifically amongst the men in lower voices. Also, in public gatherings, young women tend to be more inhibited than men. In most cases, they will talk only when directly addressed and, even if they are spoken to, they may not respond and only bow their heads. As a general rule, at AMAR meetings, women very seldom talk. Three of them (the president of the women's section; one of the residents of the courtyard, who asked her brothers to create the association; and a madrasa student, who also teaches) will occasionally speak at the end of the meeting to offer some information or to make some comment.

During today's meeting, four issues are raised. First, the executive committee makes a few comments about its appraisal of the 1995 Tabaski celebration. The representative of the committee explains that the committee is very pleased because the event was orderly and the members of the association were very well behaved, projecting an image of discipline and order to the guests who do not belong to the association and to the patrons of the event. The second point on the agenda concerns the possibility of inviting honorary members to join the association. In the course of the past few months, some members of the bureau have proposed that it would be beneficial to the association to have a few prominent honorary members -- that is, older individuals who already enjoy a certain recognition within the community, such as imams, members of CNI or members of LIP-CI. This point raises a lot of discussion, which is long and tedious. As in most cases where decisions are difficult to achieve, where there might be many disagreements and where the stakes may be quite high, Samba Coulibaly more or less monopolises the discussion. He is a member of LIP-CI and he plays the role of advisor and "elder" in AMAR. He voices the opinion that AMAR is not ready to have honorary members. The association has to make sure that it is running monthly, that its members are above reproach, and that it has gained some maturity. Most of the men members present are in agreement. The discussion mainly focuses on the reprehensible behaviour of some of the members, the negative image that this may project to the outside world and ways to try to improve these problems. This discussion leads straight into the third point on the agenda: discipline during meetings. As the members have been reminded every time that I have been at AMAR's meetings, there are two basic problems of discipline within the association: lack of punctuality and constant unrelated chatter during meetings.

It had been decided a few weeks back that any member showing up late for a meeting or chatting incessantly during meetings would have to pay a 100F CFA penalty. During this discussion, most of the criticism is directed against women. The last topic of discussion on the agenda concerns the weekly membership dues. The members present are reminded that they must make an effort to contribute the 100F CFA required of them each meeting. The main argument is that 100F CFA is not a large amount of money, the equivalent of a daily portion of aloko. The president of the association suggests to the members that they could forego their daily aloko on the day of the meeting and pay their dues instead. Heads are bowed, but the metal bowl that had been previously passed around to collect the membership dues remains empty, and no further contributions will be made this evening. Before closing the meeting, one of the women raises the issue of the possibility of organising a tea discussion the following Saturday in the courtyard of one of the women members who will shortly be leaving for Mali. There is no opposition.

After the closing prayer has been recited by one of the men present, the members of the association slowly make their way home. Some men hang around in front of the compound to chat and drink tea, others gather in another compound as they do most evenings. Women go home slowly, in small groups, chatting and sometimes stopping in a courtyard to greet a friend, a family member, or to "accompany" a member to her house.

Every week, as in the case of most Islamic youth associations in Bouaké, AMAR holds such general meetings. The general meeting is usually preceded by the meeting of the executive committee, which takes place the previous day: the executive committee meets on Wednesday night, and the general meeting is held on the Thursday night. The executive committee meets to plan the activities of the association, to discuss pressing problems and difficulties, and to plan future activities. Decisions are taken at the level of the executive committee, not by vote, but by consensus, meaning that the president along with a few men agree or disagree with the proposition.

At executive committee meetings, a few women are also present: the president of the women's section of the association and two other women who act as vice presidents. These are the three active women described above. Women are present at the executive committee

meetings, but they seldom talk, and they do not hold actual power within the *executive committee*. They are only present at executive committee meetings to voice the opinions of female members. In 1993, some women wanted to create a women's executive committee meeting to allow women to discuss issues pertaining to themselves and to create a forum where women could feel free to talk. However, male members were strongly against this possibility because they considered that one of the objectives of AMAR is the integration of women in Islamic activities through their participation in AMAR along with men, not separated from men. In principle, this position accords with women's desires for active participation, but in practice some of them feel that it is not possible. First, while men encourage women to intervene within the context of the association, they often laugh away their interventions on the grounds that women do not know anything about Islam. Second, at the level of more generalised social relations, women are often not socialised to occupy a vocal social space. As a consequence, despite the expressed overture to them for vocal interventions, the majority of women remain silent. Amongst themselves, women regularly informally discuss all these matters.

At the general meetings, members of the *executive committee* report to the members of the association, and decisions are implemented. Here again, as in other associations, the decision-making process cannot be characterised as democratic. The executive committee makes the necessary decisions on the basis of appointed sub-committees and individuals, such as the cultural advisor and his assistant, the social advisor and his assistant, the religious advisor and his assistant. The religious advisor and his assistant are always *madrasa* teachers, senior students or graduates.

In fact, members of the executive committee are not elected, but are nominated by consensus. For instance, in 1994, the first president of the association (who was a *madrasa* teacher and the son of the imam of the "Senegalese mosque" in Sokoura) left Bouaké to go join his brother-in-law in the diamond trade in Central African Republic. He was replaced by another *ustaz* --a Qur'anic teacher or individual with significant knowledge of the Qur'an and Arabic language. The second president of AMAR was nominated by the first president and by male members of the Bâ family.

When he agreed to take the position, the executive committee sanctioned the nomination. In AMAR, as in other similar Islamic youth associations, senior students, teachers, and graduates from *madrasas* occupy a specific position. As Amadou Bâ explained in his description of the history of the creation of AMAR (Chapter 4), they are considered as the guarantors and regulators of good Islamic practice and good behaviour within the association. This status, related to Islamic knowledge, confers^{to} them a significant amount of power within the association. The other individuals with significant decision power are a member of LIP-CI and male members of the Bâ family who were at the origin of the creation of the association.

By the time that I went back to the field for a third trip in 1995, the association was meeting only every two weeks as a result of claims that the members of the executive committee did not have the required time to meet more frequently. However, every fortnight, on Saturday evening, the association had instituted a new activity: tea discussions. These topical conferences and discussions took place in the compound of a member of the association. They were aimed at encouraging reflection and discussion amongst the members. The motivation was a desire to create activities in which members could meet and further their sense of belonging to the same collectivity. Non-members were also invited to participate if they so desired. Moroccan mint tea would be offered to the men present, and other refreshments (cold water, *daji*, or red sweet juice made with the boiled leaves of *Hibiscus sabdariffa* and mint called *bissap* in French, and *nyamakuji*, sweet ginger juice made with pineapple, mint and vanilla) would be passed around. Popular themes for tea discussions were friendship, marriage, authority of parents over their children, union within the Muslim community, and delinquency. Such themes were also frequently invoked in preaching organised by Islamic youth associations or by *madrasas*. In most cases, it was a member of AMAR who was preaching. As AMAR contains numerous members who still attend or teach in *madrasas*, these members preach and choose the theme for the tea discussion. The notion of debate does not mean that an organised debate takes place in front of an audience; it means that after the sermon, individuals present are invited to ask questions of the guest speakers who will answer to the best of their knowledge.

Besides holding general meetings, executive committee meetings, and tea discussions, AMAR has organised the following events since its creation in 1992: preaching at the time of the wedding of a member and at the time of a death or a birth among the kin of a kin of one of the members; Arabic and Qur'anic reading classes twice a week taught by a *madrasa* teacher or graduate (separate classes are held for men and women); preaching and dinner discussions for Tabaski and Ramadan;⁴ in September 1993, AMAR celebrated its first anniversary with a week of activities including guest speakers, debates, Islamic theatre, and banquets sponsored by the director of IDESSA (a local research centre on agriculture, which lent its facilities); participation in local and national conferences held in Bouaké; cleaning of local mosques on a more or less regular basis; and proselytising (*dawa*, or "call of Islam") in the neighbourhood.

Through these activities, the members of AMAR hope to encourage the practice of Islam and unite Islamic youth. AMAR's outlook can be summarised in the words of one of its members:

Since in the neighbourhood, many Islamic youth pray without knowing why and since many Islamic youth celebrate Christmas and do not celebrate Tabaski because there are not many Muslims in the neighbourhood, the object of AMAR is to bring Islamic youth together and to make them aware of 'aspects of the religion.' People agree with the actions of AMAR. Little by little people will change their behaviour with the help of Allah, because it is not possible to change just like that. AMAR wants to be a place where people can discuss, give their points of view, and learn what is sanctioned by Islam and what is not. This is easy because in Islam everything is written in the Qur'an. Since AMAR has been created, many bad things in the neighbourhood have stopped (Mamadou Coulibaly, October 1993, Bouaké).

As in the case of most neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations, AMAR emerged out of a concern about the lack of enthusiasm and knowledge about their religion amongst Muslim youth in Air France 1. In the case of AMAR, as in the case of AJMAF, this concern is also

⁴ The association does not celebrate *Donda* (the anniversary of the birthday of the Prophet) because the *ustaz* who are members of the association do not consider that *Donda* is a significant Islamic holiday. They gather at neighbourhood mosques for a night of prayer on the day of *Donda*, but nothing else is celebrated.

embedded in the fact that Air France is an ethnically and religiously heterogeneous neighbourhood. Muslim youth in Air France are constantly in contact with and influenced by the practices of non-Muslims. To this extent, members of AMAR believe that their religious practice is liable to be corrupted by negative influences (see later sections of this chapter for more detailed description of the local view of the corrupting effects of Western modernity).

In October 1993, a bit more than a year after its creation, AMAR had 110 members.⁵ In 1995 AMAR had won approximately 40 more members. As in other Islamic youth associations, women are more numerous than male members. They make up close to twothirds of the association. The age range of the women members is also much wider (male core members are usually in their late teens and twenties).⁶ Often elder women -- mothers, aunts, and sisters of female and male members -- attend meetings and special events, as well as Arabic and Qur'anic classes. Arabic and Qur'anic classes are particularly popular amongst women (members of the association and some older women) and young men who have not been schooled in *madrasas*.

Not all the listed members participate in the regular activities of AMAR. Around 30 to 40 individuals, including the executive committee, are regular participants in AMAR's activities. In fact, the majority of members only participate in special events such as Tabaski and Ramadan preaching, or anniversary celebrations. Aside from a decline of initial interest in a new association, the irregular participation of registered members is due to the fact that some male members are long-distance traders who must be absent for long periods from Bouaké (maybe one-fourth of the male membership of AMAR is made up of long-distance traders in their thirties), and to the fact that some female members have become members of the association despite their husbands' opposition. These women are Wahhabi or Maraka women (in these two groups women are often forbidden to participate in associations) and they participate in AMAR's activities when their husbands are out of town on

⁵ I have already related the history of the creation of AMAR in Chapter 4.

⁶ By the notion of "core members", I am referring to individuals who are founding members of an association and/or very active members and/or at the centre of the activities of the association as honorary elders, that is individuals who stand as older leaders and guides to the members of the association.

trading trips. While I was in Bouaké, there were three such women in AMAR. The lack of regular participation is not specific to AMAR. Most Islamic youth associations face the same difficulty, especially at the level of membership dues. However, around Bouaké, AMAR enjoys a good reputation and is regarded as one of the more successful associations which manifests itself in an organised and "professional" manner.⁷ AMAR also enjoys a certain prominence because of its ties with LIP-CI. AMAR is also closely aligned with CNI, rather than CSI. This alignment is in part due to the role of a member of LIP-CI in AMAR (as I mentioned in chapter 4, members of LIP-CI and CNI's executive committee are often the same individuals). Moreover, CNI is an association run mainly by *madrasa* teachers and imams. This implies that to a certain extent it represents the educated Islamic elite of Bouaké. A large portion of the members of AMAR are also young men and women educated in the *madrasa* system, whereas, the CSI is more associated with politicians and bureaucrats.

The socioeconomic and educational background of the members of AMAR is relatively diversified, reflecting the population of Air France 1 except for the interethnic dimension of Air France 1's heterogeneity. AMAR's membership includes one Baoulé woman member (whom I have neither met nor seen). The other members are of northern origin (northern Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, or Senegal). The majority of the members were born in Bouaké. A few were born in other parts of Côte d'Ivoire and some were born in Mali, Senegal, and Guinea. Most of the foreign-born members are Malians (but this reflects the general composition of the population of Bouaké). Amongst the male core members, about one-third are graduates of or are still attending the national French language schools (three were at university on the Bouaké campus between 1993 and 1995), another third attend *madrasas*, and the last third are working, either as long-distance and local traders, tailors, mechanics or photographers or *madrasa* teachers, or are unemployed. Most of the male members who work are long-distance or local traders. Only one woman had attended national French-language schools. She was working in an office as a secretary when I was in Bouaké. About ten other women attend the el-Hittihadiya *madrasa*, and one is a student and

⁷ This is the term used by elders to describe the activities of AMAR. It implies that activities organised by AMAR are well planned and very orderly.

teacher in the same *madrasa*. One woman is training as a tailor; she attended a local *madrasa* school for a short period of time. The remaining female members are at home with their mothers or are newly married young women living in their husband's compound. Some of the married women are also long-term visitors from Mali.

5.3 Defining "youth" in Islamic youth associations: Roads to Muslimhood and discourses of "internal conversion"

The versioning of Islam described here is one produced by young men and women of foreign West African origin in Côte d'Ivoire (namely Malian, Burkinabè, Guinean, and Senegalese), despite the fact that the majority of the members of AMAR were born in Côte d'Ivoire, and in most cases Bouaké. A large number of them are also Ivorian citizens.⁸ Some of them have never visited their country or village of origin. Others are in perpetual movement between their country of origin and Bouaké through trading activities or through marriage and other family commitments. These young men and women are urbanites who are undeniably part of the contemporary social and political scene in Bouaké and Côte d'Ivoire. Finally, these youth have adopted and are following openly a Muslim lifestyle. They identify primarily as Muslims, in opposition to other worldviews that have been offered to them, such as Western modernity and local African "ethnic" traditions.

However, the image of "youth" produced within Islamic youth associations is one according to which young people of Muslim origin have fallen away from a Muslim lifestyle.⁹ Due to influences in the surrounding society, young Muslim men and women adopt behaviours that are contrary to Islamic principles: dance, foreign cinema viewing, consumption of

⁸ It is also to be noted that young individuals of Senegalese origin, who participate in neighbourhood Islamic youth associations such as AMAR, are not reproducing the same versioning of Islam as a large number of young migrant Senegalese men in Bouaké who are members of Senegalese brotherhoods mainly based in Soukoura neighbourhood. The Bâ family, for instance, on Rue 24 is of Senegalese origin, as their name shows. But, the members of the family tend to associate with the Muslim Malian and Burkinabè communities rather than with the Senegalese community. There are social events where women, for instance, of these three countries will gather. But, Senegalese women, in Bouaké, tend to remain a distinct social unit.

⁹ The same discursive practice is seen in discourses about the history of the different associations (see Chapter 4).

alcohol, and extra-marital sex. They do not know about their religion and they do not gather with other young people their age who are also Muslims. However, members of Islamic youth associations see themselves as youth who, through education, have not parted from the practices of Islam or have gone back to such practices. Education, as a process taking place in the domestic space of the family and in the formal space of *madrasas* and Qur'anic classes, is at the centre of the maintenance and assertion of Islamic practices.

Members of Islamic youth associations such as AMAR are described as being of two types: young individuals for whom Islamic rules of practice have always structured their lifestyle, and "reconverted" individuals who through education have gone back to an Islamic lifestyle. The first type of individual is described and perceived as young men and women who have grown up and been educated in an Islamic worldview, adopting it and structuring their everyday life around it, in opposition to other worldviews, namely Western modernity and local African traditions. The life trajectory of Ahmed Toure, described in Chapter 4, exemplifies this first type of members of Islamic youth associations. In his case, Islam is at the centre of his daily life and provides him with a sense of community.

The second type of young individual is perceived as someone who had parted from Islamic ways of life but has now "reconverted." These are usually youth who have been educated in national French-language schools. To describe these members of Islamic youth associations, I use the term "internal conversion."¹⁰ The notion of "internal conversion" is used to characterise the behaviour of individuals -- such as Issouf Bâ in Chapter 4 -- who were born into Muslim families but did not adopt Muslim behaviours for a large part of their life (five daily prayers; attendance at the Friday prayer at the mosque; fasting during Ramadan; observance of food taboos; wearing of prayer shawl or veil for women; humble dress for women and men; no alcohol consumption; no frequenting of places of "promiscuity", such as nightclubs, *buvettes*, and cinemas; respect of social and parental roles attributed to men and women; marriage and parenthood.) They claim to have now significantly altered their behaviour through their participation in Islamic youth associations, often adopting

¹⁰ I am putting the term between quotes because it is an etic term. Informants do not use this term.

proselytising practices and acting as moral "police" in the neighbourhood. At another level, "internal conversion" is part of the religious imaginary of numerous young Muslims, even amongst the ones who do not participate in Islamic youth associations and who do not respect the precepts of Islam -- such as Sekou Haïdara in Chapter 4 -- who assert that as they grow older, their behaviour will modify, moving toward a more Muslim model.

It is to be noted that the notion of "conversion" is in tune with the Islamic requirement of reasserting one's faith when one is capable of doing so responsibly (Devisse 1989). When the child of Muslim parents was named within a week of his or her birth, he or she was made Muslim. But such a person needs to reassert this by professing his or her of faith later on in life. In fact, in strict religious terms, anyone pronouncing that God is one and that Mohammed is his prophet can become Muslim.

Here, I will present two case studies to illustrate the processes surrounding "reconverted youth."

1) Mama Sow

Mama Sow is in her late twenties. She was educated through the national French language schooling system. She works as a secretary. She is not yet married. She is from a Muslim Fula family. As she grew up in the compound of one of her deceased father's sisters, she was given the same sort of education as were her brothers, despite her Fula origin.¹¹

In the early 1990s, as she puts it, she went from being a Westernised young woman wearing short and tight skirts, going to nightclubs and cinemas, drinking alcohol, to becoming a "proper Muslim woman". This transition implied respect of a specific dress code and public Islamic rituals: five daily prayers and other Islamic practices, wearing of the prayer shawl and humble dress. She explains that, through contact with other Muslims in her neighbourhood, she realised who she was and that she needed to mend her ways if she hoped to marry and have a family life. She explains that:

Before, I knew three suras from the Qur'an. Because of my participation in an Islamic association, now I know more. Thank God. Before I wore trousers and miniskirts. If people asked me why I did

¹¹ In numerous Fula families in Bouaké, male children are schooled in the national French-language schools, whereas the female children are sent to *mory kalan* schools or *madrasas*.

such a improper thing, I would ask them whether they were the ones to buy me these clothes or to give them to me. I even used to wear hair extensions, to go out to nightclubs. I used to do all that I should not have done because I thought that I was better. I thought that I was educated, I worked, I was modernised. But now I have stopped all of that. The association has supported me a lot in this. It is through the association that I learned. With Islam, I have understood a lot of things. I have understood what I must and what I must not do as a Muslim. I am learning to read the Qur'an. Now, I always wear the *langara* (prayer shawl). People laugh at me saying that I look like an old woman, but I do not care. It is what Muslim women must do.

Mama's personal narrative of "internal conversion" must be seen in relation to the development of Islamic youth associations in Bouaké and the general climate within the Muslim collectivity. Mama is a very active participant in the versioning of educated Islam. As one of the founding and very active members of AMAR, she participates in *dawa*, actively promoting Islam. She is learning Arabic and reading the Qur'an in its original language. She also believes that the practice of Islam she is learning and reproducing is removed from local misconceptions emerging from traditional practices associated with ethnic distinctiveness. First and foremost, following the Islamic logic of universalism, she sees herself as a Muslim. Her dress (covering her hair at all times, covering her legs and arms, wearing *boubous* or *jelebas*, or very sober *complets trois pagnes*) and lifestyle position her amongst the "new bearers" of the Islamic orthodoxy, armed with "knowledge of the Qur'anic text." In 1994 she lost her job as a secretary in a pharmacy because her employer asked her not to wear a praying shawl at work and she refused. She preferred losing her work rather than not wearing the *langara*.

2) Aboubacar Coulibaly

Aboubacar Coulibaly, while participating in the same logic of "internal conversion," represents a case where the adoption of an Islamic lifestyle was not completed, contrary to the case of Mama. Aboubacar was also educated in national French-language schools. He is now attending university at the Bouaké campus in political science. He is in his mid-twenties, unmarried and living in his father's compound. As one of the members of the social circle who founded AMAR -- he was studying at university with the men of the Bâ family -- he participated actively in the

creation of the association, hoping that such practice would help him adhere to an Islamic lifestyle. A year or so after the creation of the association, he publicly announced, at an association's executive committee meeting, that he "had to retire" from the association's activities until he could "cleanse" his actions, including alcohol drinking, extra marital sex, frequenting of nightclubs, *buvettes* and cinema, and flirting overtly with young women in the neighbourhood. In fact, he had quite a reputation in the neighbourhood as a womaniser and was often cited as an example of "bad faith." His behaviour was detrimental to the reputation of AMAR. He did the "noble" thing, in his opinion, by leaving AMAR. At the time of his public announcement, he asserted that he still supported the activities of the association and he hoped that in the future when his behaviour would be "more respectable", he would be able to come back to being an active member of AMAR.

* * *

Some members of AMAR have voiced the opinion that Aboubacar's position is an easy way out and a justification of his present behaviour, wondering what it will take for him to "mend his ways" as Mama Sow has. They were quite shocked at his attitude, which they felt did not show any remorse or any desire to change his attitude at the moment. Nonetheless, Aboubacar's personal narrative remains interesting. Contrary to other young men, he felt the need to address his position with AMAR and to publicly acknowledge his "bad behaviour." He is not the only young Muslim man in Air France 1 who does not respect the precepts of Islamic practice. This case, however, is particularly striking to the extent that it is rare that such a discourse is found within the Islamic youth association context. Usually, young men and women voicing this notion of "cleansing" their behaviour later on in life do not participate in Islamic youth associations. They tend to belong to social institutions which are tied to the national French-language schooling system, sport, or music groups. Aboubacar and Sekou Haïdara's narratives (see Chapter 4) are very similar to the trajectory of young men and women who have a similar life experience to his: namely, Muslim origin, educated in the national French-language schooling system, mainly French-speakers, not very

knowledgeable of their ancestral place of origin and associated cultural practices, and aspiring to a Westernised lifestyle in terms of job, marriage, and domestic material culture. The expressed desire to revert to Islamic practices as one grows older is a very frequently encountered discourse. It stems out of a common belief about the laxity of youth, which implies that young men and young women are expected to behave in a less orthodox manner until they begin to be socialised as adults by marrying and having children (Launay 1991).

As the case of Mama Sow exemplifies, for young educated women, the assertion of an Islamic identity and participation in neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations can translate into an entry into diversified marriage markets.¹² According to local practice, in cases where there are no arranged *balmafuru*, after a young man has focused his choice on a potential wife, he approaches the father of the young woman about the possibility of contracting a marriage. Nowadays, young men and young women frequently have contacts and decide to get married before they discuss their plans for marriage with their parents. Usually, the young woman has "caught the young man's eye". Thus, it is necessary for young women to be publicly visible to "catch the eye" of young men, but they must be visible while maintaining the image of a good Muslim. Neighbourhood-based associations provide such a public space. Before the young man approaches the young woman's parents about the possibility of marriage, he will "test her" from afar, that is he will try to judge her character and behaviour. Basically, a good potential wife respects her elders, especially men; she is humble in dress and behaviours; she practises her religion as a good Muslim; and she has learned to perform domestic chores. In local parlance, a potential wife "should not see in front of her husband": she should not be more educated, more knowledgeable or more street-wise

¹² I want to address the question of intentionality. I do not think that the possible implications of displaying a Muslim identity and of participating in religious activities (such as access to a specific marriage market, expected reduction of marriage cost, re-definition of the group of reference and access to professional networks) are intentionally calculated. Such practices of identification may have a number of desired effects to the extent that "being proper Muslims" legitimises the social and family position of these young men and women while allowing them to redefine certain social practices upheld by their elders. But, it would be grossly unfair to these young men and women to imply that their adoption of an "educated" Islamic identity results strictly from a desire to marry or to become economically self-sufficient. They may have a certain consciousness of the possible implications of their religious affiliation, but it remains that the main motivation for their public display of an Islamic identity and participation in Islamic youth association is religious.

than her husband. But, she must have the necessary moral qualities and knowledge to be a good Muslim wife and mother. Young educated women, such as Mama Sow, are likely to "see in front of their husbands." In these cases, good Muslim behaviour and attitude is essential to become potential marriage partners.

5.4 Producing versionings of Islam and Muslimhood

The analysis presented in the remaining sections of the chapter is based on a number of oral texts (sermons, discussions, debates) which I have gathered through group discussions and interviews with members of AMAR. I regard these oral texts as expressions of specific versionings of Islam belonging to more general worldviews and lifeworlds. However, I am not implying a causal link between such discursive practices and other dimensions of social relations (including gender relations, demeanour, religious rituals, marriage practices and so forth). These texts are one dimension of social relations and worldviews that mark members of AMAR. Moreover, oral texts produced in the context of associations' activities cannot be disarticulated from other dimensions of everyday life to the extent that, as in the case of most neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations, the members of AMAR are in everyday contact. Some of the core members of the association belong to the same household as members of the same extended family or as lodgers (or "sharers of daily meals"). In Bouaké, it is frequent that the core members of an association -- this is not exclusive to the case of Islamic youth associations -- live in the same household or originate from the same extended family. Other male and female members of AMAR are teachers and students, from the age group in school, at el-Hittihadiya *madrasa*. And other members, as neighbours in adjoining streets, spend their free time together. The young men gather to drink tea, chat, and listen to the radio in the late afternoons, in the evenings and week-ends.¹³ And young women members gather to do some handiwork (crocheting, bracelets, hairdos) and to chat when they have free time. As a consequence, AMAR has to be regarded as another

¹³ These gatherings are equivalent to the *grin* in Mali (Brenner 1995; Cissé 1985; Cissé 1993).

dimension of everyday interaction between some young Muslim men and women in Air France 1. Moreover, the behaviours adopted by some members of the association are visible in the neighbourhood and noticed by other Muslims there. These behaviours aim at publicly displaying the versioning of Islam elaborated by members of AMAR. For instance, female members wear "proper Muslim" dress on a daily basis, whether at home or outside of the compound. They also try to encourage other young women in the neighbourhood to follow suit and to adopt "Muslim behaviour" by singling them out and trying to "convince" them to alter their lifestyle and behaviour. They consider that their lifestyle and behaviour must stand out as examples of good faith which are likely to bring in new members to the association and act as exemplars of the practice of Islam. As one woman explains:

When one is a member of an Islamic association, such as AMAR, one must encourage people around oneself to join in Islam. For instance, if I work as a seamstress, I can talk to the other women with whom I work, I can explain Islam to them, they will see my behaviour and they may follow it if it is good. But if I do not act according to Islam, how can I expect other people around me to do so? And how can I ask them to do so?

Moreover, I must emphasise again that these discursive practices -- mainly sermons, tea discussions, and dinner discussions -- are central to the versioning of educated Islam produced within Islamic youth associations.

The most frequently invoked themes for the sermons, dinner and tea discussions are marriage, the role of women in marriage and the authority of men over women in marriage, problems related to youth (delinquency), rights of parents over their children, adultery, respect of the body of women and female humility, unity (within the *umma*, or Muslim community), Islam in relation to other world religions and specifically Catholicism, good friendships and bad influences in Islam, the importance of Islamic knowledge in the conduct of one's life, piety, Islamic education, leadership within the Muslim community, and Islamic yearly holidays and rituals (pilgrimage to Mecca, Ramadan, and Tabaski). Some elements characterising Islam in these discursive practices also emerge when the question period following these sermons is examined. These question periods are often used by the individuals attending the preaching as

occasions to inquire about topics that are too delicate to address in the context of everyday life, such as questions of the use of contraception, adultery in cases where the couple is physically separated, gender relations, and gendered power relations. In fact, a good number of these questions are related to the conditions of everyday life in the contemporary urban context where young men and young women are confronted with a wide range of life worlds, life experiences, and lifestyles.

It is interesting to note that, in most cases, the questions are asked by young women, who play on their status as "less knowledgeable about Islam" to inquire about topics that may stand outside of the sermon's theme or that may seem inappropriate. The answers are always provided by men who have a senior status. (Women never preach unless to a crowd of women.) The answers vary according to the interpretation of the Qur'an, and often two or more members of the preaching guests or of the executive committee will give conflicting answers. More conservative answers will reject any form of contraception, adultery, and so forth, whereas other preachers or guests may offer more conciliatory answers. For instance, in the case of contraception, some speakers, while recognising its prohibition in Islam, may allow it to prevent births too close in time or when the health of the mother is in danger.

Most sermons are structured as follows. The event is preceded by Qur'anic chants sung by young women present or from a recorded tape. Then come benedictions in Arabic (the benedictions are standard and used for all sermons) and words of introduction by the president of the event in Dioula/Banmanan. Sometimes an extract from the Qur'an is read in Arabic, after more words of introduction in Dioula/Banmanan by the president of the association organising the event, talking about the speaker, the event and the association. Then comes the sermon in Dioula/Banmanan and/or in French. The sermon itself consists of benedictions and salutations, sections of the Qur'an in Arabic -- *Hadith*, *Suras* that are appropriate to the theme -- translated in Dioula/Banmanan and/or French. Then comments by the speaker on the relevance of the sections are read, with the use of contemporary examples or examples taken from the Qur'an, comments by the president of the event, followed by a question-and-answer period with comments by the speaker and

executive committee. The president of the host association thanks the audience and the speaker, and leads concluding prayers.

As an example of the sermons from which my analysis is built, I have chosen to translate and transcribe a sermon delivered by Nour Diabaté, a teacher at Dar-al-Addis *madrasa* in Sokoura, at an evening preaching on August 6, 1993 on the occasion of the marriage of a female member of AMAR.¹⁴ For reasons of space, I have included only the sermon in the transcription, omitting the blessings and the prayers in Arabic. The theme of the preaching was marriage. Despite the fact that this sermon does not include all the elements that make up the versioning of Islam elaborated by Islamic youth associations such as AMAR, it lays the foundations for the analysis. Moreover, I have selected intentionally a sermon on marriage because marriage is one of the central practices around which such versioning of Islam is produced in everyday life. Marriage embodies the polarity between the universalist dimension of Islam and ideologies of ethnic endogamy. It is also a poignant subject of discussion and discontent between young Muslims and their elders.

I thank God for all that he has done. We must thank God for all his good deeds. This event, this preaching is an acknowledgement of God to the extent that Muslims gather together with all their joy and with open heart. When an act of the Prophet, may peace and benedictions fall upon him, is in progress, it adds to the followers of the prophets. We ask God to bless the joy that brings us to gather here with courage in our heart. We must sit here with good intentions in our heart. We will ask blessing in one word. May God bless our happiness. And may God bless the new young couple. We ask God that we may gather under such terms.

You know, when God made human beings, he created two things: men and women. These two things, one cannot live without the other in this life. We cannot live alone. There are two roads. The

¹⁴ The translation was done with my fieldwork assistant, Mamadou Kanté, from a tape recorded at the time of the preaching. Between the two of us, we have tried to maintain the style of the preacher and to translate the concepts invoked as accurately as possible. Some terms were confusing to translate because they do not have an equivalent in French language or they can be translated into a number of French words. The translation was done first in French because Mamadou does not speak fluently English. His mother tongue is Dioula/Banmanan. He is also very familiar with Islamic discursive styles because he worked, at the time, as a *madrasa* teacher and obtained the equivalent of three years of high school education at a local *madrasa*. He also frequently is called upon to preach and to settle matters of dispute relating to the precepts of Islam. His knowledge may have led him into interpreting the content of the sermon that we translated. But since he is one of the active protagonists in the production of the version of Islam that is elaborated by the members of AMAR, judged that he was an appropriate candidate to translate this sermon.

first road leads to heaven and the second road leads to hell. May God protect us from such fate. Such is not the wish of a Muslim. We will follow the road that leads us to heaven. Tonight, it is the road to marriage that we will examine. It is due to this event that Muslims have gathered to offer their blessing. These two individuals, the day that they will "sit together", it is a new joy that will start.¹⁵ They will begin a new family. The newly wed, the compound which they left and the compound which they will join, there will be a new love between them. They will unite to do all things together. If the husband experiences problems, the parents of the bride will get worried. If the wife finds sorrows in her husband, she will worry. The parents of the bride also will get worried. In such cases, there are people in one's life who can help. This marriage makes you happy.

Today, there exist numerous bad behaviours. Everybody knows this. What are these bad behaviours? Human beings have mixed together, people of all sorts, as much from the side of the men as from the side of the women. If a man who has respect for himself as a Muslim goes out today, he walks in the streets. When he comes across a movie theatre and he sees the poster advertising today's programme, if he respects himself as a Muslim, he will lower his head and look away. Things that come out on the movie screen, a noble person, a Muslim, must be ashamed of such things. But, the enemies of Islam show such things to attract Muslims, to spoil the education of Muslim children, so that we can forget who we are. Men will not be able to rest in peace. Women will not be able to rest in peace. People who think that we must look for the road to God or the roads of the prophets, what people call *al-hourabar* today, they call upon foreigners, but they are themselves foreigners to Islam. You, you are in your neighbourhood, you are like a foreigner because if you go out, you must hide. It is so because what other people do, such as dancing, you see it as a shame. You are in your neighbourhood, all that people do is against Islam, so you are like a foreigner in your neighbourhood, you must hide. You are not free to do as you want. It is like a foreigner who arrives in a compound. He cannot do as he wishes, he must respect the people of the compound.

What has given you such light in your heart? Today, we are sitting in front of the door to Islam. It is because of this. Even if you do not have five francs, even if you have nothing, you must thank God. If you are Muslim, if you see a pagan, you see that his heart is not at rest. All these evils of the world, we must gather people together to discuss them. Each time one wants to know something in one's life, one cannot just accept such disorder and rest. It is for these reasons that we must start our sermon with our thanks to God, as we will also end our sermon with blessings and thanks for God.

With marriage in Islam, God has done a great thing, the prophet also, may blessings and peace be with him. He came

¹⁵ The equivalent of "sit together" in Dioula/Banmanan is *sigi nuronfè*. This idiom is commonly used in everyday discourse to describe the notion of associating for a common purpose.

amongst men and women to tell us that we have to marry. It is marriage that renders men intelligent and respectable. If you have a child before you are married in Islam, your child will be a bastard and you will be shamed. Your father will be shamed and your mother will be shamed. You should consider this road forbidden. You must restrain from such things. But with marriage, all the things that are recommended by Islam, you bypass shame. You must follow the Islamic road and do as God and the prophets, may they be blessed and in peace, have recommended.

How must we marry in Islam? We must follow the road of God. A man must first choose a spouse, the woman with whom he will marry and have children. Why such a thing? Because when one enters marriage, it is until death. One must not wish to marry today and to divorce tomorrow. It is bad. Spouses must stay together until they are separated by death. Women also do not wish to discuss and to fight with their husband because this would bring about divorce. The parents of the spouses also wish that it all ends well. They want the marriage to last. The important points in a marriage are: first, *al-routhba*, the engagement. To make the engagement, the young man must ask for the hand of the young women that he wants to marry or he must send someone to do so. The young man who wants to marry the young woman can just go and ask himself. This is one way that one can go about it. Here, amongst our people, we have noticed that many young men send someone to ask for the hand of the young woman because they are shy. Islam is not against this. The third person is placed between the young man and the in-laws-to-be. If the young man and the father of the young woman do not agree and the young man really likes her, the third person can intervene as an arbiter. Islam allows for these two options.

This is how one must fall in love with a woman in Islam. Before in Islam, as soon as young woman became adult, they had to be kept at home at all times. They must not go out. If already she has gone out, if you have seen her and if you have fallen in love with her, you must go at once to her parents, tell them that you have seen her and that you have fallen in love with her. You must do this before people can say that it is their daughter that you want to marry. Once the young man has advised the parents of the young woman about his intentions, the parents must arrange for the rest to follow. They must ask the young woman first. There are no forced marriages in Islam. The young woman has to agree to a marriage. If she refuses, she does not have to marry. A young woman can be forced to marry if she has been untrue to the rules of Islam, if she has become pregnant without being married. The young man must learn to know the young woman: what she is like and what her behaviour is like. Before the young man marries the young woman, her parents must arrange for the young man to know her: her beauty, her gait, and so forth. One must know all of these things before marrying. It is the responsibility of the parents to make these things known even without the young woman knowing. After all of this, the young man can set a day for the marriage. But, before this, the parents of the young woman must tell

her that someone wants to marry her, that he will come this day and that she must get ready to meet him. When the young man comes to see the young woman, the parents call her to come and meet him. She must fetch water for him, so that he can see whether her gait is perfect. Now he has seen the gait of the young woman. Now he can sit down. If she wears a veil covering her face, she must take it off, so that the young man can see her face. He must also see her arms. Once the young man has seen her face and arms, he may be encouraged to marry her as he will have seen her beauty and he will have seen whether her arms are smooth. There are four prerequisites for marriage, which the Prophet, may he be blessed and remain in peace, required, and beauty is one of them. The three other ones are: monetary fortune, the respect for Islam, and a good family origin. The two youths have seen one another. Now the parents can ask the young woman what she thinks of the young man. The woman has the choice of two answers. If she has been married before and she is widowed, she will be asked whether she likes the man or not. She will answer yes if she does. In the case of a virgin, silence will be equivalent to yes. As young women were very shy at the time of the Prophet, may he be blessed and in peace, they did not speak, so silence was considered to be a yes.

Now, it is asked from the parents of the young woman to arrange for the marriage as soon as possible. It is bad to wait too long because it can bring about a number of complications. The young man must also bring some cloth. But the parents of the young woman must not ask him to spend money beyond his means to buy some cloth. Each side gathers people and the witnesses are brought together to celebrate the marriage. And the bride price is given to the parents of the bride for the bride. In Islam, it is the groom who must give money to the bride. Islam has forbidden marriages where there is no exchange of money or material goods between the groom's family and the bride's family. But the amount is determined by custom. The exchange of kola nuts and the dowry are not demanded by Islam. They are customs. Even if there has been no ceremony at the mosque and the marriage has been performed at home with witnesses and the bride price has been exchanged, children being born from this union will not be bastards. They will be legitimate children. Islam requires that people know that a marriage has taken place, so that they will know that children are legitimate. Today, people sell young women with kola nuts. When kola nuts are given to the bride's family, the young men claim that there has been a marriage. It is not the case. If the young couple has a child in these conditions, the child is a bastard. For the wedding there are no special days on which it has to be performed. People prefer Thursday and Friday. Before, it was done on Fridays after the 16:00 prayer because on Friday blessings carry more weight. At the wedding three Suras are said and some *Hadith*. Once those are recited, the wedding has taken place.

When the marriage has taken place at the mosque, Muslim brides must be sent to their husband's house in the following way.

Before, some Muslim women organised dances and manifestations -- without men, however. Women dance and play the calabash. This is not forbidden by Islam. They can also sing, as long as the songs are not detrimental and do not critique people. This would be against Islam. But women have to do all of this amongst themselves, without men, for this to be according to the precepts of Islam. It is the same thing for the great Muslim holidays: Tabaski and Ramadan. Women can dance, sing, and play music if they do it without men. All that is forbidden by Islam is that men and women participate in such activities together. After the dancing, the bride's parents and the groom's brothers-in-law must accompany the young woman to her husband's house because all that has happened so far happened at her parents' house. The bride must be perfumed and she must be dressed up so that people who will see her will be proud and happy for her.

