

## ON THE MOVE

### MOBILITY, LAND USE AND LIVELIHOOD PRACTICES ON THE CENTRAL PLATEAU IN BURKINA FASO

Mark Breusers



## STELLINGEN

1. Accounts of past events are not to be understood as descriptions of how in fact these events took place. Nevertheless, they do refer to real events and tell a story of both past and present social relations (cf. also Comaroff & Comaroff 1992).
2. With 'globalization', the perspective from which social scientists analyze localities has become de-territorialized, the localities themselves already were (cf. also Appadurai 1996).
3. By studying migration only at the place of departure, migrants' practices and living conditions at the place of destination remain obscure. However, the possibly distorted representations of these practices as expressed by actors at the place of departure allow us to understand the way in which the meaning of migration is constructed at the place of departure (cf. this thesis, chapter 6).
4. With regard to the land in the 'village territory', each actor occupies a position in a 'hierarchy of choice'. Each actor's rights to land in the territory are related to his position in this hierarchy, but the hierarchy does not allow for the identification of plots of land with actors in terms of ownership or pseudo-ownership (this thesis, chapters 3 and 4).
5. Concepts such as 'atomization' and 'individualization' are of limited value for the analysis of social change among Moose. They tend to reify momentary social distances and to pass over the resilience of social relations (this thesis, chapter 7).
6. Migration of Moose to the south and west of Burkina Faso often is not permanent. What tends to be permanent are the compounds founded by migrants, which then become relay stations for their kinsmen (this thesis, chapter 7).
7. Conflicts between Moose and Fulbe are an expression not only of overall competition for scarce resources, but also of the growing differentiation internal to Moose communities (this thesis, chapter 8).
8. Since Moose have enlarged their assets in cattle and entrusted them for the larger part to Fulbe herdsmen, the prospects for policy reinforcing the integration of Fulbe and Moose production systems have improved (this thesis, chapters 8 and 9).
9. A course on the history and discourse of development interventions is essential to rural development studies.
10. The establishment of 'reception' and 'deportation' centres for asylum seekers at the borders and airports of West European countries can be understood as an attempt to reinscribe the boundaries of nation states which otherwise become increasingly blurred and undermined.

11. The criteria to which an asylum seeker must conform in order to obtain a refugee status are formulated not to establish whether he or she fears persecution in his or her home country, but rather to minimize the numbers of asylum seekers and refugees.
12. Considering the way in which politicians capitalize on and accentuate ethnic sentiments, the introduction of multi-party democracy in the Ivory Coast burdens the future of Moose migrants.
13. Too often the social sciences are brought into interdisciplinary research and development programmes only in the phases of identification and evaluation, while remaining excluded from the phases of engineering.

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## **ON THE MOVE**

**MOBILITY, LAND USE AND LIVELIHOOD PRACTICES ON THE CENTRAL  
PLATEAU IN BURKINA FASO**





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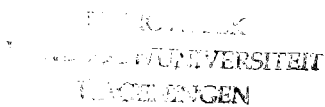
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**To my *yasba***



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## PREFACE

For some six weeks, I had been roaming the region to the north of Kaya looking for a 'suitable' place to carry out fieldwork. Ziinoogo<sup>1</sup> was the last village I visited in February 1994. That first time, I was received by a number of elders, who looked at me suspiciously, so I thought. I climbed the western hill, together with Yooro, the village's 'délégué'. He showed me the Pullo settlement of Yalanga on the other side, and attempted to explain in French that he knew the Ivory Coast well, and hence might be an appropriate informant for my research on migration. He also emphasized that I was not the first 'European' to come and stay in Ziinoogo. On that same hill he showed me the remnants of the 'campement colon', built about fifty years ago, 'at the time of forced labour' as he explained. According to Yooro, the colonial administration had considered making Ziinoogo an administrative centre, and administrators had regularly stayed the night at the 'campement'. Because of the scarcity of drinking water in Ziinoogo they had however opted for Barsalogho. I felt embarrassed by the way Yooro and others seemed to associate me with these 'illustrious' predecessors. As a matter of fact, until the end of my stay in Ziinoogo, people I met in markets continued to ask me whether those people who used to stay at the 'campement colon' were indeed my *yaabdamba* (grandparents). It was certainly not this physical presence of the colonial past which made me decide to do fieldwork in Ziinoogo. To be honest, I was much attracted by the beautiful location of the ward Ziinoogo, between the red hills, and spangled with ageless baobabs. Ironically, colonial administrators must have had similar feelings fifty years earlier, since, as I found out later, they had intended Ziinoogo to become a 'tourist site'.

For almost two years, then, interrupted regularly by stays in Kaya, I lived in Ziinoogo, sometimes accompanied by my family. My respects and thanks go first of all to the people of Ziinoogo who hosted me and cared for me throughout that period, and to the people of Yalanga and Péoukoy who were willing to participate in my research. I want to mention especially Rabi Sawadogo and his family, in whose compound I lived before obtaining my own, and Tipoko Sawadogo, Pogyagda Ouédraogo and Ado Barry who now have a special place in my heart. I would not have been able to build up friendships in the village if it were not for the warm and open personality of Madi Ouédraogo, my research assistant. His contribution to this research is crucial. He was my interpreter, and furthermore always prepared, and patient enough, to reflect on and analyze the findings. Most of all, he is a good friend.

During the three months I was preparing for fieldwork in Kaya, the support I had from Paul Sawadogo, and his thorough knowledge of the region, proved to be vital. Later, Ali Diallo assisted me in my research among the Fulbe of Yalanga and Péoukoy, while Eppy Boschma did fieldwork in the southern village of Kaibo. The work of both of them was valuable in its own right, and constituted a welcome contribution to my research. The Antenne Sahélienne provided the necessary logistics. I found it pleasant to meet with Maja Slingerland, Jan Willem Nibbering, Rose Ninkiem, Joop Begeman and other staff of the Antenne whenever I came to Ouagadougou. Through the interest they showed in my work, Heleen van

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the village is fictive and so are the names of all living actors figuring in this book.

Haaften, Berry Lekanne dit Deprez and Boureima Ouédraogo encouraged me to pursue the approach I had chosen 'in the field'.

When I first saw the 'campement colon', I could not suspect the course my research was to take in the following three years. Colonial history became a central theme, first because of the many accounts and stories told by village elders about their own lives and the region's history in general, and second, because of the 'discovery' of colonial archives in a depository behind the 'Haut Commissariat' in Kaya. My choice for Ziinoogo appeared to have been a fortunate one, given the sometimes prominent role the village had played in the region's history during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Sabine Luning showed me the way to these archives. The 'Haut Commissaire' of the province of Sanmatenga, Siméon Sawadogo, kindly allowed me to search the archives and to consult all documents there.

Back home in the Netherlands, the hard labour of writing 'the' book started. Jan den Ouden kept a close track of my work, always urging me to continue, while sensitive to the ups and downs one goes through when writing. Thanks to his constant support I never found myself stuck fast. Although I was mostly working at home in Amsterdam and did not often meet with colleagues in Wageningen, I want to thank them, especially Kees Jansen and Ester Roquas for their initiative to read and discuss together, Valentina Mazzucato and David Niemeyer for the exchange of ideas and information, Thea Hilhorst for her attempts to have me present my findings to a wider audience, and Jos Michel for finding me every time a room with a computer, and for many other kindnesses. Martin Southwold edited the manuscript. I thank him for doing it so well in so short a time. I also thank Bruno Warland for helping with the editing of the French summary. Finally, Norman Long - probably even more difficult to lay hands on when you are not present almost daily in the department - when he commented on my work always did so to the point and in such a way that my insights were greatly broadened.

My friends and family each in their own way helped me to keep in touch with life beyond the admittedly limited domain of PhD research. I want to thank my parents especially for their support. My gratitude and love are for Caroline. It was she who drew me into anthropology in the first place, now several years ago. In Burkina Faso she joined me in Ziinoogo whenever possible. Working through the archives fascinated us both. She did a great job in studying the records of the Customary Law Tribunals. Finally she did the bulk of the enormous task of transcribing fieldwork notes into the computer. This had the additional advantage that she knew the raw material for my writing thoroughly, and thus always knew what I was talking about when - as happened so often - I needed her to listen to my continual doubts, provisional certainties, or sudden discoveries.

The last words are for Bob and Steven. Their lively presence is a continual source of inspiration.

Mark Breusers  
January 1998

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Introduction

The actors who have the leading part in this book are Moose<sup>1</sup> and Fulbe men and women from a few villages in the Soudano Sahel region in Burkina Faso. This is a region which, when it was struck by droughts in the 1970s and 1980s, made the headlines of the world news. Yet, since the earliest years of colonization, there have been observers who pointed out that the region, with its relatively high population densities and extensive land use systems, was extremely prone to periodically recurring calamities. Droughts, hunger and starvation brought population densities back to levels which, under the prevailing development of technologies, could be supported by the natural resource base. Next, it was observed that the equilibrium between population and available resources was regulated by the 'shifting' of people and the establishment of new colonies over the borders of the Moose kingdoms (Marchal 1986:404-406). Contemporary Moose villages continue to be characterized by both extensive land use practices and an impressive in- and out-movement of people. While the region is subject to severe environmental degradation and endangered by the advancing Sahara desert, tens of thousands of men and women migrate each year to the cities and plantations of the Ivory Coast. Each year also, tens of thousands of them return 'home'. Thousands of people also left the northern provinces of Burkina Faso for the south and west of the country. An unknown, but most often estimated high number of Moose each year change residence within smaller regions. Each in their own way, these movements are related to land use practices in the 'home villages' of those who left. This book, then, is the reflection of a research on the interplay between changing land use practices and changing processes of geographic mobility among the population of the Central Plateau in Burkina Faso.

Through the massive migration to the Ivory Coast, Moose have become part of the transnational migration streams, which characterize the world in the era of 'globalization' and which are composed of refugees, people in search of work, tourists, development workers, etc. In recent years, a number of scholars have tackled the problem of how to study particular spatially bounded social entities in a context of dramatic deterritorialization, brought about not only by migrations but, importantly, also by the increasing development of all kinds of electronic media (telephone, computers, cinema, television) (Appadurai 1996). The research I undertook does not pretend to contribute to the development of new concepts and theory in this respect. Nor will the electronic media play any role in the unfolding of my account - and this notwithstanding the fact that they are indeed omnipresent, not only at the 'modernized' destinations of migrants (cities, economically prosperous areas in the Ivory Coast) but also in the village where I did fieldwork: for instance, at my farewell party one of the attractions was the showing in a hut of pornographic videos, featuring European or American actors and appreciated by children no less than adults. Although my research does not go into the issue of how these and other images carried by electronic media are related to the possible lives that actors are able to imagine for themselves,

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<sup>1</sup> Sing. Moaga. 'Mossi' is a French corruption.

to migration processes or to the production of locality at particular places, the work of scholars like Appadurai and Fardon nevertheless has been very helpful in the elaboration of an approach to analyze land use practice at a particular place where actors continuously move in and out.

Boundaries do not constitute an explicit issue in this book. Still, the chapters are pervaded by the problematizing of several kinds of boundaries: boundaries between territorial entities, between ethnic groups, between patrilineal and matrilineal kin groups, between the past and the present, between scientific disciplines also. My approach has been informed here by the debates which continue in the slipstream of postmodernism, in particular in anthropological and historical studies. Thus an attempt is made to deconstruct accounts on territoriality and ethnic identity, both those expressed by informants in the field and those expressed by scholars and administrators as they have been written down in all kinds of documents. Accounts of the past are interpreted in terms both of their relation to a 'real' past and of their significance for present day practice. Finally, research findings, based on anthropological field work, are translated to other disciplines involved in the study of natural resource management.

The research theme originated, for that matter, within the context of a larger interdisciplinary research programme in which Wageningen Agricultural University and the University of Ouagadougou cooperate. The programme concentrates on the study of the management of natural resources in the Soudano Sahel and has as its main research question 'under what conditions the rural population in the Soudano Sahel will be capable and willing to raise the quality and productivity of their natural resources and, subsequently, to utilize and manage these in a sustainable fashion' (Nibbering *et al.* 1997:3). I elaborated my research theme proceeding from this more general research question. To provide a better understanding of the specific line of approach I chose to follow and of the specific way in which the research theme has been detailed, some preliminary clarification regarding the issue of environmental degradation and its relation to land use practice and sustainability in the Soudano Sahel and, in particular, in my own research region is indispensable.

Thus, below, following a brief presentation of the research region, a short overview is presented of often-cited causes of environmental degradation in the Soudano Sahelian climatic zone. In many respects, these causes are related to prevailing extensive - and 'non-sustainable' - land use systems, which, if environmental degradation is to be halted and reversed, are to be transformed. To be intensified that is, as indeed in the Soudano Sahelian context, sustainable production systems appear to be perceived as synonymous with [more] intensive production systems. In the next section, two often-cited major obstacles to intensification and sustainable land use in my research region are discussed: firstly, scarcity of labour due to migration, and, secondly, land users' insecure rights to land. From the discussion on both causes of environmental degradation and obstacles to intensification, the central relevance of geographical mobility processes *in all their diversity* will come to the fore. Therefore, a comprehensive approach to the research theme will be proposed.

Next, some theoretical and methodological problems which arise in a study of land use practice at a particular locality, characterized by important in- and out-movement of actors, will be discussed. A final section, before the presentation of the book's synopsis, deals in a more detailed way with methodology, in particular with regard to the use of historical data, and comprises a brief introduction to the research location and population.

## The research setting

### *The north-central region on the Central Plateau of Burkina Faso*

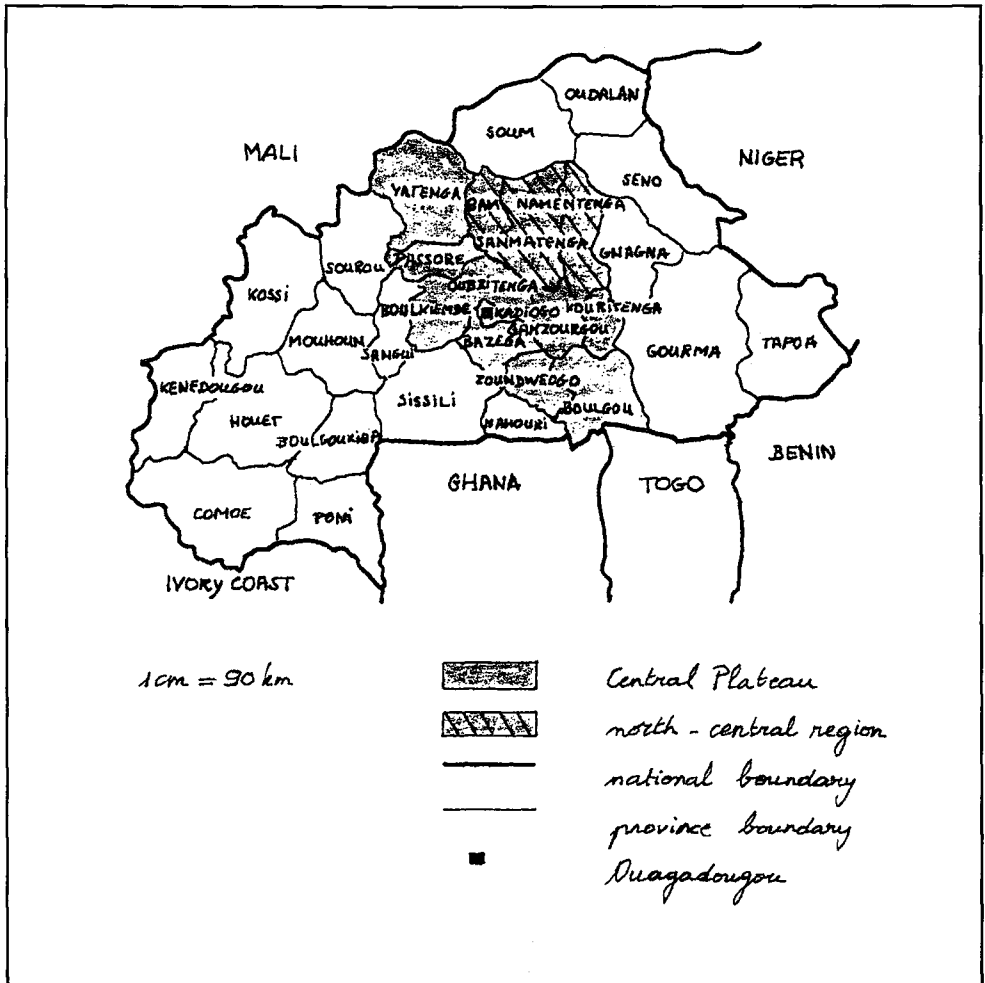
The north-central region in Burkina Faso extends over an area of 19,508 km<sup>2</sup> in between the 12°40' and 14° northern parallels at about 250 to 300 m above sea level. It covers the three provinces Bam, Sanmatenga and Namentenga and is a part of the larger Central Plateau which occupies almost one quarter of the total area of Burkina Faso (cf. map 1.1). The landscape mainly consists of hills and slopes transected by bottomlands. The vegetation is characterized by bush and tree savannah formations, interspersed by gallery forests (DRPC 1990:9,35-36). The main soil types are sandy and clay, which often are chemically poor, have a low organic matter content and a mediocre structure.

The region is situated in the so called Soudano Sahelian zone, i.e. the more southern Sahel strip (cf. Thomson 1985:228). Average yearly rainfall ranges from somewhat below 500 mm in the north to somewhat above 600 mm in the south. Rainfall varies greatly from year to year and is often distributed very unevenly both in space and in time. The rainy season lasts only four months (from June to September). The vegetation period is equally short, not exceeding 110 days. Maximum temperatures range from 31°C in August to 39°C in March, minimum temperatures from 16°C in December to 25°C in March (DRPC 1990:29-31).

The Central Plateau as a whole is relatively densely populated as compared to other regions in Burkina Faso. In 1985, its population was 3.9 million, i.e. almost half of the population of Burkina Faso (Maatman *et al.* 1992:158). Hence, population density on the Central Plateau is 54 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, compared to only 30 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> for the country as a whole. Still, population density in the north-central region, 37 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, comes somewhat closer to the national average mainly because its northern parts are relatively sparsely populated (e.g. population density in northern departments Barsalogho, Namissiguima, Dablo and Pensa is no more than 20 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, Ouédraogo 1995:205). From 1975 to 1985, the population grew at a rate of 1.7% a year, which is well below the national average of 2.7%. This lagging behind is attributed to the significant out-migration, mainly to the south and west of Burkina Faso and to the Ivory Coast. The large majority (about 80%) of the population of the north-central region are Moose, the remainder consisting of several minority groups, Fulbe (10%) constituting the largest one. About 92% of the population has agriculture or animal husbandry as its main occupation (most often these two occupations are associated), sometimes combined with small trade or craft activities. Industry is almost absent and only Kaya, the sixth town of Burkina Faso, has an urban character.

Only 38% of the total area of the north-central region is considered to be arable. In 1985, the arable area per inhabitant was estimated at 0.94 ha, whereas the actual cultivated area at that time was 0.36 ha per inhabitant. Sorghum and millet are the main crops, covering 87% of the cultivated area. Maize is cultivated only on relatively small plots near the compounds (2% of the cultivated area), but of crucial importance since it is harvested well before the other cereals at a time that granaries often become exhausted. Millet and sorghum are often intercropped with cowpea. Groundnuts (4% of the cultivated area) are sown on relatively small parcels with sandy soils. Several other crops, covering less important areas, are cultivated, such as sesame and roselle (often intercropped with millet or sorghum), rice (on bottomland mainly), Bambara groundnuts, tobacco (plots near the compounds), cassava (in enclosures), cotton, aubergines, calabash and okra (DRPC 1990:133-135).





Map 1.1  
Administrative division of Burkina Faso

According to a national survey (cf. DRPC 1990:194), carried out in 1990, animal husbandry among Moose is mainly based on sheep, goats and fowl, although they also may own some cattle or pigs. The land use practice of Fulbe, who herd sheep and goats as well and who are also involved in agriculture, is strongly oriented to cattle raising. They own about 58% of the region's cattle and moreover may take care of animals which are entrusted to them by Moose. Animal husbandry in general is characterized as 'traditional' and extensive. Livestock graze pastures and crop residues, additional feeding (e.g. of cotton seed) being of minor importance. Among Fulbe, transhumance is still practised although the distances covered may be very limited. The integration of livestock and agriculture is relatively weak, notably on Moose farms where

generally only the fields near to the compound are intensively manured (cf. Maatman *et al.* 1992:171).

Agricultural production is mainly subsistence oriented, the maximization of food security is a major objective. Nevertheless, cereal deficits seem to be a structural phenomenon: Maatman *et al.* (1992:160-161) found that cereal production met consumption needs in only one out of thirteen years (1975-87) and they furthermore maintain that for the Central Plateau the probability of cereal shortage is almost 100%, while the expected shortage for the north-central region mounts to 40% of the cereal demand.<sup>2</sup> Cereal deficits as such are by no means a new phenomenon, neither on the Central Plateau in particular nor in the Soudano Sahel zone in general. As much during the colonial epoch as before, the population has been struck more than once by hunger, often coinciding with years of drought (cf. for instance Benoit 1982a:21, Izard 1982:373 & 1985:5 with respect to the neighbouring region of Yatenga; Marchal 1986:406-407 for the Moogo in general; Ibrahim 1987:215-217 for the Sudan; de Lattre & Fell 1984:21f for the Sahel in general). Today's crisis of agricultural production, however, is considered exceptionally serious because of the perceived alarming environmental degradation, which in certain respects and at certain places could have become irreversible and which would undermine the population's resource base (Bonfils 1987:32, Ouédraogo 1995:206, Serpantie *et al.* 1988:31, Stroosnijder 1992:36, Zanen 1996:65).

### *Environmental degradation and its perceived causes*

As in other parts of the Soudano Sahel, environmental degradation - the term desertification is also used<sup>3</sup> - manifests itself in the north-central region of Burkina Faso through disappearance of vegetation and a general reduction of biodiversity, vulnerability of bare soils to erosion by both wind and water<sup>4</sup>, insecure harvests or complete failure of rainfed crops<sup>5</sup>, and a decline of groundwater levels (Bonfils 1987:33-35, Broekhuysse & Allen 1988:334, Stroosnijder 1992:36). Vulnerability of soils to erosion is high because soils are often chemically poor and physically deteriorated, a situation which continues to aggravate as the return of biomass to the soil further declines in circumstances of environmental degradation (Stroosnijder 1992:37).

Although rehabilitation and conservation of the natural resource base in the Soudano Sahel obtained a central position on research and development agendas only after the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s (Bonfils 1987:26, Dugué 1990:1), it is generally acknowledged that the process of environmental degradation started well before. Broekhuysse & Allen (1988:331), for instance, argue that the carrying capacity of the northern part of the Central Plateau probably had been reached by the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, from which time onwards degradation processes started (cf. also Marchal 1986:405). Climatological factors, such as the droughts, are considered to have only accelerated and articulated a process with more fundamental causes

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<sup>2</sup> Broekhuysse & Allen (1988:333) mention an average shortage per production unit of 57% in the region of Kaya.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., for instance, Thomson (1985:227), according to whom desertification should be understood as a 'virulent form of environmental degradation'.

<sup>4</sup> Soil erosion by wind and water would attain 10 to 20 ton per hectare on farmed land (Zanen 1996:65).

<sup>5</sup> Zanen (1996:64) notes an average decline of yields by 30 to 50%, without mentioning however over which period. According to Broekhuysse & Allen (1988:333), it took three to four generations for the production of millet and sorghum on the northern part of the Central Plateau to decline from a 700-900 kg/ha level to the actual 200-400 kg/ha level.

(Bonfils 1987:19, de Lattre & Fell 1984:22, PATECORE 1990:2, Stroosnijder 1992:36).<sup>6</sup> It is ascertained that the fundamental causes of environmental degradation are to be found in human factors. The diagnosis of environmental degradation is indeed based on the observation that the carrying capacity of the natural resource base has been transgressed: the exploitation of natural resources is characterized by a disequilibrium between vegetative production on the one hand and extraction by human and livestock population on the other hand. In other words, natural resources are over-exploited.

The transgression of carrying capacity occurred firstly because of the growth of both human and livestock population (Bonfils 1987:17, Stroosnijder 1992:37). Above, it was already mentioned that between 1975 and 1985 the human population in the north-central region grew at a rate of 1.7% a year, and this in spite of the important out-migration. Figures on livestock population are less specific. Still, it is generally maintained that herds of as well farmers as herdsmen in the Soudano Sahel have grown significantly since the early 1960s (cf., for instance, Benoit 1982b:22 for Yatenga, Bonfils 1987:23 for Niger).<sup>7</sup> After the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, herds would have been reconstituted relatively rapidly (de Lattre & Fell 1984:20, Rietkerk *et al.* 1996:513).<sup>8</sup>

Degradation would however not have progressed as it has today if it were not for the persistence of extensive land use practices. Agriculture is characterized by low external input use (little investment in fertilizers, in both 'modern' and 'traditional' material, little use of animal traction) and only fields close to the compounds are intensively manured (Benoit 1982b:37, Maatman *et al.* 1992:171, McCown *et al.* 1979:313). Instead of an intensification of agricultural practices, deemed necessary to halt and reverse the process of degradation (cf. below), a further extensification has been observed. Population growth has entailed the clearing of more and more marginal land. Thus, the extension of the cultivated area came to pace ahead of population growth, not only because the potential yields from such land were low, but also because the risk of crop failure increased. It should be noted here, that some authors, like for instance Lahuec & Marchal (1979:127), mention the importance of the forced introduction of cash crops, notably cotton, under colonial rule for the acceleration of the saturation of space and for environmental degradation. Blaikie & Brookfield (1987:106) go even further when they maintain that 'it seems fairly clear that the massive disruptions of society brought about under colonialism in Africa must bear the major share of any explanation of deteriorating quality of land management'. They thereby refer to, among other things, commercialization and [forced] labour migration which led to the 'atomizing of land management' as extended family groups broke up and social control disintegrated (*ibidem*:106-108).

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<sup>6</sup> As mentioned above, droughts have been a recurring phenomenon in the Soudano Sahel. The years 1970-1984 meant however a drought of unprecedented duration, during which mean annual rainfall was about 60% of that of the 1900-1969 period (Rietkerk *et al.* 1996:513).

<sup>7</sup> Bonfiglioli (1991:250) points to vaccination campaigns as an important factor in the increase of in particular cattle herds, which would have created serious disequilibriums because these campaigns were not supported by complementary measures to protect and regenerate natural resources. According to Blaikie & Brookfield (1987:108), stocking densities increased as a consequence of both population growth and commercialization of the livestock economy.

<sup>8</sup> Rietkerk *et al.* (1996:513) note that both human and livestock populations in the Sahel increased by a factor of about 2.3 between 1950 and 1983. According to Bonfils (1987:23), the growth of livestock population in Niger paces ahead of human population growth.

Farmers developed a system of 'security fields'<sup>9</sup>, further encouraged to do so by the deteriorating rainfall and water-infiltration conditions<sup>10</sup>, thus entailing a situation in which the sown area - i.e. exposed to erosion processes - by far exceeds the harvested area (Bonfils 1987, cf. also Broekhuysse & Allen 1988:337, Ibrahim 1987:223, Marchal 1983, Thomson 1985:231). Fallow periods have shortened and in particular useful fallow (i.e. a fallow which allows for a reconstitution of soil fertility) tends to disappear completely. Occupation of land for farming has become more and more permanent and the soils of abandoned fields often are exhausted (cf. also Broekhuysse & Allen 1988:340, Luning 1989a:19).

The prevailing extensive animal husbandry practices are considered equally detrimental to the environment as, next to crop residues, they depend almost exclusively on natural grass, shrub and tree vegetation. In a situation where pastures are disappearing mainly because of the extension of the cultivated area, the growing numbers of livestock cause a destruction of remaining pastures through overgrazing and treading (crop residues do not compensate for the disappearance of pastures) (Benoit 1982b:22,26). Pastoral resources are no longer reconstituted and diminish not only in quantity but also in quality (homogenization of grass formations) (cf. a.o. Benoit 1982b:21, Bonfils 1987). The saturation of space is said to add in yet another way to the acceleration of soil depletion. As there is less and less room for transhumance, livestock - in particular cattle herded by Fulbe - would no longer contribute to the manuring of farmers' fields to the extent it has done before, when farmers and herdsman would have concluded 'contracts' arranging the exchange of manure for crop residues (Zanen 1996:65). According to Thomson (1985:232), the reconstitution of soil fertility would be further impeded because of the withdrawal of pastoralists from agricultural zones. Bonfiglioli (1991:250) too observes a dramatic dissociation of agriculture and animal husbandry, provoked by the colonization of pastoral space by agriculture. It is often maintained that the relationships between Moose and Fulbe are at present very strained and characterized by competition and even animosity, whereas before the two population groups would have lived in a kind of symbiosis (Benoit 1982b:39, Delgado 1979:125-126, Lekanne dit Deprez 1995:9, Marchal 1983:156-157). Interestingly, de Haan (1992), who found that relationships between Dendi farmers and Fulbe herdsman in northern Benin are deteriorating in a similar way, maintains that this deterioration is influenced by environmental degradation.

Thus, environmental degradation appears as a downward spiralling process (cf. Nibbering *et al.* 1997:6). Indeed, because of degradation, the carrying capacity decreases, which results in, besides out-migration, even greater over-exploitation, more degradation and further decreasing carrying capacity of the natural resource base (cf. also Broekhuysse & Allen 1988:333-334). It has been concluded, then, that the extensive land use system has attained its limits on the Central Plateau and in the north-central region in particular (cf., among others, Nibbering *et al.* 1997:6). Both Broekhuysse (1983:5) and Maatman *et al.* (1992:173) maintain that a transition is taking place from a subsistence economy, where long term objectives are taken into account in land use strategies in order to secure the continuity of the production system, to a survival economy, where the satisfaction of immediate food security is the principal objective at the expense of long term

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<sup>9</sup> My translation of a term used by Bonfils (1987) ('champs de secours').

<sup>10</sup> According to Broekhuysse & Allen (1988:332), rainfall, in the region surrounding Kaya, has been the same or only slightly less than the average over the last forty to sixty years. The problem, according to them, thus would be not so much that there is less rainfall, but rather that there is less infiltration of rainwater, due to soil degradation (among others, crusting). In contrast, van Zutphen (1991:118) maintains that statistics show a decline in annual rainfall, resulting in a shorter rainy season (cf. also footnote 6).

food security and the reproduction of the natural resource base (cf. also Zanen 1996:65). Ultimately, contemporary land use practices would deteriorate the natural resource base to such an extent that a depopulation becomes inevitable (cf. also Broekhuysse & Allen 1988:339):

'La désertification est [...] la dégradation évolutive d'une zone donnée, d'un terroir donné, transformant une écologie où la vie était possible, voire prospère en une écologie où le développement humain est bloqué dans une première phase et où les conditions d'existence de l'homme, de plus en plus précaires, entraîneront, dans une deuxième phase, une régression de la population, et à plus long terme, sa disparition plus ou moins totale' (Bonfils 1987:32).

## **Sustainable land use: the 'necessity' of an intensification of production systems**

As mentioned above, the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s made environmental degradation a major issue of research and development.<sup>11</sup> Already during colonial rule, authorities had been concerned with, in particular, soil degradation. Still, this concern remained always subordinated to colonial commercial interests (Blaikie & Brookfield 1987:110-111). But, in particular from the 1980s onwards, sustainability became a key concept of development discourse. Sustainable development was defined by the influential Brundtland report as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs' (Motowanyika 1991:87). The notion of sustainability has, next to an ecological dimension (exploitation of natural resources by production systems within the limits of the carrying capacity), also an economic dimension (cost-effective investments) and a social dimension (equity with respect to access to natural resources and means of production) (Kessler & Breman 1995:2-3, Motowanyika 1991:87). Thus, the new paradigm linked the conservation of natural resources with human development, and development strategies necessarily had to become multi-sectoral and integrated (Bognetteau-Verlinden 1992:74, Kessler & Breman 1995:2, Nibbering *et al.* 1997:2).

The sustainability paradigm was articulated for the Soudano Sahel in particular at the Nouakchott seminar, organized by the CILSS in 1984. It was laid down that the main objective of development strategies had to be, next to the satisfaction of the populations' fundamental needs - in particular food self-sufficiency - 'the preservation of land and ecological capital and the rehabilitation of its productive potential' (Bonfils 1987:26, cf. also Bognetteau-Verlinden 1992:74). The so-called 'Gestion de Terroirs' approach came to constitute in several Soudano Sahelian countries the translation of a multi-sectoral and integrated strategy (Bognetteau-Verlinden 1992:76, Bonfils 1987:26, Dugué 1990:1). In practice, development strategies, for the Soudano Sahel in general and the Central Plateau in Burkina Faso in particular, came to focus on an improvement of production - notably an increase of crop yields - through an intensification of both agriculture and animal husbandry, to be accompanied by soil and water conservation measures (Bonfils 1987:51, Broekhuysse & Allen 1988:334-335, Kessler & Breman 1995:59, Maatman *et al.* 1992:177-178, Nibbering *et al.* 1997:6-8, Stroosnijder 1992:38, van Zutphen 1991). 'Traditional' land use practices - both with respect to agriculture and animal husbandry - are considered too space-consuming to offer any perspective at all in a situation where space has become scarce. Both natural resources and external inputs are to be used more effectively (Kessler

<sup>11</sup> This was institutionally concretized when in 1973 eight Sahel countries, among them Burkina Faso, created the CILSS ('Comité Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel') to respond to the drought crisis, which was followed by the establishment of the 'Club du Sahel' by the same Sahel countries and OECD donor countries (de Lattre & Fell 1984:13).

& Breman 1995:59), and some authors call for a rapid and radical change of agricultural practices to achieve a substantial reduction of cultivated areas as well as for the introduction of intensive livestock production, the former supposing the generalized use of manure and external inputs such as chemical fertilizer and improved seed, the latter supposing the stabling of livestock and the cultivation of fodder crops (Bognetteau-Verlinden 1992:94, Bonfils 1987, McGown *et al.* 1979:313, Nibbering *et al.* 1997:6-8).<sup>12</sup>

Two major obstacles are often identified on the path towards intensification of land use on the Central Plateau of Burkina Faso. The first relates to labour availability. The proposed changes of production systems imply labour intensive innovations, notably with respect to soil and water conservation measures (cf., among others, Blaikie & Brookfield 1987:119, Bonfils 1987:45, Ghai 1994:10, Nibbering *et al.* 1997:7). Despite the growth of overall population in the region, labour is scarce because of the important seasonal and longer term migration by Moose, mainly towards the Ivory Coast, in which mainly men aged between 15 to 40 years old are involved. In the early 1980s, it was estimated that as much as 25% of Burkina Faso's potential labour force had migrated to the Ivory Coast (de Lattre & Fell 1984:19). Although it is acknowledged that this migration, through remittances, contributes importantly to the maintenance of an economic equilibrium in the home country and allows for a flexible response to the vagaries which characterize agricultural and livestock undertakings on the Central Plateau (cf., for instance, Serpantie *et al.* 1988:40-41), it is at the same time understood as a major factor contributing to the stagnation of production<sup>13</sup> and even to a further extensification of land use practices as the human potential for development is drained away. Labour shortages would occur, in particular, during first and second weeding rounds (Broekhuysse & Allen 1988:336). Furthermore, it is generally agreed that migration remittances are not reinvested in agriculture (Benoit 1982b:37, Imbs 1987:175, Remy 1973:70).<sup>14</sup> Also, migration is supposed to disrupt kin-based and other (e.g. age grades) labour supply arrangements, thus further increasing the gap between labour demand and supply (cf. also Mabogunje 1990:330-331).<sup>15</sup> Hence, land use on the Central Plateau is deemed to be trapped in a kind of vicious circle. On the one hand, degradation of natural resources undermines the productive potential entailing the out-migration of the active labour force in search of income, which causes a further reduction in the region's production. On the other hand, the primacy of food self-sufficiency brings farmers to expand the area of food crops at the expense of commercial crops, with a corresponding expansion of extensive land use practices. The result is that opportunities to earn a cash income at home are reduced, thus further

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<sup>12</sup> The discouragement of free grazing of livestock, and concurrently the promotion of stabling of livestock and the cultivation of fodder crops, was accorded a high priority in Burkina Faso and constituted one of the three main elements in the 'fight against desertification' ('lutte contre la coupe abusive du bois, lutte contre les feux de brousse, lutte contre la divagation des animaux'), launched in 1985 by the government (Ministère de l'Environnement et du Tourisme 1990, van Zutphen 1991). It may be noted that both Bonfils (1987) and Broekhuysse (1991:69) call for the abolishment of free grazing of livestock, to be replaced by intensive animal husbandry primarily directed towards production of manure.

<sup>13</sup> For instance, after the rains resumed in 1974, i.e. following a number of extreme dry years, crop production was restored almost to pre-drought levels, but *per capita* agricultural output was on the decline for the Sahel as a whole (de Lattre & Fell 1984:24).

<sup>14</sup> The issue whether migration, in particular labour migration, is beneficial or not for the development of the region of departure (e.g. through remittances, through a relief of pressure on land) has been extensively discussed for other contexts as well (Adepoju 1978, Cleveland 1991, Gilbert & Kleinpenning 1986, Pottier 1983).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. also Collins (1987) for a similar discussion on the relation between migration and environmental degradation with respect to Aymara farmers in Peru.

inciting people to seek such an income through migration (cf., for instance, McCown *et al.* 1979:313).

The second major obstacle with which intensification efforts are confronted relates to land tenure arrangements. The status of land in rural Burkina Faso, as in several other Soudano Sahelian countries, is rather indefinite. Although the land reform (RAF<sup>16</sup>) of 1984 declared all land state property and formally suppressed customary land tenure arrangements, actual practice in rural areas has continued to follow the latter (Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:3-4). Even in cases of large scale resettlement and land use schemes, such as the Volta Valley scheme, where government institutions issued land titles to settlers, customary arrangements did not give way (cf., for instance, Traoré 1996). The revision of the RAF in 1991, which maintained the principle of state property but introduced the possibility of private property in land under certain circumstances (notably in large scale land use schemes), did not help to clarify the legal status of land (Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:4). The absence of a clear legislation with respect to land tenure is held responsible for the fact that farmers are reluctant to invest in land improvement measures, as they would only do so if their rights to land are secure, i.e. if they have the perspective of its long term use (Barrier 1990:35, Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:8, cf. also Bonfils 1987:90-91, Thomson 1985:233). Thus, on the one hand, not having the guarantee of long-term use of land would incite farmers to adopt soil-mining land use practices so that the mobility of fields is increased. On the other hand, the unclear status of land would encourage such space consuming practices because, through farming an area as large as possible, farmers attempt to maximize their claims. Mathieu (1993:436) calls this 'stratégies foncières d'anticipation', which would take into account exactly the fact that land becomes scarce and an object of appropriation.

In order to establish land users' rights to land unequivocally, the problem is not simply that a clear-cut decision should be made as to which tenure system will prevail, e.g. either private property or customary tenure. Indeed, it is often maintained that under customary tenure arrangements rights to land are not clearly delimited and that, moreover, the rights of large groups of land users are *inherently* precarious (cf. Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:36). Land users who do not customarily control the land they use - for instance: women, youngsters, 'strangers', Fulbe - would not hold sufficient long-term guarantees of usufruct to invest in land improvement. Moreover, even if they intended to do so, customary authorities would often oppose certain measures of intensification such as tree planting or the construction of stone bunds (Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:8, cf. also Dugué 1990:5). According to Luning (1989b:39), migration, dominated by men, has led to an increase of land loans, in particular to women. Migration would thus frustrate strategies of intensification, not only directly through the drain of potential labour, but also indirectly as the temporary character of land loans is often understood as constituting a factor of insecurity of land rights (also mentioned, but not agreed with, by de Zeeuw 1995:25) and, hence, land improvement measures are supposed to be less evidently realized on borrowed land.

Whereas rules governing access to farm land are thus considered inappropriate for current development strategies to succeed, it is often claimed that, with respect to the exploitation of pastures, fallow land and crop residues, regulations do not exist at all: as long as livestock does not damage crops, access to pastures, fallow and crop residues left on the fields after the harvests would be free; access to dead wood would be equally so (Dugué 1990:5). Hence, no restrictions on the use of these resources could be enforced if the carrying capacity is transgressed. Clearly, this conception is in line with the 'tragedy-of-the-commons' argument according to which 'a

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<sup>16</sup> 'Réorganisation Agricole et Foncière'.

limited resource [is bound to be ruined] when confronted with unlimited access by an expanding population' (Cox 1985:50, cf. also Hardin 1968, Lambert & Sindzingre 1995:100).

The securing of land rights is considered to constitute a condition *sine qua non* for users to be motivated in investing in the land they exploit, and thus for the triggering of a process of intensification of land use practices. In a climate of economic liberalization and disengagement of the state, the tendency grows to establish legislation favouring individual private property in land (cf. Hesseling & Ba 1994), which, according to neo-classical economic theory, will allow for an optimal allocation of resources (Lambert & Sindzingre 1995:110). In particular large donor organizations seem to consider such privatization as the only way to arrive at the desired security of land rights (Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:8), and may even demand the registration of land titles as a condition for financial support (Hesseling & Ba 1994). Conversely, others have argued against individual land-titling programmes which tend to replicate western land-tenure regimes. Firstly, 'the principle according to which the land belongs to him who can pay for it' simply would not seem to exist in rural Burkina Faso, as illustrated by the fact that no case is known in which a formal sale of land took place, despite the existence during most of the time - since the onset of colonization by the French at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century - of the formal possibility to do so (Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:8). Secondly, it is argued that there exist misunderstandings as to the nature of African land tenure systems in general. Land often is subjected to multiple and overlapping claims, and rights to land shift and merge over time, for instance over the family life cycle or following seasonal oscillations (Faure & Le Roy 1990:8, Lambert & Sindzingre 1995:106, den Ouden 1981:188-193, Shipton & Goheen 1992:311). Next to warning that it is a mistake to assume that individual land titling 'will automatically provide land holders with better incentives to conserve or develop their lands'<sup>17</sup>, Shipton & Goheen (1992:316) furthermore point out that such titling tends to neglect the possibly existing claims of subordinate right-holders, among others of women, children, other dependent kin, affines, and, not least, of herdsmen who rely on commons grazing (in the case of the Central Plateau notably Fulbe). Inequality is then bound to grow (cf. also Lambert & Sindzingre 1995:112), thus endangering social sustainability.

## **Research theme: the interplay between changing land use practices and changing processes of geographic mobility**

Initially, the aim of this research project was to analyze the interrelationships and interplay between migration of Moose to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso on the one hand, and changing land use practices in the region of origin on the other hand. Thereby it was assumed that progressive environmental degradation and deterioration of the productive potential in the north-central region would encourage Moose to continue to seek to enlarge their economic and social space through migration. Conversely, it was also assumed that migration would affect land use practices in the region of origin. Initial research questions were, then, for instance: how are labour relations and land tenure arrangements affected by out-migration; how important are migration remittances and how are they used (are they re-invested in agriculture

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<sup>17</sup> Lambert & Sindzingre (1995:11) also mention that it has not been clearly demonstrated that investments for land improvement have developed less under 'traditional' land-tenure regimes than they might have had under a private property regime. It may equally be mentioned here that for the Adja Plateau in Benin it has been found that there is no relation between investment in land and the form of access to land (share cropping, rent, borrowing, ownership) (de Zeeuw 1997:591f).



and/or animal husbandry, and, if so, do they contribute to an intensification of production systems); do returning migrants constitute an innovative force or does, on the contrary, migration drain away innovative forces; how does migration affect social organization - in particular with respect to land use - in the region of origin (such as changes in authority relations, inclusion in social networks extending beyond the region of origin, etc.).

The research was to focus not on migration processes as such but on the effects of migration in the villages of origin. In other words, migration would be conceived of as a factor in the process of social change in rural society on the Central Plateau, with an explicit concentration on changes of land use practice. Very soon, already before fieldwork had started, this approach appeared to be problematic in two respects. Firstly, the north-central region, where field work was to take place, is characterized by a settlement pattern where Fulbe settlements are interspersed among Moose villages. The nature of Fulbe settlements and the particular way in which they are linked to neighbouring Moose villages or larger Moose political entities varies. Fulbe settlements can be permanent or temporary (in particular dry season settlements). They may constitute independent villages or a ward of a Moaga village. They may be headed by a chief integrated in the Moaga political hierarchy or not. But, whatever the particular situation, the fact remains that, on the one hand, Moose retain customary control of the very large majority of the land and, on the other hand, this land is used everywhere by, next to Moose, Fulbe too, either for pastoral or for agricultural purposes or both. By formulating the research problem in terms of the effects of migration to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso, the research risked marginalizing an important group of land users, the Fulbe, since in particular migration to the Ivory Coast is dominated by Moose. An undue focus on the Moaga population group characterizes many of the earlier studies of both land use on and migration processes from the Central Plateau (cf., among others, Ancy 1983, Benoit 1982a, Gregory *et al.* 1989, Imbs 1987, Kohler 1971 & 1972, Luning 1989a & 1989b, Marchal 1983, Mathieu 1993, Remy 1972, Remy *et al.* 1977, Skinner 1960 & 1965), and this despite the fact that Fulbe constitute a substantial group of land users and are equally involved in migration processes towards the south and west of Burkina Faso and to the Ivory Coast (cf. Benoit 1989b). Studies of the Fulbe of the Central Plateau are rare (Benoit 1982b, Delgado 1979) and only Delgado (1979) elaborated in some detail the relationships between Moose and Fulbe.<sup>18</sup> In a context where tensions and conflicts over natural resource use between Moose and Fulbe are said to be on the increase (cf. above), it seemed wholly inappropriate to *a priori* marginalize one of the two groups in a study of changing land use practices.

In yet another way, the initially chosen research conception proved too restrictive. It has been said that mobility is an essential characteristic of Moaga society (Benoit 1982a:17, Coulibaly *et al.* 1980:64, Imbs 1987:183). If Moose are characterized as a population of farmers attached to their ancestral land, it is at the same time maintained that their history has been entangled narrowly with migration processes from its very beginning (Izard 1970). Movements associated with warfare and strife for political office are generally understood to have taken place mainly before the imposition of colonial rule by the French at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time, however, it is sometimes noted that in particular the migrations to the south and west of Burkina Faso have to be partly understood as a continuation of Moaga expansionism (Laurent & Mathieu 1994:6, Remy 1973:87). Individual 'misfortune', which may disguise social tensions, can

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<sup>18</sup> Riesman's famous study (1974) is about the Fulbe of Djelgodji, i.e. the region of Djibo, bordering the Central Plateau in the north. In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Moose have migrated into this area, but Riesman did not go into the inter-ethnic relations between Moose and Fulbe.

constitute a reason to move to another village close by or further away (Kohler 1971:52), just as much as more generalized adverse circumstances, like those caused by droughts or environmental degradation in general. Finally, the virilocality of Moaga society has the consequence that women at marriage generally move to their husband's village. Imbs (1987:157) distinguished this movement of women for marriage as a separate form of 'regional mobility', which has been acknowledged in other migration studies in other settings too (cf. Chant & Radcliffe 1992). Fulbe society is equally characterized by an inherent mobility of its members, and here too, the causes of movements may be ecological, political or social in nature (cf., for instance, Benoit 1982b:116, Bonfiglioli 1991:247, Gulliver 1975:369, Stenning 1957:58). According to Benoit (1982b:60), geographic mobility constitutes a historical constant for the Fulbe of Yatenga (bordering the north-central region), even if they have been settled for two or three generations.

In itself, the existence of this variety of processes of geographic mobility seemed to constitute reason enough not to focus the research too one-sidedly on the effects on land use practice of migrations to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso. Whereas migrations to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso undeniably constitute important and massive phenomena for the north-central region, there is no *a priori* reason to assume that they are not imbricated and interlocked in one way or another with other processes of geographic mobility - that is, imbricated and interlocked as processes as such, as well as in their effects on land use practice. Indeed, it may well be a mistake to consider the former two processes as separate categories either in time or in social or geographical space. That they have often been treated as such may be related to the fact that they are conceived of as 'modern' migrations<sup>19</sup> as opposed to other forms of geographic mobility - for instance, related to misfortune or strife for political office - which then are relegated to the realm of 'traditionality'. It should be noted here that relatively little is known on the numerical importance of geographic mobility over small distances, as quantitative data generally refer to movements across administrative borders (cf. e.g. Coulibaly *et al.* 1980).

Still, there is another persuasive argument for taking a comprehensive stand with respect to processes of geographic mobility. From the above discussion on environmental degradation and the proposed strategies to rectify it, it is not too difficult to infer that what is at stake here is geographic mobility in all its diversity. Not only is it said that migration to the Ivory Coast has to be slowed down, so that sufficient labour will be available to undertake measures of land use intensification, and that migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso has to be contained, as these destinations are said to become encumbered as well and to be in danger of experiencing similar degradation processes as the northern regions of departure (cf. Broekhuysen & Allen 1988:341). The aimed at sustainability of land use practices appears to demand a more or less complete sedentarization of both agriculture and animal husbandry. Proposed interventions aim at an immobilization of both fields and livestock and, thus, implicitly at a reduction of people's mobility associated with movements of fields and livestock. Regarding the enthusiasm with which both the national government and international donor organizations have engaged in the 'Gestion de Terroirs' approach (cf. Banque Mondiale 1991, Ouédraogo & Faure 1993), and thus the importance of present and possibly future rural development interventions aiming at such an immobilization, it seems all the more appropriate to study the effects on current land use practices of geographic mobility in all its diversity. Moreover, a historical perspective seems equally

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<sup>19</sup> Contemporary migration towards the Ivory Coast has its origins in the colonial epoch when Moose were forced to work on the coastal plantations and construction sites. Migration towards the south and west of Burkina Faso is often studied in relation to post-colonial resettlement schemes and clearance of river valleys from onchocerciasis.

opportune for assessing the interplay in the past between, on the one hand, changes of land use practice and, on the other hand, changes in geographic mobility.

As a consequence of the broad formulation of the research theme - the interplay between changing land use practices and changing processes of geographic mobility - no particular form of geographic mobility was excluded beforehand from the research. This is also reflected in the structure of the book. Chapters 2 to 5 discuss land use practice in the research village in a historical perspective, focusing on the securing and extension of rights to farm land and related issues of mobilization of labour. It will be demonstrated that processes of geographic mobility are inextricably linked to land use practice and the latter's dynamics. Migration to the Ivory Coast and migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso, and their interplay with land use practice in the village of origin, are treated separately in chapters 6 to 8, however not without taking care to situate these within the framework constituted by other processes of geographic mobility.

### **Processes of geographic mobility and the production of locality**

The proposed research theme contains a crucial tension which in the first instance amounts to the methodological question of who should constitute the research population. As the aim was to study in detail the effects of geographical mobility processes on land use practices, notably with respect to land tenure and labour mobilization, it seemed rather straightforward to opt for a small-scale, in-depth study. This would allow for comprehension as fully as possible of probable imbrications and interlockings and of the dynamics of mobility and land use in a historical perspective. A geographical research entity, i.e. the entity where the changing land use practices would be observed, might then be delimited by the identification of a relevant community of actors and of a corresponding land use entity in the north-central region. The high geographic mobility of actors, however, poses a problem. As mentioned above, it was not intended to study geographic mobility processes as such but to focus on their effects on land use practice in the region of origin. But, is it possible to understand local land use practices without equally studying the pursuits of, for instance, migrants in the Ivory Coast, which would require undertaking research at several locations? Authors like Berry (1985) and Smith (1984) suggest it is not. According to Smith (1984:217), who did research in Peru, fieldwork had to be carried out at several locations in order 'to assess the effects of livelihood pursuits at one place on those at another'. Likewise, Berry (1985:42-43) argues explicitly and strongly against studying social relations and change in one single location in a context where geographical mobility is an important element of social life:

'The changing spatial configuration of economic, social, and political activities and relations in western Nigeria has important methodological and conceptual implications for the study of social change in the region. Yorubas' complex patterns of movement among places of birth, work, residence, exchange, and other points of rendezvous with kinsmen, friends, or business and political associates make it difficult to study social relations in a single place. A Yoruba community [...] cannot be treated as a territorially based settlement whose inhabitants define their social identity and organize their interactions around the fact that they live and work in the same place. Rather, it is likely to comprise a group of people, scattered or moving across the map of the region and beyond, [...]. Some students of Yoruba communities have taken these circumstances into account, even while confining their research to a single location, by playing close attention to extralocal linkages. Too often, however, surveys of migrants which are conducted at one site fail to place informants in either a historical or a wider social context. [...] In general, the frequency and complexity of population movements in Yoruba society make it difficult, if not thoroughly misleading, to assume that location can be used as a proxy for patterns of economic specialization or social organization'.

If one were to follow Berry's view, then fieldwork would have to be undertaken at numerous locations, for instance, with regard to Moose, at one or more places in the Ivory Coast and in the south and west of Burkina Faso, in the capital Ouagadougou, in the provincial town of Kaya, in one or more villages near to the place of departure, etc. Such an approach might then result in the construction of what has been called 'multilocal ethnographies' (Marcus 1986:171-172). However, it will be difficult if not impossible to know all or even most of such locations beforehand. Practically, such a research design is difficult to realize unless one excludes in advance certain destinations of population movement, and thus possibly certain forms of geographic mobility. This would imply an *a priori* establishment of a hierarchy of processes of geographic mobility with respect to the research problem, something which I chose not to do.

Nevertheless, Berry's argument seems convincing. In a context where actors are as mobile as in western Nigeria or as in the north-central region of Burkina Faso, a study at one location risks giving only partial insight into actors' strategies and leading to mis-interpretations of that aspect of their strategies which pertains to land use 'at home'. The approach proposed by Berry and Smith fits rather well within the so-called actor-oriented approach in social studies, which emerged in the 1980s in response to linear, determinist and externalist views of social change which could not account for the empirically disclosed diversity of rural populations' responses to processes of change (cf. Long 1984, 1988, 1989 & 1992b). In migration studies, dominated until the early 1980s by linear and determinist modernist and neo-marxist theory, one form the actor-oriented approach took was the so-called household strategies approach (Chant & Radcliffe 1992, Wood 1981). Migration thereby is considered to be an aspect of 'the adaptive strategy that the household pursues in response to changing structural constraints', and, at the same time, 'conditional on the success or failure of other initiatives undertaken to maintain (or increase) the level of consumption and reproduction' (Wood 1981:341-342). What is aimed at is an identification of 'the complex interaction between the structural and behavioral factors that determine the pattern of population movement in the countryside', and therefore 'household sustenance strategies', of which migration is but an aspect, are to be analyzed in a comprehensive way (*ibidem*:342). Land use strategies at a particular place of departure are thus studied as an element of broader 'household' strategies. It would then be possible to assess the effects of migration on land use practices at the level of a local land use entity in an aggregate way, but seemingly only indirectly as a derivative of geographically dispersed 'household' strategies.

Taking into account the above mentioned practical objection, but also the interest of focusing, not in the first place on the mobility processes and the strategies pursued at different locations, but on *local* natural resource management, one may wonder whether it is not possible to [re-]localize the research and at the same time give account of the diverse geographic mobility processes. To a certain extent, this question is related to the debate on the place of locality in a world characterized by global cultural flows (Fardon 1995, Featherstone 1990, Kearney 1996, Moore 1996) and on whether, as Appadurai (1995:204) puts it, 'the mutually constitutive relationship between anthropology and locality [can] survive in a dramatically delocalized world'. From the discussions, it emerges that globalization in no way entails cultural homogenization. Rather, it implies a dialectic between global and local, between, on the one hand, 'an inexorable cultural homogenization' and, on the other hand, 'the proliferation and diversification of social types' (Kearney 1996:136), since what is diffused by global cultural flows is locally appropriated,

'indigenized' (Fardon 1995:10) or '[re-]localized'<sup>20</sup>, in diverse ways (cf. also Appadurai 1990:295). In the process, the nature of 'locality' undergoes profound changes and hereby geographic mobility plays a prominent role:

'The landscapes of group identity [...] around the world are no longer familiar anthropological objects, insofar as groups are no longer tightly territorialized, spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious or culturally homogeneous. [...] This is not to say that nowhere are there relatively stable communities and networks of kinship, friendship, work, and leisure, as well as of birth, residence and other filiative forms. But it is to say that the warp of these stabilities is everywhere shot through with the woof of human motion, as more persons and groups deal with the realities of having to move or the fantasies of wanting to move' (Appadurai 1991:191-192).

In the light of this changed nature of locality, Kearney (1996:148), who did research among Mixtecs and Zapotecs from Oaxaca, Mexico, engaged in transnational migration, dismisses, like Berry and Smith, the idea of research at one single location:

'[Ethnographic] research on decisionmaking concerning agricultural production is inseparable from the ethnographies of the other social fields in which the small part-time producer lives [...]. Indeed, in such cases, research on agricultural decisionmaking should be dispersed throughout the transnational community in which the person lives. To do otherwise confines research primarily to a community erroneously assumed to be local, bounded, and rural [...].'

Vincent (1977:58), for her part, argues that the advantage of 'community studies', carried out in a bounded spatial unit, is 'that it directs our attention toward the paradox that boundaries are of little significance unless they are crossed'. Fardon (1995:8), also seems to suggest that locality, and thus the study of locality, has not become obsolete:

'Perception of cultural globalization relies, necessarily and without paradox, upon recognition being accorded to more local cultural boundaries; globalization would not be discernible were there no such boundaries to be transgressed (or transcended) and affirmed as "real" in consequence'.