What we find in African custom¹⁶ today, is that the bride is dressed in white as a cadaver. It is bad when she is dressed in white. It is as if she is being buried. It is the custom here, but Islam has never asked such a thing. Before the bride is accompanied to the groom's house, there are other things which people do now that are forbidden by Islam. Still, women do them, possibly because they are not aware that these things should not be done. People lack the knowledge. One of these forbidden customs is the women take the bride and wash her before she goes to the groom's house. They wash her arms, her head and her feet, claiming that this ritual washes away all the bad deeds that she performed before she got married. This has to be stopped because these customs are against Islam. These are customs which antedate Islam in Africa. The second forbidden custom is that the bride is taken by older women to be washed. I do not know why they wash her. Maybe it is performed as the cleansing after a woman has menstruated. If this is the case, the mother of the bride must be accused for such a practice because she should have shown her daughter how to purify herself after her periods a long time before she gets married. Once a young woman has started to menstruate, her mother is the first to know. So, she has to show her how to purify herself. If the young woman has attended an Islamic school, she would have been instructed about such purification as soon as she would have turned eight or ten years old. But if your mother has not put you in school, the daughter could not have learned it in school. She had to learn it at home. Her mother has shown her to sell oranges and plantains, why not the rituals of purification? It is the mother's fault. Such customs are forbidden by Islam. Women must stop such rituals because they are customs and Islam has not required such customs. As if a grown-up woman could wash with someone else. To dress the woman before she goes to her husband, she is wrapped with a white cloth around the waist, another

¹⁶ The word used is *laada*. It is alternatively translated as "customs" or as "tradition," depending on the context of its use.

cloth around her breasts, another around her head, and she is sent to her husband as a cadaver. This is bad. The third custom which is bad is that a woman is sent to stay with the newly married couple. She sits there as a warden. She stays there and she watches all that the young couple does. In the morning, she leaves the house with the cloth on which the newlyweds slept to show the community whether the young woman was a virgin or not. If she was a virgin, they scream: "A sorola." It is old women who do such work. Today, people do not follow such customs as closely as before because everybody knows what young women do before they are married nowadays. It is rare that a young woman is a virgin when she gets married today. Now we no longer request this type of control because everybody knows that most women have lost their virginity when they get married. Despite the fact that Islam forbade such practices, they were being slowly abandoned because everybody, the bride, the groom, the families, knew that the young woman was no longer a virgin at the time of the marriage. We have entered such a level of evilness that now young women regard their bastard children as sources of pride. Moral values no longer have a meaning today. There is no form of control. If one sees such things today, we have to learn to stop such evil acts because in the times of the prophets, they were not done. Maybe before, women did not know that their customs were contrary to the precepts of Islam. But now they know. They have to stop all these customs. People who are aware of the necessity to stop such things and who have not advised people to do so will face a hard time at the day of judgement. Teachers who are aware of such customs and who have not advised people against them will face a hard time at the day of judgement. Teachers have to try to advise people wisely, to direct them on the right road. Young brides must not be dressed in white. They must be dressed nicely. People accompanying the bride to the groom's house must not stay because the young married couple will be too shy to chase them away. The individuals accompanying the young couple have to be old and wise, well-advised and knowledgeable of the proper precepts of Islam. Men and women who go to give counsel to the young couple after the marriage must limit the period of time that they spend with the young couple and must leave them on their own.

The education of the bride was acquired at home when she was with her mother. If she came from a good home, she will have had a good example and she will know good behaviours. The example that the young woman will have had watching her mother with her father will remain with her and will model her own behaviour. Mothers must show their daughters how to act with their husbands. She must serve her husband, wash the plates. As such, the young woman will know that when she goes to her husband's, she will have to do the same as her mother. What must a woman do when she wants to go out? She must ask for her husband's permission. Children see all of this. If they see their mother ask permission from their father, they will know how to act. All these good behaviours depend on the behaviour of women. Children learn from their mother

from the time that they are very small. If women do as they want without asking for their husband's permission, the children will think that it is good to do the same. The children of this household will not have received the right example. The bad behaviours that a young woman will have seen at her mother's, she will repeat at her husband's. If her husband cannot forgive her, they will fight and they will divorce. Who provoked such a situation? It is the mother of the bride who created such a situation. As a consequence, mothers have to make sure that their daughters are well educated.

Now that we know all of this, what must the husband do the night that his new bride comes to him? When a bride comes to his house, the groom must prepare something for her to eat, preferably milk. It must be in his house when the bride comes. The groom drinks a bit of the milk and then he gives it to his wife. Before this, the individuals who accompanied the bride to her husband's house must bless her. The groom will have been blessed at his house before. They must all pray together, reciting two *rakas*. The groom must be in front and the bride must be behind him. The groom must "make the bride pray."¹⁷ Then there must be a celebration at the house of the groom when the bride has arrived. They must invite their friends to celebrate. But, during this celebration, people must not listen to music, but to the Qur'an, because music is the words of Satan. The Prophet, may he be blessed and rest in peace, has asked this. When a companion of the Prophet, may he be blessed and rest in peace, came to him to tell him that he had celebrated his marriage, the prophet, may he be blessed and rest in peace, told him to have a celebration, even to kill a sheep. Even if you do not have much money, you must buy bread and drink coffee with your friends. The extent of the celebration depends on how much you have. When one has this celebration, everybody must be invited. You must not choose some friends and not others. Everybody has to bless your marriage. It is bad if the celebration is only performed with rich people and people of influence. It shows that one does not consider one's friends properly. Great people as well as paupers must be invited, because God says that in his house "great people" are the ones who respect him. Once the woman has entered the house, the celebration has to continue for two or three days. Then the marriage is over.

The significant themes emerging out of this sermon are the existence of perverting influences in contemporary societies (represented by movie theatres, music, a non-Muslim social environment, and extra-marital sexuality), the social significance of the shame brought about by participation in such activities, the material spending sanctioned by Islam in the context of marriage exchanges, as opposed to the social pressure for

¹⁷ "To make someone pray" implies that the individual is directing the prayer, as an imam does at the mosque for the community of faithful. Men always pray in front of women.

over-spending, the necessity of gender segregation during certain events, as well as the division of social power and roles between men and women, the opposition between "African customs" and the precepts of Islam, and the role of women in the education of children. In fact, two organising logics of identification stand out in this example: the position of Islam in opposition to "Western modernity" and "local African traditions," and the role of Muslim women as educators and as examples of faith. Both logics are articulated by a versioning of educated Islam based on formal training in Islamic schools. I will add a further logic of identification to the two emerging out of the above transcribed sermon: the opposition between the universalist logic of the Muslim *umma*, and ethnic particularity and endogamy. This third element of identification is significant for the present analysis to the extent that, first, it is derivative of the position of Islam in contrast to "Western modernity" and "local African traditions." Second, as I will suggest in the conclusion of this chapter, it may be at the centre of processes of identification regarding ethnocultural alliances and affiliations in the context of urban life and spatial displacement.

5.5 "Flirting" with localism and globalism: Islam, tradition, and modernity

The versioning of Islam described in this chapter is based on access to formal education. Youth formally educated in Islamic schools (local *madrasas* and Islamic institutions abroad) are positioned in opposition to elders who tend, from youth's perspective, to confuse Islamic practices with local ethnocultural practices. Elders are perceived as the element in society that reproduces the logic of ethnic conservatism (exemplified by endogamy) tied to the particularism of ethnocultural prescriptions. Due to their access to formal schooling, young Muslims consider themselves more aware of the "real rules" of Islam. For this reason, this versioning of educated Islam emphasises the unity and universality of the community of Muslim believers (*umma*), regardless of age, gender, social groups, ethnicity, kinship and so forth. As such, the *umma* is positioned in opposition to locally defined collectivities

established (in this particular case) through ethnicity and kinship.¹⁸ It also opposes a logic of universalism in Islam (the belief that all Muslims are equal) to a logic of ethnic endogamy and cultural specificity.¹⁹ Thus, these young men and young women are positioning themselves against tradition and their elders. Educated Islam is defined by practice untainted by cultural traditions reproduced by the elders. It aims both at breaking down ethnic exclusiveness and endogamy and at "going back" to the *Sunna*. The logic of identification they reproduce has three aspects: appealing to "universalism," reproducing a reformist ideology, and constructing a political project of unity amongst Muslims.

At first glance, the underlying logic that articulates versionings regarding ethnoreligious identities within Islamic youth associations such as AMAR, relies on the dichotomy between notions of tradition and modernity. In discursive and behavioural practices, the concepts of tradition and modernity are omnipresent in Bouaké. Even in the context of Dioula\Banmanan sentences, they are regularly used in French: *la modernité*, *modernisé*, *moderne*, and *la tradition*, *traditionnel*. The equivalent expressions in Dioula/Banmanan language are *laada* (an expression of Arabic origin which can mean "tradition" or "customs" or "mores")²⁰ and *kokura* ("modernity"). However, *kokura* is less often used than *modernité*. The term used also depends on context: for instance, one may say: "*wagati tchogoya lo*", meaning: "in modern times," by contrast to "*wagati laada lo*," the equivalent to "in traditional times." Moreover, amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké, as well as numerous other Ivorians, life choices are described in terms of the dichotomy between modernity and tradition. This dichotomy plays a determining role in the perception of the reproduction of certain identity referents and practices

¹⁸ It should be noted that the opposition between the *umma* and local collectivities based on ethnicity and kinship constructed by Muslim youth was also noted by Robert Launay in the case of Dioula in the region of Korhogo (Launay 1991). This indicates that despite the fact that dimensions of the versioning of educated Islam within Islamic youth associations are specific to the Islamic collectivities, it is obvious that the phenomenon is not restricted to the city of Bouaké. However, there is no discussion of neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations in Robert Launay's writings about the region of Korhogo.

¹⁹ I will not address this question in more detail in this chapter. But, it is necessary to note that a number of authors have noted that this logic of universalism does not necessarily apply to women and the social category of "slave", despite their participation in the Islamic faith (Lewis 1985; Zeghidour 1990; Tahon1994).

²⁰ "Values", which can also be an equivalent to "morals," is translated by *dambè*.

concerned with lifestyle choices regarding the formal education of children, marriage, polygamy, and initiation rituals.

However prevalent at an emic level, the dichotomy between modernity and tradition restricts etic analysis to a superficial level in that it does not permit one to take into account the logic of identification emerging from Islamic identities. Islam has to be inserted within and beside this dichotomy. Images of Islam are reproduced emically through a logic that conceptualises Islam as a mediator between the local world of tradition and the global, Western world of modernity. Islam stands as the "saviour" in light of the negative influences of both tradition or modernity. It serves as a bulwark against the evils of modernity, and it allows Muslims to move away from the "backwardness" and "misconceptions" of tradition.

In this view, the means of eliminating the corrupting effects of Western modernity and the "backwardness" of tradition lie in inculcating a good Islamic education in the family and at school. In the triangular scheme described above, Western modernity is defined in association with the Western world and the Ivorian appropriation of its stereotype. The locally defined ideal of modernisation in Côte d'Ivoire is based on stereotypical images of French lifestyle and the French republican model (Copans 1990). In comparison with other French West African countries, the political elite of Côte d'Ivoire has chosen to maintain close economic, political, and cultural ties to France. It has also modelled the construction of an Ivorian nation-state on the French republican model. Stereotypical images of French lifestyles are reproduced by the local elite, and by Western media in Côte d'Ivoire (films, fashion, gossip magazines, and television programmes), as well as by the significant physical presence of French men and women in Côte d'Ivoire (*coopérants*, business people, army personnel, and teachers) as well as by returning Ivorian migrants to France. High fashion, the French-language education system and ensuing bureaucratic employment profiles, egalitarian gender relations and nuclear family models, and modalities of consumption stand as the cornerstones of the Westernised dimension of modernity.

However, within an Islamic worldview, Western modernity represents a number of evil forces that are especially dangerous for young people. In relation to the stereotypical negative aspects of Western modernity, Islam acts as a protector against the use of alcohol and drugs,

against the temptations of extramarital affairs and premarital sex, and against the lack of humility among women which is encouraged by movies and contemporary pop music.

Besides its harmful influence on the behaviour of young people, Western modernity is also perceived as a force that undermines local Islamic family values. This is seen as primarily the effect of the model of emancipation of women offered by Western modernity: women are encouraged to acquire economic independence and to search for remunerated work outside of the household. This is against the very definition of the roles of women in Islam as mothers, as educators in the household and as examples of faith for their children. Western modernity defines gender relations and womanhood in a manner where men and women are equal, and in which women spend much of their time out of the household. This is contrary to the principles of Islam, as they are defined locally and within Islamic youth associations such as AMAR. First, in these versionings of Islam, men are superior to women. Assita Sow, a woman in AMAR, described the distinctions between men and women in the following terms:

All that men do to help Islam, women must also do. But, they do it according to their own capacities. Women can participate as much as men in Islam and they are considered by Islam, but the Prophet, benedictions may be upon him, said that women have two things less than men: their memory is not complete and their religion is not complete. For instance, on the side of religion, women do not pray every day. When they are menstruating, or when they are pregnant, or they have babies at their breasts, they do not pray. Men pray every day. On the side of memory, if there is a trial in Islam, one male witness is required, but two women are required as witnesses. God made them like this. Islam has not forgotten about women. Each time women gain a role in Islam. Before Islam, people killed women and maltreated them, It is Islam that came to forbid this. Before, women complained that men were allowed to participate in jihad. They complained because when a man dies while partaking in a jihad, he goes directly to paradise. Women wanted to know why only men had this privilege and not women. The Prophet, may he have benedictions upon him, said that women who stay quiet at home, respecting their husbands, will have the same privilege as men. The jihad of women is to respect her husband in the household and to be a good mother.

Second, within the Islamic worldview reproduced by members of AMAR, when a woman works outside of her household, she is not emancipated. She has to complete two types of work: domestic work and paid work. And she is not fulfilling her role as an educator -- the domestic servants are educating the children instead. Mama Sow explains how the modern Western notion of emancipation is misconceived and contrary to Islamic principles:

Now, modern society obliges that women do as men. But God has created men and women so they are not the same. It is because of modernisation that women compare themselves to men. Women have to learn their true place and to be submissive to men. Women want to act as men, but they are not the same. Women must not do as men because even God says in the Qur'an that they are not the same, that men are superior to women. It is a verse of the Qur'an. Women who think that they are as men are not good Muslims, they are not following this verse. Women have not understood what emancipation is. Emancipation is achieved when one follows Islam, when one follows the rules of Islam. Each with one's own role. But emancipation does not mean that women work outside of the household like men. What this means really is that women have to do two jobs. They have to go to work and make money. And when they come back home, they have to cook, clean the house, and take care of the children. They do all the work. I know a woman who works outside of her household and at lunchtime she comes back home to cook for her husband. Women are not servants. Men and women have a role in Islam and it is best to follow them. Islam does not say that women should not work outside of the household. As such, there is nothing wrong. But who will fulfil the role of the mother if she is out working? The servant? Yes. But what if the servant is not a good person? Then, the children will not be good Muslims because they will not have learned the proper ways and the mother will be to blame.

It must be emphasised here that, as Muslims in a non-Muslim social environment, members of AMAR, as well as all Muslims in Bouaké, assert a certain form of modernism as synonymous with "civility". In this sense, modernity carries other meanings that are not associated to the notion of the Western world and its Ivorian appropriation, but rather to a Muslim urban lifestyle. In this logic, modernity can also be invoked in reference to some form of local "otherness", that in this case refers to the indigenous Baoulé, who are seen and described as "traditional" and "uncivilised" (*bushman*), whereas the local Muslim population is described as "civilised"

and, by extension, "modern." Again, modernity is no longer used in reference to the Western world, but in reference to notions of "being civilised" versus "being primitive". As "*te seri mogo*" ("no praying people"), the local Baoulé population is seen as "dirty," "alcohol drinking," "eaters of bush meat," "sorcerers and worshippers of spirits." They are "not civilised," "not modern." Despite their perceived distance from notions of Western modernity, the local Baoulé indigenous population are associated with the same corrupting elements: alcohol and extramarital sexuality. Here, "being civilised" and "being modern" are associated with urban lifestyle as well as a Muslim lifestyle and Muslim beliefs.²¹ As implied in the synonymous relationship between notions of "foreigners," "Muslims," "Dioulas," and "traders," which is specific to the Ivorian context, Muslims are seen and often consider themselves as intrinsically urbane due to the nature of trading activities, which necessitate an urban base for the selling and buying of goods.

The role of Islam as "protector" against Western modernity nonetheless does not prescribe a return to local ethnocultural practices and tradition. Rather, in relation to tradition, defined in association with village life, *maraboutage* and witchcraft, and ethnic endogamy, the versioning of Islam produced in Islamic youth association is an "educated" understanding of Islam based on a logic of "universalism."

Tradition is essentially associated with ethnic and local practices (such as dietary taboos, certain marriage rituals), the recourse to illegitimate *maraboutage* and magic for illicit reasons (rivalry between co-wives, jealousy), ideologies of ethnic endogamy leading to specific forms

²¹ Three further distinctions may also be invoked here. Amongst Muslims of Malian origin another hierarchy is established between rural Malians and urban Malians in which individuals of urban origin are perceived as closer to the precepts of Islam in their practice than ones of rural origin. There also exists a certain hierarchy between ethnocultural groups and levels of orthodoxy in Islam. I am thinking here specifically of individuals of Kado, Bella, Banmanan, Senufo, or Dafing origin. These groups are perceived as "more rural" and more animist than groups such as the Songhay, Marakas, or Fula who claim a long-standing association with Islam through history or trade. Moreover, it must also be noted that from the standpoint of the national Baoulé population, Dioulas and Muslims embody tradition rather than modernity. As Ivorians (in reference to discourses of the construction of Ivorian nativeness), Baoulés (mostly urban and educated in national French-language schools) consider that Muslims lack "civilisation," that they are dirty, and that they still live as in their village of origin (multiple-family compounds and polygamy). The terms of this relationship between "native Ivorians" and Muslims are also set by the relative position of Côte d'Ivoire (by comparison to neighbouring countries) in Western schemes of economic and social development. Ivorians perceive themselves as "more developed" than Malians, Burkinabès, or Guineans.

of marriage (*balmafuru*), and some false conceptions of the rules of Islam. For an instance of the latter, regarding the wearing of the *langara* (local version of the prayer shawl) for women and the skull cap for men, members of AMAR explain that traditionally Muslims in Bouaké believed that if one had not gone on the pilgrimage at Mecca, one was not allowed to wear these head coverings. They were regarded as markers indicating the piety of someone who had visited Mecca. But members of AMAR assert that this is not the case and that according to the Qur'an, one must wear them at all times (see also Tahon 1994).

As an element that needs to be redressed by Islam, tradition is not necessarily "evil," as modernity associated with the Western world may be perceived to be. It is associated with a lack of formal training in Islamic knowledge, which brings about a syncretic confusion between locally defined ethnic practices and Islam. Elders are perceived as the main offenders, the main actors in the production of "misguided" practices of Islam.

In this perspective, an "educated" notion of Islam refers to a practice of Islam that is untainted by "cultural traditions" and which aims at, first, breaking down ethnic exclusiveness and, second, "going back" to Qur'anic texts and the word of the Prophet Mohammed in its original form, that is, in the Arabic language. During an informal discussion with two male members of AMAR visiting my house, one of the young visitors, age twenty-two, expressed this position through his opinion on marriage:

We [his generation] do not want to marry young like our parents did and want us to do. These traditional marriages are dated and imply too much obligation. First, you have to spend too much money for the gifts for the bride, then you have to have a celebration for a week, which eats up all your money once again. It is too much money and it has nothing to do with Islam. Islam does not require this. The older women, they also have all sorts of rituals, like washing the bride's head and the groom's feet or verifying that the girl was a virgin after the first night they spend together and parading the sheet across town. This has nothing to do with Islam. But it is not that they are bad Muslims. It is because they do not know. They have not learned the proper way of practising Islam. They mix up everything: tradition and religion. They think that what they learned in Mali, that what their parents did, is Islam. But it is not. The Qur'an does not ask any of this. It is the same thing with arranged marriages or family marriages. The Qur'an says that you have to agree to whom you are marrying and there should not be any distinction according to your family's

status or origin. And, again, you see the same problem when you consider the fact that some families force their young men to marry many wives. Me, I will have only one wife. It causes fewer problems. You can marry four according to the Qur'an. It is better than going outside of your marriage for sex. But two and more is too much trouble. And you do it for the family, not for the religion.

As such, in relation to tradition, Islam, in its educated versioning, can become a modernising force relying on a universalistic logic that brings about a move away from ethnic and local practices.

Out of the triangular relation between tradition, modernity and Islam, two further logics of identification emerge: the relationship between a universalist logic and ethnic endogamy, and the role of women as "educators," which both need to be examined further.

5.6 Islam as a universalist worldview: disarticulating Islam from tradition

The issue of universalism in Islam is raised in reference to a perceived gap (or elements of differentiation) between elders and youth in the definition of Islam and its practice. In other words, what is defined as Islam differs between youth and their elders. Here, young Muslims are positioned as the "true bearers" of Islam, the social force spreading an educated (and, in relation to tradition, enlightened) Islam, whereas the older generations are positioned as perpetuators of tradition, of a localised form of Islam that integrates cultural practices and the logic of differentiation. As a consequence, the distinction between educated and traditionalist (or syncretic) versionings of Islam carries a strong intergenerational dimension to the extent that elements of tradition are assigned to older individuals whereas some practices associated with youth are described as more enlightened. However, in everyday life, these elements of polarisation are not necessarily experienced as a source of conflict. Moreover, as I will show in Chapter 6, this intergenerational dimension is often tied to life course notions rather than to historically situated age groups. Lastly, the intergenerational dimension implied in the tradition/educated dichotomy is not exclusive, meaning that some young Muslims may be regarded as traditional. In this respect, I will argue that the

issue of distinction is one tied to lifestyles and worldviews rather than socially constructed age categories.

In fact, the issue of different intergenerational conceptions of social norms, worldviews and social relations regarding Islam is not new to the study of Islamic communities. Within certain African Islamic groups, issues of the exercise of social control and of religious orthodoxy have historically pitted youth against elders (Last 1992). The elder generations have been associated with the maintenance of established and traditional forms of power and social norms, while the sociologically young have appealed to Islam, in its reformist forms, as a means of social, religious or political empowerment (Last 1992; Nicolas 1981; Diaw 1992; Salvaing 1992). However, as Murray Last shows in his article on *jihads* and contemporary youth religious movements in northern Nigeria, both terms -- "youth" and "elders" -- are situational and need to be qualified in relation to each other. As social categories, they are historically situated. For instance, the elders of today in Côte d'Ivoire were the youth of the independence movement during the 1950s and 1960s. Considering the social changes imparted by independence and the role that youth played in these changes, the demographic group which constitutes the elders of today was certainly perceived as a politically demanding youth by their elders of the time.

The implications of this historical situatedness are twofold. First, the age categories which are constructed sociologically, need to be examined in the context of specific sociopolitical moments in history, being the *jihads* of the nineteenth century in Hausaland, independence and the construction of nation-states in the 1960s, the contemporary fundamentalist movements in Islam and Christianity, or the perceived bankruptcy of ideologies and practices of modernity. Second, sociological age categories have to be conceptualised in terms of the life course of individuals. Throughout their lifetime, individuals enter different sociological age categories. These categories are associated with specific social roles, which are, in turn, regulated situationally and in terms of historically defined norms. As a consequence of these two conceptual implications, age groups (youth and elders, in this case) are delimited by sociologically defined age categories and the historicity of the politics of identity. "Youth," in the context studied, covers the age spectrum between

biological puberty (twelve to fifteen years of age) and the early forties, with some fluctuation relating to gender, marital status, and socioeconomic status. But it also covers the demographic group in Côte d'Ivoire that is reckoning on a daily basis with the political and economic situation of the country: the breakdown of the educational system, the lack of employment in all sectors of the economy (traditional as well as bureaucratic), economic pressure due to the 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc, decreasing opportunities for emigration to Europe or to North America, and increased gap between personal expectations and material reality, the politics of identity in the post-Houphouët-Boigny era, and the changing status of Muslims in the country.

Despite the fact that in most historical moments youth have appealed to Islam, in its reformist forms, as a means of social, religious or political empowerment (Last 1992; Nicolas 1981; Diaw 1992; Salvaing 1992), issues under contention have not necessarily centred upon the same elements. Among the elements that have been highlighted as foci of opposition in the historical unfolding of intergenerational differences are the question of gender segregation, the opposition between *maraboutage* (or syncretism) and reformism, the definition of the Islamic community through marriage rules, inheritance rules (*risala* rules by opposition to local cultural inheritance rules), the question of unconditional family solidarity under the family elder, and so forth.

Maraboutage, which has been at the centre of Islamic claims by youth in other contexts (see Last 1992, for instance) is not the central element of contention for the members of Islamic youth associations such as AMAR. For them, while *maraboutage* is not an Islamic practice *per se*, neither is it necessarily regarded in opposition to Islam. It depends of the type of *maraboutage* and of the use for which it is intended. When *marabouts* are strictly using their knowledge of the Qur'an and of the special names of God in order to help someone who is sick, for instance, and when the *marabout* is not expecting to make money out of this helping act, there is no objection to *maraboutage*. But in cases where *marabouts* use fetishes (*jo*), where they draw signs in sand (*buguritlan*), or where they throw and read cowry shells (*colonifilila*) to harm someone (in cases of co-wives' rivalries or in cases of rivalry between children of co-wives, for instance) and expect to make a profit, Islam proscribes these practices.

In the case of Islamic youth associations such as AMAR in contemporary Bouaké, it is around the issue of marriage that the discourse of difference produced by members of associations such as AMAR, as well as a large number of young Muslims in the city, is centred. In the process of constructing and appropriating a social identity distinct from that of their elders, these young individuals reject practices such as the abusive use of *maraboutage* and the improper wearing of the prayer shawl by women, but marriage distinctively stands out as a bone of contention between young Muslims and their elders. The issue of marriage crystallises the reproduction of an Islamic logic of universalism stemming from an "educated" notion of Islam.

Issues of marriage alliances and the choice of marriage partners retain a high level of sociological meaning to the extent that marriage is at the centre of the definition of borders between ethnocultural groups.²² In other words, in Bouaké, amongst Muslims of Malian origin, answers to the questions: "Belonging to a specific group carries which type of marriage prohibition?" or "Which groups define rules of endogamy and rules of exogamy?" are at the basis of the establishment of differences between social groups, whether they are religious, ethnic, or socioeconomic. In an urban context, young Muslim individuals locate issues of preferred forms of marriage (endogamic or exogamic marriages) as well as the definition of the group of belonging (ethnic group, national group, extended family or individuals with the same patronym, place of origin, or religion) as central to processes of identification.

In general amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké, cultural behaviours and rituals, such as marriage and modes of bringing up children, are "explained" and justified through an appeal to Islam or in reference to tradition as the time before (*kakon*) the present -- a time regulated by ethnic logic of identification and practices. In the first case, where the appeal is made to Islam, one will say: "I do X because I am a Muslim" or "I do X because my people are Muslims." In the second case, sociocultural practices surrounding the upbringing of children, marriage, dress styles for women, and so forth are justified by an appeal to traditions

²² There are other elements that contribute to the contemporary delimiting of borders between ethnic groups, such as historical participation in long-distance trade, the perception of the process and time of conversion of the group to Islam, and so forth.

and/or customs associated with specific ethnic groups. In this respect, two types of discourses regarding marriage practices and the choice of appropriate partners emerge: one appeals to the logic of Islamic universalism and the other to ideologies of ethnic endogamy. According to the versioning of Islam produced by members of AMAR, the logic of Islamic universalism overrides any ideology of ethnic endogamy. And logics of ethnic endogamy are associated with the older generations in terms of demands made by parents on their children through the imposition of marriage partners. They are also seen as "a thing of the past," which has changed in the present.

However, it is necessary to point out that the notion of *balmafuru*, endogamous marriage, which encapsulates a logic of ethnic endogamy is still being performed in Bouaké amongst Muslims of Malian origin. For instance, Fodi Mariko, a twenty-four year old man of Maraka origin living in Air France 1, when questioned about his marital status, explained that:

Me, they married me when I was nineteen, my parents. They married me to the daughter of my father's cousin. She is also Maraka, as I am. I was very young and I was not yet working. I was in France trying to find something to do. I came back because I was not happy there and I could not practise my religion as I wanted. One has to do as one's parents say. When you are a good Muslim, you must do as your parents tell you. And, as Marakas, we have always followed the Muslim way. Me, I could not imagine marrying a woman other than one like me, one who is Maraka, because we are good Muslims. Marakas are special Muslims, our history is tied to Islam. My second wife, even if I am allowed to choose her (it is like this with second wives, you can choose them), I will still marry one in the family. I want a good Muslim wife, so that I can have children who know who they are and who are good Muslims.

This statement brings forth a further distinction in the notion of an intergenerational gap. The rejection or the adoption of *balmafuru* as a privileged form of marriage is not necessarily tied to intergenerational differences. Some young people recognised *balmafuru*, without necessarily rejecting Islam. Fodi certainly perceived Islam as an integral and essential part of his identity. But the versioning of Islam in which he partakes is not dissociated from an ethnic logic of identification. In fact, amongst certain ethnic groups, members of the group put forth the notion that the ethnic group with which they identify has an enduring, privileged

relationship to Islam. In these cases, the ethnogenesis of the group is directly tied to the penetration of Islam in West Africa. In Bouaké, discourses of ethnogenesis tied to Islam are notable amongst the Marakas and the Songhays.²³ Members of these two ethnic groups claim a special relationship to Islam due to trans-Saharan trade in the case of the Marakas and due to their origin in Jenne in the case of the Songhays. When recounting their ethnogenesis, the members of these ethnic groups establish a symbolic tie between their role as "first Muslims" and "Islamisers" in West Africa, and their higher level of piety and orthodoxy. The Songhay of Jenne, as seventy-five year old Al-Hajj Moussa Traore, one of the notables of the Songhay community of Bouaké, explains,

.... were initially Arabs who went and settled in Jenne. They brought Islam with them. Their descendants are the noble Songhay, not to be confused with slaves and *nyamankalaw*. As the descendants of the first Arabs who came to Africa, they were the first Muslims in Africa. They also are renowned for their piety as inhabitants of the city of Jenne, where Islam is practised in its purest form.

The Marakas also claim to be the first Muslims of Africa. Rather than claiming to be noble inhabitants of Jenne and descendants of Arab Muslims, they associate their ethnogenesis and their resulting piety to trading activities. They claim to be the descendants of the first Arab traders in Africa who were Muslims. And, in turn, they Islamised the other Africans. In both cases, piety and ethnogenesis are the direct results of a claim to direct ancestry with Arabs. This claim to piety on grounds of seniority regarding conversion to Islam is often invoked in the defence and advocacy of endogamous marriages. But it comes into direct conflict with the universalist precept of the Islamic *umma*.

Not all members of these two ethnic groups adhere to the notion of a privileged relationship between Islam and ethnicity. In cases where it is not so, elements of identification other than ethnicity play a role in the rejection of ideologies of ethnic endogamy, such as type of schooling, participation in a Westernised lifestyle through schooling or work, participation in Islamic youth associations, geographical and cultural

²³ Guy Nicolas (1981) also noted the conceptual link established amongst certain groups between ethnicity and Islam in the reconstruction of their ethnogenesis .

distantiation from the place of origin in Mali, community of origin in Bouaké, and so forth.

It is specifically against this ethnic logic of identification that young Muslims adhering to the logic put forth in Islamic youth associations posit the logic of Islamic universalism, which contends that "any one Muslim is as good as any other." The imam of the "Senegalese mosque" in Sokoura captured this basic notion of universalism within Islam in the following terms:

In Bouaké, there is one Islamic community. They are all Muslims accepting and knowing that God is one and that his messenger is Mohammed. All Muslims agree with this. The Qur'an, the book of all Muslims, is accepted as God's message. Its content comes from God. Muslim religion is one, so all the mosques in Bouaké are together. The Islam that God sent down to earth, it is the only religion. But there are divergences between Muslims. It is for the pleasure of men and not of God. There are two types: Wahhabis and Tijani. It is due to these distinctions that men discuss until they cannot hear one another any longer. They quarrel with one another.

Fatoumata Doumbia, a sixteen year old female member of AMAR, echoes the same principle when she says:

Everybody has their own customs. But when one becomes a Muslim, customs are no more [*sya te Islamaya*]. There is no tribalism in Islam. People are all the same in Islam. There are no ethnic differences in Islam. Islam is the love of others. People are all the same. Muslims are all the same. There are no distinction in Islam. In the Qur'an, to take the road of God, one must not go to the left and to the right. For instance, if you take a piece of wood, anybody can break it. But if you break the piece into three pieces and tie them together, nobody can break it. This means that if Muslims work together, nobody can break their work. If people do not work together, but try to remain divided, God does not give the strength to work together. If there is no understanding in a situation, there is division. There is no "ethnic talk" in Islam [*Sya ko te Islamaya*.] All Muslims are brothers. Today, people have mixed up tradition and Islam. For instance, some people say that blacksmiths [*numuw*] cannot marry Fula . But, this is not so. Tradition is not Islam [*Laada te Islamaya*].

This notion of the universalism of the Islamic *umma* is neither new to Islamic discourse of orthodoxy nor an invention of members of Islamic youth association such as AMAR. The interest for us lies in the ways in

which these young individuals have appropriated it. The sites of resistance are marriages based on ethnic alliances and traditional practices surrounding marriage. And the rejection of ethnic/endogamic forms of marriage is directed both to ethnic endogamy and to parental authority. But while the rejection of ethnic endogamy is clear, parental authority is not so much rejected as subjected to correction and modification when the younger generation perceives that parental demands are not in accordance with Islamic principles of practice. This quote by Gaoussou Suarez, age twenty-five, exemplifies such a distinction:

Amongst my people, there are family marriages, but things have changed. Now, you can marry the woman of your choice. If she pleases your parents, it can be done. Otherwise, you cannot discuss with your parents. If they do not want her, you have to let go of her because it is not good to have bad relations with your parents. For me, it does not matter what my wife's origin is, as long as she prays, as long as she is Muslim. If she accepts to pray to Allah, there are no problems for me, we get married. I think that it is wrong to see things otherwise. I can see the good and the bad of each type of marriage. It can be good to have a family marriage, but it is difficult. If you do not agree, the wife and husband, then it is a whole family matter. The parents will intervene. You cannot divorce without your parents agreeing because it could split the two sections of the family involved in the marriage. But when the wife is from elsewhere than your family, then she acts better. She knows that if she acts in a bad way, her husband will throw her out. The husband will not stand for her nonsense and his family will not intervene. But, unless your parents want you to do something that is against Islam, it is better to respect them.

Twenty-two year old Ladji Diallo has a somewhat different opinion. He says:

You know, white people have changed many things here, in our habits. Before, when a young woman was of an age to marry, her father would choose a husband for her, a member of their family, someone who was a good person. But, now with the white civilisation, children have started to resist their parents. They no longer want to marry the people imposed by their parents. They want to choose themselves. Now they meet someone in the street, they think that they like them, they marry them, and they have all the problems in the world. It is not good. Their parents were solid couples because they knew one another and because their union was sanctioned by their parents. But now it has all changed. However, there are good things in these changes. People have

come to understand better their religion, and they know more and more that there should not be a distinction made between Muslims on the basis of ethnicity. But, these changes come from the fact that now Islamic education in Bouaké is better. It is more developed. Before, people did not know any better. Some parents are beginning to understand this. They allow their children to choose their husband or wife. But parents still have their opinion to give. And, as long as they are not going against Islam, children should listen to the choice of their parents. In Islam, parents can propose a spouse to their children. But they must not oblige the child to marry, and they must not privilege certain groups over others. Me, all that I want for a wife is a woman who prays to Allah. But I can see that if you go too far, you might have problems. And this can cause a problem in the couple and between the families. In principle, there is nothing wrong with marrying a Baoulé woman as long as she prays like a Muslim. But it can become complicated because, as here we have a communal way of life, if her parents, who are not Muslims, want to be part of your life, then it is a serious problem. This is something that one has to think about. It is also possible that the young woman will get along very well with my parents and then it is not a problem. As long as she is willing to help my parents in the compound and she prays, there is no problem.

It should be noted that amongst the young men and women whom I interviewed in Air France 1 and Sokoura, most of them have claimed to prefer exogamous marriages, and all invoked Islam as a justification of their rejection of *balmafuru*. However, in most of the cases where it was possible to obtain a genealogy from the informant, most siblings who were married had entered into *balmafuru*. This indicates that, despite the strong discourse of young Muslims, the balance of power still lies toward the parental side.

The centrality of Islamic education lies in the desire to modify parental practice on the grounds that it is lacking in "proper" Islamic knowledge. This knowledge is acquired through formal education in *madrasas* and Islamic universities along with knowledge of the Arabic language, which allows one to read the Qur'an in its original form. Members of Islamic youth associations have had access to this type of formal training as *madrasa* students or by attending preaching, sermons, Islamic debates, Arabic classes, and Qur'anic classes. This form of access to Islamic knowledge has placed educated youths in a position of "knowing" what is "real Islam" and what is a syncretic form confusing Islamic principles of practice with "traditional local" forms.

In fact, the intergenerational dimension of the discourse about Islam is not necessarily conceived of as entirely conflicting, but rather as negotiable. Amongst older women -- that is, post-menopausal women, who are over fifty years of old -- there is a sense of subordination to the knowledge of youth, and Islamic youth are seen as promulgators of true and educated Islamic knowledge. Older women often participate in the activities of Islamic youth associations. They attend Arabic and Qur'anic classes provided by these associations. In some cases, they hire, for a minimal price, members of Islamic youth associations who are known as *ustaz* to teach them new *suras* and specific prayers. On the other hand, men in their forties and fifties may be tied to Islamic youth associations, but strictly as patrons or as advisors, as in the case of the secretary of LIP-Cl in AMAR. Older men -- referring to men who are no longer economically active, in their sixties and up -- are rarely active within Islamic youth associations. They have their own Qur'an reading sessions and they go on with their own business, undisturbed by the members of these associations. Older men might attend public preaching organised by Islamic youth associations, but their participation never extends beyond such a point. There does not seem to be any exchange of Islamic knowledge between older men and members of Islamic youth associations. I have never seen members of Islamic youth associations soliciting older men as they do with older women. I suspect that there is a relation of power established between these youths and their male elders that the younger individuals do not dare to breach in so direct a manner. It is true that to a certain extent the resistance to traditional forms concerns mainly women, because women perform the public celebrations surrounding marriages and most of the practices that are associated with "syncretic Islam" and rejected by youth are tied to the public celebration of marriages. However, the issue of bridewealth, the imposition of *balmafuru*, and the imposition of polygyny directly concern older men as family authority figures.

However, as the members of associations such as AMAR are in most cases not married, it is difficult to predict how power relations will play out between these young Muslims and their elders. In the few cases where the individuals are married (and this involves only female members), the marriages have been arranged by the male family head. And, as I pointed

out previously, when examining marriage alliances within the families of these young individuals, it is often the case that their siblings have entered *balmafuru*, which in most cases indicates that the parents (meaning especially the male family head) have chosen the marriage partner. Moreover, as these young men are in many cases unemployed, without independent economic resources, their leverage for negotiation is not very high at the moment. But, again, in most cases, they are trying to postpone marriage, waiting until they are economically independent, rejecting imposed marriages, and hoping to gain some leverage.

The intergenerational distinction is not the only element that differentiates the attitudes to ethnicity and tradition of members of Islamic youth associations from those of other groups in society. The intergenerational gap is blurred to the extent that young men and women who have had differing life trajectories and experiences reproduce ideologies of ethnic endogamy and distinctiveness (as well as the ensuing views of Islam), that are similar to ones associated with older generations. I will present more case studies in Chapter 6 that will allow me to extend the analysis regarding intergenerational relations.

5.7 Women In Islam: "Muslimhood and Proper Womanhood"

This last section of the analysis is concerned with the role and status of women in the versioning of educated Islam. Notions of womanhood and Islam presented here emerge in three sets of voices: women, men, and both genders in a context of interaction. I am not making a distinction between these voices for two reasons. First, the notions of proper womanhood produced by women and by men are very similar. I will indicate when the divergences are relevant. Second, notions of Muslimhood and womanhood produced in the context of AMAR are expressed to a designated audience (the general Islamic public in cases of preaching, members of the association in debates, and the ethnographer in the group discussions that I organised). I would add that I had a chance to discuss these questions in informal settings with a number of the female members of the association, and I shared their everyday life while living in Air France 1. I noted that their daily practice and their informal opinions are

not dissimilar to the formal ones produced in the context of association's activities.

A number of questions come to mind when noticing the commensurability between men and women's discourse about Muslimhood and womanhood. For instance, what is the place of gender ideologies and male ideological cohesiveness in the reproduction of discourses of womanhood amongst women? As ethnographers, must we necessarily regard these discourses in light of gender relations, or can we understand them in the framework of adopted and privileged lifestyles and worldviews? Of course, as a woman and as a Western ethnographer, I often found myself reacting strongly to some of the views produced here, especially ones regarding rape and the "naturalised" or "biologised" dimensions of gender inequalities. I am also aware of the power dimension involved in gender relations as they unfold in these Islamic youth associations. Women, while participating actively in the activities of AMAR, are treated like "second class citizens."²⁴ As I explained earlier in this chapter, women are not vocal in the presence of male members. They defer to men. Men, while complaining that women are inactive within the association, systematically discount their interventions as "not religiously informed." When they are on their own, women tend to be much more vocal and much more enterprising. It is for this reason that I organised two group discussions exclusively with the women's section of AMAR. However, the object of this chapter is to examine the construction of specific Islamic worldviews and I wish to remain within the boundaries of this framework rather than extend outside of it into an assessment of gender relations and gendered ideologies. I am concerned about the ethnocentric trap that can result from an analysis based on Western standards. I believe that as an anthropologist my role is to understand the worldview in which these women are constructing their sense of self rather than to uncover their "false consciousness." In my opinion, political action can stem only from an understanding based on a sense of mutuality.

The reason for focusing on images of women in relation to Islam is that, as illustrated in the sermon delivered by Nour Diabaté on marriage, in

²⁴ I have to point out that in the case of AMAR where men and women are not segregated within the association, women enjoy a much larger decisional and participatory space than in other associations where they only attend preaching and other public manifestations with the male members of the association.

the reproduction of images of Islam, women are placed at the centre of the discourse as mothers, educators and examples of faith. The remedy for deviations from Islam due to modernity or tradition worldviews relies on women in these roles. Women as educators must inculcate both the principles of Islam and correct values to their children in the domestic context. Maïmouna Keita, thirty years old, details the role of women as upholders of the Islamic faith through their educational vocation in the household in the following terms:

Let me start with a proverb: When women resist at home, children become abandoned and badly brought up. The woman is at the basis of the education of her child. A woman may work, but it is better that she educates the children. Her husband is at work all day, so he cannot be responsible for bringing up the children. To start with, the child must learn what prayer is in Islam. Any Islamic education must start with this. A child must grow up in a context where the five daily prayers are respected for him to become a good Muslim. If a child is so brought up, he will then do the other things that are expected of a child, like respecting elders. The mother must show her children how to respect people. From a young age, children must learn what is permitted and what is forbidden in Islam. In Islam, it is at the age of seven that a child must begin to pray. But if the child, from babyhood, has seen his mother pray, act as a Muslim and respect his father, he will grow up as a good Muslim. Even for young girls, parents must show them how to pray when they are very young. It is not sufficient to tell your child to go pray. The child will go, but he will not know. He needs to be shown, to be taught. Even children who attend French schools can learn the Qur'an and to pray. Their mothers must show them or make sure that they are taught. Even if a child is three years old, he has to learn. Children today are spoiled. They have not learned anything because their mothers have not allowed them to be punished when they were wrong. If you look today, the majority of the bandits are Muslims. They are the ones who have not been brought up properly by their mothers. If a child does not want to listen to you and you have tried everything, everything, it is better to chase them away. It is because they have a bad nature. Chase them away -- this way they will not contaminate your other children. Besides learning the religion, a mother must show the following things to her children. When the child gets home, he must greet his father, his mother, and his older siblings. Then, the child must learn to listen to what his parents tell him to do. Then, a child must learn to work. If it is a girl, even when she is five years old, she must learn cooking. If you send your daughter to the market, she will know that she must write down what you want and bring back exactly what you said; she must bring back the exact change, not steal from you; she must not waste time; she must walk and not take a taxi or a *baka*; she must not talk to men

she does not know, women the same; she must come back right away to help you prepare for the meal. This is how a good child learns to be a good Muslim. And with this example, she will be a good wife and she will respect her husband. Of course, if you do not respect your husband, she will not be able to learn the right thing. If a man beats his wife and kills her, if she respected him and did not fight back, even if she had not done anything wrong, she will go to paradise. This is what your daughter has to learn.

Formal education in Islamic teaching institutions must complete this basic training, which is at the basis of any practice of Islam.

However, the difficulty resides in the fact that women are perceived, both by men and by some women, as morally and religiously weaker than men. As a consequence, deviations from the norms of Islam are, in large part, seen as the result of women's behaviours as bad examples of faith and dismal educators, and as reluctant wives. Men and women agree that women, as a social category, are weaker than men. They are described as weak due to their lack of knowledge of Islam. But the description of the content of the weakness attributed to women differs between men and women's discourses. Women describe their gender as "religiously" weak, whereas men tend to extrapolate women's "religious weakness" to the realm of social and personality traits. In discourses produced by men, women, besides their religious weakness, are described as economically irrational and "too demanding," as well as having a tendency to "look for fights", and to resist men's points of view and attitudes.²⁵ The ambiguous position of women regarding their status in Islam is enhanced by the fact that women are also regarded as perpetuators of "practices of tradition". Women (mostly older women), are described as violators of Islam to the extent that they maintain cultural practices that are not in accordance with the logic of Islamic universalism and that demonstrate a lack of knowledge of "true" Islamic rules of behaviour (refer to Nour Diabate's sermon on marriage). As a consequence, despite their role as educators, women remain in a position of "needing to be taught" the precepts of Islam and to

²⁵ This description of gender perception can be extended beyond the Muslim collectivity to the local society in general. Isabelle Bardem has observed the same types of gendered perception between young men and women in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (Bardem 1995). In Bouaké, tied to these gendered perceptions of women, a further element of ethnic stereotyping can be included. "Dioula women" are described by young men, both Dioulas and non-Dioulas, as belligerent, "far too loud," overly demanding, and concerned with material property.

be in a social environment where their behaviour is monitored by men. The ambiguous position of women in Islam is part of an enduring Islamic paradox: while the *umma* cannot be constructed without women and while Islam, as an ideal form, does not encourage the intervention of women in the public sphere, women remain at the centre of a large number of Islamic debates as mothers and as producers of meaning (Reveyrand-Coulon 1993).

Two elements are central to the maintenance of "proper" behaviour amongst women: formal education and an attitude of humility. First, formal education guarantees the reproduction of "proper Muslims" from generation to generation. In fact, parallel to the discourse about women's inferiority to men in Islam is a strong discursive element linking a lack of morals and religious piety to the absence of formal training in the principles of Islam. Women are regarded as "deviant" due to their lack of knowledge and training in Islam. As in the case of the failings of modernity and tradition, education is the key to settling the ambiguity in women's status *vis-à-vis* Islam. Assietou Traore, aged sixteen, comments on the centrality of formal education for Muslims, and Muslim women in particular:

Not everybody has the same level of education. For this reason, it is important to instruct people and to share our knowledge. If we did not study to know what Islam asked and what Islam proscribes, Muslims would permanently be fighting and be in the wrong because some would say that such and such is good and some would say that it is not. Nobody would be able to judge. For instance, some people say that skin whitening cream is explicitly forbidden in the Qur'an. How can that be? Did this cream exist when the Prophet, may he have benedictions upon him, was alive? Certainly not! But, there are other things in the Qur'an that explain why using such creams is not good and should be proscribed. But if you cannot read the Qur'an, how are you going to know about these things? You will not. And you will perpetuate false ideas about Islam. You will show your children wrong behaviours, or right behaviours but for the wrong reason. It is important that all Muslims be educated in the Qur'an, men and women. If you tell other Muslims, other young women in the neighbourhood for instance, that what they do is against the Qur'an, like wearing hair extensions, they tell you to leave them alone. But if they are encouraged to learn, to read, and to understand the Qur'an, they will know what is wrong from what is right.

In this logic, education is positioned as one of the main objectives of most Islamic youth associations. It takes two forms: public education through sermons and proselytising, and formal education through Qur'anic teachings and Arabic classes.

It should be noted that formal education for women is strongly encouraged within the versioning of Islam produced by Islamic youth associations such as AMAR. But in many Islamic contexts, the question of women's formal training and education is a very controversial question. In northern Nigeria amongst the Hausa, for instance, women's formal education is perceived as a threat to notions of feminine seclusion and to Islam (Reveyrand-Coulon 1993). Within Islamic youth associations in Bouaké, and amongst the general public as well, by contrast, formal education is the cornerstone of the conformity of women to Islamic principles of behaviour, leading to the religious and social advancement of Islam. Moreover, strict female seclusion is not a central element in notions of "proper womanhood." Women's participation in economic activities outside of the compound is not overtly encouraged, and working outside of the compound is regarded as a possible infringement on women's social and religious role as mothers and educators in the household. But women are not prohibited from being involved in economic production and in overt social life, as long as these activities do not impinge negatively upon their role as mothers, their attitudes and duties as wives, and their practice as Muslims.²⁶

However, the type of formal education which is encouraged for women is strictly Qur'anic education, including Arabic. Children are encouraged to attend local *madrasas* while older women are encouraged to attend Qur'anic classes organised by local Islamic associations.²⁷

²⁶ Notions of female seclusion are significant in other contexts of identification amongst Muslims adhering to Wahhabi standards of gender roles and segregation. Female seclusion is also seen as an element of ethnic distinctiveness: some ethnic groups are stereotyped as "being more inclined" to seclude their women than others. I will discuss these distinctions in Chapter 6.

²⁷ In Bouaké, Islamic women's associations are not active in the realm of education as they are in other countries, such as Senegal (Reveyrand-Coulon 1993). Most women's Islamic associations in Bouaké are based in neighbourhood mosques. In most cases, they act as mutual support associations rather than as educational associations. Since the reactivating of the national Islamic women's association, under the patronage of the CNI, in 1994, there has been a willingness to unite neighbourhood-based associations under the national umbrella association and to encourage neighbourhood/mosque-based associations to engage in activities such as *dawa* and formal education.

Formal education for Muslim women in the national French-language schooling system is not encouraged, in contrast to boys. Amongst the Muslim collectivity in Bouaké, as well as for most Ivorians in fact, education in the national French language schooling system is regarded as a means of accessing specific forms of employment: bureaucratic jobs, liberal professions, office jobs, and so forth. Educating one's children into the national French language schooling system is an economic strategy. Education within the Islamic schooling system, by contrast, becomes a religious strategy. In numerous families where children have been educated differently (some children in local *madrasas* and some children in French-language schools), the explanations for these mixed educational choices are always tied to the distinction between economic and religious strategies. By sending a child to a local *madrasa*, one hopes that the child will become a good Muslim, while the motivating factor in sending a child to a French-language school is the hope that the child will gain well-remunerated employment as an adult. Mixed strategies are conceived of as ways of ensuring that one's family will benefit both religiously and economically. As it is not recommended that Muslim women work outside of their compound, education within the national French language schooling system is not regarded as a requirement for girls' future life, whereas for young boys it is.

However, in the case of young girls who are sent to local *madrasa* schools, in the great majority of cases, they are not sent in the hope that they will become scholars. They attend local *madrasa* schools in the hope that this formal training will prepare them to be "proper mothers" and "proper wives." It is expected that they will learn the true practice of Islam, as opposed to syncretic forms of Islam. The distribution of male and female students in local *madrasas* is a good indicator of gender-differentiated educational strategies.²⁸ In most large *madrasas* in Bouaké, female

²⁸ It is to be noted that an alternative economic strategy for boys and girls is work or apprenticeship at an early age. For instance, in cases where members of the family are involved in trading activities at an early age, the boys and the girls may be inserted into this economic activity in the hope that they will become merchants in their own right later. The discussion here concerns only children who are sent to school. I have no statistical data gauging the general tendencies regarding education in the Muslim collectivity in Bouaké. In fact, due to the high mobility of children between Bouaké and Mali, the presence of fostered children, and the preponderance of children who are employed as domestics or as street merchants, it is very difficult to assess the proportion of children who are actually formally educated and for how long.

students are more numerous than male students, except for Dar-al-Addis *madrasa* in Sokoura, where male students are more numerous than female students.²⁹ However, female students are mostly found in the lowest-level classes. Except for el-Makasit el-Islamaya *madrasa* in Dar-es-Salam, where a few girls study until the Arabic baccalaureate, female students do not obtain higher certificates at the high-school level. Moreover, when one examines female educational profiles, it becomes obvious that female students are taken in and out of *madrasas* based on a household's need for domestic and other types of labour. Female students' formal education is usually broken off when they are engaged to be married or when they get married. (Female students in national French-language schools also frequently experience an interruption of their studies when they get married.) As for young women in other Muslim communities in West Africa, marriage, pregnancy, and maternity are tangible impediments to young women's formal education in local Islamic institutions (Reveyrand-Coulon 1993).

Assita Sow's educational profile exemplifies the implications of the attitude regarding women's formal training in Islam reproduced in Islamic youth associations such as AMAR. In 1995 Assita was seventeen years old. She was referred to as *Hadjia* in Air France 1 to highlight her knowledge of Islam. She was a student at the el-Hittihadiya *madrasa*, where she also taught the younger students. She was occasionally asked to give public sermons in the neighbourhood, and to preach at the *madrasa*. Her religious opinion was highly regarded. Assita had hoped to attend a *madrasa* in Bouaké to obtain an Arabic baccalaureate and then to pursue her studies in Saudi Arabia. In 1993 she participated in a national conference and training programme for young Muslim women in Yamoussoukro. This event was in part supported by Saudi institutions. She gained recognition through this event and was approached by Saudi teaching institutions, expanding her possibilities of obtaining a bursary for

²⁹ I do not have actual statistics for all the *madrasa* schools. In some cases I was given some unofficial numbers. In most cases, this assertion was based on the word of the directors, some teachers, and personal observations. I was not given access to students' registries in any *madrasa*. In fact, most *madrasas*' directors gave me the impression that they did not keep a register of their students. I doubt that this is the case. It might be so in some of the less well organised *madrasas*, such as el-Hittihadiya since the death of its first director in 1993. But in most cases I think that distrust prevented the directors from allowing me to examine the students' registry records (see Chapter 2).

Islamic studies abroad in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait or Egypt. However, in the spring of 1995, despite her older male siblings' opposition, her father married her to an older member of his family (a *balmafuru*) residing in Gabon.³⁰ After her marriage was celebrated and she was sent to Gabon, she could have hoped to continue her studies despite her marriage, but her husband refused. Assita's marriage was generally met with approval by the members of AMAR -- while some members of the association, mostly men, were very concerned that she had to cease her studies, her peers by and large considered that she had done the right thing for a "good Muslim woman." When I received more recent news about her in the summer of 1996, she was pregnant with her first child and still in Gabon.

Still, some female Islamic scholars are very highly regarded by members of Islamic youth associations, as well as by Muslims in Bouaké in general. However, there are very few women in Bouaké who have been trained in Arab Islamic institutions and who have settled in Bouaké as teachers in local *madrasa* schools. In fact, between 1993 and 1995, when I was in the field, there was just one female teacher at the *madrasa* in the Zone Industrielle neighbourhood (see Chapter 4).

It is very difficult to assess how the attitude of members of Islamic youth associations such as AMAR toward the roles of women as Islamic scholars (implying that they have remunerated work outside of their home) link up with their attitude toward women as mothers, who remain at home. Both types of women, namely Islamic scholars and mothers, are highly respected and valorised. But it is obvious that the role of mother has precedence over the role of scholar. Up to 1995, the issue of access to higher education and employment for women within Islamic institutions was not present in discourses about the role of women in Islam. I suspect that this is not yet an explicit issue because the number of young women in Bouaké who can contemplate the possibility of Islamic scholarship remains very low at the moment. At the same time, compared to other Muslim societies in West Africa, Islamic teaching institutions remain quite young and marginal to the national schooling system in Côte d'Ivoire.

Aside from formal education in Islam, a second element is determinant in the maintenance of "proper Muslim" behaviours for women:

³⁰ Two of her older male siblings tried to devise alternative economic strategies, besides marriage, in order to maintain her as an Islamic scholar. But, they were not successful.

attitudes of humility, or humble demeanour. The adoption of a "proper Islamic" attitude by women is central to the maintenance of Islamic principles of practice within the community at large. "Proper womanhood" within this Islamic worldview is composed of moral purity, physical and social humility, deference to men, motherhood, and the role of domestic educator. Physical humility is the embodiment of good faith. And physical humility is expressed through a specific dress code, which includes: full-length dress (*jelebas*, full-length *boubous*, or simple *complet trois pagnes*), covering shoulders, legs, and ankles; a head scarf which covers the hair (the hair must be braided, without extensions); and a prayer shawl or the *hijab*, worn at all times outside of the household or when visitors are present (LeBlanc, 1996; see Appendix 2). Aminata Demba, aged twenty, offers a description of the proper dress code for a Muslim woman and explains why such a style of dress guarantees the "properness" of women:

Women must always wear a prayer shawl covering their head. Women must hide their whole body except for their face and their hands. When a woman wears the praying shawl, men are afraid of going to her. They are shy to talk to her. If one dresses as one should, even when one is on the road, outside, if a man sees you, he will let you go by, because he will not want to approach you. People may laugh at us, telling us that we dress like old ladies. But it is better. You have more respect this way. If you hear that a young woman got raped, go and see who she is. You will see that she was not one who dresses properly. Women who do not respect themselves do not get respected. You cannot expect otherwise. There is an *Hadith* of the Prophet, may he have benedictions upon him, which says that the one who knows no shame can do as he wants. But this person will have to pay for her decision.

Thus, physical humility is perceived as the embodiment of religious piety and purity. It is essential for Muslim women to overtly assert their religious attitudes in order to gain respect and to serve as a good example.

In AMAR, all the female members respect this dress code. Some members wear the *langara* (local version of the prayer shawl) at all times, but they are not numerous. None of them wear the *hijab*, except for very special events. Most of them wear the *langara* when they leave their household, and when there is an Islamic event, they are sure to wear it. They always wear a headscarf or a knitted cap (mostly worn by young women and *madrasa* students) to make sure that their hair is covered. In

all cases, they wear local dress. They never wear Western-style clothing and they do not follow Ivorian fashion as shown in the fashion magazine *Femmes d'Afrique*, for instance. Even in cases where they work in offices or in shops, as in the case of Mama Sow, who worked as a secretary and Mariam Doumbia, who works as a seamstress, they wear the *langara* and clothing that properly covers their body.

As I indicated earlier, the image that is diametrically opposed to "proper Muslim womanhood" is that of the "emancipated Western woman." The "emancipated Western woman," or its local versioning, does not respect men, acts too boldly, is not humble enough, and has no regard for family values. She dresses in Western clothes, usually showing her legs and arms. She engages in extramarital sexual relations and she shames her parents by doing so. These women are not respected because of their dress style and their demeanour. In fact, the "Western-style" prostitutes found in the *Commerce* neighbourhood are the extreme embodiment of the image of the "emancipated Western woman": very short skirts and dresses or leggings, heavy makeup, very forward behaviour with men, cigarette smoking, and an overly expressive and inviting demeanour.

5.8 Conclusion

In summary, for the young men and women who partake in Islamic youth associations such as AMAR, Islam is at the centre of their lifeworld and it is through Islam that they acquire a sense of belonging. This sense of belonging carves out a social space in which they can negotiate among a number of worldviews: modernity, tradition, and Islam. Each worldview is not monolithic and can be refined into several sets of symbols and relations of power: Western modernity, Ivorian modernity, tradition as syncretic Islam, tradition as a socioeconomic burden, tradition as distant ancestral origin, educated Islam, Saudi Islamism, and so forth. Islam as a form of social identification becomes the site through which these young men and women jockey for space in a web of relations of power. Each worldview invokes a complex of relations of power in which these young adults are integrated: the postcolonial dimensions of "north-south" relations, the political dichotomy between nationals and foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire,

forms of Islamic reformism, the historical opposition between Islam and Christianity translated into a Western-world and Islamic-world dichotomy, the symbolic and material relations between Arab Islam and sub-Saharan African Islam, intergenerational relations, and gender relations. In everyday life, the most immediate of these sets of social relations is intergenerational relations, and its most significant embodiment is the question of marriage. It is around the question of marriage that these young men and women articulate a sense of community. They reject notions of ethnic endogamy and cultural distinctiveness in favour of ideas about the communalism of all Muslims.

Three sets of elements are central to the understanding of the dynamics of these processes of identification. These elements need to be combined in order to provide a fuller picture of the context and the conditions in which the versioning of educated Islam described here acquires a meaning. A first dimension relates to conditions of life in an urban environment and to the dynamics of emigration. In the case of these young Muslim men and women, as urbanites, they live on an everyday basis with individuals who have very different origins from their own. And they are distant from many of the cultural practices associated with their parental origins (see Chapter 4). Some of these youths are quite removed both materially and symbolically from the place of origin of their parents. In this sense, they are also inscribed into local relations of power that produce new loci of identification, or rather which emphasise certain loci of identification that may not be so significant in the place of origin of their parents. As I have argued in Chapter 4, Islam is one of the very few common denominators for these young men and women, and it is a possible basis upon which a sense of communalism can be constructed. Marriage, then, becomes a relevant dimension of their practice. It is a means through which social relations can be modified. It is also one of the social forms through which borders between ethnic groups are redefined and through which a sense of community is established. In effective terms, the borders between "us" and "them", within an Islamic logic of universalism, are no longer between Marakas and Fulas, or Fulas and *noumouw*, but rather between "Dioulas" as Muslims and Baoulés as Christians, at least nominally. Moreover, as a religious ideology based on an eschatological logic, Islam provides these young men and women with

a means of acquiring a sense of self, a sense of self-worth, and a basis upon which they can organise their life. As I pointed out in Chapter 4, this is not so dissimilar to the religious processes involving Christian youth in Côte d'Ivoire and elsewhere in West Africa. However, in the case of Islam, it is taking place in a specific historical trajectory (namely, the history of trading communities and Islam in West Africa) and a specific political context (namely, the 1995 national elections and the politically constructed relation of synonymity between "Muslims" and "foreigners" in the post-Houphouët-Boigny period).

As a second set of contingencies, economic constraints and practicalities cannot be discarded. Economic contingencies need to be taken into account, especially in a context where a large number of these young urbanites are facing difficult economic and political conditions. In many cases, since the mid- 1980s economic decline and the 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc, they cannot expect what their older siblings have achieved. And, as Muslims, they have come to personify the political category of "foreigners" in Côte d'Ivoire over the past ten years or so. In versionings of Islam produced in associations such as AMAR, young men and women clearly express a desire to distance themselves from some practices privileged by their parents. One must ask which are the concrete manifestations of this process of symbolic empowerment and into what type of practices they translate. Considering the socioeconomic conditions of these young men and women, the interest in alleviating the social and economic cost of certain cultural practices associated with tradition is obvious. In the life of young Muslim men in Bouaké, the heaviest socioeconomic costs relate to marriage, namely imposed bridewealth and imposed polygamy. Young men and their families do assume the cost of marriage: bride-wealth and the costs of maintaining a household with numerous wives. Amongst young men, the rejection of polygamy and of practices described by Nour Diabaté in his sermon is a very frequently encountered position on marriage. Of course, whether these opinions and desires will be translated into marriage practices is not a known fact for the moment, as most of these young men are not yet married. To a certain extent, young Muslim women also hope to alleviate the costs and obligations of marriage, because the reduction of marriage cost and obligations implies that young men will be more willing and able

to marry them. For the majority of young Muslim women in Bouaké, marriage and motherhood is the central goal of their lives. However, their position is very different from a few other young Muslim women, for whom Islam remains central to their processes of identification at the same time as they privilege the Western model of female emancipation and do not regard marriage and motherhood as the central motivating element of their lives. I will discuss such cases in the next chapter of the thesis.

Lastly, the versioning of Islam described in this chapter is not taking place in a social vacuum. As I have shown in Chapter 4, in Bouaké, over the past forty years or so, the Islamic educational context has changed. *Mory kalan* schools have been replaced progressively by *madrasas*, and students who have been trained abroad in Islamic Arab countries and other African Islamic countries have returned to Bouaké to teach. These changes are also taking place in an era in which Saudi Arabia extended its economic and religious influence to sub-Saharan African countries. These changes seem to have, in part, encouraged a restructuring of Islamic educational institutions in Bouaké. These changes are also taking place in the context of the establishment of multiparty-ism and the context of the 1995 national elections, which again have enhanced the restructuring of Islamic institutions. Moreover, in the context of the changed nature of Islamic education in Bouaké and the introduction of a "more educated form of Islam," a concomitant discourse about the increase in number and popularity of Islamic youth associations over the past ten or fifteen years is also articulated. The "increase in number and popularity of Islamic youth associations" is conceived as an extension of "educated Islam" and the place of Bouaké as a privileged site of the promulgation of Islam.

In light of these last comments, the question of the rise of political Islamism and political movements amongst Islamic youth as a means of social empowerment, while not a central question in this work, is certainly looming in the background. In other words, are these young men and women partaking in a larger claim to political empowerment through Islam by young people, as one encounters in Senegal, Algeria, and northern Nigeria? In a sense, the elements of conclusion invoked here (and in chapter 4) partially answer this question. The processes taking place in Islamic youth associations such as AMAR are partly embedded in the issues of religious doctrine and political empowerment. But, they are also

tied to the construction of borders between ethnic groups as well as to socioeconomic conditions.

CHAPTER 6:**WOMEN'S LIFE TRAJECTORIES, WORLDVIEWS
AND THE LIFE COURSE****6.1 Introduction**

In this last chapter of empirical analysis, I will present and analyse the material which I have gathered regarding women's life trajectories in relation to the central topics of the thesis, that is: the production of collective and individual identities through the description of life projects, the understanding and negotiation of worldviews, and the transmission of cultural knowledge and values from parents to children. To do so, I will closely examine the life trajectories of six women, emphasising the processes that inscribed them in differing lifeworlds and worldviews. As shown throughout the thesis, the dominant worldviews and lifeworlds invoked in Bouaké in the 1990s play upon and combine in various ways "African tradition," which opens the door to the world of ethnocultural referents, "Western modernity," which is associated with Western-style education and salaried employment, and "Islam," which is invoked in varied versions. As will become obvious through the description of women's life trajectories, different combinations of these worldviews and ensuing lifeworlds may evolve throughout an individual's life.

The description and analysis of women's life trajectories show how the processes of identification described (theoretically and at a macrosocial level) in preceding chapters unfold in individuals' lived experience (Abu-Lughod 1991). This experience is read within the framework of the "life course" perspective (Bertaux 1982; Elder 1978, 1987; Hareven 1978, 1991; Rosemmay 1982). The notion of life course emerges from research on family history and processes of social change in the post-1960s period (Hareven 1991; Elder 1987). I am using the notion of life course in the context of individuals' life trajectories, still regarding individuals as members of larger social units, of which families are a particularly central kind. Whereas historians and sociologists of the family look at how family structures have changed over time in contexts of social and historical change, aiming at articulating elements of "individual time," "family time,"

and "historical time" (Hareven 1977, 1991; Elder 1981, 1978), I am using notions of life course and social change in order to elucidate how individuals come to be inscribed and to partake in different lifeworlds in their lifetimes.

The life course framework of presentation and analysis is useful because of its dynamic perspective, in opposition to notions of life cycle which are much more static (see Chapter 1). Life course thinking is temporal, contextual and process-oriented, allowing me to take dimensions of social changes into consideration. Its object of analysis is the relationship between history, social structures, and individuals' lives (Bertaux 1982). Tamara K. Hareven described this relationship in the following terms:

Each individual develops at a different pace and assumes a variety of roles over his or her life time. Individuals' entry into and exit from such roles and the resulting collective changes within the family unit are subject to biological time tables, as well as to changing social and economic conditions. Hence, family and individual decisions affecting the timing of such transitions as leaving home, entry into the labour force, marriage, setting up an independent household, childbearing, launching children from the home and widowhood, are in turn affected by changing historical conditions (Hareven 1978: 97).

Life course analysis regards the timing of life transition moments as historically and culturally constructed. This implies that transition moments may fluctuate across time and place, and may also be altered in a particular time and place as a result of social change.

In contemporary Bouaké, events that mark life transition moments in women's lives are birth, naming, excision and *denuli* (naming ceremonies), weaning, schooling (*madrasa*-style or Western-style), marriage, motherhood, menopause, and death (see Chapter 4). These moments imply different roles and statuses, and are associated with different levels of social and family power. However, as I will show throughout the chapter, not all women experience these life transitions at the same pace and their life trajectories may deviate from this generalised life course pattern.

I have chosen to focus this chapter strictly on women's life trajectories. While a similar analysis about men is presented in Chapter 4,

the material here goes into greater depth for two reasons. First, as I have explained in Chapter 2, I did most of my work amongst women despite the fact that my research project was not initially constructed as a project on women. The decision to work amongst women was circumstantial. It was due to personal inclination, events in the field, my involvement as a teacher in a *madrasa*, and the context of social relations amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké, which is very much determined by Islamic principles of segregation by sex. But I would also argue that women are central to the processes of identification which are being described for young Muslims of either gender in Bouaké. Many of the practices which are subjected to transformation, which imply conflicting worldviews, and which may ultimately lead to processes of accommodation and negotiation between life projects specifically concern women. Moreover, drastic changes in women's life courses have taken place since independence, leading in some cases to delayed marriage and motherhood. These changes are mostly tied to access to formal education and to salaried employment.

Finally, I have chosen to present life trajectories rather than life histories for methodological reasons. An analysis of life histories based strictly on narratives of personal history, on how the individuals produce and organise their life history, as social actors, evoking different "ethnic subjects," runs up against the limitations of discursive analysis; it does not address the questions of the relationship between behaviour, discourse, and belief.¹ I have tried to integrate these elements by combining analysis of discursive practices with observations.

Remaining within the framework of lived experience, I collected individuals' interpretation of their lives through formal interviews (life histories and semidirected interviews) and conversations in informal contexts. These narratives are coupled with observations about their daily lives gathered through sharing life experiences with them, as well as through discussions of these women's lives with other members of their family. These lives, trajectories, choices and projects are presented here as chronological narration, including the following themes: place of birth,

¹ Moreover, such a method is not necessarily appropriate in all research settings, as it involves notions of personhood, and the Western notion of subjectivity, that may or may not be appropriate amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké.

where childhood was spent, migration history, education history, training history, work experience, life course rituals (baptism, circumcision and excision, other body markings, marriage, parenthood), present lifestyle and material culture, information about biological and/or social parents as well as their place of birth, marriage, children, migration history, educational and work experience, information about siblings (place of birth, migration, educational and work experience), participation in associations (political, sports, social, work-related, religious, ethnic) and in the life of the community, religious practice, relationship and trips to Mali, citizenship, and ties of belonging to ethnic groups. Each narrative is based on the life trajectory of a single woman, supplemented by similar life experiences of women whom I have encountered. Such an accumulative method of narrative reconstruction allows me to preserve the anonymity of the women concerned.

The women who¹ I have chosen to base the case studies are my close friends in most cases, but the choice is more than just a rendering of friendship.² It is also motivated by an analytical logic based on a desire to present women who had different ethnic origins and places of origin in Mali, different economic backgrounds, different levels of education and who have experienced different lifestyles. The life trajectories of the women I call Awhöé, Djénéba, Amy, Hawa, Salimata, and Mariam cover issues that are central to the discussion of the thesis, but their stories are not exhaustive of the existing possibilities. Further criteria could have been invoked to include older women who live secluded lives, co-wives who have lived together for years, divorced women with children, married

²In my experience, the ethical and emotional issues raised here remain very delicate. They are directly tied to the question of friendship in the field and the necessity of respecting the privacy and anonymity of informants/friends. How should one relate to the friend/informant relationship as a friend/anthropologist? Should each mode of relating be kept totally separate? Or should they be integrated into a whole, even if its balance may be very precarious? As is clear, I have decided to opt for the second option. This decision is based on two main elements. First, despite the quality of relationship I may have had with different individuals in the field, the purpose of my presence in Bouaké was always very clear and omnipresent: I was there to gather information in order to write up a Ph.D. thesis. Secondly, I was often reminded by my closest friends of that fact. They would repeatedly offer themselves as "objects" of inquiry and express great surprise at my reserve. However, reconstruction allows me to somewhat "de-personalise" their life accounts and their life choices. Despite their willingness to help me in my research, these women clearly expressed their concern with not being recognisable in my thesis. Reconstruction also allows me to underline the societal extensions to phenomena that may seem idiosyncratic.

women living entirely outside of their ethnic group of origin, single mothers, and so forth.

In the last section of the chapter, I will discuss the six case studies in a comparative perspective in order to highlight idiosyncrasies due to the life course, ethnic affiliations, life experiences, and opportunities of each woman. I will also discuss the common elements of identification, such as seclusion and the control over one's space and movements, age stages related to the life cycle, education and work, processes of accommodation and the referential dichotomy between "tradition" and "modernity" as temporally and spatially determined. The stakes which are central to these women's lives and of the relationship between elements of cyclicity in the life course and of social changes are central to the concluding remarks.

6.2 Six case studies: Awhöé, Djénéba, Amy, Salimata, Hawa and Mariam

The six case studies are made up of one old woman (Awhöé); two women in their forties and fifties (Amy and Djénéba), who have, more or less, chosen to end their reproductive period; and three "young" women, Salimata, Hawa, and Mariam (see Chapter 4 for the social definition of these age categories). Awhöé, Amy, and Djénéba are married. Of the three young women only one (Salimata) is married and has children. Salimata, Hawa, and Mariam have a similar background regarding education, but they lead different lives. Djénéba and Amy also had similar experiences regarding education and work, but they now partake in very different lifeworlds and have different expectations about the future. The present life experience of Amy is very similar to Awhöé's.

* * *

Table 1: Life trajectories of six case studies

| • Migratory biography | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Subject</u> | <u>Date of birth</u> | <u>Place of birth</u> | <u>Migration history</u> |
| AWHÖÉ | 1920s | Jenne, Mali | came to Bouaké, at 6, |

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|
| DJÉNÉBA | 1944 | Jenne, Mali | fostered to "older sister" came to Abidjan at 10, father worked for railroad; went to Paris with husband at 21; came to Bouaké at 27 with husband; returned to Abidjan at 50 with husband |
| AMY | 1955 | Kayes, Mali | went to Bamako at 16 for studies; went to Bouaké at 22 for marriage |
| HAWA | 1960 | Bouaké | went to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso at 18 for studies; moved to Abidjan at 20 for studies; went to Paris at 26 for studies; established herself in Abidjan at 32 for work |
| SALIMATA | 1971 | Bamako, Mali | came to Bouaké at 19 for marriage |
| MARIAM | 1974 | Bouaké | went to Abidjan at 20 for studies; left for Morocco at 22 for studies |
| • Family biography | | | |
| <u>Subjects</u> | <u>Marriage</u> | <u>Children</u> | |
| AWHÖÉ | married in late teens, marriage (not <i>balmafuru</i>) arranged by woman who brought her up in Bouaké | 12 children, 10 surviving; last child born in mid-forties | |
| DJÉNÉBA | married at 20 to man she met at university | 6 children; last child born in late thirties | |
| AMY | engaged at 16, with | 9 children, one child from before | |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| | child at 18; second engagement at 20; marriage (arranged, <i>balmafuru</i>) at 22 | marriage; last child born at 38 |
| HAWA | not married | none |
| SALIMATA | married at 19 (arranged, <i>balmafuru</i>) | 2 children, born when she was 20 and 26 |
| MARIAM | not married | none |
| • Professional biography | | |
| Subject | Studies | Work |
| AWHÖÉ | 2 years of <i>mory kalan</i> in Bouaké | petty trade from her compound; managed her husband's store |
| DJÉNÉBA | university, undergraduate degree in finance | bureaucrat in Bouaké and Abidjan |
| AMY | French baccalaureate | literacy instructor in Kayes region and secretary in Bamako; petty trade from her compound in Bouaké |
| HAWA | university, Ph.D. in biology and one year business in France | university professor for 2 years; director of research in multinational corporation |
| SALIMATA | BEPC in Bamako | none |
| MARIAM | pursuing an undergraduate degree in finance in Morocco | none |

6.3 Narrations of life trajectories

1) Awhöé

Awhöé is approximately sixty years old, although her *carte de séjour* says that she was born in 1923. She was born in Jenne, Mali. Despite the fact that she has been living in Bouaké for over fifty years, she still buys a *carte de séjour* every year and she still has Malian citizenship.³ She is very proud of being Malian and does not see why she should become Ivorian. She also explains, in other contexts of discussion, that her husband, who is Ivorian, never bothered to help her obtain Ivorian citizenship. Above all, Awhöé is Songhay, or *am Songhay* ("we Songhay"), as she says. She describes her everyday practices and other practices in which she engages (child rearing, marriage, bodily markings, cooking, bodily aesthetic, and so forth) as specifically Songhay, with her description carrying a significant component of pride and superiority. Moreover, she is very much at the centre of the Songhay collectivity, originating from Jenne, in Bouaké. She is their female elder and the president of their association, which implies that she knows most of them and that she is in everyday contact with a large number of people originating from the Macina region in Mali.⁴ Before her older brother died,

³ Awhöé's citizenship situation is not an isolated case. It is frequent that, in the same family, male members have Ivorian citizenship whereas female members do not. This could be explained by numerous factors: place of birth, the decisions for an Ivorian of Malian origin to go "get a wife" in Mali, the place of birth of the parents and so forth. However, if one looks at families where the members are more recent migrants engaged in the process of acquiring Ivorian citizenship, the fact that male members of the family acquire Ivorian citizenship and not the women resembles more a rational strategy on the part of the family heads. Having Ivorian citizenship gives some advantages regarding education, work and trade. For instance, since the movement for the nationalisation of administrative and economic government cadres in the early 1970s, it is virtually impossible for a non-Ivorian to obtain a job in the national Ivorian administration or even in the bureaucracy, including teaching jobs. So, heads of families expend significant amounts of resources to obtain official or falsified papers allowing one to obtain Ivorian citizenship, and will privilege men over women. The ideology of "man as the bread winner" is very much at the centre of gender roles amongst Malians in Bouaké. I have then encountered numerous families where the male members are or are becoming Ivorian, whereas the women remain Malian. It is less expensive, in terms of money and time, to buy the *carte de séjour* yearly than to do the appropriate steps to obtain citizenship.