In order 'to capture the impact of deterritorialization on the imaginative resources of lived, local experiences', Appadurai (1991:196) calls for a new style of ethnography. No longer should culture be understood as 'some sort of inert, local substance', where 'traditions' provide for a finite set of possible lives: 'Ethnography must redefine itself as the practice of representation which illuminates the power of large-scale, imagined life possibilities over specific life trajectories'

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. Long (1996:50): '[We] use the concept of "localization" to emphasize the *local embeddedness* of agrarian development. That is, we aim to examine the complex ways in which local forms of knowledge and organization are constantly being reworked in interaction with changing external conditions. We also find it useful to reflect upon issues of "re-localization" rather than simply "localization", since this addresses questions concerning the resurgence of local commitments and the "reinvention" or creation of new local social forms that emerge as part of the process of globalization. In fact globalization itself can only be meaningful to actors if the new experiences it simultaneously engenders are made meaningful by reference to existing experiences and cultural understandings, but in the process new social meanings and organizing practices are generated. To argue for the reassertion of local organizational and cultural patterns, the reinvention of tradition and the creation of new types of local attachment, is therefore not the same as arguing for a *persisting* set of local traditions. Rather, these "reinvented" patterns are generated through the ongoing encounter between different frames of meaning and action. In this way, "re-localization" opens up new theoretical insights into processes of social transformation'.

(*ibidem*:200). Thus, a shift has to take place from study of 'tradition' to a study of 'imagination'<sup>21</sup> nurtured by images, ideas and opportunities that come from elsewhere (*ibidem*:199).

In a later paper, Appadurai (1995) elaborates more concretely on how locality might be conceptualized in a world characterized by [transnational] migration, electronic highways and presence of the nation-state. He defines 'locality' as an aspect of social life 'constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity and the relativity of contexts, [...] which expresses itself in certain kinds of agency, sociality and reproducibility'. He uses the term 'neighbourhood' 'to refer to the actually existing social forms in which locality, as a dimension or value, is variably realized'. That is, neighbourhoods constitute the contexts of locality and are situated communities characterized by their spatial actuality and their potential for social reproduction (204).<sup>22</sup> Locality, in this sense, is an inherently fragile social achievement and has always been so. Both locality and neighbourhood have to be produced and reproduced (in a dialectical way) and 'maintained against various kinds of odds' (205). A neighbourhood moreover requires 'contexts against which its own intelligibility takes shape' (209). Such contexts may be encountered, and possibly be other neighbourhoods, or they may be produced by the neighbourhood itself, also possibly giving rise to new neighbourhoods.

According to Appadurai, the production of locality (as a structure of feeling, a property of social life and an ideology of situated community) is increasingly difficult in the light of the impingement of the nation-state and the displacement and deterritorialization of populations through migration processes and the establishment of virtual communities. Of interest to the present research is exactly the role of migration - and, for that matter, processes of geographic mobility in general. In particular such processes may be responsible for the erosion and dispersal of neighbourhoods as coherent social formations, entailing a disjuncture between neighbourhoods and locality. Nevertheless, the engagement of people in the production of locality, however difficult, at any one place remains very real. Moreover, it may be noted that - as clearly appears from the cases presented by Appadurai - geographic mobility processes do not only threaten the production of locality. They may be at the same time essential for both the production and the maintenance of locality and neighbourhoods (cf. for example the remark that 'all locality-building has a moment of colonization' (208) and the discussion of the way in which Yanomami villages 'produce a wider set of contexts for themselves' (210)).

This conception of locality and neighbourhood is proposed here as a tentative frame within which the following chapters may be read. This allows not only for an analysis of the history of a specific neighbourhood, i.e. the selected research village; it equally permits one to analyze how the involvement of members of the neighbourhood in diverse processes of geographic mobility affects the production of locality - not only through migrants' [temporary] absence or through the means they provide (remittances), but also through new ideas, views and the like which they infuse into the neighbourhood. Moreover, the concept of neighbourhoods encountered and/or generated permits one to analyze, on the one hand, how geographic mobility processes are constrained and, on the other hand, how they contribute to the extension of a neighbourhood's social space. Finally, it should once again be noted that the focus of the present research is on land use practice, which in terms of Appadurai's conceptualization may be viewed

<sup>21</sup> Appadurai (1996:7) distinguishes 'imagination' from 'fantasy': '[The] idea of fantasy carries with it the inescapable connotation of thought divorced from projects and actions [...]. The imagination, on the other hand, has a projective sense about it, the sense of being a prelude to some sort of expression [...]. The imagination is today a staging ground for action, and not only for escape'.

<sup>22</sup> For the present research the possible virtuality of such communities does not have to be taken into account.

as an aspect of 'the spatial production of locality'. Appadurai stresses that this spatial production has not to be taken as an end in itself but 'rather as moments in a general technology (and teleology) of localization'. It is the inscription of locality in space, just as ceremonies of, for instance, naming and circumcision inscribe locality onto the bodies of local subjects (205). In this sense, then, what follows is not only a history of a particular 'neighbourhood', it also is 'a history of the techniques for the production of locality' (207).

## Methodological approach

Methods proposed within the framework of the actor-oriented approach as used by Long and others seemed very promising for the present research project. Long (1992a:6-7) defends the view that 'local practices include macro representations and are shaped by distant time-space arenas, but that these macro phenomena are only intelligible in situated contexts', i.e., 'they are grounded in the *meanings* accorded to them through the ongoing life-experiences and dilemmas of men and women' (emphasis added). He then argues for 'an open-ended, ethnographic approach which attempts to unravel the complexities of meaning and social action'. Clearly, in order to come to grips with the effects on local land use practice of geographic mobility and of moving people's experiences in more or less far away places, a meaning-centred approach is called for. To elicit meaning and how it is differentially produced, one needs to focus research on the existing alternative discourses and discursive practices related to the specific domains of social practice which are studied, i.e. geographic mobility and land use. Barnes & Duncan (1992:8-9) define discourses as 'frameworks that embrace particular combinations of narratives, concepts, ideologies and signifying practices, each relevant to a particular realm of social action'. What has to be studied then are such concepts, ideologies, narratives and signifying practices, related to land use and geographic mobility. It may be noted that land use practices themselves, as 'technologies of localization' (cf. above), are also to be understood as discursive (signifying) practices<sup>23</sup> (cf. in particular chapters 3 and 4).

One final, general remark has to be made here. Qualitative research methods were deliberately chosen to study in depth a relatively small population, its land use practices and the mobility processes in which it is involved. In no way is statistical representativity claimed by this research. As was observed by Smith (1984:217), in situations where due to migration people move in and out of 'households', the use of statistical data gathered at any one moment can be extremely distorting. In this respect, the quantitative data I gathered through a survey among some eighty Moose farm heads were more revealing by what they hide than by the figures obtained. Nevertheless, the research does uncover the dynamics of changes of land use practices and geographic mobility processes and their mutual interlockings, and reflects the dynamics and interlocking relationships occurring in the wider north-central region.

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<sup>23</sup> Whereas Foucault has argued that discourses and practices should be treated as if they were the same thing, Parker (1992:17) calls for the maintenance of a distinction: discursive practices are then those practices which reproduce the material basis of institutions.

*History: fragments of the past, facts of the present*

In order to fully comprehend the above mentioned dynamics of change, a historical approach is indispensable. Far-reaching historical changes, such as the imposition of colonial rule and the development of a plantation economy in the coastal colonies, most certainly had an impact on both geographic mobility and land use practice. Historical data permit one not only to assess how local actors responded in the past to sweeping changes in their macro-environment, they also allow for an understanding of how past experiences are reflected in contemporary practices and meaning production. Of course, to declare that a study of change processes is not possible without a historical approach seems self-evident. The application of such an approach, however, is not trivial at all and wound up with snags. The historical material presented in several of the following chapters stems mainly from three different sources: the oral accounts of both Moose and Fulbe actors in the field, several kinds of colonial documents from the archives of the former Cercle de Kaya, and earlier, mainly anthropological and geographical, writings. All three sources deserve some preliminary comment.

The accounts of the past expressed by Moose and Fulbe actors were recorded during interviews or other encounters during fieldwork at which stories, narratives or gossip were told.<sup>24</sup> Knowledge about the past is often unevenly distributed over the members of a community: age, initiation, office, individual life trajectories, personal interest in a particular issue, etc., may be explanatory factors. However, one cannot expect to be able to reconstruct factually a local past by tapping historical information from the locality's 'experts' in this field. Indeed, much has been said about what such accounts actually do tell us, about the past as well as the present, ranging from the conclusion that they embrace conceptions of the past that are facts of the present dissociated from any 'real' past, to the contention that representations of a 'real' past are to be understood dialectically in relation to present practice, one constraining the other, and not completely divorced from a 'real' past (Peel 1984:111-112; cf. also Barber & Farias 1989, McCaskie 1989). Comaroff & Comaroff (1992:158-159) argue that historical consciousness is not confined to one expressive mode, that is the conventional western mode of history 'as an account of "real" events and processes', but 'may be created and conveyed - with great subtlety and no less truth - in a variety of genres' (cf. also Sahlin 1983:521-522). They maintain that people often talk about their past and present in rhetorical terms, in which 'history and its representation are not nicely distinguishable' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992:176). The interpretation of oral accounts on the past is further complicated by the fact that actors may fashion their accounts according to their present day interests and depending on the particular context in which they express themselves, i.e. accounts on the past are strategically deployed. With regard to the latter, Murphy (1990) - although not explicitly referring to history - makes the distinction between 'frontstage discourse' and 'backstage commentary'.<sup>25</sup> It seems, then, that only by properly contextualising accounts of the past, both in terms of actors' present day interests and positions and the actual scene in which the accounts are expressed, and in terms of 'wider worlds

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<sup>24</sup> Nuijten (1990:28) defines narratives as accounts told in the third person that pretend to tell a 'true story'. They have a strong explanatory value and hegemonic characteristics. Conversely, stories are more anecdotal and tell individual histories in the first person.

<sup>25</sup> Murphy (1990:33) shows not only that in backstage commentary actors expressed intentions opposed to those they expressed publicly, but also, and maybe more importantly, that assumptions, values, and cultural ideology as expressed in public were inverted backstage.



of power and meaning that gave them life' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992:17), may these accounts be helpful in explaining both past and present.

The colonial documents which have been consulted and from which information has been drawn are of a diverse nature: letters, telegrams, annual reports, political and economic reports, civil and criminal court records, circular letters, etc. Whereas many of these documents obviously can tell a lot about colonial policy and about the concerns of local administrators, one may rightly ask whether they contain relevant historical information on life in the villages and social practice of the population in general. Most of the consulted documents concern reports and letters written by the local colonial administrator, in this case the Commandant of the Cercle de Kaya. Although these writings most certainly have to be treated with caution - administrators' observations and opinions undoubtedly were heavily influenced by their position in the colonial administration - they should not be discarded indiscriminately as to the possible ethnographic information they contain. The French had decided very early, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to administer their African colonies according to 'local custom', which made it necessary to undertake extensive surveys to gather information on the 'traditions' of colonized populations. This task was entrusted essentially to local administrators, i.e. the Commandants of the Cercles (Amselle 1990:238-239, Pageard 1963:8, Wooten 1993:419-420). They were instructed, for instance in 1897, 1905, 1909 and 1931, to carry out surveys and to collect information on indigenous customs and were required to submit historical and ethnographic reports (so called 'monographies de Cercle'). Colonial administrators therefore also received an ethnographic training. It is in this sense that Wooten (1990:430) observes that these administrators were simultaneously ethnographic observers and 'should be viewed as contributors to the growth of French ethnography in the twentieth century', an opinion shared equally by Amselle (1990:243) according to whom their writings 'reveal a very detailed observation of local dynamics'. A number of the administrators later went on to write historical and ethnographic works on the population they had administered (Wooten 1993:431). Among them was Chéron, in the early 1920s Commandant of the then Cercle du Mossi (the Cercle de Kaya was created only later on, cf. chapter 2), who published both on the Kaya region and on the Moose in general (e.g. Chéron 1924 & 1925).<sup>26</sup>

However valuable the ethnographic information thus recorded, it still remains essential to situate it within the context of colonial endeavours. For the colonized peoples to be administered according to local customs, it was not only necessary to investigate these customs; they also had to be fixed in one way or another in order for the Commandants de Cercle - who, among other things, also presided over the Customary Law Tribunals - to have a body of jurisprudence. Wooten (1993:427-428) suggests that, as the region was in the midst of turmoil and transformation at the moment colonial rule was imposed, a rigid set of customs probably often was hard to find, and that, thus, 'tradition' had to be invented in some cases. According to Ranger (1983:250), it was certainly not exceptional for colonial administrations in Africa to do so: 'What were called customary law, customary land rights, customary political structure and so on, were in fact all invented by colonial codification', or, in other words, 'colonialism reified custom' (*ibidem*:256, cf. also Hawkins 1996:208-209). By the same token, colonialism also brought a re-inforcement of ethnicity or even the invention of ethnic groups (Amselle 1990:22, Ranger 1983:248-249). Clearly, then, colonial documents in general and writings of administrator-ethnographers in particular, are likely to have reified at least the rigidity of norms,

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<sup>26</sup> Both Wooten (1993:441) and Amselle (1990:238) stress the great importance of the work of these administrator-ethnographers. For instance, Delafosse's work 'Haut-Sénégal-Niger', based on the monographies written by the Commandants de Cercle, would have constituted for several decades a 'bible' for other researchers.

values and institutions governing local practices. The 'customs', which were eventually codified by the colonial administration, were of course not arbitrary but most probably the outcome of power struggles in which local populations were heavily involved (cf. Hawkins 1996, Ranger 1983). Only recently have 'historians and anthropologists [...] come to understand [...] that what colonial officials treated as immutable customary law was itself the product of historical struggles unfolding during the colonial period' (Roberts & Mann cited by Wooten 1993:427).

Colonial administrators and administrator-ethnographers were, however, not alone in their search for 'tradition'. The history of anthropology has concurred to an important degree with colonialism. According to Fabian (1983:17), anthropology contributed above all to the intellectual justification of the colonial enterprise, by promoting 'a scheme in terms of which not only past cultures, but all living societies were irrevocably placed on a temporal slope'. Fabian's general observation has been specified for the relation between colonialism and anthropology in West Africa. Wooten (1993:422), for instance, discusses how dominant evolutionary thinking within the scientific community of France left its mark on colonial policy, thereby grounding the latter 'with [its] perspective on the immutability of race and cultural achievement'. Anthropologists in the field provided colonial administrations with what they desired, firstly by aspiring to coverage, i.e. to describing all African peoples, and, secondly, by focusing on systematisable features in their descriptions of cultures, which, for that matter, they conceived of as bounded social units (Tonkin 1990:141).<sup>27</sup>

An important result has been that anthropology and ethnographic writing too have contributed to a reification of 'tradition' - and ethnicity, for that matter - creating the image of African societies existing in another evolutionary time and at the same time outside of time as the focus on structure and function conveyed the idea of immutability (Fabian 1983:26-27, Tonkin 1990:141, cf. also Wolf 1982:13-14 and several contributions in Clifford & Marcus 1986). Thus, Tonkin (1990:144) argues that 'accounts of West Africa written of the 1930s-50s sustain the fiction for anthropologists of an ethnographic present, although they are now historical documents'. Still, it is not to be assumed that these flaws of ethnographic writing vanished with colonialism. As Hawkins (1996:202) observes, it was only from the 1970s onwards that some sociologists and anthropologists questioned the concept of 'tradition' arguing that 'it was little more than a means of objectifying and distancing African societies'.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, it is to be expected that both ethnographic writings and colonial documents provide a picture of African societies which is excessively static, whereby heterogeneity and fluidity have been subordinated to the rigidity of, in some cases invented, structure and 'tradition'. However, it has been argued that 'invention of tradition' has not been the project solely of administrators and ethnographers. Tonkin (1990:141), for instance, maintains that structural-functionalists' informants shared the researchers' concern for representing their society as structured and as ethnically distinct and different. It has been widely accepted at present by both historians and

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<sup>27</sup> Although, in retrospect, anthropology and ethnographic writing appear to have sustained the colonial enterprise, this does not mean that anthropologists always considered their research as unproblematic (cf. also Gardner & Lewis 1996:32-34). Tonkin (1990:142), for instance, notes that '[the] ethnographic tradition of West Africa [...] has been partly constituted by a concern to "write [non-racist] ethnos" and at the same time to criticize the possibility of doing so'. Wooten (1993:431) argues that French administrator-ethnographers, although being evolutionary thinkers, supported a more humanist approach, stressing African populations' capability of progress, contrary to the kind of evolutionary thinking on which the design of colonial administration was based at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>28</sup> These issues are also discussed by Clifford (1986:10) in his critique of ethnographic writing. He observes: "Cultures" do not hold still for their portraits. Attempts to make them do so always involve simplification and exclusion, selection of a temporal focus, the construction of a particular self-other relationship, and the imposition or negotiation of a power relationship'.

anthropologists that what people present as ancient, 'traditional' practices can well be invented, that the novelty of certain practices tends to be disguised (Hawkins 1996:202, cf. also Galaty 1981:22, Ranger 1983<sup>29</sup>). Peel (1984:113-114) makes this point as follows with respect to Yoruba history:

'[Where] possible, present practice is governed by the model of past practice and, where change *does* occur, there is a tendency to rework the past so as to make it appear that past practice has governed present practice. This stereotypic reproduction serves both to slow down social change and to deny that such change occurs: it must be understood both as an achievement in the face of history and as a constituent of it'.

All three historical sources thus need to be approached critically, in particular with respect to their notions of 'tradition' and boundedness of social units. Notions of 'tradition' and 'ethnicity' appearing in ethnographic writings, colonial documents and oral histories are not to be taken for granted. On the contrary, they need to be deconstructed. For the fieldwork of this research, it also follows that one should avoid '[investing] in preserving zones of "tradition", [stressing] social reproduction over random change, cosmology over chaos' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992:5), which is a conclusion which comes very close to Appadurai's call for an imaginative ethnography to study locality (cf. above).

### **Methods**

Fieldwork was started in one ward, the most ancient, of the selected Moaga research village (cf. below). From there, the research population was progressively extended to the other wards and to neighbouring Moose and Fulbe villages, involved in the use of natural resources of the selected village's 'territory'. No statistical representativity was thereby pursued. It was, however, attempted to obtain a research population which reflected as much as possible the prevailing heterogeneity of perspectives with respect to land use practice. In this way, possibly existing differential responses to change processes were to be brought to the fore as well as possibly conflicting interests with respect to the use of natural resources. Research methods consisted mainly of non-structured interviews complemented by a number of rounds of semi-structured interviews (i.e. following a check-list of 'themes' to be discussed). Next, two specific methods were used, which are commented on briefly now.

#### **'Family-histories' and the construction of genealogies**

To tackle the question of the history of land use practice and geographic mobility from a local perspective, it seemed obvious to attempt to reconstruct a number of 'family-histories'. The term '[individual] life-histories' is explicitly avoided here, having taken note of the observation made by Comaroff & Comaroff (1992:26) that life-histories 'bespeak a notion of the human career as an ordered progression of acts and events' and that they serve 'to find the motors of past and present in rational individualism, and to pay little heed to the social and cultural forms that silently shape and constrain human action'. It was thus attempted to contextualize as much as

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<sup>29</sup> Ranger (1983:261) puts it as follows: 'Historians have to free themselves from the illusion that the African custom recorded by officials or by many anthropologists is any sort of guide to the African past. But they also need to appreciate how much invented traditions of all kinds have to do with the history of Africa in the 20<sup>th</sup> century'.

possible the accounts recorded with individual respondents, firstly in relation to both village history and wider historical changes (e.g. the *nakombse* conquest, the imposition of colonial rule and changes in colonial policy), and secondly in relation to the history of larger kin groups. The latter was achieved by first constructing, with the help of several respondents, genealogies, and subsequently discussing, again with several respondents, the history of the thus represented kin group and the respondents' life-histories in relation to the former. The focus, of course, was on land use and geographic mobility of both individuals and kin groups.

In his plea for the use of detailed genealogical enquiries in ethnographic research, den Ouden (1989:2,50) argues that it allows for a broadening of research beyond the village setting, for paying proper attention to migration, and for a diachronical study of change processes making it possible to trace both 'cyclic variation' and 'structural change'. For the present research too, the construction of genealogies seemed, and indeed proved to be, a very suitable entry for tackling the research problem, since a relatively systematized picture could be obtained of the relation between land use practice (in particular tenure arrangements) and geographic mobility processes. Nevertheless, genealogies should be interpreted with caution since they constitute an outstanding example of 'the mutability of the past in terms of the present' (cf. Hawkins 1996:202) and because they may be manipulated to legitimize certain groups' or individuals' claims over the claims of others (cf. also Tonkin 1990:113). Starting research from the construction of genealogies in the patrilineal societies of Moose and Fulbe has the concomitant risk of downplaying the role of affinal relations in the processes studied (cf. also Kuper's discussion (1982:85) of lineage theory). Finally, one should take care not to reify the communities studied as 'communities of kin groups', thereby marginalising the role of non-kin relations in social process.

### Case studies

One of the core elements of the methodology advocated by the actor-oriented approach is constituted by the 'extended-case study method' ('situational analysis', 'analysis of social drama') (Long 1992b). It was first developed by researchers from the 'Manchester School' (Gluckman 1958, Turner 1957, van Velsen 1964), who ascertained the need to include case material in ethnographic writing, not merely as 'apt illustration' of a particular theoretical principle, but as 'an integral part of the analysis of the social structure': the extended-case study method essentially served 'to show how variations can be contained within the structure' (Mitchell in his introduction to van Velsen 1964:xii-xiii). In the actor-oriented approach of the 1980s, the method served more particularly, in addition to showing the 'room for manoeuvre' for actors in solving their everyday problems, the analysis of how actors, through their choices, not only reproduce but also may transform social structure (Long 1989a:228-229, Long 1989b:248, Verschoor 1992:179).

Although one will look in this book in vain for beautifully edited 'social dramas' or 'situational analyses' as in the work of Turner and Van Velsen, the method has been applied during fieldwork as faithfully as possible. Social situations studied and observed were disentangled through interviews not only with key-informants, but with as many as possible of the actors involved - and others - in order to elicit differing perspectives and possibly conflicting interests (cf. also A. Long 1992:163-164). Also, follow-up interviews were conducted and it was attempted to disinter how the studied situations had historically taken form (cf. Long 1989b:248). Although some of the case material presented in the following text most certainly is 'merely illustrative', the use of the extended-case study method is reflected in the way cases in most instances are integrated in the ongoing analysis. Moreover, the re-appearance of the same actors

in different situations (and different chapters) helps to reveal the interconnectedness of situations and the context-dependency of actors' actions (cf. Mitchell in his introduction to Van Velsen 1964).

### *Selection of and brief introduction to the research location and population*

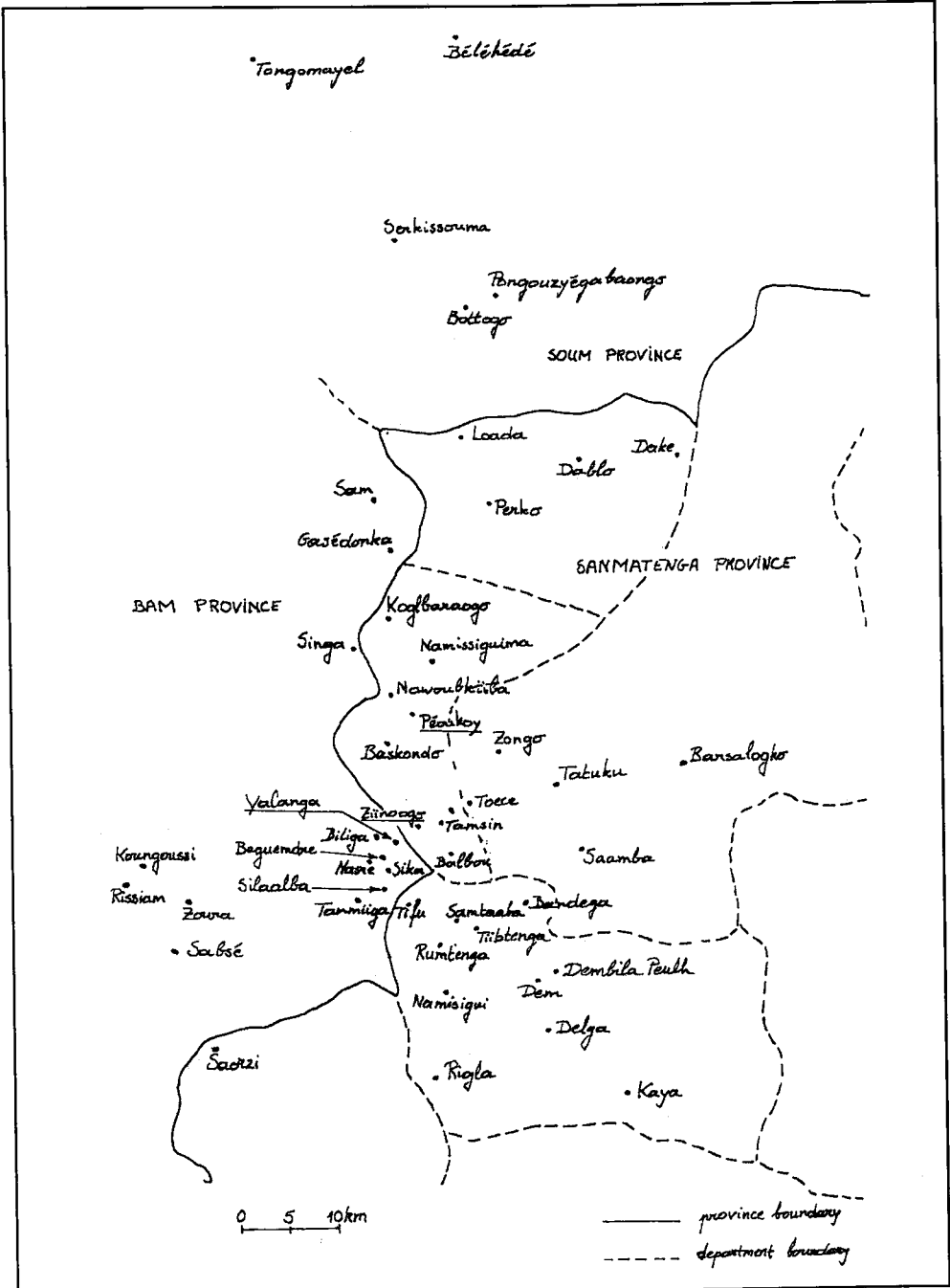
The research population was not delimited beforehand. Indeed, with the intended focus on 'the spatial production of locality' in mind, it was decided to first identify a locally relevant land use entity and then to involve the actual users of this entity, whether residents or not. Although the concept *tengpeelem* clearly can take different meanings<sup>30</sup>, it has been interpreted as referring to the territory ritually controlled by an earth priest (*tengsoba*). It is understood that, in the Moaga region, this territory constitutes the only territorial entity to which geographical fixity can be ascribed. There would not necessarily exist a correspondence between 'village' and '*tengpeelem*', since one *tengpeelem* may comprise several villages or the lineage segments of one village may control land on different *tengpeelem* (Imbs 1987:45-46). As it was intended to obtain as thorough and complete as possible insights into the dynamic interplay between geographic mobility and changes in land use at one particular place, the actual research location had to be not too large nor involve too large a research population. What was sought for, and thought to be found - as will become clear in chapter 3, things were not what they appeared - was a relatively small village, composed of a relatively small number of wards, which was expected to correspond more or less with one single *tengpeelem*. An additional condition was the presence nearby of Fulbe who made use of the natural resources of the *tengpeelem*. Next to the inhabitants of the village and these Fulbe, the research population would then furthermore be composed of those people who in any kind of way made use of the *tengpeelem*'s natural resources, notably Moose from neighbouring villages borrowing land on the studied *tengpeelem*. Thus the *tengpeelem* of the Moaga village of Ziinoogo was chosen, situated at about 45 km to the north-west of Kaya and used by, next to Moose, the Fulbe of the neighbouring settlements of Péoukoy and Yalanga (cf. map 1.2). Permission to do research was asked of, and granted by, the village chief (*naaba*), the earth priest (*tengsoba*) and the administrative official (the 'délégué').<sup>31</sup> Fieldwork was carried out mainly in 1994 and 1995 (March-June and November-December 1994, January-November 1995). In 1997, I had the occasion to visit Ziinoogo once again during four weeks (February).

Ziinoogo is situated close to the western border of the province of Sanmatenga and belongs to the department of Namissiguima. At the same time, it is also integrated in the Moaga power structure and in this respect belongs to the *kombere* of Piugtenga, itself a subdivision of the kingdom of Boussouma. Based on the census of 1985, the population of Ziinoogo was estimated at 771 inhabitants in 1994, distributed over about fifty compounds (*zakse*, sing. *zaka*). The village is divided administratively into three wards: Ziinoogo, the most ancient ward and situated on the plateau in between the hills, and Bagsin and Naba Bagre, both of a more recent date and situated in the lowland, respectively at about seven and twelve kilometers from the ward of Ziinoogo.

All inhabitants are Moose, that is, in its most inclusive sense since internal distinctions according to origin and occupation do exist. With respect to the population's heterogeneity it may

<sup>30</sup> Compare, for instance, Imbs (1987), Luning (1989b), Luning (1997), Zanen (1996).

<sup>31</sup> A correspondence between village and *tengpeelem* was suspected as all villages bordering Ziinoogo had their own earth priest.



Map 1.2  
The research location: Ziinoogo and its surroundings

firstly be remarked that Ziinoogo seems a 'typical' Moaga village, characterized by the duality 'power over people' *versus* 'power over land'. The former is held by the village chief, the *naaba*, issuing from a *nakombga* lineage segment related to the Piugtenga *kombere* chieftancy. The latter is in the hands of the elder of a *tengbiiga* lineage segment, the *tengsoba* or earth priest, the term *tengbiise* (sing. *tengbiiga*) referring to the descendants of the village's founding ancestors. In the Moogo, i.e. the region constituted by the Moose kingdoms, *tengbiise* may be of diverse origin (e.g. Ninise, Kalamse, Fulse). The *tengbiise* of Ziinoogo are Yiyoose, a numerically important 'autochthonous' population group in the region extending from Ouahigouya to Boulsa (cf. Pageard 1963:15). Next to these two groups, the village population is composed of members of several other later arrived Yiyoose lineage segments, *nakombse* lineage segments less closely related to the Piugtenga *kombere* chieftancy, Saaba (blacksmiths) and Yarse<sup>32</sup> (Muslim traders).

Moaga society is patrilineal and marriage is virilocal. Daughters are married out beyond the lineage (*buudu*) in which they were born and go and live on the compound of their husband. Marriage between persons related by whatever known tie of consanguinity, either patrilineal or uterine, is strictly prohibited (Kohler 1971:180). One might say that a bridewealth is handed over to the bride's lineage, although it has to be stressed that this happens generally in the course of a period extending over several years. As Comaroff & Comaroff (1992:171-172) observed with respect to marriage among the South African Tshidi, among Moose too a marriage can best be understood as a relationship which matures over many years and through many social exchanges. Marriage exchanges have been controlled by elders, notably lineage elders, who both 'gave' daughters of their *buudu* to other *buudu* and 'received' women from other *buudu*, which they then were entitled to redistribute within their own *buudu*. The dominant position of elders in marriage exchanges - and thus in the control of production relations which necessarily passes by the control of access to women (cf. Kohler 1971:173) - would have eroded progressively since the beginning of this century, among other things under the influence of youngsters' migrations to the Gold Coast and the Ivory Coast (*ibidem*:174).

The exogamy rule stimulates the permanent extension of alliance networks and the social integration of local groups and groups of strangers. No social group can thus evolve withdrawn within itself (*ibidem*:180). Luning (1989a:7-8) argues that a *buudu* can reproduce itself in the course of time only through the wives 'received' as brides from another *buudu*, which is made possible if the *buudu* also 'gives' wives to other *buudu*. This gives way to a kind of tripartite, which comes very well to the fore in the so-called *yiirpaga*-system (cf. also chapter 5), which expresses the Moose's preference for repeated marriages between two *buudu* after a certain lapse of time. *Buudu* A 'gives' a woman to *buudu* B. Some years later, this first woman receives another woman, a *yiirpaga*, from her own *buudu* A, for whom she is authorized to choose a husband within the *buudu* B in which she is herself married. The first woman's eldest daughter, who will be 'given' to a third *buudu* C, is entitled to receive her mother's *yiirpaga*'s eldest daughter as her own *yiirpaga*, which thus would entail the repetition of marriage between *buudu* B and *buudu* C. According to Luning (1989a:8), marriage relations between Moose thus 'spread like wildfire'. Nevertheless, some marriage taboos exist, notably with respect to Saaba, who constitute a kind of endogamous group. Marriages between Fulbe and Moose do occur, notably between *nakombse* and Fulbe.

The three wards of Ziinoogo which are recognized to exist by the administration are further subdivided into smaller residential units. The Moore term *saka* (pl. *sakse*) refers not only

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<sup>32</sup> The Yarse used to hold an important part of the caravan trade in the west of the 'Boucle du Niger' and in Masina. Nowadays, they are most often equated with 'Muslim traders' (Izard 1982:384 & 1985:66).

to the larger conglomerates of compounds of the wards Ziinoogo, Bagsin and Naba Bagre, but also to their internal subdivisions. Most often, the term *saka* indeed points to smaller residential units, often, but not always, composed of homogeneous localized lineage segments. Thus, the ward of Ziinoogo consists of the *sakse* of Yiitaore (*tengbiise* and later arrived Yiyoose), Kamsin (*tengbiise*), Nakombgo (*nakombse*) and Balongo (*nayiirdamba*), Pempelsin (Yiyoose) and Sorpoore (mixed); Bagsin is composed of Bagsin (mixed, among others *tengbiise*, Saaba and Yiyoose), Kougpéla (mainly *nakombse*) and Tangzeega (mainly Yiyoose) and Naba Bagre of Naba Bagre (mixed, among others *tengbiise*, Saaba and Yarse) and Wagda Kaongo (Yiyoose). The compound of the village chief is situated at Kougpéla, while the chief's lineage elder lives at Nakombgo and the *tengsoba* at Yiitaore.

Agriculture clearly is the population's main activity, although at all compounds small livestock (mainly goats and sheep, sometimes a few pigs), fowl (poultry, guinea fowl) and sometimes a limited number of cattle can be found. Fields are farmed generally both near the compounds (mainly sorghum, millet, maize, tobacco, okra) and further away in the 'brousse', often at several kilometers from the compounds (sorghum, millet, sesame, roselle, groundnuts, Bambara groundnuts). The generic term for field is *puugo* (pl. *puuto*), and this term is most often used to indicate fields in the 'brousse'. Fields near the compound are generally called *karaase* (sing. *karaaga*), although the maize fields are often called *kamaandse* (sing. *kamaandga*). Many men are engaged in off-farm activities of smaller or greater importance: small trade, weaving, forging (restricted to Saaba), healing and other crafts (e.g. working of wood or calabashes). However, by far the most important male off-farm activity, at least in terms of monetary earnings, obviously is temporary migration to the Ivory Coast. Although women too may be involved in small trade, their main off-farm activity consists most often of the preparation and sale of sorghum beer ('dolo', *raam*). Saaba women are engaged in pottery.

Main markets in the area are held on successive days, and each three days (rotating markets), in the villages of Samtaaba, Nawoubkiiba and Nasre. A market of minor importance is held each three days at the nearby village of Koundbokin. In addition to being places for trade, they constitute major social happenings, especially on Fridays and Sundays. Interventions by development projects have been limited to the construction of stone bunds (on nearly all *karaase*), a concrete well (at Bagsin), and the installation of two pumps (at Ziinoogo and at Bagsin). It may be noted here that a water pool (*bouli*) exists both at Ziinoogo and at Bagsin, the former however running dry early in the dry season. Activities of the government extension service concentrate on the introduction of stables for cattle, compost pits and the stimulation of manure and fertilizer use.

The village of Ziinoogo is bordered to the south by the Moaga village Tamsin, to the east again by Tamsin and by the Moaga village Zongo (in particular the ward of Yaka), to the north by the Moose villages Baskondo and Nawoubkiiba and by the Pullo village Péoukoy and to the west by the Moaga village Biliga with its Pullo ward Yalanga (province of Bam). Inhabitants of all these neighbouring villages use natural resources on the territory of Ziinoogo, for either farming purposes or the grazing and watering of livestock or both. Although a number of Moose from the villages Tamsin, Zongo and Biliga have been involved in the research, the involvement of Fulbe from Yalanga and, in particular, Péoukoy has been much more important. Therefore - and also in order to restrict these introductory notes somewhat - only the Fulbe settlements are briefly presented.

Both Fulbe settlements are relatively small (e.g. Péoukoy numbered in 1994 approximatively 340 inhabitants). Both are administered by a chief (*jooro*) integrated in wider Fulbe structures as well as in the Moose political structures (inaugurated as *naaba* by a Moaga



*kombere* chief; cf. below). The descent principle among Fulbe is equally patrilineal and marriage is virilocal. The marriage system is characterized by a preference for, in the first place, patrilateral parallel-cousin marriage (marriage with father's brother's daughter), and, in the second place, for cross-cousin marriage. However, marriage with mother's sister's daughter is considered incest (Dupire 1996:268-269). Here too the arrangement of a marriage often extends over many years, already starting at a girl's birth and ending when this girl gives birth to a first child. A bridewealth is paid to the bride's family and this too in several stages. Although other items may be involved too, the most important part of the bridewealth consists of cattle (*ibidem*:233-237).

The Fulbe's main occupation is animal husbandry (mainly cattle, but also sheep, goats and fowl). The livestock is herded by men, while women are responsible for the milking of the cows. Men also farm, though the areas cultivated are significantly smaller than with Moose. Main crops are sorghum, millet and maize. Women sell milk in neighbouring villages and on markets. Men may also be involved in trade and some of them are butchers.

For both Péoukoy and Yalanga one has to distinguish between dry season and rainy season settlements. Indeed, the Fulbe generally stay at the relatively permanent settlements - consisting of a number of compounds (*wuro*, pl. *gure*) - only during the rainy season. During the dry season, some elders, women and children stay behind, while others camp elsewhere, preferably near the place where they farm during the rainy season (fields thus can be intensively manured by cattle). Whether the latter is possible depends on the presence nearby of water (well or *bouli*) and pastures. Some of these dry season camps are situated on the territory of Ziinoogo. The territory of Ziinoogo moreover comprises important pastures (notably the eastern part of the territory) and water points (*bouli* and wells at Bagsin) for the herds from Yalanga and Péoukoy. Finally, it may be noted that Péoukoy has never been involved in interventions by development projects. In this latter respect, the situation of Yalanga is somewhat different since it is a ward of the Moaga village of Biliga which has been involved in large development projects (e.g. the construction of a barrage and the implementation of a rice cultivation project).

## Synopsis of the thesis

Chapter 2 situates the scene by presenting the historical background to the research area. First, a brief outline of the research village's history is provided. The main part of the chapter is devoted to the elaboration of case material relating to a number of conflicts over land, along the border between the kingdom of Ratenga and the *kombere* of Piugtenga and in which the village of Ziinoogo has been involved. The purpose is to bring to the fore the diverse motivations which encourage people to move and occupy land 'elsewhere' and to demonstrate how different processes of geographic mobility interlock and imbricate. After having outlined tentatively the history of Pullo presence in the region, the chapter concludes with some observations concerning the dichotomy between 'traditional' and 'modern' processes of geographic mobility.

The next two chapters focus on land tenure arrangements and the interplay between geographic mobility, on the one hand, and the securing and extension of rights to land on the other hand. The land use pattern within which land use practices are enacted is described in chapter 3. This pattern is conceived of as a structuring spatial structure, i.e. both constitutive of and constituted by social practice and social organization. First, it is attempted to establish what territorial entity might be understood to constitute a 'village territory'. It is concluded that, for the present research, the village territory can be conceived of as an aggregation of lineage lands. However, there is no consensus among actors on the meaning of 'lineage land' (*yaab ziiga*), which

allows for the co-existence of different interpretations of the village territory's land use pattern. The shifting meanings of 'lineage land' appeared to be correlated with the shifting meanings of the categories 'strangers' and 'people of the village'. It is, then, concluded that the measure in which actors control land is closely related to the date of arrival of the lineage segment to which they belong. Finally, Saaba and Fulbe are shown to occupy relatively marginal positions with respect to the outlined land use pattern.

In chapter 4, different land use strategies and related geographic mobility processes, in particular with respect to the extension and securing of claims on land, are studied through the analysis of four cases. A partial explanation for the existence of different strategies can be found in actors' differing degree of 'autochthonousness'. A fuller comprehension of the distribution of rights to farm land is obtained by supplementing the 'autochthonousness principle', which can be understood as a principle of 'group seniority' (determined by the date of arrival of the different lineage segments in the village), with the principle of seniority *within* the group (determined by actors' positions within a particular lineage segment). Based on this double seniority principle, each actor may be understood as occupying a certain position in what I call a 'hierarchy of choice' regarding access to farm land. From this it can be concluded that, whereas all who actually live on the village territory have a right to sufficient land for farming, the degree of control an actor exercises over this land differs according to his position in the hierarchy of choice. Still, the land use paths followed by individual actors suggest that 'lineage lands' are further subdivided and that *rights* to land are transferred from fathers to sons, which, however, is not the same as the transfer of *land as such*. Although it certainly seems true that, with the growth and diversification of the village's population, a progressive fragmentation of the village territory took place, this did not happen in a mechanistic way and did not give way to an unequivocal distribution of land whereby particular plots are associated with particular production units. Particular plots appear most often to be subject to a multiplicity of claims, albeit not necessarily all of the same weight. Moreover, these claims are shifting and merging over time. Securing and extension of rights to farm land are shown to be inextricably linked up with actors' geographic mobility. Conversely, the options open to actors as where to move to, depend on where they or their kin have already established rights to farm land and these places may be situated well beyond the village territory, i.e. actors have access to land in a 'pool of territories'.

Chapter 5 starts from the observation that securing and extension of rights to land depend heavily on labour availability. It is explained how labour is distributed within a farm and how additional labour may be mobilized through fosterage. It appears that fostered children, notably sisters' sons, have a right to farm land with their foster father. This raises the question of the nature of these rights and of the rights to land of married women on the territories controlled by their own patrilineal kin group. It is argued that the latter rights are best captured by the term 'submerged claims', which may be realized either by a woman herself (e.g. at divorce or widowhood) or by her husband or sons. It follows that a man not only has potential access to land at places where his patrilineal kinsmen (members of his *yiiri*) control a territory (discussed in chapter 4), but equally so at places where his affines or in-laws do so. The latter thus constitute potential destinations in case a man wants or finds himself obliged to move.

Chapter 6 is devoted to a detailed analysis of the meaning of migration to the Ivory Coast in a historical perspective. It starts with a localized history of this migration, concentrating on a relatively short period in the colonial history (1937-39), during which the administration demonstrated willingness to liberalize its labour policy. Next, the relations between migration to the Ivory Coast and changes in social life in general and land use practice in particular in the research village are described. Whereas migration to the Ivory Coast initially had a disruptive

effect on village life (until the 1950s), and subsequently was not immediately accepted by all, notably not by elders, it seems that more recently, from the 1980s onwards, it linked up with village life. It came to constitute one among other routine activities of members of a village farm, whereby village farm enterprises and migration enterprises are often well integrated, exemplified by the way in which actors try to distribute labour over the different enterprises. Furthermore, migration to the Ivory Coast appears fully integrated into wider kinship networks and youngsters' migration before marriage is considered as integral to their education. Concurrently with these changes of the meaning of migration to the Ivory Coast for village life, changes also occurred in age, gender and marital status of migrants. Moreover, migrants came to pursue a 'career' in the Ivory Coast, thereby aiming at establishing themselves independently, notably through the purchase of land for a cocoa or coffee plantation. The existence of such plantations owned by kin again has consequences for migration perspectives of actors in the village. The routine character of migration to the Ivory Coast implies that it interferes little with agricultural land use practice, notably regarding labour mobilization and land tenure, which is not to say that, in previous decades it did not contribute to the maintenance or even furthering of extensive land use practice.

Whereas in chapter 6, emphasis is placed on the integrating aspects of contemporary migration to the Ivory Coast, chapter 7 begins with a brief discussion of how this migration may nevertheless also contribute to fission and how rights to land acquired in the Ivory Coast are more 'individualized' than rights to land on territories as discussed in chapter 4 and 5. Next, migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso is analyzed in detail, i.e. both 'spontaneous' migration and migration in the context of large scale resettlement schemes. Although at first sight these migrations seem to point to a growing 'atomization' of production units - notably because complete farms tend to be moved over prolonged periods, without economic links with the farms 'at home' seemingly persisting - a closer look shows that this is not necessarily the case. Again, migration appears well integrated in kinship networks and initially 'atomized' units may at a certain moment link up with one another again (for instance, through joint livestock management and through the fact that land used by the migrants in the south and west of Burkina Faso enters their lineage segment's pool of territories). Although it is demonstrated that migrants often do not settle definitively in the south or west, this migration nevertheless implies an attenuation of land scarcity in the region of origin as the pool of territories to which actors in the village have potentially access often is extended.

The pursuit of a monetary income undoubtedly constitutes one main motivation of migrants to the Ivory Coast in particular, but, albeit to a lesser extent, of migrants to the south and west of Burkina Faso as well. Chapter 8 deals with how incomes and remittances from migration to the Ivory Coast and the south and west of Burkina Faso are spent. Although some investments are made in agricultural tools (carts, ploughs), it will be demonstrated that the main interest of both migrants and those who stay behind is with investments in livestock, notably cattle. In order to understand the impact of these investments on land use practice and social relations it appeared indispensable to analyze relations between Moose and Fulbe. It is demonstrated that differential accumulation of cattle has led to tension within the Moaga community, which tends to be covered up. The covering up is made possible by the entrusting of cattle to Fulbe herdsmen. The analysis provided in this chapter also permits one to put in perspective some commonly held views on the deterioration of relationships between Moose and Fulbe in a context of mounting pressure on natural resources.

In chapter 9, the major findings of this study are recapitulated, firstly, in more theoretical terms (frontier perspective, neighbourhood/locality), and, secondly, with respect to the policy issues of land reform and integration of agriculture and animal husbandry.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CHIEFTANCY: ISSUES OF GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY AND LAND IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

'African societies were so constructed that they systematically produced frontiersmen. Innumerable ethnographies support the commonplace observation that African social groups - be they kin groups, villages, cult groups, chieftancies, or kingdoms - show consistently a tendency to fission and segment. As a result, the formation of new social groups as offshoots of old ones has been a constant theme in the histories of African societies - histories filled with the movement of the disgruntled, the victimized, the exiled, the refugees, the losers in internecine struggles, the adventurous, and the ambitious. Several cultural principles and social mechanisms are and were behind the centrifugal forces, many of them being themselves products of frontier conditions or at least consonant with them' (Kopytoff 1987:18).

#### **Introduction**

Understanding Moose population movements, both past and contemporary, is not easy and straightforward. Nevertheless, it is often suggested that expansionist movements logically follow from not only the land use system, which is extensive and space consuming, but also the political system, which is always in need of new local chieftancies in order to evict defeated kin from the centres of power (Benoit 1982a:23-24). The core of this chapter is constituted by the presentation of case material on the occupation of land in the research region during a relatively short period (essentially the 1930s), which does not so much contradict the above observations as put them into perspective. That is, this specific case of occupation of land and its modalities - the ways in which it was put into practice by local actors - has to be understood in relation to specific historical circumstances as well as the more idiosyncratic projects of some of the actors involved. The chapter remains introductory. In addition to presenting the region's historical background, it permits one to introduce the subject matter for the following chapters, in which the interrelationships between geographic mobility processes and land use practices are further elaborated.

First, some general observations with respect to the history of the Moose kingdoms and some introductory remarks with respect to the nature of the case material are made. Next, it is attempted to reconstruct the research village's history from the moment of its foundation onwards, in relation to developments within the Moose kingdoms. The following sections focus on disputes over land on the border between two colonial administrative entities, the 'Cercle de Kaya' and the 'Cercle de Ouahigouya'. Different possible interpretations are presented, bringing to the fore the diversity of motivations which may exist for geographic mobility of people to occupy land and the importance of the wider socio-political context in which local actors deployed their strategies. As Fulbe are completely silenced, seemingly not having been involved, in the explanations of these conflicts, a separate paragraph treats the history of their presence in the region. Finally, since the geographic mobility processes which appear in the presented case are those which generally are more or less understood to be

'traditional' - i.e. their patterns might be explained by referring to a 'traditional' pre-colonial political structure and to 'traditional' land use practices - the chapter is concluded by the introduction of two processes of geographic mobility which originated during or after colonial rule, i.e. migration to the coastal economies of the Gold Coast and the Ivory Coast and migration to the 'terres neuves' in the south and west of Burkina Faso.

## The history of the Moogo: multiple accounts of the past

The creation of the Moose kingdoms in the former White Volta Bassin - nowadays Nakambé Bassin - is generally understood as the result of a number of migratory movements by *nakombse*, whereby originally non-Moose population groups were gradually incorporated into what has come to be called Moaga society: the Moogo. The origin of these *nakombse* who imposed political rule over 'autochthonous' population groups is traced back to Dagomba warriors who, in the course of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, left Gambaga in northern Ghana (Benoit 1982b:34, Skinner 1960:377). The origin of the pre-Moaga population groups is diverse: Fulse, Kiihse (Dogon), Kalamse, Samo, Ninise and Yiyoose, among others, who nowadays are often identified, and identify themselves, as *tengbiise* (cf. Izard 1985:310, Kohler 1971:24-25, Pageard 1963). Next, there are other important population groups, like Yarse, Saaba and Fulbe, whose greater or lesser integration into Moaga society will be touched upon too, partly in later chapters.

With respect to the history of the Moogo, a kind of 'master narrative' exists, justifying the dichotomous structuration of Moaga society. Two hierarchies are juxtaposed, one referring to authority over people, the other to authority over issues of land and several phenomena of nature. Descendants of conquering *nakombse* lineage segments hold political authority while descendants of submitted *tengbiise* lineage segments retain the exclusivity of the cult of the earth, personified by the *tengsoba* (*tengbiiga* lineage elder, earth priest; pl. *tengsodbamba*) (cf. Izard 1985:6, Pageard 1963:48). Whether the imposition of Moaga rule followed military conquest, whereby part of the original population fled and another part was 'assimilated', or took place by gradual penetration and colonization however remains a subject for discussion (cf. Kohler 1971:25, Pageard 1963:45-46). Oral histories of the arrival of the *nakombse* and the character of this arrival differ from locality to locality. Indeed, in the numerous historical, anthropological and geographical studies on Moose<sup>1</sup>, the diversity in local socio-political arrangements comes strikingly to the fore (cf. also Pageard 1963:13). Although in particular the political organization of the Moose kingdoms is strongly hierarchized, it appears to allow for openness and flexibility in the constitution of local rule. Thus, for example, the *nakombse* did not appropriate all political authority (a *tengbiiga* too can be a village's *naaba* (chief)), and, although the title of *tengsoba* is reserved for *tengbiise*, the functions of *tengsoba* can be performed by members of other population groups as well (Benoit 1989a:27, Imbs 1987:26-27).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Among others: Ancey 1983, Bonnet 1988, Imbs 1987, Izard 1970 & 1985, Kohler 1971, Lallemand 1977, Luning 1989a&b, Luning 1997, Marc 1909, Marchal 1983, Remy 1972, Skinner 1964a (cf. Also Merlet 1995).

<sup>2</sup> Kohler (1971:25f) writes for the 'Ouest-Mossi', i.e. the region of Yako: 'Le type de relation identique que les Ninisi et les Yiyoose entretenaient avec les envahisseurs *nakombse* était le rapport formel autochtones-colonisateurs. Mais le contenu réel de ce rapport a beaucoup varié selon les régions et les époques'. According to Luning (1997:76), one

To come to grips with the above mentioned diversity in local socio-political arrangements in the Moogo, a multifocused approach to the making of history is needed. Clearly, the fact that differential responses to wider processes are produced locally (cf. chapter 1) is not a new phenomenon. The earliest occupation of the 'Boucle du Niger', the imposition of Moaga rule and later on colonial rule, droughts, wars, were all, in a way, 'global' - or at least non-local - events which have been 'processed' by local actors, giving rise to particular local outcomes: in their time too, 'they' have always been modern and capable of creating different modernities (cf. Arce & Long 1996). The case presented below allows for the analysis of a particular period in the establishment of one particular *kombere* ('canton'), namely the Piugtenga chieftancy belonging to the Boussouma kingdom. It shows how the processes at work are partly similar to those highlighted in the classic accounts on the Moose kingdoms, while at the same time demonstrating that local arrangements arise from highly specific and contingent encounters between different 'worlds' at specific times.

Although historical sources have been commented on extensively in chapter 1, a few more specific observations relating to the following case should be added at this point. The factors setting in motion the processes described have sometimes been contradictory, thus inhibiting a straightforward and more or less linear account of events (for instance, the widely acknowledged fact that French rule pacified the region, thus making it safer and permitting the spread of population, while on the other hand French colonial rule also brought forced recruitments and an inherent lack of safety; also, the end of raids and lootings but the persistence - or emergence - of struggle over land along the borders of different kingdoms). A number of 'events' (cf. Comaroff & Comaroff 1992:38-39) can indeed be indicated as having been important factors in past population movements. However, each of the 'events' analyzed separately would lead us to erroneous conclusions on the substance of what happened, while 'events' taken together will probably only leave us with a number of contradictory conclusions. It is only by situating these 'events' (hunger and droughts, conflicts over land, imposition of colonial rule, forced recruitment, etc.) in contexts of ongoing social and cultural processes (e.g. population growth and subsequent land scarcity) that we can reach a proper understanding of the complexities. These social and cultural processes are not only locally rooted but also affected by 'global' forces. It is the encounter of the 'local' and the 'global' that needs to be analyzed (cf. again Comaroff & Comaroff 1992). This introductory chapter nevertheless focuses on some main 'events' as they have come to the fore from the accounts of villagers and from colonial archives. The fact that the 'events' are analyzed through a particular case, with Zindawende, a son of the then Piugtenga *kombere naaba*, as a central figure, helps to avoid a presentation of merely loose ends. In the following chapters, I will attempt to come to more firmly socially and culturally-rooted explanations of processes of geographic mobility and land use practices, and to a 'proper' contextualization of the 'events' here introduced.

Difficulties in the reconstruction of the case were not only brought about by 'events' being contradictory, but also by the diversity of the sources consulted and therefore the emerging diversity of histories. The case is reconstructed on the basis of oral histories by people from Ziinoogo and neighbouring villages, in combination with material consulted in colonial archives and information already present in the extensive literature on Moose kingdoms (in particular Chéron 1924 and Izard 1970). The history of the Moogo, as well as of

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should understand the distinction between autochthonous subjects and ruling conquerors not as an expression of 'factualities', but rather as modelling 'a relation constitutive of society'.

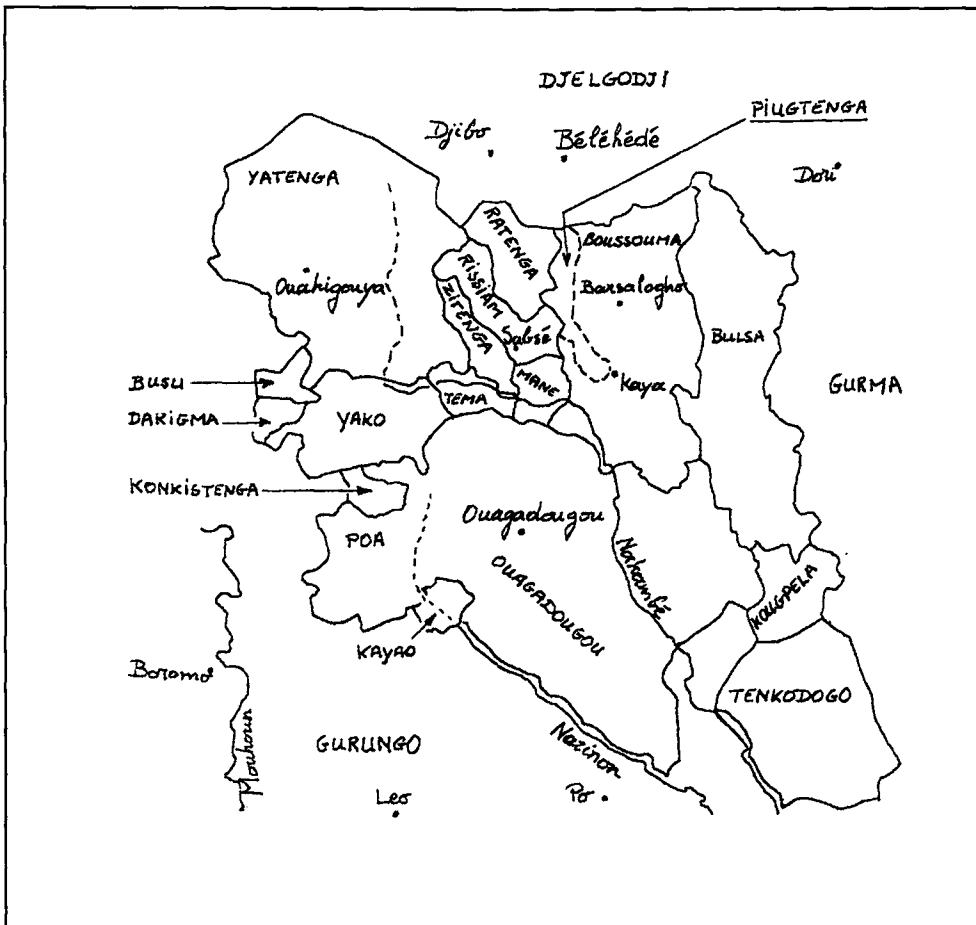
its separate kingdoms and *kombemba* surely can be represented in terms of what Sahlins (1983:520) called 'a history of kings and battles', 'a history in the heroic mode', where 'through "heroic segmentation", initiated by the centrifugal dispersion of the royal kindred, typically in anticipation of a struggle over succession', the underlying (or defeated) people are redistributed among members of the ruling aristocracy (*ibidem*:522). This mode of history will be easily distinguishable in the case presented below. It was expressed mainly by members of the royal *nakombga* lineage segment as well as by the colonial administrators. It seems erroneous, however, to understand the creation and expansion of Moose kingdoms solely in terms of an unfolding logic of *nakombse* political power. The latter constitutes only one possible account of the past, i.e. the 'grand narrative' legitimizing political authority of *nakombse* conquerors over several autochthonous population groups, eliminating histories of the latter and thus not capable of accounting for diverse local configurations. Opposed to the heroic mode, Sahlins puts the 'developmental process of the classic segmentary lineage system', whereby the segmentary lineage 'reproduces itself from the bottom upwards: by natural increase among its minimal groups and fission along the collateral lines of a common ancestry' (*ibidem*:521-522). The accounts of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* are much more in line with this latter mode of history.