⁴ It would be inaccurate to claim that all the individuals originating from Jenne are part of this association and are known to the elders. There certainly are individuals who stand outside of this collectivity. However, even in a large city such as Bouaké, it is unlikely that an individual may be entirely anonymous and invisible. News travels very fast. And individuals participate in and depend on numerous personal networks that would eventually lead one to be in contact with other individuals originating from Jenne. At the neighbourhood level,

she went back to Jenne relatively regularly. But she now has not been in twenty-five years. She visits her other brother in Bamako every five to six years.

Awhöé was the third child of her mother. Her deceased brother in Jenne was an imam. Her other brother who still lives in Bamako, was a school director. Awhöé's father died a few months before she was born. Her mother was his first wife. Some of her half siblings' children live in Bouaké, and she has a half-sister who travels regularly to Bouaké from Bamako for business.

Her father traded along the rivers in the Macina region. Her mother was also a long-distance trader, but in a more limited way than her father. She did not get out of the Jenne-Timbuktu region. Trading and religion were the main professional activities of the men and women in Awhoë's family. Awhöé often emphasises the special place of Songhays within the Islamic faith. She describes the inhabitants of Jenne as very strict followers of the Islamic faith, rejecting, until very recently, French education and having fought bitterly against the invading French colonial army. In fact, as a Songhay from Jenne, Awhöé inscribes herself in an ethnic continuity with Arabs, recounting that the Songhay in Jenne were Arabs (not just any Arabs, but the descendants of the Prophet Mohammed) who settled in Jenne and intermarried locally.

for instance, any new arrival will be noticed and there will be inquiries as to the origin of the newcomer. A state of anonymity is difficult to attain in Bouaké. As far as the Jenne community in Bouaké is concerned, I have often encountered stories of new arrivals who were eventually tracked down or who needed to bring up social ties in order to establish their credentials. It is also difficult to establish the number of individuals from Jenne now inhabiting Bouaké. A large number of them are young men who come to Bouaké on a temporary basis to make money in the hope of establishing themselves in Jenne. And there also are individuals who partake in the community life of individuals originating from Jenne who are not from Jenne and who may not even be Songhay -- friends, cowives or neighbours of individuals originating from Jenne. One of the most active female member of the *Jennekaw ton* is a Maraka from Côte d'Ivoire, but she is married to one of the leaders of the *Jennekaw* in Bouaké. Elders of the *Jennekaw* in Bouaké estimate that initially three migrant families from Jenne established themselves in Bouaké. Today, one such family contains forty-two individuals. They also estimate that there must presently be approximately sixty individuals established in Bouaké who were born in Jenne and there are about ten family units originating from Jenne in Bouaké now, without counting the young men who have come alone and without counting fostered children. However, contrary to other ethnic groups originating from Mali, Songhays from Jenne remain well defined because the first migrant men did not tend to intermarry with local women. In most cases, they went back home to marry amongst the Songhay population in Jenne or surrounding villages and towns.

Awhöé is a dedicated Muslim.⁵ She respects her daily prayers and she regularly learns and recites new *Suras*. She spends much of her free time listening to tapes of Islamic preaching and prayers. She cannot fast because of health problems, but she is very ashamed of this. She attended Qur'anic school, the *mory kalan*-type, but for a brief period, so she cannot read Arabic (and she does not read French.) She also is a great believer in the power of Islam to heal all sorts of ills and evils. She sees *marabouts* whenever she has the money to do so. She is a member of Islamic associations in her neighbourhood mosque and around Bouaké. She would never go out without her prayer shawl, even to the street corner.

Awhöé came to Bouaké when she was six years old. She came by truck.⁶ She still remembers the long trip, the dusty roads, and the other people who came with her. She was fostered as a child to her "older sister," Maïmouna, because Maïmouna could not have children. Maïmouna moved to Bouaké from Jenne with her husband, a cook for the French colonial administration.

Awhoë was brought up and her marriage arranged by Maïmouna and her husband as if she had been their own child. Despite this fact, Awhöé never refers to Maïmouna as *gna bamusso*, as her mother. Her mother remained the woman who gave birth to her. When Awhöé was young, she

⁵ Levels of individual religious practice and beliefs are very hard to ascertain. But I can say that it is usual for older women (after their reproductive period) to cover their head with a prayer shawl, even at home, and to wear a long *boubou*. I do not know whether all older women pray and respect other Islamic rules of behaviour, but they certainly give an external image of piety in their dress and demeanour. Married women of a certain milieu, more "traditional" and more "strictly Islamic," always wear a scarf on their hair, under the prayer shawl. They never have their head uncovered to show their hair. They also would never use hair extensions. It is described as against Islamic teachings.

⁶ Members of the Malian collectivity in Bouaké establish a distinction between "people who walked to Bouaké" and the others. People "who walked to Bouaké" have a special status amongst the Malian community. Very few of them are still alive. They are the elders and the notables. They are considered as the first ones to come and to settle in Bouaké at the turn of the century. Together they make up about five families and are considered as the original settler families in Bouaké. Each time that I inquired about historical matters, I was referred to the "ones who walked." I met a few of them, but because they are very old and often sick, it was not always possible for them to have extensive discussions with me. Their migration stories, in the few cases where I could obtain some information, are all similar and resemble what may be described in the literature: they came in groups of five to twenty with a donkey or two. They transported salt and brought back kola nuts. Some of them made the trip numerous times before they definitively settled in Bouaké. When a trader settled in Bouaké, he would come to live with an already established family from Mali or he would marry a local woman who converted to Islam. They would eventually establish an independent compound, usually given or obtained by the head of the household who gave them shelter at first, and start working as traders, as artisans: dyers, leather workers, *jeliw*, or as religious specialists: *marabouts*, imams, or Qur'anic teachers.

regularly visited her biological mother in Jenne. And her mother eventually came to live with her when she was elderly and when Awhöé had her eighth child. Awhöé refers to Maïmouna as her *koro musso*, which translates into "older sister." They were not sisters of the same mother and father, nor of cowives. They were not even of the same biological generation: children of brothers or sisters from the same father. By the use of the term *koro musso*, it is obvious that Maïmouna was Awhöé's elder, implying a certain degree of respect. Maïmouna was a distant relative from the family of Awhöé's father. She was well known and very active amongst the Malian community of Bouaké. She was the president of the first association of Malians from Jenne in Bouaké. Awhöé, as her social daughter, took her place when she died.

Awhöé speaks Dioula/Banmanan, Songhay, Fulfulde, and Baoulé. She spoke Dioula and Songhay at home, whereas she learned the two other languages in the streets. None of her own children speak Songhay, except for her oldest daughter, who speaks numerous local African languages out of personal interest, and a son who lived in Jenne as a child. At home, her children learned Dioula and they learned French in school. Awhöé's husband does not speak Songhay, having Maraka and Baoulé roots. Amongst themselves, Awhöé's children speak French.

From the time that she was a young girl, Awhoë learned to trade. She worked for Maïmouna: selling cakes; gathering henna, drying it and selling it; making and selling *ussulan* (locally made incense with crushed spices, minerals, butter, and commercial perfume); making hair extensions with horse hair and vegetal matter. She still sells from her compound. She makes *ussulan* and sells sweets now.

In her late teens, Awhöé had eight suitors when she came of age to be married. According to local standards, she was very beautiful. She fitted local ideals of feminine beauty: her skin is light and unblemished, she has a gap between her two upper front teeth, she has a full head of long and thick hair, and she is very well versed in the local feminine aesthetic including tattooing, using henna on the hands and feet, using *ussulan*, and displaying clothes and jewellery in the "right way" to make the "right statement."⁷ In fact, she is often still mistaken for a Fula woman who are

⁷ In Bouaké, "Dioula" women (here meaning women of Northern foreign origin, Mali, Guinea and Senegal) are renowned for the attention they pay to bodily aesthetic. It is a question of

considered to be "beautiful women": tall, thin, light-skinned, and with "hair like white people."⁸ Bodily beauty is very important to Awhöé. Even now, despite her old age and her lack of economic means, she is proud to show off her beauty and to wear new and high-quality clothes. She has passed on a sense of "Malian pride and beauty" to her daughters, who claim to prefer defining themselves as Malians because they are more beautiful women than Ivorians, especially Baoulé, who are described by northerners as "small and squat."

Awhöé married Alpha, a man about fifteen years her elder. Alpha was born in Bouaké. His father walked to Bouaké from San and married a local Baoulé woman, who converted to Islam. His father was a Maraka trader. Both his parents died when he was young. He was brought up by his father's half-brother. Alpha became a tailor and later a trader. He also inherited rights to land in his mother's village nearby, where he cultivates groundnuts and breeds cows.

Awhoë's marriage to Alpha was not a *balmafuru*. Alpha had been married twice before, but since his first two wives had not "given him" children, he divorced them. Awhöé takes pleasure in saying that one of them remarried and had ten children, implying that the lack of children was not due to the woman's infertility. Awhöé then became the senior wife. And she insists, to this date, that she will remain her husband's only wife, despite the fact that her husband took a second wife and that he has children with other women with whom he has not married. Awhöé refuses to acknowledge these women and their children.

The story of Awhöé's marriage is somewhat stereotypical for a woman her age.⁹ She was the first, cherished wife of her husband. She

social survival to be able to afford, at least, a few holiday outfits which will be worn at marriages, baptisms, funerals and for the Muslim holidays. A woman who cannot afford to "dress up" with well adorned first quality *basin* cloth, gold jewellery, a Mecca *langara*, and special shoes cannot go to these social events and will not be able to maintain the social network which may be necessary for her economic survival. For this reason, Dioula women have the reputation of being very vain and of being "expensive women" to support for a man. If one pays attention to ethnic stereotypes, it is a common stereotype that Senegalese women are more vain, extensively wearing elaborate Western make-up and gold jewellery.

⁸ Some of the local criteria of beauty were historically re-defined through contacts with foreign groups, mainly white European and Arabs: "thick hair like white people" and "lighter skin like Arabs".

⁹ In a popular television satirical sitcom, *Comment ça va?*, similar themes tied to polygamy often make up the story line. This Ivorian-produced sitcom is very popular amongst people of all ages.

helped her husband build his business and future, and she was treated in the best possible way: clothes, money to go out, meat to be eaten everyday, impressive amounts of cloth and jewellery when a child was born, and so forth. She also shared her husband's work, and it made them become good friends. She thought that a bright future was shining in front of her, one in which she would eventually "retire" with her elderly husband to live with her sons, their wives, and their offspring -- a future in which she would rest and be able to enjoy her social life with other women her age. But, when she could no longer have children, her husband started having children outside of the marriage and eventually took a second wife. Awhöé always refused to recognise her *rivale*, or co-wife, and so her husband went to live in his mother's village with the second wife, more or less abandoning Awhöé and her children.¹⁰ He no longer takes care of her economic needs.

With Alpha, Awhöé had twelve children, of which ten survived. The first child and the third died: a daughter and a son. They died before they were two years old; she then had a child about every two years, six boys and four girls. The eldest is a woman of approximately forty-five years of age and the youngest, another woman, is twenty-two years of age. Most of her children were born in Bouaké, except for the two oldest boys, who were born in Jenne. As many young women do, she went to her mother's house to give birth and to be taken care of for forty days.

Awhöé's male children were all circumcised at an older age. They were part of a group circumcision. People "danced" for them. Awhöé recalls the drum players and the large crowd. Awhöé's older daughter was excised, but the three younger ones were not, due to the influence of their older male siblings, who had been living in France for fifteen to twenty years at the time.

Awhöé expresses bewilderment and sometimes shame at the behaviour of her children. They have not conformed to any local standards regarding what is expected: getting married, having children, and economically supporting one's parents in old age. One of her sons is married, but he lives in France. None of her daughters is married, and only one has a child, whom she had while in her teens. In fact, none of her

¹⁰ Co-wives are commonly referred to as *rivales* (rivals in English) implying a competitive relationship between the spouses of a single man.

children has married locally. This is one of the sadnesses of her life. She often wonders what has gone wrong. She complains that, at her age, she should be sitting at home and resting while the wives of her sons do the work. She should not have to work in the house. She should be surrounded by grandchildren.

All of Awhöé's children were put through school by their father. All of them did most of their schooling in Bouaké, though a son went to school in Bamako where his uncle was school director, for a time; a daughter obtained her baccalaureate in Mali; another son obtained his baccalaureate in France; a fourth son is studying in Abidjan. Six of them got a baccalaureate and attended university, three in France and three in Abidjan. One daughter got a Ph.D. in France, and a son is now doing a Ph.D. in France. Awhöé explains that the older ones used to attend Qur'anic teaching on the week-ends or school holidays. But this practice was not continued with the younger ones.

Awhöé and her husband both consider that it is essential for children to attend the national French-language school system if they are to have the possibility of obtaining good employment in the future. They brought up their children to be part of the bureaucratic class of Côte d'Ivoire and to occupy Western-style employment, as opposed to relying strictly on trade as a source of revenue. So far, only one of their sons, Alassane, abandoned school early and is working in a local type of employment: he is a trader between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire when his capital permits and between Ivorian cities when he does not have the means to engage in larger-scale trade. He is Awhöé's only son to live permanently with her in Bouaké. Unfortunately, he is not very successful.; his commercial ventures never seem to succeed.

Except for one son, who is doing a Ph.D. in pharmacology in France, Awhöé's daughters have done much better in school and have acquired a much higher level of education than her sons. None of them is yet married and most of them are no longer "young": they are forty-five, thirty-four, thirty-one, and twenty-two. The last one is still quite young, but she is now in France where she has started a master's degree, and it is very unlikely that she will be married and abandon her studies. She claims that, these days and with the situations of couples in Africa now, a woman needs to have a

good job in order to be prepared to face any type of eventuality. She has also gone to great lengths to continue her studies.

Economically, Awhöé lives a relatively precarious life. She has a roof over her head, but she does not have a regular income. She lives in her husband's house in Air France 1. Awhöé's husband pays only for the electricity, the water and the telephone, and he gives her a small amount of money for food every month. The amount is not sufficient, and the money for the bills and the food does not come regularly. Awhöé would need a minimum of 50,000F CFA a month from her husband to run her household, but she gets about 35,000 francs. She supplements this amount with her own money, which she should be able to use for personal activities: association contributions, bodily care, gifts, clothes, medical care, and so forth. Her husband does not pay for her medical expenses, which can be quite high at times since she suffers from heart and stomach ills. Moreover, she has to assume the cost of the medical treatment (*indigenat* and Western) for her oldest daughter, who is suffering from a psychiatric illness. Awhöé also gets a small amount of money every month from the rents from a compound she inherited from Maïmouna in Koko. But the money is no longer a regular source of income, because the tenants do not pay their rent every month. She has to rely on the money her children irregularly give her, her participation in *tontines*, loans, and the little she gets from the small trade she practises from her compound. Two of her children in Abidjan send her about 10,000F CFA a month. As for her trade, she probably loses money on average rather than making any.

Awhöé has been living in this house for ten years. Before, she lived in Koko, in her husband's father's old courtyard, with two other Malian families. Koko is an older and more populous neighbourhood than Air France. It is also much more central; it is next to the *grand marché*. As a location, Awhöé found it much more convenient. It was much less expensive for her to get around town in order to go to the different events she is expected to attend as the head of the Jenne and Malian associations. It was a very difficult period in her life when she had to move away from Koko, where she had grown up, into Air France. She resisted the move for as long as she could. She remained in Koko for two years on her own, with her children in Air France, before her older children forced her to move to Air France. They had decided for her that Air France would

be a more appropriate space than Koko, more up to middle-class standards of living: less noise, less dirt, less sickness, less petty delinquency, more comfortable housing, and so forth. But she had to leave behind dear friends and a rich community life. In Air France, Awhöé found herself to be very isolated socially in a single-family compound and in a neighbourhood where she had no acquaintances. She eventually met women at the mosque, who introduced her into a number of neighbourhood associations: the local women's mosque association and Air France's *bara ton*.¹¹ By the time that I left the field in June 1995, Awhöé had re-established a very rich social life for herself in Air France, but she still missed the communal life of Koko.

Awhöé's everyday activities are divided into two kinds: household activities or outings. If she does not have an outing or an event to attend, she will stay put, work and rest. Since Awhöé is president of two associations, *Mali ton* and *Jennekaw ton*, she is called upon to participate in many social events. She goes out about four days a week on average, but there are weeks when she is out every day. As far as marriages and baptisms are concerned, the important days for public celebrations are usually Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. She also receives constant visitors tied to her association life.

2) Djénéba

Djénéba was born in Jenne in 1944. She lived in Jenne with her mother until she was ten years old. With her mother, she joined her father in Abidjan in 1954. Her father worked for the French railway company on the Abidjan-Ouagadougou route started the 1920s. He permanently settled in Abidjan with his first two wives a few years after Djénéba was born. Djénéba's mother, who was the third wife, joined him later. Djénéba's father took a fourth wife in Abidjan when Djénéba was well into her twenties.

Djénéba's father was a Songhay from Jenne. His first wife was also a Songhay. Their marriage was a *balmafuru*. His second wife was also a Songhay, but from Timbuktu. Djénéba's mother is a Fula from Jenne. Djénéba is the third daughter of her mother's children. Because Djénéba's

¹¹ *Bara* is a wide, low drum, originating from regions North of Côte d'Ivoire, played at weddings and baptisms. A *bara ton* is a musical association.

father worked for the railroad, he was in a position to become a very successful long-distance merchant. After retirement from the railroad, his trading business flourished. He bought land and real estate in Abidjan, Bouaké, and cities in the north of the country. He also bought real estate in Bamako and Jenne. He managed with this money to support his four wives and the education of his children. Before he died in 1995, he was one of the prominent figures of the Songhay community in Abidjan.

In Jenne and in Abidjan, Djénéba attended Western-style schools. She obtained her French baccalaureate in Abidjan a few years before she married. But, because she grew up in her father's family in Jenne, she also knows her ancestral culture and she speaks Fula and Songhay; she never spoke French with her parents. But she did not pass on these cultural practices to her children. She explains this lack of cultural transfer to her children as a result of her marriage to a non-Songhay. Moreover, her stay in France has very much influenced her to follow a Western lifestyle: education of her children in national French language schools, exclusive use of French at home, monogamous and nuclear household. In the past few years, Djénéba has started adhering more closely to a Muslim lifestyle, in her dress and her Islamic practice.

Djénéba married when she was twenty. She married a Dan from the Man region in Côte d'Ivoire who is also a Muslim. They met at university in Abidjan. Djénéba's father accepted the marriage because he believed that children should choose their own marriage partners as long as they are Muslims and from good families. In fact, Djénéba describes her father as "modernised." She says that he belongs to the independence-era generation in West Africa who valorised the Western model of economic development and lifestyle. While he himself followed "tradition," he believed that all his children, daughters and sons, should be Western-style educated. He also believed that his children must choose their careers and marriage partners. Moreover, Djénéba thinks that, because her father had numerous children (thirty-one surviving children), he could not control the marriage choices of all his children. He arranged *balmafuru* for his older children, but by the time Djénéba came of age to be married, he already had seventeen older children, and was less involved in his children's life.

A year after her marriage, Djénéba followed her husband to France. He had received a bursary to pursue an undergraduate degree in finance

in Paris. Once in Paris, she registered in the same programme. Her husband got a master's. She got an undergraduate degree. She had her two older sons in France. She had three more children when she went back to Côte d'Ivoire with her husband. They stayed in France for six years.

When the family came back to Côte d'Ivoire in 1976, Djénéba's husband was transferred to Bouaké. He worked for the revenue and tax ministry. They remained in Bouaké until he retired in 1994. At the time, they moved to Abidjan. Her husband wanted to live close to his brothers who are all retired in Abidjan. Djénéba got a transfer to Abidjan and she continues working for the water company, where she is an office worker. She was not happy with the move to Abidjan because she was concerned that she would have too many family responsibilities in Abidjan: her husband is the most economically successful of his siblings, and Djénéba was afraid that she would have to take on fostered children. Moreover, in Bouaké, she had very extensive social and economic networks. She traded between Mali and Bouaké in cloth and jewellery. She re-established her trade from Abidjan, but she had to modify her networks and she lost some money. She was also a very active and prominent member of the Songhay community in Bouaké. She was next in line to replace the female elder in the *Jennekaw ton*. She was also very involved in political matters which affected the Malian community in Bouaké.

Nonetheless, Djénéba considers that she has a good marriage. She and her husband stayed together and he never took other wives. To her knowledge, her husband does not have children outside of their marriage. He respects her. He has always permitted her work and have a career.

All her children are in Western-style schools. Her older son is in the French army in France. Another son is doing a master's in computer science in Germany. The third son has started an undergraduate degree in economics in Bouaké. A daughter is studying medicine in Abidjan. Two other daughters are in high school. Her children speak only French because she and her husband speak only French at home.¹² This was

¹² It is common to encounter families of Malian origin in Bouaké who have been educated in the national French language system and in which the members do not speak Dioula. In these families, the parents have attended French schools and often hold government jobs. And, they speak French with their children and amongst themselves. In cases where the parents do not have the same maternal tongue, French becomes the *lingua franca* when the parents have been schooled in French, but when it is not the case, the *lingua franca* is Dioula.

necessary because as they do not have the same mother tongue, nor do they speak Dioula/Banmanan beyond "market Dioula."

Djénéba never received formal Islamic training outside of her father's compound. She learned to pray from her father and older male siblings. Since 1993 she has been attending Arabic and Qur'anic classes. A few years before, she became very involved in local Islamic associations. She participated in mosques' women's associations and in Coordination (the forerunner of the Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Côte d'Ivoire). She was one of the leaders of Coordination. All her women friends in Bouaké are the present leaders of the Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Côte d'Ivoire. She joined the association's branch in Abidjan when she moved there in 1994.

Djénéba's lifestyle conforms very much to the lifestyle of a "proper Muslim woman" of her age, albeit that of a professional Islamic woman. She does her daily prayers and she observes Ramadan. Her financial means also allow her to give alms for the benefit of poorer Muslims. She made the pilgrimage to Mecca with her husband in 1992. She always wears African-style clothes, a head scarf, and a prayer shawl (see Appendix 2).¹³ She brought up her children as Muslims, but at the moment they do not follow the rules and prescriptions of Islam. She is not worried about their behaviour because she knows that they are "good people" and she thinks that, as she did, they will change their behaviour as they grow older.

3) Amy

Amy is now forty-three years old. She came to Bouaké twenty years ago when she was married to the son of the woman who brought up her mother. She describes this time in her life as the hardest: coming to a place she did not know, to a family she had never met, and to a husband that she did not love. In her teens, her father arranged an engagement between her and the son of a member of his family. At first she refused him, but she grew to like him and they had a daughter together. When the time came for them to be married, she visited her paternal grandfather in order to introduce her future husband. The old man objected to the marriage on

¹³ In Côte d'Ivoire, this is the specific fashion worn by Muslim female bureaucrats (LeBlanc 1996).

grounds that there was a marriage taboo between Amy's family and the young man's family, which Amy's father had forgotten when he had arranged for the engagement. The young couple was separated by Amy's family and the child remained with her father. A few years later, Amy's mother contracted a marriage between Amy and the son of the sister of the women who had brought Amy's mother up in Bouaké. It was an arranged marriage and nobody asked Amy's opinion. She was married and sent to Bouaké without knowing her future husband. She ran away, but her family refused to take her back. She returned to her husband and had children with him. She claims that she never learned to like her husband and that he never treated her as he had initially promised.

She has returned to Mali a few times for a visit since she moved to Bouaké, but not as often as she would have liked because she needs to have her husband's permission to do so. She would like to go back and live in Mali, but she knows that she never will as long as she is married or as long as her husband is alive. She still has Malian citizenship; she is not Ivorian despite the fact that all of her husband's family is and her children are too. Her husband has never begun the legal procedures necessary for her to get Ivorian citizenship, which would keep her from having to buy a *carte de séjour* every year. The yearly *carte de séjour* is quite an expense for her since she has to get the money herself to buy it. But, she does not mind because she is proud of being Malian. She says that, being happy and proud to be Malian, she does not see why she would want to give up her Malian citizenship for citizenship in a country where she is not happy and where she thinks that life is not good. As do many Malians, she argues that life may be materially difficult in Mali, but that there at least people are friendly and generous. -- contrary to Ivorians who are greedy and who think that they are "white people." Moreover, as a Malian woman, Amy thinks that it is necessary to try to live up to certain ideals of bodily beauty: being *bien en forme* (not too thin), wearing appropriate and good-quality clothes made with high quality *basin*, wearing gold jewellery, wearing henna designs on her hands and feet, and perfuming her body with *ussulan*. These are largely unattained ideals for Amy, since she does not have the money to dress up and to adorn her body in the right way.

The people whom she considers to be her closest kin in Bouaké belong to a Malinke family of Guinean origin (though very close to her own

village of origin across the border in Mali). The male head of this family was a close friend of Amy's father when the latter was still alive. She also is very much integrated into the networks of the women of her husband's family, who are, for the majority, *jeliw* who perform around town.

Since I met Amy in March 1993 as a potential language teacher, her life has noticeably deteriorated. Her standard of living has gone down and her good spirits have disappeared.¹⁴ Her initial image was of a self-assured woman, but when I left Bouaké in 1995 she seemed an older-looking, tired, and resigned woman. As one says locally: "A *segela*," ("She is tired", meaning that she has used up all of her courage to go on).

Amy more or less lives in a state of poverty in the context of relative wealth. She has a roof over her head, with running water, and electricity and food every day, but she cannot afford other material goods, even medical care. And she experiences serious difficulties maintaining a small livelihood through her trading activities.

She had abandoned her trading activities when I went back to the field in January 1995. Her flourishing commercial activities were seriously diminished by the devaluation of the CFA franc and by the large amount of credit extended to her clients and their inability to pay. She used to get her merchandise from Mali every week or every fortnight depending on how fast she managed to sell it. Her grandmother (the mother of the woman who brought her up when she was young) would send Amy goods through a truck of hers to be sold in Bouaké. In return, with the profits from the sale, Amy would buy local goods in Bouaké and send them to her grandmother to be sold in Bamako. In Bouaké, she was selling *boubous*, jewellery, perfume, cloth, and other articles for women. Most of her clientele was amongst female office workers. She also placed some goods, such as small bead bracelets, with white people or with merchants in the markets. She preferred to trade with office workers because even if they bought on credit, as most women do, she was more or less guaranteed that they would pay her at the end of the month, when they got their pay cheques.

¹⁴ One might speculate whether there is not a process of impoverishment that accompanies ageing in women. For a large group of women, one gets the impression that they were at the height of their wealth when they married and they had their first children. These are the times when they received gifts from their husband, family, and friends. And then the accumulated goods and capital are depleted as life goes on, as the husband shies away from his family responsibility, as the children grow up, and as the economic situation worsens in the Côte d'Ivoire.

Amy eventually stopped acquiring goods from Mali because her clients were no longer paying their debts -- with the 1994 devaluation they were short of money -- and the 1994 devaluation reduced her capital to half of its worth. In 1995, her only revenue came from the embroidery and sale of women's frocks, cloth, and blankets for carrying children on one's back.

When I left Bouaké in June 1995, Amy more or less spent her days at home with her children, sitting in the shade of her house or in her living room. She was performing her household duties: shopping for the daily meals and preparing them, making sure that the house and the clothes were clean, taking care of her children and supervising their homework. But she no longer went to social events as she used to do earlier on. (She formerly participated regularly in the Kayes region women's association in Bouaké, and she went around town attending to her commercial activities.) She increasingly felt socially cut off. The process of economic impoverishment and social isolation started to reproduce itself as a vicious circle: the less she could invest into her social networks, the less she could expect to receive, and the more she would have had to invest if she ever wants to become active again.¹⁵

She lives in the compound of her husband's father with her children, her husband, her mother-in-law and three of her mother-in-law's *protégées*,¹⁶ her father-in-law, a daughter of her husband (her husband had this daughter with another woman before Amy and he were married), her son, one of her sisters-in-law (who is not from the same mother as her husband) and her baby, and one of her brothers-in-law (he is from the same mother as the previously mentioned sister-in-law) and his new wife. Amy is rather distressed at the presence of these young women in the compound. She considers that they are *gâtées*, meaning that they are "spoiled." They had children without being married. They do not try to work

¹⁵ E. S. N'Dione (1992) proposes a similar argument for the economic and social return of investments in women's associations in Dakar, Senegal. He argues that a strict economic assessment of financial investments and returns in women's co-operatives by development agencies is erroneous because such local economies do not function on a strictly economic basis. The logic of investment and return also includes a social component that very much resembles the processes which one finds in women's associations.

¹⁶ *Protégé* is the French word used to refer to fostered children. It is always used in French by people speaking Dioula/Banmanan. Usually, *protégés* are fostered under an elder's care as guarantor of their well-being. The guarantor neither employs the *protégé* as domestic labour has the obligation to school them. The guarantor usually provides food and lodging, as well as help in difficult times.

or to get married. They go out at night with men, leaving their infants to cry in the courtyard. She is afraid that they will set a very bad example for her own daughters. She does not want her daughters to ruin their lives this way.

The household is financially supported by Amy's husband, Bakari, and his parents. Her husband works for the city of Bouaké as a bureaucrat, with a regular salary. In 1994, his job went from full-time employment to part-time employment, as was the case of a number of bureaucrats. He pays only for the electricity and the water. He also clothes and educates his children. The food is paid for by his mother, who receives rent from a house in Sokoura. Since the compound belongs to Bakari's father, there is no expense for the rent.

Amy assumes all the cooking duties, since she is the only daughter-in-law permanently present in the compound. She has a servant and she gets help from her older daughters. The two older ones are twelve and fifteen years of age, so they can assume some of the housework, but she still has to supervise the work. And when her daughters are in school, she does all the work.

All of Amy's children who are of an age to do so attend the national French-language schools. Her sons have attended Qur'anic schools, at one time or another, during school holidays. Her older son, Alassane, is quite dedicated to Islamic matters. He is an active member of the AEEMCI chapter in his school. He attends all the meetings and the organised prayers. He does his five daily prayers. Alassane goes to the mosque on Fridays with his father when he is not in school. His younger sisters started praying and fasting while I was in Bouaké, but they do not go to the mosque.¹⁷

Amy is very regular in her prayers and she hopes to give a good example to her children by her assiduity. She also enjoys spending the end of the afternoon listening to tapes of Islamic preaching. When she

¹⁷ According to Islamic rules, children must start praying and fasting when they are seven years old. Many boys do not pray regularly until they are adolescent and young women until they are married. The frequency of daily prayers does not strictly depend on personal choice; it depends on the type of education received. Children in *madrasa* schools will be obliged to pray in school and to respect Ramadan. It also depends on the family environment. Some parents oblige their children to pray, waking them up at dawn for the first prayer, whereas other parents tend to adopt the view that as their children will become adults, their religious behaviour will begin to adhere more closely to religious orthodoxy.

realised that I had a portable tape recorder, she often asked me to make tapes of Islamic preaching given around Bouaké. She often attends such events when she can. She also enjoys listening to Malian *djeli* -style singers live or on tape. She always knows when one is coming to Bouaké, but she does not always have the money to attend the concert.

She also follows the activities of the Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Bouaké. This association is made up of bureaucratic women and professional women who are involved in national politics through their connection with the CNI. Amy enters into their social category because these women used to be her clientele when she still practised her trade. She also has the same level of education as they do and, when she was young, she hoped that she would have a career similar to theirs. She also is a personal friend of many of these women through her own networks and through the female members of her husband's family in Bouaké.

It is essential to Amy that her children get a proper education, which she hopes will lead them to good employment. She spends a lot of time supervising their work and she pays attention to their progress in school. When things do not happen as they should, she will appeal to her connections in her social networks to redress the situation. For instance, where her eldest son was unfairly refused his BEPC exam, she arranged with her husband's cousin (who is school director) that he fix the mistake, and her son obtained his BEPC.

Amy brought up her seven children with her husband (Bakari) along with her husband's daughter from another woman, who lives in their compound with her infant son. Bakari also has a number of children out of wedlock. Amy believes that he has five such children. He supports only one of them, who is a son.

Bakari has a second wife, an older widow he married a few years ago. She is well into her fifties, has her own compound in Kennedy, and has financial resources from her late husband. She does not want to live with Bakari and she will not have children with him. Amy does not mind. She says, "*Elle n'a qu'à s'occuper de lui*" ("She can just take care of him"). Amy also thinks that her husband married this woman for her money, but that the woman does not mind because she simply did not want to remain a

widow. Amy has occasionally met her at social events, but she does not really know her and she does not have regular contact with her.

Amy's first daughter, whom she had with her first fiancé in Mali, has lived with her father in Bamako all of her life. She used to come to visit her mother quite regularly in Bouaké but, when she became pubescent, Amy no longer wanted her to come. She considers that her husband "did not treat her with respect," implying that he made sexual advances to her. Now, Amy sees her when she goes to Mali, which is not often.

In most respects, Amy's children are the centre of her world. She is very unhappily married, but she decided to remain married for the sake of her children. She explains that when a mother goes to live outside of her husband's compound, her children are not well treated by the father. If she stays with her husband, she can make sure that he will feed, school, and clothe them, whereas if she leaves her husband, she will return to her family and she will not be able to control the care given to her children.

Having not been able to realise the hopes which she had for her own life, she has decided to pursue these same hopes for her children, especially her daughters. She wants them to be educated, to marry men that they love, and to wait until they are married to have children. She is strongly against arranged marriages and against *balmafuru* for any of her children.

4) Hawa

Hawa is thirty-seven years old. She grew up in Bouaké, where she was born. She left Bouaké for the first time when she went to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, to do her baccalaureate when she was eighteen years old. From Ouagadougou, she attended university in Abidjan. She pursued graduate studies in Paris, obtaining a Ph.D. in biology and doing a one-year course in business. All her studies were financed by the Ivorian government and her father, a long-distance trader who was able to supplement her Ivorian bursary. As in the case of her other siblings, her parents always encouraged her to continue her studies abroad in order to come back to Côte d'Ivoire and to obtain a salaried job. Her parents do not belong to the sociopolitical elite of the country but, through their help, she has become a member of this group. After her Ph.D., she came back to Bouaké for a few months, until she found

employment in Abidjan as a university lecturer. Due to poor working and research conditions, Hawa worked only two years at the university. She found a job with a multinational food company in Abidjan, where she was director of scientific research and development. She recently switched to a multinational perfume company, where she heads the research department.

Hawa's parents were both born in Mali, in the Macina region. She visited Mali once when she was in Burkina Faso, but she speaks very little of Mali. Mali for her is only the place of her ancestral origin. She thinks that it is important to know where she is from, but Mali, as a lifeworld, carries no meaning for her. In her everyday life, she has nothing to do with the Malian community in Abidjan, or in Bouaké. She very much identifies with and adopts the lifestyle of an international businesswoman. For the moment, she lives in Côte d'Ivoire, but she does not have any specific desire to remain there. She is willing to migrate wherever her work will be more interesting. Since she works for a German multinational, she is thinking of asking for a transfer to Germany. She does not feel particularly attached to Côte d'Ivoire. It is where her social and professional networks originated, but she is building extensive international networks. As do most Ivorians in her position, she invests her social resources mostly in Western-style social networks, such as the Rotary Club, of which she is the local president. She finds such associations much more pertinent to her life goals than any form of local *tontines* or ethnocultural associations.

Besides her social investments in an international professional network, she identifies as a Muslim. She respects Islamic religious practices: prayers and fasting. She is learning Arabic and she attends Qur'anic classes for Muslim professional women. She is also president of the mosque association of her neighbourhood and belongs to Association des Femmes Musulmanes de Côte d'Ivoire (Islamic associations that emerged from the salaried class in Côte d'Ivoire). She wears Western-style clothes and African bureaucrat-style clothing, but she tries to follow Islamic rules of female humility, though she does not cover her hair at all times and she does not wear a prayer shawl except when she is attending Islamic events.¹⁸ She thinks that as she grows older, she will wear a headscarf

¹⁸ Contrary to practice in some Middle Eastern and North African countries, in Côte d'Ivoire Muslim women never wear Western-style clothes with prayer shawl or head scarf.

and a prayer shawl at all times -- but by then, she says, she will probably also always wear *grand boubous* at all times.

In 1994 Hawa bought a house in a new development in Riviera 3 (a newly developed residential neighbourhood in Abidjan). She hoped that her mother would move from Bouaké to Abidjan to live with her. This way, it would be easier to provide for her mother. However, her mother is not ready to leave her social networks in Bouaké, where she is still very active. Still, Hawa does not live alone in her big house: three of her younger siblings, who attend school and work in Abidjan, live with her. She is financially responsible for them. She does not mind helping her younger siblings, because she was helped by her older brothers when she was in France. However, she refuses to take fostered children from members of her parents' extended families. In fact, she refuses to have anything to do with her parents' families. In her opinion, one has to limit family support to one's parents and blood siblings. Otherwise, the economic and social burden is too heavy. She thinks that the extra weight of extended-family obligations is the reason for Africa's "underdevelopment" (I am using Hawa's term). In her opinion, one can never get ahead if one always has to financially contribute to other people's lives.

Despite the fact that she is in her late thirties, Hawa is not yet married and she does not have children. She had a few serious boyfriends and she was engaged to a man for some years, but she left all of them because she discovered that they had other women in their lives. Recently, she asked her mother to find her a respectable and acceptable husband. For her, a respectable and acceptable husband is a man who has been educated Western-style, who is a Muslim, who is economically successful, who is not already married, and who is willing to marry a woman with her socioprofessional status. Hawa is against the idea of *balmafuru* and arranged marriage for young women, but she considers that, in her case, it is as good a means of meeting a potential husband as any other. And such an arrangement guarantees that the man will be under social and family pressure to behave in a proper manner. Her parents arranged for her to marry the son of one of her father's cousins. This man, also in his late thirties, is a lawyer in France. Hawa agreed to marry him, but under the condition that he come to Abidjan and that they spend a few months getting to know each other. The two families celebrated the *wolotlan*

(engagement, with exchange of kola nuts) in Bouaké. However, the months passed and her fiancé never came to Abidjan, so Hawa broke the engagement. Her mother considered that her daughter had been wronged; normally the young couple should have been married, but in the case of a highly educated and economically successful woman such as Hawa, the rules are considered to be different. Hawa's parents never returned the kola nuts and the family of the young man apologised. This failed attempt at marriage discouraged Hawa, but she hopes to get married soon, for she wants to have children. She could marry a foreigner, but she wants to marry a Muslim who originated from a Muslim family.

Even if she never marries nor become a mother, Hawa enjoys a very high status. Since her father is quite old and since all her older male siblings are in France and in the United States, she plays the role of the elder male sibling of the family. She is what people call locally a "female man" (*femme homme*). She provides economically for her parents and younger siblings, and, as a consequence, she is at the centre of the decision-making process in her family. She sent her mother to Mecca this year (1997). She arranges for her siblings' schooling. She pays her parents' financial debts. And she is called upon to settle family conflicts.