Sahlins finally makes another important distinction, that is between those structures 'that are practised primarily through the individual subconscious [inscribed in *habitus*] and those that explicitly organize history as the metaphor of mythical realities' (*ibidem*:525). That is to say that history is differently and unevenly mastered by different actors. For example, members of the royal lineage are much more than others expected to be master of the heroic mode of history, which also constitutes a dominant historical discourse. Other, say common, people may have less explicit knowledge of the past as well as being less conscious about the making of history today. Thus, it is only logical that different accounts of one and the same event exist, even within one relatively small community.

Surely, the diversity of the accounts gathered is even greater because actors involved in particular, sometimes heroic, events have also their own more private projects to pursue. They may be participating, consciously or unconsciously, in the making of the history of the Piugtenga *kombere* or of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*, but at the same time they make the history of their own lineage or family or, for that matter, the history of their own individual lives with the constraints and opportunities at hand, the heroic event being possibly one such constraint or opportunity. When talking about an event, they may tell us about either the history of the *kombere*, of their lineage, of their family or of their own life, thus bringing to the fore only particular aspects of what actually happened, possibly motivated by trying to give an account that best serves their actual interests.

## Early settlement and incorporation in the Moogo

By the time the French imposed colonial rule in 1896, the Moogo consisted of some nineteen kingdoms, however greatly varying in geographical extension and influence (map 2.1; cf. Izard 1985:529). The village of Ziinoogo is situated along the north-western border of Boussouma, one of the four more important kingdoms (together with Ouagadougou, Yatenga and Yako; cf. Izard 1982:363). The Boussouma kingdom consists of twelve *kombemba* (sing. *kombere*). Each *kombere*, constituting an intermediary level between kingdom and villages, is ruled by a *kombere naaba*, depending on and nominated and inaugurated by the king of



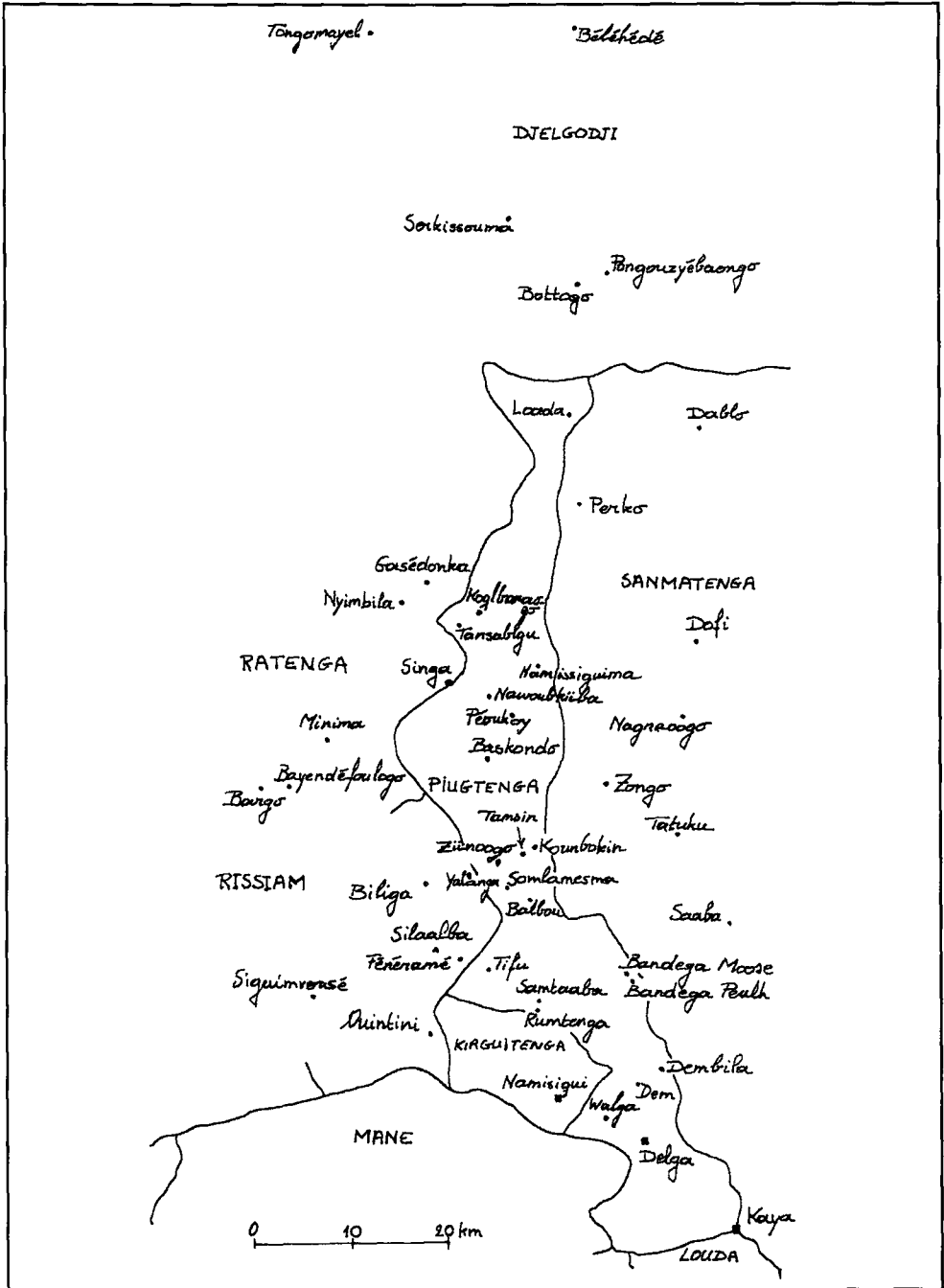
Map 2.1

*The Moose kingdoms and the Piugtenga kombere (source: Izard 1982)*

Boussouma, the latter bearing the title of *rima* (lit. 'eater of power'). Each *kombere naaba* is responsible for the nomination of - i.e. 'gives power' to - the chiefs of the villages (*teng nanamse*) under his command. Ziinoogo belongs to the Piugtenga *kombere* (cf. map 2.2).

Oral histories recorded with elders in Ziinoogo situate the foundation of the village before the creation of the Piugtenga chieftancy. The village's founding ancestor, the Yiyooa *tengsoba* Tensyande, is said to have left Béléhédé, some eighty kilometers to the north in the present-day province of Soum (department of Tongomayel), seeking shelter from raids and lootings - organized, among other things, to capture slaves - by people from neighbouring kingdoms such as Ratenga, Zitenga and Yatenga. He found a safe haven in Ziinoogo, after having stayed for some time at Sergissouma. When he arrived at Ziinoogo, the Moogo *naaba* (the *rima* of the Ouagadougou kingdom) probably did not yet reside in Ouagadougou. The Boussouma kingdom would already have existed, not however Piugtenga. Only a few villages existed in the area, the nearest having been Tifu, Bandega, Tatuku and Silaalba (cf. map 2.2).





Map 2.2

The Piugtenga kombere (source: PEDI, Kaya)

According to Izard (1970:243), the Boussouma chieftancy was founded in about 1570, while Piugtenga was established in between 1593 and 1630 as an independent chieftancy by *naaba* Piku, who was sent by his father, Moogo *naaba* Zwetembusma<sup>3</sup>, to the village of Samtaaba (*ibidem*:148). It follows, then, that *tengsoba* Tensyande would have arrived at Ziinoogo some time between 1570 and 1600, approximatively.

It was argued by village elders, talking about the village's early history, that, at Ziinoogo too, their ancestors continued to be assailed by raiders and looters. The hills surrounding the village, however, offered some protection and permitted them to withstand attacks. The work of Izard (1970) confirms that the region must have been in considerable turmoil and that hostilities at the frontier where Ziinoogo was situated must have been numerous. While the then king of Ouagadougou, *naaba* Zwetembusma, waged wars in the east of his kingdom during the first decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, he sent his son Piku to the north reputedly to protect the Ninise of Samtaaba against Fulbe incursions. During that same period he also sent sons to other places in the region of Kaya (among others, to Biliga, where the chieftancy of Kirguitenga, later becoming a *kombere* of Rissiam, was founded) (*ibidem*:240). Around 1670, Piugtenga came under the suzerainty of Boussouma, which came to be involved in a number of wars with the neighbouring kingdom of Rissiam up until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (cf. also Chéron 1924:665). After a first series of battles, Boussouma defeated Rissiam in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and consequently was able to expand: Louda, Pissila and Soubégha came under its suzerainty, while the Mané kingdom entered its sphere of influence. It was however only at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the chieftancy of Sanmatenga lost its independence, after a war waged by Boussouma against Sanmatenga and, again, Rissiam, whose influence in Sanmatenga, up to that moment, had been considerable and who would even have reigned over this territory for a short period at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Izard 1970:140,245-247). Contrary to Rissiam, Ratenga, the other kingdom separating Piugtenga from Yatenga, had been a vassal state of Yatenga since the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Izard 1985:533). When, then, village elders stressed 'Yaadse' raids and lootings to evoke the region's insecurity in the past, they probably meant raids and lootings which were organized from the territory of Ratenga and which, along Boussouma's western border, added to the insecurity caused by the wars opposing Boussouma and Rissiam (for instance, battles at Siguimvouse and Dapalogo).<sup>4</sup> Ziinoogo was also situated relatively near to one of the few commercial axes traversing the Moogo (the route going from Tomboctou *via* Djibo to Ouagadougou, passing by Tongomayel, Sergissouma and Kaya), which attracted raiders (Izard 1970:385). Finally, although it was never mentioned in Ziinoogo, one is inclined to speculate about insecurity along the northern border of Boussouma, separating it from the Fulbe chieftancies of Djelgodji. Although Djelgodji resisted the pressure of the Masina empire and formed a kind of buffer between Masina and the Moose kingdoms, Yatenga was involved in

<sup>3</sup> It was *naaba* Zwetembusma's successor Nyadfo who was the first Moogo *naaba* to reside in Ouagadougou (Izard 1970:160).

<sup>4</sup> Strictly speaking, Yaadse (sing. Yaadga) refers to inhabitants of the kingdom of Yatenga. However, the Moose kingdoms were divided very early in their history into two influence spheres, one dominated by the Yatenga kingdom and including Ratenga and Zitenga, the other by the Ouagadougou kingdom and encompassing Boussouma (Izard 1982:363). Within the prevailing balance of power, Rissiam maintained for a long time an exceptional position. It lost its independence only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it was defeated by Yatenga and had to recognize the latter's supremacy (Izard 1985:534-536). Inhabitants of kingdoms recognizing the supremacy of the Yatenga kingdom, like for instance Ratenga and Zitenga, are then also referred to as 'Yaadse' by Moose not living in Yatenga's sphere of influence.

three wars against Fulbe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>5</sup> More than likely, this tenuous situation also had its impact on security along the northern border of Boussouma.

In Ziinoogo, it was maintained that, until the arrival of the French at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, insecurity constituted the primary motivation for people to seek shelter close to one another, thus giving rise to relatively few and rather large villages as newly arriving lineage segments settled close to those already present:

'Before the Europeans arrived, the bush was dangerous. There were often raids and lootings and people killed one another. People of different origin sought to live together as if in one compound in order to protect themselves from attacks. That was also how it went at Ziinoogo. There were no *kamaandse* [maize fields near to the compound]. People from Dambre, Baskondo, Namissiguima [today separate villages or wards to the north of Ziinoogo] and others lived here all together in between the hills from here up to Tamsin'.<sup>6</sup>

Ziinoogo's founding ancestor Tensyande is said to have been joined early by other Yiyoose from Béléhédé. Descendants of Tensyande and these other Yiyoose created the *sakse* (sing. *saka*: ward) of respectively Yiitaoore, Kamsin and Kuritgo and their descendants today still constitute the village's most numerous fractions. Later on several other lineage segments, of diverse origin from both within and outside the Moogo, arrived. They settled close to the others, often in their own separate *sakse*, among which Baskondo, Namissiguima and Dambre.<sup>7</sup>

Although it may be assumed that Ziinoogo came very early under the influence of Moose *nakombse* - the nearby villages of Samtaaba and Biliga being ruled by Moose chiefs from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards - it was not before the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>8</sup> that a village chief was nominated in Ziinoogo by a Piugtenga *naaba*. It is difficult to say anything precise about the circumstances of the arrival of Moose *nakombse* in Ziinoogo: did the *tengbiise* of Ziinoogo ask the Piugtenga *naaba* to send a chief for their village in order to protect them, as would have been the case for other villages in the region (e.g. Samtaaba), or

<sup>5</sup> From 1834 to 1837 and from 1853 to 1861, Masina waged war against Djelgodji and its allies from Yatenga, while from 1864 to 1867 Djelgodji attacked Yatenga (Izard 1985:541, cf. also Izard 1982).

<sup>6</sup> Kogbila, Yiitaoore *tengbiisa*.

<sup>7</sup> For instance, the people who founded the *saka* of Namissiguima are said to have left Loubila, a village near Ouagadougou, because of hunger and dissensions. In search of 'peace and good lands' they arrived at Ziinoogo (cf. also Belem & Zongo 1991). During a certain period, a Saaba (blacksmiths) lineage segment, originally from Korumbuli, a ward of the large village of Saaba, was present in Ziinoogo. These people returned to Korumbuli, reputedly after a conflict over a stolen anvil, probably in the 1930s. The origin of still other lineage segments that arrived before the imposition of colonial rule by the French is sometimes traced to specific regions outside the Moogo, although they most often identify themselves, and are identified as such by others, as Yiyoose. For instance, descendants of the founders of the *saka* of Baskondo in Ziinoogo, who have some importance in the region nowadays, are said to be of Kiiibse-origin, i.e. their ancestors would have left ancient Mali. Izard (1970:119) considers the Kiiibse as a population, originary from Mandé, that, moving from the north-west to the south-east, superposed itself on the already present Yiyoose population, extending as far south as the Rissiam mountain area. According to Izard, these Kiiibse fought the *nakombse* and, being defeated left the region to settle at Bandiagara where they became known as the Dogon. That some Kiiibse nevertheless integrated in Moaga society was confirmed in Ziinoogo, where it was said that: 'The Kiiibse came here because they fled from hunger. Some of them returned, others stayed and transformed. Originally they were not Moose, but they took over the Moose traditions'. Izard's distinction between Yiyoose 'd'origine voltaïque' and Yiyoose 'd'origine mandé' thus was recognized in Ziinoogo.

<sup>8</sup> It was said by village elders that this first village chief was nominated by either Piugtenga *naaba* Kuulga or by his predecessor. As *naaba* Kuulga's successor, Sanma, was a contemporary of Boussouma *naaba* Sigri, who reigned from 1851 until 1866 (Izard 1970:244,249), it is plausible that Kuulga and his predecessor reigned over Piugtenga during the first decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

was a chief imposed on them by force? Oral accounts do not give a decisive answer, although it was said that Ziinoogo *tengbiise* were involved in asking for a *nakombga* to start the chieftancy of Piugtenga (for which they then would have joined the Samtaaba Ninise).

The first chief of Ziinoogo was not a *nakombga*. He belonged to a *nayiirdamba* (lit.: 'servants at the chief's court') lineage. As Izard (1985:54) points out for Yatenga, a nomination by a superior chief of a servant of his court as village chief was not uncommon, in particular not when it concerned a village at the border of the kingdom (cf. also Izard 1982:366). The Ziinoogo *nayiirdamba* founded the *saka* which today is named Balongo.<sup>9</sup> The present day village chief belongs, however, to another lineage. He is the fourth Ziinoogo *naaba* of a *nakombga* lineage segment. Around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, *naam* ('power'; Luning (1997) translates *naam* as 'the quality to rule over people') was withdrawn from the *nayiirdamba* for the benefit of a son of the then Piugtenga *naaba* Saaga. The reason most heard in the village for this substitution was the harshness of the deposed chief towards his subjects. The then *buudu* (lineage) elder of Kamsin would have asked the Piugtenga *naaba* Saaga to replace him. It was, however, also explained that the Piugtenga *naaba* Saaga nominated two other sons of his as chiefs of the villages Bakuto and Runtenga at the very same moment he nominated Zemne as the new chief for Ziinoogo. This suggests that the *kombere naaba* made use of the occasion to nominate close relatives, to whom future access to the *kombere* chieftancy was blocked, as village chiefs, thereby evicting chiefs of ancient root<sup>10</sup> or of *nayiirdamba* origin. That such considerations may have intervened and that the nomination of Zemne as Ziinoogo *naaba* indeed took place at the turn of the century was confirmed by the following comment of a village elder: 'Because it was so dangerous in the "brousse", the Piugtenga *nanamse* did not always like to send their own sons to become chiefs of the villages. They preferred to send *nayiirdamba* and it was only after the Europeans had pacified the region that the Piugtenga *naaba* began to replace the *nayiirdamba* by his own sons'.<sup>11</sup> With his descendants, *naaba* Zemne established in Ziinoogo the *saka* of Nakombga.

Hence, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Piugtenga *kombere* was ruled by *naaba* Saaga, who had come to power at a young age and who would hold the office for some

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<sup>9</sup> *Balenbiise* are people of confidence of the chief ('gens de confiance du chef'), i.e. a category of *nayiirdamba*.

<sup>10</sup> *Naam* ('power') is ideally transferred from father to son (from *naaba* to *nabiiga*). In practice the office of chief is subject to power struggles and defeated sons or brothers, whose sons will no longer have access to the chieftancy, are removed from the centre of power by being given a lower level chieftancy. As long as territorial expansion remains an option this latter chieftancy may be a newly founded village or a village formerly not having a political Moaga chief. Izard (1985:22-23) describes this 'ideal' situation as follows:

'L'engendrement segmentaire des *naam* particuliers hiérarchise les territoires comme il hiérarchise les groupes de descendance; à partir d'un village, l'espace politique s'étend, comme à partir d'un premier chef, le groupe de descendance croît. Tout semble se passer de telle manière qu'on ait une exacte congruence entre histoire lignagière et histoire territoriale. [...] Le fondateur d'un commandement nouveau élargit l'assise territoriale de son pouvoir en créant pour ses fils des commandements villageois, donc des *naam* périphériques subordonnées au *naam* central'.

With kingdoms approaching the limits of their territorial expansion, sons and brothers defeated in the struggle for central power have village chieftancies assigned to them, for which Moose chiefs of ancient root have to be evicted. The latter and their descendants then come to join the ever growing ranks of common people (*talse*, sing. *talga*) (Weilenmann 1996:61 gives a remarkably similar account of processes of political succession in the kingdom of Burundi).

According to Izard (1985:29), it happened that a village chief chose his servants and dignitaries among those who had been evicted from power for some time. The latter conserved the thus accorded privilege within their family, reflected in the name of their *saka* (among others, Balongo).

<sup>11</sup> Kogbila, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

seventy years (Izard 1970:249).<sup>12</sup> Ziinoogo was well incorporated into the *kombere's* power structure, with a second 'line' of chiefs taking over political rule in the village. It was composed of several *sakse* (Yiitaore, Kamsin, Balongo, Nakombgo, Baskondo, Namissiguima, Dambre, Kuritgo), founded by different lineage segments in the course of time. The village can be seen as having been a frontier post of both the Boussouma kingdom and the Piugtenga *kombere*, implicated in turmoils with neighbouring kingdoms which, as we shall see, continued during the colonial period and afterwards. During the epoch preceding the arrival of the French, geographic mobility processes converged around a restricted number of settlement foci, Ziinoogo being one of them, characterized by a concentrated habitat, where a relatively large population of diverse origins lived together. The larger part of the region, in particular up north, is viewed as having been essentially empty: 'C'était la brousse seulement', as it was often asserted. Surely, such an observation needs to be put into perspective. It may, for instance, very well have been that this northern region was used as transhumance grazing land by Fulbe from both the Moose kingdoms and Djelgodji (cf. Marchal 1983:703 and also Izard 1982:367, who noted that the northern frontier of Yatenga was an open frontier, totally permeable for pastoralists), and that anyhow the area was only 'subjectively' empty. It is useful to mention in this regard Kopytoff's observation on so-called 'interstitial frontiers': '[Societies] often define neighboring areas as lacking any legitimate political institutions and as being open to legitimate intrusion and settlement - this even if the areas are in fact occupied by organized polities. [...], the frontier is above all a political fact' (1987:11).

Whatever may have been the case, Namissiguima and Baskondo, presently independent villages to the north of Ziinoogo, did not yet exist as such at the turn of the century. They were *sakse* of Ziinoogo, located within the small area in between the hills. The first people to have settled at these and other northern places are said to have left *sakse* of Ziinoogo, former places of settlement today completely or for the larger part abandoned and farmed as *karaase* by those who stayed behind. Indeed, while immigration has continued and still characterizes changes in the village's population composition, colonial rule brought about a striking discontinuity in people's geographical mobility patterns: in contrast to the converging patterns of the preceding epoch, the 20<sup>th</sup> century gave way to diverse patterns of outward movement. Most certainly, the massive migrations to the Gold Coast and the Ivory Coast were of utmost importance in this respect (cf. chapter 6). In this chapter, however, I focus mainly on movements on a smaller geographical scale, which, as will appear below, could be rather spectacular as well. Their analysis may provide an illuminating glance at local social and political practice and the way in which it was affected by the advent of colonial rule. Moreover, as will become clear in chapter 4, it helps to come to grips with certain aspects of contemporary land use practice in the research region.

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<sup>12</sup> Saaga's predecessor, *naaba* Sanma (reign from 1852 to 1866), had been accused of murdering Boussouma *naaba* Kom and of having conspired with Rissiam against Boussouma. Kom's successor deposed Sanma from power and inaugurated Tougouri as Piugtenga *naaba*. Tougouri died within a year and was succeeded by Saaga, who came to office at a very young age (Chéron 1924:675).

## Diversity of actors and projects involved in the expansion of the Piugtenga *kombere*

### *Colonial pacification: straightforward rule, diffuse borders*

When the French imposed colonial rule in 1896, the Moose had already refrained for a long period from territorial conquests by military force over the outer frontiers of the Moogo. In the north and west expansion was halted by respectively Djelgodji Fulbe and Samo. Except for border skirmishes and a few wars (notably Yatenga *versus* Masina and Djelgodji), the Moogo had largely retired within itself (Izard 1970:387). From 1896 onwards, the French colonial administration in the Moogo was progressively built up. Administrative entities were created which were supposed to correspond to the kingdoms and their subdivisions.<sup>13</sup> If then, for instance, the 'Cercle de Ouahigouya' enclosed not only Yatenga but also the kingdoms of Busu, Nyesga, Ratenga, Rissiam and Zitenga, it was supposed to effectively reflect the territories recognizing the supremacy of the Yatenga *naaba* at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Izard 1985:529). The kingdom of Boussouma was at first integrated, together with other central and southern kingdoms, in the 'Cercle du Mossi'. In 1912, the circumscription of Boussouma was created, which became in 1914 the 'Subdivision de Kaya du Cercle du Mossi'. In 1923, finally, the 'Subdivision de Kaya' became the 'Cercle de Kaya' of the colony of the Upper Volta. It consisted of the kingdoms of Boussouma, Mané, Téma and Boulssa, each of them obtaining the status of province, and each subdivided into cantons corresponding to the *kombemba*.<sup>14</sup> Hence, Piugtenga became a canton of the province of Boussouma.<sup>15</sup>

The administrative division of the colony was designed to rule the population as effectively as possible through the chieftancies already in place. Indeed, especially in view of the limited number of French administrators available, the existing political organization of the Moose kingdoms was considered an important asset (cf. also Mersadier 1991:4, Ouédraogo 1996:252). Thus, for instance, in 1916, the then administrator in Kaya was instructed in the following way by his superior:

'L'organisation Mossi simplifie, facilite l'administration du pays et il y a lieu de s'en servir, en conservant aux chefs leur autorité et en passant par leur intermédiaire pour tous les ordres à transmettre à la population. Cette manière de faire que vous avez toujours eue nous a donné d'excellents résultats'.<sup>16</sup>

The rather straightforward indigenous political organization allowed the French to quickly establish a 'rational' system of governance. The borders between administrative entities, however, soon appeared to be remarkably diffuse and contested. In the cases, presented below,

<sup>13</sup> The Moogo became part successively of the military territory of Sénégal-Niger (1896-1904), of the colony of Haut-Sénégal-Niger (1904-1919) and of the colony of the Upper Volta (1919-1932, 1947-1960). In between 1932 and 1947, when the colony of the Upper Volta was temporarily suppressed, the 'Cercle de Kaya' became part of the colony of the Ivory Coast, while the 'Cercle de Ouahigouya' was attached to the French Soudan (Izard 1985:1-2, 1970:252).

<sup>14</sup> Thus, in 1923, Boussouma became a province of the Cercle de Kaya, with Boussouma, Sabouri, Soubégha, Pensa, Pissila, Sanmatenga, Louda, Piugtenga, Kirguitenga, Diguilla, Kirgoutenga and Yimiougou as its cantons (Izard 1970:252).

<sup>15</sup> After an administrative reorganisation in 1938, the canton of Piugtenga was suppressed and incorporated into the canton of Sanmatenga.

<sup>16</sup> Lettre no.372 du Commandant de Cercle du Mossi à M. le Résident de Kaya, le 4 novembre 1916.

on conflicts over land along the border between the Cercle de Kaya and the Cercle de Ouahigouya, the [re]-inscription of a border between the Piugtenga *kombere* and neighbouring chieftancies - and at the same time of the border between the two Cercles - time and again comes to the fore as an important issue. It seems that the earliest delineation of this border by the French dates from 1912, when the circumscription of Boussouma was created as a subdivision of the Cercle de Kaya. The territory of this circumscription corresponded to what afterwards became the Cercle de Kaya. This delineation was laid down in a document which is referred to in later records as the 'Acte Constitutif du Cercle de Kaya'.

The border between Piugtenga and the neighbouring kingdom of Ratenga was revised a first time in 1921. In August of that year, the Commandant of the Cercle du Mossi informed his colleague of the Cercle de Ouahigouya that the Piugtenga *naaba* withdrew his claims on land at Nyimbila (cf. map 2.3), because he had to acknowledge that it had been farmed for over ten years by people from Ratenga.<sup>17</sup> It had been proposed to the Piugtenga *naaba* to accept a provisory border for his canton, apparently based on the prevailing situation with regard to occupation of land for farming by people from respectively Ratenga and Piugtenga. It was furthermore decided to redraw the border as soon as the rains ended. Thereto, in December 1921, the administrators of the two Cercles met with the chiefs and *tengsodbamba*, concerned by this affair, in Nyimbila at the disputed lot. The latter did not reach an agreement, although the customary ritual of taking oath on the *tense* (earth divinities) was performed: each *tengsoba* present took oath on his *tense*, none of them withdrew his claim.<sup>18</sup> The administrators then decided to propose to the Governor of the Colony to correct the frontier between the Cercles in such a way that the land farmed at that moment by people from Ratenga was attached to Ouahigouya and land used by people from Piugtenga to Kaya. The report of this meeting was concluded by a detailed description of the border and a map was added.<sup>19</sup>

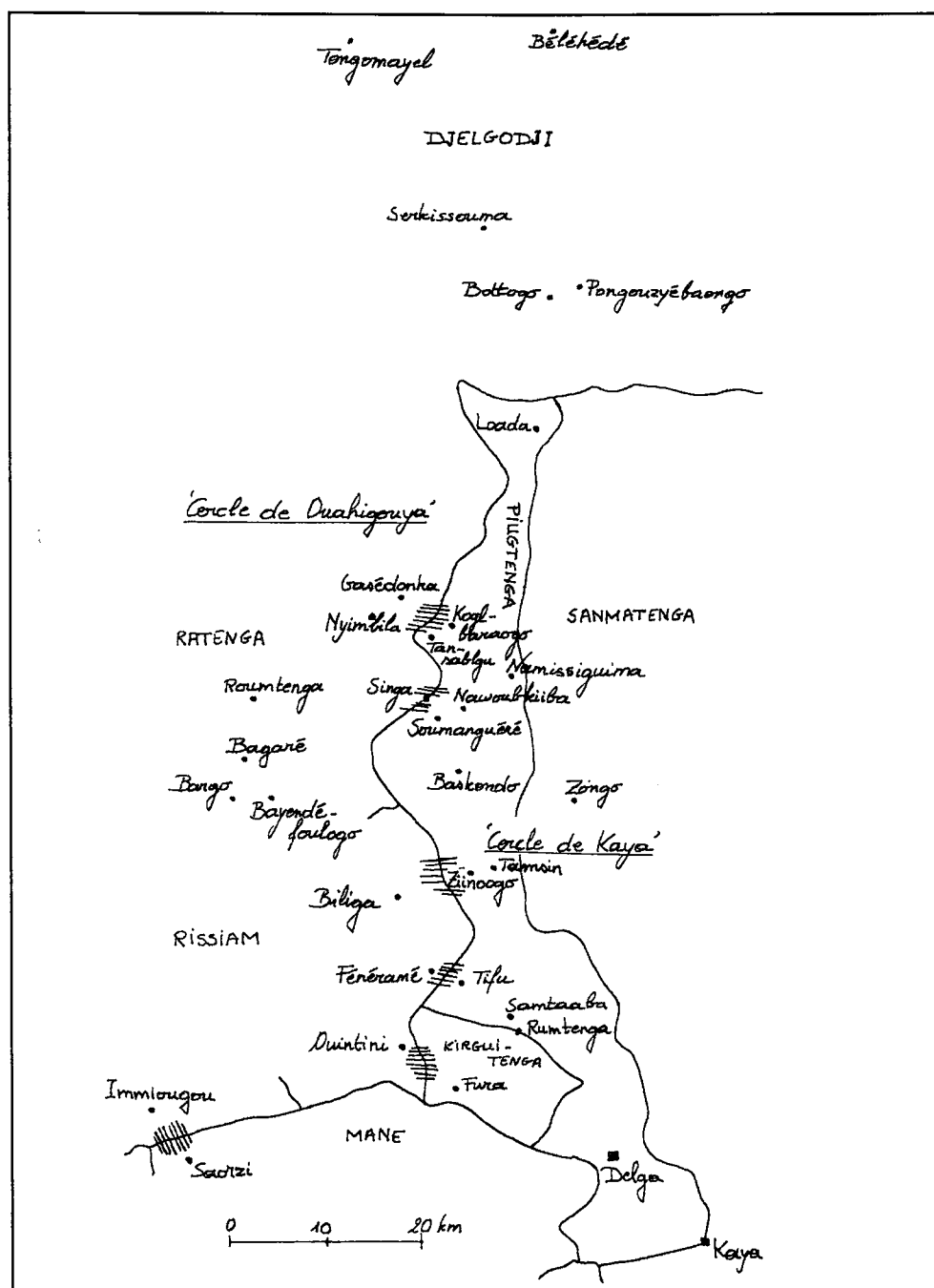
One of the *tengsodbamba* present at this encounter in Nyimbila was the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* as it is well recalled by village elders: 'The people from Ratenga said Nyimbila was their village but the people from Piugtenga opposed and said it was theirs. There has been a judgment and even nowadays [*tengbiise*] from Ziinoogo can go there to discuss the borders. For the judgment many *tengsodbamba* and many chiefs were convened and the *tengbiise* brought their *tengkuga* [earth shrines]. The Piugtenga *naaba* Saaga came and there has been a judgment and the Piugtenga *naaba* has taken his "brousse". Note, firstly, the legitimizing force attributed to the *tengkuga* of the *tengbiise* and the subsequent authority of the Piugtenga *naaba* to claim his "brousse", and, secondly, the claim that *tengbiise* from Ziinoogo even today have a say in matters of land at a place more than 25 kilometers to the north of Ziinoogo, while several other villages are situated in between the two.

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<sup>17</sup> Note pour le Cercle du Mossi, Kaya, le 5 août 1921.

<sup>18</sup> As in other legal matters, French policy with respect to conflicts over land was to follow customary law (sentences pronounced at court trials also ought to be in line with customary law, except if its prescriptions were considered to be contrary to 'les principes de la civilisation française'; cf also chapter 1). This meant that the *tengsodbamba* who claimed authority over the land were invited to indicate the *tengkugri* marking their territory and to take oath upon their *tense* that they were speaking the truth. Those who were not prepared to take oath on the *tense* in fact withdrew their claim.

<sup>19</sup> Procès-Verbal de la délimitation entre Piugtenga et Ratenga, le 14 décembre 1921.



Map 2.3

Recurring conflicts over land along the border between the 'Cercle de Kaya' and the 'Cercle de Ouahigouya'



*The opening up of the empty 'brousse': competition for political authority in a frontier zone*

In order to understand the involvement of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* in the dispute at Nyimbila, it first has to be remembered that the zone north of Ziinoogo up to Djelgodji was considered 'empty' at the turn of the century. No Moose villages existed there. Colonial pacification opened up this empty 'brousse' for human occupation: during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the French followed an active policy of disarming the indigenous population and acted severely upon any turmoil; production of lances and arrows by blacksmiths was prohibited and only 'hunters' were allowed to carry a weapon in order to kill game.<sup>20</sup> Thus, raids, lootings and wars among neighbouring chieftancies were ended, or at least considerably reduced, while through the killing of game the 'brousse' became safer in another way as well.<sup>21</sup>

In 1921, farmers from Ratenga claimed they had cleared the disputed land more than ten years earlier. Clearly, people from Ratenga had moved soon after the imposition of colonial rule to clear land in the lowland which supposedly separated Ratenga and Piugtenga, meeting farmers from Piugtenga not later than 1920. When, in 1921, the border between Kaya and Ouahigouya, and thus between Piugtenga and Ratenga, had been redrawn, it was only asserted that those who lived on and worked the land were entitled to the houses and crops on it and, implicitly, could continue to farm that land. However, since no agreement had been reached between the *tengsodbamba*, no decision was made with respect to the question of to whom the disputed land belonged. Problems were bound to arise again. And, indeed, skirmishes between the populations of Ratenga and Piugtenga continued during the 1920s.<sup>22</sup> Still, the border conflict re-emerged in its full extent only in 1931, this time at Singa, located at only a few kilometers to the south of Nyimbila in the same lowland. An 'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives', R. Arnaud, at that moment staying in Ouahigouya, was asked by the Governor of the Colony of the Upper Volta to settle the conflict which had dragged on for years by then. He provided an extensive report.<sup>23</sup>

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 1931, Arnaud went to the so-called 'village de culture' of Singa at the border between Piugtenga and Ratenga and met the Commandants of Ouahigouya and Kaya as well as the three *kombere* chiefs of Ratenga, Piugtenga and Sanmatenga - the latter's presence was not at all evident (cf. below) - and 'all the *tengsodbamba* of the frontier zone', one of them being the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*. Based on the map drawn in 1921<sup>24</sup> after the conflict

<sup>20</sup> Lettre no.906 A.P. du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta à M. l'Administrateur du Cercle du Mossi, le 23 septembre 1920; Note à toutes Subdivisions du Commandant de Cercle du Mossi, le 25 septembre 1920.

<sup>21</sup> How 'French peace' allowed for new movements of population in frontier zones between pastoral and farming populations has also been described elsewhere (for example, Horowitz 1972:106 for Niger).

<sup>22</sup> In 1926, the Commandant of Ouahigouya informed his colleague in Kaya: 'Question terrains a été, ainsi que vous le savez, réglée à l'amiable. Il n'apparaît pas que les deux affaires dont il s'agissait, aient été difficiles à trancher. Si vous connaissez comme moi le chef de Ratenga je ne connais pas personnellement celui de Piugtenga, mais je le connais de réputation ainsi que ses administrés. Ai prié Ratenga Naaba de tenir ses gens, vous serez reconnaissant bien vouloir inviter Piugtenga Naaba à tenir les siens' (Télégramme-Lettre no.398 du Cercle de Ouahigouya au Cercle de Kaya, le 20 juillet 1926).

<sup>23</sup> Rapport de l'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives à M. le Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta, le 7 mai 1931.

<sup>24</sup> Interestingly, Arnaud, after having experienced the difficulty of tracing documents on earlier establishments of the border between Ouahigouya and Kaya, inserted an extensive complaint on the way archives are kept by the local administrators: 'J'aurais attaché du prix à connaître le détail de la frontière entre les deux Cercles, telle qu'elle a dû être établie par l'acte constitutif du Cercle de Kaya en 1912. Mais ce document ne figure pas aux archives des Cercles

at Nyimbila, Arnaud concluded that 'the disputed land of Singa undoubtedly belongs to the territory of the Cercle de Kaya, in between Soumanguéré and Bakouda'. As this map had been drawn according to the actual occupation of farm land by people from respectively Piugtenga and Ratenga in 1921, it can be concluded that people from Ratenga had forced their fields eastwards during the following ten years. In 1931, land at Singa was used by farmers from the Ratenga villages Bagaré, Roumtenga, Bayendéfoulogo, Yalagatenga and Bargo, and by farmers from 'several villages of the canton of Piugtenga', all situated to the south of Singa. To Arnaud it seemed obvious that Singa constituted a recently cleared area, where people spent only the rainy season near their fields and retired to their respective villages for the dry season:

'Les terrains de culture de Singa ne sont occupés que pendant l'hivernage et pendant une partie de la saison sèche pour la garde des greniers. A la saison sèche il n'y a pas d'eau du tout. C'est un terrain parfaitement fertile [...]'.<sup>25</sup>

Arnaud established that the disputed land had been cleared for a first time in 1904 by a man from Bayendéfoulogo, authorized to do so by the Roumtenga *tengsoba*. Afterwards, the plot was used by other people from Bagaré and Bayendéfoulogo. No disputes had occurred until 1927, when Zindawende, a son of Piugtenga *naaba* Saaga entered the scene:

'Il y a 4 ans des difficultés commencèrent. Le nommé Zindawende, fils du chef de canton de Piugtenga et établi depuis six à dix ans au village de Soumanguéré à 4 ou 5 km. de Singa, revendiqua la possession des terrains alors cultivés par le nommé Z.Y. dûment autorisé par le *tengsoba* de Bayendéfoulogo, qui cultivait sur les lieux avant le possesseur actuel.

D'après les dires du *tengsoba*, à l'époque où Zindawende s'établit à Soumanguéré auprès de son frère, chef de village, les terrains de Singa étaient déjà mis en valeur'.<sup>26</sup>

Arnaud certainly acknowledged that he did not deal here with a simple land tenure dispute. At several points in his report he brought to the fore the involvement of the three chieftancies (Piugtenga, Ratenga and Sanmatenga), which complicated the matter considerably. Firstly, he observed:

'En ce qui concerne les terrains de Singa, il est à signaler qu'à se les disputer avec acharnement les indigènes sont devenus ennemis les uns des autres et que les trois chefs de Canton intéressés paraissent brouillés à mort. Au moindre incident, il se produira des rixes.

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intéressés. [...] Qu'il me soit permis de déplorer, à ce propos, la négligence apportée par la plupart des Cercles à la tenue de leurs archives. Dès que les documents datent de plusieurs années les Chefs des circonscriptions s'en désintéressent. Ils les considèrent comme paperasse futile et les relèquent le plus souvent dans quelque magasin poudreux et obscur où ils deviennent la proie des termites. Les pièces les plus précieuses à l'histoire de la Colonie sont ainsi disparues ou sont incomplètes, réduites à l'état de lambeau qui se délitent au moindre contact. Ces Messieurs ignorent que l'histoire se bâtit avec le quotidien de l'Administration et que se désintéresser de cette chronique dès qu'elle a vieilli, c'est manquer à son devoir. Le vandalisme est une maladie chronique à la Colonie, et si je me permets de regretter qu'il ne soit pas mis fin à des pratiques bien regrettables et à une carence coupable des Commandants de Cercle, c'est dans l'espoir que M. le Gouverneur voudra bien y mettre un terme par des instructions à la fois ferme et précises'.

Considering the actual condition of the archives at the Haut Commissariat of the Province of Sanmatenga, it seems unlikely that any Administrator, colonial or national, has ever laid this early warning to his heart.

<sup>25</sup> Rapport de l'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives à M. le Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta, le 7 mai 1931.

<sup>26</sup> Rapport de l'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives à M. le Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta, le 7 mai 1931.

M. l'Administrateur de Ouahigouya m'a fait connaître à ce propos que récemment le chef de Canton de Piugtenga a envoyé sur le territoire de Ratenga une véritable expédition guerrière composée d'une quarantaine de cavaliers et d'un certain nombre de fantassins tous armés d'arcs et de flèches, qui, après avoir arrêté plusieurs indigènes de Ratenga, pillèrent leurs greniers et conduisirent à Kaya leurs prisonniers, que l'Administrateur incarcéra et punit de peines disciplinaires pour avoir empiété sur les terrains de leurs voisins. Les indigènes de Ratenga se transportaient de leur côté à Ouahigouya et se plaignaient amèrement des procédés des gens de Piugtenga. Les Administrateurs intéressés se rencontrèrent sur les lieux, ouvrirent l'un et l'autre une enquête et n'aboutirent à aucun accord'.<sup>27</sup>

The 'war expedition' sent by the Piugtenga *naaba* seems to have been out of proportion compared to the limited surface of the disputed land<sup>28</sup> and clearly political motives intervened. In order to settle this conflict, the people of Ratenga had demanded the presence of the Sanmatenga *naaba*, although Sanmatenga apparently was not involved in the conflict. This demand was communicated by the Commandant of Ouahigouya to the Commandant of Kaya.<sup>29</sup> The latter seems to have been afraid of being manipulated and, in order to prevent political problems within his circumscription, at first had strongly opposed the presence of the Sanmatenga *naaba*, answering the Commandant de Ouahigouya in the following terms:

'En ce qui concerne "le grand chef" de Sanmatenga dont fait mention votre lettre je n'en connais pas sous cette qualité; il existe dans le cercle un chef de canton de Sanmatenga sous les ordres directs du chef de Province de Boussouma et les territoires de ce chef de canton ne s'étendent pas jusqu'au point de Singa mis en litige [...].

Je ne vois donc pas l'opportunité bien au contraire de faire assister à la réunion projetée le chef de canton de Sanmatenga qui n'a rien à y voir, de ses propres déclarations et dont la venue injustifiée ne pourrait qu'apporter du discrédit auprès de ses administrés pour le chef de canton de Piugtenga seul qualifié pour intervenir en la circonstance.

L'animosité connue du chef de canton de Ratenga de votre cercle contre le chef de canton de Piugtenga qu'il désire ignorer, tendrait donc à provoquer ici même dans le cercle de Kaya des difficultés politiques en incitant un de mes chefs de canton à revendiquer des territoires de son voisin.

[Cette manœuvre] vient encore de s'affirmer ici même par l'envoi par le chef de Ratenga d'un émissaire auprès du chef de canton de Sanmatenga pour lui demander de substituer devant nous au chef de canton de Piugtenga pour l'étude et dans le règlement du litige en cause'.<sup>30</sup>

It does not become clear how it finally was decided who should attend the settlement of the conflict at Singa. Still, the Ratenga *naaba* succeeded in having it his way in that the Sanmatenga *naaba* was present and even came to have a decisive say together with a son of the *tengsoba* of Zongo, a Sanmatenga village. As the Sanmatenga *naaba* and this *tengsoba's* son supported the claim of the people from Ratenga, the representatives of Piugtenga, that is the Piugtenga *naaba* and the *tengsobdamba* of Piugtenga villages, were overruled. In order to settle the conflict, Arnaud decided to follow the majority, constituted by Ratenga and Sanmatenga representatives. In his report, he came to the conclusion that before (period not

<sup>27</sup> Rapport de l'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives à M. le Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta, le 7 mai 1931.

<sup>28</sup> 'Le terrain qui fait l'objet du présent litige est d'une superficie très restreinte, l'année dernière (1930) on y a récolté en tout 70 paniers de têtes de mil. Pour les terrains voisins il n'y a jusqu'ici de contestations' (Rapport de l'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives à M. le Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta, le 7 mai 1931).

<sup>29</sup> Lettre no.89 de l'Administrateur du Cercle de Ouahigouya à Monsieur l'Administrateur Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, Ouahigouya, le 5 février 1931.

<sup>30</sup> Lettre no.39 A.S. du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya au Commandant de Cercle de Ouahigouya, le 18 février 1931.

specified) Piugtenga did not extend as far north as it did in 1931<sup>31</sup> and that Sanmatenga and Ratenga had already agreed on a common border (this happened probably not earlier than the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century <sup>32</sup>). It was maintained by Ratenga and Sanmatenga representatives that the border was determined by the *tengsodbamba* of Roumtenga and Bayendéfoulogo for Ratenga and by the *tengsoba* of Zongo for Sanmatenga and that 'they had placed stones on this border'. Although Arnaud acknowledged that the Piugtenga *naaba* was the rightful *political* successor of the Sanmatenga *naaba* in this particular region as Piugtenga had 'interposed' itself between Ratenga and Sanmatenga, he adhered to the view that the *tengsoba* of Zongo (Sanmatenga), 'according to indigenous custom', possessed the most ancient claims on the *land*. Zindawende's claim was rejected and Z.Y. from Bayendéfoulogo was authorized to consume the fruits of the disputed lot.

Two points which appear from the settlement of the conflict at Singa and from Arnaud's illuminating report need some comment here. Firstly, there clearly was a certain continuity between the tenuous relations among the three chieftancies and their pre-colonial history. From 1859 to 1896, Ratenga and Sanmatenga had been waging war against one another. Hostilities had started after people from Sanmatenga had raided herds of Fulbe from Ratenga. During this war, Sanmatenga villages were looted and submitted to a regime of terror (Izard 1970:377). Such circumstances make it all the more probable that the zone separating Sanmatenga and Ratenga remained empty or was emptied for that matter. What is remarkable then is, that in a time of lootings, raids and wars, Sanmatenga and Ratenga still succeeded in delimiting a common border, sanctioned by the *tengsodbamba* of the respective chieftancies. As the division of authorities over people and land between respectively the *nanamse* and the *tengsodbamba* seems in any case not to be doubted, the appearance of the *tengsodbamba* on the pre-colonial scene of conflicts suggests that then too control of land for cultivation may have been an issue. This issue of land for farming is often strikingly absent in representations of the pre-colonial history of Moose kingdoms. On the one hand, it may have been that land indeed played a minor role in conflicts and expansion strategies, that what counted above all was political power over people and that to obtain political power, or to expand it, wars had to be waged to evict competitors or to have an ally placed on a certain throne. That, after the imposition of colonial rule, land for farming became central to conflicts and that in these conflicts, as it will be shown below, *nakombse* chiefs came to play a major role, may then be explained by the fact that colonial pacification had made former strategies of expansion impossible, giving rise to new strategies for chieftancies to continue their struggle. On the other hand, the history of Moose kingdoms has come to us mainly as the history of *nakombse* dynasties (cf. also Luning 1997:51), indeed concerned with political power issues, political power that relates exclusively to people, as is so often stated by Moose themselves as well as by literature. The Moaga society consists of more, however, and it may well be that an alternative pre-colonial history never has been told, that is the history of occupation of land as opposed to the history of submission of people. This has also been acknowledged by Izard (1970:389), who critically commented on his own work:

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<sup>31</sup> This was also confirmed by village elders who stated that 'before the Piugtenga *naaba* commanded from Kaya to Santaaba'.

<sup>32</sup> Probably this period is correct, as it was the Zongo *tengsoba* whose son was present that day who participated himself in this delimitation.

'Le caractère purement événementiel des pages que nous avons consacrées à Boussouma, Mané et Rissiam indique assez notre gêne devant un matériel relevant de la seule histoire "dynastique" dont on ne peut tirer que peu d'information susceptibles d'éclairer ne serait-ce que de façon grossière le comportement politique de souverains dont les noms ne sont associés à des guerres pour nous obscures que parce que nous ignorons les vraies causes de celles-ci'.

The imposition of colonial rule coincides with the start of an epoch for the study of which more and diverse sources are available. The sudden appearance of conflict over land for cultivation in the history of a Moaga chieftancy might thus be attributed partly to this shift in sources, which is not to deny that colonial rule must have had a severe impact on expansion strategies that could be deployed.

That the former enemies from Sanmatenga and Ratenga found themselves at Singa as allies does not have to surprise, because overruling Piugtenga claims served both their interests best: people from Ratenga continued to have at their disposal the land at Singa, while Sanmatenga in the process had succeeded in getting accepted by the colonial administration its 'customary rights' to the lands separating the cantons of Sanmatenga and Ratenga, where political rule however remained with the Piugtenga *naaba*. But, as we shall see, the claiming of land for cultivation based on 'customary rights' detained by *tengbiise tengsodbamba* appeared to be an excellent strategy when pursuing the expansion of political power, at least under colonial rule.

Secondly, Arnaud suggested that the conflict between Piugtenga and Ratenga at Singa probably was related to the struggle for political power internal to Piugtenga. The Piugtenga *naaba* would have been in search for a place to nominate his son Zindawende as chief (cf. also footnote 10):

'Le chef de Canton de Piugtenga est établi comme chef depuis plus de 50 ans au village de Delga, à quelques kilomètres du village de Piugtenga qui est très éloigné des terrains en litige. Ce jour, il est vieux et aveugle. Il semble avoir nommé de son autorité quatre de ses fils chefs de village: à Sivega, à Tamsin, à Soumanguéré et à [illegible].

Il a d'autres fils à placer. C'est l'un d'eux, Zindawende, qui frère du chef de Soumanguéré s'est emparé des terrains cultivés jusqu'alors à Singa par les gens du canton de Ratenga. Or étranger au Pays, il ne peut cultiver ces terrains que s'il y est autorisé par les *tengsodbamba*'.<sup>33</sup>

In the interpretation of colonial administrators, this aspect of the border conflicts between Piugtenga and Ratenga, i.e. Zindawende's frustrated aspirations for political power, would be stressed more and more in the years to come.

### *Agricultural colonization of the north: land for subsistence, today and in the future*

Next to the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*, three other *tengsodbamba* from Piugtenga villages were mentioned by Arnaud to have been present at the settlement of the conflict at Singa in 1931: the Dambre *tengsoba*, the Nyimbila *tengsoba* and the Soumanguéré *tengsoba*. The former was the elder of a lineage segment that had left Ziinoogo for the north at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to found Koglbaraogo. Until the eve of colonization, Dambre had been a *saka* of Ziinoogo and nowadays too the Koglbaraogo *tengsoba* is sometimes referred to as the Dambre *tengsoba*. Also early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, people from the *saka* Namissiguima in Ziinoogo took

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<sup>33</sup> Rapport de l'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives à M. le Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta, le 7 mai 1931.

off to the north and founded Namissiguima, nowadays a relatively large village about seventeen kilometers from Ziinoogo. In Ziinoogo it was said that the first settlers from Piugtenga at Nyimbila had left the *saka* Namissiguima in Ziinoogo. It seems very plausible that the one referred to by Arnaud as the Nyimbila *tengsoba* was in fact the Namissiguima *tiibsoba*.<sup>34</sup> Soumanguéré, which Arnaud wrongly considered to be a village, at that time was a *saka* of Ziinoogo where it paid its taxes.<sup>35</sup>

During the same first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Baskondo was founded, equally by people who used to live at Ziinoogo, in the *saka* Baskondo. Furthermore, Ziinoogo *tengbiise* were among the first (Moose) settlers at places like Loada and Bottogo, and Nawoubkiiba was founded by people from the Piugtenga village Rumtenga. Obviously, a remarkable spreading out of population had taken place during the first thirty years of colonial rule.<sup>36</sup> Asked for explanations, elders in Ziinoogo, on first enquiry, rarely mentioned any of the political arguments set out above - chieftancies' pursuit of expansion, struggles for power internal to chieftancies - except of course for the increased safety brought about by colonial pacification. First of all, the need for farm land was stressed. With regard to Zindawende's presence at Soumanguéré, for instance, it was said: 'Zindawende farmed at Soumanguéré, and at that moment *tengsoba* Rayuudu was there as well. Rawaage [during my fieldwork and until his death in 1995 lineage elder of Kamsin] was born there.'<sup>37</sup> Zindawende did not live in Ziinoogo. His *yiiri* [home] was Delga and he left his father, Piugtenga *naaba* Saaga, to search for millet. Together with others from Ziinoogo, Rayuudu and Zindawende constituted one group at Soumanguéré. People who left for Soumanguéré did this in order to find millet. No other problem existed in Ziinoogo'.<sup>38</sup> Thereby it was emphasized that Singa and Soumanguéré were part of 'Ziinoogo's "brousse"' (*yaa tond weoogo* or 'it is our "brousse"'), and that, thus, Rayuudu was entitled to accord Zindawende the right to farm at Singa: 'Surely Rayuudu did not have to ask for the land there for it belonged to him'.

How the authority of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* in matters of allocation of farm land at places like Singa and Soumanguéré should be understood will become clearer below. Here, it is sufficient to point to some probable causes of the spreading out of population in search of farm land. Firstly, it seems plausible that a relative population pressure had built up during the period preceding colonial pacification, when more and more people gathered on the frontiers of the kingdoms under the pressure of population growth in more central areas. High population densities in the Moogo were indeed already noticed by early travellers (cf., for example, Binger cited by Marchal 1983:712; in 1903, population density for Yatenga was estimated at about 12 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, Izard 1970:384). Secondly, climatological

<sup>34</sup> The office of *tiibsoba* is comparable to the office of *tengsoba*. It is held by a *tengbiiga* lineage elder and the term *tiibsoba* is explained by the fact that the most important shrine for which the *tiibsoba* is responsible is the *tiibo* (ancestors' shrine, cf. Pageard 1963:50 and Ouedraogo & Sawadogo 1991).

<sup>35</sup> Nowadays, Soumanguéré is a *saka* of Namissiguima with its territory under the authority of the Namissiguima *tiibsoba*.

<sup>36</sup> Today, the wards Namissiguima and Dambre in Ziinoogo are deserted. Kinsmen of those who founded Baskondo are still living in Ziinoogo.

<sup>37</sup> The office of Ziinoogo *tengsoba* alternates between lineage elders of respectively Kamsin and Yiitaoore (cf. also chapter 3). That Rayuudu, having left Kamsin, was at Soumanguéré and held the office of *tengsoba* at that moment, suggests that the person called by Arnaud the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* was the lineage elder of Yiitaoore. Although the latter at that moment did not hold the office of *tengsoba* he still might have had considerable influence as also today both lineage elders have great authority in issues of conflict over land even if they happen not to occupy the office.

<sup>38</sup> Raboke, *nakombga* lineage elder.

circumstances intervened. Whereas the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had been relatively wet (Lahuec & Marchal 1979:125), the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were relatively dry. The years 1913-1914 were disastrous and brought hunger throughout the region<sup>39</sup>, while the period from 1925 to 1930 was also very difficult: for Yatenga, Marchal (1980:214-215) notes prolonged dry periods during the rainy season for five out of these six years, three years with a 'soudure difficile' and one year of hunger.<sup>40</sup> It is not surprising that in such circumstances the land along Piugtenga's north-western border was highly valued, as much by Piugtenga as by Ratenga farmers, for this land consisted for the larger part of lowlands.

That people's movements to the north of Ziinoogo can be interpreted in terms of agricultural colonization was again confirmed by elders' comments on yet another conflict over land at Singa, which took place in 1932. On this dispute, which was about a plot next to the one which had been the object of the conflict in 1931, the Commandant of Ouahigouya wrote:

'R.G. prétend cultiver depuis 5 ans, et avoir été l'objet d'une réclamation de K.S. il y a 4 ans. Ce dernier ne put obtenir gain de cause devant l'Administrateur de Ouahigouya en tournée. Le terrain contesté serait voisin de celui de Z.Y. objet du litige réglé le 27 avril 1931 par M. l'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives. R.G. aurait ensemencé cette année; le mil était déjà haut quand K.S. vint pour occuper son lougan.

De son côté K.S. nous a déclaré le 9 août occuper le terrain sans interruption depuis dix ans, et le tenir du nommé T., fils du *tengsoba* de Ziinoogo, récemment décédé, mais n'ayant pas lui-même la qualité de *tengsoba*. Il soutient avoir ensemencé le lougan qui serait situé à 500 ou 1000 mètres au nord du champ de Z.Y.'<sup>41</sup>

In Ziinoogo it was argued that 'K.S. went to farm at Singa because he wanted his children to know which were the boundaries of their *ziinse* ['places', sing. *ziiga*]. He came from Ziinoogo, had his origin here'.<sup>42</sup> What is emphasized here is that people moved to clear land in the north not only because of their immediate needs, but also in order to secure access to farm land for their descendants. A father needed to show his sons the places they would be allowed to farm when he himself would no longer be there. Note also that K.S. did not obtain permission to farm from the *tengsoba*, but claims to be authorized by the latter's son. In chapters 3 and 4 the nested levels of authority with respect to the allocation of farm land will be further analyzed. Here it suffices to note that conflicts over land such as those described here all too easily lead one to focus upon leading figures with some kind of higher status, all the more so because colonial authorities attempted to have their decisions sanctioned by such status holders (notably the chiefs and the *tengsobdamba*).