5) Salimata

Salimata is twenty-eight years old. She attended French-language school in Mali, where she grew up in her father's house in Bamako. She failed to obtain her baccalaureate the first time around; she could have tried again the following year, but she got married and left school. In the context of Bouaké, her marriage is considered to be a *balmafuru*, arranged by Salimata's father. Her husband's parents, as her own, were born in Braouli, Mali. Her family and her husband's are Maraka. Moreover, her husband was fostered to her father's house in Bamako when she was a teenager. Gaoussou, her husband, has lived in Bouaké since the late 1980s. He originates from a rich Maraka merchant family that has established trading networks in Bouaké and Bamako. Gaoussou received an Islamic education in Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Her marriage symbolises a break in her life; she migrated to Bouaké and her lifestyle changed entirely. She went from being a student to being

a wife, which, in her case, are two social roles that stand at the opposite of the scale between "tradition" and "modernity." She says so herself in the following terms: "While I was in high school, I used to do as I wanted. Now that I am married, as a good wife and a good Muslim, I must ask my husband and do as he wants." The changes in her physical appearance are iconic of the changes in her lifestyle. Once she showed me pictures of herself dating from when she was a student. She wore Western-style clothes: short skirts, dresses and trousers. She did not cover her head, and she wore hair extensions. There were also pictures of her at parties, dancing to the rhythm of Western, Caribbean and Zairian music. But, seeing her now, one would never think that she used to be that way. She has become a "proper Muslim woman". She wears only *boubous*, her hair is always covered and she never uses hair extensions, she wears a prayer shawl when she goes out, she stays at home to perform housework, and she takes care of her children and husband. She never leaves her husband's compound without his permission unless she is going to the market for daily errands. She would never think of working outside of her compound. She tried selling *indigo* (locally dyed *basin* cloth) from her compound, but she is not very inclined toward commercial activities and she took a very long time to sell her merchandise, which was brought to her from Mali by her father.

Now she leads the lifestyle of a Muslim housewife with young children. But, she has not necessarily forgotten about the implications of her past education. She reads French books regularly, and when she was pregnant with her second child, her husband bought her an encyclopaedia about pregnancy and young infant care, which she read thoroughly.

Salimata's version of Islam remains closely tied to elements of "traditionalism." These elements are imputed to her ethnic background (Maraka) by herself and by the surrounding society. In Bouaké, within the realm of ethnic stereotypes, Marakas are described (and describe themselves) as "very traditional," implying that they privilege *balmafuru*, that Maraka women are confined to the domestic sphere and often secluded, that long-distance trade remains a significant economic activity amongst them, and that they reproduce culturally distinct practices from generation to generation without altering them.

On grounds of being a "proper Muslim," Salimata has adopted an attitude of complete submission to her husband, accepting the possibility of having a co-wife and excising her baby daughter despite her personal objections to the practice.¹⁹ When asked what she thinks about the possibility of co-wives, she said that it is not her decision. As do all women, she hopes that her husband will not take another wife, but there is nothing that she can do because polygamy is prescribed by her religion. She has to accept whatever her husband decides on this account because she wants to be a good Muslim. It must be said that Salimata's husband is particularly attentive and understanding with her. She never lacked for anything materially. When she was in the last months of her second pregnancy, he got air conditioning installed in her bedroom so that she could be comfortable for the end of her pregnancy and after the baby had arrived. When Salimata was pregnant with her second child, he refurbished the whole compound.

Despite outward appearances, Salimata's attitude is not one of submission to local traditional and religious models of womanhood -- that is, marriage at a young age (between fifteen and twenty-two), submission to husband's rule and needs, role as household caretaker, as biological and social reproducer of children, and participation in women's social world organised around events of marriages, baptisms and funerals. She shows more an attitude of quiet resistance. While she basically lives according to these models of womanhood, she also has certain ideas about how her life should be led.

¹⁹ Excision is a very interesting topic with which to examine the relationship between the reproduction of specific cultural practices and social pressures. I encountered numerous young parents, mostly mothers, who did not think, in principle, that their daughters needed to be excised. Still, they had the operation performed on their daughters. In one case, I specifically asked the mother why she had her infant daughter excised if she did not think that it was a necessary procedure. She answered that she and her husband did not want their new infant daughter to be excised, but that all "her people" (*am mogo*) did so and that she did not see how she could be the first one to break away from tradition. She pointed out that she believed that in ten years' time or so, infant daughters would no longer be excised, that the practice was fading away. Still, she felt that she had to follow the way of "her people" and she felt that she could not discuss this with her elders because they would automatically advocate excision. This example concretises what numerous other young parents think and have expressed. In the city of Bouaké, excision, like male circumcision, is no longer surrounded by its ritualistic components. That is, these bodily mutilations are no longer performed as a rite of passage within the context of participation in an age group. The social meanings that were given to these mutilations through the initiations which accompanied them have been stripped away; nowadays it is justified exclusively through the Islamic faith and a reluctance to break away from tradition.

First, regarding children, Salimata wants three or four children. When I left the field in June 1995, she had been married for eight years and she had two children: Abdoukarim was seven years old and Aïcha was one month old. After her first child, she waited seven years to have a second one. She was made fun of extensively by the other women in her family and by her friends, for according to them, she should have had two other children between Alabdoulaye and Aïcha. This extended period of time between her two children was not due to infertility. She did not want to have another child right away and her husband let her choose so. She took contraceptive pills for a while.

The number of children is not the only area where Salimata has offered resistance since she got married. When her husband first brought her to Bouaké, he wanted her to pray like Wahhabis, with her arms crossed, and to wear the Wahhabi black robe; her husband's father as well as one of her husband's brothers-in-law living in Mali are Wahhabis. When Salimata refused to respect Wahhabi rules of behaviour for women, her husband insisted; she realised that she would not win by verbal argument, so she went on a hunger strike, refusing to eat for a few days until her husband said that she could do as she wished. Nothing more was ever said.

On religious grounds, Salimata's husband has also forbidden her to participate in any form of women's association or dancing for marriages and baptisms. In his opinion, women's associations always bring conflicts due to money exchanges and such associations also go against religious prescriptions regarding the seclusion of women. But Salimata is not lonely, despite having only two members of her family in Bouaké when she came: her older sister (from the same mother and the same father) who is the third wife of a Maraka merchant from Braouli, and Assa, who was "given" to her by her father when she married (another sister from the same mother and the same father). She considers Assa as her own daughter: Assa is put through school and clothed as Alassane is, and she receives the same supervision and help with her schooling as Alassane does. Salimata was also quickly surrounded by the women of her husband's family and by the other Maraka women from Braouli living in Bouaké. These women make up her social network. They participate in the same social events and they visit one another regularly.

Salimata's everyday activities do not vary very much since she leads quite a secluded life. She lives in her husband's father's compound with her husband, her children, three of her husband brothers (one from the same mother and two from another wife), the wife of one of her husband's residing brothers, and the first wife of her husband's father (the mother of the two other brothers-in-law residing in the compound). She goes out to the market every four days, and she goes out for social events occasionally when she has her husband's permission. But she has many female visitors, and her husband's brothers always spend time chatting with her during the day or in the evenings. Moreover, this compound is one of the compounds where new arrivals from Braouli in Mali go when they arrive in Bouaké.

6) Mariam

Mariam was born in Bouaké at the maternity hospital of Koko. She is now twenty years of age. Her mother was born in Mali and her father was born in Côte d'Ivoire of a Malian father. She likes to describe herself as Malian; her ethnic affiliations are very much centred around her mother, as is the case for her older siblings. However, Mariam says that she does not know all the customs and traditions associated with being Malian. She does not know Mali very well; she has been there a few times, but when she was very young. In that respect, she resembles the young people her age who were born in Bouaké and who have never been to Mali. Mariam has moved away from the lifestyle, history, and customs associated with being Malian through education in the national French-language schools and through a process of Westernisation that involved her older siblings. She finds herself in a world of global exchanges and references, and she lives according to Western standards of modernity. French-language education is central to her life. She wants an office job, signifying both economic independence and the social status that such a form of employment carries in Côte d'Ivoire. She follows Western fashion through magazines, televisions, foreign films, and wealthy friends. She wants a nuclear family. She rejects local African customs such as excision and scarring.

Mariam grew up in Bouaké. She did not leave the city until she went to university in Abidjan in 1994. She is presently in Morocco, where she is finally continuing her studies at the university level in finance.

She is the last child of a family of nine. Five of her siblings have received their baccalaureate. Her siblings who have studied at university level have all been educated in France. Two of them are now living in France, two of them have just finished or are pursuing degrees in France, and two of them are working in Abidjan in multinationals. Despite the fact that both her parents are illiterate and that they barely speak French, Mariam was brought up to expect a "salaried" lifestyle through the experience of her elder siblings. She knows now that she has little chance of achieving the same standard of living as they have, for the socioeconomic situation in the Côte d'Ivoire has changed tremendously over the past twenty years or so. However, she is not willing to give up on her dreams.

Mariam admires her mother and has the utmost respect for her, but she is not like her. She is living in another social and cultural world from her mother's, following her older female siblings' life trajectories. None of her older female siblings have married in a traditional fashion; the three of them are all professional women over thirty years of age and none of them is married.

Mariam hopes to eventually get married, but she finds it difficult to imagine marrying an African man who will accept that she works and who will respect fidelity vows. Mariam cannot imagine marrying a "real Dioula", or, as she would say using local French, "*un Dioula façon, façon*", that is, in her definition, a man who practices traditional trade, who is polygamous, who lives in an extended-family compound, wears *boubous*, and who expects his wife to stay home, have children, and care for the household.²⁰ She is very much taken by the American movie image of couples from the 1950s who live together happily ever after. She had two serious, long term boyfriends since she was seventeen years of age. Both ended up having affairs with other women and she left them. She is now going out with a Moroccan man with whom she is studying. In terms of relationships with

²⁰ The expression *façon, façon* means someone or something that is not quite up to par. Here, Mariam uses it to imply that she could never marry such a man because they stand outside of her expectations and worldview.

men, Mariam faces the same difficulties as other young women her age who are in the same social position. She is conscious of her limited choices, and she often complains that it would be better for her to marry a "white man."

She is definite, however, about the fact that she wants to have a child. As for most African women, she could never feel complete if she did not have a child. She uses contraception when she has sexual intercourse. She does not want to get pregnant without being married and she does not want to interrupt her studies because of an unplanned pregnancy.

Her ideas about marriage and motherhood are also informed by her Muslim identity. Being Muslim is central to her life. Like a growing number of Muslim youth educated in national French-language schools in Côte d'Ivoire, Mariam is a member of an Islamic youth association. She follows prescribed Islamic practices: she does her five daily prayers, she fasts when she can (when she is not sick and when she is not menstruating), she does not drink alcohol, and she does not smoke. However, she does not agree with ideologies of sexual segregation and she does not agree with the behavioural codes imposed on women in some of the doctrinally stricter Islamic youth associations. She refuses to wear the veil, to wear a *boubou* all the time, or to see her world limited to the domestic space of a compound. She contends that she could not wear Muslim markers in public because a good number of her friends are not Muslim and it would be considered "out of place" to wear a prayer shawl or any other Muslim markers. She explains that:

It would not be possible for me to wear the prayer shawl at all times and go to the movies, for instance. Not that it is not allowed to attend movie theatres with prayer shawls on. But most of my friends are not Muslims. How could I wear the shawl when I go out with them? It would be embarrassing. It would look very odd. I would not feel at ease. I know that I should wear the shawl and that some of my behaviours do not follow Islamic rules. But, at the moment, I am not there yet. I just do not have a lifestyle at the moment that allows me to do so.

She believes that Islam is practised differently amongst different social groups. When she says this, she is thinking not of Islamic theology, but of social rules

and norms. She justifies her Western-style dress and her behaviour through this. She regularly goes out to the cinema and to nightclubs. She hangs around with men her age. Most of her friends are not Muslims.

However, again like numerous young Muslims her age, she considers that with age, when she gets married, becomes a mother, and grows older, she will progressively adopt a more "traditional" lifestyle and wear Muslim markers. She expects that she will exchange her Western clothes for *boubous* and prayer shawls as she grows older.

6.4 Commentary on the life trajectories

The aim of this commentary is to highlight the elements of identification that are central to each of these women's lives and life choices. These elements refer to larger processes of identification.

Like most women in their sixties, Awhoë does not live a secluded life. She no longer has dependants at home, and she can go and come as she wants from her compound. This liberty is accentuated by the fact that her husband does not live with her on a permanent basis. Even if he was, her outings are acceptable for women of her age: they are related to community matters and to Islamic events. Awhöé lives in a world of traditions and Malian customs, leading a life that is very much centred around the Malian community. But, contrary to some other Malians one might encounter in Bouaké, she does not live in an enclosed, self-sufficient lifeworld, exclusive of other worldviews. She hangs on to her way of life, the "old way of life," the lifestyle she learned as a child and which she associates with Mali, but she knows and accepts that "things have changed," and that her children cannot live as she does, especially if they are to achieve social and economic success. Here, she is measuring success by the standards of bourgeois Ivorian society: Western modernity, European/Western-style living and salaried employment. I could say that she stands in tradition while living alongside modernity. For her, it is an intergenerational difference with an historical base. Her children do not live in the same world that she grew up in. And, she can see the good and the bad elements in each lifestyle and worldview. However, Islam cannot be compromised by either of these two worldviews. Modernity cannot stand in

the way of being a "proper Muslim," as much as traditions which run contrary to Islamic principles should be eradicated. This is why it is so central to her that her children respect and practise the Muslim faith. She is, at times, unhappy to see that they do not always do so and that they have not married or had children (being married and having children is a sign of a good Muslim, especially for women). Her children's participation in Western modernity goes against many of her expectations in life: living in a multigenerational households with her sons, their wives and children; not having to care for and to perform housework; regularly receiving money from her sons; living with her husband and having a good rapport with him. The sense of "should have been" left from these unfulfilled expectations in her life is accentuated by her position in the Malian community. The image Awhöé projects to the outside world is of prime concern to her.²¹ She tries to salvage her image by keeping these unfulfilled expectations private. Social shame is something which she must avoid at all costs.

Djénéba stands much more in-between the lifeworlds of tradition and locally appropriated models of Western modernity. She negotiated a space for herself, permitted by the conditions of her life, in which she conforms to local ideals of "proper Muslim womanhood," while maintaining a career. Such a position is rendered possible in her case, in large part, because of her economic means and her age. The fact that she is economically self-sufficient implies that she can inject resources into her social networks, which guarantees her a certain level of respect and recognition. Moreover, as a woman in her fifties, she maintains a religiously irreproachable lifestyle and dress code. As she is employed by the Ivorian state, Djénéba is also much more involved in the daily running of Ivorian society than any of the other women described here.

Amy's story transmits a sense of a wasted life, of having been brought up for something else than what she experienced so far in her life. She was educated and lived for a short while as a "modern working woman," but she was forced into an undesired arranged marriage and that was the end of her life as she had known it. As it does for numerous women, for Amy marriage symbolises a cutoff point in her life -- the same can be said for Assita Sow (see chapter 5), she experienced a noticeable

²¹ Social prestige and "a good reputation" is very significant as a means of acquiring self value, but also as a means of social advancement.

change in their lifestyle when she was married to a man in Gabon and she was forced to alter her expectations for the future, leaving aside her studies as a promising Islamic scholar. When Amy married she went from one lifestyle to another: she was a young educated working woman adhering to a "salaried" worldview who suddenly had to adopt the role of a "good Muslim wife." Contrary to most women her age, Amy's life has also grown much more secluded over the past few years. Usually when a woman is no longer of childbearing age, she enjoys more freedom of movement outside of her compound, because there are fewer domestic duties for her to be performed and because this is a time of life when women become more socially involved. In the majority of sociopolitical associations, for instance, leading and active women members are middle-aged or older women. However, Amy's seclusion is not the same as that of younger women (as in the case of Salimata, for instance) who are still in the biologically reproductive period of their life. Her husband still controls her comings and goings, but only indirectly, to the extent that he will not give her money for transport and other expenses. Her seclusion is rather due to her increasing poverty. She still maintains her ties with her community of belonging (Malinkes from the Kayes region and her husband's family) through friends and relatives with whom she visits, but she no longer is active in women's associations or amongst the Kayes region association. Amy has more or less given up on changing her own life. She will not leave her husband, and she will remain in Bouaké despite the fact that she would like to go back to Mali and work. She is now centring her hopes and her energy on her children, and she measures her self-worth by the success of her children. Her children all attend French-language national schools, and she hopes that they will obtain good office jobs. However, she does not accept her predicament; she submits to it, but she believes that what has happened to her is wrong. Amy could not blame or resent her mother for agreeing to marry her to a male member of her extended family, as she subscribes to the local ideology of respect for elders, but one senses a frustration towards her family. Amy expresses a feeling of having been let down, of having been abandoned by her family network. Her husband did not stick to the promises he made when they married (that is, to find her salaried employment in Bouaké), and Amy's family never intervened on her behalf because of the social obligations implied in *balmafuru*. Her situation

is not atypical. Numerous women have been and are still forced into arranged marriages. Contrary to other secluded women -- Salimata, for instance -- Amy has not relied on an Islamic logic in order to justify her situation. She does not appeal to a logic of male power and family dominance to legitimise her situation. Women who appeal may do so because, if nothing else, such a logic may confer a sense of well-being and accomplishment to the extent that one is living up to local Islamic standards of behaviour. Nonetheless, despite her rejection of these justifying logic, Amy certainly lives up to local standards of a "a good Muslim woman," considering her dress, her secluded life, her role as a mother and housewife, and her religious practice. Amy is torn between local ideals of respect for parental decisions and Islamic gender roles, on the one hand, and a globalised image of the economically independent women accompanied by the ideal of marriage for love, on the other.

Judging from the life trajectories of these women, marriage seems to have a strong influence on the type of lifestyle a woman can expect in the future. It is not getting married as such that makes the difference, but rather the form of marriage into which one enters. The difference in Amy's case, compared to Djénéba and Hawa, for instance, is that she was forced into an arranged *balmafuru*, which implies that she could not escape family pressure to conform to local ideals of proper womanhood based on domesticity and submission to male authority. Amy also happened upon a man who curtailed her desires for a professional life. Hawa, to a certain extent, leads the life Amy had hoped for. She is economically self-sufficient, and she managed to pursue her studies and professional ambitions. For Hawa, marriage and motherhood represent another type of problem in her life. She wants to marry and to have children, but according to local criteria, she is no longer a very likely candidate. She is "too old" and she "sees in front of men," meaning that she is highly educated and professionally successful. As an unmarried woman without children, her social position could be highly difficult. But her behaviour is sanctioned by her family and her social environment because of her economic status and her Islamic practice.

Of the six women, Salimata lives the most secluded life. Her life conforms to stereotypes of Maraka women in Bouaké: limited movement outside of her compound, no participation in associations, no commercial

activities outside of her compound, social network restricted to her family of origin and husband's extended family, and a Muslim lifestyle and worldview. Her life is organised around her two children, her younger sister who lives with her and her husband, her husband, and her husband's extended family as domestic and reproductive units. As in the case of Amy, marriage constituted a break in Salimata's life. She went from being a student to being a good Muslim wife. She changed her manner of dress: from wearing Western-style clothes, she adopted the *boubou*, headscarf, and prayer shawl. She adopted an attitude of respect and submission towards her husband. She is entirely economically dependent on her husband. And she put aside her studies in order to concentrate on housework and biological reproduction, but she is not resentful of this. She could not imagine working outside of her home, and she claims that, even if she wanted to, she has forgotten everything that she learned in school. She accepts these changes on the grounds that she is Muslim and that she wants to respect her family traditions and by extension Maraka tradition. She lives within a Maraka worldview -- as it is defined in Bouaké -- and a Muslim worldview.

Salimata lives exactly the lifestyle that Mariam hopes to bypass. Mariam says she could never marry and forget about her present life in order to adopt the lifestyle of a "good Muslim woman." At 24 years of age, she has come to the conclusion that, at the end of the day, she can rely only on herself. She has seen too many miserable women and she does not really have faith in the support of her family. As a consequence, it is imperative for her to attain a position of comfortable economic self-sufficiency, as did her older sisters. Will she locally find a husband who will accept this? Maybe, but not very likely. Her sisters have not so far, and they are over thirty years of age, which is quite old to remain unmarried, according to local standards. Mariam's life bears no resemblance to her mother's lifestyle. She partakes in a Western-modernity worldview, whereas her parents live in a traditional lifeworld. Still, Islam plays a mediating role in Mariam's life, bridging the generational and experiential gaps between herself and her parents. She may not live up to the local ideal of a "good Muslim woman," but Islam is a defining element in her identity. And, like many youth, she considers that her lifestyle will move in accordance with Islamic rules as she becomes older.

Mariam is typical of Western-style educated urban youth in Côte d'Ivoire, and probably elsewhere in West Africa: French-language education is central to her life; she wants an office job; she follows Western fashion; she wants a nuclear family unit; she rejects "African" customs. She is very removed from her parents' origin in Mali, though she has a sense of "being Malian" through her mother, and she associates with a national ethnic referent (Malian) and not with regional ones, such as Songhay or Maraka. She is the product of an urban setting and she appeals to global identity referents such as Islam. She does not have a sense of community belonging as Awhöé, Djénéba, Salimata, and Amy have. She associates with her family unit, which is centred around her mother, and with other youth of her social group: Western-style educated urban youth hoping to become professionals.

Mariam also belongs to the sociological category of Ivorians who are becoming adults under the conditions created by socioeconomic mismanagement. Like other youth her age, she was brought up to expect Western ideals of acceptable standards of living: university education abroad in France or in North America or fully financed university education in Côte d'Ivoire (she ended up in Morocco), a guaranteed job in Côte d'Ivoire following one's studies or the possibility of further training abroad. But this is no longer the situation for a large number of Ivorians; it is arguable that it is also not the situation of a large number of Westerners. University education is no longer necessarily financed by the Ivorian state, and employment is no longer guaranteed for university graduates. Moreover, economic opportunities in Côte d'Ivoire are no longer as promising as in the 1970s. These changes are felt all the harder by people of Mariam's age group when they are amongst the youngest of large families, in which elder siblings benefited from all these advantages. Yet such young people have the same expectations as their older siblings.

6.5 Conclusion

Three central themes emerge from an examination of the life trajectories of these six women, namely the effect of social change on life course, the centrality of Islamic and "ethnic" practices, and the process of

course. It is accepted, and often expected, that as one grows older, one may follow religious and ethnic worldviews more closely.

Dress-styles, for instance, are good vehicles for the description of changing attitudes and practices regarding Islamic ideals of womanhood (see Appendix 2). Unmarried women do not dress like young married women, who in turn do not dress like older women. Young unmarried women may, at one extreme, wear exclusively Western clothes, even jeans and short skirts. Others will tend to wear three-piece suits made of African cloth, rather than *boubous*. Young married women who do not work in an office will not wear Western-style clothes. They will keep a head scarf on at all times, even in the compound; they will also most likely wear *boubous*. Young married salaried women will wear a three-piece suit or fancy embroidered *boubous*; whether they cover their head will depend on their religious fervour. They may also wear Western-style clothing, but it is rarer and, if they do so, they will wear neither trousers nor short dresses and skirts. Older salaried women will dress similarly to unsalaried young married women, but they will also wear a prayer shawl at all times, even while in their compounds. There is a kind of *boubou* known as an "old woman" *boubou*, but others are considered "young" *boubous*. Some religiously fervent young women will wear dresses and scarves that resemble a Saudi-style of dress (*jelaba*-style gowns, knitted white caps, and *hijab*).²²

The same can be said for the five daily prayers. It is socially acceptable for a young unmarried woman not to pray regularly. However, when a woman marries, she is expected to start observing this requirement, though she will very rarely be seen praying in public. Older women, on the other hand, make a point of praying regularly. They often perform extra daily prayers in the evening, early morning, or afternoon when they are idle. They will also pray in public without inhibition, especially at public events such as weddings and baptisms.

Regarding "ethnic" practices, as women get older, they are seen as conforming more closely to such practices. One could take the example of *indigenat* (local medicine practised with plants and/or Islamic incantations). Older women use *indigenat* more frequently and have a more intimate

²² This is obviously a locally constructed version of Saudi female dress-style.

accommodation between diverging (sometimes contradictory) worldviews. These themes tie the specific experiences of Awhöé, Djénéba, Amy, Hawa, Salimata, and Mariam to the more generalised experience of women of Malian origin in Bouaké and, to a certain extent, to most individuals of Malian origin in Bouaké.

The life course, punctuated by major rites of passage (which mark times of transition), plays a central role in the experience and understanding of processes of identification. The main rites of passage for women are marriage, motherhood, and the end of the childbearing period (though, as I have indicated, there are others, such as birth, excision and other body markings, and death). Tied with these transitions are attitudes toward and experiences of seclusion, participation in the sociopolitical life of the community, changing attitudes to and observance of Islamic practices, as well as changing attitudes toward "ethnic practices."

For women, seclusion is most stringent between the time of marriage and the end of women's biological reproductive period. As in the case of Amy and Salimata, women can see a drastic change in their lifestyle at the moment of their marriage. This is not to say that marriage is undesirable. On the contrary, most young women hope to marry young and have children. Wifehood and motherhood are their designated roles in life according to local values and Islamic principles of gender division. From this, it becomes obvious that participation in the sociopolitical life of the community is also affected by motherhood. It is young unmarried women and older women who mainly participate in the various associations, whether political, religious, ethnic, or cultural. The case of *tontines* (economic associations) is different because they attract trading women and other professional women who are also young mothers. Also, certain ethnic groups, such as Songhay, Fulbe, and Maraka, tend to discourage women from working outside of their compound. As a consequence, these women tend to lead a more secluded life and to participate in small-scale trading activities that are not very lucrative.

I cannot assert the centrality or marginality of Islamic and "ethnic" practices in women's lives without recognising that differences in attitudes and practices regarding religion and ethnicity are a question not only of specific moments of time in history but also of specific points in the life

knowledge of it. Young people also profess that they are not well versed in such medicinal practices and that old people are the ones who know. Again, however, as one should not ignore the role of the life course in identity processes, one should also not ignore the place of history. For example, how likely is it that young women such as Mariam will revert to local practices of *indigenat* or to using shea butter rather than imported beauty products? One could hypothesise that youth will seek to learn these medicinal practices as they grow older, much as they expect to move closer to Islamic and ethnocultural practices. But this is complicated by the fact that a large number of contemporary youth are growing older in a very different context from the one in which their parents grew up. They live an urban life, away from their village of origin, and in numerous cases are being educated in the French-language national schooling system, where they are being exposed to Ivorian ideals of modernity. Moreover, changing historical conditions must be taken into account. For instance, attitudes and practices regarding the consumption of medical treatments have altered since the devaluation of the CFA franc in 1994 and the implementation of a basic fee (1,000F CFA) for medical exams in government-run hospitals and clinics in 1992. While I was in the field, more and more individuals who would not have done so otherwise were reverting to *indigenat* because they could no longer afford imported medicine from France and the United States nor visits to local clinics or hospitals.

The question that emerges here involves the relative weight of social change and human agency in relation to elements of cyclicity tied to the life course. However, it is not so much a question of attempting to determine to what extent social change affects individual life trajectories or how individuals direct and resist social changes, but rather under what circumstances individuals are able to control their destiny and to effect large social changes. The question can also be phrased in a reverse manner: under what circumstances do individuals succumb to external forces, social changes, and family pressures? The underlying principle here is that individuals' life trajectories affect social change and the life course to the same extent that elements of social change affect individual trajectories and the life course. For women, the salient phenomena here are modalities of marriage, access to formal education, and the capacity to claim economic independence.

The life trajectories of Awhöé, Djénéba, Amy, Hawa, Salimata, and Mariam are strongly marked by processes of accommodation of diverging, sometimes contradictory, worldviews. As in the case of numerous individuals of Malian origin in Bouaké (and probably any West African migrants), these six women live in a world of multiple worldviews. On an everyday basis, as inhabitants of a large cosmopolitan city, they partake and are in contact with a multiplicity of ethnic, cultural, and religious practices: those of Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire, their place of origin in Mali, the Western world, and the Islamic world. They also live in a world fragmented by various polarities: Bouaké/Mali, local values and tradition/Western modernity, Islam/Western-modernity, Islam/Ivorian society, Islam/tradition -- whose elements may fluctuate as social situations change. However, in most cases, this polarity is mediated by Islam insofar as it provides elements of social legitimacy and dimensions of communalism.

When looking at the dynamics surrounding processes of identification, it becomes apparent that women, as independent social actors and as members of larger collectivities, look for ways to accommodate these differing worldviews. Marriage, parenthood, and models of the family, as well as education and work, are the dimensions of social life in terms of which individuals are called upon to act out their beliefs and/or to confront the beliefs privileged by their family and the social groups to which they belong.

At a general level, the main issue regarding marriage is tied to practices of exogamy and endogamy, which become symbols of more general value systems: tradition versus modernity, the village versus the city, kinship/ethnicity versus *métissage*, ethnic ties versus the universalism of the *umma*. Practices of endogamy are associated with tradition, rural life, and ethnic ties, whereas practices of exogamy connote processes of urbanisation and modernisation (due mainly to Western-style education). However, to a certain extent, with young women such as Mariam and Hawa, practices of endogamy have shifted from ethnicity to Islam. For them, kinship, tradition and ethnicity are neither valid nor acceptable loci for practices of endogamy. Imposed *balmafuru* as a form of ethnic and kin endogamy associated, in their opinion, with the backwardness of tradition, is reprehensible. However, neither woman could imagine marrying out of

the *umma*. Islam, to that extent, becomes the required element of endogamy in marriage choices.

For women, the issue of marriage is also tied to the question of who decides whom and when a woman will marry. In fact, control over time of marriage and marriage partner accounts, in part, for the differences in marriage trajectories experienced by Djénéba and Amy, and Salimata, Hawa and Mariam. Mariam's life trajectory differs from Salimata's, despite their similar experience of Western-style education, because Salimata, on grounds of religion and ethnicity, entered into an arranged *balmafuru*. The differences between Djénéba and Amy's marriage trajectories may be accounted for in part by the fact that Djénéba married whom she wanted.

There is an apparent desire amongst young women such as Hawa and Mariam to individualise the timing of life transitions, that is, to extract from the control of their elders the decision to marry and to have children.²³ As a consequence, the decision to marry and to have children is seen as contingent on finding a suitable partner at a suitable age rather than on the requirements and the constraints imposed by their family. It seems, nonetheless, that, despite her rejection of *balmafuru*, Hawa is willing to consider a marriage arranged by her parents rather than remaining unmarried. Amy's story exemplifies cases where marriage trajectories are determined by women's lack of control over marriage partner. She was forced into a *balmafuru*, which implied that the possibility of divorcing her husband was limited by the social obligations felt on the part of her family of origin. Amy's mother sent her back to her husband when she ran away from Bouaké at the beginning of her marriage on grounds that she could not break the alliance that she made with the mother of Amy's husband. Such a process was repeated numerous times in Amy's life time, but each time, Amy was faced with the choice of divorcing her husband and being rejected from her family of origin, or remaining with her husband and accepting the hardship of her marriage. Because she could not conceive of breaking away from her family of origin, she choose to remain with her husband. Remaining with her husband also meant for her that she would be able to protect her children's position and, by doing so, she opted to invest in her children's future rather than in her own.

²³ It should be noted that Tamara K. Hareven noted a similar process of individualisation of the timing of life transitions amongst youth in Western societies (Hareven, 1991).

children and catering to the needs of their husband and his family members.

In a context where adulthood for a woman is defined by marriage and motherhood, the question remains of what will happen to these educated women? Who will they marry? What accounts for the fact that some Western-educated women marry and become a housewife, leaving their professions aside, while other professional woman do not marry, and yet others get married and keep their job? The answer to these questions lies, in large part, in practices of family-imposed *balmafuru*. In cases where *balmafuru* are arranged when the brides are still in their late teens or early twenties, women's role as housewives.²⁴ This was the case of Salimata and Assita Sow (see Chapter 5). Assita Sow wanted to continue her Islamic education after her marriage, but her husband refused. In the context of imposed *balmafuru*, when husbands refuse that their wives pursue a profession, it is very difficult for women to do so because they are subjected to pressure from their family of origin as well as from their husband's family to remain married and to conform to their husbands' desires. Amy's marriage trajectory is a good example of the social pressure of imposed *balmafuru*. Her husband and his mother refused that she work as a secretary, and her mother refused to support her claim because she was concerned about the potential negative effects on extended-family relations of supporting her daughter. In cases where elders have not arranged *balmafuru* while the women were in their late teens, the women usually marry at an older age (late twenties to mid-thirties). Older women with salaried employment seem to basically have three options regarding marriage. They can marry out, ethnically and/or religiously. But, for these Muslim women, it is a very unlikely option; they want to marry Muslims. They can also become the second, third or fourth wife of a relatively rich Muslim merchant. Most women (when they have a choice) prefer monogamy or to be the first wife. They can also marry a younger man who has a lesser socioeconomic status than them. This is equivalent to "buying a husband". As I already mentioned in Chapter 5, for young professional women, displaying a Muslim identity through

²⁴ I have encountered a few cases where the women continued their studies, but only until they became pregnant with their first child.

However, despite a desire to be empowered in terms of timing of marriage and choice of marriage partners, young educated and professional women, such as Hawa, Mariam and Mama (in Chapter 5), still define their womanhood through marriage and motherhood. For a woman in Bouaké and in West Africa in general, not to marry and not to have children is very hard to the extent that unmarried and childless women do not really have a social position. To remain unmarried and childless, a woman has to negotiate a socioeconomic position for herself which requires great resources. For instance, Hawa (Chapter 6) managed to do so, but strictly because she has a prestigious job in which she makes a significant amount of money. She is in her late 30s and single. She studied in France where she got a PhD in biology. She is director of research in a multinational in Abidjan. She more or less financially supports her parents and her siblings. She sent her mother to Mecca in 1996. She plays the social and family role of the eldest son who is in France with the second eldest son of the family. Her position is socially legitimate in her role of family provider. However, Hawa's life trajectory is not available to most women in Côte d'Ivoire.

The situation of young women such as Hawa raises new issues for the question of marriage. Young educated and professional women are certainly not a new sociological phenomenon in Côte d'Ivoire and in West Africa. There exist a number of noted examples (Boyd and Last, 1985). Moreover, the history of the predominant economic role of women, mainly as traders, has been well documented by West Africanist scholars. Nonetheless, it seems that relatively young (20s and 30s), highly educated and economically self-sufficient, yet unmarried, women may start to make up a distinct social group. This is enhanced by the fact that whole families of daughters find themselves in this situation -- a situation which is not familiar to most of their mothers.

Highly educated women and economically self-sufficient women are not very likely potential wives to the extent that they are perceived as "seeing in front of men". These women do not fit the locally defined roles of potential wives -- that is, being younger than one's husband, leading a secluded life except for trading activities in some cases, economically dependent on their husband, and focusing on domestic chores, bringing up

behaviour, dress code and participation in Islamic activities, can enable them to steer away from these three options.

Marriage practices do not only refer to control over timing and partner of marriage but also to timing of parenthood and choice of family model (that is, number of children had or desired, monogamy\polygamy and habitation style). Again, the issues are very much described in terms of an opposition between "African tradition" and the local appropriation of Western criteria of modernity but, here, Islam is positioned along with local traditions against Western modernity. In times of economic hardship and in light of a desire to guarantee a better future for one's children, the small nuclear family model is privileged amongst salaried individuals. The French-Western family model is very much privileged in Côte d'Ivoire, and the middle class aims ultimately at reproducing stereotypes of French life: office job, education in the national French system and abroad, single-family villa, exclusive use of French in the household, French-style meals eaten with cutlery while seated at a table, Western dress, Western hairdos, and so forth. These ideals permeate the lower strata of society as well. However, there still are very strong pulling forces in the direction of tradition, ties to ethnicity and kin, and Islam. Large extended-families with numerous children and polygamy are privileged as ideal forms of traditional and Islamic families. For instance, despite personal preference, Salimata appeals to Islam and ancestral tradition to explain her acceptance of polygamy. Ideologically, Islam is against contraception and accepts polygamy. Islam is also seen as a "protector" against the evils of the Western model of life: alcohol and drugs, sex and adultery, lack of humility amongst women, broken families and out-of-wedlock children, lack of respect for and abandonment of elders. The second factor pulling against the nuclear family model is the emphasis on family and ultimately ethnic ties. The sense of belonging to "my people" -- which can mean the immediate family, the village of origin of the family, or the larger ethnic group -- is embodied in the desire to reproduce what "my people have always done" and the refusal to be the first one to break away with this tradition.

Different educational path are symbols of different lifestyles. If one is educated in the national French-language schools, one expects to obtain work in an office, to have a guaranteed monthly salary, and to attain a

Western lifestyle. If one is educated in the *madrasas*, on the other hand, one will know one's religion and will be a respectable person. These are the two ideals offered by each educational system. (One may also not attend school and lead a life entirely outside of literacy.) Educational strategies are very indicative of family choices regarding identity orientations. When parents do not send all their children to the same schooling system, the general tendency has been to send male children to French-language schools and female children to *madrasas*, and sometimes more randomly. Girls may be formally educated in national French-language schools, but may be expected to marry before they complete their formal education and to never enter a profession. In this perspective, male children are expected to gain salaried employment and female children are expected to marry. However, these tendencies may also be deceiving. For starters, economics certainly plays a role in education strategies. The national French-language schools are no longer free for foreigners and many families can no longer afford to pay the fees, pay for the uniform, and the books. In many *madrasas*, only half the children attending pay the annual fee (12,000F CFA). The structure of educational opportunities has also been changing and this plays a role as well. *Madrasas* have been growing in number and have undergone a restructuring in the past thirty years in Bouaké. They have become viable alternatives to national French-language schools. I could also mention the fact that a single family may be sending different children to both education systems, at the same time, according to the sex of the child or by chance.

Finally, different types of work are associated with different lifestyles and worldviews. For instance, cloth dying, *ussulan* making and selling, kola nut trade, and teaching in a *madrasa* are regarded as "traditional" activities, whereas office work, professions (law, medicine, engineering, dentistry), and teaching in French schools are described as Western and modern employment. But, of course, things are not so clearly distinguished and separated. For instance, most Malians are involved in trade in some form or another, whether they hold office jobs or not. Djénéba, for instance, aside from her office job, imports to Côte d'Ivoire woven blankets from Mali and perfume from France, which she sells in Abidjan and Bouaké. Since she moved to Abidjan, she has introduced her children remaining in Bouaké to such trading practices children remaining in Bouaké by making

them sell in this city. Many Malians in Bouaké come from a trading family tradition, and at the very least trade is in most cases the "fallback option" if nothing else has worked or as a way of getting fast money. But trading is also a very viable and lucrative option for many. It also has a strong historical influence: there are many successful traders in Bouaké whose children have crossed the line into "modernisation" because of the economic success of their fathers.

The dichotomy between tradition and modernity is central to the description of the logic that underlies processes of identification affecting women. In this sense, "modernity" and "tradition" are local idioms used to make sense of differing lifestyles. As worldviews, they play a determining role in the perception and the adoption of certain identity referents and practices that are more specifically concerned with choices regarding family life: the formal education of children, marriage, polygamy, and initiation rituals. Life choices are described in terms of the dichotomy between modernity and tradition. As I demonstrated in Chapter 5, this dichotomy carries an intergenerational dimension to the extent that elements of tradition tend to be assigned to older individuals whereas practices associated with youth are described as modern. In the case of women's life trajectories, these elements of polarisation are not necessarily experienced as a source of conflict in everyday life as women inscribe themselves in a series of processes of accommodation. Islam plays a central role in such processes. In certain cases, Islam serves to redeem the failures of either of these two systems of values: as I showed in Chapter 5, it protects against the evils of modernity and it also allows people to move away from the backwardness of tradition. It also bridges dimensions of lived experience that would otherwise remain ridden with conflict: Mariam may experience a very different lifeworld from her mother's, but Islam remains a mitigating element of community and legitimacy between generations. As such, Islam may be a mitigating element in "processes of individualisation" which are seen as the appendages of the local appropriation of Western modernity.