<sup>39</sup> In Yatenga, this drought would have caused about 60,000 victims (Izard 1985:4).

<sup>40</sup> Crops have also been destroyed by locust plagues; in 1929, locusts destroyed 80 to 90% of millet harvests in Yatenga (Benoit 1982a:22). It should furthermore be stressed that an important factor in the frequency of harvest failures during the 1920s was the forced cotton cultivation programme (cf. also chapter 4). Cotton production competed directly with food production in terms of both labour and land. The famine of 1926-27 is often attributed mainly to Lieutenant-Governor Hesling's cotton policy (Gervais 1990:82).

<sup>41</sup> Lettre no.558 du Commandant de Cercle de Ouahigouya au Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, le 17 août 1932.

<sup>42</sup> Sayouba, Tiibtenga Yiyoooga.

*Colonial authority challenged: flight and uncontrolled expansion*

Already in the earliest days of colonial rule, the French developed a system of 'prestations' through which labour was mobilized, mostly for all kinds of infrastructural works (e.g. roads and bridges). Recruitment took place also for military service and for both 'public works' (e.g. the construction of the railroads Thiès-Kayes and Abidjan-Niger) and private enterprises (mainly in the Ivory Coast). Furthermore, a head tax was imposed and, during the 1920s, cotton production was enforced on the population (cf. Echenberg 1975, Gervais 1990, Marchal 1980). The first thirty years of colonial rule, and in particular the 1920s, laid an extremely heavy burden on the population as demands for labour, taxes and cotton were raised 'above all tolerance' (Gervais 1990:20, citing the report of an inspection mission which took place in 1932). Not surprisingly, then, a second major reason for movements to the north, put forward by village elders, was the repressiveness of the colonial regime. The empty 'brousse' to the north was supposed to offer a hiding place from colonial exactions. For instance, an elder who spent his youth in Koglibaraogo explained: 'My father left with his younger brothers for Koglibaraogo because here in Ziinoogo we were beaten. We found nobody there and cleared the "brousse" to settle'. Another elder: 'People from Ziinoogo went to live in Baskondo and Koglibaraogo because the French wanted to chop wood around here and let us transport it to Ouagadougou where it would be used for the construction of houses. That is why a number of people settled deeper in the "brousse". The French passed orders to the chieftancies which then had to see for the work to be carried out'.

Not only had the region to the north of Ziinoogo been opened up by colonial pacification, but also repressive colonial policy unintentionally contributed to the acceleration and intensification of population spreading into that zone. It has been pointed out by others (e.g. Asiwaju 1975, Gervais 1990:53-54) that flight, be it to less controlled areas<sup>43</sup> of the French colonies or to the British Gold Coast, constituted an effective weapon in the hands of Upper Voltans in the face of the injustices they were to endure. Such flights certainly did not go unnoticed by the administrators and also worried them. In 1937, the Commandant of Kaya complained:

'Peu lui [le Moaga] importe de quitter sa soukala, il s'enfonce dans la brousse et va en construire une autre loin de son chef de village et de préférence dans un autre canton ce qui lui permet, tout au moins pendant quelques années, d'échapper à tous ses devoirs'.<sup>44</sup>

and also observed:

'Certains chefs que j'ai interrogé moi-même n'ont pas hésité à déclarer que nous étions les seuls responsables de l'anarchie qui règne dans le pays. Je ne serai pas loin de partager cette manière de voir.

En effet, l'indigène, habitué depuis des millénaires à ne respecter la force que lorsqu'elle se manifeste sous une forme brutale, ne comprend pas notre libéralisme parce que la transition a été trop brutale. C'est ainsi que s'expliquent les abandons systématiques des villages, la création de nouveaux groupements en dehors des

<sup>43</sup> Earlier studies already revealed that at the turn of the century the northern zones of the Moogo had been relatively 'empty' (Benoit 1982a, Lahuc & Marchal 1979) and that colonial exactions have been an important factor in instigating a population movement to these less controlled areas ('aires-refuges'). Especially until the 1940s, Fulbe areas in the north were penetrated by Moose.

<sup>44</sup> Rapport Politique, premier semestre 1937, Cercle de Kaya, Colonie de la Côte d'Ivoire.



agglomérations d'origine, loin de tout contrôle et même le refus d'obéissance des ordres qu'ils savent émaner de l'autorité administrative'.<sup>45</sup>

As is already suggested in this latter quotation, administrators sought the cause for the escape from colonial control in the diminished authority of chiefs, brought about by the fact that the French no longer allowed chiefs to act with force against disobedient subjects as they would have done in pre-colonial times:

'En dépit d'un caractère individualiste, et d'une sorte d'insoumission passive, le Moaga n'est pas dangereux. Il s'applique à éluder ses obligations en prenant du large, il quitte volontier sa soukala du village pour aller en établir une autre dans la brousse, le plus loin de ses chefs naturels. La pauvreté de ses terrains de culture est la raison invoquée le plus souvent pour justifier son départ. Il faut reconnaître qu'elle n'est pas dépourvue de valeur, la culture extensive qu'il pratique, n'ayant pas les moyens suffisants de fumer les terres qu'il travaille, lui crée périodiquement le besoin de changer ses terrains. Pour satisfaire ce besoin il ne serait point indispensable qu'il aille aussi loin qu'il va trop souvent, mais son désir de liberté le fait renchéir sur la nécessité.

Au temps où les *nanamse* gardaient encore leur autorité primitive de telles pratiques n'étaient point tolérées, mais l'autorité des *nanamse* est aujourd'hui quasi ruinée. Il est bien certain que l'Administration française ne pourrait point tolérer leurs abus d'autrefois, mais il semble qu'une sollicitude trop accentuée vis-à-vis de ses sujets, sans améliorer de beaucoup leur sort, n'ait eu comme résultat que de détruire l'autorité de leurs chefs naturels'.<sup>46</sup>

The case of the Piugtenga *kombere*, however, suggests that these administrators may have been wrong, underestimating the authority of chiefs and overestimating their loyalty. Indeed, in 1932, the year that the second conflict at Singa took place, it became apparent not only that the administrators in Kaya and Ouahigouya had difficulties in controlling the events at their common border, but also that they were afraid of being played off against one another:

'[...] Honneur rendre compte que tendance se manifeste chez certains indigènes Canton de Ratenga à réveiller anciennes querelles territoriales avec voisins du Cercle de Kaya, à propos desquelles Inspecteur Affaires Administratives avait dû se déplacer en avril 1931. Ces indigènes semblent escompter hostilité Commandants de Cercle intéressés et cherchent même à la provoquer par renseignements visiblement tendancieux. Ai averti que toute tentative désordre serait sévèrement punie'.<sup>47</sup>

They also felt their authority challenged:

'Administrateur de Ouahigouya rend compte que fin novembre dernier plusieurs de ses administrés cultivant dans la région de Biliga furent assaillis par des indigènes armés, originaires du village de Piugtenga, Cercle de Kaya. Recherchez fauteurs désordres et punissez les très sévèrement.

Contestations d'ordre domanial région frontalière Kaya-Ouahigouya - déjà anciennes - nécessitent [dans] plus bref délai possible arbitrage Administrateurs Cercles intéressés. Faute limites naturelles et en raison imprécision coutume arbitrage devra être imposé et respecté par indigènes dûment avertis que leurs prétentions à fixer eux-mêmes des limites aux Cercles est inadmissible'.<sup>48</sup>

The situation in that part of the colony seems to have changed rapidly, without the administration having gained a grip on settlement patterns. In documents from the 1930s, names of villages and wards appeared to disappear in following documents, or a village in one text became a ward in another (e.g. Soumanguéré). Illustrative in this respect is that, in 1931,

<sup>45</sup> Rapport Politique, deuxième semestre 1937, Cercle de Kaya, Colonie de la Côte d'Ivoire.

<sup>46</sup> Rapport Politique, quatrième trimestre 1933, Cercle de Kaya, Colonie de la Côte d'Ivoire.

<sup>47</sup> Lettre no.490 du Commandant de Cercle de Ouahigouya au Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta, le 22 juillet 1932.

<sup>48</sup> Télégramme-Lettre no.3964 A.P. du Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta au Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, le 13 décembre 1932.

Arnaud considered Zindawende to be a *kombere* chief's son for whom a village chieftancy of his own still had to be found. One of Zindawende's elder brothers would, again according to Arnaud, have been nominated chief of the village of Tamsin before 1931. However, according to information obtained in both Ziinoogo and Tamsin, Zindawende was nominated chief of Baskondo at the very same moment as this chief of Tamsin: 'There was no Baskondo *naaba* before Zindawende; among the poor it is impossible to take care of one another, one needs the chieftancy for order to reign'<sup>49</sup>, and: 'There were people in Baskondo and because the Piugtenga *naaba* saw that it had become a large village he sent Zindawende as *naaba*. He also sent a son to become *naaba* of Nyimbila'<sup>50</sup>. It seems that, at a time that Baskondo was considered to constitute a hiding place beyond the control of the colonial administration, the Piugtenga *naaba* had nominated a village chief without notifying his French superior, as he formally should have done (nominations of village chiefs by *kombere* chiefs had to be approved of by the Commandant de Cercle).<sup>51</sup> Since it was in particular the *kombere* chiefs who were responsible for the carrying out of the exactions imposed by the administration (e.g. collection of taxes, recruitment for forced labour and military service), the Piugtenga *naaba*, by leaving his superiors unaware of the existence of Baskondo as a separate settlement, can be said to have protected a number of his subjects from these exactions. This puts in perspective the extent to which the chiefs, formally incorporated into the system of colonial rule, collaborated with their superiors.<sup>52</sup>

In playing off the Commandants against one another and in challenging colonial authority, Zindawende played a major role. In July 1933, he tried again to obtain satisfaction with respect to land at Singa, first with the Commandant of Ouahigouya, who claimed however to be incompetent in the matter, since the disputed land belonged to the Cercle de Kaya<sup>53</sup>, and who sent the inhabitants of his Cercle, concerned by Zindawende's claim to Kaya where the case was brought before the Customary Law Tribunal that same month. Zindawende had to face eleven men from the Cercle de Ouahigouya (villages of Bagare, Bargo and Bayendéfoulogo), in 'an attempt at reconciliation'<sup>54</sup>, and, contrary to 1931, this time he was put in the right: the people from Ouahigouya were allowed to harvest what they had on their fields but compelled to leave the fields to Zindawende the next season.<sup>55</sup> In May 1936,

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<sup>49</sup> Tamsin *naaba*. The argument that a group of rulers is needed for order to reign, is a recurrent theme in the history of African polities. As Kopytoff (1987:74) maintains, rulers often derived a claim to primacy from having established a valid social order, whereas subjected groups (e.g. firstcomers, like the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*) derived their claim to primacy from the physical occupation of space by them.

<sup>50</sup> Raboke, *nakombga* lineage elder.

<sup>51</sup> It would follow from my information that Zindawende was nominated chief of Baskondo in the 1920s. Although he was addressed as 'chief of the ward Baskondo of the village of Ziinoogo' when he appeared in court in 1933 (cf. below), he was described again as a man in search of a chieftancy in 1936, shortly before he was installed by the French as Piugtenga *naaba* (cf. below).

<sup>52</sup> It is most often maintained that the *nakombse* chiefs, and in particular *kombere* chiefs, were instrumental in the implementation of colonial policy and that they abused their subjects by imposing exactions that even exceeded what the colonial administration demanded. They thus are depicted essentially as collaborators of the colonial administration (Gervais 1990:100, Gregory *et al.* 1989:87, Skinner 1965:65).

<sup>53</sup> Télégramme-lettre no.416 du Commandant de Cercle de Ouahigouya au Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, le 4 juillet 1933.

<sup>54</sup> Procès-Verbaux des Tribunaux du Premier Degré, le 18 juillet 1933.

<sup>55</sup> With respect to the functioning of Customary Law Tribunals in Africa during the colonial epoch Ranger (1983:251) observes: 'Those whose traditions lost a case came back a year or two later with better traditions!'

Zindawende once more attempted to chase Ratenga farmers from Singa:

'Suis saisi de réclamation formulée par nommé Z.Y. du village de Yalgattenga, Cercle de Ouahigouya, contre nommé Zindawende fils du Chef de canton de Piugtenga votre circonscription ['à Ziinoogo' is noted in the margin]. Z.Y. déclare que Zindawende les a chassés, lui et ses gens, des terrains qu'il cultive aux abords de la mare de Singa et dont la propriété leur a été officiellement reconnue après contestations survenues en 1931 et 1933 [...]. Zindawende aurait, par ailleurs, déclaré agir avec votre autorisation et fait savoir aux autres habitants de Yalgattenga et à ceux de Bagaré Rimaibé qu'il leur prendrait également les terrains qui leur ont été affectés' (emphasis added).<sup>56</sup>

***Expansion of the Piugtenga kombere as a concerted effort of Piugtenga nakombse and Ziinoogo tengbiise***

In July of the same year 1936, Zindawende finally was accused of having been the instigator of a conflict over land at Koglbaraogo where two people, a Piugtenga farmer and a Ratenga farmer, were killed. Koglbaraogo too is situated at Piugtenga's border with Ratenga and constituted, like Singa, an area of colonization for both Piugtenga and Ratenga villages. According to Marchand, 'Adjoint Principal des Services Civils', sent on the spot to investigate the double murder, it was not a village, not even a hamlet, but only a 'soukala' erected at a remote place. He was surprised to meet there an old blind man who claimed to be the *tengsoba* responsible for the allocation of the disputed land.<sup>57</sup> The presence of this *tengsoba*, as mentioned above originating from the *saka* Dambre in Ziinoogo, indicates that, whatever may have been the appearance, a village structure probably was emerging. The killings had followed a dispute between F., a farmer from Piugtenga, and L., originally from Ratenga:

'L. voulant s'agrandir défriche la parcelle [qui le sépare de F.] et attend le moment propice pour brûler. F. brûle le défrichement puis déclare "J'ai pris cette peine, donc le champ m'appartient". Ce à quoi L. rétorque "j'ai pris la peine de défricher, donc le champ est à moi". Et il plante son mil. Là dessus, F. abat un baobab et en disperse les morceaux sur la parcelle déjà semée sous prétexte d'engrais, puis un jour, alors que le mil commençait à pousser, recule la limite de son champ de trois rangs de semence et plante des herbes pour le marquer en disant: "C'est le *tengsoba* qui m'a donné la terre". L. arrache les herbes en disant "Je tiens le champ de M." et il continue à travailler, à biner avec son frère'.<sup>58</sup>

Thus, F. claimed to be authorized by the Koglbaraogo *tengsoba* to sow the land, whereas L. supported his claim by arguing that he had been authorized by another man from Ratenga, M., whose father had used this particular plot before. How a plot can simultaneously become subjected to several valid - though not equally valid - claims will be clarified in chapters 3 and 4. The dispute ended in a fight whereby the Piugtenga farmer's brother first killed the Ratenga farmer's brother before being killed himself. Interestingly, it appeared from witnesses' statements that, whereas the Piugtenga farmer claimed to have been authorized by the

<sup>56</sup> Télégramme-Lettre no.383 du Commandant de Cercle de Ouahigouya au Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, le 29 mai 1936.

<sup>57</sup> Rapport de l'Adjoint Principal des Services Civils sur la tournée effectuée dans le Ratenga à propos d'une affaire de meurtre, Ouahigouya, le 30 juillet 1936. Marchand found it also hard to accept, Ratenga being to the west and Piugtenga to the east, that the land actually occupied by people from Ratenga was located east to that occupied by people from Piugtenga with the disputed lot that led to the murder being a fallow in between. How different territories come to be imbricated and merged will become somewhat clearer in chapters 3 and 4.

<sup>58</sup> Rapport de l'Adjoint Principal des Services Civils sur la tournée effectuée dans le Ratenga à propos d'une affaire de meurtre, Ouahigouya, le 30 juillet 1936.

Koglbaraogo *tengsoba* to use the disputed land, his brother, who killed the man from Ratenga, argued that he had acted on the instruction of Zindawende, by then, as we know, chief of Baskondo: 'It was Zindawende who told me to kill [the Ratenga farmer] if he would farm at that place'.<sup>59</sup>

Elders in Ziinoogo, having lived through this incident, kept their comments short: 'That problem had nothing to do with land that Zindawende wanted to farm. It was in the sowing period and T. also had searched his seed. They met, [F.'s brother] and people from Ratenga, in order to sow and [F.'s brother] hit the guy from Ratenga who died and afterwards the people from Ratenga beat [F.'s brother] and he too died. They have their tombs at Koglbaraogo. Thus there has been a judgement and the Piugtenga *naaba* has withdrawn the "brousse" there to have it for Piugtenga'.<sup>60</sup> The investigating administrator, Marchand, however, gave most credence to the version which sought the cause of the conflict in Zindawende's unsatisfied ambitions for power.<sup>61</sup> He seems to have been ignorant - again - of the fact that Zindawende already held the office of Baskondo *naaba*:

'Et c'est ainsi qu'apparaît le nom de celui que l'on trouve à la base de toute friction depuis des années. Enfant d'une nombreuse famille (il a douze frères environ), fils d'un chef de canton, il voit ses frères aînés chefs des villages de Sivéga, Tamsin, Soumanguéré, etc. Dévoré de l'ambition de commander des terres, il veut se tailler un canton et cherche un terrain propice'.<sup>62</sup>

For Marchand, then, a necessary condition to be realized for order to be restored along the Piugtenga-Ratenga border, was Zindawende's 'elimination' from the stage:

'Deux moyens me semblent seuls capables d'arrêter les dissentiments trop nombreux:

1<sup>er</sup>/ RETABLIR LA LIMITE COUTUMIERE

2<sup>ème</sup>/ METTRE ZINDAWENDE HORS D'ETAT DE CONTINUER SES AGISSEMENTS PROVOCATEURS DANS CETTE REGION'.

He came to this conclusion not only because Zindawende had been involved numerous times in conflicts over land in the preceding ten years, notably at Singa, but also because, to his great astonishment, he had discovered that Zindawende had laid out and marked a boundary between Ratenga and Piugtenga all by himself, covering several kilometers and crossing a number of 'particularly sensitive' points. This boundary showed no 'correspondence at all' with the boundary fixed in 1921 by the administrators of Kaya and Ouahigouya, most notably not at Nyimbila. The borderline inscribed by Zindawende reversed the decision taken in 1921. A remarkable detail was that Zindawende had placed *stakes* to mark the border, not a

<sup>59</sup> Rapport de l'Adjoint Principal des Services Civils sur la tournée effectuée dans le Ratenga à propos d'une affaire de meurtre, Ouahigouya, le 30 juillet 1936.

<sup>60</sup> Raboke, *nakombga* lineage elder.

<sup>61</sup> Marchand also found a link between the conflicts over land at the border and ancient hostilities between the chieftancies of Ratenga and Piugtenga, for which Zindawende presumably still sought revenge: 'D'où vinrent les premières querelles? [...] [Avant] l'arrivée des Français dans ces régions, le Baloum [particular 'servant' at the chief's court] du Ratenga fut chargé par son chef d'une expédition dans le canton voisin. Il pilla, razzia et fit prisonnier le chef même qu'il vendit comme esclave à Zimtenga. Ces guerres que notre arrivée éteignirent semblèrent vouloir renaître sous forme de guerillas à l'instigation de Zindawende [...]'.  
<sup>62</sup> Rapport de l'Adjoint Principal des Services Civils sur la tournée effectuée dans le Ratenga à propos d'une affaire de meurtre, Ouahigouya, le 30 juillet 1936. It should be noted that, even though Zindawende occupied the office of Baskondo *naaba*, it still may have been true that he strived for a higher office.

'traditional' Moaga practice. Where one would have expected the territory to be delimited by *tengkuga*, Zindawende used the 'modern' technique of stakes.<sup>63</sup>

Whereas other actors involved in the Koglbaraogo double murder case were severely punished 'to set an example'<sup>64</sup>, the colonial administration decided to 'eliminate' Zindawende by nominating him Piugtenga *naaba*, replacing his old father Saaga.<sup>65</sup> Thus it was presumed that problems at the border<sup>66</sup> between Piugtenga and Ratenga would finally be solved:

'Zindawende s'acquitte assez bien de ses fonctions provisoires de Chef de Canton de Piugtenga, il est certainement le seul parmi les enfants et petits-enfants du vieux chef qui ait quelque autorité sur cette population très difficile. Zindawende n'est certes pas irréprochable, volontaire et ambitieux il a créé bien des incidents ces dernières années aux alentours de la frontière séparant le Cercle de Kaya de Ouahigouya et bien des contestations de terrains terminées

<sup>63</sup> To show Marchand's astonishment with what he encountered, I reproduce his observations:

'Cependant, [l'] action [de Zindawende] serait sans cause si la limite des cercles était partout fixée et, dans certaines parties, si elle l'était logiquement.

OR CETTE LOGIQUE NE SAURAIT S'Y TROUVER PUISQUE C'EST ZINDAWENDE LUI-MEME QUI LA FIXA.

Il me semblait étrange, malgré les dires des *tengsobdamba*, gens rassis et raisonnables, malgré les affirmations des vieux des villages voisins que Zindawende ait pu, de sa propre autorité planter des poteaux de kilomètre en kilomètre et déclarer voici la frontière, tracer une piste entre ces poteaux et affirmer ce qui est à l'ouest est au Ratenga, ce qui est à l'est est au Piugtenga.

Mais j'ai vu les poteaux, j'ai suivi la piste à cheval, et je n'ai plus douté quand j'ai vu la fantaisie qui a présidé à l'établissement de cette frontière, fantaisie mêlée d'astuce car certains points sont particulièrement sensibles, véritables nids à palabres et du reste sans aucune correspondance avec la limite fixée par MM. Chéron et Deruas.

Dans le procès-verbal de délimitation rédigé par ces Administrateurs un des points névralgiquement signalés est la mare de NYIMBILA. Sur place on ne peut comprendre les raisons de la contestation puisque Nyimbila est le seul village proche de cette citerne naturelle dont il n'est éloigné que de 400 m. environ.

Et Zindawende a résolu la question posée par MM. Chéron et Deruas. La piste qui part d'un poteau enfoui par lui dans un petit vallon de la Sabatanga, après avoir contourné la montagne, se dirige sur Nyimbila c'est-à-dire du Nord au Sud avec léger fléchissement sur l'ouest, en ligne aussi droite qu'une piste indigène saurait l'être, puis rasant le village même, qu'elle veut bien laisser au Ratenga, fait un angle brusque et pique droit vers l'est pour aboutir à un nouveau poteau triomphalement placé au bord de la mare, englobant ainsi toute celle-ci et refusant par ce fait la moindre goutte d'eau au village de Nyimbila, situation anormale, extravagante même, car on ne voit plus très clairement à qui peut servir cette eau et pour qui elle a été réservée.

La carte tracée de cette région laisse supposer que la mare appartient à Nyimbila, ainsi que la montagne, Nyimbila tanga, que Tansablogo appartient au Ratenga, or la limite Zindawende donne toutes ces terres au Cercle de Kaya' (Rapport de l'Adjoint Principal des Services Civils sur la tournée effectuée dans le Ratenga à propos d'une affaire de meurtre, Ouahigouya, le 30 juillet 1936).

<sup>64</sup> 'Au Tribunal Criminel une seule affaire importante, le double meurtre de Koglbaraogo, un des épisodes de la rivalité des habitants des cantons de Piugtenga (Côte d'Ivoire) et de Ratenga (Soudan) qui se traduit tous les ans par des querelles au sujet des terrains de culture à cheval sur la frontière. A titre d'exemple et pour faire cesser enfin l'insécurité de cette région assez peu pénétrée, les peines prononcées ont été sévères: 15 ans d'emprisonnement aux principaux coupables' (Rapport Politique, deuxième semestre, Cercle de Kaya, 1936).

<sup>65</sup> 'Le vieux chef de Piugtenga, aveugle et plus que centenaire, a été remplacé par un de ses fils, Zindawende Ouédraogo. Celui-ci installé depuis peu fait preuve de bonne volonté, mais aura du mal à rétablir l'autorité sur une population difficile, vivant dans un canton pauvre et laissé à l'abandon par le vieux chef dans les dernières années de son règne' (Rapport Politique, deuxième semestre, Cercle de Kaya, 1936).

<sup>66</sup> By nominating Zindawende as Piugtenga *naaba* it was hoped to solve another long-standing problem as well, that is the problem of command in Piugtenga: 'Quant au canton de Piugtenga, dont le chef a plus de 100 ans et est aveugle, il est certainement le plus mal commandé de tous. Les fils du chef, eux-mêmes fort âgés, sont dispersés dans le canton - sous prétexte qu'en restant près de leur père ils mourraient - et n'ont aucune autorité. Ce canton, qui n'est pas des plus riches, va à vau-l'eau' (Rapport Politique, deuxième trimestre 1936, Cercle de Kaya, Colonie de la Côte d'Ivoire).

tragiquement ont été son fait. Chef, son ambition semble satisfaite et on peut être assuré, j'en ai eu dernièrement la preuve, qu'il saura réprimer les agissements de ses parents tentés de l'imiter'.<sup>67</sup>

Zindawende did not enjoy his power for very long. He was never customarily inaugurated (*'a pa rii naam ye'* 'he has not eaten power') and died at about the same time as his father, probably in 1938. Therefore, when reciting the Piugtenga *nanamse*, Zindawende was never mentioned by people from Ziinoogo: Saaga's successor, *naaba* Sigri, was Zindawende's younger brother.

Accounts by elders in Ziinoogo confirmed that Zindawende indeed was a dominant actor at the border between Piugtenga and Ratenga in the 1920s and 1930s. For instance, one elder explained: 'Zindawende was nominated Baskondo *naaba* by *naaba* Saaga and that was at the same moment that also Tamsin got its *naaba*. Saaga had refused to nominate his sons and it was only when he was very old that he did so. It was the bandit Zindawende whom he sent to Baskondo. Zindawende was a feared man, with him a certain form of chieftancy died. He was not like the present Ziinoogo *naaba* who is a chief only on paper'. And to demonstrate Zindawende's recklessness he added: 'Still, it was also because of his banditism that he found his end. No Piugtenga *naaba* is allowed to walk in the evening shadow of the hill of Nongo. One day Zindawende was on his way to Delga and arrived in the evening at Nongo, saying to himself he didn't want to make a detour. Therefore he put his hat on and walked through Nongo's shadow. There, an insect touched him in the face, which made his tongue hang out of his mouth. Arriving at Delga, his tongue hung way down to his navel and that is how he died'.<sup>68</sup> Still, much more than his unsatisfied ambitions for power, village elders stressed Zindawende's role in the territorial expansion of the Piugtenga *kombere*: 'A man like Zindawende was necessary in order for Piugtenga to have a "brousse"'. Zindawende clearly had been able to mobilize people: 'At the time of those conflicts with Ratenga, I went myself to Gasédonka [cf. map 2.3], not so much to clear land, but for the scrap. All those who wanted to be men went'<sup>69</sup>, and another elder: 'What would you do if you saw that others, like in this case people from Ratenga, take land that belongs to you? If you are a man you go there to occupy those lands yourself. If you came by Zindawende and his younger brother in those days, they would have a daba in their hands and you couldn't talk with them if you hadn't taken up first a daba yourself'.<sup>70</sup>

One aspect of the occupation of land to the north of Ziinoogo surely was the pursuit of Piugtenga's expansion, and in this regard Zindawende can be understood to have acted as a representative of his chieftancy. Still, another kind of expansion has been at stake in the border conflicts. None of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* will forget to stress that 'it is thanks to Ziinoogo that Piugtenga extends up to Loada'. They maintain that the Ziinoogo *tengpeelem*, that is the territory over which the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* exercises ritual and religious control, is an indivisible territorial entity extending from Balbou, to the south of Ziinoogo, to Béléhédé in the north. The Ziinoogo *tengbiise* claim that Béléhédé is their place of origin and that the whole region from Balbou to Béléhédé is delimited by their *tengkuga*. What they want to make clear, then, is that the expansion of the Piugtenga chieftancy would not have been possible if it were not for their ancient ritual and religious claims on land. In the course of the

<sup>67</sup> Rapport Politique, premier semestre, Cercle de Kaya, 1937.

<sup>68</sup> Sayouba, Tiibtenga Yiyooaga.

<sup>69</sup> Sayouba, Tiibtenga Yiyooaga.

<sup>70</sup> Raboke, *nakombga* lineage elder.

occupation of land to the north of Ziinoogo, ritual and religious authority was delegated by the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* to lineage elders who had left *sakse* in Ziinoogo: thus elders from Dambre, Baskondo and Namissiguima became the earth priests directly responsible for the allocation of land at the newly founded settlements of Koglbaraogo, Baskondo and Namissiguima. It may be noted that the latter did not belong to the founding lineages of Ziinoogo (cf. above): 'The Baskondo, Koglbaraogo and Namissiguima lineage elders are not from the same *buudu* [lineage] as we, but because we were together here in Ziinoogo we attached to one another'.<sup>71</sup> Today, these earth priests are still ritually tied to the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*, who maintained ultimate ritual and religious control.

When I elaborate on the concepts of *tengpeelem* and village territory in chapter 3, it will become clearer that one of the things that happened during the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was indeed the progressive inscription of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise's tengpeelem*, indivisible in the sense that it does not contain internal boundary-defining *tengkuga*. It will also appear, then, that the 'supreme' authority of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* is, in practice, limited to a territory smaller than the *tengpeelem* and coincides with the boundaries of the Piugtenga *kombere*. The conclusion lies at hand that the Piugtenga *nakombse* and the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* found each other in a joint project of expansion. This is also confirmed in some of the conflicts analyzed above that show how claims to disputed land are legitimized by referring alternatively to the authority of chiefs and earth priests.

### *Commentary and conclusions*

When at the turn of the century, colonial rule was imposed on the Moogo, the borders of kingdoms and *kombemba* were not very definite nor so well established as the French had wished them to be. Internal and external frontiers were moving and in construction, chieftancies often were separated from one another by a kind of no-man's land. The colonial administration applied a territorial model which copied the French departmental organisation. The above cases of conflicts at the border between the Cercles of Kaya and Ouahigouya show that delimitations could be highly problematic in practice - something which was, for that matter, not specific to the Moogo. Amselle (1990:239), for instance, observes with respect to the Cercle de Bougouni in present day Mali that the delimitation of Cercles and Cantons proved to be 'extremely delicate' since different entities overlapped and the French territorial model corresponded only partly with 'the segmentary and warlike character' of local societies. The colonial administration sought to establish 'line-like' borders which they assumed to be recognized 'customarily' as well. For instance, in 1936, Marchand still expressed the hope that the customary boundary might be successfully established because the Piugtenga representatives who had taken the oath in 1921 had all died by 1936 unlike the Ratenga representatives:

'En cherchant à établir une limite aussi près possible de la limite coutumière, Chéron et Derouas voulurent bien attacher de l'importance aux serments des *tengsodbamba* et chefs de canton sur les *tensé*, serments qui naturellement se contredisaient. A titre purement indicatif et sans vouloir tirer là une conclusion que les faits ne méritent pas, j'ajouterai que tous les indigènes du Cercle de Kaya, chefs de terre aussi bien que chefs de canton qui ont prêté serment sur les *tensé* sont morts, alors que ceux de Ratenga sont encore vivants. Les indigènes voient là un jugement de Dieu. Avec ces antécédents, l'épreuve serait peut-être de nouveau à tenter'.

<sup>71</sup> Nomba, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

Marchand should have known better. His account of how the frontier between Ratenga and Piugtenga had been initially drawn in ancient times<sup>72</sup> was contradictory to the account, although delivered by the same Roumtenga *tengsoba*, recorded by Arnaud in 1931 at Singa (cf. above). It seems that the model the French sought to apply was based on a concept of territoriality which had been previously unknown to the Moose. It is, then, interesting to see that a man like Zindawende actively played along with this 'alien' concept when he inscribed a border by placing stakes.

Thus, the French obviously did not succeed in freezing the border between Piugtenga and Ratenga, nor between several other chieftancies.<sup>73</sup> On the contrary, military pacification opened up a region which before had been considered too unsafe for human occupation and the repressive colonial regime accelerated the influx of people into this zone largely beyond the administration's control. The perceived no-man's land to the north of Ziinoogo became the object of struggle in which various projects came together. The administration attached great weight to the interpretation that a major cause of the conflicts was internal to the Piugtenga power structure: *naaba* Saaga had many sons to nominate as village chiefs and therefore the creation of new villages was instrumental. From the accounts above it would follow that the expansion of the Piugtenga *kombere* was pursued mainly through the clearing of land for farming. Still, a division of the history of the Moogo into different eras such as respectively conquest (up to the 17<sup>th</sup> century), lootings and raids (18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century) and agricultural colonization (Benoit 1982a:32, Lahuec & Marchal 1979:116-117) might well be somewhat misleading: during the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well, raids have taken place (cf. the 'war expedition' above), while the emphasis on *nakombse* dynasties in pre-colonial historical narratives may be covering alternative accounts, among them those of agricultural colonization.

The administration's interpretation clearly fits what Sahlins (1983:522) calls 'a history in the heroic mode', that is a history of chiefs (cf. the first section of this chapter). The accounts by Ziinoogo *tengbiise*, however, pointed out that the expansion of the Piugtenga *kombere* was not the only grand project at stake in the border conflicts. By clearing land themselves and by delegating ritual and religious power to the migrated elders of lineage

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<sup>72</sup> 'J'AI VOULU ALORS ME RENDRE COMPTE DE LA LIMITE COUTUMIERE DONT M'AVAIT PARLER LE CHEF DE CANTON DE RATENGA ET DONT ME PARLAIENT ENCORE LES *TENGSOB DAMBA* DE ROUMTENGA.

Autrefois, voilà bien longtemps, m'ont dis ceux-ci, aucune limite n'existait entre le Ratenga et le Piugtenga. Lorsqu'un éléphant mourait, les indigènes du Ratenga allaient le dépecer. Un beau jour ceux du Piugtenga en trouvèrent un et connurent ainsi qu'il leur était possible d'avoir de la viande. Les deux chefs de canton se rencontrèrent alors et fixèrent une limite disant:

Les éléphants qui mourront à droite seront au Piugtenga et les autres au Ratenga. Cette frontière existe encore, car elle est formée soit de gros cailloux enfoncés en terre soit de tas de cailloux cimentés par de la terre' (Rapport de l'Adjoint Principal des Services Civils sur la tournée effectuée dans le Ratenga à propos d'une affaire de meurtre, Ouahigouya, le 30 juillet 1936).

By contrast with 1931, where a common history with Sanmatenga was evoked in order to contradict Piugtenga's claims, the assessment of Ratenga's eastern boundary in this account is an affair between Piugtenga and Ratenga; there is no mention of Sanmatenga. Although Marchand had read Arnaud's report which contained the contradictory statement, he did not seem to bother.

<sup>73</sup> Persistent conflicts along *kombere* and kingdom borders, with similar events occurring as in the here presented conflicts between Ratenga and Piugtenga, took place for example at Sattin, Sabouri (Kaya/Ziniaré), Saorzi-Immiougou (Mané/Rissiam; cf. also Luning 1997:174-175), Sagouem (Fura)-Ouintini (Kirgoutenga/Rissiam), Gombé-Séguénéga (Téma/Séguénéga(Ouahigouya?)), Samtaaba and Tifu-Fénéramé (Piugtenga/Rissiam) (several documents of the Archives at the Haut Commissariat du Province de Sanmatenga, Kaya) (cf. map 2.3). Many of these boundary disputes still go on today.



segments with whom they had lived together at Ziinoogo, the *tengbiise* attempted and also succeeded in expanding the territory under their authority (cf. also chapter 3). Obviously, the expansion of the *kombere* and of the *tengbiise's* territory are not to be understood as independent processes: the former was legitimized by the *tengbiise's* ancient religious and ritual claims, the latter was backed by the political power of the Piugtenga *nakombse*. The two accounts, one stressing the role of the *nakombse* chiefs, the other emphasizing the legitimizing power of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*, can be understood as representing the duality of perspectives on the 'constitutional legitimation' of the Piugtenga 'polity', held respectively by rulers (*nakombse*) and subjects (*tengbiise*) (Kopytoff 1987:62). They are not so much competing but much more complementing one another. These findings are thus in line with Kopytoff's observation that 'mature' African polities are characterized by such an integration of perspectives, i.e. the duality of perspectives has become part of a unified theory (*ibidem*:68-69).<sup>74</sup>

Many actors involved in the border conflicts, consciously or unconsciously participating in the expansion policies pursued by *nakombse* and *tengbiise*, were also pursuing much less grand projects. The history of the Piugtenga *kombere* indeed comes to the fore as multiply motivated, as a history of social processes characterized simultaneously by unity and diversity (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992:37). Firstly, many have been those who attempted to escape the exactions demanded by the colonial administration. While mostly unmarried young men frequently found their way to the British Gold Coast, others moved in small groups to the north, their primary motivation being to hide. Next, during periods of successive dry years, farmers evidently sought to make their fields in the relatively wet lowlands, formerly constituting part of the no-man's land to the north of Ziinoogo. Finally, it seems that farm land in the immediate surroundings of Ziinoogo had become relatively scarce, probably as a consequence of population pressure built up during the preceding epoch. People sought to extend their claims to land, both to be able to provide subsistence for themselves and their dependents and to secure access to sufficient farm land for their descendants in the future. Hence, not only the boundaries of the *kombere* and the *tengpeelem* have been inscribed and re-inscribed. In the process, a complex land use pattern - understood as the way in which a given territory is subdivided in terms of land tenure - has been laid out, and boundaries of lands claimed by larger and smaller kin groups have been inscribed and re-inscribed. An understanding of the movements of people to the north early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century will then prove to be of utmost importance for coming to grips with contemporary land tenure arrangements and related nested levels of authority in the area, and, for that matter, with the high mobility of fields and people they presently allow for. Indeed, people today living and farming in Ziinoogo actually possess potential rights to land at various dispersed places. In not a few cases the basis for these rights was laid during the early decades of this century when their fathers or grandfathers or other kinsmen moved, sometimes temporarily, to the north (cf. chapters 3 and 4).

Last but not least, representatives of the colonial administration, notably the Commandants of the Cercles of Kaya and Ouahigouya, were important actors on the stage at

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<sup>74</sup> 'In these mature polities, the line between rulers and ruled became blurred, given the networks of kinship and marriage alliances that united the rulers with many of the subjects. The interests of many of those who were formally (and symbolically) among the subjects lay entirely on the side of the rulers; and some branches of the ruling group, with no hope of ever exercising power, had interests allied with the commoners. This blurring made it all the more easy for the duality to be part of a unified theory' (Kopytoff 1987:69).

the Piugtenga-Ratenga border. In important ways, colonial rule set the conditions under which the occupation of the northern territories took place: the pacification opened up the area in the first place and to a large extent circumscribed the possible modes of expansion (mostly expansion through agricultural colonization), while colonial repression was an important incentive for people to move. It should, however, be noted that the interests of the Commandants of respectively Kaya and Ouahigouya were not necessarily congruent. For the activities to be deployed within their Cercle, the Commandants depended on the funds they were able to raise through taxation (cf. also Gregory *et al.* 1989:77). Therefore fixation and maximization of his Cercle's population was in a Commandant's best interest (cf. also Gervais 1990). From the correspondence between the two Commandants, not only on the conflicts discussed here but also on issues such as the 'transfuges' (people crossing borders of administrative entities without permission), it appears that they did not always trust one another. With respect to the 'transfuges', for instance, one Commandant could suspect the other of not reporting and sending back people that had left the Cercle of the other Commandant. Zindawende comes to the fore as a man who successfully drove the administrators to despair, by submitting claims to land with both the Commandant of Ouahigouya and, several times, at the Customary Law Tribunal in Kaya, by playing off the Commandants against one another and by provocative actions such as the delimitation of a border with stakes. Otherwise, the events to the north of Ziinoogo have taken place largely beyond the Commandants' control and the establishment of Moose institutions (village chieftancies, earth priest offices) has preceded effective colonial command of the newly occupied area.

If, now, the above presented fragments of the research region's history appear as having been multiply motivated and suggest the concurrent existence of alternative makings of history, it still is likely that at least one such making has remained underexposed. Indeed, important actors on the present day stage of the village, and surely also on the then stage, have remained silent in the above accounts. Not surprisingly so, these are actors having little authority of speaking 'publicly' in matters of political power or land. This holds for members of lineage segments arrived rather recently in the village and for the Saaba and Yarse, and most notably for the Fulbe. As the Fulbe are of particular importance in the understanding of contemporary land use issues I turn in the next section to some aspects of their history.

### **The silent history of Pullo presence**

While discussing the population of the Volta region before the conquest by the Moose *nakombse*, Izard (1970:115-119) elaborates on the origin and importance of a number of groups, such as the Ninise, Yiyoose, Kiibse and Kurumba. He does not however address the question of the pre-*nakombse* presence of Fulbe, nor, with few exceptions, of the periods of arrival of Fulbe after imposition of Moaga rule. Nevertheless, in the accounts of the different kingdoms' histories, Fulbe regularly appear as important actors. On the one hand, the kingdoms of, in particular, Yatenga and Boussouma extended up to territory controlled by Fulbe, notably the Djelgodji chieftancies<sup>75</sup>, and were involved in wars with the Pullo empire of Masina. On the other hand, Fulbe played a role in internal Moose affairs, acting as allies of

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<sup>75</sup> The Djelgodji chieftancies Barabulle, Djibo and Tongomayel were founded at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Izard 1982:369).

the chiefs on whose territory they lived. So it is noted that solidarity between Moose and Fulbe was particularly strong in the Ratenga kingdom (Izard 1970:377) and that a Djelgodji Pullo chief supported the Rissiam *naaba* in a conflict with Boussouma (*ibidem*:249).<sup>76</sup> Still, in his work on Yatenga, Izard (1985:64-65) also suggests that Fulbe are accorded a status comparable to that of other 'pre-state' groups (Saaba, *tengbiise*) in mythologies of the Yatenga kingdom, while Benoit (1982b:40) states that in Yatenga Pullo presence sometimes effectively preceded the arrival of the Moose *nakombse*.

The information obtained during my research does not permit one to say anything sensible on the question of whether Fulbe were already present in the northern regions before the establishment of Moaga rule. A survey carried out among a number of Fulbe settlements in the present province of Sanmatenga, which encompasses the Piugtenga *kombere* and most of the Boussouma kingdom, confirmed that Pullo presence in Boussouma is of long standing (for instance, the Fulbe of Balbou near Boussouma arrived there under the reign of Boussouma *naaba* Piiga, who, according to Izard (1970:244), ruled from 1806 until 1823; Izard (*ibidem*:246) himself mentions the establishment of Fulbe from Masina in Boussouma during *naaba* Rubo's rule (1676-1723); cf. also Diallo 1996). In only a few cases, the Fulbe consulted during the survey were able to trace their origins back to a place outside the Moogo (i.e. to the Pelouta chieftancy of Djelgodji and to contemporary Mali). As to the reasons for their ancestors' movement into the Moogo, 'ecological' motives were stressed: 'migratory drift' (cf. Stenning 1957) in search of new pastures brought them gradually to the south. Still, it might well be that political factors also played a role, at least with respect to the choice made by the Fulbe as to where to settle. Accounts of the implantation of Fulbe settlements always referred to the agreement obtained from Moose *nanamse*, most often *kombere* chiefs or the king himself. Moreover, at least part of the Fulbe have been integrated into the socio-political structures of Moose chieftancies, their leaders achieving the office of *naaba* and being inaugurated as such by the *kombere naaba* or the king and also performing the *zupondo*<sup>77</sup>, which is a Moaga ceremony. If Stenning (1957:70) notes on Fulbe that 'in the mass of sedentary populations among whom they are disseminated, they are a minority, and a particularly elusive one, because of their lack of ownership of land' and that, thus, as they nevertheless use that land, 'they are aware that at least a recognition of their use must be secured from political authorities in whom title of ownership is vested', the Moose *nanamse* often appeared willing allies.<sup>78</sup>

Today, two important and more or less permanent Fulbe settlements impinge upon the land cultivated by the people of Ziinoogo: Yalanga, a ward of the Moaga village of Biliga, to the west and Péoukoy, a Pullo village, to the north. Both are integrated in Moose political

<sup>76</sup> Izard (1985:539-540) also speaks of the Fulbe in Yatenga as loyal allies of the Yatenga *naaba*, acting as guards at the northern borders of the kingdom and being the Yaadse's accomplices in raids and lootings.

<sup>77</sup> The *zupondo* is a ceremony at which a man's or woman's head is shaved. The ceremony is performed for each *naaba* and *tengsoba*. In the case of the *zupondo* of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*, the ceremony marks the finalization of his inauguration. After the *zupondo* he can approach all earth shrines on his territory, while before some of them could only be approached by his 'deputy', the *kurita* (cf. chapter 3). The *zupondo* symbolizes the end of a fallen condition and the start of a new condition. The same kind of ceremony is performed at the end of a period of widowhood and when a newborn is named (Badini 1994:64). I had the occasion to be present at the *zupondo* ritual for the Péoukoy *jooro*, who on that occasion was paid respect by the Piugtenga *kombere* dignitaries.

<sup>78</sup> What is very remarkable here is that these findings on Fulbe in Piugtenga deviate importantly from what Izard found for Fulbe in Yatenga. He maintains that in Yatenga Fulbe are in no way whatsoever integrated in the Moaga institutional system (Izard 1982:368).

structures, Yalanga being dependent on the Rissiam kingdom and Péoukoy on the Piugtenga *kombere*. In line with the above exposition on Ziinoogo in relation to Piugtenga, I concentrate in this introductory note on the Fulbe of Péoukoy.

In order to explain the Fulbe's longstanding presence in Piugtenga, the Pullo chief (*jooro*) of Péoukoy explained that the Fulbe and the very first Piugtenga *naaba* came to this region almost at the same moment. The Piugtenga *naaba* would have arrived only 'a little while' earlier. It is said that this first Piugtenga *naaba* was accompanied by a Pullo when he went 'to receive power' from a king who still resided in Gambaga. Being inaugurated as Piugtenga *naaba* he then nominated the Pullo *Silmii naaba* (Pullo chief) for Piugtenga. Bearing in mind Izard's information on the establishment of the Piugtenga chieftancy, it does not seem sensible to take the *jooro's* information literally. Nevertheless it tells us something about the probably early alliance between Fulbe and Moose (notably *nakombse*) in Piugtenga. The *jooro's* own ancestors would have left contemporary Mali (Masina?), 'several centuries ago', for a place in the kingdom of Mané, namely Koutunou (Kouhunou?), from where they soon moved to Djandugu, also in Mané.

From there on, a number of fissions and movements occurred, first when a group moved to Bandega, a Piugtenga village with which the people of Péoukoy today still maintain relationships (Moose often call the Fulbe of Péoukoy *Bandegaba*, that is 'people from Bandega'). It was not possible to establish even approximatively when this movement took place. Several informants however confirmed that it was more than one hundred years ago that the father of the present day *jooro* of Péoukoy left Bandega for Sounaël, on the southern fringe of Ziinoogo. About sixty years ago, finally, Sounaël was abandoned for Péoukoy. Moose from villages near Sounaël had been extending their fields, which forced the Fulbe to search for other pastures. This latter displacement took place gradually, herdsman first bringing their herds to the north only during the rainy season and only later on abandoning completely their site at Sounaël.<sup>79</sup> To explain this century's movements, informants indeed stressed mostly the search for good and abundant pastures, thereby adding that the Fulbe are *egougon* ('wanderers'). Thus, again, following Stenning's classification of Fulbe movements, we are dealing here with migratory drift, where ecological factors would have prevailed (note that, according to Stenning (1957:59), the Pullo word for 'migratory drift' is *eggol*, that is 'wandering'). Still, one should not forget that, as will become clear later on, the extension of cultivated fields by Moose changes not only ecological circumstances, but undoubtedly the political relationships as well. It may be that, although the political relationships between the Moaga Bandega *naaba* and the Pullo *jooro* of Péoukoy are still cordial today, this is and was perhaps very different with respect to the relationships between Fulbe and other population groups of Bandega. One should not too easily dissociate ecological from political motives.

As mentioned above, the socio-political integration of Fulbe is exemplified by them being presided over by a chief who is inaugurated by a Moaga *naaba*. In Piugtenga at least two such chiefs are present nowadays, one of them the *jooro* of Péoukoy, the other being the *jooro* of Dembila Peul. Both *jooro* have more Fulbe settlements under their governance than the administrative villages of respectively Péoukoy and Dembila Peul. For example, the Fulbe settlements near or in the villages of Tanmiiga, Samtaaba, Niagado, Darsalam, Balbou, Zongo, Namissiguima, Niantadjé, Walga and Bissiga are said to have issued from the founding ancestor of Dembila Peul. They depend on the Dembila *jooro* and are, Zongo excepted, situated on the territory of the Piugtenga *kombere* (cf. also Diallo 1996). The Fulbe

<sup>79</sup> Today, Sounaël is a ward of the Moaga village of Tamsin and is called Somlamesma.

still living in Bandega depend on the *jooro* of Péoukoy, with whom they have their ancestors in common (it is because the Fulbe became more numerous at Péoukoy than at Bandega that it would have been decided to move the chieftancy from Bandega to Péoukoy, the former Pullo chief nominated by the Piugtenga *naaba* having lived at Bandega).

Above I elaborated extensively on a case which demonstrated processes in which Moose population groups were involved during colonial rule as well as the impact of some colonial policies on those population groups. Neither the oral accounts of villagers, nor the administrators' reports mentioned any Pullo presence or involvement. Although they were there and at least some of the Fulbe communities have a history concurring with the history of Piugtenga Moose, it is indeed much more difficult to say something about the processes in which Fulbe were involved during that period, as well as about the impact of colonial policies on them. Firstly, my own research was far less thorough with Fulbe than it was with Moose. Secondly, Fulbe are marginalized or even silenced by Moose histories in the village, notwithstanding the fact that their presence in the region is undoubtedly of long standing, that they constitute almost ten percent of the population in the region and finally that social, political and economic relations exist between Fulbe and Moose at all levels of society.<sup>80</sup> Thirdly, the documents present in the archives of the former Cercle de Kaya in general give only scarce information on Fulbe. The French colonial administration's principal interest was in the Moose, a population group considered to be particularly suited for recruitment for forced labour and military service and for forced cotton cultivation.

The Fulbe were considered to be physically too weak to be used in forced labour and recruitment programmes. In his report on the recruitment operations of 1944 in Kaya, the medical officer concluded:

'L'insuffisance physique des Peulhs est frappante et la plupart d'entre eux ont été ajournés ou exemptés. Les Mossi formant le gros sinon la totalité des inscrits donnent une impression favorable et meilleure qu'à Ouagadougou. A mesure qu'on s'élève vers le Nord à travers le pays Mossi [...] la valeur physique des hommes augmente pour donner à Kaya une impression d'ensemble favorable d'où émergent un grand nombre de très beaux échantillons'.<sup>81</sup>

To be sure, however, the colonial administration considered the Fulbe to be rich, or at least less poor than the Moose, and therefore considered them as an important source of head tax (for long periods the taxes paid by Fulbe were higher than those for Moose, cf. also Mersadier 1991:5), to which were added later the taxes on cattle and other livestock. The administration saw itself confronted with considerable obstacles in its attempt to collect these taxes. From the correspondence between administrators of different subdivisions it becomes clear that Fulbe too tried to escape this burden of colonization (cf. for instance, the extensive correspondence on 'transfuges'). To the French administrators the Fulbe were rather elusive, their political structures too diffuse, for them to be effectively administered as it was done for the Moose through the accessible chieftancy hierarchy. The administration of Fulbe seems to have remained a puzzle for the colonial government, and this up until the eve of independence. In 1953, the Commandant de Kaya observed:

<sup>80</sup> These relations are analyzed in more detail later on, in particular in chapter 8. Chapters 3 and 4 will shed some light on the reasons for Moose's keeping silent on long standing presence of Fulbe.

<sup>81</sup> Rapport Médical sur les Opérations de Recrutement du Cercle de Kaya par le Médecin Lieutenant Heintz, Ouagadougou, le 9 décembre 1944.

'L'opposition entre cultivateurs (Mossi) et pasteurs (Peulhs) [...] pose en fait le problème de l'organisation du commandement de ce pays de "contact". [...] Il me semble que l'organisation actuelle présente d'inconvénients. Ces inconvénients sont apparents pour:

a) la perception des impôts sur le bétail des pasteurs

b) la recherche des personnes de groupements humains n'obéissant pas aux mêmes règles que les sédentaires.

[On met ici] l'accent sur la question point d'eau et dégâts causés par les animaux dans les cultures.

Il semble bien à première vue que les groupements ex-nomades, semi-sédentaires, en tout cas non-Mossi, devraient être organisés en chefferies dépendant des chefs de canton, mais tout de même regroupés dans chaque canton sous l'autorité d'un chef de groupe, Adjoint au Chef de Canton. Cette question sera présentée au prochain Conseil des Notables'.<sup>82</sup>

This proposition was dismissed. The 'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives' wrote in his report on the Cercle de Kaya:

'[La réalisation d'une chefferie peulh] n'est pas réalisable à Kaya, car en fait il y a autant de fractions que de familles peulh et de familles peulhs que de villages mossi. [...] Le Peul doit rester soumis à la chefferie locale. Rien n'empêche celle-ci d'organiser son ministère des "affaires peulh"'.<sup>83</sup>

To conclude, it may be noted that the administration saw the Fulbe and their cattle not only as a source of taxes, but also as the 'trustees' of one, if not *the*, most important potential for economic development of the Cercle de Kaya, considered to be a 'pays d'élevage'.<sup>84</sup> This concern was translated during the 1940s and 1950s into policy with respect to pastoral hydraulics, control of epizootics and animal husbandry centres. Again, the 'elusiveness' of Fulbe seems to have frustrated colonial administration, which probably has been one of the reasons for propagating the advantages of animal husbandry among the Moaga population, as the following quotation illustrates:

'Pour la conservation et l'amélioration de l'élevage [il est proposé] une propagande intensive auprès des "Mossi" pour qu'ils deviennent éleveurs pour deux raisons: a)-Le "Moaga" est plus actif que le Peul, moins routinier et se fait "escroquer" par l'éleveur peul qui ne lui rend rarement le cheptel confié, b)-Le "Moaga" est plus commerçant que le Peul qui trop souvent conserve ses boeufs et vaches jusqu'à l'extrême vieillesse empêchant ainsi toutes transactions sur le bétail et privant le Cercle d'une source de gains appréciables'.<sup>85</sup>

### **'Modern' migrations *versus* 'traditional' processes of geographic mobility?**

To conclude this chapter, which sets out the historical background to the following chapters, I add a few remarks on two important processes of geographic mobility which have not so far come to the fore: migration to the Gold Coast/Ghana and the Ivory Coast and migration to the

<sup>82</sup> Lettre no.874 du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya à Monsieur le Gouverneur de la Haute-Volta, Affaires Politiques et Sociales, Kaya, le 15 septembre 1953.

<sup>83</sup> Rapport de l'Inspecteur des Affaires Administratives, Inspection des Affaires Administratives de la Haute-Volta, Inspection du 17 au 23 décembre 1953.

<sup>84</sup> 'L'élevage constitue une des plus importantes richesses économiques du Cercle' (Bilan de deux ans d'administration dans le Cercle de Kaya, Kaya, 1940) and 'Le Cercle de Kaya pourrait devenir la réserve de viande de la Basse Côte qui n'en a pas, sans parler des Colonies voisines: Dahomey, Gold Coast' (Rapport Economique du Cercle de Kaya, année 1935, premier semestre).

<sup>85</sup> Bilan de deux ans d'administration dans le Cercle de Kaya, Kaya, 1940.

south and west of Burkina Faso. I elaborate extensively on the history of both in chapters 6 and 7.

'Les Moose migrant', is the simple assertion made by Benoit (1982a:17) when he sets about explaining Moaga behaviour with respect to space. Numerous are indeed the citations which could be reproduced here and which confirm that geographic mobility is inherent to the reproduction of Moaga society, its political structures and its land use system (e.g. Imbs 1987:183, Skinner 1965:66), whether it is mobility internal to a given village territory or internal to a region of the Moogo or whether it is mobility entailing an expansion into regions formerly not controlled by Moose. One could easily conclude that geographic mobility processes of several kinds form part of Moaga 'tradition'. Exception is however made for, in particular, labour migration to the Gold Coast/Ghana and to the Ivory Coast, viewed as an essentially colonial creation (Imbs 1987:157, Skinner 1965, cf. also Mabogunje 1989).

Above it was mentioned that escaping colonial exactions was an important motivation for people from Ziinoogo to move north into less controlled areas. Movement however also occurred in the opposite direction, to the British territory of the Gold Coast. The interpretation of this movement as a 'massive walk-out on the French administration' has been strongly defended by Isawaju (1976), who stresses the much more liberal rule of the British as opposed to the 'hard-fisted' and 'agressive' policy of the French. This escape-motivated movement continued into the 1930s and 1940s, until French rule was liberalized, among others by the abolishment of forced labor recruitment.<sup>86</sup> Skinner (1965), for his part, attaches more importance to the necessity for Moose to earn cash to pay taxes imposed by the French: 'The taxes were raised gradually and more and more Moose men had to migrate for work [to the Gold Coast]' (Skinner 1965:62). Also, the pursuit of a higher standard of living would have added to the need to earn a cash income. That migration was directed to the Gold Coast and not to the Ivory Coast is then attributed to the higher salaries paid in the former. Although contacts existed between the Moose and their southern neighbours before colonial rule (mainly trade, mostly confined to Yarse, Hausa and Dioula, Izard 1970:386), consensus exists in the literature on the fact that a migration pattern to the south was induced by colonial rule. By the time French policy was liberalized, a pattern of temporary migration is said to have been more or less institutionalized (Skinner 1965:66).