CHAPTER 7:**CONCLUSION:
SITUATIONALITY, LIFE COURSE AND CHANGE****7.1 Changing identities: From sya to Islam**

In this concluding chapter, I will address ethnographic and theoretical issues that emerge from the empirical evidence presented in the thesis, including a number of issues tied to the relationship between the study of elements of social change and the study of dimensions of continuity in the context of the life course. Both features of social life are tied to the fluid and plural aspects of processes of identification, as well as to historical conditions. Also, without adopting a predictive standpoint, I will highlight some of the possible future implications of the salience of Islam for young Muslim men and women, and for the politics of cultural and religious difference in Côte d'Ivoire.

I have argued that for young, urban, educated, Muslim men and women of Malian origin, in the context of transnational displacement and the heterogeneity of urban life, Islam is a primary locus of self- and communal identification. Other young Muslims -- originating from Guinea, Burkina Faso, Senegal, and northern Côte d'Ivoire -- with a similar experience of trans-nationality and educational trajectories, partake in the same lifeworld, which emphasises Islam. These youths of diverse ancestral origins interact within the same Islamic youth associations (neighbourhood-based and national), Islamic events, and educational structures (national French-language schools and *madrasas*).

For political and experiential reasons, Islam is an appealing referent of identification where a number of other identity referents are no longer pertinent. As children or grandchildren of migrants, these youth are inscribed within Ivorian social history. *Sya* identities tied to Mali carry little meaning in their daily life. As elements of identification, they may bring about a sense of pride associated with their ancestry. But these young men and women have been extracted from the local history in which their parents originated. And, in the context of new

politically defined modalities of national exclusion and inclusion, Ivorian identity is not necessarily a possible identity referent for these young men and women either. Since the 1990 multiparty elections and ensuing democratisation, Muslims of Malian origin, whether they are naturalised as Ivorian or not, are identified as foreigners by the political process. Moreover, in the context of the perceived bankruptcy of the Western model of socioeconomic development and sociocultural modernisation, Islam as a life project and a societal project remains a powerful alternative to Western modernity. As such, it provides a social space of expression for these young men and women, while giving them a sense of self-worth and purpose.

The life trajectories of these young people differ (in most cases) from the experience of their parents whose lifeworlds are closely tied to *sya* identities. They differ as well from those of other young Malians with differing educational and migratory trajectories -- through material contacts and insertion in specific social networks, these other youths remained closely tied to places of origin in Mali. In turn, through such lifeworlds, they are inserted into social networks that are based on elements of identification tied to places of origin in Mali -- that is, *sya* identities, including *nyamankala* identities, trading networks, referents of identification using the suffix *-ka* (*Jennekaw*, *Braoulikaw*), and so forth.

However, Islam is not a new identity marker for individuals of Malian origin. As a matter of fact, the argument I put forward in this thesis is that given identity labels may become more or less significant for specific social groups over time. For migrants and children of migrants from Mali, who identify with ethnocultural referents leading back to places of origin in Mali, Islam is also a component of their social identities and social networks. But, under specific historical conditions, Islam has taken on a distinct social meaning for a specific group of individuals. It is not so much that existing *sya* identities (place of origin in Mali, *nyamankalaw*, and so forth) have been reduced to Islam in the cases of some young men and women; rather, some worldviews and lifeworlds have become less significant in their everyday life while Islam has become central.

The question of the "ethnicisation of Islam" or "Islamisation of ethnicity," evoked by Jean-Loup Amselle (Amselle, 1996) amongst others, may be raised here. This standpoint implies that Islam has taken on the social role usually played by ethnic identities and that ethnicity is reduced to an Islamic identity. However, in the case of individuals of Malian origin in Bouaké, whether Islam functions as an ethnic label or is replacing ethnicity as a locus of identification remains irrelevant to the extent that, historically, ethnic labels and religious identity exist alongside one another (see description of Dioula label in Chapter 3). The relevant questions that need to be addressed are tied to the relevance of specific identity labels in specific sociohistorical contexts -- in other words, what are the social dynamics which have brought about such a shift from *sya* identities to Islam?

Here, I have used the notions of situational processes of identification in order to problematise the historical salience of specific identity labels and to highlight the sociohistorical dynamics which account for possible shifts in the social significance of specific identity labels. The notion of situationality, on the one hand, "is premised on the observation that particular contexts may determine which of a person's communal identities or loyalties are appropriate at a point in time" (Paden 1970: 268). Thereby, this notion recognises the plurality and the fluidity of referents of identification to which an individual may appeal or may be ascribed within the context of social interaction. On the other hand, the concept of processes of identification allows us, first, to move beyond the immediacy of social interaction towards the overall society, and, second, to problematise dimensions of power relations, which are inherent to dynamics of social change as well as to the differential salience of possible identity labels. It takes into account

the movement back and forth between individual identities and so-called collective identities, which constitutes the background to dynamics of identification, which, in turn, conceals the reality of social ascriptions and discrimination between groups, that is practices of inclusion and exclusion as a consequence of the hierarchy of statuses (my translation) (Gallissot 1989: 15).

In other words, processes of identification take place in sociohistorical contexts where different identity labels carry differing levels of power.

Such analytical tools allowed me, in Chapters 3 and 4, to highlight relevant dimensions of international migration, the politics of cultural identities in Côte d'Ivoire, the position and the role of youth as political actors, and the impact of a number of structural changes in the past fifty years or so (multiparty elections, restructuring of Islamic institutions, and development of national and Islamic educational structures in Côte d'Ivoire) to address the question of the social dynamics which have brought about a shift in salience from *sya* identities to Islam. It also should be kept in mind that the centrality of Islam as an element of identification is unfolding in the context of the recent history of Islam -- that is, the growing influence of Middle Eastern countries, mainly Saudi Arabia, in sub-Saharan Africa since the 1970s, the development of Islamic educational institutions in sub-Saharan Africa in the past fifty years or so, and the emergence of new Islamic-based political claims in Côte d'Ivoire and in neighbouring countries.

7.2 About Islam

Despite the fact that Islam is not a newly imported social identity in Bouaké, the form of Islam adopted and produced by some Muslim youth in Bouaké and Côte d'Ivoire, especially those in neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations, is described by them as a new form of Islam -- an "educated" (or "modernised") Islam distinct from the Islamic practice perpetuated by elders. This is one of a number of differing versionings of Islam that coexist in Bouaké, along with Wahhabiyya, Sufi brotherhoods, various ethnocultural forms, and so on. And, urban Muslim youth themselves adopt a variety of versionings of their faith, as seen in the cases of Mariam (Chapter 6) and Sekou (Chapter 4). Still, despite its internal distinctions, Islam stands as a single locus of identification when facing, on the one hand, the Western world (and its Ivorian appropriation), and, on the other hand, the political definition of Ivorian identity and nationality.

These co-existing dimensions of multiplicity and singularity in the definition of Islam hint at the necessity to distinguish between the different contexts of social interaction in which Islam may become

significant as an element of individual and communal identification. Are the young Muslims described in Chapters 4 and 5 defining themselves in the face of Ivorian society or Western modernity or their elders? Are they defining themselves in light of an Islam tied to Cairo, Mecca, or other Islamic capitals? Are they identifying through regional allegiances expressed through brotherhoods? Or, in other words, what are the social circumstances confronting these young men and women as Muslims? And in what way does Islam, as an element of social identification, allow them to face these circumstances?

To highlight the salience of Islam in processes of identification does not necessarily deny its religious dimension, implying that religious identities are tools of social and political claims. Enrolment in neighbourhood-based Islamic associations, for instance, is certainly motivated by religious feelings and aspirations while being embedded within the recent history of Islamic institutions in Côte d'Ivoire. Emic explanations for the growth of Islamic associations and the salience of Islam also include the role of Islam as a guarantor of legitimacy within the family and society at large, modifications of educational institutions, the return of African students from Saudi and other Middle Eastern teaching institutions, the influence of national associations such as AEEMCI and CNI, and an eschatological logic according to which Islam as the "true religion" will necessarily grow. To this extent, religious and social dimensions of processes of identification cannot be analytically distinguished. And, concepts such as lifeworld and worldview are pertinent here because, by inferring a phenomenological standpoint, they articulate dimensions of perception and experience to elements of social contingencies.

The community basis for "educated" Islam is the *umma*. The *umma* is defined as a global Islamic collectivity, in opposition to ethnocultural and regionalised collectivities claimed by their elders. As such, it transcends ethnocultural barriers as well as internal divisions within the *umma* pertaining to religious doctrine. It moves away from ethnocultural alliances and marriage rules produced by elders, addressing, amongst other forms of power relations, the power of elders regarding access to the status of adult and one's position in the family.

Unity within the *umma* both defines and is defined by social relations in Côte d'Ivoire, particularly the longstanding ambiguous relation between the Ivorian government and Muslims in Côte d'Ivoire -- which was accentuated from 1990 onwards. Muslims are positioned as "foreigners," as external to Ivorian identity, but yet they are not excluded from economic and political processes. Most Muslims consider that the national government aims at dividing Muslims, whether through the actions of CSI or through media propaganda. In this context, unity within the *umma* becomes paramount. It is necessary for Muslims across the national space to unite their actions and construct a sense of belonging.

Thus, Islam fulfils a double role in processes of identification. First, it is at the core of processes of identification for many urban young men and women. It is central to their sense of self and, as a common element of identification in a highly heterogeneous context, it provides a sense of community. Second, Islam is claimed at a political level. It is a referent of identification that carries political significance in a context of power relations between elders and youth, and between "Ivorians" and "foreigners," as well as between the Western world and local African traditions. (Amongst other populations of youth in Bouaké, and certainly in other parts of Africa, Christianity and the new Christian churches, mainly Protestant ones, play a similar role as sites of social claims [Cruise O'Brien 1996; Gifford 1994; Mbembe 1988].)

As such, when considering the specificity of the shift of identity referents from *sya* identities to Islam, the historicity of social phenomena emerges, as well as the issue of intergenerational conflicts and ensuing social changes. Though this shift of referents of identification cannot be conceptualised as a linear movement from one form of identity to the next, it cannot be perceived strictly as the result of a divide across generations, either. First of all, many youth resemble their parents' generation to the extent that they participate in the same lifeworld and worldviews as their elders, identifying with referents tied to places of origin in Mali. Moreover, power relations are not only articulated through a youth/elder distinction. They are also experienced through a Western world-Islamic world opposition, through a modernity/tradition dichotomy, through gender relations, and

through differential experiences of education. In other words, power relations between age groups are not the sole motor of social change in this case.

7.3 Islam, youth and politics

Issues pertaining to sociopolitical conditions and processes of identification lead to the topics of the relationship between politics and youth as well as "political Islam" and youth, issues that are prominent in the contemporary Africanist literature (Richards 1995, 1996; Furley 1995; Cruise O'Brien 1996; Brenner 1994; Mbembe 1985; Wigram 1994; Bagayogo 1994; d'Almaida-Topor *et. al.* 1992; LePape 1986; d'Almeida-Topor and Goerg 1989; LeBris and Chauveau 1993; Coquery-Vodrovitch 1992). Questions about the contemporary role of Islam as a political instrument amongst youth in West Africa (and around the world for that matter), the weight of youth as political agents and as instigators of political instability, and the growth of political Islam amongst youth carry global implications beyond Africa and beyond academia. Topics such as "youth and violence," "youth and resistance," "youth and social change," and so forth are not uncommon in popular and academic discourses. In some cases, these topics are framed within a discourse implying that young men and women are socially, politically and economically "problematic" in a context of a declining politico-economic situation; that they are a "lost" (or as a "sacrificed") generation; that they constitute a "deviant" social category; or that they are the incumbents of a difficult stage in the life course, which consequently often brings about instability. Following a similar logic, Donald Cruise O'Brien, for instance, paints a bleak picture of the predicament of youth in Africa. Of the same opinion as Bayart, Mbembe and Toulabor (1992), he contends that

on the one hand, they are a natural opposition [to existing sociopolitical power], having so little to lose and being so resentful of a situation in which they are left to get by as best they may. On the other hand, however, these young people are very poorly equipped to make their opposition effective: with their

limited resources, they are easily manipulated by their elders.
(Cruise O'Brien 1996: 55)

In such a position of disempowerment, according to Cruise O'Brien, youth across Africa appeals to three forms of political resistance: violence, religion, and education. Weapons and guerrilla bands, reformed forms of Christianity and Islam, and education as a means to access political power become the tools of their possible empowerment.

The political place of youth and the significance of Islam as a space of social identification cannot be reduced to intergenerational conflicts nor to political empowerment. In the face of apocalyptic discourses about youth and political instability, I would tend to side with authors such as Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, who asserts that:

the influence of youth is not in itself a way to explain the greater or lesser risk of political destabilisation [in Africa], because that influence is everywhere relatively the same. (my translation)
(Coquery-Vidrovitch 1992: 38)

This is not to deny that, first, youth has been ignored for a long time as a politically significant social category in Africa (Abélès and Collard 1985) and that, second, in specific cases such as the decolonisation movement and the recent process of democratisation, African youth have been very active agents of social changes (Brenner 1993, 1994; Mbembe 1985; Cruise O'Brien 1996; Daddieh 1996). For instance, in Mali, students' movements have been at the centre of political coups and democratisation in the past decade (Brenner 1994; Wigram, 1994). The same can be said for Côte d'Ivoire; students played a determining role in the 1990 events which led to the adoption of multiparty-ism.

I would suggest that generalising claims such as those defended by Cruise O'Brien need to be mitigated by, first, a more socially integrated vision of intergenerational relations and, second, by a localised analysis of the social implications of relations of power. Young men and young women in Africa today suffer from the decay found in numerous African states, and under such conditions they may appeal to religion, amongst other forms of social identification, to claim

political power and, at least, to generate a sense of self-worth. Still, they are not the only social group to reckon with conditions of hardship on an everyday basis. And not all young people are affected in the same way, with differences existing along gender and economic lines.

I contend that in contemporary Côte d'Ivoire, the centrality of Islam as a focus of self and communal identification for certain youth, as well as the concurrent rise and growth of Islamic youth associations, should not be read as an instance of political Islam, nor as a will to gain formal political power and to institute an Islamic state. This does not mean that the situation may not change in the future, and that violent changes could not take place. Côte d'Ivoire has certainly been faced with a high level of political instability in recent years, given the 1990 multiparty elections, the death of Houphouët-Boigny in 1993, Bédié's accession to the presidency in 1994, and the generalised students' and transporters' strikes in May and June 1997. The relationship between the agents of Ivorian national power and the Muslim collectivity has historically been one of compromise; while slow to recognise the social significance of Islam and highly criticised for attempting to divide the Muslim national collectivity, the Ivorian government under Félix Houphouët-Boigny never neglected to include Muslims within the power structure. Considering the 1994 changes to the electoral code, the demise of Alassane Dramane Ouattara, and the creation of the RDR, it remains to be seen whether Bédié will maintain the same political strategy.

It should also not be forgotten that, in Côte d'Ivoire, Islam generally has been expressed and practised outside of the political and legal definition of Ivorian civil society. The French colonial administration had a very ambiguous relation to Muslims, rejecting them or including them in the structures of power depending on the historical period (Triaud 1974). Under the present government, Muslim institutions stand outside of state structures, especially in the case of Islamic education and marriage. Moreover, there is a long-standing history in the Ivorian territory of support from local leaders to protect the status and the monopoly of "Dioula traders" (Launay 1982; Lewis 1970). While not locally integrated, Dioula traders historically have been able to settle and to practise their commercial activities without

the irrelevance of local leaders and structures (see Chapter 3). Whereby Muslims of foreign origin have established and maintained social structures in the realms of education, marriage and religion that stand outside of state regulations.

Despite Muslims' perception that they have often been excluded from political power and control, that the government has made concerted efforts to divide Muslims, and that they are increasingly seen as foreigners in Côte d'Ivoire, to date there is no Islamic political party in Côte d'Ivoire, and there are no Ivorian Islamic newspapers. Since the 1990s, political relations between Muslims and the political majority, as well as sociopolitical claims made by Muslims at the national level, aim at integrating the Muslim collectivity within existing national institutions and guaranteeing the rights of Muslims at the national level. The CNI, which was created largely in reaction to the actions of the national government, is a central player in these negotiations.

7.4 Islam and social legitimacy

In the midst of these relations of power, Islam as a form of social identification is a way for certain young men and women to acquire certain social and familial legitimacy through being "good Muslims." The experiential gap created by migration and formal education is palliated by the practice of Islam, despite an overt rejection of the elders' practice of Islam. Parents undeniably prefer, for instance, that their children be "proper Muslims," even if the children criticise their parents' interpretation and practice of Islam, rather than have them hang around in nightclubs and *buvettes*. As "proper Muslims," young people will not "bring shame" to the family. On the contrary, they will honour the family. Second, Islam confers a sense of self and of self-worth in a context where one's aspirations for the future are jeopardised, especially for young men.

In Bouaké, as in numerous other West African cities, there is a large number of unemployed young men who simply "hang around." Many of them have been educated in national French-language

schools or in local *madrasas*. In the first case, the compression of the public and private sectors of the economy and the recent policies of exclusion from the educational system on grounds of academic incompetence (LePape 1986) explain, in part, their idleness. In the case of *madrasa* students, graduates do not have much of a chance for salaried employment; some qualified students or ex-students may find work in a *madrasa* as teachers, but in most cases they do not receive a salary, and, as in the case of Ahmed (see Chapter 4), prefer being idle to working for free. In both cases, they lack training in local trades. Some may decide to learn a trade, such as tailoring or car mechanics, but graduates from national French-language schools often refuse to train for such employment, which they consider to be beneath them (LePape 1986).

Third, Islam, through its universalistic appeal and claims of "properness," is a way of achieving the socially sanctioned status of "adult" through a claim of "proper" Islamic knowledge and an ensuing redefinition of marriage practices. Locally, adulthood is broadly defined by marriage and by the establishment of an economically independent household. Adulthood corresponds to different behaviours for young men than for young women.

For young men, passage to the status of adult requires marriage and economic autonomy. To a certain extent, "educated" Islam may ease both processes. Regarding marriage, "educated" Islam argues for the reduction of marriage costs by opposing ethnocultural practices which stand outside of the strict terms of marriage defined by Islam (and thus making it easier for young men to acquire the means to get married when they so desire rather than having to wait until they are economically well-off). In addition, by emphasising the *umma* rather than regional ethnocultural collectivities, educated Islam provides for a larger marriage pool. In an urban setting, marriages cross ethnic boundaries very frequently and traditional marriage taboos while still recognised, are no longer applied in most cases. But, much of the redefinition of marriage practices as claimed by young men is still largely discursive. In most cases, elders remain in control of marriage choices and timing, due to lack of economic autonomy on the part of youth. Regarding economic autonomy, Islamic youth associations

certainly involve their members in diversified socio-religious networks which may have repercussions at the level of employment; this is a topic that I propose to examine in the future.

For young women, access to the status of "adult" is actualised through marriage and motherhood. In a context in which potential wives are judged by the suitability of their behaviours, participation in Islamic youth associations is a way of publicly displaying a "proper" Muslim behaviour and dress; this can translate into certain advantages regarding marriage possibilities. Moreover, participation in Islamic youth associations certainly increases the permitted social visibility of young women. Parents and potential husbands can hardly criticise a young woman for participating in the activities of Islamic youth associations and Islamic preaching because such activities promote "proper" Islamic behaviours. In the case of women educated in national French-language schools and at university (and often already economically independent young women), who are not very likely potential wives to the extent that they are perceived as "seeing in front of men", the display of a Muslim identity and participation in Islamic youth associations may promote access to marriage possibilities which would be otherwise unavailable. This is the case insofar as a Muslim man may be willing to consider a "wife who sees beyond him" if she is a "good Muslim".

As such, Islam, for Western-style educated and professional women, seems to confer legitimacy in a context where their lifestyle and lifeworld contrasts with locally sanctioned female social roles as mothers and wives. But the more fundamental analytical question relates to the social definition of gender roles and gender relations. While "educated" Islam defines women through a domestic role as educators and guarantors of their children's faith, it is also believed that women must have a formal Islamic education in order to fulfil this role. Paradoxically, however, education may open for women the possibility of employment and economic independence outside of the household -- which is rejected by the model of "proper womanhood" elaborated within the context of Islamic youth associations. At the moment, it is difficult to apprehend how such an Islamic logic will impact upon the social and marriage status of young educated Muslim

women, who were trained in Islamic institutions abroad and who work as Islamic educators.

7.5 "Growing older" and social change

The relationship between Islam as an element of social identification and access to adulthood carries a number of conceptual implications when considered in the context of the question of social change. Without doubt, the experienced shift from *sya* to Islam as a central identity referent can be understood in the context of the historical unfolding of the nation-state in Africa, including the politically constructed dichotomy between nationals and foreigners. In addition, the history of Islam both in the region and at a global level also informs the contemporary centrality of Islam as an identity referent. However, these perspectives are most useful as background to a more locally situated examination of dimensions of social change. As we have seen, the social definition of "youth" and "elders," the sociopolitical meaning of "Islam" as a social category of identification, and the dynamics of the politics of cultural and religious identities as they unfold in Bouaké and Côte d'Ivoire are distinct from such phenomena in other regions in West Africa and around the world, despite certain common elements. This difference highlights the danger of invoking analytical categories such as modernity, tradition, and intergenerational conflicts without examining the social setting in which they unfold. Other works that have successfully taken into account dynamics of the appropriations or versionings of global phenomena includes that of Rowlands in West Africa (1996), Miller in the Caribbean and England (1995), Spencer in Sri Lanka (1995), and Herzfield in Greece (1995).

As mentioned in Chapter 1 and throughout the thesis, "modernity" and "tradition" are frequently used as social idioms by Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké to describe social practices and modalities of identification. Both are tied to one another to the extent that their utterance transmits a sense of historical change, from tradition to modernity, or modernisation. However, this change carries either

positive or negative connotations depending on the worldview adopted by the social actors. In the early days of independence, nationalism and national integration, in its "modern" form, was associated with a move away from rural traditions and ethnic allegiances. However, young men and women, however, participating in neighbourhood-based Islamic youth associations, for instance, regard modernisation -- defined as the adoption of a Western-style lifestyle -- as dangerous because it corrupts Muslim youth. Western-style modernisation is regarded as a positive dimension of change for young men and women who are aspiring to a salaried lifestyle. Elders, for their part, in some cases, perceive Western-style modernisation in a negative light because it distantiates young men and women from their ancestral origin and worldviews. Despite the fact that many elders send their children to Western-style schools and hope that they obtain salaried white-collar employment, they still criticise their children's Western attitude to marriage and parenthood. In fact, both idioms -- tradition and modernity -- acquire meaning in light of the situation of social interaction. In this sense, on the one hand, modernity (as an idiom) evokes Western-style lifestyle, Ivorian salaried lifestyle, or "educated" Islam, or exteriority. In this last sense, modernity refers to lifeworlds and worldviews which stand outside of the collective "us", whether it is the *umma*, ancestral ethnic groups, or African societies. Modernity also ultimately evokes change, whether from traditional lifestyle to Western-style lifestyle, or from traditional lifestyles to Ivorian salaried lifestyles, or from older forms (or syncretic forms) of Islam to an "educated" Islam. Tradition (as an idiom), on the other hand, evokes locality -- in the sense of Africa and localised cultural practices tied to places of origin in Mali -- and stability -- defined through continuity in history. Ethnic identities and associated ancestral customs are one of the most significant embodiments of tradition. And, *balmafuru* is their archetypal expression. Both ethnic identities and ancestral customs are perceived by social agents in static and primordial terms; each ethnic identity refers to specific, defined characteristics and behaviours, which do not change over time.

Besides invoking different practices, and social and geographic spaces, both idioms (modernity and tradition) also invoke a series of

power relations which are relevant to the processes of identification described in the thesis: between elders and youth, between social classes defined by type of formal education, and between genders. The dichotomy between tradition and modernity also brings forth the tension between religion and ethnicity, religion appealing to one community (*umma*) and ethnicity to another (*sya* related identities).

When considering the issue of social change, especially on an intergenerational scale, there exists an overwhelming danger of reading these changes against a past which is captured as monolithically traditional, and against a group of elders identified as static in their values and worldviews. To evade such a conceptual trap, I emphasised that each generation has its own role in the socio-political currents of the day. More generally, one may ask under what circumstances it becomes the role of youth to claim and enact change and the role of elders to uphold previous changes as elements of continuity. Another way to look at this issue is to ask whether claims made by young Muslims in Bouaké today regarding Islam and their expected life trajectories are about "real change" or about "being young"? The answer to this question will determine whether redefinitions of identity remain largely discursive or reshape the social world in a tangible way. Either way, such agent-centred redefinitions will inevitably become smaller or larger currents in broader movements of social change, ones beyond the agency of individuals.

This sense of both individual agency and larger-scale change comes through clearly in the analysis of case studies, which crystallise life trajectories, enhance dimensions of intergenerational relations and ruptures, and render visible the course of life. The theoretical and methodological tools I have employed allow me to take into account dimensions of structural constraint and dimensions of human agency in order to mark out how individuals, as members of specific collectivities, come to inscribe themselves within specific lifeworlds and worldviews. The notion of life course analysis aims at bridging elements of personal trajectories and intentionality with specific dimensions of social constraints, such as gender relations and age-grade relations, as well as institutional changes regarding education and politically defined social status. In the same vein, the emphasis on the processual and

situational dimensions of social identities highlights the role of human agency in constructing the fluidity of social identities, while taking into account the historically constructed power relations delimiting the extent of this fluidity. The specifically ethnographic project is to show how these plural, fluid dimensions of individual and collective identities take on specific characteristics and relations in given cultural and historical milieus.

Focusing on processes of identification amongst Muslims of Malian origin in Bouaké makes it clear that ethnicity and religion (and other forms of social identity, for that matter) must be understood and studied as interrelated modalities of social identification rather than as isolated social phenomena. Because social actors identify themselves in various ways -- through ethnicity, religion, professional status, gender, age, and so forth -- and because historical conditions of the political definition of citizenship in Côte d'Ivoire have changed, it cannot be otherwise. It is for this reason that I choose to use notions of lifeworlds and worldviews, rather than identity; such notions articulate these different elements of processes of identification and capture their experiential (or lived) dimension. In this perspective, social identities are both "social acts" and "lived experience" within the context of specific social constraints, and processes of identification are conceptualised as junctures of transformations situated within a broader historical socio-political dynamic. Finally, using the developmental perspective of the life course has allowed me to bridge these individual and collective dimensions of processes of identification. Life course analysis aims at articulating the timing of individual life trajectories with the timing of social events and changes by examining how social conditions can influence individual life trajectories and how individual life choices can impact upon social conditions.

Ultimately, processes of identification are articulated to historically situated power relations. Here, power is not necessarily conceived as coercion, but as a way of conceptualising who has access to certain forms of social, economic and political resources: women, men, Muslims, youth, elders, and so forth. This implies that one looks at these processes not strictly from the standpoint of the

powerful, but also the less powerful, in this case youth and women (Bayart, 1989). The emphasis on power relations goes back to René Gallissot and the ambiguity of his notion of *procès d'identification*. What emerges in my own analysis is how power relations, in the context of fluid and plural worldviews and lifeworlds, can be studied at the individual level through the analysis of individual life trajectories, and at a collective level through the study of the versioning of "educated Islam."

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GLOSSARY

Aloko: fried riped plantain bananas served with fried fish and hot pepper; also mid-afternoon meal

Anango: (Portuguese term) Yoruba; by extension all Nigerians

Attiéké: grated, fermented steamed manioc served with fried fish; also mid-morning meal

Baka: mini-van which are used for public transport costing half the price of a taxi ride (75F CFA in 1994 after the devaluation of the CFA Franc)

Balmafuru: consanguine marriage

Bara: large round drum

Bolomafara: monetary contribution by members of associations

Borotigini: married young female

Boubou: (French term) long West Africa-style gown worn by men and women

Bouillie: (French term) gruel

Buguritlan: divination using sand drawings

Colonifilila: divination using cowrie shells

Dambè: mores

Daji: juice made with the flower of *Hibiscus sabdariffa*

Dawa: (Arabic term) "call of Islam"; act of proselytising

Den: child

Denfitini: child from age one until puberty

Deninani: infant under one year old

Denmissen: child

Denuli: female celebration of naming ceremonies

Densereli: naming ceremony

Donda: Arabic *Lib al-kabir*, holiday celebrating the anniversary of the Prophet Mohammed's birth

Dontigi: Mande warrior or cultivator

Dunan: stranger; foreigner

Dunu: small drum, held under the arm, and hit by a curbed stick

Farafi: African

Farafina: Africa

Féi: home (*am féi* means "our home")

Fitri: Islamic daily early evening prayer (around 6:35 pm)

Furu: marriage, to marry; name of the ceremony that finalises the marriage

Furusiri: exchange of bridewealth; male event celebrated during the marriage ceremonies

Fula: Banmanan term for Fulbe

Garanke: Soninke term for leather workers

Gongonmugu: perfum made with locally made incense

Grin: informal young men gathering

Griotisme: (French term; in Dioula/Banmanan, *jeliyake*) refers to the profession of *jeli*, that is, individuals who have as a livelihood the social roles of *jeli*

Hadja: (In Arabic, *Al Hajjia*) term used to designate women who have done the pilgrimage to Mecca

Horon: Mande category referring to a free-born person

Imam: (Arabic term) office designating the leader of prayer at the mosque; the person who "prays in front" of the community or who leads the community in prayer

Indigenat: (French term) medicinal therapy based on plants and other natural resources

Jamu: patronym

Jatigi: host

Jeleba: (Arabic term) Arab-style dress for men or women

Jeli: member of and hereditary Mande professional category (*nyamankala*), historical genealogists, professional singers, professional musicians and dancers, public praisers, and intermediaries in times of marriages and other forms of social relations

Jembe: long drum

Ji: water

Jihad: (Arabic term) meaning "struggle"; used to refer to holy wars or violent conflicts between Muslims and non-believers

Jo: fetish

Jon: Mande term for slave acquired by purchase or warfare

Kado: Banmanan term for Dogon

Kakon: before

Kalan: to recite from a written text; to read; to study

Kan: language

Karamogo: Muslim cleric or scholar; teacher

Kembeleni: unmarried young male

Kokura: modernity

Konyo: female ceremony celebrating a marriage; usually in the case of a first marriage

Laada: tradition

Ladji: (in Arabic, *Al Hajj*) term used to designate men who have done the pilgrimage to Mecca

Langara: local form of prayer shawl

Lansera: Islamic daily afternoon prayer (around 4:00 pm)

Madrasa (or *medersa*): (Arabic term) school; Franco-Arabic Islamic school; based on the Western model of classroom teaching with a curriculum emphasising Arabic language and Muslim religious teaching

Maliki: (Arabic term) one of the four Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence; based on the writing of Malik ibn Anas (715-95) of Medina; followed by the majority of Muslims in Bouaké

Mande: a family of West African languages; also used to refer to peoples who trace their origin to the Manden, West African empire of Mali and Segou

Marabout: (French term; in Arabic, *marbût*) man devoted to ascetic life; in the francophone West African context, individuals performing divinations based on the Qur'an, or individuals knowing the Qur'an and the secret names of God

Maraka (or *Marka*): Term used in Dioula/Banmanan to refer to Soninke and Sarakole people

Marakakein: Maraka quarter

Misiri: mosque

Mogo (or *moro*): people or individual

Mogotigiya: personal social capital

Mory: scholar or Muslim cleric

Morykalan: traditional mnemonic-style Qur'anic school

Musso: woman

Mussokoroba: old female

Mussokoroni: very old female

Numu: the Mande socio-professional category of blacksmith

Nyamakuji: ginger juice

Nyamankala: an historical Mande system of social stratification divided into groups which are professionally specialised

Ramadan: (Arabic term) month of obligatory fasting

Risala: (Arabic term) Islamic inheritance rules

Sagafo: Islamic daily evening prayer (around 8:00pm)

Saraka: (in Arabic, *sadaqa*) a non-obligatory pious donation

Sarakabo: ritualised donations at the time of a death, on the 4th, 7th and 40th day after a death

Senankunya: "joking" relationship

Seri: prayers performed five times a day; to pray

Serifana: Islamic daily midday prayer (around 1:30 pm)

Sogomadaseri (or *fadili*): Islamic daily early morning prayer (around 5:00 am)

Suko: funeral

Sunguroni: unmarried young female

Sunna: (Arabic term) code of behaviour modeled on the exemplary actions of the Prophet Mohammed and his companions

Sya: ethnic identity, ranging from place of origin to national identity

Tabaski: (in Arabic, *Ayd al-kabir*) Muslim holiday commemorating and reenacting Ibrahim's sacrifice of a ram for his son as well as marking the end of the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca

Tabushi: "mixed" race, also used for language

Tche: man

Tchekoroba: old male

Tchekoroni: very old male

Tchemisseni: married young male

Tigi: warrior, proprietor, leader

Ton: economic and cultural association that has for a goal the gathering of individuals to accumulate funds for the purpose of organising a social event

Tontine: (French word) association with goal the accumulation of funds for mutual economic help or funds for common economic ventures

Tubabu: originally a white person from France, now all white Europeans and North Americans

Umma: (Arabic term) the universal Muslim community

Ussulan: locally made incense with crushed spices, minerals, butter, and commercial perfume

Ustaz: someone who can read the Qur'an in Arabic and who can teach Qur'anic classes

Wagati: time, "when"

Wahabiyya: (Arabic term) a follower of the teachings of the Islamic reformer Mohammed ibn 'Abd-al-Wahhab'; in French West Africa, the term is used to refer to adherents to Muslim reformist movements, that emerged with the return of students from Al-Azhar university in Cairo in the nineteen-forties

Wolo: kola nut

Wolofo: Wolof; by extension all Segenalese people

Wolotlan: distribution of kola nuts at the time of a marriage engagement; also women's public event celebrating an engagement

Worosso: child of slave; descendant of slave; slave "born in the house"

APPENDIX 1**Check lists for interviews in household family units and description of the material culture of compounds**

1. Interviews with children's generation in household family units - This checklist may have been completed during many separate interviews. Some of its elements may also have been completed without the need of an interview in cases where I acquired the necessary knowledge simply through casual observation and interaction.

- genealogy of ego
- life history and projects for the future: place of birth, grew up where and in whom household, migration, education, training, work experience, life-course rituals (baptism, circumcision, marriage, children), life-style
- parents: place of birth, migration, educational and work experience
- siblings: place of birth, migration, educational and work experience
- children: place of birth, migration and educational
- describe most significant event in their life
- talk about most important person in their life and main role model
- participation in associations (political, sports, social organisation, work-related, religious, ethnic ...)
- describe activities of and people seen yesterday, asked at each formal interview with the same individual
- describe activities of and people seen last week
- religious practice
- describe relationship and trips to Mali
- citizenship

2. Interviews with parental generation in household family units - This checklist may have been completed during many separate interviews. Some of its elements may also have been completed without the need of an interview in cases where I acquired the necessary knowledge simply through casual observation and interaction.

- genealogy of ego
- life history: place of birth, grew up where and in whom household, migration, education, training, work experience, life-course rituals (baptism, circumcision, marriage, children),
- parents: place of birth, migration, educational and work experience
- siblings: place of birth, migration, educational and work experience
- children: place of birth, grew up where and in whom household, migration, education, work experience, life-course rituals (baptism, circumcision, marriage, children), opinion regarding material life-style, opinion regarding marriage and children; opinion regarding choice of work
- describe most significant event in their life

participation in associations (political, sports, social organisation, work-related, religious, ethnic ...)