Mainly based on research done at the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s, a whole body of literature on Moose migrations was published in the 1970s and 1980s, again confirming the institutionalized character of Moose migrations to the south, although a shift had taken place from the Gold Coast to the Ivory Coast (e.g. Ancey 1983, Kohler 1972, Remy 1973, Remy *et al.* 1977). Although institutionalized, it clearly is understood as a process of geographic mobility intrinsically different from other processes of geographic mobility, like those confined within the smaller region or directed towards the south and west of Burkina Faso. This is expressed, for instance, by Ancey (1983:96), who claims that through migration to the Gold Coast and the Ivory Coast a parallel monetarized economic circuit was established in Moose villages, disconnected from the sphere of social reproduction determined by control over factors which are not monetarized (land, women, barter, livestock). Remy (1973) in this respect speaks of a 'société dédoublée' and, like Ancey, stresses the opposition between elders and youngsters, the former maintaining control over social reproduction and the latter acting within the monetarized circuit. Imbs (1987:181) puts it more shadedly by stating that 'il n'y a

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<sup>86</sup> The forced labor recruitment for private interests had been stopped, formally, in 1937, while recruitment for public works continued until 1946 and for the French army until independence in 1960 (Skinner 1965).

plus dédoublement ni de la vie ni de la société, il y a seulement dédoublement du cadre dans lequel fonctionne une société et se déroule une vie désormais bipolaires'.

Nevertheless, it has also been suggested that, in the course of time, migration patterns to the Ivory Coast have adapted to the patterns of other processes of geographic mobility characteristic of Moaga society. Imbs (1987:171), for instance, observed that from the 1960s onwards 'la mobilité s'entretient d'elle même' as people who have a property in the Ivory Coast employ kin, or, by Skinner (1965:75-76) who noted that Moose chiefs who migrated established new chieftancies among migrants, instrumental in maintaining 'affective ties between the migrants and their homeland'. In chapter 6 this issue, which might be better understood if posed in terms of cultural construction of migration, is further elaborated. Here, I only want to demonstrate briefly how colonial administrators too have struggled with the meaning of migration to the Gold Coast.<sup>87</sup>

In 1933, the 'Gouverneur Général de l'A.O.F.' initiated an investigation into the causes of migration from French colonies towards the Gold Coast. He did so after he took notice of a report on the demographic situation in the Gold Coast, composed by a British administrator. After having ascertained a considerable population growth in the so called northern territories due to immigration from the French colonies, the latter suggests that the cause for this population movement should be sought in the progressive desiccation of the climate in the north.<sup>88</sup> This explanation surely suited the French Governor who noted that the British administrator 'a résisté à la tentation facile d'attribuer [le mouvement migratoire] à des causes politiques ou administratives, comme auraient pu la faire des observateurs superficiels ou de parti pris, empressés à faire ressortir par exemple une supériorité des méthodes colonisatrices de nos voisins'.<sup>89</sup> As were other Commandants de Cercle of the Colony of the Ivory Coast, the Commandant of Kaya too was asked to investigate the matter in his circumscription. The French, although pleased that their policy was not incriminated by the British document, were also deeply troubled because: 'Si cette émigration avait une cause géographique, il n'y aurait en effet aucune raison pour que la Côte d'Ivoire, qui se trouve dans les mêmes conditions de climat que la Gold Coast et dont les terres sont tout aussi fertiles, ne bénéficiât pas de l'exode'.<sup>90</sup> In his answer<sup>91</sup>, the Commandant of Kaya minimized the exodus of his subjects to the Gold Coast, by stating that this migration concerned only a small number of people, in search of small wealth to satisfy their vanity ('leur petite ambition de gloriole') and staying abroad for only short periods (six months to three years). Nevertheless:

'Un fait cependant demeure indéniable c'est que la Gold Coast est et restera le refuge des réfractaires au service militaire qui, prudemment envoyés par leur famille un an ou deux ans avant la conscription, ne rentrent en territoire français que lorsqu'ils se croient oubliés'.

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<sup>87</sup> The observations of French administrators need to be understood in the context of the struggle going on within the French administration on which was the proper policy to follow for the Colonies of the Upper-Volta and the Ivory Coast (cf. Gervais 1990 and also chapter 6).

<sup>88</sup> Extrait du rapport du chef du service de recensement de la Gold Coast sur la situation démographique en 1931.

<sup>89</sup> Lettre no.684SE/2 du Gouverneur Général de l'A.O.F. à Monsieur le Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Dakar, le 29 mars 1933.

<sup>90</sup> Lettre no.56 B.P. du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à Monsieur l'Administrateur Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, Bingerville, le 10 juin 1933.

<sup>91</sup> Rapport au sujet de l'émigration vers le Sud. Kaya, le 22 mai 1933.



In his conclusion the Commandant lashed out sharply at [past] colonial policy and thus sent the desiccation thesis to the realm of fancy. Interestingly, he thereby related the migration to the Gold Coast to the occupation of land in the northern part of his Cercle:

'S'il est exact que certains pratiques, en ce qui concerne l'ex Haute-Volta aient pu déterminer des départs, ces départs ont aussi bien eu lieu vers les régions nord et nord-est du Cercle que vers le Sud. La vérité est que l'indigène a cherché aussi bien à s'affranchir des charges qui lui étaient imposées que de la sollicitude peut être un peu trop grande qui lui a été témoignée à certains moments. Je veux parler du travail prestataire, du travail des chantiers de construction, et de la fâcheuse politique du coton d'il y a quelques années'.

Cordell *et al.* (1996:9-11) point to the persistence in migration studies of the 'traditional'/'modern' dichotomy: they argue that the dichotomy 'deemphasizes the importance of change in African societies before the coming of the West and overemphasizes changes associated with colonial conquest and rule'. Discontinuity is emphasized over continuity and, concurrently, space is dichotomized into rural and urban worlds or into 'traditional village economy' and 'modern plantation economy'. It has often been suggested that, by migrating from one world to another, migrants 'become' modern (*ibidem*:11). With respect to Moose migrations to the Ivory Coast, then, these are most often analyzed as *labour* migrations undertaken by individuals. 'Group' migrations, most often confined to a smaller region, are considered to be relics of the past (for instance, movements associated with the 'traditional' extensive land use system). Throughout this thesis, such dichotomies are critically assessed. Already in the discussion above of the movements to the north during the early decades of colonial rule, it has become apparent that it is difficult if not impossible to come to grips with these movements and the particular way in which they were enacted without referring to both factors that might be labeled as 'modern' or 'colonial' and factors that might be categorized as 'traditional' or 'pre-colonial'. The above fragments of the discussion among colonial administrators of migration to the Gold Coast furthermore suggest that this migration was related in some way to movements to the north. Here as well, it seems appropriate to be aware of possible continuities with other kinds of movement and of a possible continuity between actors' enterprises in their villages of origin, on the one hand, and migration enterprises on the other.

Migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso has been considered, firstly, as different from migration to the Ivory Coast because, in contrast to the latter, complete 'households' are moving for longer periods (cf. Imbs 1987:19). It would be more or less permanent and driven in the first place by land scarcity and ecological disasters (e.g. the drought of 1972-73) (Imbs 1987:169, Lahuec & Marchal 1979:119, Remy 1973:87). Secondly, in particular migration to the 'terres neuves' in the south and west is often considered as 'modern', even to such an extent that it has sometimes been seen to exemplify contestation of 'traditional' village life (cf. in particular Remy *et al.* 1977). The sense of 'modernity' is further reinforced because of government and donor involvement in the eradication of onchocerciasis and in resettlement projects. On the other hand, it has also been mentioned that migration of Moose to the 'terres neuves' can be interpreted in terms of 'traditional' processes of geographic mobility (e.g. in terms of Moaga expansionism, cf. Remy 1973:87).

Related, then, to the conclusion formulated above with regard to the cases on conflicts along the Piugtenga-Ratenga border - i.e. that there is a 'simultaneous unity and diversity' to be captured in social processes - it seems obvious that a distinction between, on the one hand, 'modern' migrations and, on the other hand, 'traditional' processes of geographic mobility

risks being an artificial one: the processes of geographic mobility as they came to the fore in this chapter cannot be captured by such a dualism and one should be cautious not to do so *a priori* with respect to other processes of geographic mobility either. To paraphrase once more Comaroff & Comaroff (1992:5), these processes are to be expected to be brought about by 'complex fusions of what *we* like to call' 'modernity' and 'tradition'.

## CHAPTER 3

### LINEAGE LANDS AS STRUCTURING SPATIAL STRUCTURES

'[The making of] history and geography [is] a summative process of social production and reproduction that is constrained by circumstances "directly encountered" in the already constituted spatiality of social life, itself an historical and social product' (Soja 1985:98).

#### Introduction

Bearing in mind the accounts of the occupation of space presented in the previous chapter, one should not be surprised that the above citation has been chosen to open this chapter. Essential is the inclusion of 'the making of geography' as a social process, which opens the way to a 'socio-spatial dialectical' approach to the problem of changing land use practice. This approach does not seek to explain spatial structures by intrinsically spatial processes, nor does it conceive of the spatial as a mere reflection of social structure. Spatial structures are understood as structuring structures, that is they are themselves constitutive of and constituted by social practice and social organization. As I understand it, they are no other than Appadurai's spatial dimension of locality (cf. chapter 1). The following short discussion is added, as it allows one to be more specific on how locality might be inscribed in space than Appadurai's more general observations do.

A land use pattern<sup>1</sup>, as encountered in the research setting, can be conceived of as such a spatial structure, inscribed through land use practices. The idea is that the inscription of a land use pattern, and thus land use practice, involves the appropriation and transformation of space and nature, which is inseparable from the reproduction and transformation of society in time and space (cf. Pred 1985:337). Each land use activity contributes to the re-inscription of a land use pattern and is constrained by the pattern already there ('directly encountered'), the latter being a historical and social product. Thus, it follows that social life - of which locality as Appadurai understands it is an aspect - is in a way materially concretized in, among other things, a land use pattern. As suggested in the previous chapter, a land use pattern is open to contradiction, conflict and transformation, or in other words, the social production of a land use pattern is not 'a smooth and automatic process in which social structure is stamped out, without resistance or constraint, onto the landscape'. The production of a land use pattern 'is no once-and-for-all event; it must be reinforced and restructured when necessary, must be socially *reproduced* and this reproduction process presents a continuing source of struggle, conflict and contradiction (conjunction of social and spatial reproduction)' (Soja 1985:97).

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<sup>1</sup> 'Land use pattern' is understood here as the way in which a given territory is subdivided in terms of land tenure. As such, it constitutes a four dimensional entity, extending in space and time. In this and the next chapter, the land use pattern is discussed mainly in relation to agriculture. Thus, control over and rights to land refer to land for farming purposes, if not mentioned otherwise. In chapters 4 and 8, the latter focusing on relations between Moose and Fulbe, more will be said also about control over and rights to land for other purposes (grazing, in particular).

A land use pattern can then be conceived of as a competitive arena for land use practices aimed either at maintenance and reinforcement of the existing pattern or at significant restructuring and possible transformation (adapted from Soja 1985:98-99). The capacities to define and control the practices inscribed in a pattern are not equally distributed over the actors involved. In this respect Pred (1985:341-342) introduces the concept of 'dominant institutional projects, usually identical with the operation of a locally significant mode of production', which constrain other institutional and actors' 'independently' defined projects. In this and the following chapter I analyze the conjuncture of such institutional and independently defined projects in the construction of a particular land use pattern.

Before starting the analysis, it remains to be clarified how, within a given land use pattern, several, possibly contradicting projects can be undertaken. A land use pattern at a given moment in time is made intelligible through discourses, whose association with an institution legitimates the 'truths' they produce (Barnes & Duncan 1992). Parker (1992:1) defines discourses as 'sets of statements which constitute an object'. They 'do not simply describe the social world, but categorise it, they bring phenomena into sight. [They] allow us to see things that are not "really" there, and [...] once an object has been elaborated in a discourse it is difficult *not* to refer to it as if it were real' (*ibidem*:4-5). Discourses then are practices of signification, thereby providing a framework for understanding the world, and as such they are both enabling and constraining: they determine answers to questions as well as questions that can be asked. They constitute the limits within which ideas and practices are to be considered 'natural', they set the bounds on these questions. With respect to a particular realm of social action, e.g. land use practice, competing discourses may evolve among opposing interest groups because the limits set by discourse are by no means fixed: discourses are subject to negotiation, challenge and transformation because the signifiers within discourse have no natural connection with their signified, the relation being socially constructed and therefore variable. Although it may be so that open clashes exist between groups whose presuppositions are based on antagonistic discourses, it may also be that competing discourses coexist within a relatively stable discursive formation constituted by a 'hegemonic' discourse (Barnes & Duncan 1992:8-9).

Discourses thus constitute *interpretations* of a land use pattern made possible by the latter's referential capabilities. That such referential capabilities do exist, and that there can be no natural connection between signifier and signified in discourse, is clarified if one takes account of Ricoeur's concept of *distanciation*, which has several forms, the most important here being that a land use pattern is removed from its historical and social conditions of production. It is as such also detached from the intentions of those actors who inscribed the land use pattern in the past and can be interpreted and reinterpreted in the light of changing circumstances (Barnes & Duncan 1992:6, Moore 1986:81-82). The range of interpretations of a land use pattern, which is not unlimited nor equally distributed over the members of a social group or between groups, then can be seen as constitutive of strategic human agency. Indeed, each action in a land use pattern presupposes an interpretation through which an actor gives meaning to the pattern. By his action, the actor thus may create, manipulate or sustain particular meanings (adapted from Moore 1986:76) and hence contribute to either transformation or reproduction of the encountered land use pattern.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. also: 'In practice, discourses delimit what can be said, whilst providing the spaces - the concepts, metaphors, models, analogies - for making new statements within any specific discourse' (Henriques *et al.* cited by Parker 1992:13).

This chapter is devoted firstly to an attempt to reconstruct the dominant discourse<sup>3</sup> on land use practice, legitimizing the present land use pattern and the distribution of authority enforcing it. I start with a discussion of the concept of *tengpeelem*, which appeared to encompass several 'village territories' and then focus on the Ziinoogo 'village territory'. Next, I show how certain concepts (notably *yaab ziiga* or 'lineage land'), central to dominant discourse, allow for alternative interpretations and claims and for the existence of competing discourses.<sup>4</sup> It is only in the next chapter that I turn to individual biographies ('land use paths') to demonstrate how individual projects are inscribed in the land use pattern and how these may be understood to differ according to the different positions actors occupy in several social fields.

### ***Tengpeelem*: the promise of a territory**

Dominant discourse on land use practice in the village of Ziinoogo ascribes the religious and ritual authority over land to the *tengsoba* (earth priest), who is a *tengbiiga* lineage elder. The *tengbiise* - as mentioned in chapter 1, they are Yiyoose - are those villagers who trace their origins back to the village's founding ancestor Tensyande, or his place of origin, and as such constitute the 'autochthonous' section of the village population. Not surprisingly, the issue both of the extension of the territory over which the *tengsoba* exercises authority, that is his *tengpeelem*, and of its boundaries is central to dominant discourse. It has been argued elsewhere (Imbs 1987:45-46, Luning 1989:3, Mersadier 1991:2) that the *tengpeelem* constitutes the only territorial form to which a certain stability and even a geographical definiteness can be attributed - that is a stability and fixity which other possible territorial entities such as those based on political or use-grounds lack. For one thing this is due to the dissociation between political authority over people (*naam*) vested in the village chief (*naaba*) - the people submitted to a chief constitute the latter's *soolem* - and religious and ritual authority over land vested in the *tengsoba*. While it is possible to distinguish a territory corresponding to a chief's *naam*, that is passing by the territories associated with the localized lineage segments recognizing this *naam*, there is not necessarily a recognized authority *over land* corresponding to such a territory.

That such a correspondence is lacking is generally attributed to the fact that, although previously existing structures were taken into account, the *nakombse* 'conquerors' nevertheless brought a new partition of the land based on the hierarchy of political rule, cross-cutting previously existing *tengpeelem*. Studies of Moose do often take account of the fact that political strife is a continuing process in Moaga society whereby new chieftancies may be created and chiefs' *soolem* may be redistributed and thereby the territories indirectly associated to the *soolem*. But, although it is recognized that a *tengpeelem* too may be subject

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<sup>3</sup> Although, according to Barnes & Duncan (1992), the use of the term 'hegemonic discourse' is not incompatible with the existence of several competing discourses, its use seems inappropriate here because of its connotations with 'being beyond direct argument; [...] [Hegemony], at its most effective, is mute' (Comaroff & Comaroff 1992:29). I therefore prefer to use the term 'dominant discourse'.

<sup>4</sup> It has to be stressed that discourses are not to be expected to be found as such. What one encounters are fragments of discourse, which appear in all kinds of 'texts' (cf. Parker 1992:6). A land use pattern is one such text, narratives about the land use pattern are others. What follows below is the result of a piecing together of discourse fragments into what I have termed 'dominant' and 'alternative' discourses about the land use pattern in the research village. These discourses will be demonstrated to constitute their object, the land use pattern, in different ways.

to fragmentation, giving rise to several smaller *tengpeelem* under the authority of several *tengsodbamba* (cf. Bonnet 1990:54), it remains accorded with a territorial fixity which precedes all other things in a certain region.<sup>5</sup> In what follows it will be demonstrated that the territorial fixity of the Ziinoogo *tengpeelem* is much more an ideological fixity than a geographical fixity. This point is essential to the understanding of dominant discourse and of how present day land use patterns have come into being.

Of the villages that border Ziinoogo today, probably only Biliga to the west and Zongo to the east existed at the arrival of the first Ziinoogo *tengbiise* (cf. also Izard 1970). The other villages were founded afterwards, those to the north - Baskondo, Nawoubkiiba and Péoukoy - only in this century (cf. chapter 2). Baskondo, Koundbokin, Zongo and Biliga each have their own earth priest (either a *tengsoba* or a *tiibsoba*), ritually and religiously responsible for territories which might be supposed to border on the *tengpeelem* of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* (Nawoubkiiba depends on the Baskondo *tengsoba*). Although I was well aware of the sensitivity of questions on territorial boundaries, I nevertheless tried to find out whether boundaries existed between the *tengpeelem* of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* and the surrounding *tengpeelem*. With respect to the west, south and east such borders were acknowledged to exist indeed and sometimes hills and lowlands (containing water during the rainy season) were indicated as constituting natural boundaries, though not undisputed.

To my surprise, however, not one person in Ziinoogo was willing to admit to the existence of borders to the north. The Ziinoogo *tengpeelem* was depicted as an indivisible territorial entity, extending from Balbou, south of Ziinoogo, up to Béléhédé in the north, the place where founding ancestor Tensyande is said to have left some three centuries ago. In discussing the boundaries of the *tengpeelem*, not so much natural markers, like lowlands or hills were stressed, but much more the presence all over this territory of *tengkuga* (lit. 'stones of the earth', sing.: *tengkugri*)<sup>6</sup> under the custody of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*. It seems erroneous to interpret *tengkuga* as equivalent to, for example, landmarks such as were placed by Zindawende along the Ratenga-Piugtenga border in 1936 (cf. chapter 2): although I found out the approximate location of only a few *tengkuga*, it was remarkable that they were situated more to the centre than to the fringes of the territory. The *tengkuga* may be better understood as being ritual markers, on which an oath is taken by the *tengsoba* in case of border conflicts over land, not as landmarks physically carving out a territory.<sup>7</sup> This is in line with the observation made elsewhere that, although *tengpeelem* have a geographical fixity, the

<sup>5</sup> Cf. for example Imbs (1987:27) who notes that the *tengpeelem* often resists fusion and fractioning of corresponding customary villages. Izard (1985:22) maintains that the *tengbiise* had divided space in hierarchized territorial units, which the *nakombse* used for their own purpose in bringing it under their authority, without however producing an exact superposition over the already existing territorial hierarchy (cf. also *ibidem*:363).

<sup>6</sup> *Tengkuga* are earth shrines where ritual offerings are performed to the divinities of the earth (*tense*).

<sup>7</sup> In their discussion of African land tenure, Bohannan & Bohannan (1968:79-80) distinguish two types of 'land maps', the first being exemplified by the moving 'genealogical map' of Tivland, the second by rain shrines among the Tonga or saints' graves among the Cyrenaican Bedouin Arabs: 'Rather than pieces of land with boundaries, there are points on the land, marked by shrines, that form the center of activity of a social group; the "map" is a juxtaposition of geographical points intruded into the social system by a religious idiom'.

Cf. also the following observation, made by Fortes (1940:262) on the territory (*ten*) under the authority of a Tallensi earth priest (*tendaana*): 'A *tendaana's ten* is roughly demarcated by certain natural landmarks, but it has no precise boundaries, since it is only a subdivision of the single, unitary Earth. Since neighbouring *tendaanas* usually have clanship or ritual ties, they regard their respective rights and responsibilities as specific devolutions of what are really common rights and responsibilities shared, in the last resort, by all *tendaanas*. Frequently neighbouring *tendaanas* have one or more Earth shrines in common'.

boundaries between *tengpeelem* are intrinsically imprecise and in practice constituted by a no-man's land (Luning 1989b:33). While chapter 2 already demonstrated how such 'no-man's land' recurrently has been the object of conflict in the past, chapter 4 deals, among other things, with how its ambiguity more recently intervened in individual land use paths.

Still, how is one to understand the assertion that the Ziinoogo *tengpeelem*, and thus the Ziinoogo *tengsoba's* ritual and religious authority over land, extends as far as Béléhédé? In the preceding chapter it was mentioned, on the one hand, that the region north of Ziinoogo was considered as 'empty' at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and, on the other hand, that claims have been made by the Zongo *tengsoba*, politically submitted to the Sanmatenga *kombere*, asserting that at least part of this region belonged to his *tengpeelem*. And, what is more, Béléhédé is situated well into what is admitted to be a Pullo region, namely Djelgodji (present province of Soum), at a distance of about eighty kilometers from Ziinoogo. The appropriation of this vast *tengpeelem* by the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* is nevertheless situated at the very moment of their first arrival in Ziinoogo:

'That the Ziinoogo *tengpeelem* extends as far as Béléhédé is because those who arrived here first did not, like others, clear land by cutting and felling in order to determine what would belong to them. Tensyande let his children run and made a fire. After the fire had burned out he placed *tengkuga* on the burned land which stretched out up to Béléhédé'.<sup>8</sup>

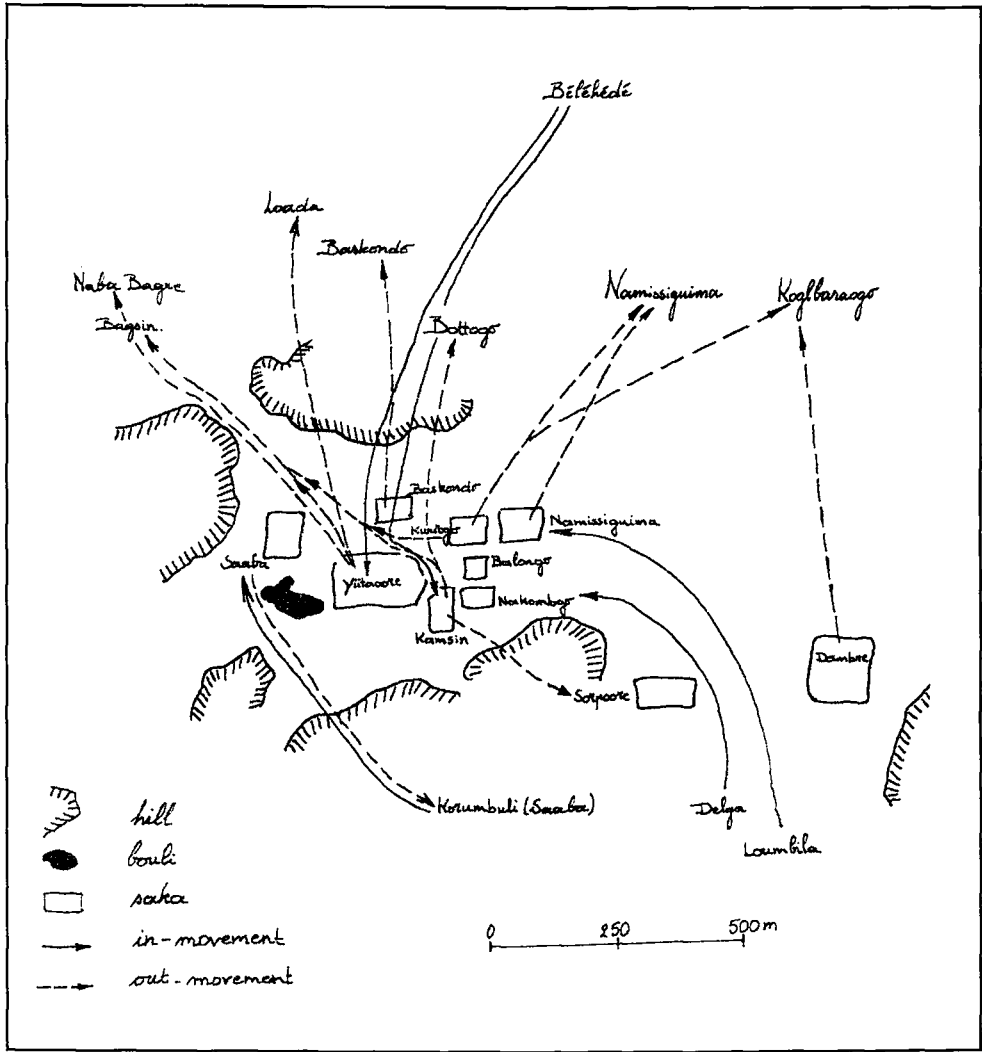
As explained in chapter 2, the subsequent history of the village was geographically confined to a small orbit where other lineage segments progressively joined the first settlers until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the course of this century, then, descendants of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* did indeed move north, but, to my knowledge, they have not [yet] reached further than the village of Bottogo - which for that matter is nevertheless situated in former Djelgodji. If the struggles described in chapter 2 suggested a progressive interposition of the Piugtenga *kombere* in between Sanmatenga and Ratenga, the Ziinoogo *tengpeelem* also comes to the fore as a territory still to be physically realized or only partly realized today, progressively carved out in the course of time in its physical form. While the existence of *tengkuga* constitutes a ritual and religious support to the Ziinoogo *tengbiise's* claim, the above account of the bush fire mythically validates it. Thus, the concept of *tengpeelem* as it appears in dominant discourse in Ziinoogo refers less to a physical reality than to an ideological construction in which the promise of future land has been and still is embedded.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, while the Ziinoogo *tengpeelem* is said to extend up to Béléhédé, it was at the same time asserted that only the *tengsodbamba* present in the region up to Loada, i.e. some forty kilometers south of Béléhédé, depend on Ziinoogo, that is, the supreme ritual and religious authority of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* is in practice limited to a territory smaller than the *tengpeelem* and coinciding with the boundaries of the Piugtenga *kombere*: 'The *tengsoba* of Baskondo and the *tiibsoba* of Namissiguima depend on Ziinoogo, Bottogo depends on Djibo. From Loada to here depends on Ziinoogo - Tamsin, Balbou and Koundbokin included. Zongo is part of Sanmatenga'.<sup>10</sup> The close intertwining of the histories of the Piugtenga *kombere* and of the authority of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*, exemplified by the often expressed statement that 'it has been thanks to the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* that Piugtenga extends to Loada',

<sup>8</sup> Ousmane, Runtenga Yiyooa.

<sup>9</sup> It is worthwhile to note that according to Pageard (1963:51) the concept *tengpeelem* (lit. 'white earth') serves to denote the earth as a symbol of purity.

<sup>10</sup> Nomba, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.



Map 3.1  
Ziinoogo: origins and dispersion of sakse

further endorses the idea that the Ziinoogo *tengpeelem* is and has been at least partly an ideological construction. The mythical *tengpeelem*, present before human occupation took place, and the territory effectively occupied in the course of time are sometimes confounded in discourse in a remarkable way: 'When our ancestor came here he ignited a fire to indicate the boundaries of his place [ziiga]. Behind the hills is Kirguitenga, but from my compound



onwards to Bagsin and to Bottogo we are allowed to cultivate, because the people in Bagsin and Bottogo came from Ziinoogo'.<sup>11</sup>

After the occupation of the northern territories started, instigated by the colonial 'pacification', soon a number of earth priests were installed, under the auspices of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*, notably at Koglbaraogo (Dambre), Namissiguima (*tiibsoba*) and Baskondo (cf. chapter 2). They were elders of smaller or larger kin groups that had left from Ziinoogo and obtained authority over land they cleared or which was cleared after their permission was solicited, that is, over part of the mythical *tengpeelem*, which was progressively gaining physical form. They were, however, not Ziinoogo *tengbiise*. They belonged to lineage segments that came only later to Ziinoogo, where they had settled in the *sakse* of Dambre, Namissiguima and Baskondo (cf. map 3.1, cf. also chapter 2). As shown below, later arrived lineage segments, lacking consanguinity bonds with the village's founding ancestor, could link up with a locality, in this case Ziinoogo, by establishing marriage and ritual ties with the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*. Such ties probably existed between Ziinoogo *tengbiise* and Namissiguima, Dambre and Baskondo when the latter were still *sakse* of Ziinoogo.<sup>12</sup> The splitting up of Ziinoogo at the beginning of the century then did not lead to a complete break. Continuity was maintained, although the substance of the ritual relations probably changed, by the creation of sub-offices of *tengsodbamba*, still tied ritually to the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* thanks to the prior existence of a mythical *tengpeelem*.

### 'Village territories' as aggregations of *yaab ziinse*

The Ziinoogo *tengsoba* thus ceded authority over the larger part of the *tengpeelem*, as it is physically carved out today, to *tengsodbamba* and *tiibsodbamba* who however remained his subordinates. It was explained that he will only be involved in matters concerning these ceded lands in very grave situations, such as for instance border conflicts between Ratenga and Piugtenga as described in the preceding chapter. The 'routine' ritual and religious activities of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* are however limited to a much smaller territory, the extent of which I shall discuss presently.

The Ziinoogo *tengpeelem* is undivided in the sense that there are no *tengkuga* marking separate sub-*tengpeelem*. Subdivisions of another kind are however acknowledged to exist, namely the so called *yaab ziinse*<sup>13</sup> (sing. *yaab ziiga*, lit. 'place of the ancestors'). Luning (1989b:34) too found that the *tengpeelem* were subdivided into what she calls *barambziinse* or *yaabrambziinse*, being large territories 'belonging to the groups of descendants of those who arrived first'. These would be territories with clear-cut boundaries, covering the whole of the *tengpeelem* and not separated by no-man's land as 'people are not fearing religious repercussions in case of conflict over boundaries'. The *yaab ziinse* are, unlike the *tengpeelem* not marked by *tengkuga*. In dominant discourse in Ziinoogo, a claim on a *yaab ziiga* is

<sup>11</sup> Rawaage, Kamsin *tengbiiga*; members of his lineage segment are numerous at Bottogo, whereto they moved at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Izard (1982:381) also mentions the development of Moose colonies in the south of Djelgodji, canton of Bottogo, during the colonial period.

<sup>12</sup> I have not found any descendants of Namissiguima and Dambre still living in Ziinoogo today. Baskondo descendants are however still present and are ritually associated with the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* (cf. below).

<sup>13</sup> *Yaab ziinse*, in this sense, might be translated as 'lineage lands'. I will however stick to the Moore term in this chapter, because it is exactly this term that plays such an essential role in the construction of alternative discourses.

validated in terms of having ancestors who effectively had the authority to open up these places by cutting and felling or to command others to do so (in contrast to the claim on the *tengpeelem* which is essentially mythically validated). The territory over which the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* exercises more or less direct authority then consists of the *yaab ziinse* which have been cleared while sanctioned by previous Ziinoogo *tengsodbamba*. It borders for example in the north on a territory controlled by the Baskondo *tengsoba*, which consists of the *yaab ziinse* cleared under the sanctioning of previous Baskondo *tengsodbamba*.<sup>14</sup>

The fact that, in the process of the splitting off of people from Ziinoogo towards the north, the development of the Piugtenga *kombere* chieftancy - and the subsequent creation of new *soolem* under newly nominated village chiefs - converged with the installation of *tengsodbamba* by the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*, may explain why one finds a relatively good overlap between, on the one hand, the territory effectively under the authority of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* and, on the other hand, the territories associated with the localized lineage segments recognizing the Ziinoogo *naaba*'s political authority. Therefore, I consider, in what follows, this territory to constitute the Ziinoogo village territory. The land use pattern inscribed in this territory has been the main focus of this research. The village territory, defined in this way, constitutes a land management unit as well as a social, political and ritual entity.<sup>15</sup> Physical boundaries do exist, though they are not undisputed: the 'village territory' is an historically contingent entity, the momentary outcome of socio-political processes unfolding over time and space and still going on.

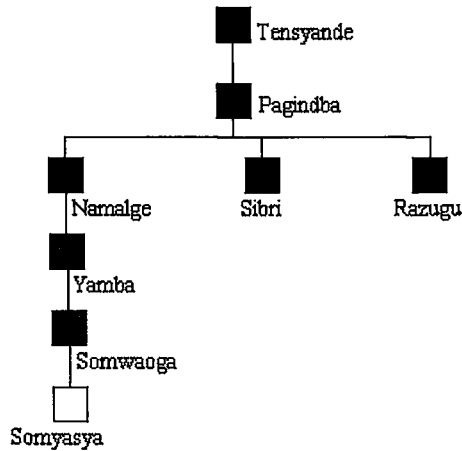
In dominant discourse, the Ziinoogo village territory is presented as an almost monolithic entity. That this is not completely so, even not in dominant discourse, will be discussed below. The appearance of monolithicity results from the presentation of the village territory as consisting of only one *yaab ziiga*, that is, of the *tengsoba* and the members of his lineage. In explaining the history of the occupation of the village territory, the *tengbiise* take great pains to demonstrate that *almost all* the lands have first been farmed by *tengbiise* ancestors before any other gained access to it, only exceptionally admitting that they authorized others to do so. The *tengbiise*'s 'appropriation' of the village territory is validated by their exclusive autochthonousness, their 'being first', which is expressed in terms of the virginity of the land at their ancestors' arrival, the localities their ancestors were the first to clear and the places where they once built their compounds. A kind of map is drawn with one time residences of and certain portions of land cleared by ancestors as markers (cf. map 3.2 and genealogy 3.1). The first such markers were laid out in the village's earliest history:

'*Tengsoba* Tensyande was the first to settle in Ziinoogo. He left Béléhédé to go to Sergissouma and from there he went on to Ziinoogo, where he first settled at Longre, which nowadays is part of the "brousse". Afterwards he built his compound at Nongo, but his tomb is at Longre. While he was at Nongo he had four sons, the eldest being Pagindba. It was *tengsoba* Pagindba who finally settled where we are now and who founded the *saka* of Yiitaoore'.

<sup>14</sup> The authority of the Baskondo *tengsoba* is not limited to the lands cleared by people from the village of Baskondo. He ritually sanctioned, for example, the installation of people from Rumtenga, the founders of the village of Nawoubkiiba, and, until today, exercises ritual control over the lands cleared by these people too (cf. also Ouédraogo & Compaoré 1991).

<sup>15</sup> The village territory does not however constitute the only such entity, and even more importantly the village constitutes only one among several entities relevant to actors' strategies with respect to land use and geographic mobility. This will be further clarified in the following chapters.

The association of later ancestors' names with different locations also narrates the gradual expansion of the cultivated area:



### *Genealogy 3.1*

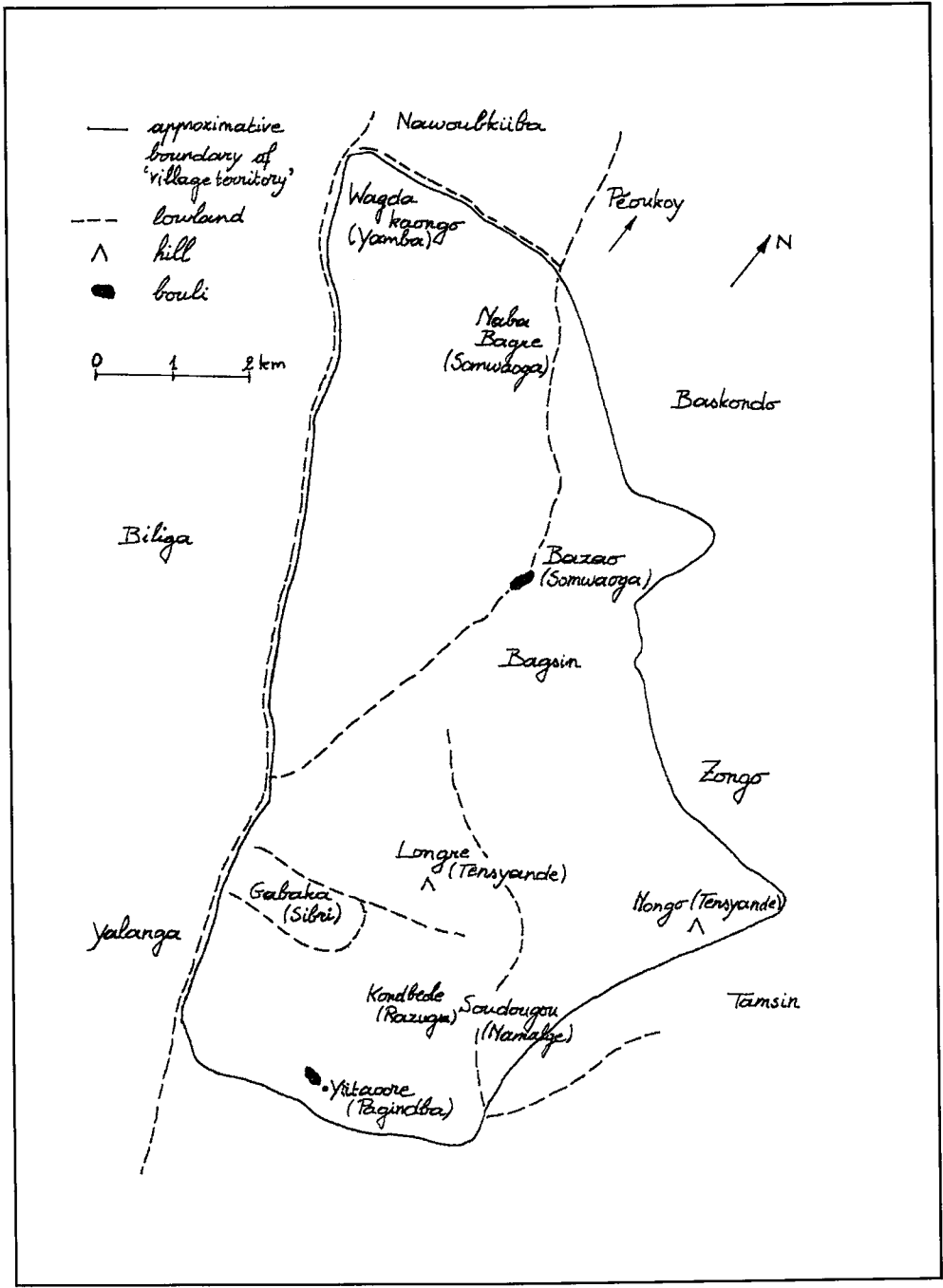
#### *Yiitaoore tengbiise ancestors*

'Sibri from Gabaka, Razugu from Kondbeole and Namalge from Soudougou. Sibri was also called *Sibki* ['millet-Sibri']; he was rich and once a pile of millet he harvested changed into a termite hill. He was always in the "brousse" and even during the dry season you wouldn't see him in the compound; he was looking for wet places where he would sow and if the rains started he would indicate the places he sowed to others so they wouldn't occupy the places. Three days after the rains had started his millet would have grown high already while others would still be sowing'.<sup>16</sup>

While Sibri, Razugu and Namalge cleared land relatively nearby the ancient village nucleus, it was only from the beginning of the present century onwards that more distant land, equally belonging unequivocally to the present day village territory, was cleared. In the next chapter, a closer look will be taken at this spreading out of population and fields, but it may be noted here that it is an important element of dominant discourse that it was again members of the *tengbiise* lineage who, in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, cleared the way to the parts of the 'brousse' which were called Naba Bagre and Bagsin, and which have come to constitute separate wards today. At first, so called 'campements de brousse' were established near newly cleared fields during the rainy season, and only later permanent settlements were created. And so, again, the clearings at particular locations are associated in narratives with the names of *tengbiise* ancestors, in particular with Yamba and his son Somwaaga.

Sayouba, today living at Wagda-kaongo at the north-western boundary of the village territory, explained that, when his family first came from Tiibtenga (Samtaaba), only Yamba had his fields there. That was before he became *tengsoba* and returned to Ziinoogo [probably in the mid-1920s]: 'All the places between here and the Pullo settlement at the entrance of Naba Bagre were cleared by Yamba's son Somwaaga. Somwaaga never stayed longer than two

<sup>16</sup> Yuma, Rumtenga Yiyooaga.



Map 3.2  
Tengbiise markers in the 'village territory'

years with his field in the same place. He worked the land up to Bazao. The stump which still is there is from a tree felled by Somwaoga's axe'.

Somyasya, Somwaoga's son, speaking about a field he was working on near Naba Bagre: 'My father was the first to clear these lands when I was a small boy. He cleared a parcel, sowed, and the next year he cleared a new parcel, leaving fallow the one from the year before. There were few people here, there were only lions and hyenas. Afterwards, my father made his fields at Bazao and there too he was the first to clear the land on both sides of the river'.

The *tengbiise* lineage's genealogical history and the history of the occupation of the village territory appear then strongly correlated in dominant discourse. Though not necessarily going further back in time than the genealogies of any of the other lineage segments (for example, the members of the *nakombga* lineage segment to which the village chief belongs trace their origin back to the founding ancestor of the Moogo, *naaba* Ouédraogo), its overlap with the village's geographical history is unique and imperative to account for present day arrangements of land use practice. The accounts of who was the first to clear the different parts of the village territory are brought to the fore firstly in order to support the religious and ritual authority of the *tengbiise* over the village territory: 'Those belonging to the firstcomers, who were the first to clear the land, can use the land without getting into trouble. When you however belong to those who came second you need to take care not to fell without first asking permission. You may have your fetishes in your compound, but in the "brousse" the fetishes are the *tengsoba's* affair. When you are a latecomer and you say that your axe is good and sharp and you start felling, then you are the one who looks for trouble'.<sup>17</sup> Secondly, the same accounts also legitimize a particular distribution of authority over different *tengbiise* elders with respect to the actual allocation of land for cultivation. Below, I come back to this internal segmentation of the village territory and of the *tengbiise* lineage segment.

### Dominant discourse: the exclusivity of autochthonousness

The distinction between firstcomers and latecomers concurs more or less with another essential distinction in dominant discourse, namely between *tengneba* (lit. 'people of the village', sing.: *tengneda*) and *saamba* ('strangers', sing.: *saana*). In its most exclusive sense, the *tengneda* are equivalent to the *tengbiise*, all other villagers whose ancestors arrived later being strangers. Access to land for the installation of one's compound as well as for farming is possible only through the *tengbiise*, that is, settlement and/or use rights are not granted without prior authorisation by the latters' lineage elder, the *tengsoba*.

Any portion of land that is not used by the *tengbiise*, or which the *tengbiise* do not intend to use in the coming rainy season, is open for use by others. Indeed, although as we shall see there may exist difference of opinion as to the number of *yaab ziinse* constituting the village territory and thus as to which lineage segments control a territory they can manage more or less autonomously, consensus reigns as to the impossibility of appropriation of land, in the sense of private property, by any living human being or group of living human beings: 'No piece of land belongs to someone. The moment a person leaves fallow the land he used the year before to clear land elsewhere, it can be asked [from the *tengsoba*] by someone else. Even if the *tengsoba* himself leaves fallow a plot he used, it may be asked for by another

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<sup>17</sup> Sayouba, Tiibtenga Yiyooaga.

person'.<sup>18</sup> In principle, the use of land is granted to any person who is 'of good faith', whether he or she lives in the village or not. The applicant is asked to walk over the village territory and to choose the place (*ziiga*) where he wants to make his field (and, eventually, the fields of members of his compound). As long as it is not a place already in use by someone else, he can choose any place he likes and the *tengsoba* will authorize him to clear and sow. This hospitality, intrinsic to dominant discourse, was exemplified by the expression a Ziinoogo *tengbiiga* used when he went to determine the boundaries of the place to be allocated to an applicant from the neighbouring village of Koundbokin: 'He who comes to see you [to ask for a place to farm] possesses the shadow's circle'.<sup>19</sup> The person uses the land until yields diminish and then can look for another place for which he again has to ask permission with the *tengsoba*. The abandoned place becomes open again to solicitation by other persons.

People in search of farm land will not ask for it from just anybody: they approach those people from whom 'they know they have a good chance to receive'. Thus, a man from Tamsin, who farmed land on the Ziinoogo village territory, explained: 'We asked for land in Ziinoogo, and not for example in Songo [bordering Tamsin to the south-east], because our grand-parents did not have many ties with Songo, so that we cannot know if good or evil is awaiting us there'.<sup>20</sup> In matters of land allocation to strangers, the actors involved need to know one another, the stranger to whom use rights are granted is not a complete stranger and a minimal trust must exist. The existence of trust is most often expressed in terms of kinship ties or marriage relations: those who use land with the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* are related to them either through *rogem* (lit. also 'birth', relationships between cognatic kin, the most important here being the relationship between mother's brother and sister's son, i.e. the *yasba-yagenga* relationship) or through *reemdo* (in-law relationship).<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the applicant's behaviour has to be correct (in particular: no precedents with respect to conflicts over land he used before, not being a sorcerer, not having 'stolen' women from the village or its allies). It should be stressed here that this assessment of behaviour does not concern simply the individual applicant involved, but also, and even most importantly, the behaviour of his agnates too. For example, if there exists an unresolved problem of rivalry between the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* and the kin group of the applicant, access to land will be denied.

Having 'correct behaviour' also means that it can be expected that the applicant will accept the ultimate right of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* to withdraw the land allocated to him, at any moment they might deem suitable. In dominant discourse, it is fully accepted that, if a 'stranger' obtains high yields on land allocated to him or if rainfall circumstances during past seasons have favoured for example the sowing on lowland, the [low]land can be withdrawn the next season so that it can be used by a *tengbiiga* (a reputed sorcerer, for example, may be expected to resist withdrawal by witchcraft - preparation of *tiim* - and to him land would not be allocated in the first place). However, such a withdrawal concerns only a *particular* plot, it is not a withdrawal of the *right* to a place (*ziiga*) on the *tengbiise's* *yaab ziiga*. The applicant will be asked to look for another place to farm. The right to a place, albeit not geographically fixed, is not so easily withdrawn: 'If a person had a place for some time already without

<sup>18</sup> Ousmane, Rumtenga Yiyooga.

<sup>19</sup> 'Watam yā n fo soaba n tara maas gilga', Kogbila, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

<sup>20</sup> Rabanega, Tamsin.

<sup>21</sup> Sometimes, a relation of friendship (*zoodo*), often preceding *reemdo*, may be the basis for granting another person use rights to land (cf. chapter 5).

causing trouble [*m pa beege*], his children too will be allowed to exploit it'. Only when grave problems occur is this said to happen. More precisely, the right to a place is said to be withdrawn only in the case of rivalry (*ratado*<sup>22</sup>), which in most cases comes to rivalry over women. Thus, the entitlement of a stranger to a place on the *tengbiise's yaab ziiga* in a way stays 'in the family'. Conversely, misbehaviour of one person may have long term consequences for his kin and descendants; as an old man from Koundbokin explained with respect to land lent out to one of his kin: 'If it were not for my good behaviour in the past, my brother's son would not have a *ziiga* today with the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*'.

Although stressing the wholeness of the village territory and the existence of only one *yaab ziiga*, dominant discourse nevertheless does recognize the existence of certain subdivisions, related on the one hand to a first<sup>23</sup> internal differentiation of the *tengbiise* lineage segment and, on the other hand, to the particular and ritually sanctioned relation between *tengbiise* and *nakombse*. This first internal differentiation is linked to times of arrival, but, in a way, effaced through the office of *tengsoba*. In the ward of Ziinoogo, the *tengbiise* are dispersed today over three separate sub-wards (*sakse*), namely those of Yiitaoore, Kamsin and Sorpoore (cf. map 3.1). All of them claim descent from the same ancestor and to have left Béléhédé, but only the Yiitaoore *tengbiise* trace their origin effectively back to the founding ancestor of Ziinoogo, Tensyande. What is more, they belong to separate lineage segments in the sense that they have different *buud kasmdamba*, i.e. lineage (*buudu*) elders (*kasmdamba*, sing.: *kasma*) having custody of ancestor shrines (*kiimse*). Although they may all have originated from one and the same ancestor in Béléhédé, it seems that the *kiimse* were split at a certain moment giving rise to two separate lineage segments. The primacy of arrival is nowadays disputed between the two. Those who are at Yiitaoore explain the name of their ward in the sense of 'the first home' established at Ziinoogo, while those from Kamsin and Sorpoore take it to signify 'the house established in front of [Kamsin]', thus according primacy of existence to Kamsin over Yiitaoore. Whatever may have been the case, the fact is that the office of *tengsoba* alternates between the two lineage segments: a *tengsoba* from Yiitaoore is succeeded in office by the lineage elder from the *tengbiise* at Kamsin and Sorpoore, whether the latter is older or not than the succeeding Yiitaoore lineage elder, and *vice versa*.<sup>24</sup>

With respect to the land use pattern, dominant discourse takes account of this differentiation in that two separate territories are recognized to exist, under the authority of the two lineage elders. They consist of the lands first cleared by their respective ancestors and as such do not constitute simply two blocks, but are scattered among one another all over the village territory. These lineage lands, over which the lineage elders (one of them being *tengsoba*) exercise large autonomous control, notably with respect to allocating land to strangers and the distribution of land among their lineage members, are also called *yaab ziinse*. Although thus separated, they are still ritually unified in dominant discourse in one territorial entity, the *tengbiise yaab ziiga*, institutionalized in the alternating *tengsoba* office.

<sup>22</sup> *Ratado* is stronger than a dissension (*zabre*). In the latter case, those involved can continue to live together in the same ward, while when one is a person's *rataaga* (rival) 'one should not frequent the ward or the market of the other'. *Ratado* entails the withdrawal of land and women.

<sup>23</sup> Internal differentiation of the *tengbiise* lineage segment and lineage land is in practice a rather complex affair, as will be demonstrated below (in particular case 1 in the next chapter). This complexity is however not recognized to exist in dominant discourse.

<sup>24</sup> In Yiitaoore it was said that the people of Kamsin arrived only later and were installed under the authorisation of *tengsoba* Pagindba, who ordained that after his death the office of *tengsoba* should go to Kamsin because 'if the people from Kamsin have food it will benefit everybody' (Nomba, Yiitaoore *tengbiiga*).

Dominant discourse further acknowledges that the village territory is characterized by another kind of territorial subdivision which is geographically relatively fixed and which is associated with the *nakombse* and *nayiirdamba* lineage segments that hold, respectively held the office of village chief (cf. chapter 2). The political authority of the *nakombga* chief over the village population is not an issue under discussion. However, it is stressed that the territorial grounding for political authority has been and still is achieved only through the presence of *tengbiise* who, as first occupants of the land, are the mediators towards the divinities of the land and all other natural forces affecting agricultural production (rain, clouds, wind) (cf. also Luning 1997:59, Marchal 1983:700). This mediation is institutionalized in the office of *tengsoba* and the *tengsobdamba* legitimize the *nakombse* political authority. This is expressed in a number of rituals, one of them being the *ringu*, during which a newly inaugurated *nakombga* king travels through his kingdom paying visits to associated *tengsobdamba* (cf. Izard 1985:19; another such ritual is the *napuusum*). Such legitimization in principle does not accord any autonomy to *nakombse* with respect to effective control of the village territory or parts of it, it only indirectly associates to a chief the territories controlled by the lineage segments recognizing his political authority. With respect to land tenure, one would not expect the *nakombse*'s situation to be any different from that of other latecomers. Still, dominant discourse in Ziinoogo makes exception for the *nakombse*'s position because of their association with 'power' (*naam*): 'People who came from elsewhere can always have the land they farm withdrawn. If the lands they use get exhausted, they will have to *ask* for another place. Exception should be made however for the *nakombse*. Although they have only power over people, they received at their arrival in Ziinoogo a *ziiga* at Soudougou that cannot be withdrawn and of which they know the boundaries'.<sup>25</sup> Within that *ziiga* they can clear land without asking the *tengsoba*'s permission as well as allocate land to others. This holds as well for the *nakombse* presently holding the village chieftancy as for their *nayiirdamba* predecessors. Both control relatively autonomously a territory at Soudougou (cf. map 3.3), to which the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* however refuse the status of *yaab ziinse*.

### The inclusiveness of alternative discourses and the superposition of claims

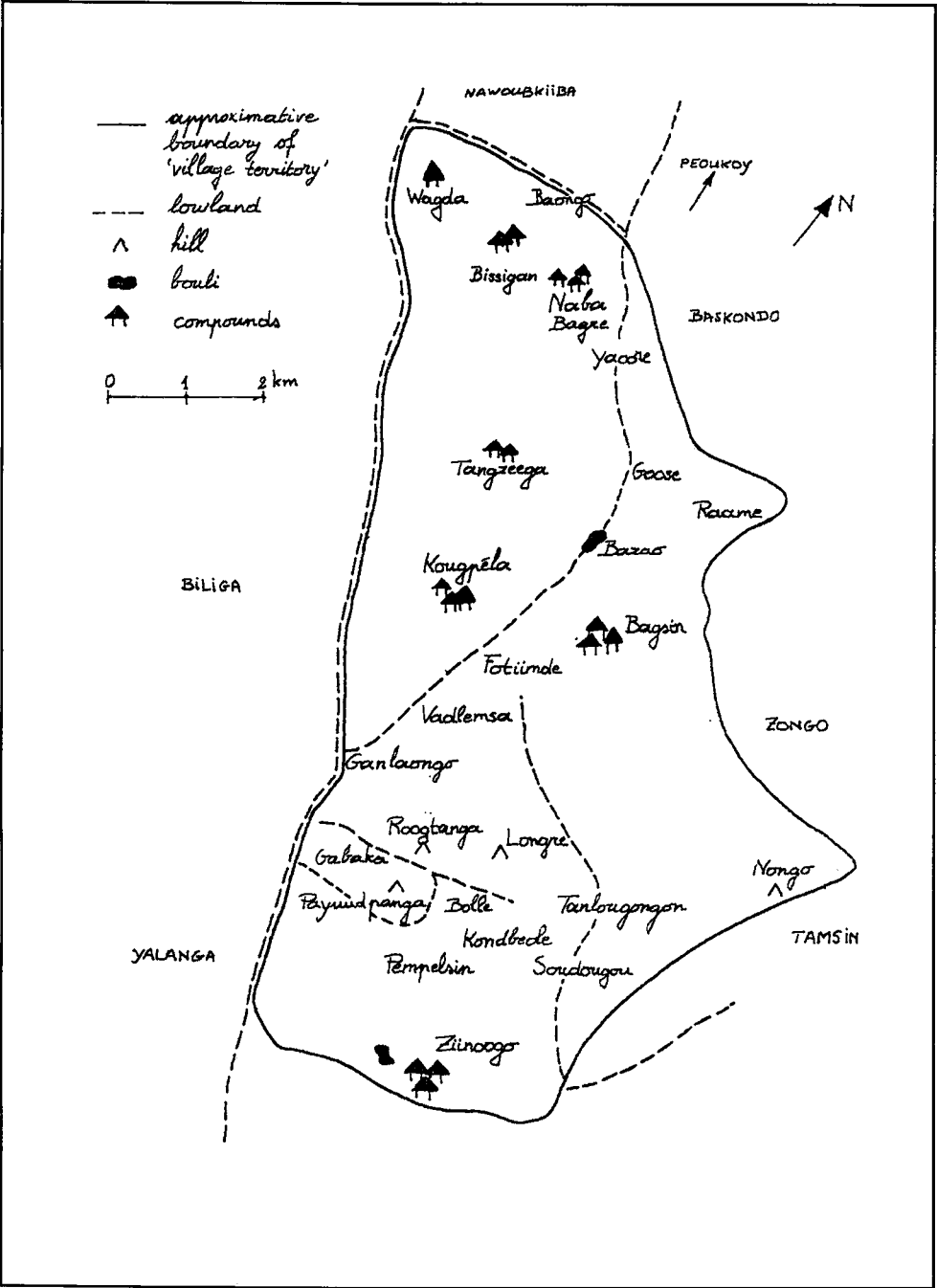
The construction of alternative discourses of land use practice in the village territory is based on the contextually shifting distinction between *tengneda* and *saamba*, and on alternative interpretations of the concept of *yaab ziiga*. That members of lineage segments, other than the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*, may be considered to be *tengneda* is motivated by their early arrival and/or their close kinship ties and ritual collaboration with the *tengbiise*. This inclusiveness may go as far as to consider other lineage segments as 'having become one and the same as the *tengbiise*'.<sup>26</sup>

In dominant discourse the having arrived first of the *tengbiise* was stressed. This makes them the only 'real' autochthonous population group of the village and the only people

<sup>25</sup> Kogbila, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. also Piot (1991) on how different Kabre 'houses' (northern Togo) can become one or the same as the relationships between the 'houses' are growing.