- describe activities of and people seen yesterday, asked at each formal interview with the same individual

- describe activities of and people seen last week

- religious practice

- describe relationship and last trip to Mali

- citizenship

3. Material culture in compounds

electricity

gaz

running water

type of habitat: communal courtyard, single family courtyard, villa

number of rooms and room occupation by the occupants of household

furniture

mode of cooking: wood fire, coal, gaz or electricity

refrigerator

television

sound system

type decor: family pictures, political posters, cultural posters, pots and pans,

traditional woodcarvings, carpets ...

transport: car, bycicle, moped

jewelry, hairdoes, gold teeth

dress: Western, local, type of local dress, head pieces

entertainment available: books, music ...

animals

type of food cooked and eaten

commercial activities based in household

APPENDIX 2**Photographs of dress-styles**

List and description of photographs:

- a) *Madrasa* students
- b) National French-language school students, primary school level
- c) Baoulé-style dress, rural women
- d) Baoulé-style *complet trois pagnes*, bureaucrat
- e) Young women (Baoulé or Dioula) in *complet trois pagnes*
- f) Western-style modernity
- g) Western-style modernity
- h) Western-style modernity
- i) Dioula bureaucrat-style dress, older woman
- j) Dioula bureaucrat-style dress, older woman
- k) Dioula bureaucrat-style dress, older women
- l) Dioula-style dress, old woman
- m) Dioula-style dress, old woman
- n) Young Muslim woman, displaying Islamic identity
- o) Young Muslim women, displaying Islamic identity
- p) Dioula-style dress, women
- q) Dioula-style dress, women
- r) Dioula-style dress, merchant
- s) Dioula-style dress, naming ceremony (Senegalese women)
- t) Dioula-style dress, women, marriage
- u) Dioula-style dress, old Dioula men
- v) Dioula-style dress, men, marriage
- w) Young men, Ivorian appropriation of Western modernity and Dioula-style cap
- x) Western modernity, young man



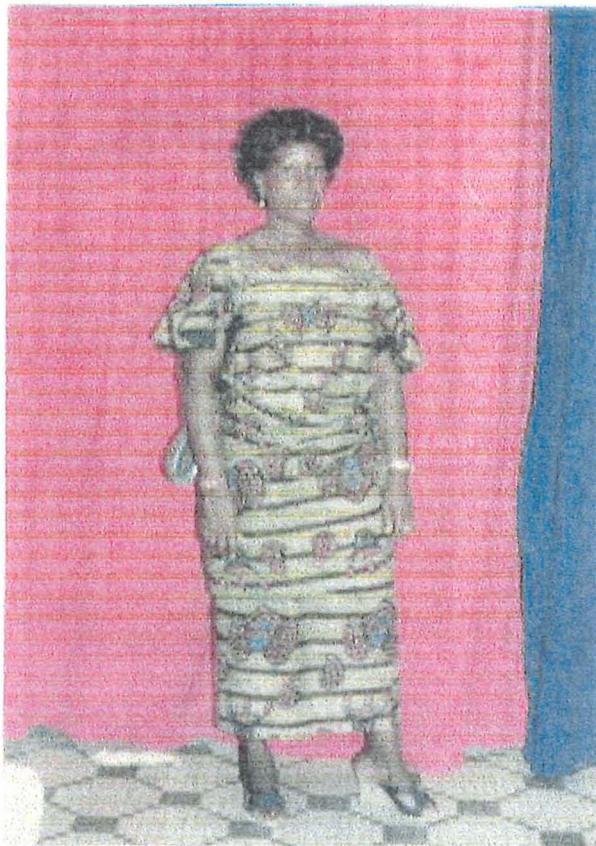
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b)



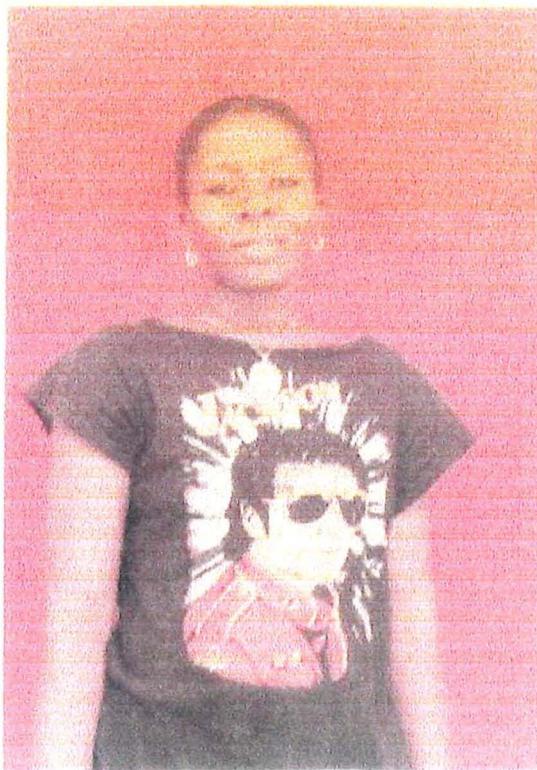
c)



d)



e)



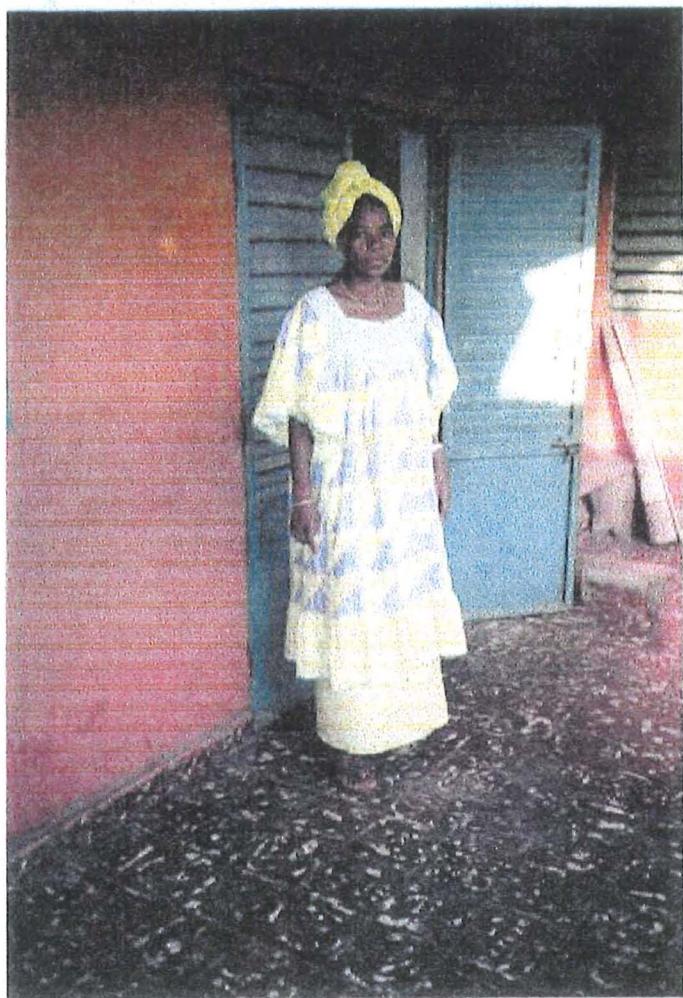
6)



7)



8)



j)



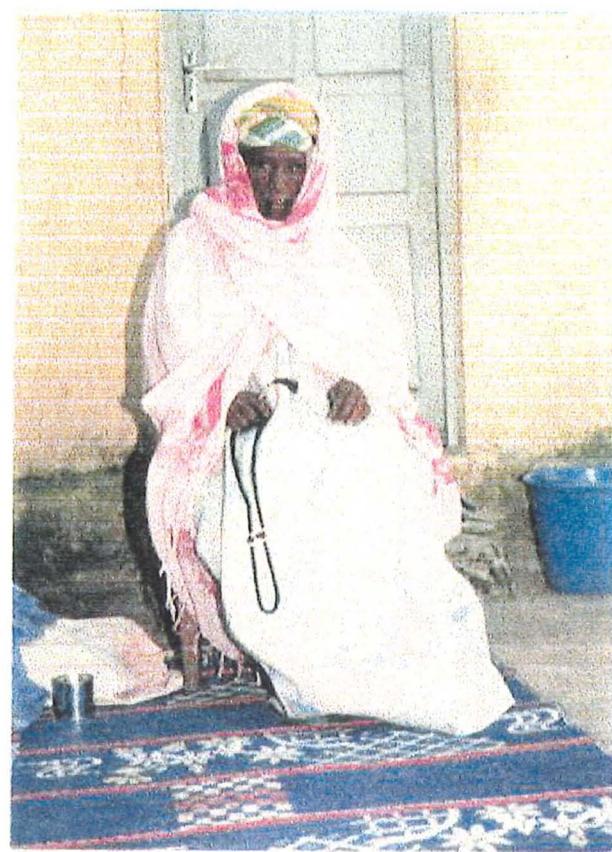
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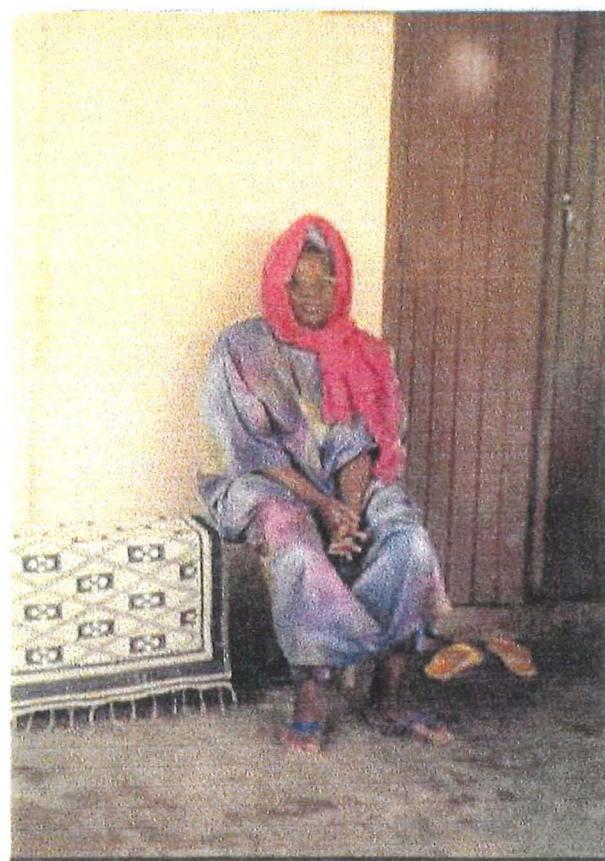
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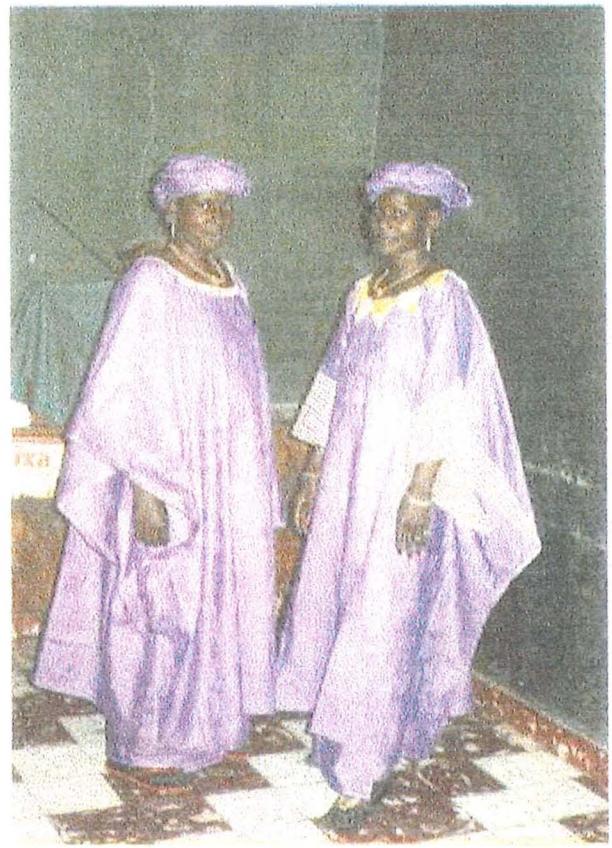
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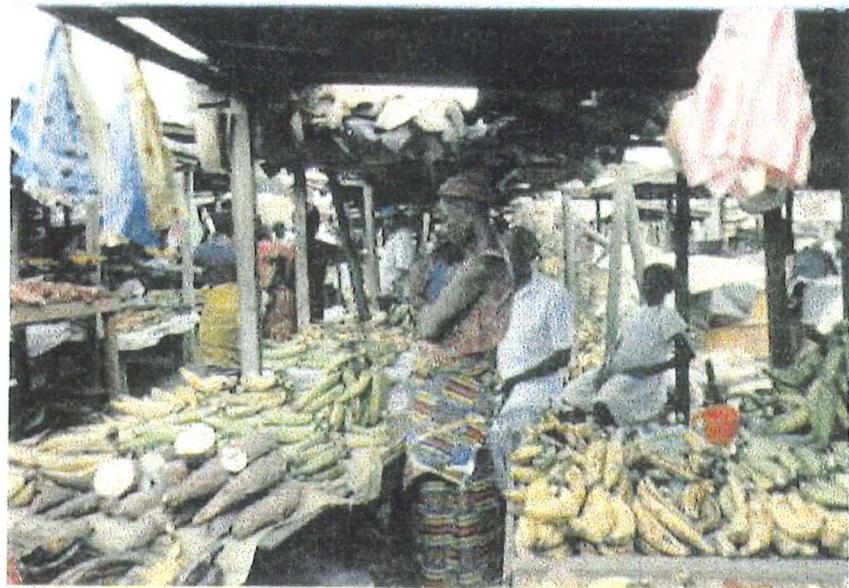
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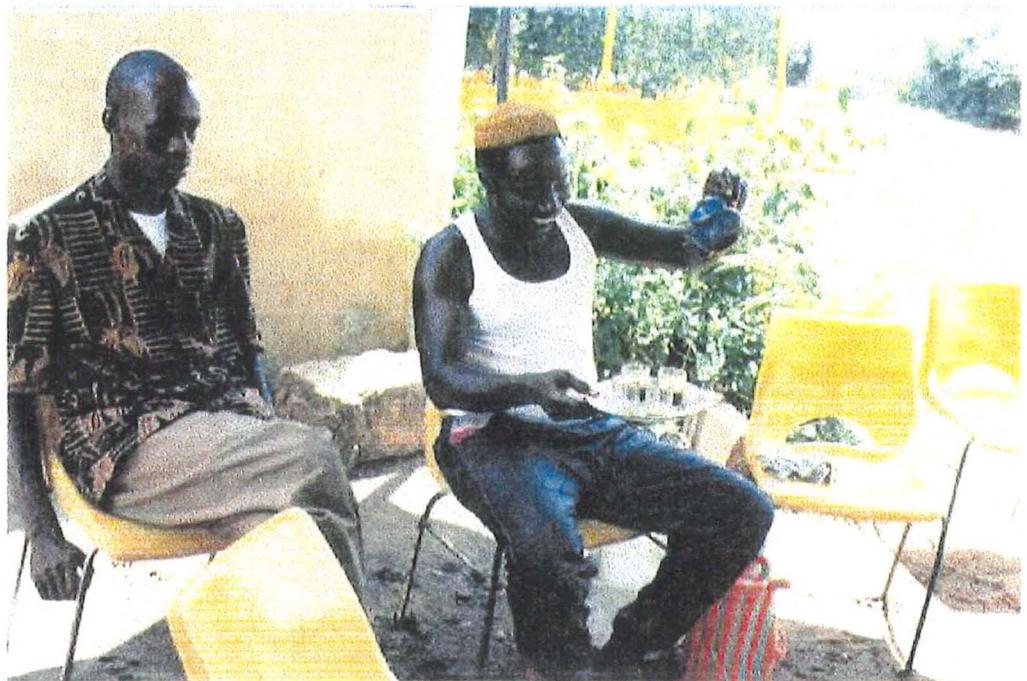
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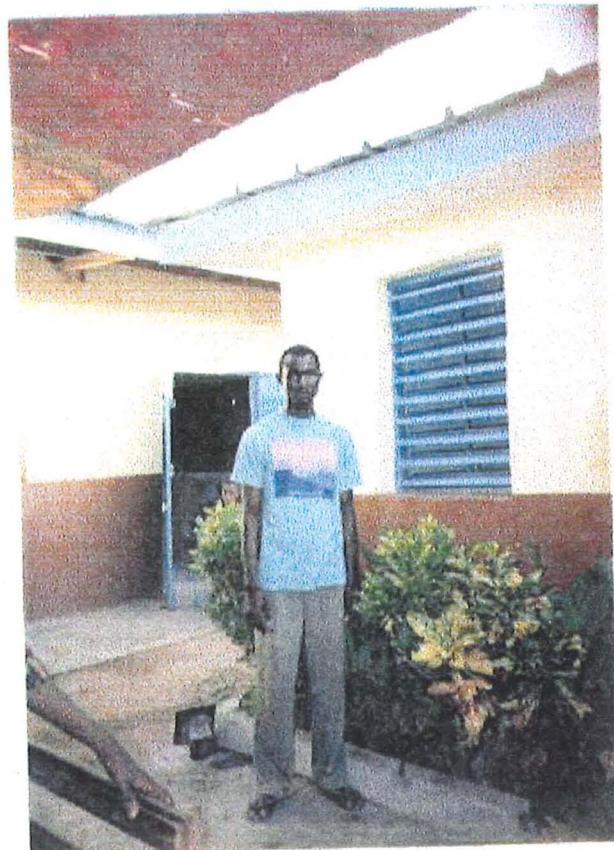
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v)



w)



x)

Appendix 3

1994 Electoral Code (relevant extracts)

Projet de code électoral

Le ministre Emile Constant Bombelet était hier devant les députés pour défendre le projet de code électoral à travers l'exposé des motifs... la pratique du pluralisme politique pendant ces quatre dernières années a cependant mis en exergue, dira le ministre de l'Intérieur, la nécessité d'opérer quelques améliorations du système

électoral en vue de sa totale adaptation aux réalités politiques nouvelles.

Le projet de code électoral qui regroupe en un texte unique l'ensemble des dispositions relatives aux élections présidentielles, législatives et municipales comporte 139 articles. À travers lesquels l'autorité vise «l'instauration d'un climat

de plus grande tolérance politique et d'une meilleure convivialité entre ces différents partis politiques à laquelle aspirent tous les Ivoiriens. Ci-dessous, le texte intégral de l'exposé des motifs lu hier devant le parlement par M. Emile Constant Bombelet, exposé des motifs suivis des articles du projet de code.

BOMBET DEVANT LE PARLEMENT

Lhistoire de la démocratie ivoirienne se caractérise par trois étapes principales.

La première de celles-ci se situe sous la période coloniale et se caractérise par l'existence de nombreux partis politiques et l'intensité des activités menées par ceux-ci.

La seconde étape est quant à elle, marquée par le consensus politique survenu et qui a été à l'origine du rassemblement de tous les autres partis politiques autour du PDCI, au lendemain des élections législatives organisées à la veille de l'accession de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'indépendance.

La troisième étape se caractérise pour sa part par la rupture sans heurt du consensus et la réinstauration du multipartisme le 30 avril 1990.

Il convient de rappeler que malgré l'existence du parti unique de fait, le régime électoral de la Côte d'Ivoire a été conçu à l'image de celui des pays de grande démocratie.

C'est dans cet esprit que la loi fondamentale du 3 novembre 1960 a été élaborée.

Celle Constitution détermine en ses articles 9 et 10, les règles relatives à l'élection du Président de la République et dispose en son article 41 que la Loi fixe le régime électoral des députés à l'Assemblée nationale et des conseillers aux assemblées locales.

La refonte complète des lois électorales ne s'est en conséquence pas avérée utile à l'occasion des élections générales de 1990, ces textes ne nécessitant alors aucune adaptation fondamentale au contexte politique nouveau.

La pratique du pluralisme politique pendant ces quatre (4) dernières années a cependant mis en exergue, la nécessité d'opérer quelques améliorations du système électoral en vue de sa totale adaptation aux réalités politiques nouvelles.

La plus importante de ces adaptations réside dans la position adoptée par le Gouvernement de soumettre au Parlement, un projet de loi écartant le scrutin, les non nationaux d'origine africaine.

Sans que cela constitue en soi une rupture avec l'héritage politique légué par le Président Félix



Emile Constant Bombelet face aux députés.

Houphouët-Boigny, le Gouvernement s'est imposé le strict respect des principes essentiels de la Constitution ivoirienne, notamment la déclaration des droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, tels qu'ils figurent dans le préambule de celle-ci.

Une telle option politique semble a priori en totale contradiction avec la philosophie de toutes les batailles politiques livrées depuis 1946 pour l'épanouissement, non seulement de l'Homme ivoirien, mais aussi pour la dignité de l'Homme africain en général.

Toutefois, conviendrait-il de noter qu'en homme politique averti et conscient de la flexibilité de certaines normes qui engagent la vie politique d'une Nation, le Président Félix Houphouët-Boigny, tout en posant pour l'avoir, l'acte solennel du vote des non ivoiriens d'origine africaine, n'a pas manqué de maintenir les dispositions constitutionnelles relatives au droit de suffrage notamment l'article 5.

Cette intelligence qui veut que le temps soit laissé au temps dans le changement vers l'intégration effective qu'il a conçue avant la lettre, l'a guidé dans son choix dont le pragmatisme qui n'est plus à démontrer, s'est traduit par l'inscription des dispositions qui n'étaient que transitoires, s'appuyant du vote des non ivoiriens d'origine africaine.

Quant au fond et à l'application des dispositions de l'article 41 de la Constitution, le projet de Code

Les évolutions survenues dans nos Etats respectifs, notamment ces quatre (4) dernières années ont amené bon nombre de pays à organiser le vote de leurs ressortissants résidant à l'étranger.

Ces diverses évolutions ajoutées au principe du respect de l'état de droit que le Gouvernement s'est assigné ont contribué à la prise de cette option nouvelle.

C'est au regard de toutes ces considérations que le présent projet de Code électoral a été élaboré.

Au plan de la forme, ce projet de Code électoral regroupe en un texte unique l'ensemble des dispositions relatives aux élections présidentielles, législatives et municipales.

Il comporte 139 articles répartis en trois (3) livres respectivement consacrés :

- aux dispositions communes à l'élection du Président de la République, des députés et des conseillers municipaux;

- aux dispositions particulières à chaque élection;

- aux dispositions finales.

Il convient d'indiquer que le livre

Il se subdivise en trois chapitres

concernant respectivement l'élection du Président de la République, celle des Députés et enfin celle des conseillers municipaux.

Quant au fond et à l'application

électoral fixe toutes les règles concernant le régime électoral relatif aux différentes élections.

Ce texte inclut également la réglementation concernant l'établissement, la révision et la refection des listes électorales.

Les règles inscrites dans ce projet de Code électoral vont de la présentation des candidatures au contentieux électoral en passant par les opérations de vote et la proclamation des résultats des scrutins.

Les règles inscrites dans ce projet de Code électoral vont de la présentation des candidatures au contentieux électoral en passant par les opérations de vote et la proclamation des résultats des scrutins.

Les innovations introduites par rapport à la législation en vigueur sont énumérées ci-après

INNOVATIONS CONCERNANT L'ÉLECTION DU PRÉSIDENT DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE

S'agissant de l'élection du Président de la République, les innovations apportées par ce projet de Code électoral concerne :

- le respect strict de l'esprit et de la lettre de la Constitution notamment en son article 5;

- la reprise de l'élection en cas de décès de l'un des candidats en liste au second tour;

- l'obligation pour tout candidat à l'élection du Président de la République d'être ivoirien de souche et d'avoir résidé en Côte d'Ivoire sans interruption pendant les cinq (5) années précédant le jour du scrutin;

- l'admission de candidatures indépendantes soumises cependant à la condition de l'investiture au moyen de signatures émanant d'électeurs directement inscrits sur la liste électorale;

- les larges pouvoirs dévolus au Conseil constitutionnel en matière électorale;

- le renforcement des sanctions encourues par les contrevenants aux dispositions de la présente loi.

INNOVATIONS CONCERNANT L'ÉLECTION DES DÉPUTÉS À L'ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE

S'agissant de l'élection des

députés à l'Assemblée nationale, les innovations apportées par ce projet de Code électoral concernent :

- l'obligation pour tout candidat à l'élection à l'Assemblée nationale d'être ivoirien de souche et d'avoir résidé en Côte d'Ivoire sans interruption pendant les cinq (5) années précédant le jour du scrutin;

- l'obligation du parrainage des candidatures par des électeurs inscrits sur la liste de la circonscription concernée.

- le rôle important dévolu au Conseil constitutionnel dans la constitution de l'Assemblée nationale;

- la déchéance qui frappe tout parlementaire qui change d'appartenance politique en cours de mandat dans le souci de maintenir la stabilité de la majorité parlementaire acquise après les élections.

Il convient de préciser que les conditions d'éligibilité et d'inéligibilité, la présentation des candidatures et les modalités de déroulement des opérations de vote n'ont subi aucune modification.

INNOVATIONS CONCERNANT L'ÉLECTION DES CONSEILLERS MUNICIPAUX

S'agissant de l'élection des conseillers municipaux, les innovations apportées par ce projet de Code électoral concernent :

- l'augmentation du tiers à la moitié, du quota de conseillers dont la démission doit entraîner la dissolution du Conseil municipal, la mise en place d'une délégation spéciale et l'organisation d'élections partielles;

- la prolongation de la durée de la délégation spéciale à un an.

Autant, le présent projet vise à satisfaire à un souci d'amélioration et d'adaptation du système électoral et son adoption contribuera à n'en point douter, à l'instauration d'un climat de plus grande tolérance politique et d'une meilleure convivialité entre les différents partis politiques à laquelle aspirent tous les Ivoiriens.

Projet de code électoral

VOILÀ LES 139 ARTICLES

Article 1^e: présente loi détermine les conditions d'exercice par le peuple de sa souveraineté en ce qui concerne sa participation aux élections du Président de la République, des Députés et des Conseillers Municipaux.

Article 2: Le suffrage est universel, égal et secret.

TITRE PREMIER**DISPOSITIONS GÉNÉRALES****COMMUNES****CHAPITRE 1^e****DE L'ÉLECTORAT****Section 1****De la qualité d'électeur****Article 3**: Sont électeurs:

- les nationaux ivoiriens des deux sexes, âgés de vingt et un (21) ans accomplis, inscrits sur une liste électorale, jouissant de leurs droits civils et civiques et n'étant dans aucun des cas d'incapacité prévus par la loi;

- les nationaux ivoiriens vivant à l'étranger peuvent prendre part à l'élection du Président de la République selon des modalités fixées par Décret en Conseil des ministres;

- les personnes ayant acquis la nationalité ivoirienne soit par naturalisation soit par mariage.

Article 4: Ne sont pas électeurs les individus frappés d'incapacités notamment:

- les individus condamnés pour crime;

- les individus condamnés à une peine d'emprisonnement sans sursis pour vol, escroquerie, abus de confiance, détournement de deniers publics, faux et usage de faux, corruption et trafic d'influence, attentats aux mœurs;

- les individus qui sont en état de contumace;

- les interdits;

- les individus auxquels les tribunaux ont interdit le droit de vote et, plus généralement, ceux pour lesquels les lois ont édicté cette interdiction.

Section 2**De la liste électorale**

Article 5: La qualité d'électeur est constatée par l'inscription sur une liste électorale. Cette inscription est de droit.

Article 6: La liste électorale est établie sur la base de données fournies par le dernier recensement général de la population et contient les éléments d'identification des électeurs résidant dans la circonscription électorale:

- Nom et prénoms;

- Date et lieu de naissance;

- Profession;

- Domicile;

- Nom et prénoms du père;

- Nom et prénoms de la mère.

Article 7: La liste électorale est unique, permanente et publique.

Elle est établie par une commission dite commission de la liste électorale pour l'en-



Ce sont 139 articles qu'ont commencé à examiner les parlementaires depuis hier matin.

PHOTOS: KISSY BARTHÉLEMY

semble des consultations électORALES et tenue à la disposition de tous les électeurs.

Article 8: La liste électorale est établie par circonscription administrative ou par commune.

Elle peut être scindée par secteur électoral, par quartier, par village, par lieu de vote ou par bureau de vote selon des modalités définies par décret en Conseil des Ministres.

Nul ne peut être inscrit dans plus d'une circonscription électo-

rale dans les cas suivants:

- perte, vol, dégradation, altération ou destruction totale ou partielle pour quelque cause que ce soit;
- modification du ressort de la circonscription électorale soit par scission, soit par fusion soit par extension.

Article 12: La commission de la liste électorale visée aux articles 7, 10 et 11 ci-dessus est ainsi composée:

- l'autorité administrative de la circonscription;

- le maire de la commune;

- l'élu à l'Assemblée nationale;
- les représentations locales des partis politiques disposant au moins d'un Député à l'Assemblée nationale, d'un membre au Gouvernement ou d'un membre au Conseil Économique et Social.

Les modalités de fonctionnement de la commission sont fixées par décret en Conseil des Ministres.

Article 13: Les modalités d'établissement, de révision, de refonte, de publication et d'affichage des listes électorales sont fixées par décret en Conseil des Ministres.

Article 14: Les recours contre les décisions de la commission en matière d'établissement, de révision et de relance des listes électorales relèvent des Juridictions de 1^{re} instance statuant en matière de renvoi en 1^{re} et dernier ressort.

Section 3**De la carte d'électeur**

Article 15: Il est délivré à tout électeur inscrit sur la liste électorale une carte d'électeur.

Nul ne peut être admis à voter s'il ne justifie de son identité.

La carte d'électeur est person-

nelle. Elle est valable pour tous les scrutins pendant la durée des mandats en cours.

Article 16: Les spécifications techniques et les modalités d'établissement des cartes d'électeurs sont fixées par décret en Conseil des ministres.

Article 17: Les cartes d'électeurs sont remises aux électeurs par une commission de distribution au plus tard trois (03) jours avant le scrutin.

Article 18: La Commission de distribution est composée:

- a) dans les communes:

- d'un représentant de l'Administration, président;

- d'un adjoint au maire ou d'un conseiller municipal;

- des représentants locaux de partis politiques disposant au moins d'un député à l'Assemblée nationale, d'un membre au Gouvernement ou d'un membre au Conseil Économique et Social.

- b) dans les circonscriptions administratives:

- d'un représentant de l'Administration, président;

- des représentants locaux de partis politiques disposant au moins d'un député à l'Assemblée nationale, d'un membre au Gouvernement ou d'un membre au Conseil Économique et Social.

Article 19: Les membres de commissions sont nommés par l'autorité administrative.

Article 20: Les cartes non distribuées font l'objet à la circonscription administrative pour être remises au bureau de vote int-

Listes électorales**LE COMMUNIQUÉ DE M. BOMBET**

Le ministre de l'Intérieur a l'honneur de porter à la connaissance des populations que la première phase de révision des listes électorales se poursuivra jusqu'au 30 novembre 1994 par une opération de rafleage des quartiers des communautés pour la ville d'Abidjan et des chefs-lieux de départements pour le reste du pays, par les Agents Recenseurs.

Cette opération doit permettre de prendre en compte la population résidentielle non encore inscrite.

Le ministre rappelle que pendant cette période les personnes qui n'auraient pas encore été recensées pourraient également le faire à travers une permanence sous forme de bureaux d'information ouverte à leur intention dans chaque commune pour la ville d'Abidjan et aux chefs-lieux de départements pour le reste du pays.

Pour faciliter la localisation individuelle dans les quartiers, il est demandé aux personnes qui n'ont pas encore été inscrites de se présenter dans les bureaux d'information munies du certificat d'un voisin immédiat ou du numéro d'identification du ménage figurant sur les portes.

Le ministre précise que ces deux opérations seront closes le 30 novembre.

L'inscription sur les listes électorales étant à la fois un droit et un devoir, le ministre de l'Intérieur invite instamment toutes les personnes qui n'ont pas encore accompli cet acte à le faire dans le délai indiqué.

Projet de code électoral

ressé où elles restent, le jour du scrutin à la disposition de leurs titulaires.

À la clôture du scrutin, les cartes non retirées sont comptées et mises sous pli cacheté par le président du bureau de vote et transmises à l'autorité administrative contre décharge. Les plis ainsi cachetés ne pourront être ouverts que par la commission de la liste électorale prévue aux 7 et 10 ci-dessus lors de la plus prochaine révision de la liste électorale.

CHAPITRE II: De l'éligibilité, de l'inéligibilité et des incompatibilités

Section 1 De l'éligibilité

Article 21: Tout ivoirien électeur peut faire acte de candidature aux élections organisées par la présente loi sous réserve des conditions particulières fixées pour chacune d'elles.

Section 2 De l'inéligibilité

Article 22: Tout électeur qui se trouve dans l'un des cas d'inéligibilité prévus dans les dispositions particulières relatives aux élections organisées par la présente loi ne peut faire acte de candidature.

Section 3 Des incompatibilités

Article 23: Lorsque des personnes élues sont frappées par les incompatibilités prévues par les dispositions de la présente loi, il leur est fait obligation de choisir l'une ou l'autre des deux fonctions dans les conditions prévues à l'article 100.

CHAPITRE III: De l'élection

Section 1: Des opérations préparatoires du scrutin.

Article 24: Le collège électoral est convoqué par décret en Conseil des ministres.

La date de l'élection et les heures d'ouverture et de clôture du scrutin sont fixées par le décret portant convocation du collège électoral.

Article 25: Il est créé dans chaque commune et dans chaque circonscription administrative des bureaux de vote. Chaque bureau de vote comprend mille (1000) électeurs au maximum.

Le nombre de bureaux de vote est fixé par décret en Conseil des ministres.

Article 26: L'Etat prend à sa charge le coût d'impression des affiches, des enveloppes et des bulletins de vote ainsi que les frais d'expédition de ces documents.

Les spécifications techniques ainsi que le nombre des affiches, enveloppes et bulletins de vote sont fixées par décret en Conseil des Ministres.

L'Etat prend également à sa charge tous les frais relatifs aux opérations de vote.

Article 27: L'impression des documents électoraux relève de

l'Imprimerie Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire. Celle-ci peut confier partie des actes d'impression desdits documents à des imprimeurs préalablement agréés par l'Etat et inscrits sur une liste.

Les conditions d'établissement de cette liste sont fixées par décret en Conseil des ministres.

Section 2: De la présentation des candidatures

Article 28: Toute candidature doit faire l'objet d'une déclaration. Les candidatures font l'objet d'un examen selon des modalités spécifiques prévues pour chaque élection.

La déclaration de candidature est assortie d'un cautionnement.

Le cautionnement est restitué à tout candidat ayant obtenu dix pour cent (10%) au moins des suffrages exprimés.

Dans le cas contraire, il reste acquis à l'Etat.

Le cautionnement reste également acquis à l'Etat si le candidat se retire après la délivrance du récépissé définitif ou la publication de la liste.

En cas de décès d'un candidat, le cautionnement est restitué à ses ayants-droits.

Article 29: Tout cautionnement non réclamé après un délai de douze (12) mois à compter de la date de versement, reste acquis à l'Etat.

Article 30: Tous les candidats retenus disposent d'une période réglementaire au cours de laquelle ils font campagne.

Pendant toute la durée de la période électorale, le Gouvernement prend les mesures de nature à assurer l'égalité de traitement des candidats.

Section 3: De la propagande électorale

Article 31: Les dates d'ouverture et de clôture de la campagne électorale sont fixées par décret en Conseil des ministres.

Article 32: Pendant la période de la campagne électorale, les candidats retenus ont accès aux organes officiels de presse écrite, parlée et télévisée selon des modalités définies par décret en Conseil des ministres.

Article 33: Il est interdit de signer ou d'apposer des affiches, d'envoyer ou de distribuer des bulletins de vote, circulaires ou professions de foi dans l'intérêt d'un candidat en dehors de la période réglementaire de campagne.

Section 4: Des opérations de vote et de la proclamation des résultats

Article 34: Les opérations de vote ont toujours lieu un dimanche.

Elles ne durent qu'un jour sauf cas de force majeure.

Le scrutin est ouvert et clos aux heures fixées par le décret portant convocation du collège électoral.

Article 35: Nul ne peut être admis à voter s'il n'est inscrit sur la liste électorale, sauf s'il y est autorisé par ordonnance du juge.

Le vote par correspondance ou par procuration est proscript.

Article 36: Chaque bureau de vote comprend un président, un représentant de chaque candidat et un ou plusieurs secrétaires.

Les membres du bureau de vote doivent être inscrits sur la liste électorale de la circonscription.

Le président est désigné par l'autorité administrative.

L'organisation et le fonctionnement des bureaux de vote sont fixés par décret en Conseil des ministres.

Article 37: Chaque bureau de vote dispose d'une ou plusieurs urnes et d'un ou plusieurs isoloirs.

Les spécifications techniques des urnes et isoloirs sont fixées par décret en Conseil des ministres.

Article 38: Chaque candidat a libre accès à tous les bureaux de

vote soit par lui-même soit par l'un de ses délégués habilités à cet effet.

Le procès-verbal des opérations de vote est signé par le président du bureau de vote et par les délégués.

Article 39: Le dépouillement a lieu immédiatement après la clôture du scrutin.

Les procès-verbaux de dépouillement sont rédigés en triple exemplaire dans la salle de vote et signés des membres du bureau.

Ils comportent les observations et réclamations éventuelles des représentants des candidats.

L'annonce des résultats est faite par le président du bureau de vote devant les électeurs présents.

Article 40: Le droit de contestation des opérations de vote est reconnu à tout candidat selon les modalités prévues pour chaque élection.

CHAPITRE IV: Des dispositions pénales

Article 41: Sont interdites toutes réunions électoralas et toute propagande électorale par quelque mode que ce soit, en dehors de la durée réglementaire de la campagne électorale.

Tout contrevenant aux dispositions de l'alinéa précédent sera passible des peines de onze (11) jours à deux (2) mois de prison et d'une amende de 50.000 à 360.000 francs ou de l'une de ces deux peines seulement.

Article 42: Toute infraction aux dispositions des articles 31 et 33 est passible d'une amende de 250.000 francs à 750.000 francs.

Article 43: Les dispositions des articles 41 et 42 ne sont pas obstacle à l'application des peines prévues par les lois pour sanctionner les crimes et délits relatifs à l'exercice des droits civiques.

TITRE II DISPOSITIONS

PARTICULIÈRES À CHAQUE ÉLECTION

CHAPITRE I DE L'ÉLECTION DU PRÉSIDENT DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE

Section 1 Du mode de scrutin

Article 44: Le Président de la République est élu pour cinq (5) ans au suffrage universel direct. Il est rééligible.

Article 45: L'élection du Président de la République est acquise à la majorité absolue au premier tour.

Si la majorité absolue n'est pas obtenue au premier tour, l'élection est acquise à la majorité relative au second tour qui se déroule quinze (15) jours à partir de la proclamation des résultats du premier tour.

Article 46: En cas d'égalité des candidats arrivés en tête, il est procédé à un nouveau tour dans les trente (30) jours qui suivent le second tour.

Article 47: En cas de décès de l'un des candidats, le Conseil constitutionnel, saisi par le Ministre chargé des élections ou par le parti ou groupement politique ayant parrainé le candidat, prononce la suspension des opérations électorales.

Le parti qui a parrainé la candidature du décesé dispose de soixante douze (72) heures pour présenter une nouvelle candidature.

Le Conseil constitutionnel ordonne la reprise des opérations électorales dans les quarante huit (48) heures qui suivent l'acceptation de la nouvelle candidature.

La durée des opérations électorales est prorogée d'autant.

Section 2 Des conditions d'éligibilité et d'inéligibilité.

Article 48: Tout ivoirien qui a la qualité d'électeur peut être élu Président de la République sous les réserves énoncées aux articles suivants:

- les individus privés par décision judiciaire de leurs droits d'éligibilité en application des lois qui autorisent cette privation;
- les personnes poursuivies d'un conseil judiciaire;
- les personnes ayant obtenu la nationalité d'un autre Etat.

Article 49: Nul ne peut être élu Président de la République s'il n'est âgé d'au moins quarante (40) ans révolus et s'il n'est ivoirien de naissance, né de père et mère eux-mêmes ivoiriens.

Il doit en outre avoir résidé de façon continue en Côte d'Ivoire pendant cinq (5) années qui précèdent la date des élections.

Les dispositions de l'alinéa 3 ci-dessus, ne s'appliquent pas aux ivoiriens choisis par l'Etat de Côte d'Ivoire pour servir dans des organisations internationales ou multinationales.

SUITE PAGE 12



Les parlementaires ont consacré beaucoup de temps à l'exposé des motifs.

SUITE DE LA PAGE 11**Article 50:** sont inéligibles:

- les individus privés par décision judiciaire de leurs droits d'éligibilité en application des lois qui autorisent cette privation;
- les personnes pourvues d'un conseil judiciaire;
- les personnes ayant obtenu la nationalité d'un autre Etat.

Article 51: Ne peuvent être acceptées pendant l'exercice de leurs fonctions et pendant les six (6) mois qui suivent la cessation de leurs fonctions de quelque manière que ce soit, les candidatures à l'élection du Président de la République:

- des membres du Conseil constitutionnel et de la Cour suprême;
- des Magistrats;
- des Trésoriers-Payeurs centraux et départementaux;
- des présidents et directeurs d'établissements ou entreprises à participation financière publique;
- des militaires et assimilés;
- de tout fonctionnaire ayant au moins rang de directeur d'administration centrale.

**Section 3
De la présentation
des candidatures****Article 52:** Chaque candidat est tenu de produire une déclaration revêtue de sa signature dûment légalisée.**Article 53:** Les candidatures à l'élection du Président de la République sont reçues au Conseil constitutionnel dans un délai fixé par décret en Conseil des Ministres.

Le délai de réception des candidatures expire vingt et un (21) jours avant la tenue du scrutin.

Article 54: La déclaration de candidature doit indiquer:

- les noms et prénoms;
- la filiation;
- la date et le lieu de naissance;
- le domicile et la profession du candidat;
- la couleur et le sigle choisis pour les bulletins de vote;
- le ou les partis politiques ayant investi le candidat.

L'utilisation combinée des trois (3) couleurs du drapeau national est proscrite.

Est également proscrite l'utilisation des armoiries de la République sous quelque forme que ce soit.

Article 55: La déclaration de candidature est obligatoirement accompagnée:

- d'un extrait de l'acte de naissance ou du jugement supplémentaire en tenant lieu;
- d'un extrait du casier judiciaire;
- d'un certificat de nationalité.

Ces pièces doivent être établies depuis moins de trois (3) mois.

La déclaration doit en outre être accompagnée d'une lettre d'investiture du ou des partis ou groupements politiques qui parent la candidature.

Tout candidat, membre d'un parti ou groupement politique

dont la candidature n'est pas parainnée par celui-ci, doit rapporter la preuve écrite de sa démission de ce parti ou groupement politique depuis douze (12) mois au moins à la date des élections.

Article 56: Tous les candidats investis ou non par un parti ou groupement politique doivent joindre à leur déclaration une liste d'au moins cinq cents (500) électeurs par région, appuyant leur candidature et comportant la signature des intéressés.

Ceux électeurs doivent être inscrits dans les circonscriptions électorales relevant de la région.

Nul électeur ne peut appuyer plus d'une candidature sous peine des sanctions prévues à l'article 43 ci-dessus.

Les modalités d'établissement et de publication de la liste des signataires sont fixées par décret en Conseil des Ministres.

Article 57: Il est délivré au candidat un récépissé provisoire de sa déclaration.

Le récépissé provisoire est remplacé, après contrôle d'éligibilité par le Conseil constitutionnel, dans les huit (8) jours, par un récépissé définitif, sur présentation du reçu de versement de sa déclaration.

Le récépissé provisoire est remplacé, après contrôle d'éligibilité par le Conseil constitutionnel, dans les huit (8) jours, par un récépissé définitif, sur présentation du reçu de versement de sa déclaration.

Article 58: Le cautionnement doit être versé au Trésor dans les trois (3) jours qui suivent la déclaration de candidature.**Article 59:** L'établissement de la liste des candidatures est fait après vérification de l'éligibilité des candidats par le Conseil constitutionnel au vu des déclarations qui lui ont été adressées.

Le Conseil constitutionnel assure la publication des listes des candidats, quinze (15) jours avant le premier tour du scrutin.

Article 60: Est rejetée toute candidature dont la composition du dossier n'est pas conforme aux dispositions ci-dessus.**SECTION 4****Des opérations de vote, des réclamations et de la proclamation des résultats****Article 61:** Chaque Président de Bureau de vote transmet par l'intermédiaire du chef de la circonscription électorale dont relève son bureau, au Ministère chargé des élections, un exemplaire du procès-verbal des opérations électorales accompagné des pièces qui doivent y être annexées, le tout pour être remis au Conseil constitutionnel dans les trois (3) jours qui suivent le scrutin.

Le second exemplaire du procès-verbal reste dans les archives de la circonscription administrative et le troisième, au chef-lieu du Département.

Article 62: Tout candidat peut présenter par requête écrite adressée au Président du Conseil constitutionnel une réclamation concernant la régularité du scrutin.

Le nombre et l'étendue des circonscriptions sont fixés par décret en Conseil des Ministres.

Article 63: Toute réclamation

concernant la régularité du scrutin

doit être déposée dans les trois (3) jours qui suivent la date de la proclamation des résultats.

Le résultat du scrutin

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mentaires hier matin à l'Assemblée nationale.

- les militaires et assimilés;
- les fonctionnaires ayant au moins rang de directeur d'administration centrale.

Au terme du mandat, et en cas de non réélection, les personnes ci-dessus désignées réintègrent de plein droit leur corps d'origine.

Section De la présentation des candidatures

Article 80: Chaque candidat est tenu de produire une déclaration revêtue de sa signature dûment légalisée. (...)

Article 81: Les candidatures à l'élection des députés à l'Assemblée nationale sont reçues en double exemplaire par le ministre chargé des élections dans un délai fixé par décret en Conseil des ministres.

Le délai de réception des candidatures expire vingt et un (21) jours avant la tenue du scrutin.

S'il apparaît qu'une candidature a été déposée par une personne inéligible, la commission doit saisir dans les quarante huit (48) heures le Conseil Constitutionnel qui statue dans les trois (3) jours.

Si les délais mentionnés à l'alinéa précédent ne sont pas respectés, la candidature doit être enregistrée.

Article 82: La déclaration doit mentionner:

- les noms et prénoms
- la filiation;
- la date et le lieu de naissance;
- le domicile et la profession;
- le cas échéant l'ordre de présentation des candidats.

Article 83: La déclaration de can-

didature est obligatoirement accompagnée pour chaque candidat:

- d'un extrait de l'acte de naissance ou du jugement supplétif en tenant lieu;

- d'un extrait du casier judiciaire;

- d'un certificat de nationalité.

Ces pièces doivent être établies depuis moins de trois (3) mois.

La déclaration doit en outre être accompagnée de la lettre d'investiture du ou des partis ou groupements politiques qui parraissent la candidature.

Pour les candidats non investis par un parti ou groupement politique, la déclaration doit être accompagnée d'une liste de cinq cents (500) électeurs inscrits dans la circonscription concernée et comportant la signature des intéressés.

Nul électeur ne peut appuyer plus d'une candidature sous peine des sanctions prévues à l'article 43.

Article 84: Chaque candidat ou liste de candidats doit indiquer:

- l'intitulé de la liste, le cas échéant;

- la circonscription électorale retenue;

- la couleur et le sigle choisis pour les bulletins de vote.

La couleur du bulletin de vote doit obligatoirement être différente de celle des cartes électorales.

L'utilisation combinée des trois (3) couleurs du drapeau national est proscrite.

Est également proscrite, l'utilisation des armoiries de la Répu-

blique sous quelque forme que ce soit.

Plusieurs listes d'une même circonscription électorale ne peuvent avoir ni le même sigle ni la même couleur de bulletins de vote.

Article 85: Aucune liste de candidature ne peut être acceptée si elle ne comprend un nombre de candidats égal à celui des sièges à pourvoir dans la circonscription électorale considérée.

Article 86: Un récépissé provisoire de la déclaration est délivré au déposant.

Le récépissé délivré est délivré dans les huit (8) jours si les candidatures sont conformes aux prescriptions de la présente loi et sur présentation d'un reçu délivré par le Trésorier payeur attestant du versement du cautionnement prévu à l'article 28 ci-dessus.

Article 87: Le cautionnement est fixé à cent mille (100.000) francs par candidat.

Le cautionnement doit être versé au Trésor dans les trois (3) jours qui suivent la déclaration de candidature.

Article 88: Est rejetée par la commission prévue à l'article 81 alinéa 3 toute candidature dont la composition du dossier n'est pas conforme aux dispositions ci-dessus.

Le conseil constitutionnel peut être saisi par le candidat ou le parti ou groupement politique qui a parraîtié sa candidature dans un délai de trois (3) jours à compter de la date de notification de la décision de rejet.

Le Conseil Constitutionnel statue dans un délai de trois (3) jours à compter du jour de sa saisine.

Si le Conseil Constitutionnel ne s'est pas prononcé dans le délai sus-mentionné, la candidature doit être enregistrée.

Article 89: L'établissement de la liste des candidats est fait après vérification de leur éligibilité par la commission créée à l'article 81 ci-dessus, au vu des déclarations qui lui sont adressées.

La commission transmet la liste des candidats au ministre de l'Intérieur, quinze jours (15) jours avant le premier tour du scrutin.

Section 4:

Des opérations de vote et de la proclamation des résultats

Article 90: Chaque président de bureau de vote transmet immédiatement un exemplaire du procès-verbal des opérations électorales accompagné des pièces qui doivent y être annexées, à l'autorité administrative en vue d'un recensement général des votes au niveau de la circonscription électorale.

Il est procédé à la proclamation provisoire des résultats du scrutin par l'autorité administrative, la proclamation définitive étant faite par le ministre chargé des élections.

Un exemplaire du procès-verbal accompagné des pièces justifi-

en l'exécution de travaux, la présentation de fournitures ou de services pour le compte ou sous le contrôle de l'Etat, d'une collectivité dont plus de la moitié du capital social est constitué par des participations de sociétés ou entreprises ayant ces mêmes activités.

Article 96: Il est interdit à tout parlementaire d'accepter, en cours de mandat, une fonction de membre de conseil d'administration ou toute fonction exercée de façon permanente en qualité de conseil dans l'un des établissements, sociétés ou entreprises visés à l'article précédent.

Article 97: Nonobstant les dispositions des articles 94 et 95, ci-dessus, les préfectoraux membres d'un conseil général ou d'un conseil municipal peuvent être désignés par ces conseils pour représenter le département ou la commune dans des organismes d'intérêt régional ou local à la condition que ces organismes n'aient pas pour objet propre de faire distribuer des bénéfices et que les intéressés n'y occupent pas de fonctions rémunérées.

Article 98: Il est interdit à tout avocat inscrit au barreau, lorsqu'il est investi d'un mandat parlementaire, d'accomplir, directement ou indirectement par l'intermédiaire d'un associé, d'un collaborateur ou d'un avocat stagiaire, sauf devant la Haute Cour de Justice, aucun acte de sa profession dans des affaires à l'occasion desquelles des poursuites pénales sont engagées devant les juridictions répressives pour crimes ou délits contre la chose publique ou en matière de presse ou d'atteinte au crédit et à l'épargne.

Il lui est interdit, dans les mêmes conditions, de plaider ou de consulter pour le compte de l'une des sociétés, entreprises ou établissements visés aux articles 93 et 94 ci-dessus dont il n'était pas habituellement le conseil avant son élection, ou contre l'Etat, les sociétés nationales, les collectivités ou établissements publics.

Article 99: Il est interdit à tout parlementaire de faire ou de laisser figurer son nom suivi de l'indication de sa qualité dans toute publicité relative à une entreprise financière, industrielle ou commerciale.

Sont punis d'un emprisonnement de un (1) à six (6) mois et d'une amende d'un million (1.000.000) à cinq millions (5.000.000) de francs, ou de l'une de ces deux peines seulement, les fondateurs, les directeurs ou gérants des sociétés ou établissements à objet commercial, industriel ou financier qui auront fait ou laissé figurer le nom d'un parlementaire avec mention de sa qualité dans toute publicité faite dans l'intérêt de l'entreprise qu'ils dirigent ou qu'ils se proposent de

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En cas de récidive, les peines ci-dessus prévues peuvent être portées à un (1) an d'emprisonnement et à dix millions (10.000.000) de francs d'amende.

Article 100: Le député qui se trouve dans l'un des cas d'incompatibilité prévus aux articles 91, 94 et 95 ci-dessus peut, devant tout avertissement, se démettre volontairement de son mandat.

A défaut, le bureau de l'Assemblée Nationale l'avise par lettre recommandée en indiquant sommairement les motifs qui justifient l'application de l'un des articles qui précédent, que la question de sa démission d'office sera portée à l'ordre du jour de la première séance de l'Assemblée Nationale qui suivra l'expiration du délai de huitaine après son avertissement.

Avant la séance ainsi fixée, si l'intéressé ne fait parvenir aucune opposition formulée par écrit adressée au Président de l'Assemblée Nationale, celui-ci donne acte de la démission d'office, sans débat.

Dans le cas contraire, l'opposant est admis à fournir ses explications à huis clos et l'Assemblée Nationale se prononce immédiatement ou, s'il y a lieu, après renvoi devant une commission spéciale.

Section 6: Du contentieux électoral

Article 101: Le contentieux des élections à l'Assemblée Nationale relève du Conseil Constitutionnel.

Article 102: Le droit de contester une éligibilité appartient à tout électeur dans le délai de huit (8) jours à compter de la date de publication de la candidature.

Article 103: Le requérant doit annexer à sa requête les pièces produites au soutien de ses moyens.

Le Conseil Constitutionnel inscrit l'affaire dont il est saisi.

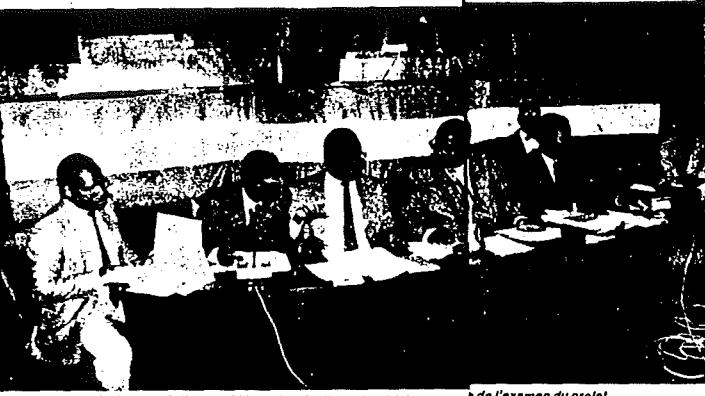
Toutefois, il peut, sans instruction contradictoire préalable, rejeter les requêtes irrecevables ou ne contentant que des griefs qui, manifestement, sont sans influence sur l'éligibilité contestée.

Si la requête est jugée recevable, avis en est donné au candidat concerné qui dispose d'un délai de quarante-huit (48) heures pour prendre connaissance de la requête et des pièces jointes, et produire ses observations écrites.

Article 104: Le Conseil Constitutionnel statue, par décision motivée, dans les huit (8) jours de la saisine.

Article 105: Le droit de contester une élection appartient à tout candidat ou liste de candidats dans le délai de cinq (5) jours francs, à compter de la date de proclamation des résultats.

Article 106: Pendant toute la durée de la législature, l'élu dont l'inéligibilité est établie, est



Le bureau de l'Assemblée nationale. Il a eu fort à faire au cours de l'examen du projet.

déchu de son mandat par le Conseil Constitutionnel saisi à cet effet par le ou les candidats de la même circonscription électorale.

De même, l'élu qui change d'appartenance politique en cours de mandat, est déchu par le Conseil Constitutionnel, saisi par le parti ou le groupement politique qui l'a parrainé.

Section 7 De la vacance d'un poste de Député

Article 107: En cas de vacance par décès, démission ou pour toute autre cause, des élections partielles ont lieu dans les six (6) mois qui suivent la vacance dans la circonscription électorale concernée, conformément au mode de scrutin fixé par la présente loi.

Ce délai peut être prorogé par décret en Conseil des ministres pour une durée n'excédant pas six (6) mois.

Il n'y a pas lieu à l'élection partielle dans les dix huit (18) mois qui précèdent la fin de la législature.

CHAPITRE III DE L'ELECTION DES CONSEILLERS MUNICIPAUX

Article 108: Le nombre de conseillers municipaux par commune est fixé conformément à la loi portant organisation municipale.

Article 109: Les conseillers municipaux sont élus pour cinq (5) ans sur des listes complètes.

Ils sont renouvelés à une date fixée par décret en Conseil des Ministres publié au Journal officiel au moins deux (2) mois avant les élections.

Toutefois, un décret peut abréger ou proroger le mandat d'un Conseil municipal pour faire coïncider son renouvellement avec la date des élections municipales générales.

Section 1: Du mode de scrutin

Article 110: Les conseillers municipaux sont élus au suffrage universel direct et au scrutin de liste

majoritaire à un tour sans vote préférentiel ni panachage.

Le vote est acquis à la majorité simple.

En cas d'égalité des voix entre plusieurs listes arrivées en tête, il est procédé à un nouveau tour de scrutin pour ces seules listes.

Ce nouveau tour de scrutin a lieu le dimanche qui suit la date de la proclamation des résultats.

En cas de nouvelle égalité, il est procédé à de nouvelles élections dans les trente (30) jours qui suivent le second tour.

Section 2 De l'éligibilité et de l'inéligibilité

Article 111: Tout Ivoirien qui a la qualité d'électeur peut se présenter aux élections municipales dans toute circonscription électorale de son choix pour être élu conseiller municipal sous les réserves énoncées aux articles suivants.

Article 112: Pour faire acte de candidature aux élections municipales, l'électeur doit être inscrit sur la liste électorale de la circonscription choisie et résidente effectivement dans la commune concernée.

Toutefois, des électeurs ne résidant pas dans la commune peuvent être éligibles s'ils y ont des intérêts économiques et sociaux certains. Le nombre des conseillers municipaux non résidents ainsi élus ne peut être supérieur au tiers de l'effectif du conseil.

Article 113: Les conjoints, les frères et sœurs, les ascendants et les descendants au premier degré ne peuvent être simultanément membres du même Conseil municipal.

Article 114: Sont inéligibles :

- les individus privés par décision judiciaire de leurs droits d'éligibilité, en application des lois qui autorisent cette privation;
- les personnes pourvues d'un conseil judiciaire;
- les personnes ayant acquis la nationalité ivoirienne depuis

moins de dix (10) ans;

- les personnes secourues par un budget communal;

- les maires, les adjoints aux

maires et les conseillers démis

d'office pour malversation

même s'ils n'ont pas encouru de

peine privative de droits cliviques

sans préjudice des dispositions

de l'article 43 de la loi n° 80-1180

du 17 octobre 1980 relative à

l'organisation municipale modifiée

par la loi n° 85-578 du 29 juillet 1985.

Article 115: Sont inéligibles dans le ressort où ils exercent leurs fonctions :

- les Préfets, Sous-Préfets, Secrétaire Général de la Préfecture et Chefs de Cabinet de Préfet;

- les Personnels des Corps de la Police nationale;

- les Militaires des Armées de la Terre, de Mer et de l'Air, de la Gendarmerie nationale et du

Corps des Sapeurs pompiers;

- les Comptables des deniers

communaux et les entrepreneurs

des services municipaux;

- les Agents salariés de la

commune non compris ceux qui,

étant fonctionnaires publics ou

exerçant une profession indépendante, ne reçoivent une indemnité de la commune qu'à raison

des services qu'ils lui rendent

dans l'exercice de cette profession.

Article 116: Tout conseiller municipal qui, pour une cause quelconque survienne après son élection, se trouve dans l'un des cas d'inéligibilité est immédiatement démis de ses fonctions par l'autorité de tutelle.

La décision de l'autorité de tutelle est susceptible de recours

par l'intéressé devant la Cour

suprême dans les quinze (15)

jours de la notification.

Ce recours est suspensif.

Section 3: De la présentation des candidatures

Article 117: Toute déclaration de candidature aux élections municipales est présentée sous la forme d'une liste comportant au-

tant de noms que de sièges conseillers municipaux à pourvoir.

Article 118: La déclaration de candidature est déposée en double exemplaire auprès de l'autorité de tutelle au plus tard trente (30) jours avant la date d'ouverture du scrutin.

Article 119: Chaque liste doit préciser :

- les noms et prénoms du candidat tête de liste;
- dans l'ordre de présentation, les noms, prénoms, filiation, date et lieu de naissance, domicile et profession des candidats;
- la couleur et le sigle choisis par les bulletins de vote, cette couleur devant être obligatoirement différente de celle des cartes électorales.

L'utilisation combinée des trois (3) couleurs du drapeau national est proscrite.

Est également proscrite l'utilisation des armoiries de la République ou de la collectivité déclarée concernée.

Plusieurs listes de la même circonscription électorale ne peuvent avoir ni le même intitulé ni le même sigle ni la même couleur de bulletins de vote.

Article 120: La liste portant déclaration de candidature doit être accompagnée par chaque candidat :

- d'une déclaration personnelle revue de sa signature dumment légalisée;
- d'un extrait de l'acte de naissance ou du jugement supplétif en tenant lieu;
- d'un certificat de nationalité;
- d'un extrait de casier judiciaire.

Ces pièces doivent avoir été établies depuis moins de trois (3) mois.

La déclaration est accompagnée éventuellement de la lettre d'investiture du ou des partis ou groupements politiques qui parent la liste de candidature.

Article 121: Nul ne peut être inscrit sur plus d'une liste de candidatures.

Tout candidat qui se présente sur plus d'une liste de candidatures ou simultanément dans plus d'une commune, est radié d'office de ces listes sans préjudice des peines prévues par les lois pour sanctionner les crimes et délits relatifs à l'exercice des droits civiques.

Article 122: Aucune liste de candidatures ne peut être acceptée si elle ne comprend un nombre de candidats égal à celui des conseillers municipaux prévu pour la commune considérée.

Article 123: Un récépissé provisoire de la déclaration est délivré au candidat tête de liste ou remis au déposant.

Le récépissé provisoire est remplacé dans les huit (8) jours par un récépissé définitif si les candidatures sont conformes aux prescriptions de la présente loi et sur présentation du reçu de versement du cautionnement.

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Article 124: Le cautionnement est fixé à dix (10) mille francs par candidat.

Ce cautionnement doit être versé pour l'ensemble des candidats au Trésor dans les trois (3) jours qui suivent la déclaration de candidature.

Article 125: En cas de radiation d'un candidat en application de l'article 121, de constatation d'inéligibilité ou de décès d'un candidat, il est procédé à son remplacement par un nouveau candidat au rang qui convient.

Ce remplacement fait l'objet d'une déclaration complémentaire soumise aux dispositions de la présente loi, à l'exclusion des délais fixés aux articles 123 et 124.

Article 126: Dès réception d'une liste de candidatures, l'autorité administrative en transmet une copie accompagnée de ses observations au Ministre chargé des élections qui dispose d'un délai de quinze (15) jours à compter de la date de dépôt pour en arrêter et publier la liste.

Article 127: La liste transmise au Ministre chargé des élections par l'autorité administrative doit être authentifiée par cette dernière.

Toute liste non conforme à celle déposée auprès de l'autorité administrative est irrecevable.

Lorsque le Ministre chargé des élections déclare un candidat inéligible, celui-ci dispose d'un délai de trois (3) jours à compter de la notification de l'inéligibilité pour saisir la Cour Suprême qui statue dans les trois (3) jours à compter de sa saisine.

Section 4: Des opérations de vote et de la proclamation des résultats.

Article 128: Chaque candidat tenu de liste a libre accès à tous les bureaux de vote. Il a le droit, par lui-même, par l'un des candidats ou par l'un de ses délégués, de contrôler toutes les opérations de vote, de dépouillement des bulletins et de décomptes des voix dans les locaux où s'effectuent ces opérations, ainsi que d'exiger l'inscription au procès-verbal de toutes observations, protestations ou contestations sur les législatives opérations, soit avant la proclamation des résultats du scrutin, soit après.

Le procès-verbal est signé par les délégués ou leurs suppléants. Ceux-ci doivent être inscrits sur la liste électorale de la circonscription concernée.

Article 129: Chaque Président de bureau de vote transmet immédiatement un exemplaire du procès-verbal des opérations électorales accompagné des pièces qui doivent y être annexées, à l'Autorité Administrative en vue d'un recensement général des votes au niveau de la circonscription électorale.

Il est procédé à la proclamation provisoire des résultats du scrutin par l'Autorité Administrative locale.

Un exemplaire du procès-verbal accompagné des pièces justificatives est transmis sous couvert de l'Autorité Administrative au Ministère chargé des élections pour proclamation définitive des résultats puis publication au Journal Officiel de la République de Côte d'Ivoire.

Le troisième exemplaire du procès-verbal reste dans les archives de la circonscription administrative dont relève le bureau de vote.

Section 5 Des incompatibilités.

Article 130: Nul ne peut être membre de plusieurs conseils municipaux.

Tout membre d'un conseil municipal, pour être candidat à une élection municipale dans une autre commune, doit démissionner au préalable de son mandat.

Article 131: Les fonctions de conseillers municipaux sont incompatibles avec celles:

- d'Inspecteur général des Services publics;
- de Militaire des Armées de Terre, de Mer et de l'Air, de la Gendarmerie Nationale, et du Corps de Sapeurs-Pompiers et d'agents des Corps de la Police nationale;
- de Fonctionnaire ou autre agent de l'Etat chargé d'attributions de tutelle des collectivités décentralisées à quelque titre et à quelque niveau que ce soit.

Article 132: En cours de mandat, les élus municipaux nommés ou engagés au titre de l'une des fonctions déterminées à l'article 115 ci-dessus sont suspendus de plein droit de leur mandat durant la période pendant laquelle ladite fonction est exercée. Notification de la suspension leur est donnée immédiatement par le Ministre chargé de la tutelle.

Section 6: Des contentieux électoraux

Article 133: Tout électeur ou tout candidat de la circonscription électorale concernée peut contester une inscription sur les listes de candidatures au plus tard quinze (15) jours avant le jour du scrutin.

Les réclamations sont adressées par écrit à l'autorité administrative qui les transmet sans délai au Ministre chargé des élections, accompagnées de ses observations.

Lorsque le Ministre chargé des élections constate un cas d'inéligibilité, il est procédé conformément à la loi.

Il est procédé aux dispositions des articles 125, 126 et 127 de la présente loi.

Article 134: Tout électeur ou tout candidat peut contester la validité des opérations électorales municipales de sa commune.

Les réclamations doivent être consignées au procès-verbal, ou être déposées auprès de l'Autorité Administrative, sous peine de nullité, dans les cinq (5) jours à compter de la date de l'élection. L'Autorité Administrative donne immédiatement connaissance de la réclamation par voie administrative aux conseillers dont l'élection est contestée. Elle les prévient qu'ils ont quinze (15) jours au maximum pour présenter leur défense.

Les dossiers de réclamations sont aussitôt transmis à la Cour Suprême sous le couvert du Ministre chargé des élections.

Article 135: La Cour Suprême statue dans un délai d'un (1) mois à compter de la date de sa saisine.

Article 136: En cas d'annulation des opérations électorales, il est procédé dans les trois (3) mois à de nouvelles élections.

Ce délai peut être prorogé par décret en Conseil des Ministres. Il ne peut excéder douze (12) mois sauf pour des raisons d'ordre public.

Section 7 De la vacance ou de la démission des membres du conseil municipal

Article 137: En cas de vacance de la moitié au moins des mandats de membres d'un conseil municipal, par décès, démission ou pour toute cause, il est procédé au renouvellement intégral du conseil municipal dans les trois (3) mois à compter de la nomination de la délégation spéciale conformément à la loi relative à l'organisation municipale.

Ce délai peut-être prorogé par décret en Conseil des Ministres. Cette prorogation ne peut excéder douze (12) mois sauf pour des raisons d'ordre public.

Toutefois, il n'est pas pourvu aux vacances survenues dans les dix huit (18) mois qui précèdent le renouvellement des conseils municipaux.

TITRE III DISPOSITIONS FINALES

Article 138: Des décrets en Conseil des Ministres fixent en tant que de besoin les modalités d'application de la présente loi.

Article 139: La présente loi abroge toutes dispositions antérieures contraires.

Demain:
NOS ANALYSES
ET COMMENTAIRES

DIJEDJÉ MADY

(Groupe parlementaire PDCI)

Hier après l'exposé des motifs par le ministre Emile Constant Bombet, le porte-parole du Groupe parlementaire PDCI, M. Alphonse Djedjé Mady, a pris la parole pour soutenir le projet de code électoral en ces termes: «N'allumons pas le feu». Texte intégral de son intervention.

«N'ALLUMONS PAS LE FEU»



« PDCL ne voudrait pas

effacer d'un trait ce qu'est la vérité historique. Il voudrait reconnaître, qu'à travers ce texte, il se doit de rendre hommage à celui qui a concu l'esprit et le corps de ce texte. Il y a d'éminents juristes qui diront

PHOTOS REÇUES PAR

ABEL DOUALY

que la loi n'a pas d'initiateurs. Et qu'un matin, au réveil on trouve en place des institutions qui existent.

Mais quand il arrive que la vérité historique est ce qu'elle est, il est de bon ton de reconnaître cette vérité historique(...). Quand nous observons les textes de notre constitution, nous constatons qu'il y a certains points qui demeurent constants. C'est par exemple l'article 5 et toutes les autres dispositions qui font que la République de Côte d'Ivoire se veut démocratique. C'est-à-dire voir instauré un gouvernement du peuple, par le peuple et pour le peuple(...).

Je pense aussi que les historiens et les hommes de droit qui sont dans cette salle devront se rendre compte des différentes luttes qui ont été engagées pour redonner à l'homme ivoirien sa dignité(...). C'est pourquoi le groupe parlementaire PDCI voudrait saluer ici la volonté politique d'Houphouët-Boigny qui a prévu toutes ces choses(...).

Je voudrais aussi au nom du groupe parlementaire PDCI rendre hommage à M. le Ministre et au gouvernement du Président Konan Bédié pour avoir voulu nous soumettre ce texte aussi explicite, aussi clair, cherchant à répondre à l'attente des Ivoiriens authentiques(...) feu Félix Houphouët-Boigny avait voulu nous faire gagner de l'avance sur les autres. En nous proposant en son temps la possibilité d'avoir la double nationalité. Nous avons refusé. Il a voulu également que nous gagnions de l'avance sur les autres en œuvrant pour une intégration sous-régionale. Nous ne

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l'avons pas voulu non plus.

Aujourd'hui le peuple ivoirien est à la recherche d'une identité nationale. L'ivoirien veut se reconnaître ivoirien, tout en acceptant les autres. Mais il veut être d'abord lui-même. Le débat est trop récent sur le vote des étrangers, faut-il vous le rappeler. Nous sommes en train de décider dans l'élan nationaliste que la République de Côte d'Ivoire soit démocratique(...).

Nous avons donc demandé et obtenu de la part du gouvernement que le droit de vote soit accordé aux seuls Ivoiriens. Ainsi fait et bien fait.

Sommes-nous vraiment sérieux quand nous parlons aujourd'hui de différents degrés de citoyenneté? Devant cette volonté des Ivoiriens d'être eux-mêmes, qui vient nous parler de différents degrés de nationalités? Pensons-nous véritablement que tous les Ivoiriens ont les mêmes droits et en même temps? Nous savons par exemple que nous sommes électeurs à 21 ans. Mais pourquoi à 21 ans tous les citoyens ne sont pas éligibles à tous les postes électifs? La loi dispose qu'il y a un âge où on peut se présenter à l'Assemblée nationale et un autre

âge où on peut se présenter comme candidat à la Présidence de la République. Dans toutes les démocraties, tous les citoyens électeurs ne sont pas éligibles au même degré(...).

Aujourd'hui, les Ivoiriens veulent se gérer eux-mêmes. Et ils veulent choisir celui qui remplit les conditions maximales d'assumer cette tâche, de les guider(...) chez nous par exemple, en pays bétel, le «Bagnon» c'est celui qui est présenté comme le plus bel homme. Il remplit des critères que les autres ne remplissent pas du point de vue de sa prestance, de son physique, de ses pas de danse. Bref, il est doté d'un certain nombre de qualités qui font que les populations sont fières de se reconnaître en lui.

Le problème qui est donc posé c'est que celui qui doit incarner la souveraineté du peuple en tant qu'individu, celui-là devrait requérir un certain nombre de qualités, de spécificités. Où est donc le mal que celui-là soit né Ivoirien de mère et de père eux-mêmes Ivoiriens? Les parents peuvent être Ivoiriens soit de naissance soit par naturalisation; peu importe.

Si nous regardons plus près de nous pour comparer ce qui est comparable, nous disons qu'au

Burkina-Faso, il est écrit en toutes lettres que «ne peut-être candidat à la présidence de la République qu'un Burkinalbé né Burkinalbé; de père et de mère eux-mêmes Burkinalbé» (article 78). Aux États-Unis, le premier naturalisé ne peut briguer un poste à la Maison Blanche en qualité de Chef d'Etat. Il faut être de la deuxième génération(...). En outre la constitution des États-Unis dispose, entre autres, que celui qui veut devenir le locataire de la Maison Blanche, doit résider dans le pays quarante ans au moins avant les élections.

Nous disons qu'il nous faut être Ivoiriens. Et ne nous plaignons pas parce qu'on nous demande d'être Ivoiriens. C'est pourquoi le groupe parlementaire PDCI voudrait ici inviter la nation entière à se reconnaître en elle-même.

Dieu merci, beaucoup d'Ivoiriens remplissent les conditions posées par le présent projet de code. Parce qu'à la vérité, combien d'Ivoiriens, par générations sont candidats à la Présidence de la République? Pourquoi veut-on provoquer une insurrection populaire parce que le représentant suprême de la Côte d'Ivoire devrait être Ivoirien à part entière, c'est-à-dire de naissance?

Le groupe parlementaire PDCI se félicite donc de ce projet de code électoral que le gouvernement soumet à l'analyse de l'Assemblée nationale. C'est pourquoi les députés du PDCI-RDA en contact permanent avec la base (parce que nous pensons qu'il n'y a pas lieu d'interrompre le contact avec la base pour sporadiquement aller la consulter puisque nous la consultons en permanence) savent que leurs populations, leurs frères qu'ils représentent à l'Assemblée nationale ont toujours été fiers de dire: «Nous sommes des Ivoiriens et nous acceptons nos frères non-Ivoiriens à vivre avec nous».

Cela n'est pas une politique d'exclusion. Mais une politique d'intégration Faloméfia, en restant soi-même. Car pour aller au rendez-vous du donner et du recevoir, il faut être soi-même, avoir sa propre identité. Il y a des points sur lesquels les Ivoiriens ne peuvent pas ne pas s'entendre. Et je suis parfaitement d'accord avec le député Sarassoro que cela constitue un point de consensus: la Côte d'Ivoire doit appartenir aux Ivoiriens. Je suis parfaitement d'accord avec lui sur ce point précis(...).

Il faudrait que dans nos explications à nos parents, à nos militants, nous n'allumions pas le feu là où il n'y a pas lieu d'allumer le feu. Nous avons tous besoin de la Côte d'Ivoire. C'est pourquoi nous devons faire en sorte que

gouvernent cette Côte d'Ivoire ceux qui n'ont pas d'autres points de chute et qui brûleront avec elle s'il y a feu. Si ceux-là

au pouvoir ils feront en sorte que la Côte d'Ivoire ne brûle pas(...).

C'est pourquoi, le moment venu, le groupe parlementaire PDCI entend analyser, avec les autres, les différents articles afin de formuler ses critiques et émettre ses suggestions dans l'intérêt bien compris de la nation. Le gouvernement a notre soutien total.

Vous êtes né (e) le 09 décembre 1964

Comme **FRATERNITÉ MATIN** vous avez donc 30 ans!

Contactez-nous avant le 02 décembre 1994

Ensemble, nous fêterons notre anniversaire

Tél : 37-06-66 — Poste 328

M. Laurent Gbagbo, député de Ouragahio, président du groupe parlementaire FPI

«LAISSEZ LES IVOIRIENS DÉCIDER DE L'AVENIR DE LEUR PAYS»

M. Laurent Gbagbo (Député de Ouragahio, président du groupe parlementaire FPI):

«A cause de l'importance du texte reconnus par tous, j'aurais souhaité que les travaux soient reportés et que nous y revenions dans une, deux semaines dans cette même salle. Par ailleurs. Car c'est la première fois que, depuis que nous vivons sous le régime multipartite après l'indépendance, nous avons à traiter d'un code électoral. C'est aussi la première fois que depuis tous les départs de 1990 à nos jours, nous ayons à travers un texte de loi, à indiquer si oui ou non nous voulons la démocratie ou si nous voulons aller à révoltes. Nous avons tous dit: «ou nous voulons la démocratie».

Et c'est la première fois que nous allons indiquer comment nous la voulons, cette démocratie. J'aurais donc souhaité que nous ayons plus de temps pour

mûrir nos réflexions et pouvoir bien travailler sur ce projet de code ici même à l'Assemblée Nationale(...).

Je remercie notre collègue Djédjé Mady. Il a exposé de façon claire sans aucune ambiguïté les positions de son parti. J'ai retrouvé en lui, comme malin, le Djédjé Mady de naguère (...).

Les débats qui touchent à la nationalité dans un pays sont toujours sujets à commentaires (...). Nous parlerons encore longtemps de vous, le PDCI et son gouvernement; nous vous attacherons ou nous vous applaudirons. Mais ce débat est tellement important que personne ne peut se taire et personne ne se laisser (...).

Je suis heureux que nos frères du PDCI-RDA aient joint notre position pour dire qu'il faut enfin laisser les Ivoiriens décider de l'avenir de leur pays. On nous a traités de zéro-gobes, ici nous



que nous avons voulu que la constitution soit appliquée dans le vote des étrangers. On est allé jusqu'à dire à des communautés étrangères que si l'opposition venait au pouvoir, celle-ci allait les

chasser de Côte d'Ivoire, confisquer leurs biens, arracher leurs plantations, etc...

Aujourd'hui quand nous voyons nos frères du PDCI vibrer au nom de la Côte d'Ivoire, et même nous dépasser en la matière (rires et acclamations de toute la salle) nous ne pouvons que les en féliciter.

Il est de bon ton que les textes nous soient proposés maintenant. Car un an nous sépare de leur application. Ce n'est donc pas le temps aujourd'hui ce texte qui nous a été remis que nous remettions en cause. Ce que nous dénonçons c'est qu'il ne faut jamais donner l'impression de régler des complots à travers un texte de loi. Et cela pour la crédibilité même de ceux qui le proposent.

Vous le dirai-je, je serai certainement candidat à la Présidence de la République. C'est dire que plus on élimine les candidats mieux cela sera pour nous! Mais

je dis que c'est la notoriété d'un pays qui est malmenée lorsqu'un texte de loi donne l'impression de régler des complots (...).

Pour ce qui est de la définition de la nationalité, nous sommes toujours référés au code de la nationalité où la nationalité a été définie et qui a même posé un certain nombre de garde-fous (...). Ce texte qui nous est soumis comporte certaines parties en contradiction avec ce code de nationalité (...).

J'ai aussi trouvé qu'il y a brusquement un certain nombre d'interdits qui se posent à celui qui veut être député (...). Nous reviendrons sur tous ces points quand nous attaquerons l'examen du texte qui à bien des égards, pose problèmes (...). Je demande donc à tous les collègues d'aller au fond de chaque article et de corriger toutes les contradictions soit avec le code de nationalité soit avec la constitution.

ERRATA

List of acronyms

- AEEMCI:** Association des élèves et étudiants de Côte d'Ivoire (High school and university students' association of Côte d'Ivoire)
- AFM:** Association des femmes musulmanes (Islamic women association)
- AJMAF:** Association des jeunes musulmans d'Air France (Islamic youth association of Air France)
- AJMCI:** Association des jeunes musulmans de Côte d'Ivoire (Islamic youth association of Côte d'Ivoire)
- AMAR:** Association des Musulmans d'Air France 1 (Islamic association of Air France 1)
- AOF:** Afrique occidentale française
- BEPC:** Brevet d'étude du premier cycle (primary school diploma)
- CEDEAO:** Communauté économique et douanière de l'Afrique Occidentale (West African francophone countries economic community)
- CFA:** Communauté financière africaine (West African francophone countries currency board)
- CHR:** Centre hospitalier régional (regional hospital)
- CHU:** Centre hospitalier universitaire (university hospital)
- CNI:** Conseil national islamique (National Islamic council)
- CSI:** Conseil supérieur des imams (Superior council of imams)
- CSI:** Conseil supérieur islamique (Superior Islamic council)
- FPI:** Front populaire ivoirien (main national opposition party)
- IDESSA:** Local research centre on agriculture and pastoralism
- JEMCI:** Jeunesse estudiantines de Côte d'Ivoire (Student youth association of Côte d'Ivoire)
- LIP-Cl:** Ligue des promulgateurs islamiques de Côte d'Ivoire (Islamic teachers association of Côte d'Ivoire)
- MEECI:** Mouvement des élèves et étudiants de Côte d'Ivoire (High school and university students' movement of Côte d'Ivoire)
- OIC:** Organisation culturelle islamique
- ORSTOM:** Organisation de recherches scientifiques et techniques d'outre-mer
- PDCl:** Parti démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire (national leading party)
- RDA:** Rassemblement démocratique africain
- RDR:** Rassemblement démocratique républicain (second national opposition party)
- SIAMO:** Service inter-professionnel pour l'acheminement de la main-d'œuvre (Agricultural workers's placement service)
- TSF:** neighbourhood called Télégraphie sans fil
- WARDA:** West African Rice Development Association