Map 3.3  
The 'village territory': toponyms

controlling a lineage territory (*yaab ziiga*) in the strictest sense. One then can have a lineage territory only at one's place of origin, that is the place where one's ancestors were the first to settle. In this sense we have to understand that it can be maintained that, for instance, the Rumtenga Yiyoose, who arrived in Ziinoogo only some 35 years ago, 'never will have a *yaab ziiga* on the Ziinoogo village territory, but only there where their origins are, that is in Rumtenga'. However, other lineage segments that arrived after the *tengbiise* have 'autochthonized' to such an extent that they consider Ziinoogo as their place of origin and see themselves and are seen by others as *tengneda*.<sup>27</sup> Autochthonization is achieved by long-standing presence in the village and by the establishment of an intricate network of kin relations with the *tengbiise*, and it seems to have been facilitated by ritual collaboration, as will be shown now.

In Ziinoogo, members of three lineage segments are to a greater or lesser extent considered to be *tengneda*. They are linked to the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* through [former] ritual collaboration. It seems that we are dealing here with what Fortes (1940:243) refers to as a 'composite clan'<sup>28</sup>, where 'the constituent maximal lineages [...], though relatively autonomous in relation to one another, are bound by clearly defined reciprocal duties and privileges, obligations and rights which emerge in ceremonial situations, economic and legal affairs and in religious institutions'. In order to explain the actual situation in Ziinoogo, a retrospective look is necessary once again. I limit myself to a discussion of two of these lineage segments.<sup>29</sup>

Formerly, three lineage segments collaborated in rituals related to the divinities of the earth: the *tengbiise* lineage segment in the person of the *tengsoba*, the Saaba lineage segment in the person of the *saabnaaba* (blacksmiths' chief) of Balbou<sup>30</sup> and the Yiyoose lineage segment of Kuritgo (a *saka* of Ziinoogo) in the person of the *kurita* (this lineage segment's elder). The collaboration is best illustrated by the procedures which had to be followed in the case of succession to a deceased *tengsoba*. The *saabnaaba* of Balbou then came to collect the ritual attributes of the *tengsoba* (notably a small pickaxe, *ti-toaga*) to hand them over to the *kurita*. The *kurita* watched over the attributes until the moment a new *tengsoba* could be inaugurated (that is, after the necessary funerals for the deceased had been performed) and seems to be considered generally as a kind of 'deputy' to the *tengsoba*. He then returned the

<sup>27</sup> Izard (1985) elaborates on processes of autochthonization in the Yatenga kingdom.

<sup>28</sup> A composite clan is constituted by maximal lineages, for each of which the respective members trace agnatic descent from a common ancestor. The composite clan has no common ancestor. Fortes furthermore writes that '[such] a local clan is conceived by the natives as an expanded agnatic lineage, all members of which are "kinsmen by consanguinity" (*doyam*)' (Fortes 1940:243), which again is a situation encountered in Ziinoogo where such consanguinity would be referred to by the term *rogem* (cf. also Luning 1994). In other respects too, similarities exist between the Tallensi studied by Fortes and the Moose (for instance, the socio-political organization based on two coupled though opposed institutions of chiefship and earth priesthood).

<sup>29</sup> Only one compound of the third lineage segment remains in Ziinoogo and constitutes what is left of the *saka* of Baskondo. The head of the compound is a lineage elder (*buudkasma*), which means that he does not depend on the actual Baskondo *tengsoba*. A division of the ancestor shrines (*kiimse*) has taken place. As was mentioned earlier on, the presence of this lineage segment in Ziinoogo is of long standing. Its ritual tie with the *tengbiise* consists of the fact that a direct ancestor of the Baskondo elder now living in Ziinoogo handed to the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* a power over fish: 'This ancestor, Raboake, had a power to make food. The *tengsoba* told him that he wanted stickles [i.e. fish-bones, fish] to give to his people. Raboake in reply asked the *tengsoba* to send him a black hen and in this way he gave the power over fish to the *tengsoba*. From then on, the pools in the "brousse" were filled with fish and in the following rainy season they caught a huge pile of fish. The *pogdbadamba* [fathers' sisters] and the *yagense* [sister's sons] did not need to ask for fish, they could take as much as they liked' (Raboake, *nakombga* lineage elder).

<sup>30</sup> Balbou is a neighbouring village south of Ziinoogo.

attributes to the *saabnaaba* who handed them to the new *tengsoba*.<sup>31</sup> The three lineage elders also joined in the performance of yearly rituals such as the *tengaana*<sup>32</sup>, when offers are made to the earth divinities at *tengkuga* located in the 'brousse'. The ritual alliance between the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* and the Balbou Saaba was further demonstrated by the fact that deceased *tengsobdamba* and *saabkasmdamba* are said to have formerly shared one and the same tomb (at Longre).<sup>33</sup>

As mentioned before, the lineage segment, whose elder used to be the *kurita*, occupied a separate *saka* in Ziinoogo, namely Kuritgo. It was not possible to establish its origin, nor how exactly it is related to the two Ziinoogo *tengbiise* lineage segments. While people from Yiitaoore claim to be the *yasbdamba* (mother's brothers) of Kuritgo, the *tengbiise* from Kamsin and Sorpoore stress more their sameness, going as far as stating that they and Kuritgo belong to the same *buudu*, 'though not very connected'. In this respect it is interesting to note how a man from Sorpoore tried to demonstrate common descent of the *tengbiise* and Kuritgo: 'The people from Kamsin, Yiitaoore and Kuritgo all have the same ancestor. Let me explain. A man from Kamsin cannot marry a woman from Yiitaoore or Kuritgo, a man from Kuritgo cannot marry a woman from Kamsin or Yiitaoore and a man from Yiitaoore cannot marry a woman from Kamsin or Kuritgo. That is why we belong to the same *buudu*'.<sup>34</sup> It seems then as if the people from Kuritgo are *yagense* of ancient root of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*. That is, *yagense* or *yasba* here does not indicate an actual relation between living people but a more general kin relationship between lineages, which, through successive exchanges of women - creating consanguinity to such a degree that further intermarriage became impossible - have become 'one and the same'.<sup>35</sup> In any case, the people from Kuritgo themselves consider

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<sup>31</sup> Conversely, the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* watched over the attributes of a deceased *saabnaaba* until a successor was inaugurated.

<sup>32</sup> The *tengaana* ritual is, nowadays too, performed in the period that the millet matures.

<sup>33</sup> The ritual collaboration between Saaba and *tengbiise* is not surprising, considering the complementary places the two groups occupy in both Moaga meta-ideology and ideologically informed discourse on the village level. With respect to the former, Izard (1985:64), for example, writes for Yatenga: 'Les gens de la terre [*tengbiise*] et les forgerons [Saaba] [constituent] une société pré-étatique, du point de vue du pouvoir moaga. Les gens de la terre travaillent la terre, ce sont les agriculteurs par excellence. Les forgerons fabriquent les outils nécessaires à ce travail (métallurgie des hommes). Les gens de la terre récoltent les produits végétaux alimentaires tirés de la terre. Les forgerons fabriquent les instruments de cuisine nécessaires à la transformation de ces produits alimentaires en nourriture (poterie des femmes)', and, also: '[Les forgerons] creusent le sol pour que les gens de la terre puissent y déposer les morts [...] (19). That this complementarity is also stressed at the village level in order to explain certain arrangements concerning land tenure will come to the fore later on.

<sup>34</sup> Nasida, Kamsin *tengbiiga*.

<sup>35</sup> Imbs (1987:43) too notes that wards can become so related with one another through marriage that future marriages become impossible. Goody (1959:68) discussed the mother's brothers-sister's sons relationship between 'clan sectors' among the LoWilli. His observations are obviously of interest for the relationship in Ziinoogo between Yiitaoore, Kamsin and Kuritgo: 'Clearly not everyone in these groups can be related to each other as sister's son and mother's brother [...]. I have heard this usage [of the term sister's son] only from senior members of the clan sector of the first arrivals in a particular area to refer to clan sectors descended from persons visualized as coming later. [...] Thus, the spatial position of two adjacent lineages, and their ritual relationships to the Earth (for the custodianship of the local Earth shrine is vested in the clan sector thought of as descended from the first settler) are conceptualized in terms of the acquisition of land by a sister's son from a mother's brother. The use of the kinship term, "sister's son", is thought of by the actors as derived from this initial event, although the observer may regard it as referring to the contemporary one. Logically it should be balanced by a similar usage of [the term mother's brother], and indeed such a usage, always implied, may well exist. But although the descent groups of the later arrivals might agree that their founding ancestor was related to the clans of the first comers through a female, they would be most unlikely themselves to refer to that group in general as "our mother's brothers" For this would indicate a generation difference and therefore

Ziinoogo to be their place of origin, which has consequences for their claims on village land, as will become clear below, because in this way they claim to be *tengneda*.

Nowadays, the place which used to be the *saka* of Kuritgo is occupied by other people's *karaase*. Kuritgo was progressively abandoned in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the lineage segment dispersed, mainly towards contemporary Namissiguima and the Ziinoogo ward of Bagsin, where, with some six compounds, they came to constitute an important fraction of the population. The office of *kurita* was withdrawn from them after a dispute during the inauguration of *tengsoba* Belgre (in the 1970s) and transferred to another *yagenga* of the *tengbiise*, who however had arrived only recently (early 1960s) in the village (cf. case 2 in chapter 4). The people from Kuritgo living in Bagsin cry shame upon this transfer, maintaining that their lineage elder still is the rightful claimant to the office. It should be noted that their lineage elder today lives in Namissiguima, which means that the ancestor shrines of their lineage segment were moved away from Ziinoogo. I was not able to establish what came first, the withdrawal of the office of *kurita* or the moving away of the ancestor shrines, but it might be that this removal somehow is related to the loss of the office of *kurita*. The explanations given for the conflict between the *tengbiise* and Kuritgo remained rather cryptic to me. The second oldest man in Yiitaore bluntly told me that I shouldn't try to know all about their customs. Others mainly pointed to the fact that the *kurita* had delayed too long the restitution of the *ti-toaga* after a new *tengsoba* had been chosen. It is anyhow significant for the rupture in the ritual collaboration between Kuritgo and the *tengbiise* that the ward of Kuritgo has been completely abandoned, as Ziinoogo is generally acknowledged to be the village's ritual centre.<sup>36</sup>

The Saaba of Balbou too once occupied a *saka* in Ziinoogo (cf. map 3.1), which however, like Kuritgo, is deserted at present. They are said to have left after a conflict over a stolen anvil (probably in the 1940s). Although the *saabkasma* still is present at important rituals like the *tengsoba's zupondo* (cf. chapter 2), the ritual collaboration between Saaba and *tengbiise* seems to have diminished because of what is referred to as a 'dissension'. The village of Ziinoogo nowadays counts only one compound belonging to the Balbou Saaba, that is in the ward Naba Bagre. Although the Saaba constitute an endogamous caste-like group in Moaga society, the Balbou Saaba are said to issue from the *tengbiiga* ancestor Tensyande: 'In the time of our grandparents there was a son who rebelled against his fathers and married a Seya [sing. of Saaba] woman. Their children were told that they had to be Saaba as their mother's lineage was. However, we [Ziinoogo *tengbiise*] and they [Baltou Saaba] are one and

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inequality'. Another term for this kind of kin relationships is suggested by Kopytoff (1987:38): 'perpetual kinship'. In this respect, Kopytoff points out that an original kin relationship later on can come to define the relationship between two offices (in the present case between the offices of *tengsoba* and of *kurita*). It may be noted that when the office of *kurita* was withdrawn from the people of Kuritgo, it was assigned to the elder of the Rumtenga Yiyoose, equally *yagense* of the people from Yiitaore, without the living people however being able actually to trace this kin relation (cf. chapter 4).

<sup>36</sup> That the ward Ziinoogo, although less populated nowadays than the other wards, is still to be considered the ritual centre was stressed time and again in numerous ways. For example, in Bagsin and Naba Bagre it was maintained that ultimately no decision could be made at their level for 'their elders were in Ziinoogo'. People from Ziinoogo tried to convince me that their ward is 'the' village, while Bagsin and Naba Bagre are to be considered as mere 'quartiers de travail'. The village chief stressed that, although he himself was living in Bagsin, he tried several times to settle in Ziinoogo, as if that was the place to be for the chief. He never stayed because of the scarcity of water, but stressed that his lineage elder took care of matters at his compound in Ziinoogo, which we should consider as his 'real' home (*yiiri*).

the same [*a yembre*].<sup>37</sup> Again a form of 'common ancestry' to validate this compound's status of *tengneda*.

Such 'autochthonization' has consequences for the land use pattern and is related to alternative interpretations and discourses. Consider the following.

The elder of Kuritgo<sup>38</sup> in Bagsin, Yamnooma, indignantly refuted my suggestion that he had to ask for farm land from the *tengbiise*: 'Never ever did we have to ask for land from others! You can indeed say that we farm on our own *yaab ziiga* here, and instead of us asking for land from others, others ask for land from us. For example, Mané Saaba<sup>39</sup> asked land from my elder brother, while one of their women asked for land from me'. I then asked an elder *tengbiiga* whether or not land in Bagsin fell under the authority of Yamnooma. He answered: 'If Yamnooma told you that, he was lying. He cannot claim to have abandoned fields [*puuweese*] at Bagsin. Those who say that they asked land from him are his sons'.<sup>40</sup> Somyasya, the *tengbiiga* elder at Naba Bagre, confronted with the same question replied: 'My father was the first to clear the land at Bazao, along both sides of the river. Yamnooma doesn't have anything there. Moreover, it was that affair that destroyed the compound of Poynaaba [Yamnooma's father's brother's son; he left no children]. When he came from Ziinoogo he inflated himself like a white man. They don't know anything about these affairs, they distribute lands that don't belong to them, they don't know a thing. Who then are those people claiming they asked land from Poynaaba or Yamnooma?'. I told him and he went on: 'Well, then, those are people who belong to Yamnooma's *buudu*, while the Saaba, they don't have anything here. It is because the people of Yamnooma are *tengneda* that the Saaba from Mané can ask for land from them. Anyhow, if there should be someone from their compound who might speak on matters concerning Bazao, it would be Geswende, for it was his father Nawood who was ordered by my father to clear land there. It is only because he is the elder [of the compound] that Yamnooma allocates land to others'.

The above passage is very rich in information and exposes some of the complexity of the land use pattern, which remains hidden under the surface of dominant discourse. On the one hand, it is maintained by Somyasya that Yamnooma has no right to speak in matters of land allocation for farming, while on the other hand he recognizes that members of Yamnooma's lineage receive land from Yamnooma, as it is possible too for the Saaba from Mané, who are but strangers as opposed to the *tengneda* from Kuritgo. What is more, he recognizes that Nawood, another of Yamnooma's father's brother's sons, was 'ordered' by his father to clear land, which makes Nawood the first occupier of that land. Other information I obtained then suggests, like Somyasya's remarks, that Poynaaba too came from Ziinoogo to clear land (at Raame, cf. map 3.3) that had not been in use before, but that he did so without paying due respect to the *tengbiise*. Indeed, if Somyasya says that the people from Kuritgo 'don't know a thing', he is merely stressing the *tengsoba*'s exclusive ritual authority over the village territory, something which Yamnooma for that matter fully recognizes. Being *tengneda* and having ancestors who were the first to clear certain portions of the village territory, albeit ritually authorized to do so by the *tengbiise*, the elder of Kuritgo has a large autonomy with respect to the allocation of these lands, which he conceives of as his lineage territory, his *yaab ziiga*. The *tengbiise*, however, always refused to call it a *yaab ziiga*. The Saaba of Balbou in the same

<sup>37</sup> Kogbila, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*. This 'mother's lineage' probably was a lineage segment originally from the village with the name Saaba, which is situated some twenty kilometers to the east of Ziinoogo. Such a change of identity is not uncommon. Izard notes that one does not 'become' Seya, but one 'falls' Seya, 'which is close to a malediction' (Izard 1976:73-74). Still, it should also be stressed that the rupture caused by the forbidden marriage did not lead to a complete break, but that on the contrary a continuity in relations was ensured through ritual collaboration (cf. also Kopytoff 1987:19).

<sup>38</sup> I continue to indicate the members of the lineage segment that once occupied the *saka* of Kuritgo in this way for the sake of simplicity.

<sup>39</sup> Group of blacksmiths, living in the ward of Bagsin, cf. below.

<sup>40</sup> Kogbila, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

way claim to control a *yaab ziiga* at Yaoore (Naba Bagre, cf. map 3.3): 'We never had to ask for land here, as our grandfathers [*yaabdamba*, sing. *yaaba*] cleared these lands at Naba Bagre together with the grandfather of Somyasya. We, Balbou Saaba, and the *buudu* of Somyasya are one and the same'.<sup>41</sup> Their elder too distributes the lands of this *yaab ziiga* among the members of his compound and possible strangers who come to ask his permission to farm.

These lineage lands then appear in practice to have a status comparable to the territories controlled by the *nakombse* and *nayiirdamba* lineage segments (cf. above). While the *nakombse* and *nayiirdamba* themselves consider these territories to be their *yaab ziinse* 'because they were attributed [by the *tengbiise*] to their ancestors', the *tengbiise* argue that these lands never can become *yaab ziinse* because 'we have given them those lands in the first place'. To support the latter argument the *tengbiise* often add that in case of conflicts over the boundaries of these lands, it will in any case be the *tengsoba* who arbitrates. As such - at least when they are referring to others, i.e. non-*tengbiise* - the *tengbiise* reserve the term *yaab ziiga* for the whole of the village territory, unified by the ritual authority of the *tengsoba*, while the use of the same term by the *nakombse* and *nayiirdamba*, the people from Kuritgo and the Saaba from Balbou refers to their claim of controlling autonomously these lands in daily practice. That, for example, this Kuritgo *yaab ziiga* has another connotation than the *tengbiise* *yaab ziiga* is further confirmed by the fact that the land at Soudougou, farmed by the people from Kuritgo when they were still living in Ziinoogo-ward, is considered by Yamnooma to be his *yaab ziiga* too, but that, because members of his lineage have abandoned it for too long a period now, it returned under the direct authority of the *tengsoba*.

The above citation of Somyasya suggests yet another possible meaning of *yaab ziiga*, i.e. taken in a more literal sense, when he argues that it is Nawood's own son who is most entitled to the lands used by Nawood. Indeed, very often *yaab ziiga* is taken to mean simply 'grandfather's place'. This meaning comes to the fore in particular in explanations of how land goes from fathers to sons: one's *yaab ziiga* is then understood to be the place where one's father has farmed and which was asked for in the first place by one's father's father. Thus, members of relatively recently arrived lineage segments too may claim to have a *yaab ziiga* although 'not on the same terms as those who have their origin here and who control an eternal *yaab ziiga*'. Thus, for example, the head of the Yarga compound in Naba Bagre can argue as follows: 'Where my father farmed is not a *yaab ziiga*, because he himself had to ask for the permission to farm there. It can come to constitute a *yaab ziiga* albeit not completely possessed. On the land used by our father we are allowed to plant trees so that our children can know the boundaries of their *yaab ziiga*. No one can take that land away from them if it isn't for the grandchildren of the one who allowed our father to use it. But they will only do that in the case of rivalry [*ratado*]. Still, our children have to submit themselves to the village, because it was Somyasya [the *tengbiiga* elder in Naba Bagre] who authorized us to farm here'.<sup>42</sup>

This fairly well sums up the position with respect to land for members of relatively recently arrived lineage segments like, for example, the Yarse in Naba Bagre and the Yiyoose from Rumtenga. While it is possible that a third party, for example someone from a neighbouring village, addresses these 'strangers' of Ziinoogo with a request to use part of their *ziiga*, they will always refer the applicant to a Ziinoogo *tengbiiga* or any other responsible authority from whom they themselves obtained land, or else act as an intermediary. As such,

<sup>41</sup> Tengo, Balbou Seya.

<sup>42</sup> 'Wend la ne Somyasya yuur ninga', lit.: 'in Somyasya's name'.

although the difference in status of the land in question compared to the status of the *yaab ziinse* of people from Kuritgo and of the Saaba of Balbou is only slight, their autonomy with respect to how to dispose of the land allocated to them is more limited. Their entitlement to a particular geographically fixed place is in another way precarious too, for, although it is mostly maintained that only 'rivalry [over women]' may be a reason to withdraw the land, in practice they may be forced to consent to move their field to another place at any time (cf. case 2, chapter 4). The notion of *yaab ziiga* then appears much more as the entitlement to a portion of farm land on the basis of one's grandparents' presence in the village and their use of a portion of the village territory, without that entitlement referring to a particular geographically fixed area.<sup>43</sup>

Although I come back to this in the next chapter, it may be noted here that to succeed in maintaining continuity in the use of a particular place helps to advance one's claims to it, to give one's *yaab ziiga* a geographically inscribed form. This is expressed in the following example:

Karin's father settled at Wagda-kaongo at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1994, Karin moved his compound closer to Naba Bagre and started to exploit a new field, not too far from his new compound. The elder of the Balbou Saaba at Naba Bagre, Tengo, commented: 'Karin will probably abandon the field he used to sow at Wagda-kaongo, because it is far away from where he settled now. That field has become his *yaab ziiga*'. We asked how it could possibly be his *yaab ziiga* if it was only Karin's father who started to exploit it. Tengo answered: 'Well, although Karin's father had to ask the permission to farm the place, it has become in a sense his *yaab ziiga* for it has never been withdrawn for one reason or another'.

The 'eternal' *tengbiise* lineage land appears thus to be subdivided into numerous 'lineage lands' of differing statuses, the latter being strongly related to the moment of arrival in Ziinoogo of the lineage segment concerned. The 'lower' this status, that is the later the lineage segment's arrival, the more probable is it that the 'lineage land' is submitted to several superimposed claims, linked to nested levels of authority. Moreover, the number of subdivisions recognized to exist and their nature are not the same to everyone: several interpretations of the land use pattern co-exist.

Subdivision of the village territory is not only due to the ceding of rights by the *tengbiise* to later arrived lineage segments. The notion of 'land used by [one's own] father or grandfather' is important to the *tengbiise* themselves too. Let us look at how Sambo from Sorpoore (a Kamsin *tengbiiga*) elaborates on his *yaab ziiga*:

'Rawaage [Sambo's lineage elder] and I have one and the same *yaab ziiga*, Rawaage is my *kasma*, we are the same thing [*bumb a ye*]. Still, everyone farms the place which was farmed before by his own father. Thus, the area extending from Tangantanga to where the Fulbe are belongs to Rawaage, while from Longre to Kondbeole is my *yaab ziiga*. As such, we don't have the same *yaab ziiga* because our grandfathers were brothers [of the same father], who worked together with their father on their *ba ziiga* [father's place], but what they had after their marriage was different. My own children will farm on my *yaab ziiga*. Nevertheless, they are allowed to farm a plot on Rawaage's *yaab ziiga* without asking permission, on condition that none of Rawaage's people needs that plot'.

Another indication of the existence of subdivisions of this kind was the fact that people from neighbouring villages, who used land on the village territory of Ziinoogo, often told me that they farmed a 'Kogbila *ziiga*', Kogbila being a Yiitaore *tengbiiga*, yet not the *tengsoba* or a lineage elder. Kogbila's father's brother, Rabanega, acknowledged that 'they all belong to the

<sup>43</sup> This also holds for the lands used by the *nakombse* but which are located outside the lineage territory accorded to their ancestors at their arrival in the village (for example, the lands used by the village chief in Bagsin).

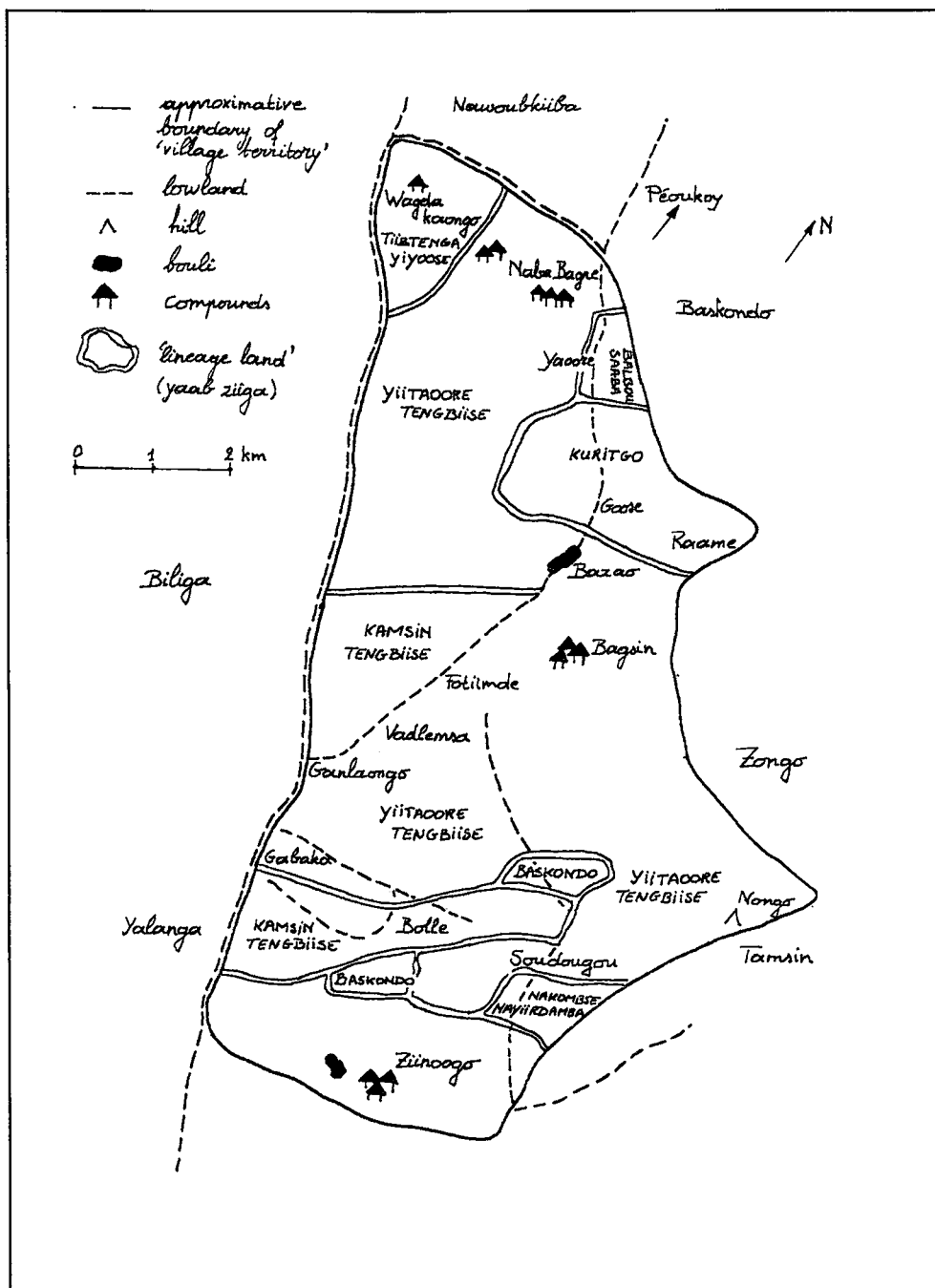
*tengsoba*', but that, nevertheless, 'each knows the boundaries of his father and the *tengsoba*'s father is not the same as Kogbila's father. Even if the *tengsoba* would want to lend out land used by Kogbila's father, Kogbila wouldn't agree. Brothers' children all take care for the land used by their own father'. From this one can conclude that land is inherited from father to sons. One should however take care not to infer from all this that the village territory has been submitted, from the moment of earliest occupation onwards, to a continuous process of fragmentation. Indeed, the structures outlined above are very flexible in practice and allow for re-aggregation, as already indicated above by Sambo, when he observes that his children are allowed to use land with Rawaage, which would enlarge the area directly accessible for his grandchildren. Once again, one and the same plot is most often subjected to several claims at the same time: it may be the plot used by somebody's father and by somebody else's grandfather. Another person again may claim the plot because it belongs to his *yaab ziiga*, where *yaaba* refers to an ancestor several generations back. It follows that the land use pattern on the village territory with its associated distribution of control rights is always but a snapshot of ongoing processes. In this way should also be interpreted map 3.4, which very schematically represents the distribution of control over land in the village territory. In practice, the lineage lands are much more imbricated into one another and scattered all over the territory.

Concurrently, several nested levels of authority over land exist. The *tengsoba* retains the supreme authority, which is mostly ritual and religious, although he will act as arbiter in cases of conflicts over boundaries. It may be noted that, whereas in the literature on Moaga agriculture it is very often argued that the authority of the *tengsoba* has declined markedly in the last decades - concurrently with the advancement of 'individualization' - and nowadays is *but* ritual and religious, I did not find indications that this authority ever was of another nature (cf. also Fortes (1940) on the authority of the Tallensi earth priest). Next, a number of elders of early arrived lineage segments have large autonomy as to the allocation of land on their lineage territory. Finally, compound heads distribute the land used by their fathers - or, if they are recently arrived strangers, the land allocated to them - among their younger brothers and children and act as intermediaries with their lineage elders for demands made by outsiders to use part of their fathers' land (i.e. each son 'takes care' of his own father's land in the first place). It seems evident that such structures as described here, with the existence of a superposition of claims, carry the germs for conflict. It should be stressed, however, that what I called alternative discourses, constructed on alternative interpretations of the concept of *yaab ziiga*, do not openly challenge dominant discourse: the ultimate authority of the *tengsoba* over the indivisible lineage land of the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* is never questioned. How all this works out in practice will be elaborated in the next chapter.

## Wandering Saaba and Fulbe

Two population groups using the village territory of Ziinoogo are considered, by others as well as by themselves, as 'strangers' (*saamba*) 'par excellence', namely the Saaba settled at Bagsin and the Fulbe from the neighbouring settlements of Péoukoy and Yalanga. Although their position with respect to access to land certainly shows resemblances with that of other 'strangers' (Rumtenga Yiyoose, Yarse), they are accorded a particular status in dominant discourse: their relationship both to land and to the *tengbiise* is presented as specific.





Map 3.4

Relatively autonomously controlled 'lineage lands'

The four compounds constituting what is referred to by other villagers as the Saaba from Mané do not have a common origin. Only the members of one compound, headed by Larba, trace their origins effectively back to a Mané-village. The other three are of Marase<sup>44</sup> origin and migrated from the villages of respectively Samtaaba, Rissiam and Rigla (cf. map 1.2). They committed themselves 'a long time ago' to the trade of blacksmithing and changed their name (*sondre*) thus becoming Saaba. Only Larba's compound possesses at present an operative forge, the other Saaba sometimes making use of it. Larba's father was the first of this group to settle in Ziinoogo. Although he indeed departed from a Mané-village, Larba made mention of extensive wanderings preceding their settlement in Ziinoogo:

'It was not because of hunger or any other problem that we left Mané, but only because we are Saaba and Saaba move. They settle there where it appears to them to be suitable. Before we came here we spent some thirty years in Djelgodji. That is also where I learned to speak Fulfulde, for if you are for a long time somewhere where a foreign language is spoken, you learn it of itself after some time. We were, among other places, for some time at Gorgadji, near Dori. We spent also some time in Rissiam. You know, we Saaba, we are wanderers [*tond Saaba yaa gondba*]. If we settle somewhere and if then things appear not to go well we move on to another place. It is like if you are sitting in the sun and if that is not good you go and search a place in the shadow. If God [*Wende*] created the world large as it is, he did so to allow people to move elsewhere if things don't go well where they are. Before, we could go to Aribinda and stay there for some three years and then move on. We went there where the work of the forge was profitable and made our furnaces there.<sup>45</sup> Nowadays we buy the white man's iron and when my generation dies, those who follow will no longer know that work of extracting the iron from the soil'.

Larba's father settled in Bagsin, Ziinoogo, probably somewhere in the 1950s. The fact that Larba remained settled at one place afterwards strongly contrasts with his account of earlier wanderings.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, blacksmiths no longer move to places where the extraction of iron minerals was concentrated. This is due mainly to the access to 'European' iron, but also to deforestation and the exhaustion of extraction sites (Martinelli 1992:28-29). Nevertheless, the Saaba of Bagsin still conceive of themselves, and are conceived as such by others, as 'wanderers', which has a profound impact on how they and others perceive their relation to the land they cultivate; they attribute the attachment to an ancestral territory to 'Moose'<sup>47</sup>, not to themselves:

'The Moose place *tengkuga* where they settle and then make sacrifices and say that the land is their ancestors'. This Saaba don't do. It is because Moose have those *tengkuga* that they will always return to their place of origin, wherever they went. Even if we settle somewhere and a whole Saaba village comes into existence we will never claim that the land belongs to us'.

Thus, these Saaba do not claim any actual or future control of any kind of *yaab ziiga*. Nor do they pretend to derive any privileges from the fact that they have been settled now for almost

<sup>44</sup> According to Izard (1985:66), the Marase (sing.: Maranga) are Sonray, originally living among the Kurumba or Fulse of Lurum (to the north of Yatenga and Boussouma). They were traders involved in the caravans importing saharian salt. They were also, and often still are, artisans, mostly dyers.

<sup>45</sup> Martinelli (1992:32) mentions that, among others, the region of Djibo (Djelgodji) constituted such an exploitation zone from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. With respect to Yatenga, he argues that during the 19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century numerous village sites for iron extraction became exhausted and that blacksmiths organized an intensive dry season production of iron in regions situated on the periphery of the region (*ibidem*:35).

<sup>46</sup> Note, however, that two of Larba's brothers moved on to the south-west of Burkina Faso.

<sup>47</sup> The fact that the Saaba speak of themselves as such, opposed to Moose, and that other villagers too speak of 'us Moose' as opposed to 'them Saaba', underlines the fact that the Saaba consider themselves and are considered by other villagers as more 'other' than other latecoming lineage segments.

fifty years at the same place. On the contrary, they stress their status as 'stranger', as exemplified by Larba when he was asked by me to comment on a conflict between Moose and Fulbe over the use of a well: 'The Moose are the Moose from this place, the Fulbe are the Fulbe from this place, while I, I am a *saana* [stranger] and I am not in a position to speak on these matters'. Their status as 'strangers' is furthermore consolidated by the interdiction on intermarriage between Saaba and *tengbiise*. All other latecoming lineage segments established, or had previously established, in-law or kinship ties with the *tengbiise*, which, as noted above, appear to constitute important conditions in order to gain access to farm land.<sup>48</sup> Finally, there exists no ritual collaboration between the Saaba of Bagsin and the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*. How then is their access to land in Ziinoogo secured? Although there has been established an in-law relationship between the Saaba of Bagsin and the Balbou Saaba in Naba Bagre and although part of the land used by the former is located on the *yaab ziiga* of the latter, it is not this in-law relationship that is invoked. Still during the same conversation with Larba, I tried to find out about the guarantees the Saaba had with respect to access to land in Ziinoogo:

Larba repeated once more that they, Saaba, 'whenever they are sitting in the sun and things don't go well for them, they will go and look for a place in the shadow where things may turn out to go better'. 'Moreover', he said, 'the pickaxe, the hoe and all other tools the Moose use are made by us. The Moose will say that the land belongs to them, but they will never refuse a Seya a place to farm as long as he didn't commit a great evil, because the use of the land is not possible without the Saaba. The Saaba are at the base of the exploitation of the land. That is why it is possible for Saaba to move around and to ask for land and to receive it too. As you can see for yourself, the Fulbe are chased from the wells at Bazao<sup>49</sup>, while I have myself received the permission to dig my own well there'.

That these kinds of statements can be considered to form part of dominant discourse on land use practice in the village is confirmed by the fact that other villagers, such as *tengbiise* and *nakombse*, argue in the same terms when they explain the Saaba's presence in the village and their rights to farm land. It is a discourse that stresses the exclusion of the Saaba (strangers 'par excellence', enforced by intermarriage prohibitions) but at the same time their autonomy in negotiating access to land wherever they are (cf. also Martinelli 1992:35). Both aspects are rooted in the society's 'trifunctional myth' (*ibidem*:34, cf. also Pageard 1963:12) according to which the power over people, land and forge is distributed respectively over *nakombse*, *tengbiise* and Saaba.

In the preceding chapter, the absence of Fulbe in accounts of the village's history was already mentioned. In line with such accounts, the Fulbe are denied in dominant discourse even the slightest notion of autochthonousness, which is accorded to other non-*tengbiise* lineage segments. The Fulbe are seen essentially as only 'passing by', despite their long standing presence and despite the fact that they have used land in the village territory for an

<sup>48</sup> As explained above, the case of the Saaba from Balbou is somewhat exceptional. For them too an interdiction on intermarriage with the *tengbiise* obtains, but they derive their status of *tengneda* from common descent and ritual collaboration with the *tengbiise*. All other later arrived lineage segments have kinship ties with the *tengbiise*, most often being the latter's *yagense* (sister's sons). Even the Yarse of Naba Bagre, albeit also often presented as 'them Yarse', or identifying themselves as 'us Yarse', as opposed to respectively 'us Moose' or 'them Moose', are nowadays well rooted in Ziinoogo, being *yagense* of the people of Kuritgo and their father having been adopted in the compound of the *nakombse* (after having divorced, their father's mother married the present chief's grandfather).

<sup>49</sup> Cf. case 4, chapter 4.

equally long time, albeit mostly for pastoral purposes.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, at present, during the dry season a number of Fulbe from neighbouring Péoukoy settle on the village territory of Ziinoogo near the places where they also have their rainy season fields. Referring to these Fulbe the chief of Ziinoogo said:

'Yes, there are Fulbe around here. But I do not command them. They have their own chief. They didn't ask permission to stay here, either with me, or with the *tengsoba*. Anyhow, they are people that don't settle [*bamb pa zin ye*]. And maybe they do settle, but one day they will move on to other villages'.<sup>51</sup>

Although the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* stress their primacy of arrival and their ensuing ultimate authority over the village territory towards all other users, they do so with particular vehemence towards the Fulbe who are said to 'have never ever since their ancestors constituted a part of Ziinoogo'. The *tengsoba* himself went as far as to deny the fact that Fulbe are using land for cultivation on Ziinoogo's territory: 'Surely they would like to farm land of Ziinoogo, but they will never be permitted to do so, in view of the way they herd their animals'.<sup>52</sup> The Fulbe's right to graze the 'brousse' during the dry season is acknowledged, but during the rainy season, from the moment the Moose have made their fields, Fulbe and their cattle should stay away. Not one Ziinoogo villager recognizes the existence of well defined passages for cattle on the village territory. As will become clear in the next chapter, practice appears to be somewhat different, with respect to pastures and for land farmed by Fulbe on the Ziinoogo territory.

Above it was demonstrated that different interpretations of the land use pattern exist. Nevertheless, none of the alternative interpretations challenged the interpretation propagated by dominant discourse: the indivisibility of the village territory and the ultimate authority of the *tengsoba* are recognized as is the principle of autochthonousness. The Saaba equally, although claiming to be 'wanderers' as well and even more 'stranger' than the neighbouring Fulbe (cf. Larba above), do not question the prevailing hierarchy, and inscribe themselves in the generally accepted conceptions of territoriality. The Fulbe's conception of territoriality, however, appears completely different and is expressed in a more 'antagonistic' discourse.

Fulbe stress that the partition of the region into several separate 'brousses' is the work of Moose, who 'accorded one "brousse" to a first village, another "brousse" to a second village, and so on'. The Pullo chief (*jooro*) of Péoukoy, for instance, argued: 'To us there is no difference between villages like Balbou, Ziinoogo, Bagsin and Baskondo. It is all the same thing', while a younger Pullo maintained that 'the difference between for example Baskondo and Péoukoy only exists on paper. Baskondo is also the same as Bagsin; only the Moose make the difference, because if they have land somewhere they give their place names. In reality, however, we, Fulbe, and the Moose are sharing the same place'. In line with this conception, the Fulbe view all non cultivated land as free to enter for everybody: 'The "brousse" belongs to all Burkinabé', as they say. The latter obtains in particular for the dry season - 'if the fields are

<sup>50</sup> I am referring here to Fulbe from the permanent settlements of Péoukoy and Yalanga. Other Fulbe groups and also Bella, both mostly from the Soum, Oudalan and Séno provinces pass over the village territory and sometimes stay for a few weeks during the dry season when they are on transhumance with their herds from the north to the south.

<sup>51</sup> Moose also associate Fulbe housing constructions with temporality. When Moose move their compound, a number of temporary 'Fulbe houses' are constructed awaiting the finishing of the mud brick houses. For a Moaga son it is a shame to leave for the Ivory Coast, leaving his father in such a temporary 'Pullo' housing.

<sup>52</sup> The *tengsoba* was referring here to conflicts between Fulbe and Moose, which occurred regularly over cattle damaging crops. I will return to the substance and significance of these conflicts in chapter 8.

harvested the Moose know the "brousse" belongs to us' - but the Fulbe also make clear that during the rainy season as well they consider themselves entitled to graze their herds wherever they please, as long as they keep out of cultivated fields. This conception of the 'brousse' not only pertains to pastures. Generally, Fulbe maintain that they do not ask Moose for the permission to farm a plot either (for arrangements in practice cf. chapter 4, case 4).

The opposition between Moose and Fulbe conceptions of territoriality comes down to an opposition between a philosophy based on exclusive rights to land, so often associated with farming populations, and a 'pastoral free range philosophy', attributed to pastoral peoples, like the Fulbe (cf. for example van Raay 1975). Still, it may be important to note that this comes to the fore when probing for conceptions of 'village territory'. Although Fulbe do indeed present themselves as 'wanderers' who move on to other places whenever they 'become too numerous at one place', there exists a meaningful spatial entity for Fulbe that is, at least indirectly, of a territorial nature and that coincides with a relevant entity recognized by Moose. In the preceding chapter I pointed out the way in which the Fulbe of Péoukoy explain their history in concurrence with the history of the Piugtenga *kombere* and how they are integrated into the *kombere* political structure through the inauguration of their chief by the *kombere* chief. In the same way, the Fulbe from Yalanga claim to be dependent on a *jooro* who lives in Nasre and who himself depends on the *amiru* living in Zoura, both receiving their 'power' (*naam*) at Sabsé from the Rissiam *naaba*.

As these Fulbe chiefs also undergo the ceremony of *zupondo*, one may conclude that Fulbe are associated with Moose structures through political and ritual ties, albeit not on the village level but on the higher levels of respectively the Piugtenga *kombere* and the Rissiam kingdom. This constitutes an association with the 'people of power', the *nakombse*, not with the *tengbiise*, and explains why Ziinoogo *nakombse*, although backing the *tengbiise*'s vision of the Fulbe's status with respect to the village territory, still speak of the Fulbe from Péoukoy as 'our Fulbe' (*tond Silmiise*). The elder of the village chief's lineage goes as far as to consider the Pullo chief as belonging to his lineage (*buudu*), for 'just like the chief of Ziinoogo, the Pullo chief receives his power from the Piugtenga *naaba*. That the chief of Ziinoogo goes to greet the Pullo chief on the day of his *zupondo* is because of *buudu*'. Moreover, there exists no interdiction on the exchange of women between Fulbe and *nakombse*.<sup>53</sup> This was once more confirmed by a note I came across in the archives in Kaya, in which the Commandant de Cercle expressed his surprise at a ceremony, called *roumbiri*, that had to take place in 1972 and during which the Piugtenga *naaba* intended to distribute a number of women, the beneficiaries being Moose as well as Fulbe.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> It may be significant in this respect that in an early study on the Moose, Marc (1909:11) mentions that the Moose hold in strong contempt the Fulbe living in the region, but also that '[les influents chefs peulhs] entretiennent avec les *nanamse* des relations assez cordiales'.

<sup>54</sup> The Commandant wrote: 'L'attribution des fiancées était une pratique très répandue en pays mossi; c'est une coutume que le colonisateur a tenté de freiner et que la République a interdite dans ses toutes premières années. Cette coutume consiste à attribuer des épouses sans aucun consentement de la jeune fille [...]. Cette pratique n'a jamais complètement disparu de certaines régions [...]. Il y a deux ans environ le Diocèse de Kaya a fait proclamer dans toutes ses paroisses que le chrétien coupable de cette pratique ne pouvait en obtenir l'absolution que de l'Evêque. Cela montre à quel point les consciences collectives quelque peu élevées réprochent cette coutume (loin de moi de vouloir tout ramener au christianisme! Mais n'avons-nous pas été colonisés au nom de la "mission civilisatrice de l'Europe" avec tout ce que cela a supposé de valeurs chrétiennes dont il fallait nous marquer du signe de la croix!).

Ainsi donc vers le milieu du mois d'avril j'ai appris que le Chef de Piugtenga avait l'intention de procéder à une distribution massive de fiancées coutumières. Il s'agissait alors d'une vingtaine de jeunes filles à promettre en mariage à 20 personnes dont 17 Moose et 3 Peulhs. En voulant mieux me renseigner j'ai appris qu'il y a 3 ans environ

Intermarriage does not occur between the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* and the Fulbe and this is also brought out by the former to support the categorization of Fulbe as 'strangers' and 'people not to be trusted'. Nevertheless, even for *tengbiise* a kin relationship 'by extension' with Fulbe is possible. Rabanega, for example, a *tengbiiga* living in Bagsin, considers the Fulbe of Péoukoy to be his *yasbdamba* (mothers' brothers), for his mother was a daughter of a Bandega *naaba*. Although the latter is a Moaga, the kin term *yasbdamba* also applies to the Fulbe because 'those Fulbe were together with the Bandega *naaba* at Bandega' and because 'the Bandega *naaba* also married daughters to the Fulbe'. Rabanega referred to this 'kin' relation to motivate his attendance at the *zupondo* of the chief of Péoukoy.

## Summary and conclusion

This chapter began by exploring what might be understood as constituting the village territory, whose land use pattern is to be studied. It was then demonstrated that the *tengsoba's tengpeelem* is best understood as an ideological construction, never completely realized in its physical form. Two seemingly contradictory contentions are reconciled in the discourses legitimizing the *tengbiise's* authority over land. On the one hand, there is the contention that the *tengbiise* arrived first to occupy the land and that all the land on the physically realized *tengpeelem* was cleared in the first instance by members of their lineage or under their ultimate authority. On the other hand, there is the contention that they have their origins elsewhere, namely in Béléhédé, which is essential in legitimizing the *tengbiise's* claim to a *tengpeelem* extending to Béléhédé and thus in making understandable the occupation of the northern zones and the distribution of authority there.<sup>55</sup> With respect to what constitutes the village territory, over which the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* exercises more or less direct ritual and religious authority, it was concluded that it consists of an aggregation of lineage lands, which is a historically contingent entity.

Dominant discourse was shown to stress the indivisibility of this village territory as consisting of one single *yaab ziiga*, the Ziinoogo *tengbiise's* lineage land, and to accord autochthonous status to the *tengbiise* only. A first interpretation of the land use pattern comes then to reading a map of the village territory along the lines set out by the history of occupation of land for settlement and farming by the *tengbiise's* ancestors, that is, the

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le même Chef avait donné une brillante fête au cours de laquelle il avait procédé à la distribution de 70 fiancées coutumières.

[...] Les distributions que fait ainsi le Piugtenga sont généralement considérés par beaucoup de ceux qui le connaissent comme une escroquerie. En effet ses anciens amis et proches m'ont déclaré qu'il y a trois ans il s'était écrié qu'il allait "appeler l'argent" [...].

Si les distributions d'il y a 3 ans ont pu être considérées comme motivées par le besoin d'argent, celles de cette année peuvent être considérées comme motivées, certes par le besoin d'argent, mais avant tout par le besoin d'obtenir de la main d'œuvre pour les immenses champs du Piugtenga qui a perdu complètement cette année le bénéfice des corvées auxquelles il astreignait sa population jusqu'à la saison dernière.

[...] Le plus grave c'est que cette distribution massive [...] est liée à une pratique odieuse que les Moose connaissent sous le nom de "*roumbiri*". "*Roumbiri*" (étymologiquement = à la manière des petits d'un animal, *rounga biiga*) est une pratique qui consiste à considérer la femme comme un animal que l'on donne en production avec le droit de faire des prélèvements sur les petits femels. Cela revient à arracher des filles à leurs parents et à en disposer comme des petits d'un animal' (Lettre no.153/K-AG. Rapport à Monsieur le Ministre de l'Intérieur et de la Sécurité sur l'attribution massive de fiancées et pratique de '*roumbiri*' dans le Piugtenga. Kaya, le 2 juillet 1972).

<sup>55</sup> Kopytoff (1987:25) notes that the contradictory contentions of 'being first' on the one hand, and being of alien origin on the other hand appear time and again in African oral traditions on the occupation of frontier zones.

*tengbiise*'s genealogical history is congruent with the history of the occupation of the village territory. Dominant discourse recognizes the autonomy of the *nakombse* and *nayiirdamba* lineage segments with respect to territories ceded to them because of their acquisition of political authority<sup>56</sup>, but does not acknowledge these lands to constitute *yaab ziinse*. It was the scrutinizing of the concept of *yaab ziiga*, to which alternative meanings are attributed, which allowed me to bring to the fore alternative interpretations of the land use pattern. Several lineage segments were shown to claim to control relatively autonomously what they themselves call their *yaab ziiga*. The claims are validated by ancestors' presence and use of these lands. Concurrently with the shifting meanings of the concept of *yaab ziiga* there appeared to be a shifting of the categories *saamba* and *tengneda*, showing that processes of autochthonization can take place. Such autochthonization seems to have been facilitated by ritual collaboration between the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* and lineage segments which arrived later. Finally, also people who at present have no autonomous control of land are still able to speak of a *yaab ziiga*, albeit a *yaab ziiga* projected into the future, for their children and grandchildren, a place as yet not geographically fixed.

As to the Mané Saaba it may be noted that, although seemingly they are marginalized with respect to rights of control over land and have no kinship relations and do not ritually collaborate with the *tengbiise*, their entrance on the village scene is made possible by referring to myths that stress the complementarity between *tengbiise* and Saaba. Their rights to land are clearly phrased in terms of their particular social identity. The Fulbe, equally marginalized, also are less 'stranger' than one would conclude from dominant discourse in the village; this, however, can only be understood if one reveals their relationship with higher levels of Moaga political authority, i.e. the *kombere* and the kingdom.

At one moment in history the village land can thus be understood as an aggregation of a number of lineage lands (*yaab ziinse*), albeit of differing statuses. The lineage lands constitute the spatial structure on which land use paths are inscribed. The fact that several interpretations exist of the meaning of 'lineage land' already suggests that the importance of land extends further than simply its role in the production of 'the material conditions of survival and enrichment' (cf. Shipton & Goheen 1992:307). Dominant discourse, for instance, reinforces the institution of *tengsoba*, controlled by *tengbiise* elders and, as such, also the authority of the *tengsoba* and his kinsmen in matters of land use. It tends to reproduce power relations in terms of an opposition between '*tengneda*', in its most exclusive sense, and 'strangers', with obvious consequences for who has a right to speak in other matters than strictly land use matters as well. Dominant discourse accords the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* not only the right to settle disputes over land, but also, for instance, the authority to admit or refuse immigrants and a privileged position in negotiations with outsiders (e.g. with government officials or project employees for the construction of a well). In the next chapter I will show how access to land on the village territory is arranged in practice and, more importantly, how the land use pattern is continuously reinscribed, as a reproduction of the existing pattern or as an attempt to change it. Land is subject to strife and negotiation and it will appear below that the power to interpret - or re-interpret - historical events is indeed of 'critical importance in order to legitimate claims to land' (*ibidem*:307). At the same time I will attempt to

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<sup>56</sup> Paraphrasing Kopytoff (1987:74), one might thus say that primacy in the establishment of a valid social order (establishment of chieftancies by *nakombse* and *nayiirdamba*) has as its correlate a certain privileged position regarding control of land.

demonstrate the dialectical tension that exists in people's strategies between what has been called an 'ideology of lineage' and an 'ideology of locality'. This will be done by following people's biographies of land use, which step widely across the boundaries of the village territory.



## CHAPTER 4

# GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY AND STRATEGIES FOR SECURING AND EXTENDING CLAIMS ON LAND

'Ideas about space reflected in English and related languages are so specialized - so refined to fit specific institutional situations - that it is difficult to understand other cultural perceptions of social ecology. The concepts of "ownership" and "property" are highly specialized and are dependent on specific technological, social, and legal institutions which are by no means universal. Nevertheless, a large number of writers dealing with "land tenure" have assumed the English and American specifics and then tried to understand the general and the exotic in terms of them. Needless to say, it has not worked well' (Bohannon & Bohannon 1968:77).

## Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have outlined the land use pattern as a spatial structure and its relation to social organization. I have stressed the fact that this structure and organization are to be understood in a historical perspective, constructed contingently with wider socio-political processes. Whereas focus thus far has been on structure, attention will be shifted in this and the next chapter to process and agency. That is, it will be analyzed how actors went and still go about inscribing their own projects in the land use pattern and how these projects relate to the existing land use pattern, to social organization and to wider socio-political [and ecological] processes, that is how the former are circumscribed by and at the same time modify or reinforce the latter. Different strategies (land use paths) are described. In the course of this undertaking, the relevance of the village territory, the village, the lineage and the ward as [social] entities for the deployment of actors' land use practices will be discussed.

If it is said that land use strategies are to be analyzed, an immediate question which arises is 'whose strategies'? As already noted in chapter 1, I have attempted to reconstruct a number of 'family histories' through the contextualization of individual accounts. The focus was on such aspects as the different lands used during a life-time and the reasons for moving from one place to another. It will indeed become clear in what follows that the limited scope of solely individuals' life histories and land use strategies would to a large extent miss the point. Individuals' projects are inscribed in projects of larger social entities and institutions and should be analyzed in relation to the latter. Therefore, the cases introduced in this chapter are not limited to the life histories and strategies of individuals, nor even of single compounds. Still, I take as a point of departure the five compounds composing the *saka* of Yiitaoore at the time of my field work and I focus on the life histories of people who at that time inhabited these compounds. The choice of, on the one hand, the compound of the Rumtenga Yiyoose and, on the other hand, four *tengbiise* compounds, is motivated by their opposed statuses with respect to the village territory, determined by the extreme positions they occupy on the autochthon-stranger continuum. While the *tengbiise* directly descend from the village's founding ancestor Tensyande, the Rumtenga Yiyoose arrived only 35 years ago. It was not possible to construct a case on only one or less than all the four *tengbiise* compounds,

for their histories are inextricably intertwined. Moreover, the members of the four *tengbiise* compounds all stress their unity, exemplified in the expression that they form '*zaka a yembre*', i.e. 'one compound'. The only physical evidence of this unity is the fact that the women of all four compounds, for the grinding of their millet, make use of one and the same large *neere* (grinding table)<sup>1</sup>, located on the outside of the compounds (all the other compounds in the village each have their own *neere*, located on the inside of the compounds). The case material presented in this chapter, taken together, gives an idea of how the actors came to be settled where they are and of how they came to occupy the land for cultivation they use 'today'. It will prove to consist of stories of fission indeed, but of remarkable fusions too.

Although it is my intention to focus in this chapter on actors' recent and present day strategies of land use, I deemed appropriate an additional historical introduction to the case material. That is, in order to provide a thorough understanding of present day strategies, in particular of the *tengbiise*, it is necessary to lift out a specific piece of the Yiitaore *tengbiise* lineage's history, notably the period extending from about 1900 to about 1945. An elaboration on this period is of great importance for the understanding of today's strategies of land use and processes of geographic mobility in the smaller region, for it coincides with the period in which the 'scattering' of many villages in the region took place (cf. also chapter 2). At this point, a number of general aspects of colonial rule are presented. In chapter 6, colonial policy regarding labour mobilisation is discussed in detail.

## 1900-1945: The height of colonial repression

In the second chapter I briefly mentioned flight from colonial repression as one of the reasons for the occupation of the territories to the north of Ziinoogo. I did so in order to bring to the fore the *diverse* factors which came into play in geographic mobility processes at that time. This may have led to the wrong impression that colonial rule, and in particular colonial repression, constituted only one among many other factors (e.g. population growth, competition for political power between Moose rulers). Undoubtedly, however, its impact should not be minimized and therefore I deliberately take colonial policy as an entrance here to present the context in which the scattering of the compounds discussed in the following cases took place in the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. But then again it will become clear that colonial policy alone cannot explain the specific land use pattern laid out.

The population, of what in 1919 came to constitute the colony of the Upper Volta, has obviously suffered from a harsh and repressive regime, and this from the onset of French occupation in 1896. Central to colonial policy was 'the myth of the Upper Volta labour reserve' (Gervais 1990:66), which very soon came to constitute the axiom on which policy was developed. Several measures came together in drawing labour from the subsistence economy and contributed to the occurrence of two subsequent crises and famines (1926-27, 1932-33). The French developed a system of 'prestations' - i.e. of 'forced day labour' (Cordell & Gregory 1982:213), in the early period mostly concretized by the use of human carriers needed for the construction of the administrative capital Ouagadougou (Gregory *et al.* 1989:77). Later on, these 'prestations' were mostly demanded for all kind of infrastructural works (e.g. roads, bridges, airfields). As was the case for other kinds of labour mobilisation,

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<sup>1</sup> A *neere* consists of a kind of round table, made of stones and clay, on which a grinding stone is placed for each woman of the compound(s).

the 'prestations' were at first organized in an anarchic way and in a legal vacuum. In 1912, a legal body was created to regulate the system of 'prestations', officially in order to put an end to abuses and to develop a labour market (system of contracts) (Gervais 1990:54). Gervais demonstrates convincingly how abuses still continued and this, among other things, because of lack of personnel - making control nearly impossible - and because of the over-estimation of population figures. The higher the population, the more people could be mobilized for 'prestations'.<sup>2</sup> It is important to realize that the main part of colonial policy was based exactly on these population figures provided by the Commandants de Cercle. Each village had to provide quotas of mainly men, not only for 'prestations'<sup>3</sup>, but also for military service<sup>4</sup> and labour for both public works (e.g. the construction of the railroads Thiès-Kayes and Abidjan-Niger) and private enterprises (especially the timber exploitations and industrial plantations in the Ivory Coast).<sup>5</sup>

Taxation likewise was based on 'constructed' censuses. As the Cercles were supposed to be self-financing and as head taxes constituted the Cercles' sole source of income, a growth in their budgets was only possible through a continuous rise of tax levels<sup>6</sup> and the number of taxable people (cf. also Gregory *et al.* 1989:77-78).<sup>7</sup> That the over-evaluation of the population suited not only the Commandants de Cercle, but also higher levels of the colonial administration, is well expressed in the following citation of the colony's Lieutenant-Governor Hesling, who noted in 1923:

'Le recensement fait en 1923 prouve - par ses résultats - que la situation démographique de nos territoires n'a nullement été gravement influencée par les exodes des populations de la Haute-Volta vers les territoires anglais. [...] Ces mouvements, de peu d'importance ne constituent pas un courant continu capable de nuire à notre situation politique, ou de causer quelque inquiétude au point de vue économique' (Gervais 1990:169).

Hesling's name is inextricably bound up with the disastrous cotton production programme of the 1920s. Not only was cotton to provide farmers with the necessary income to pay taxes, Hesling also had the ambition to make the Upper Volta produce enough cotton to substitute for the British and American exports to France (Gervais 1990:82). The cotton production programme of the 1920s should indeed be understood in the context of France's policy change with respect to her colonies following the first World War. Whereas before the war 'a maximum of autonomy was encouraged to prevent the colonies from draining the resources of the metropole', the colonies now were supposed to produce the raw materials needed to

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<sup>2</sup> Gervais (1990:170-171) notes, for example, how the Commandant de Cercle of Kaya reports a population growth of 11% from 1922 to 1923 and then of 23% from 1923 to 1924!

<sup>3</sup> From 1912 onward there was a possibility to buy off the 'prestations'. Initially, this was supposed to happen only exceptionally, and in practice only very mobile people, like Fulbe, were authorized to do so. In 1930, this buying off became obligatory for Fulbe, while the possibility to do so was theoretically opened for all (Gervais 1990:55-58).

<sup>4</sup> Military recruitment in the French West African colonies had already started before the first World War. However, from 1914 onwards more and more men were conscripted. In 1915, the age limit was reduced from 20 to 18 and by 1917 nearly 120,000 'tirailleurs' had been recruited (cf. Toungara 1980:249-250).

<sup>5</sup> In chapter 6, I return in detail to policies which among other things intended to 'free indigenous labour from the lineage economy' (Gregory *et al.* 1989:73) in order to create a labour market. Policy in general was explicitly directed to the transformation of the subsistence economy into a monetarized market-oriented economy.

<sup>6</sup> In constant francs, taxes doubled between 1919 and 1940, with peaks in 1922 and 1932, while in absolute figures there was a drop from 1932 to 1938 (Gervais 1990:261).

<sup>7</sup> Even if after improbable population increases the figures were somewhat adjusted downwards, as for example for Kaya in 1929, the number of taxable people never diminished.

'recharge' the weakened economy of France (Toungara 1980:267, cf. also Wooten 1993:438). Again according to quotas based on village populations, cotton production was enforced: each village was supposed to sow a cotton field and to produce each year a quantity of cotton proportional to the village size (Marchal 1986:410-411). Just and fixed prices appeared to be an illusion as Hesling had delivered himself to the cotton traders, thus leaving also the farmers completely at the latter's mercy. Cotton production competed directly with food production, in terms of not only labour but also land, since the authorities tried to impose the sowing of cotton either on the well manured fields near the compounds or on land not cultivated 'since time immemorial' (Marchal 1986:411). Although successive bad rainy seasons may explain the harvest failures in 1925 and 1926, the famine of 1926-1927 is often attributed mainly to Hesling's cotton policy, notably so in colonial documents of the 1930s (cf. also Gervais 1990).<sup>8</sup> The world crisis of 1929 and the subsequent collapse of world market prices passed the death sentence on the colonial cotton dream, and in 1930 the enforced cotton fields at village level were abolished (*ibidem*:259). In 1932, the Commandant de Kaya received a confidential circular letter written by the recently appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Upper Volta, Chessé, in which the failure of policies of the 1920s is re-assessed, while at the same time concern is expressed with regard to the discontent among the people. Errors, notably with regard to forced cotton production, are explicitly admitted and the first of the measures listed to regain the people's confidence is once again the suppression of collective cotton fields.<sup>9</sup>

In summary, up until about 1930, colonial policies, already a heavy burden on the population, were exacerbated by the manipulation of population figures which permitted the Cercles to increase their demands on all fronts, as the Commandants always succeeded in 'making the accounts fit'<sup>10</sup>; demand for labour, taxes and cotton were raised 'above all tolerance' (Gervais 1990:20, citing the inspection mission of 1932; cf. also Echenberg 1975:183, Marchal 1980:206).<sup>11</sup> In 1932, an inspection mission exposed colonial policy in the Upper Volta as pure 'brag' and decided on the colony's insolvency (Gervais 1990). The report of this mission contributed to the abolishment of the Upper Volta and its partition between the

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<sup>8</sup> Forced cotton production programmes had disastrous effects in other parts of colonial Africa as well (southern Chad, northern Mozambique, eastern Zaire). Next to the fact that it interferes with food crop production, cotton production is also far more demanding in labour than, for instance, coffee and cocoa, which, when enforced by colonial administrations, were less disruptive (Lemarchand 1989:54-55).

<sup>9</sup> Circulaire no.88C du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Colonie p.i. de la Haute Volta à tous Cercles et Subdivisions, Ouagadougou, le 8 juin 1932.

<sup>10</sup> Gervais (1990:193) notes that 'subtilement une équation s'établissait entre le nombre d'individus [...] et le montant des recettes d'un budget'. Population figures recorded during the 1920s and 1930s appear then to have greatly puzzled later administrators. In 1949, for instance, the Commandant de Kaya observed with respect to figures on the period 1935-40: 'Ce sont là des chiffres ne reposant sur aucune base. Chacun a dû prendre les états anciens en y portant de légères modifications ou majorations'. He proposed a population figure for his Cercle well below the figure which had been maintained in 1940, and then went on to argue that: 'Loin de présenter une diminution sur les années précédentes, le dénombrement arrêté cette année marque une augmentation de plus de 11.000 unités sur 1932. [...] En réalité l'accroissement est encore plus important si l'on considère que les chiffres des recensements de 1932 ont été souvent forcés par les recenseurs indigènes. Ainsi il est arrivé au cours des dénombrements effectués en 1941 de constater que les vieux cahiers de 1932, portaient répété 2, 3 ou même 4 fois le même nom [...] (Rapport Politique Cercle de Kaya, année 1949).

<sup>11</sup> One should add here that colonial policy was executed through the Moaga chieftancy hierarchy and that at least some of the chiefs took advantage of their position thus acquired by mobilizing people not only to fulfill their obligations towards the colonial government but also to have them work on their own fields: 'At that time, neither the chiefs nor other members of their lineage did work on the fields. Others were forced to work for them', it was told to me more than once.

neighbouring colonies of the Ivory Coast (which incorporated among others the Cercle de Kaya), Niger and the French Soudan in 1933. A shift in policy orientation took place, stressing the former Upper Volta's role in supplying the labour needed by the coastal economy (cf. chapter 6). New laws were developed to accommodate this policy shift, but the burden on the population was not lifted. For example, 'prestations' were made use of by the Commandants de Cercle as intensively as possible (Gervais 1990:80) and military recruitment continued. Only in 1946, when forced labour recruitment was abolished, did things change.

The colonial administration over-exploited the population's labour force and had to resort to repressive methods ('des méthodes policières', 'des chasses à l'homme', Gervais 1990:67,110) to enforce its policy. In particular the period from 1919 to 1933 must have been a time of extreme hardship and anguish. While Marchal (1980:166) concludes his analysis of the archives of the Cercle de Ouahigouya for the period 1924-1932 with the observation that the years 1930-1932 were 'infernal', Echenberg (1975:191), with respect to military conscription in French West Africa from 1914 to 1929, writes that 'even if many thousands of families were spared the loss of a son [...] the anxiety of the annual drafts over the years touched millions of [...] families', and Remy (1977:625) asserts that colonial policy rapidly brought Moaga economy 'out of breath', disorganizing production and dragging the country into a succession of famines (1908-1914, 1925-1930, 1932-1934), in which the climate was but an accomplice. Gervais (1990:214-215) demonstrates convincingly how the Cercle de Kaya had its share of the colonial burden:

'La prééminence des travaux à réaliser sur les ressources humaines susceptibles à les réaliser a toujours caractérisé les stratégies coloniales dans tous les domaines [...]. Kaya en offre une parfaite illustration. [...] [En] préconisant la mobilisation de 30% de la population, les administrateurs de Kaya drainaient la quasi-totalité de la force de travail du Cercle, et certainement plus, ce qui obligeait les communautés domestiques à se départir non seulement de leurs travailleurs adultes masculins, mais aussi des femmes et des enfants. [...] Les années de disette, l'administration de la colonie et du Cercle ont recruté dans Kaya presque 120.000 travailleurs, pour des périodes variables certes, mais l'ampleur des nombres stupéfait'.

With respect to the population's reactions to colonial policy, the French local administrators most often stressed the Moose's passive and apathetic character.<sup>12</sup> In retrospect, historical analyses show that the Moose were not really passive at all. To escape colonial exactions, the Moose are said to have resorted mostly to sheer flight (Asiwaju 1975, Gervais 1990, Gregory *et al.* 1989, Remy *et al.* 1977):

'Les efforts des unités domestiques de production portèrent dans cette période d'entre-deux-guerres sur la création d'un espace autonome de migration. [...] Loin de subir passivement les politiques coloniales, les sociétés voltaïques et en particulier les Moose ont recouru au moyen le plus connu de lutte contre une administration considérée injuste. [...] Plus qu'une fuite, la migration fut et demeure souvent l'arme la plus efficace des désarmé(e)s' (Gervais 1990:53-54).

Only in an early phase of colonial occupation did open revolt occur (Gregory *et al.* (1989:77) mention local Moose revolts in 1915-1916). Flight essentially took two forms: firstly, towards

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<sup>12</sup> Cf., for instance, the Commandant of Kaya who wrote in 1936: 'La situation politique générale du Cercle est bonne. Il y a seulement quelques régions où l'indigène encore peu pénétré se laisse aller à des actes regrettables envers ses semblables, actes qui ont généralement leur dénouement en justice. Il y a aussi de la part de certains chefs une mauvaise volonté cachée, une résistance passive qui exige de la part de l'autorité une vigilance continuellement en éveil, mais qui, sauf imprévu, risque peu de provoquer des incidents graves en raison du caractère généralement apathique de la grande masse des Moose' (Rapport Politique, troisième trimestre 1936, Cercle de Kaya, Colonie de la Côte d'Ivoire).

regions less controlled by the colonial administration ('aires-refuges') and, secondly, towards the British Gold Coast. Although colonial administrators stressed the passivity of the Moose, they nevertheless were well aware of these flights. For instance, when, in 1941, the Commandant of Kaya was asked to give his opinion on the possibility of recruiting settlers from Kaya for the 'Office du Niger' in the Soudan Colony, he emphasized the risk of provoking another exodus, and this to less controlled areas as well as to the Gold Coast:

'La question est de savoir si un recrutement massif pour l'Office du Niger n'emportera pas comme conséquence une nouvelle émigration en groupe vers la Gold Coast. A mon avis, cela ne fera pas de doute. L'exemple du Cercle de Ouahigouya est frappant [...]. Les recrutements pour les zones irriguées du fleuve ont commencé dans ce Cercle voisin en 1937. Depuis lors environ 5.000 colons ont été expatriés. Au début, les chefs du Yatenga choisissaient les gens attachés à leur maison et aucune difficulté ne s'était présentée. Mais les demandes se maintenant, il a fallu choisir dans tous les villages. C'est alors que des mécontentements se sont manifestés [...]. Le résultat, facile à prévoir, a consisté en des départs massifs. C'est ainsi que 6 à 800 indigènes [de cantons du Cercle de Ouahigouya] ont commencé [...] à s'installer dans le canton de Téma [Cercle de Kaya]. [...] Par ailleurs, j'ai appris que plus de 10.000 indigènes se seraient enfuis dans la Subdivision de Bandiagara. [...] De plus un grand nombre de Mossi se seraient réfugiés dans les cantons Peulhs du Yatenga, où l'on ne demande pas d'hommes'.<sup>13</sup>

The issue of migration and flight to the Gold Coast will be treated in detail in chapter 6. Here the significance of 'flight' to the less controlled areas is discussed, in particular with respect to contemporary land use patterns, which allows us to put into perspective the assertion, widespread in the literature, that colonial policy has been responsible for irreversible 'lineage segmentations' and has led to 'totally autonomous exploitations', whereby all kinds of solidarity mechanisms lost their meaning and substance (Gervais 1990:92-97, 212, Mabogunje 1989:330, Remy *et al.* 1977:628, Skinner 1965). That is, to question the exclusively disruptive consequences of colonial policy.

### **Fission of the *tengbiise* compounds of Yiitaoore during colonial repression**

First, a few words to situate once again the village scene at the time of colonial conquest, in particular with respect to the compounds figuring in the following cases. As noted at several places in the preceding chapters, the village population lived clustered together in between the hills of Ziinoogo at the turn of the century. Like other inhabitants of Ziinoogo, the *tengbiise*, before the imposition of colonial rule, farmed land relatively near the compounds, extending probably no further away than Gabaka to the north-west and Nongo to the north-east (cf. map 3.3; see also chapter 2). The Rumtenga Yiyoose, for their part, had not yet arrived at Ziinoogo, although very probably inter-marriage between them and the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* had already taken place.<sup>14</sup> In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Sidnoore, the grandfather of the present day compound head, Yuma, went at a very young age from Rumtenga to Silaalba to be

<sup>13</sup> Lettre du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Kaya, le 2 juin 1941.

<sup>14</sup> Both *tengbiise* and Rumtenga Yiyoose maintain that kinship between them dates from a very long time back and none of the living elders was able to indicate when exactly women were exchanged; it would have happened too long ago.

fostered by his father's sister who had married there.<sup>15</sup> Grown up, he chose to stay in Silaalba and not to return to his brothers still living in Rumtenga. During the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Sidnoore was the compound head in Silaalba and both the fathers of Yuma and Ousmane, Yuma's father's brother's son, were born there (cf. genealogy 4.2 in case 2 below).

Two population movements in particular, departing from Ziinoogo at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, proved to be important for the understanding of recent and present day land use strategies pursued by members of the *tengbiise* compounds of Yiitaoore, the first reaching far north, the second having been confined to today's village territory. Flight from colonial repression is certainly one important reason<sup>16</sup>, evoked by people - from Ziinoogo and the northern villages of Bottogo and Loada (cf. map 1.2) - whom I interviewed on this matter, but other factors intervened as well.

Although it was shown in chapter 2 that early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the occupation of land to the north of Ziinoogo had already started, it is difficult to be exact as to the dates of departure of particular persons. The accounts of elders nevertheless allow us to deduce that at least from 1920 onwards and very probably already before 1914<sup>17</sup>, the first *tengbiise* from Yiitaoore left for the north. Thus it was related by the head of the compound in Loada (cf. genealogy 4.3 in case 3 below):

'Baobingba, Weebnaaba's father, was the first to leave Ziinoogo more than seventy years ago. He did not leave because of hunger, nor because of lack of water. He left because of the hard times the Europeans gave the people at that time. We had no weapons against the Europeans and therefore we preferred to live separated from them. Baobingba at first went to Sergissouma. There we were alone with the Fulbe and because Baobingba feared to find no women for his sons he came to Loada. There too lived Fulbe, but also already a few Moose'.

Such a 'flight' from colonial repression was not always successful. In the archives of the Cercle de Kaya an extensive correspondence can be found which took place between the Commandant of Kaya and the Commandants of neighbouring Cercles on the so-called 'transfuges', i.e. people who crossed the borders of Cercles without authorization and who tried to settle outside the Cercle in which they were registered. Sometimes searches were organized and those found were sent back to their 'Cercle of origin' (so called 'refoulements').

Baobingba was not the only *tengbiiga* to leave. Probably a few years later, Ragenawende too left for Pougouzyégabaongo (cf. map 1.2). Both Sergissouma and Pougouzyégabaongo belonged to the neighbouring Cercle de Djibo. Just like Baobingba, Ragenawende too later on, in the late 1930s or early 1940s, retreated towards Loada where he came to live in the compound founded by Baobingba: 'When he was almost the eldest,

<sup>15</sup> Note that, notwithstanding the animosities between Rissiam and Boussouma, intermarriage between the populations of neighbouring villages from the two kingdoms occurred then too, as they frequently did all through the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>16</sup> A village elder said: 'Nowadays there are more volunteers than places in the army. When I was young, there were no volunteers. People looked for *tiim* [charms] to avoid recruitment. My *yasba* [mother's brother] was a "marabout" and he wrote me a Koran paper so that I would not be recruited and I was not. Others pretended to be ill, to have problems with their eyes or testicles or they wounded their knees to avoid recruitment'. Another elder confirmed the adequacy of the title of Echenberg's article (1975) - 'Paying the Blood Tax' - when he explained that he was incorporated in the so called 'deuxième portion' and not sent to war in 1939 but forced to work a year on the Bamako-Dakar railway, where each night his hands were wounded till the blood came.

<sup>17</sup> The years 1913-1914 constitute a relatively reliable point of reference as they were years of severe famine, in local histories known as *naaba Koabga kom*, i.e. the famine of *naaba* Koabga. Koabga was the Yatenga *naaba* from 1902 to 1914 (Izard 1985:211).

Ragenawende approached and settled in Loada'.<sup>18</sup> Whether they arrived in Loada or elsewhere, these migrants are said to have encountered a virgin 'brousse' - despite the acknowledged presence of Fulbe - which they cleared to farm. The compound founded by Baobingba remained a refuge for individuals in the late thirties and early forties. Thus, for instance, the present day *tengsoba*, Yuunrawa, fled to Loada in that period: 'After the construction of the "campement colon"<sup>19</sup> in Ziinoogo, I was recruited to work for one year in the Ivory Coast. Afterwards, in order to escape forced labour, I went to Loada. At that time, we were beaten and tied up to be forced to work'.

From these short citations we learn that, while flights from forced labour continued until the 1940s and while people at first went as far as Sergissouma, movements of Yiitaoore *tengbiise*, probably from the 1930s onward, came to be [re-]directed in an important way to Loada, a village that nowadays belongs to the Piugtenga *kombere*.<sup>20</sup> It is suggested that this was motivated by the wish to be closer to 'home' (e.g. the wish to find women for one's sons); it was always made explicit that for example Sergissouma was part of Djelgodji, a Fulbe region that is. In any case, while the first departures were maybe somewhat chaotic without a preconceived destination, later departures and movements have been more [geographically, socially and politically] circumscribed (cf. the actual *tengsoba* and Ragenawende who went to an already existing compound in Loada).

Although colonial repression was a major factor in the dispersal of the village population in the first decades of this century, other factors also intervened and were often put forward as having caused 'the falling apart' of the village: people are said to have moved, also to Loada and even Sergissouma, 'pour les cultures' or because of 'lack of water in Ziinoogo'. Hereafter I try to highlight the relevance of these factors in the unfolding pattern of land occupation through a discussion of movements which remained confined within the limits of the present day village territory and which led to the creation of the wards Bagsin and Naba Bagre.

Village elders claim that what are today the wards Bagsin and Naba Bagre were uncultivated 'brousses' at the turn of the century. Soon thereafter, people from Ziinoogo started to make their fields there, staying in temporary settlements during the rainy season, but

<sup>18</sup> Bagre, Ragenawende's son. The fact that Ragenawende and Baobingba both came to the same compound in Loada already indicates that these departures can hardly be conceived of as isolated and if they were so initially, this was only for a relatively short period. It may be added here that also people from Kamsin left, at first for Sergissouma, retreating later on to Bottogo.

<sup>19</sup> In 1938-39, a 'campement' was constructed on one of the hills surrounding Ziinoogo. The colonial administration intended this 'campement' to become a tourist location. Under the heading 'principaux travaux d'urbanisme en 1939-1940' the Commandant of Kaya wrote: 'A signaler en outre de grands campements nouveaux construits notamment à Bonam, Birgui, Ziinoogo (campement touristique comme hauteur avec un très beau panorama) [...] (Bilan de deux ans d'administration dans le Cercle de Kaya, le 21 décembre 1940). Less than fifteen years later, the then Commandant observed on Ziinoogo, after having made a tour: 'Coin perdu au milieu des collines - coin réputé jadis comme centre touristique, mais dont le campement perché sur la colline est aujourd'hui presque entièrement démoli' (Compte rendu de tournée, 25 et 26 mai 1954, Kaya). Although the colonial administration probably saw the works for the 'campement' as 'prestations', the elders who participated in the construction label it as forced labour and as another cause for the falling apart of the village. It is, in this respect, indeed remarkable that figures for the village of Ziinoogo show more than halving of the village's population from 1936 to 1939 (from 476 to 205; Kaya archives; Report on taxes and population, province of Boussouma, Cercle de Kaya, 1941).

<sup>20</sup> In chapter 2, I already elaborated extensively on the possibility of a joint project of *tengbiise* and Piugtenga *nakombse* with respect to the occupation of land to the north of Ziinoogo. Therefore I do not go into this aspect here again, although one should keep in mind the often used expression by Ziinoogo *tengbiise* that 'it is thanks to us that Piugtenga extends up to Loada'.



returning to Ziinoogo for the dry season. By the mid twenties, however, Yamba, son of the former *tengsoba* Namalge (cf. genealogy 4.1 in case 1 below), was staying the whole year in the northwestern part of the village territory. Why did Yamba make this movement? The explanations for the name given to this northwestern out-of-the-way corner, Wagda-kaongo (lit.: 'the thieves' bushes'), provide some hints. Firstly, it is said to have been the hiding place for people who tried to escape labor recruitment and taxes: in the eyes of the colonial government these people indeed were criminals, thieves. Secondly, it is also argued that Yamba went to clear land there in order to prevent others, notably from Biliga, from occupying them. With respect to the latter argument it may be noted that Yamba went to Wagda-kaongo in the same period that the conflicts to the north between Piugtenga and Ratenga villages took place (cf. chapter 2). It seems plausible that Yamba's movement was at least partly related to these border conflicts of a larger scale.

Again, colonial exactions certainly were important in making people move and Yamba, as we shall see below, did not make his movement alone. However, by that time Yamba was already an elder *tengbiiga* - he became the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* a few years later - and in 'normal' circumstances one would expect elder *tengbiise* to farm near the compounds of the ancient ward Ziinoogo, as is still usual today. In order to understand why Yamba was involved in this movement, and also to make sense of the location of his and his son Somwaoga's subsequent settlements and land clearings, one other factor needs to be taken into account, namely the changing rainfall conditions. While, as mentioned in chapter 2, the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had been relatively wet, the 1910s and 1920s in particular were characterized by years of insufficient rainfall. In the 1910s there had been the notorious drought and famine of 1913-1914, and, Gervais (1990:245), relying on reports of the Cercle de Kaya, cites the years 1923, 1925, 1926, 1928 and 1929 as relatively dry years, while 1926 and 1927 were years of famine.

Many are those who today live in Bagsin and Naba Bagre and who claim that they or their fathers settled there 'in search of millet' and because of 'the lack of water in Ziinoogo'. It seems only logical that, in periods with successive years of drought, lowlands gained in importance, although this may have been only temporary (below, this will be shown to have happened in the 1970s and 1980s as well). A kind of race for the lowlands between the villages of Ziinoogo and Biliga probably started in the 1920s. Thereby one must realize that large tracts of these lowlands had probably not been claimed for a very long period or maybe had not been claimed for farming ever before (cf. chapter 2). The way land was cleared and used at that time can only be understood taking this latter point into account: not only the use of lowland for subsistence purposes was an issue. It was also important to prevent people from Biliga or their allies from occupying land which they then might continue to claim as theirs. The story of Sayouba, the head of the only compound of Ziinoogo remaining today at Wagda-kaongo, is illustrative in this respect:

'My origin is Samtaaba. It was not because of dissension or any sort of problem in our lineage that we left there. We were only in search of food. Yamba was our *yagenga* [sister's son] and we made an arrangement with him to settle at Wagda-kaongo, that is three younger brothers of my father came here more than seventy years ago. Yamba gave us a place to farm and later on another place. When he was at Wagda-kaongo his name was Yamba, only after he left here he became *tengsoba* Yamba. Yes, indeed, we came to Wagda-kaongo in order to prevent others from farming here. People from Kirguitenga, from Biliga, wanted to occupy the land here. It was because my father's brothers came here that Yamba could move and clear land at other places. After Yamba had become *tengsoba* and had returned to Ziinoogo, his son Somwaoga went to settle closer to his brothers who farmed at Bagsin and Soudougou, while we remained here. Somwaoga cleared land at Bazao, Bagsin and Naba Bagre. He never made his field more than two years at the same place. Today, Somwaoga's son Somyasya is the one who can distribute the land here at Wagda-

kaongo. I can do it myself but not without informing Somyasya. Still, at his death, Somwaoga said that the land from my compound up to the hill between here and Naba Bagre would belong to us, while the land to the east of that hill would belong to Somyasya'.

Neither Sayouba nor Somyasya nowadays would deny that their parents were hiding to escape colonial repression. The agenda seems however to have been more than double. Next to the need to find a hiding place, the occupation of land was firstly motivated by the need for farm land. One would be tempted to conclude that this need was mainly caused by the climatological circumstances which drove people to clear lowlands. Still, it may also have been so that an absolute scarcity of land for cultivation had occurred because of population growth combined with the extension of cultivated areas imposed by the cotton production scheme. Especially with respect to population growth I do not have sufficient data to say anything conclusive. The third, and for my argument important point on the agenda has been the occupation of land *per se*.<sup>21</sup> Sayouba's statement 'it was because my father's brothers came here that Yamba could move and clear land at other places' is particularly revealing. Yamba was a *tengbiiga* with authority over the allocation of land. Such an authority was needed to face the threat constituted by people from Biliga who were also interested in occupying the lowlands. From this perspective it seems no coincidence then that Sayouba's father's brothers, who made Yamba's movements possible, belonged to the lineage whose elder was the Tiibtenga *tiibsoba*. Later, Sayouba's father would become himself *tiibsoba* of Tiibtenga, equally a Piugtenga village. I found evidence of another such alliance whereby a *tengbiiga* authorized members of another lineage to be the first to clear new farm land. In the late 1930s or early 1940s, Yamba's son Somwaoga authorized Nawood, member of the Kuritgo lineage, to clear land at Bagsin (in particular Goose; cf. also chapter 3). As suggested by Sayouba (the land between his compound and the hill would belong to his lineage, while Somyasya is the ultimate authority with respect to the allocation of land) and becomes apparent below, such arrangements between Ziinoogo *tengbiise* and others carry the germ of conflict.

In retrospect, some of today's actors summarize what happened very succinctly. When I asked how the *tengbiise* from Yiitaoore had come to control more land than the Kamsin *tengbiise*, the Kamsin lineage elder replied: 'The *yaaba* [grandparents] of Yiitaoore had the idea to have many sons and grandsons and they searched for much space [*ziiga*], while our *yaaba* did not have that many sons'. Rabanega, a Yiitaoore *tengbiiga* now living in Bagsin, explained this in the following way: 'At the time much land was cleared, we were numerous and dispersed ourselves and occupied much land in Ziinoogo as well as in Bagsin and Naba Bagre', thereby confirming the importance of the period 1900-1940 in which Bagsin and Naba Bagre were founded. While hiding from colonial repression in the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the villagers set out to inscribe the contours of a land use pattern on which today's strategies are performed. In what follows, I show how these strategies are not limited to a single village territory and that the disruptive consequences of colonial rule need to be put into perspective: although lineage segments have been geographically dispersed they are not necessarily so socially. This fact, that geographically dispersed people continue to belong to, or are able to reconstitute a unified social space, has important implications for the range of options open to actors in the performance of their land use strategies.

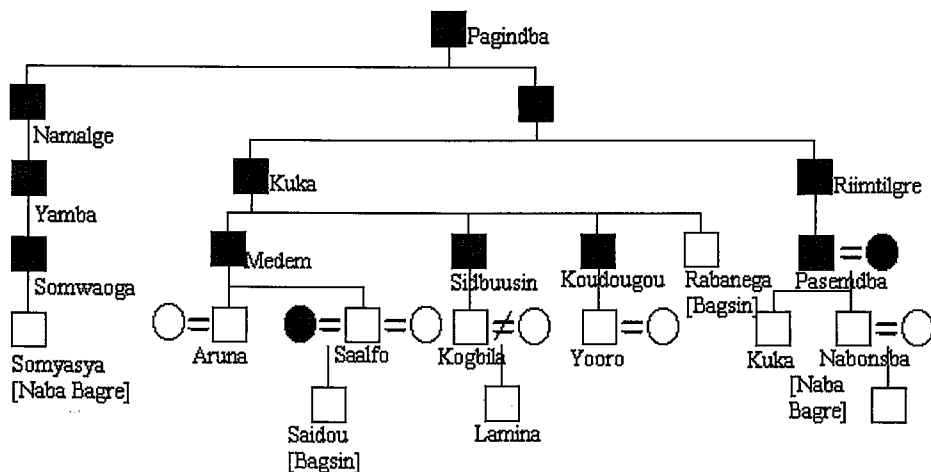
<sup>21</sup> It is very probable that this aspect also played a role in the coming together of Ziinoogo *tengbiise* in Loada.

## Recent and present day land use strategies

In what follows, recent and present-day strategies are analyzed through the reconstruction of four cases, all of which are very much linked to one another. The first case focuses exclusively on land use within the village territory by the people who during my fieldwork constituted the compound headed by Kogbila at Yiitaoore. It allows us to obtain an insight into the specificities of *tengbiise* land use strategies, the nature of conflicts over land, the nature of the *tengbiise* lineage land on the village territory, the relative significance of compound fissions, and the role played by ecological and climatological circumstances. The second case highlights the land use strategies pursued by the 'strangers' from Rumtenga. Another kind of conflict over land comes to the fore here and the importance of rights to land outside the village territory is apparent. The third case has the members of the three other *tengbiise* compounds of Yiitaoore as its main actors. It elaborates on the importance of rights to land outside the village territory and puts into perspective the processes of fission which took place during colonial rule. Finally, the fourth case elaborates on some aspects of the use of resources in the village territory by Fulbe.

### *Case 1: Geographic mobility confined within the village territory: defence and internal organization of the tengbiise's lineage land*

In this first case I attempt to reconstruct the constitution of the compound headed by Kogbila and its composition. Kogbila is a widower, living together with three of his father's brothers' sons, Aruna, Saalfo and Yooro (cf. genealogy 4.1). Aruna, Saalfo and Yooro each married one



*Genealogy 4.1*

*The Yiitaoore tengbiise (case 1)*

wife. Next to these men, their wives and children, there is the presence of three other persons to mention: the widow of Kogbila's grandfather's brother's son (she died in 1995; her husband was Pasemdba), her daughter's son (who returned to his father at his grandmother's death) and, from 1995 on, a son of Pasemdba's son. Kogbila's son Lamina left for the Ivory Coast in June 1994 and did not return before my departure, one daughter of Yooro was, at my arrival, with her mother's mother but returned in 1995 to live with her father, and Saalfo's eldest son Saidou lived since his early childhood with Saalfo's father's brother in Bagsin.

Before turning to the land use strategies pursued by the male members of this compound, I first present Kogbila's view of the way in which land use is organized for his compound. Although living together in one compound, each of the four married men has his own farm, that is, each man is his own *puugsoba* ('master of the field'), responsible for his own *puugkasenga* ('large field', i.e. the field on which all other members of the farm have labour obligations), with those women and already elder children dependent on him each working a *beolga* (personal field) (cf. also chapter 5). At the time of field work, the members of the compound had their fields at Soudougou, Kondbeole and Gabaka, all situated on their common *yaab ziiga* (cf. map 3.3). I asked Kogbila to explain the allocation of land within his *yaab ziiga*. He answered as follows:

'Within our compound, we are all from the same *yaaba*. As to our *yaab ziiga*, it does not consist of a space within which clear boundaries exist as to areas belonging to each of us. We cannot say to have our own *ziiga*, which then afterwards would be inherited by our respective sons. There is no such fixity, nor did it ever exist. Within our *yaab ziiga* the younger follow the elder. That is, if I should die, Aruna takes my place, Saalfo takes Aruna's and Yooro takes Saalfo's, which is not to say that spaces with fixed boundaries go from one to the other. At present, I am entitled to choose a *ziiga* first. If, for example, the soils where I farm now became exhausted I can take the place where Yooro farms and tell him to clear land elsewhere on our *yaab ziiga*'.

Kogbila's main argument here is that, within his *yaab ziiga*, there exists a kind of hierarchy of choice as to the places where a member of his compound can farm. There exist, however, no individual rights of appropriation entailing the inheritance of particular plots of land from father to sons. Still, what is the *yaab ziiga* that Kogbila is referring to? By arguing that they are 'all from the same grandfather' he might be suggesting that a partition of land parallel with compound fissions has taken place. Thus, the question is whether the existence of a separate compound has its counterpart in the organization of space, i.e. a *yaab ziiga* specific to these men issuing from one and the same grandfather. There is no straightforward answer to this question. By attempting a reconstruction of the 'land use paths' followed by the members of Kogbila's compound, mainly during the last twenty-five years, I nevertheless hope to arrive at a balanced picture of the intricacy of the *tengbiise's* land use strategies and the related organization of space.

Although the cases focus on the period extending from 1970 to 1995, I start the account of the events, that finally brought together the four men into one compound, some twenty years earlier. In this way I am able to make clear immediately that their starting points were not all the same, while at the same time I link up with the story of Naba Bagre in the preceding section.

While Kogbila, Aruna and Saalfo all three were born in the compound where they live today, Yooro was not. I ignore how it came about exactly, but in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Yooro's father lived in the compound of Somyasya's father Somwaoga at Naba Bagre, where Yooro was born in 1950. Somyasya, who at that time was about fourteen years old, remembers that his father was farming land at Bissigan at that time (cf. map 3.3): 'He cleared a place, sowed it and the next year he cleared a new place, leaving fallow the one he had occupied the year before'. From

1939 onwards, for 15 years, Somwaoga farmed at Bissigan.<sup>22</sup> While his father left for the Gold Coast, where he worked in the gold fields (Dunkwa Goldfields) from 1956 until 1970, Yooro passed his youth in Somwaoga's compound. In about 1954, Somwaoga moved his field to Bazao and a few years later, at the age of seven, Yooro started working on the land together with Somwaoga and Somyasya. When he was seventeen (about 1967), Yooro received a *beolga* on which he farmed next to the work on the compound's field [*puugkasenga*]. By then, however, Somwaoga was again working at Naba Bagre, only this time at Baongo [lowland = *baongo*]. Five years before, Somwaoga had made this move because, according to Yooro, the soil at Bazao became exhausted. In 1973, Yooro went to the Ivory Coast. On his return, four years later, he married and did not return to Naba Bagre, where Somwaoga as well as Yooro's father had died in the meantime, but joined the compound in Yiitaoore which then was headed by Pasemdba. Somyasya became the compound head in Naba Bagre. Yooro farmed a *beolga* and worked on the *puugkasenga*, both at Soudougou, and he continued to do so until 1983, with the exception of 1981 when he spent nine months in the Ivory Coast. In 1983, Pasemdba - and Yooro with him - moved to Naba Bagre because others wanted to occupy land there, according to Yooro, or because of 'les cultures', according to his wife. Pasemdba settled in his own compound and had his own farm there. Kogbila became the compound head in Yiitaoore. In 1984, Pasemdba died, and Yooro and his wife returned to the compound at Yiitaoore. Kogbila was the compound head, as he still is today, but Yooro no longer cultivated a *beolga*. He started exploiting his own *puugkasenga*, his own farm. From then on, he made his field each year at Soudougou, although he gradually moved the location of the field from east to west. Pasemdba's two sons, Kuka and Nabonsba, stayed at Naba Bagre, where they still have their separate compound and where they are said to farm land on the same *yaab ziiga* as Somyasya. However, in 1995, a son of Nabonsba, about twelve years old, joined Yooro in Yiitaoore.

Yooro thus has been a member of three different compounds: born in the compound of Somwaoga at Naba Bagre, he later on moved to the compound of Pasemdba in Yiitaoore, went with the latter to Naba Bagre again and finally joined Kogbila in Yiitaoore. Kogbila is the only one of the compound's married men not to have lived in another *saka* of the village or in another village in the region.<sup>23</sup> Saalfo and Aruna, for their part, over the last fifteen years, lived at several places in the village territory. It appears that, just like the 1910s and 1920s, the 1970s and 1980s have constituted a period in which fissions and fusions of compounds of Yiitaoore have occurred with a remarkable frequency. Already in about 1971, Rabanega, until then working on land at Soudougou with respectively Pasemdba's father (Riimtilgre) and Kogbila's father (Sidbuusin) as compound heads in Yiitaoore, moved to Bagsin where he founded his own compound, which still exists today: 'It was the hunger that drove me to Bagsin. Because the lands here are abandoned fields of my parents I came here to farm. Each person can go there where he wants to go and especially in case of droughts he who does not find millet moves. That is why I came to settle here in the lowland'. In about 1974, Saalfo's eldest son was taken at a very young age, about three years old, by Rabanega and further educated by the latter. In 1980, Saalfo and Aruna moved to Naba Bagre, as did also Nomba, nowadays the head of one of the other *tengbiise* compounds in Yiitaoore. Until then, Saalfo and Aruna had lived in the compound in Yiitaoore, dependent on the respective compound heads Riimtilgre, Sidbuusin and Pasemdba, except for the years they were working in the Ivory Coast. At Naba Bagre, they lived together in one compound, separate from other *tengbiise* settled there, and each of them having his own farm. Aruna commented in the following way on this movement: 'At one time, the rains had become so bad that the soils here in Ziinoogo produced too little. In Naba Bagre we farmed in the lowland where the drought was not felt so much. After seven years, the soils in Naba Bagre became exhausted and there was no other land there that could have produced more. Moreover, the rains had somewhat recovered'.<sup>24</sup> While, in 1987, Nomba returned directly to Yiitaoore and started farming at Roogtanga and

<sup>22</sup> That Somwaoga farmed the relatively higher lands of Bissigan is in line with the fact that the 1940s were relatively wet, especially the first half of that decade (except for 1941, archives of the Cercle de Kaya; Marchal 1980:215). This period coincides more or less with the period during which Tisomde was the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*. Tisomde's name is associated with abundant harvests: 'At the time of *tengsoba* Tisomde we had very good harvests here. People from neighbouring villages and Fulbe too came to Ziinoogo to buy millet. Each year, Tisomde took his bag and filled it with millet and then he set out on his way to Bagsin. Before each compound he passed by, he scattered some millet and when the fowls came to pick the grains he took one without asking to which woman or which child it belonged. He killed the fowls to pray for a good season and the people only said: "there he is again". Today too the *tengsoba* should fulfil the ritual obligations [*todo*] so that we can receive benediction [*doaga*], for it is much more difficult to receive benediction than it is for malediction [*kaabgo*] to come to the people' (Raboke, *nakombga* lineage elder). The years 1950-1953 also were relatively wet (archives of the Cercle de Kaya).

<sup>23</sup> This is not to say that he did not leave the village. As a matter of fact he spent long periods in the Ivory Coast, after having done forced labour in Senegal.

<sup>24</sup> Nomba's eldest son gave a similar account: 'We went to Naba Bagre because it did not rain very much and our fields at Soudougou did not produce well. We farmed for eight years in the lowlands of Naba Bagre. By then, rains had become abundant and the water even destroyed the millet in Naba Bagre. Therefore we came back to Ziinoogo

Bolle, Aruna and Saalfo in the same year went from Naba Bagre to Pempelsin (cf. map 3.3) to build their compound.<sup>25</sup> They cleared land at Gabaka. For four years they lived together at Pempelsin, again working the land separately. Why didn't they return straight to Yiitaoore? Aruna explained it thus: 'The advantage at Pempelsin was that everything of the "brousse" was nearby, most importantly the fields. It was important to stay near your fields because if the millet stands about fifty centimeters high, Fulbe may send their cattle into the fields'. In 1991, both Saalfo and Aruna returned to Yiitaoore in the compound led by Kogbila. Each of the four adult men in the compound continued to work the land separately. Kogbila farmed at Kondbeole, Yooro at Soudougou and in 1991 and 1992 Saalfo and Aruna still at Gabaka. In 1993, Aruna moved his field to Soudougou, while Saalfo also made a field at Soudougou, but kept his field at Gabaka until 1995. Below I will give more details on the reasons for this move to Soudougou by Saalfo and Aruna. As to the reasons for leaving the compound at Pempelsin, Aruna said: 'Our children were too young and at Pempelsin there is no water to be found in the dry season. We couldn't fetch the water each time at the pump in Ziinoogo [drilled by UNICEF in 1987]. Because of the water we went back to Yiitaoore. Still, even if there had been water at Pempelsin, we still would have left there because of the Fulbe. They kept us awake. Before, they were behind the river, but some sixteen years ago they approached and settled near to the light-coloured hill, which is close to Pempelsin'. Kogbila maintained also that it was because there was 'misunderstanding between them and the Fulbe' that Saalfo and Aruna left the fields at Gabaka.

Looking at the diverse places which have been used for farming by the members of Kogbila's compound during their lifetime and taking into account Kogbila's opening statement to this case, one might easily conclude that each *tengbiiga* man has a right to farm land at any place on the *tengbiise*'s lineage land taken as a whole, if the place is not in use by an elder member of the lineage. It is a right acquired by birth. Lineage land here coincides with what was referred to in the preceding chapter as an 'eternal' *yaab ziiga*. The use of a particular place by the members of a certain compound seems to change only temporarily the spatial organization of this lineage land: when the fields are moved to another place, whether or not accompanied by a move of the compound itself, no inscription of boundaries of any kind would be left behind. Its correlate in the organization of habitat is the fact that a compound fission is not necessarily definitive: the composition of a compound, as to the members of the agnatic lineage, changes over time, thereby not necessarily following a logic of successive segmentations with groups of siblings progressively splitting off.

Still, this does not make clear why at a certain moment people decide to move their fields, sometimes over relatively large distances and even entailing the displacement of compounds. At first sight, it seems that the movement and the related fissions and fusions of compounds have been mainly motivated by the changing rainfall conditions, the availability of water and soil conditions. The rainfall factor stands out in particular. Looking at the figures for Kaya, one indeed easily concludes that not only the years 1970 and 1972 had been dry, but also the years 1978<sup>26</sup>, 1979, 1980<sup>27</sup>, 1983<sup>28</sup>, 1984 and 1985 (cf. also Speirs 1991:101) and to

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and made our fields at Bolle and Roogtanga. The fields we left in Naba Bagre are nowadays used by Somyasya, while the fields at Soudougou which we used before going to Naba Bagre are nowadays farmed by the *tengsoba* and his brother'.

<sup>25</sup> It may be added here that, at the time that Nomba, Saalfo and Aruna left Naba Bagre, Rabanega started farming at Naba Bagre for a period of four years.

<sup>26</sup> 'Du 15 août au 30 septembre 1978 inclus, il n'est tombé que 109,7 mm d'eau pour 15 jours de pluie [...], quantité vraiment très insuffisante pour le développement harmonieux des cultures: le sol n'était jamais imbibé d'eau. Les cultures, à l'exception de celles des bas-fonds, ont donc séché un peu partout dans les champs face au cultivateur désarmé; en certains endroits si l'on s'amusait à frotter un brin d'alumette dans un champ, il s'enflammerait' (Rapport trimestriel, troisième trimestre 1978, sous-préfecture de Barsalogho, département du Centre-Nord; administratively, Ziinoogo belonged to Barsalogho in this period).

<sup>27</sup> '[La pluviométrie] a été mauvaise en 1980. [...] Le spectre de la famine plane déjà sur la région' (Rapport Economique, année 1980, sous-préfecture de Barsalogho, département du Centre-Nord). 'Outre qu'elle a été insuffisante, [la] pluviométrie a été mal répartie dans le temps et dans l'espace. La campagne agricole 1980-1981 est

some lesser extent 1986 and 1987, making plausible that from 1978 or 1979 onwards until 1987 there was a strong preference in the region to farm on lowlands. Restricting, however, the explanation for the paths followed by people, compounds and fields to climatological and ecological arguments, would mean neglecting an important point with respect to land management. Indeed, as will become clear, the regular changing of the location of one's field is important with respect to the re-affirmation of ancient claims and also the securing of future claims on land. In chapter 3, the 'multi-vocality' of the concept *yaab zūga* and the related fact that one and the same plot is often subjected to several claims at the same time was emphasized. As will be demonstrated now, the observed paths of people, compounds and fields can only be understood by taking into account the existence of these multiple claims, which appear to surface in particular circumstances, one of them being drought entailing the search for relatively scarce lowlands.

Initially, the information that the affirmation of claims on certain lands was of importance in the movement of people from Ziinoogo to Naba Bagre came to me by way of coincidence. Except for one remark of Yooro on Pasemdba's move towards Naba Bagre, all other actors directly involved mentioned only drought as the reason for the displacement of compounds and fields. One day I was discussing with Ousmane, a Rumtenga Yiyooa from Yiitaoore, an aerial photograph from 1982. We were able to identify all the compounds of Ziinoogo, except for the compound of Nomba which did not appear on the photograph. Ousmane commented: 'Well, that agrees with the facts. At that time Nomba, together with Saalfo and Aruna, had left for Naba Bagre. Before he left, he lived in the compound which nowadays is occupied by the *tengsoba*. Only at his return did he build the new compound. They went to Naba Bagre because people from Kirguitenga [Kirguitenga is a *kombere* of the kingdom of Rissiam] intended to take land there. In order to show that it belonged to them, Nomba and the others went clearing the land. Not everybody who left for that reason from Yiitaoore also returned afterwards. There is for example Nabonsba [son of Pasemdba] who still has his compound at Naba Bagre'.

Confronted with this information, those involved in the movements never denied that the aspect of defending land against outsiders from other villages had played a role in the choice of their destination. Somyasya, by that time already the oldest *tengbiiga* in Naba Bagre and *de facto* the person ultimately responsible for the allocation of lands there, even maintained that it was not only a problem between people from different villages: 'You know, Saalfo and Aruna are my mother's children, and another reason for their coming to Naba Bagre was that people from Kuritgo wanted to take the lowland here. As there were only two of us here<sup>29</sup>, we asked Saalfo, Aruna and Nomba to come and farm here. Thus we made the people from Kuritgo understand that the land here is not their lineage's [*buudpuuto*], nor their grandfathers' or their fathers' and thus not theirs either. The land which was occupied at that

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de ce fait très déficitaire. On notera que seules les cultures pratiquées sur les terres basses (bas-fonds par exemple) ont généralement bien donné. Par contre, les cultures sur les terres hautes accusent un très grand déficit' (Rapport trimestriel, quatrième trimestre 1980, sous-préfecture de Barsalogho, département du Centre-Nord).

<sup>28</sup> 'La campagne agricole 1983-84 s'avère être une véritable catastrophe. Après un début prometteur, les pluies sont devenues de plus en plus rares à partir du mois d'août: beaucoup de villages ont à peine reçu une seule pluie depuis le début du mois de septembre. Des champs entiers ont complètement séché; et nombreux sont les paysans qui ne récolteront pas un seul épis dans leur champ cette année' (Rapport trimestriel, troisième trimestre 1983, sous-préfecture de Barsalogho, département du Centre-Nord).

<sup>29</sup> That is, the compound of Somyasya himself and the compound of his grandfather's brother's son.

time by those who are now back in Yiitaoore today is used by people whom I ordered to do so [mainly people from the neighbouring village of Baskondo]’.

By conceiving of the *tengbiise* lineage land as an indivisible ‘eternal’ *yaab ziiga*, it is possible to come up with a first interpretation of the movements, in particular during the 1980s, from Ziinoogo to Naba Bagre and back. The recurrent droughts incited people to sow on lowlands and as the lowlands of Naba Bagre, opened up by Yamba in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, belonged to their *yaab ziiga*, all Yiitaoore *tengbiise* had in principle a right to farm land there. They could have chosen to make their fields closer to Yiitaoore, for instance at Fotiimde, Bazao or even Gabaka (cf. map 3.3), but they did not as these were not subjected, to an equal extent, to claims by others, in particular people from Biliga and from Kuritgo. The people from Biliga supported their claim by the fact that they had been farming these places for quite some time (I have not been able to find out exactly how long), even though, according to the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*, the land was only lent out to them. Although, as explained in chapter 2, conflicts over land between villages, especially along the borders between the Moose kingdoms, have occurred throughout this century, the Revolution of 1983 may have increased the always latent tensions. In 1984, Sankara proclaimed an agrarian reform through which all land in Burkina Faso became the property of the state, at the same time condemning traditional systems of land management as feudal practices. The regime created a network of revolutionary defence committees (CDRs) in the villages, which also tried to assume responsibility for the allocation of land (Speirs 1991:103). What seems to have happened then is that people from neighbouring Kirguitenga villages who, according to the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*, borrowed land of Ziinoogo, attempted to appropriate this land, thereby seeking support from the agrarian reform and the CDRs’ competences.<sup>30</sup> It is not possible to say anything conclusive about the influence of the Revolution on the events in the 1980s at Naba Bagre. For one thing, they had already started before 1983 and the actors involved never referred to the Revolution explicitly, except for such remarks as ‘the problems came with the Revolution’. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that Yooro was one of the people moving to Naba Bagre in 1983, the year in which he became president of the Ziinoogo CDR.

The people from Kuritgo, in order to extend their fields to the north, referred to their father who would have been the first to clear parts of the land in dispute. When explaining this conflict to me, Somyasya explicitly mentioned the compound which nowadays is headed by Yamnooma, a father’s brother’s son of Nawood, who, as noted above, had been explicitly authorized by Somyasya’s father Somwaoga to clear land until then uncultivated at Bagsin, i.e. at the fringes of what clearly falls under the direct authority of Somyasya nowadays. Even if it is true that the land disputed in the 1980s was first cleared by Nawood, it is no surprise that the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* claim that land too as it happened under their ultimate authority.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Ouédraogo & Faure (1993:40) write: ‘Certains exploitants ont utilisé [la Réorganisation Agraire et Foncière (RAF)] à leur profit et l’ont parfois brandie contre les systèmes fonciers traditionnels. [...] Dans tout le pays, les cultivateurs se sont déplacés sur les “terres libres”, niant les droits des propriétaires fonciers coutumiers, momentanément affaiblis par la promulgation de la RAF qui affirmait la suppression des droits fonciers coutumiers et la propriété de l’Etat sur les terres’.

<sup>31</sup> In chapter 3, other aspects, in particular of ritual cooperation, of the relationships between the people of Kuritgo and the *tengbiise* were discussed. Although the two events do not coincide in time - withdrawal of the *kuritnaam* in about 1972 and conflict over land in the early 1980s - and although any connection has been denied by the actors involved, it still is tempting to speculate about the possibility of such a connection. Indeed, in both cases it is as if the *tengbiise* have tried to halt a process of autochthonization which had gone too far. To make this point clear with respect to the conflict over land, it suffices to refer to chapter 3 and to the way a claim to a *yaab ziiga* can be understood in terms of autochthonousness. With respect to the withdrawal of the office of *kurita*, the following



By 1987, the rains recovered and the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* had been able to occupy sufficient land, for a period sufficiently long to revalidate their lineage's claim on the land. Looked at from this perspective, the *tengbiise's* move had been indeed quite impressive: no less than six compounds and seven independent farms existed at one time at Naba Bagre, compared to the two farms and compounds which were there before 1980 and the three which constitute today's total.

Does this then contradict the assertion that 'each knows the boundaries of his father' (cf. chapter 3)? How can such a statement be reconciled with the conception of lineage land without internal boundaries and indivisible? The answer to these questions requires a discussion of two issues: firstly, the preference for farming on one's father's place (*ba ziiga*), and, secondly, the nature of the boundaries in the land use pattern implied by the existence of 'fathers' places'. The latter point will be treated in a concluding section of this chapter.

Aruna argued that the latest movement of his field from Gabaka to Soudougou, and in particular the choice of the place at Soudougou, was motivated by the fact that this same place had been farmed by his father. Yooro, for his part, stated that, on his return from Naba Bagre, he started farming the land of his 'fathers and elder brothers, on Pasemdba's *ziiga*'. While Aruna thus refers to his own father, Yooro farms the place not of his father, but of his grandfather's brother's son Pasemdba. It is through having worked together with Pasemdba for some time, through having been a member of Pasemdba's compound, that Yooro has obtained a particular right to land farmed by Pasemdba. The fact that he also depended on Somyasya's father Somwaoga gives him such rights too to the land which today falls under the authority of Somyasya at Naba Bagre. The same goes for the land at Naba Bagre farmed by Pasemdba and, as a grandson of Pasemdba has been fostered recently by Yooro, this grandson later will be able to claim land farmed by Yooro. In the next chapter we will see how fosterage entails certain rights for the fostered man to the land farmed by the compound in which he is fostered. Here suffice it to observe that most men usually work with their father or elder brother and as such retain a strong claim on the land farmed by their former *puugsoba* once they have their own independent farm. Each *tengbiiga* man has a right to a farm no matter where on the lineage land, and Yooro has a right to land of Aruna's father too, and *vice versa*. Such a claim however is not as strong as a claim on one's own father's land, but may be strengthened by seniority (e.g. Aruna *versus* Yooro). Conflicts may then arise when one man claims land because it was farmed by his father, while another, elder member of his lineage claims it too because of his seniority. Although I have no indications that it effectively did, such a conflict among *tengbiise* might have arisen in the 1980s at Naba Bagre (both Nomba and Pasemdba were elder than Somyasya), as suggested by the following statement of Somyasya: 'Although people like Bagre and Rabanega are both older than I am, they nevertheless will ask permission from me first when they want to farm at Naba Bagre'.

In the span of one generation a particular place is farmed by several people. The sons of each of them may claim it to be 'a place of their father'. That a place would be subjected to only one claim seems then but an exception. When explaining why the land they farmed was 'theirs', *tengbiise* often stressed it was land that was not only farmed by their father, but also

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explanation by the *nakomnga* lineage elder is illuminating: 'The people from Kuritgo had taken the *ti-toaga* and claimed that it belonged to one single house [*roog a yem bumb*]', thereby suggesting they were of the same house as the Ziinoogo *tengbiise*, i.e. issuing from the same ancestor. Cf. also Kopytoff (1987:52-53), who maintains that in the 'hierarchy of firstcomers and latecomers', groups which arrived early may become rivals to the founding group, having 'local roots old enough for making ambiguous claims to great antiquity of residence and even to hint at primacy'.

by their grandfather and even great-grandfather: the occupation over several generations is stressed to strengthen the claim, notwithstanding the fact that the land has been used by other people too in the meantime. The consequence of this situation also is that the allocation of land to a certain person is seldom the affair of one single authority, be it the *tengsoba* or a lineage elder. Several people having a claim on a certain plot need to be consulted and/or informed. I will come back to this aspect in the next case.

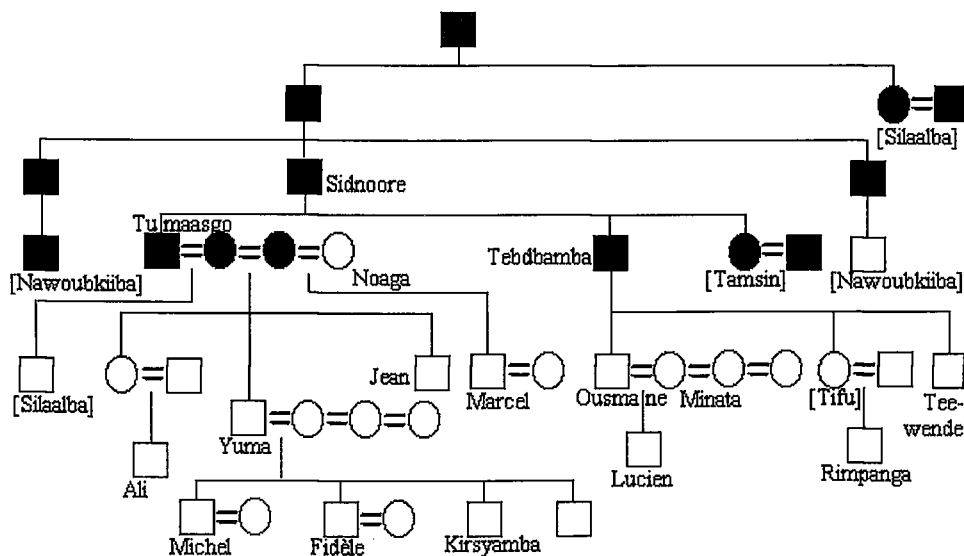
With respect to the choice of a place to farm, next to ecological and climatological considerations, there is more at stake than the defense of the lineage land against outsiders. A continuity is sought by farming the land that was farmed before by one's father or by the *puugsoba* on whom one has [temporarily] depended. The move of fields from Ziinoogo to Naba Bagre in the 1980s not only entailed the revalidation of the claims of the *tengbiise* lineage as a whole, but also of the personal claims of the actors involved and, importantly, it was a way of securing and/or extending future claims of the actors' sons and grandsons. For the living people, control over a particular area of land is never complete nor definitive. It is through the exploitation of land for farming that claims are made or re-affirmed, i.e. an ongoing and never-ending process. The next case will permit an elaboration on this point. It is obvious then that the boundaries of one's father's place are not to be understood as definitively inscribed in the land use pattern.

### *Case 2: Securing and extending rights to farm land by 'strangers'*

The second case deals with the constitution of the compound of the Rumtenga Yiyoose at Yiitaore and its members' 'land use paths'. The head of this compound, at the time of fieldwork, was Yuma, a man of about sixty years old, married to three wives, the eldest being his father's widow. Living with him are two married sons and five other children, a full brother, Jean, and a half-brother, Marcel, the latter being married and having two little children. All these people work together on Yuma's *puugkasenga*. His father's brother's son, Ousmane, also lives in the same compound, but has his own farm. Ousmane has three wives and six children, none of them married. In the course of 1994-95, a number of the younger men left for the Ivory Coast, and did not return before I left the village: Jean in 1994, and Kirsyamba and Michel in 1995. Ousmane's full brother, Teewende, had left in 1991 for the Ivory Coast. Next to these people, Ousmane's sister's son Rimpanga was in the compound until the beginning of 1995 (he had been in Ziinoogo from 1985 onwards), while a sister's daughter came in 1995. One daughter of Ousmane lived with her mother's mother (cf. genealogy 4.2).

Yuma and Ousmane did not grow up together. Their fathers' and their own 'paths' have differed. Above it was mentioned that both their fathers were born in Silaalba, a Kirguitenga village. After having married a woman from Silaalba, Ousmane's father, Tebdbamba, had to leave the village at the end of the 1940s.<sup>32</sup> Together with his father, Sidnoore, Tebdbamba went to their 'place of origin' Rumtenga. Yuma's father, Tumaasgo, stayed with his children in Silaalba. In about 1950, Ousmane was born in Rumtenga. One year later Sidnoore died and Tebdbamba moved with his children to Tamsin. They joined the compound in which a younger sister of Tebdbamba had married. While sharing one compound with his host, Tebdbamba had his own farm. In about 1960, Tumaasgo's compound in Silaalba was struck by a smallpox epidemic which induced Tumaasgo to move to Ziinoogo. Yuma: 'At that time I came back

<sup>32</sup> 'If you are in Silaalba and you marry a Silaalba woman, you are obliged to move. It has been that way since the time of our ancestors and we don't know why it has to be that way. Suppose Ziinoogo is Silaalba. If now the Yiitaore *tengbiise* gave a woman to Ousmane's eldest son, then he should move with his new wife to Nawoubkiiba' (Yuma).



#### Genealogy 4.2

##### The Rumtenga Yiyoose

from the Ivory Coast. Only Jean had survived the epidemic. If many children die, the women are very sad and they will not be contented if you do not move so that they can forget their sorrow. Therefore, my father couldn't stay any longer in Silaalba and he came to settle in Ziinoogo. My elder brother didn't want to go with us and stayed in Silaalba'. That Tumaasgo chose Ziinoogo to settle, was because it was his mother's brothers' home [*yasbiyiri*]. Yuma again: 'If you are somewhere, where in a short time many of your children die, your *yasba* tells you that it is better to move and to come and settle close to him. Kogbila's father was my father's *yasba* and he installed my father in Ziinoogo.<sup>33</sup> A few years later [in about 1967] my father asked Tebdbamba to join him in his compound in Ziinoogo. From then on, all of us worked together on the same *puugkasenga* which was at Soudougou and for which the place was allocated to us by Kogbila's father'. In the meantime, two of Yuma's grandfather's brothers' sons had moved from Rumtenga to Nawoubkiiba, a village to the north of Ziinoogo.

The land use path followed by the members of Yuma's compound in Ziinoogo certainly has been turbulent. Until 1976, they kept their fields at Soudougou: 'We started to work on a field next to where the *tengsoba* nowadays has his fields. Each year we asked small pieces to clear and to add to our fields' (Lucien). In 1977, Tumaasgo asked land with his mother's brothers in Tamsin, leaving the land in Soudougou: 'For nine years we worked in the lowland of Tamsin. Tumaasgo was our *zaksoba* and *puugsoba* and Tebdbamba was the eldest of the *rakoopa*.<sup>34</sup> We left the field at Soudougou not because of any kind of dissension but just because we harvested little millet, only seven

<sup>33</sup> Such misfortune is often attributed to earth spirits (*ziindamba*, sing.: *ziina*) or to the ancestral founder of a compound: 'It is related to the person who founded a compound that, when misfortune arrives, it may be decided to move the compound. The founder places certain powers [*tiiga*] to protect all those living in the compound. After the founder of the compound died it may happen that another person builds his house on the *tiiga* and the *tiiga* may turn against that person. In such a case, the compound needs to be moved, the place must be liberated' (Kogbila, *Yiitaoore tengbiiga*). Cf. also Kohler (1971:52) on transfers of compounds for magico-religious reasons.

<sup>34</sup> Literally, *rakoore* means 'bachelor'. However, within the context of farm organization all men not having their own farm, i.e. not being *puugsoba*, are still considered to be *rakoopa*, whether they are single or married.

baskets for the whole compound. As there was kinship [*rogem*] between people of Tamsin and us, they told us: "if that is the way things are, come and farm with us in Tamsin" (Marcel). However, it appeared that there was not only 'just' the problem of bad harvests, as was explained by Ousmane's eldest son: 'There was a disagreement with Nomba [Yiitaoore *tengbiisa*], who told us that if we continued to farm at Soudougou we wouldn't harvest one single millet stalk. And that year we didn't harvest a thing, so Tumaasgo decided to move our fields to Tamsin'. I asked about the reason for the disagreement: 'Noaga, Tumaasgo's wife, had her brothers from Tanmiiga who came to visit her and one of the brothers ran off with Nomba's daughter. Nomba accused Noaga of having helped her brother'. While the fields were at Tamsin, both Tumaasgo and Tebbamba died. Shortly afterwards, Yuma and Ousmane separated their fields. In 1982, Ousmane saw his fields at Tamsin withdrawn: 'We had very good harvests there, which made the people from Tamsin envious. They withdrew the land and allocated it to a Pullo'. While Yuma continued to farm at Tamsin until 1985, Ousmane returned to land at Kondbeole controlled by the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* in 1983. In 1990 he sow a field eastwards at Soudougou, maintaining his field at Kondbeole: 'Kogbila had given us a new place to clear, but I kept the old place and sowed there too because I did not yet know how the new place would be. After all, the old place at Kondbeole was a good place as well and only one year later I moved the *puugkasenga* completely to the new place'. Only two years later, however, Ousmane was again forced to move his fields: 'For three years we had very good harvests, even so good that we didn't eat the newly harvested millet but the millet of the year before. We had to organize a *si-soaga* for the harvest there, because otherwise the work of the harvest couldn't be finished. They [the *tengbiise*] saw it and Aruna took the place. They withdrew the place at the eve of the rains, but we nevertheless got allocated a part of the old place to make *beolse* and there the yields have been good' (Lucien).

Yuma himself and people working with him were much less explicit about such strife for particular plots of land. Still, his movement over the village territory has not been without problems either. In 1986, Yuma left the land at Tamsin and came to Bolle, 'because at Soudougou there was no place left'. Again, the land for the *puugkasenga* was allocated by Kogbila. For eight years, the *puugkasenga* was maintained at the same place along the path leading to Bagsin. In 1994, the field was moved eastwards because the place became exhausted. It seems however that Yuma had preferred to move his field earlier, but was not allowed to clear the place he had picked out. For some time, Yuma considered the option to leave the village. While most other members of his compound maintain that he talked about migrating to the south-west of Burkina Faso (Dandé) to join a *yagenga* of his, Yuma himself asserted that he only had considered moving to Nawoubkiiba, where two of his grandfather's brothers' sons live. Ousmane's eldest son: 'The soil of the fields along the road to Bagsin was completely exhausted and Yuma wanted to leave because he didn't obtain good yields and because he was not allowed access to good land. Moreover, if you are a *zaksoba* and you have your own compound, you should have *karaase*, and you can see for yourself that such is not the case for Yuma's compound. Others [the *tengbiise*] occupy the land around his compound. But, for the last few years Yuma has not talked about leaving. Two years ago the rains were good and moreover, for two years he obtained good land in the "brousse". He will not move now that he has these lands'. Ousmane added: 'There was also a disagreement over a girl, which made people think that Yuma would leave the village'. On his decision to stay in Ziinoogo, Yuma simply stated that he did so because 'the *tengbiise* asked him to'. In this respect, it is important to mention that after the office of *kurita* had been withdrawn from Kuritgo, it was Yuma's father Tumaasgo who became the new *kurita*. He was succeeded at his death by Yuma.

With regard to this case, a first point to note is that, next to agnatic kin, in-laws and affines also may be important in people's movements: Yuma's grandfather moved to a father's sister, Ousmane's father settled with a sister's husband, and Yuma's father went to a mother's brother. At all these places, the people from Rumtenga were allocated farm land, although at none of them had they any kind of lineage land: a man thus seems to have, at least in certain circumstances, a right to farm land with his in-laws and affines. I will return to the relationships with mother's brother and father's sister and the implications with respect to rights to land in the next chapter. Here, it can be stressed that in case a whole or the largest part of a compound moves because of misfortune (such as the smallpox epidemic), the choice is often to settle with one's mother's brothers, through whom access to farm land is obtained.

From the above account, it appears as if the use of land in Ziinoogo by the Rumtenga Yiyoose has been rather problematic: first the movement of fields to Tamsin and more recently the tensions between both Ousmane and Yuma and the Yiitaoore *tengbiise*. The confrontation between Aruna and Ousmane, whereby the former moved his field to the place previously occupied by the latter, can hardly be called a conflict. Aruna himself only gave a more or less non-committal answer ('I went to farm there where my father has farmed before').

His compound head, Kogbila, said that Aruna was fully entitled to occupy that land: 'When Aruna said he wanted to farm where Ousmane had his field, the place was allocated to him, for it belongs to our *yaab ziiga*, and Ousmane was told to look for another place'. Ousmane, being a stranger in the village, is not entitled to and does not dispute Aruna's claim on the land at Soudougou. No elder brother or father of his had previously farmed there and the only thing Ousmane is entitled to is another place not claimed for immediate use by a *tengbiiga*. Such a confrontation then fundamentally differs from the conflicts which have come to the fore in the first case, where the two parties involved both were able to back up their claims by previous occupation of the disputed land by kin.

Nevertheless such an event leaves its traces, surfacing in expressions of resentment by Ousmane's people, while the often heard remarks of envy by the Yiitaoore *tengbiise* of the real or supposed prosperity of Yuma's compound suggest an additional explanation for Aruna's latest move. In the account above, Ousmane's eldest son Lucien pointed to the fact that, according to him, his father's good harvests had been the reason for the allocation of the land to Aruna. Later, he added: 'They are the *tengbiise* and they control the land. If you, as a stranger, come to the village you receive a place to build your compound and you receive a place in the "brousse" to farm. If, then, you obtain good yields the *tengbiise* will take the land back the next year and farm it themselves, while you yourself are referred to places they have abandoned [*puuweese*]. But then again it may appear that your harvests are better than the *tengbiise*'s and again you will be forced to farm at another place, while they take your place of the year before.<sup>35</sup> You know, Yooro is a hard worker and he obtains good yields. He might even invest in cattle, but instead of doing so he is only searching for *tiim* [charms]. If you have your field next to a *tengbiiga*'s field and your crops are doing better than his, he will not be happy and he might use his power to prevent your success. That is why we restrain ourselves in everything we do. Before each extension of our compound or of our fields in the "brousse", we first go and inform the *tengbiise*. Inversely, the *tengbiise* will not act that way with respect to us'.

Note again that the right of the Rumtenga Yiyoose to a place is not questioned. They have a right to sufficient land to farm on the *tengbiise*'s lineage land, although the location of such land is not fixed. Still, being a 'stranger' in the village puts one in a fundamentally different position concerning control of land than the *tengbiise*. As a consequence, there are important differences in the actors' strategies too. The *tengbiise* change the place of their fields frequently, thereby covering relatively large distances all over the village territory and in some cases entailing the [temporary] movement or fission of compounds. They *can* do so because they have extensive rights, acquired by birth, to the lineage land. That they *do so* is not solely due to ecological and climatological circumstances, but, as demonstrated in case 1, also to the wish to revalidate personal and lineage claims on land. To this it can be added now that fields are also moved to disrupt the presumably successful land use strategies of people with a lesser status in relation to the control of land.

Thanks to the continuity of use over three or more generations, the *tengbiise* do not have to occupy a portion of land for a long period in order to re-confirm a claim, most often no more than two or three years or even one year. When, at the beginning of my stay in the village, I asked Ousmane how long one could farm a place before the soil becomes exhausted,

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<sup>35</sup> Note that Lucien probably is overdoing it a bit here. From the account of the land use path followed by the Rumtenga Yiyoose it appeared that, since they have arrived in the village, such a withdrawal of a place by the Yiitaoore *tengbiise* happened only twice (Tumaasgo in 1977, Ousmane in 1994).

he answered: 'Those to whom the land belongs stay one or two years at the same place and then move their field. Those who have asked for the land they farmed stay longer, three to seven years. Of course, the yields also vary from place to place and that too influences whether one continues farming at a certain place or moves on. But, the *tengbiise* move their fields before the places get tired. The reason they do so is because the places are theirs'.

While a *tengbiiga* has ancient claims of his lineage or of his father or grandfather as a starting point for the movements of his fields, for his 'land use path' - which does not exclude an extension of claims, the Rumtenga Yiyoose start their land use paths on the Ziinoogo village territory from a very different perspective. Although their fathers have farmed a field at Soudougou, both Yuma's and Ousmane's claims to that place are very weak as compared to the claims of Yiitaore *tengbiise* whose fathers, grandfathers and other ancestors have used the place. Nevertheless, as I argued in chapter 3, although 'strangers' today, it certainly is possible that Yuma's and Ousmane's sons will one day refer to their *yaab ziiga* on the Ziinoogo village land. Such a *yaab ziiga* however can gain a certain geographical fixity, i.e. be inscribed on the land use pattern, only if the members of Yuma's compound succeed in giving their occupation of particular places continuity. They have no great-grandfathers or grandfathers who contributed to such a continuity and thus the only way to start inscribing it, i.e. to start making a claim to a *particular* place, is by extending the period during which they use the place. Following the account above, the fields of the compound of the Rumtenga Yiyoose were moved for the first time in 1976. Ousmane kept his field at Kondbeole for eight years before moving to a first place at Soudougou, while Yuma moved his field at Bolle also only after eight years. Ousmane's last move of fields in 1994, just like Tumaasgo's move to Tamsin, happened, as explained, under pressure.

There are certainly a number of forces at work in land use practice which counteract long-time occupation of tracts of land by 'strangers', one of them being the above described aspects of *tengbiise*'s strategies to restrain strangers' claims by simply withdrawing the place for their own use. Strangers try to avoid this by maintaining a low profile (cf. Lucien above: 'we restrain ourselves in everything we do'). A second, inescapable force bringing people to move their fields of course is constituted by the process of gradual soil depletion. How soon decreasing yields are a reason to move one's field depends on the alternatives open to the actor concerned, and these are again crucially dependent on the actor's position in what I call a 'hierarchy of choice'. As a 'stranger' can use only that land which is not already used or wanted for use by a *tengbiiga*, whatever the latter's age may be, his position in this hierarchy is relatively low. It can be understood, then, that soil depletion ('des terres fatiguées') is an argument to move a field for a *tengbiiga* sooner than for a 'stranger'. Still, for a 'stranger' too the moment to look for a new place to farm because of decreasing yields on the old place inevitably will come about.

The moment to leave a particular place, however, seems to be often postponed, i.e. the problem of soil depletion is skirted at least temporarily by 'strangers'. The way this is done at the same time gives an insight into strangers' strategies for extending the area they farm, and, thus, indirectly the area on which they lay an initial claim. Whereas, as explained, a *tengbiiga* often changes his field to a completely different place - in case of soil depletion, changing rainfall circumstances, other people's claims on certain tracts of land, or a combination of these factors - and at the same time revalidates his lineage's and his own claim on the 'new' place, a stranger acts differently. A first hint was given above, when Lucien said that, while his grandfather was farming at Soudougou '[they] asked each year for small pieces to clear and to add to [their] fields'. Indeed, as a rule the area of a farm, at a particular place, is

curtailed only exceptionally. The tendency is to extend the area one controls, often, though not always, through an extension of the area under cultivation: 'Asking for an additional piece of land does not always come to an extension of the area under cultivation. It depends on the means [labour] at your disposal. If you have enough means, you extend your fields; if you don't, you just shift your field a bit: you clear a small area bordering your last year's field, leaving fallow a small part of what you farmed last year'.

A closer look at the area exploited by Yuma in 1994 and 1995, and the 'status' of the places left fallow by him, may be of help here. In 1994, Yuma obtained permission to make his field just east of the place where he had farmed the eight previous years: 'I farmed there where Aruna's father had his field before. The soil there became exhausted and that is why I asked for a place to *add*. I will also sow on the old place, it is only the middle part of my place [*ziiga*, Yuma is referring to the new and old place taken together] that will be left fallow. If that place has rested I can return there possibly'. In 1995, Yuma completely left the 'old' place, arguing that 'the place is tired and sowing there would cause the appearance of barren spots. If it rains this year and grass and bushes grow again, it will be a sign that the place has recovered and I will sow there again'. With respect to the place allocated to him in 1994, Yuma said in April 1995: 'I will sow this year on the same place as last year. But, I will cut grass and add a piece. On those places where I will sow this year for the first time, work will be hard, but it will become less heavy the following years. I will inform the *ziigsoba* [the 'master' of the place, i.e. the responsible *tengbiiga*] that I am to extend my field, although it wouldn't be a problem if I didn't, because the moment you ask for a place to farm you are told that you are allowed to farm according to your means'. Note then also that asking the *tengbiise* for some additional space to add to an already allocated space would not be obligatory. The important point is that although Yuma acknowledges the fact that the place he left could be occupied by someone else, he nevertheless considers it to remain part of his *ziiga* where he intends to return with his field as soon as the soil has recovered. Moreover, if, at the start of the rainy season of 1995, the old place had been asked for by another stranger, I was assured that, before it would be allocated, Yuma would be consulted first in order to be sure that he did not want to farm part of it.<sup>36</sup>

I thus hope to have demonstrated that 'strangers', like Yuma and Ousmane, attempt to consolidate their presence at a particular place in the village territory: although, in principle, they have a right to any land on the *tengbiise* lineage land, not used by another person or wanted for use by a *tengbiiga*, they tend to avoid leaving a particular place completely.<sup>37</sup> Such a strategy is also their only option to root territorially in the village.

There is one final issue, which was evoked at the end of the exposition of this case, which calls for comment and which makes the link with the next case. Yuma was crossed by the *tengbiise* in the extension of his *ziiga* and the movement of his fields in the years before 1994. He was so displeased that he considered leaving the village. Whether it is true or not that he thought about going to the south-west of Burkina Faso, it is significant that Yuma himself claims that he would have left for the village of Nawoubkiiba. A grandfather's

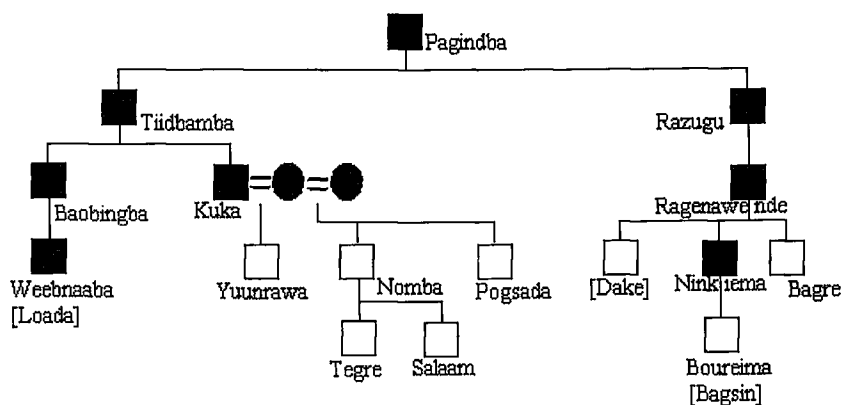
<sup>36</sup> With respect to Ousmane's fields in 1995, it may be noted that during the rainy season a sister of Ousmane was staying in his compound because of an illness. Although hardly able to work on the land, Ousmane cleared some land for her to have a *beolga*, thus extending his place.

<sup>37</sup> This was once more confirmed by Yuma's younger brother who moved his *beolga* temporarily: 'In 1990 and 1991, I had my *beolga* at Gabaka. I went there because there had come barren spots [*zii peelee*] at Bolle. At Gabaka I could farm lowland and I wanted to compensate for the little millet we harvested at Bolle. For two successive years the rains were good and the barren spots at Bolle disappeared, so I could return to Bolle'.

brother's son, Lamusa, who had moved from Rumtenga to Nawoubkiiba probably in the 1940s or earlier, had proposed to Yuma to join him. He would be allocated a part of Lamusa's place to farm. The life histories recorded during my fieldwork frequently showed that a man can obtain access not only to his lineage land at his 'place of origin' ('eternal' *yaab ziiga*), but also to any land on which more or less close agnatic kinsmen have built a claim over the years. As such, Yuma is ensured of a right to farm land not only at Rumtenga (the village of his 'eternal' *yaab ziiga* and where his grandfather died), but also in Silaalba (the village where his grandfather and father have farmed and where his elder brother still lives and farms today) and Nawoubkiiba. That, in the early 1990s, he considered moving to Nawoubkiiba and not to Rumtenga (his origin) or Silaalba (closest kin) is not difficult to understand in view of the history of Nawoubkiiba, which was founded by members of Yuma's lineage in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (cf. also Ouédraogo & Compaoré 1991:3-4). The latter were the first to clear land there, and although they did so under the explicit authorization of the Baskondo *tengsoba*, they are nowadays undoubtedly firmly rooted territorially there, having a large autonomy with respect to the allocation of land (comparable to the autonomy of, for example, the people of Kuritgo in Ziinoogo, cf. chapter 3). While this move of Yuma has remained hypothetical, the next case concretely shows how a compound's land use paths effectively transcend the boundaries of the village territory.

### *Case 3: Actors' access to lineage lands at geographically dispersed places*

While it has been possible above to demonstrate important aspects of actors' land use strategies, restricting the accounts to the village territory, this is no longer so when a closer look is taken at the three remaining compounds of Yiitaoore, whose histories are strongly intertwined with the history of compounds in other villages, in particular in Loada. A first



#### *Genealogy 4.3*

*The Yiitaoore tengbiise (case 3)*



compound is the *tengsoba*'s. He lives there with his wife Yagre, his younger brother Pogsada and his wife Talake, and five children. Somewhat to the north is the compound of Nomba, who is the lineage's second in age and who lives with his wife, his eldest son Tegre and his wife Mariam, and five children (cf. genealogy 4.3). In between the compounds of the *tengsoba* and Koghila, finally, is the compound of Bagre, who lives with his wife and two children. Let us first look at Bagre's compound.

Above it was mentioned that Bagre's father Ragenawende migrated towards the north and settled in Loada in the late 1930s or early 1940s. When, in about 1947, he became the Yiitaore *tengbiise* lineage elder, Ragenawende returned to Ziinoogo. Only one or two years later he became the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*, succeeding Tisomde in office. Bagre, still an adolescent at that time, accompanied his father. Together with their wives they farmed mainly at Soudougou. Bagre's elder brother Ninkiemba stayed in Loada in the compound of Weebnaaba. To stress their living in Weebnaaba's compound, Ninkiemba's wife explained that they formed 'one compound, eating one and the same meal' (*zak a yembre, monde a yembre*).<sup>38</sup> This situation did not change importantly until the death of Ragenawende in about 1970. In 1973, Ninkiemba returned to Ziinoogo, however not to Yiitaore but to Bagsin, where he settled in his own compound and farmed at Bazao and Fotiimde. In 1993, Ninkiemba died. As to the reasons of Ninkiemba's return to Ziinoogo, both his wife and his eldest son, Boureima, stressed the importance of approaching 'home' (*yiiri*), and this although Ninkiemba was born elsewhere and never before had lived in Ziinoogo. Boureima: 'After Ragenawende's death, each sought a place to settle for himself. My father chose to go near the village of his father and that is why we came to Bagsin. At Loada, we lived with many people and that is why each went his way when Ragenawende died'. Bagre's wife, Binta: 'After Ragenawende's death, Bagre started his wanderings. For three years we were in Kaya, and afterwards we had our compound at Bagsin, Naba Bagre and Pempelsin, before returning [in 1986] to Yiitaore'. Bagre: 'I moved so often at that time because there was no food. What else could I have done'. After Ninkiemba's death, Bagre married Ninkiemba's wife and in 1994 started to farm, together with her, her sons and daughter at Bazao and Fotiimde. His first wife, Binta, stayed at the compound in Yiitaore and continued, together with two of her children, to farm at Soudougou, on her own account from that time onwards. As to the reasons for her not joining Bagre in Bagsin, Binta anticipated the eventual return of Bagre's elder brother from Dake: 'We did not want to abandon the compound in Yiitaore. Bagre would like me to join him in Bagsin, but he has an elder brother in Dake who is the third in age after the *tengsoba* and Nomba and it would not be a good thing if he found nobody at this compound when he returns to Ziinoogo. But, in the end, I probably will go to Bagsin, even if it is so that the millet is no good there: if it rains little, the millet dies there, while if it rains much, the water eats the millet'.

Before Nomba left Yiitaore for Naba Bagre in 1980, he had been the head of a compound at the place where nowadays is the *tengsoba*'s compound. During Nomba's absence from 1980 to 1987, many things happened in Yiitaore. First, in 1983, Weebnaaba, until then living in Loada, became the Yiitaore *tengbiise* lineage elder and for that reason moved to Yiitaore, building his compound there where Nomba had lived before. He came together with his wives, Yagre, Mairma and Talake, one of his sons and a number of grandchildren. In 1985, at the death of *tengsoba* Belgre, he became the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*. His occupation of office was however of short duration. One year later he died, not even having had the occasion to undergo the *zupondo* ritual. His place as lineage elder and compound head at Yiitaore was taken by Yuunrawa who came from Loada. Weebnaaba's son returned to Loada, while two of Weebnaaba's wives, Yagre and Talake, were married by respectively Yuunrawa and his half-brother Pogsada, the latter also having left Loada. Next to Pogsada, Yuunrawa also took with him three of Weebnaaba's children, who until then had lived in Loada. Finally, a daughter of Weebnaaba who had been married in Koundbokin but who had become a widow returned to Ziinoogo: 'I came to Ziinoogo to assist at Weebnaaba's funerals and afterwards I didn't return to my husband's home. After his death, I was married to a child who cannot take care of himself and thus not of me either'.<sup>39</sup> It may also be noted that Pogsada left his first wife and her children at the compound in Loada. Both Weebnaaba and his successor Yuunrawa farmed at Soudougou.

When, then, Nomba returned from Naba Bagre in 1987, he found the place he had left occupied by Yuunrawa's compound. He settled in a separate compound with his wife and children: 'I did so because the

<sup>38</sup> Another elder brother of Bagre today lives in Dake.

<sup>39</sup> At a man's death, his widows are married to his younger brothers, brothers' sons, or own sons from other wives (levirate). That a widow is married to a child may be because there simply are no adult younger brothers, brothers' sons or sons. It may however also be that there are adult brothers, brothers' sons or sons, but that the widow did not have good relations with her deceased husband's kin, who do not want to take responsibility for her. There is a Moore proverb expressing that it is important for a woman to build good relations in her husband's lineage: '*Pog kuur baoda a sida, ta sid na vuiye*' ['A widow looks for her future husband while her husband is still alive'].

compound where I live now is an old compound. I built my compound at this place so that each will know his boundaries. The people who are today in Bagsin and Loada all originate from one and the same compound. We became numerous at a certain period and when the maize ripened it was no longer sufficient for all. That is why we were told to disperse ourselves over the *karaase* so that each would be given his responsibility. Where I have my compound now is the place which was predestined to me'. Another villager however simply commented that 'if the *tengsoba* and his direct successor lived in the same compound, they would be too close to one another; that is why not Nomba but his younger brother Pogsada lives with the *tengsoba*'. Before he left Yiitaoore in 1980, Nomba had farmed at Soudougou at a place which on his return was occupied by Yuunrawa. While the fields he left in Naba Bagre were later on occupied by Somyasya, Nomba in 1988 cleared land at Bolle and Roogtanga.

One would almost think that the compound at Loada has come to constitute a kind of ante-room for future *tengsobdamba*: the three latest Yiitaoore *tengsobdamba* spent part of their life in Loada before returning to Ziinoogo at the time they became lineage elder. To be sure, while having been initiated by flight under colonial repression, the compounds founded to the north by Yiitaoore *tengbiise* (in particular in Loada, but also in Dake) never ceased to belong fully to the same lineage. The histories of the three Yiitaoore compounds are inextricably linked to the history of the Loada compound: for example, where Nomba chose to make his field and to build his compound on his return from Naba Bagre was clearly influenced by the return of people from Loada. What is more, it is almost impossible to distinguish between the economies of the compound in Loada and, for example, the *tengsoba's* compound in Yiitaoore. The *tengsoba's* younger brother, Pogsada, left all his children and his first wife in Loada. The *tengsoba*, for his part, was accompanied to Ziinoogo by three younger children of the former *tengsoba* Weebnaaba, the latter's elder children remaining in Loada (or even returning to Loada, as was the case for the son who accompanied Weebnaaba to Ziinoogo). Both the *tengsoba* and Pogsada have a large part of their livestock in Loada, as have their wives too. Finally, members of the two compounds give help working on each other's fields.

The Yiitaoore *tengbiise* appear to have a right to farm land not only on their lineage land in Ziinoogo, but also in Loada. This holds not only for those genealogically close to Baobingba, the first Yiitaoore *tengbiiga* to settle in Loada, but also for those more distant like Ragenawende and his son Ninkiemba. Initially a refuge for colonial repression, the 'brousse' in Loada came to constitute an extension of the lands where the *tengbiise* can lay a strong claim: ritually authorized to do so by the Namissiguima *tiibsoba*, Baobingba was the first to clear parts of the land at Loada, which came to constitute for the *tengbiise* a *yaab ziiga*, although not an 'eternal' one like their lineage land at Ziinoogo - at least in practice (cf. the discussion on the Ziinoogo *tengpeelem* in chapter 3). The successive returns of lineage elders to Ziinoogo appear to have been more or less compulsory: the lineage's *kiimse* (ancestral shrines) are kept in Ziinoogo and as the lineage elder is the custodian of these shrines he cannot but settle in Ziinoogo. However, not only the lineage elder is involved, brothers, children and brothers' children may be as well. It is easy to understand then that, for example, the sons of Weebnaaba, who accompanied the actual *tengsoba* to Ziinoogo, when they are adults and in a position to establish their own farms, can opt either to remain in Ziinoogo or to return to Loada: at both places they have a right to land on their lineage's *yaab ziiga*. Conversely, members of the compound in Loada can at a certain time in their lives always opt to settle in Ziinoogo, Bagsin or Naba Bagre, i.e. independently of the occupation of the *tengsoba* office (as the example of Ninkiemba shows).

*The yiiri and actors' rights to land at geographically dispersed places*

The existence of geographically dispersed places, where rights to farm land can be claimed, is by no means restricted to the cases of the few compounds presented here. An important question to answer is whether it is possible to identify a social entity which accounts for the spatial dispersion of actors' rights to land. Clearly this entity is not the village or the ward. The case material more strongly suggests a non-localized kin group. The actors involved in the movements from one village to another, from one ward to another, or from one compound to another, with its corresponding movements of fields, explain their right to land at widely separated places by referring to the actor directly responsible for the allocation of land as belonging to or originating from the same 'compound' (*zaka*) or the same 'home' or 'house' (*yiiri*).

Although acknowledging that the notion of *yiiri*, house, may refer to different levels and scales of social identity, Luning (1994:5) nevertheless takes it to correspond to a 'distinctive cluster of dwellings':

'It is a residential unit inhabited by people linked by kinship and marriage. A good approximation of the composition of a *yiiri* can be formulated as follows; a *yiiri* is a social unit primarily made up of patrilineally related men, their wives and their children'.

Each *yiiri* is then made up of several *zakse* or compounds, a *zaka* consisting of a married man, his wives, children and unmarried brothers (*ibidem*:17). The use in local discourse of the terms *zaka* and *yiiri* however lacks such precision and they often appear as interchangeable. For example, both *zaka* and *yiiri* may refer to one single compound (the compound where one lives) or to a cluster of compounds which have issued through processes of fission from one and the same parent compound. For the present purpose, a discussion of the term *yiiri* is most fruitful, as it is more consistently used with respect to issues of rights to land at different places and in the explanation of other related social processes. My main problem with Luning's understanding of *yiiri* is that she considers it to be a *localized* social unit, situating the appearance of links between different localities at the level of the *buudu* (lineage) 'which reunites people living in different localities who are connected through unilineal descent' (*ibidem*:18). To be sure, my own observations too confirm that *yiiri* may denote localized units like a single compound or a cluster of compounds, but certainly also compounds very much dispersed geographically. I prefer to reserve the term *saka* for localized social units. Often, a *saka* is equated to a so-called 'localized lineage segment' (cf. Imbs 1987:31, Remy 1972:112), which with respect to Ziinoogo is a definition too restrictive since a *saka* is not necessarily composed of compounds belonging to the same lineage segment (cf. for instance Yiitaoore which is composed of two such segments). Still, although it is difficult to generalize about the composition of a *saka*, it seems right to consider it as referring to a specific locality, contrary to, in particular, *yiiri* and *buudu*.

*Buudu* is most often translated as 'lineage' and interpreted as reuniting 'people belonging to one stock of kin, patrilineally related to common apical ancestors' (Luning 1994:20). *Buudu* itself however can refer to several levels of social identity ranging 'from the minimal patri-lineage (the *buudu* intervening in matrimonial exchanges) to the totality of the

Moose (the *Moos buudu*)' (Izard 1985:21).<sup>40</sup> In local discourse referring to social relations extending beyond the locality (in particular the ward - *saka*), *buudu* is often applied to a group of people larger than the 'minimal patrilineage', i.e. to a group of people internally divided by their association with different *kiimse* (ancestral shrines). Although a custodian of the *kiimse* is referred to as the '*buudkasma*' (lineage elder) and I never heard the term '*yiirkasma*', I found a correspondence in local discourse between on the one hand the people belonging to the same *yiiri* and on the other hand the people paying respect to a particular *buudkasma*, custodian of *kiimse* kept in a particular *kiimsroogo* ('the hut of the ancestor shrines'), i.e. I found a correspondence between the *yiiri* and the minimal patrilineage united by the same ancestral shrines.

I have dwelled so extensively on these terms because it is the *yiiri* in the latter sense, i.e. that of patrilineally related people depending on the same ancestral shrine, that comes nearest to the group of people having rights to farm land on each other's geographically dispersed territories: 'People depending on the same *kiimsroogo* cannot chase one another from the land they control. People from another *kiimsroogo* too can be allowed to use this land, but not with the same title. They can be chased away from one day to another'.<sup>41</sup> For one *yiiri*, the status of the different territories differs from locality to locality. Thus, the *Yiitaoore tengbiise* have a territory in *Ziinoogo* over which they exercise a more or less complete control, thanks to their autochthonousness at that place; in *Loada*, though having been the first to clear certain tracts of land, they submit to the ritual authority of the *Namissiguima tiibsoba* and their control is less complete (in case of a conflict over land they are expected to comply with the *Namissiguima tiibsoba*'s decision).<sup>42</sup> The land 'controlled' by the *Rumtenga Yiyoose* in *Ziinoogo* is not even geographically inscribed in space as yet. Most probably, if members of their *yiiri* asked permission to settle and farm in *Ziinoogo*, they would be permitted to do so because of the prior rights to land for settlement and farming acquired by their kin, but their position in the 'hierarchy of choice' with respect to farm land would be low. The status of this *yiiri*'s land in *Nawoubkiiba* is much higher, as *Rumtenga Yiyoose*'s ancestors were the first to clear land there, albeit under the authority of the *Baskondo tengsoba*. In *Nawoubkiiba*, the land they control is also geographically inscribed and their *yiiri*'s elder at that place has large autonomy in matters of allocation of land on his territory. If *Yuma*, then, had decided to move to *Nawoubkiiba* his rights to farm land would be stronger than in *Ziinoogo* (in terms of his position in a 'hierarchy of choice'). The status of the land at *Silaalba*, controlled by *Yuma*'s elder brother, is a different one again. Here land for farming was initially acquired through [*Sidnoore*'s] father's sister's husband and I have not been able to ascertain whether nowadays the place to which they are entitled has acquired any fixity. Although the *Rumtenga Yiyoose* in *Ziinoogo* maintain that they still have an 'eternal' *yaab ziiga* in *Rumtenga*, it is important to note that their *yiiri*'s *kiimse* have been moved to *Nawoubkiiba*. While this displacement of *kiimse* certainly does not exclude *Yuma*'s entitlement to land at *Rumtenga* - members of his

<sup>40</sup> Even the application of the term *buudu* to the domain of kinship is only one of many. It can design an animal species or a plant family, or an ethnic group (*Fulbe*, *Moose*) or a social category (*nakombse*, *tengbiise*, *Saaba*) (Luning 1994:20).

<sup>41</sup> *Yamnooma*, *Kuritgo*.

<sup>42</sup> When I asked the *zaksoba* in *Loada* about the *Ziinoogo tengsoba*'s authority in matters of farm land in *Loada*, he simply answered: 'Here, there are places where the *tengsoba* is allowed to speak and others where he is not'; this stands in contrast to the situation in *Ziinoogo* where the *tengsoba* has a final say in all matters of land on the whole village territory.

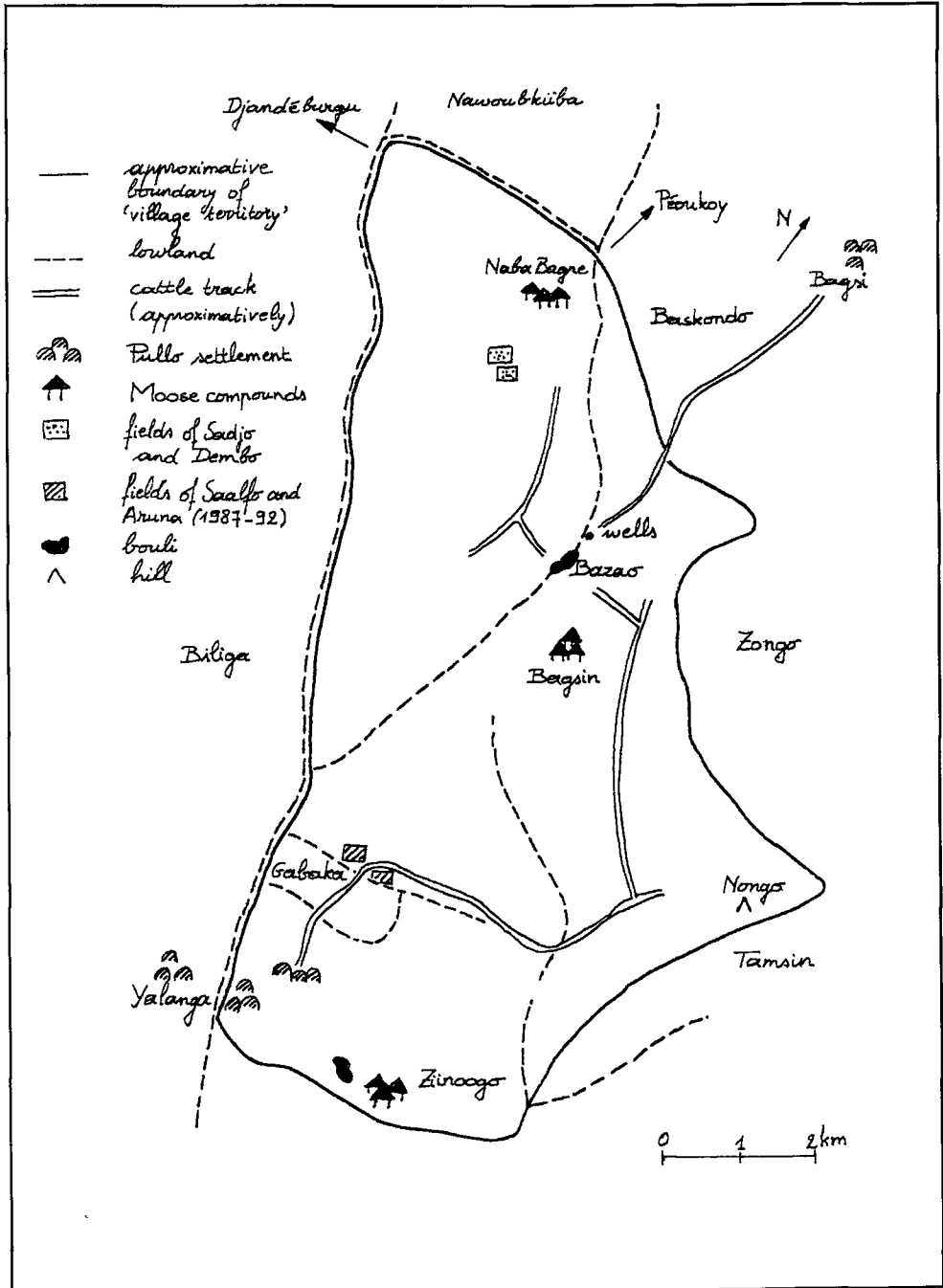
*yiiri* may still control a territory there - it does say something about the autochthonization of his *yiiri* in Nawoubkiiba.

A displacement of *kiimse* most often is but a partition: the *kiimse* are divided whereby one part remains at the place of origin while the other part moves. In this way a new *yiiri* is created, whereby the members of the new *yiiri* forsake their rights to land controlled by the old one and *vice versa*. As long as such a split does not occur, each actor has a potential right to land with any member of his *yiiri* who effectively has realized such a right. The status an actor has with respect to land at any particular place then depends on his own status within his *yiiri* - notably determined by age - and on the status of his *yiiri's* land at that particular place - determined by the local historical context of its inscription; cf. chapter 3 for the range of possible statuses such land can have (alternative meanings of *yaab ziiga*). The important point thus is that each actor potentially has access to a pool of geographically dispersed territories, of differing statuses and inscribed in space in the course of his *yiiri's* history. Next to the nested levels of authority which exist at a particular locality (cf. chapter 3 for Ziinoogo), each *yiiri* too counts several authorities concerned with its geographically dispersed territories: for the Rumtenga Yiyoose, their *buudkasma* controls their land in Nawoubkiiba and Yuma's elder brother in Silaalba; for the Yiitaore *tengbiise*, the compound elder in Loada controls their land in Loada, while the *buudkasma* controls the land in Ziinoogo. Migrations of one or more actors often bring about shifts in the exercise of control over land: for example, when the *tengsoba* left Loada, the new compound elder there took over control over the land, the *tengsoba* himself assuming responsibility over the land in Ziinoogo. Finally, it should be noted that a *yiiri's* claims on land can only be maintained by at least a minimal presence and use: suppose that Yuma's elder brother had left Silaalba together with his father and brothers, no Rumtenga Yiyooga would have remained there and whatever territory they had inscribed in Silaalba would have been effaced.

The existence of such a pool of territories is an important factor to take into account if one wants to understand processes of geographic mobility and the diversity of options open to people who want or are forced to move, although it does not constitute by itself a sufficient explanation for observed paths followed by actors. Full comprehension, if possible at all, can only be obtained by analyzing each case contextually: a move may then be explained primarily, for example, by an actor's access to a ritual office (a number of the movements from Loada to Ziinoogo), by ecological or climatological circumstances (soil depletion, droughts), conflict over land (between villages, between lineages, between 'strangers' and 'autochthons'), etc. Moreover, the *yiiri*-related pool of territories does not exhaust the potential places an actor can move to and gain access to land. Indeed, the *yiiri* is a social entity which restricts attention to the patrilineage. As mentioned above, access to land can also be obtained through matrilineal [and other] kin (in particular mother's brother) and movements of people to their mother's brother's village are no exception. This aspect of processes of geographic mobility and land use practice is treated in the next chapter.

#### ***Case 4: Use of natural resources by Fulbe on Ziinoogo's village territory***

By presenting the following material I explicitly intend to bring Fulbe into the picture again. Not only does this permit an analysis of a particular aspect of the relationships between Moose and Fulbe - relationships which will prove to be highly relevant to the argument developed



Map 4.1  
Sketch-map case 4

later on - it also constitutes an opportunity to shift the attention from farm exclusively land to other resources on the village territory (water, pastures).

In the previous chapter, I limited myself to the observation that Fulbe generally maintain that they never ask a Moaga permission to farm somewhere, while Moose simply deny that Fulbe farm on the Ziinoogo village territory. Only after I had established by myself where on the village territory some Fulbe had a farm, did Moose acknowledge these facts with which I confronted them.

I arrived in the village in the middle of the dry season of 1994. Soon, during my first explorations of the village, I had spotted a number of Fulbe huts in between the wards of Bagsin and Naba Bagre (cf. map 4.1). When I asked about them with the Moose of the village, I did not receive direct answers. It was simply said that there were no Fulbe in Ziinoogo, nor Fulbe that farmed on the village territory. At first, I thought that the huts had to belong to transhumant Fulbe who had come from the north for the dry season. However, it did not take long before I discovered that the settlements belonged to two younger half-brothers, Sadjo and Dembo, of the *jooro* of Péoukoy. The settlements clearly were established on land which falls under the direct authority of Somyasya, the *tengbiiga* elder of Naba Bagre (cf. case 1). Sadjo: 'If we want a field to farm or a place to camp, we do not ask permission. We know already that the land belongs to the Moose. If we ask we cannot receive, and, thus, if we see a place that suits us we go and camp there. It can be a fallow, a field that has been abandoned for some ten years. Sometimes, we clear a place without knowing who controls it. If the "owner" then shows up, we try to come to an agreement, that is, if he wants to exploit his place we leave, if he doesn't need it immediately we ask permission to stay and he delimits the space we can use'. When I asked Somyasya about the land used by Sadjo, he explained: 'Sadjo didn't ask me permission to farm there. It was out of compassion that I let him stay. The poor should not chase the poor and to my knowledge it has always been so that Fulbe have no land of their own and that they go where Moose are. But, I warned him: if he does something that doesn't please me, I will invoke the *tense* and he will die on the spot, for it was my ancestors who came here first and that is why I am entitled to speak here'.

This way of arranging Fulbe's access to farm land explains the initial statements of both Moose and Fulbe on the matter, i.e. respectively 'no Fulbe use land on the village territory' and 'we don't ask for permission to farm'. The way Fulbe gain access to farm land is specific in the sense that they obtain *post facto* permission, while within the framework of Moose arrangements people are used to obtaining *pre facto* permission. That Moose in public discourse speak as if there are no Fulbe farms on their territory only confirms that Fulbe should not expect to obtain any right to the land they farm as Moose can; Moose as well as Fulbe themselves ('the land belongs to the Moose' and 'if we ask we cannot receive') consider Fulbe as not following the same rules; the procedure for Fulbe access to farm land, i.e. the absence of formalities as in use between Moose, in fact prevents Fulbe from rooting in the village territory.<sup>43</sup> By cleaning and sowing a place they find 'suitable', the Fulbe in fact seem to expose themselves to Moaga arbitrariness, for the Moaga responsible for the land in question may *post facto* accord the Pullo the permission to farm, but he may also chase him away thereby implying that the place is needed by him or another Moaga. Still, one should be aware of the fact that Fulbe will generally not sow where they know beforehand they will

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<sup>43</sup> During my fieldwork, neither Moose nor Fulbe ever referred to a conflict over farm land, whereby a Pullo had resisted the withdrawal by a Moaga of a certain parcel. This is not to say that such conflicts do not occur in the region. While studying the archives of the Haut Commissariat in Kaya, I encountered several accounts of conflicts over farm land opposing Fulbe and Moose. Colonial authorities conceded rights of 'ownership' to land to any person who could prove that he had used a plot for a period of at least fifteen years, and sometimes Fulbe too have been able to have such rights recognized by colonial courts (cf. Régistre Tribunal du Premier Degré 1931, Régistre Tribunal du Premier Degré 1935; cf. also Pageard 1969:392). A Moaga strategy directed to prevent Fulbe from rooting on their territory thus is not necessarily accepted passively by Fulbe.

probably be chased away (for example, lowlands<sup>44</sup> or plots on a territory controlled by a proclaimed enemy of Fulbe).

The choice of a location for a Pullo farm is not arbitrary in another way as well. Fulbe try to sow their fields at places which are favourably situated for establishing dry season settlements. During the dry season the fields are manured by the cattle which is paddocked, between grazing and watering, on the field. Thus, such a location is chosen taking into consideration the proximity of dry season pastures and water resources for cattle (cf. also Riesman 1974:25-28). In this respect, the places where Sadjo and Dembo had their fields and dry season settlements in 1994-95 seemed indeed very suitable: distances to pastures to the east (Soudougou, Nongo) as well as to the west (Djandéburgu) were not too large and, most importantly, there were two important water points nearby, namely the *bouli* and the wells at Bazao, which usually do not dry up. However, while access to pastures and completely harvested fields on the Ziinoogo village territory is fairly unproblematic for Fulbe during the dry season, this is not the case for the access to water resources. Around the latter many conflicts between Fulbe and Moose arise during the dry season.

There are four wells at Bazao. Two of them are only rudimentary, strengthened by rings of stones at their edges, the first dug by the Saaba from Mané, who live at Bagsin, the second by a man from Biliga. The two other wells were constructed by 'outsiders', the smaller one by a Christian organization in about 1983 ('at the time of the Revolution'), the second and larger one in 1994 by a rural development project based in Kaya. While a 'locally constructed' well is called a *kulgo*, the concrete wells constructed by outsiders are called *gargaase* (sing.: *gargaaga*). The *bouli* is situated only a few hundred meters to the south of the wells. In February 1995, I came by the *bouli* and met there a number of elders of Bagsin who were quietly sitting and watching the water. 'We came here this morning to chase the Fulbe from the *bouli*', was all they said. A little while later, two of the elders (*tengbiise*) were having an argument at the wells of Bazao with a young Seya and with the Pullo Sadjo. The elders were furious because the two other men were watering their cattle at the *gargaase*: 'With all their power, even the Europeans never succeeded in making us do what we don't want', said one of the elders, thus making clear that they set the rules which had to be followed. What, then, are these rules? First, the digging of wells as well as of a *bouli* is sanctioned by the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*. The daily use of the water resources then is normally controlled by the ward elders. With respect to the *bouli*, in principle all livestock is allowed to be watered there, although cattle should be prevented from entering the water to avoid troubling it. However, control is only exercised from a certain time in the dry season onwards, decided upon by a congregation of elders; then, the *bouli* will be guarded by turns and cattle that are not held by ropes are supposed to be chased away. With respect to the wells too, regulations are enforced during the dry season. The water from the two *gargaase* is then to be reserved for human consumption in the first place, though according to what I could observe sheep and goats are allowed to be watered. At the end of the dry season of 1995, for example, a *tengbiiga* elder of Bagsin explained: 'Our women fetch water there and so do the Fulbe women. That is all right with us, but we cannot accept that the Fulbe come there with their cattle too'. Another elder: 'We have two wells [*gargaase*] from which the people of several villages drink. The water is only just sufficient and if we were not hard on the Fulbe [and their cattle] there wouldn't be enough water for the people to drink'. The use of the two other wells is a different matter, because the permission to dig them was asked by and given to individuals. The first well was dug by a man from Biliga. He had many animals and came to water them at Bazao. His use of the well was prohibited however later on, when his younger brother attempted to 'steal' a Ziinoogo woman. Since then, this well has had no 'owner'. As to the second well, dug by the Saaba, an elder from Bagsin said: 'As Larba [the Saaba elder] lives here and as we are all Moose who help one another on the fields and with the construction of roofs for the houses and as, moreover, Larba is a Seya who each season makes the tools with which we farm, we have authorized him to dig a well. Still, we were the ones who gave him the place to dig'. The two 'local' wells have a very small water supply; Larba's well at certain periods hardly suffices to water his own herd, which is, granted, relatively large. Why then did Fulbe, like Sadjo or Dembo, not dig their own well at Bazao to water their herds? As a matter of fact, they have done so. One afternoon in March 1995, I met Dembo at Bazao. He said: 'This morning Moose chased us and our herds from the wells. At

<sup>44</sup> I did not encounter a Pullo who farmed on lowland. An important reason certainly is that lowlands are relatively scarce and that Moose do not allow Fulbe to occupy them. It may be noted however that Riesman (1974:24) attributes the location of Fulbe fields on sandy soils in Djelgodji to the Fulbe's preference for these soils to which their tools would be better adapted than to heavier soils.



present we are forbidden to come here with our cattle. But what sense does it make to allow goats and sheep to be watered if cattle are not allowed to come? And what is more, we are not allowed to dig our own well here. Larba does permit Fulbe to water their cattle from his well, but that well does not give enough water. If we came here early in the morning and Larba also arrived with his cattle, we could not let him wait. We then would have to wait until the evening before we could water our animals. A few years ago, Sadjó dug a well here. We hadn't even raised seven bags of water when the Moose came to fill it in again. There have been problems between us and the Moose in the past, that is true. These were however mostly problems with cattle entering fields and to solve them we went to Barsalogo [‘préfecture’]. With respect to the wells however we have never done anything wrong and we do not understand the Moose’s attitude. Of course, people living together can always have some problems with one another, but at some time one should be able to put them aside. Nowadays the situation is that one year we can come to the wells and the next year not’. Yamnooma, the Kuritgo elder in Bagsin, confirmed Dembo’s account: ‘After we filled in the well dug by Sadjó, the Fulbe went to complain to the “préfet” at Namissiguima. The “préfet” said that if this was true he would go to Bazao himself to dig a well for the Fulbe. He set out for Bazao, but he halted at Baskondo to consult the Baskondo *tengsoba*, who told him not to continue to Bazao arguing that although the Fulbe are not our enemies they are not our benefactors either. The Baskondo *tengsoba* warned him that the *tengbiise* had brought their *tengkuga* to Bazao and that he would do better to stay out of these matters, because otherwise he wouldn’t be in office as “préfet” for another twenty days. The “préfet” never came to Bazao’. When I asked Yamnooma why the Fulbe were not allowed to dig their own well at Bazao, he summed up a number of scuffles that had occurred at the wells in the past between Fulbe and Moose.<sup>45</sup> Yamnooma maintained that, because they want to avoid a repetition of such disputes, they refuse the Fulbe their own well: ‘We are afraid now to give them the permission, for if they had their own well, trouble might arise and someone of us might get killed by a Pullo. Since the Fulbe have settled near Nawoubkiiba there is not a year gone by that they don’t attack each other with knives’. During the dry season of 1995, I saw how Sadjó, Dembo and one other Pullo (who had his dry season settlement at the eastern border of Ziinoogo on Baskondo territory) continued coming to Bazao with their herds, although they were regularly chased away.

Water undoubtedly is an extremely scarce resource during the dry season and strife over it is only to be expected. The analysis of what exactly is at stake at the wells of Bazao is however far from easy, not least because I was unable to establish how access was regulated before the concrete wells were constructed. With respect to the wells at Bazao, the outsiders’ influence was never made explicit, as it was at other places.<sup>46</sup> Still, I suspect that this construction by outsiders ‘for the village’ has increased tensions, because the Moose argue that the water from exactly these wells is mainly meant for human consumption, using this argument to keep away Fulbe cattle. A Pullo elder: ‘Everything used to go well at Bazao. Fulbe from Djandéburgu as well as Bagsi [a ward of Péoukoy] went there with their cattle. It was only recently that the Moose started to chase Fulbe away, arguing that the wells are on their land and that they thus have the right to protect them. Fulbe continued to water their herds at Bazao but for a few years there have been problems each dry season. The Moose start chasing the Fulbe away from the time that the water problem becomes serious. Because of these frequent problems, many Fulbe have decided to stop going there. Still, there are some of us who continue to go each time when things calm down. That is the way it goes each year’. The situation around the

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<sup>45</sup> For example: ‘One of our sons went to Bazao to fetch water. When he arrived, a Pullo was also drawing water. The Pullo said to our son to watch out not to let his bag touch the Pullo’s bag. Our son answered that he only had come to fill one jar, while the Pullo had to water his whole herd and that it would thus be better if the Pullo would take his bag out of the well for a moment to let him fill his jar. Thereafter, the Pullo would be able to continue to water his herd. The Pullo did as was asked, but he continued to fix his gaze on our son and suddenly he took a piece of wood and struck our son, who then hit back’.

<sup>46</sup> For example, at the *bouli* of Balbou which has been deepened by a bulldozer and where a water filter has been placed; there it was explicitly said that ‘because the *bouli* has been deepened out and a filter has been placed, the people of the project said that from now on the water is drinking-water for the people’, which would then prohibit the watering of cattle. Ironically, Fulbe maintain that, because of the works done at the *bouli*, it has become a kind of ‘barrage’ which gives them a right to come there more than before. With respect to Fulbe in Niger, Dupire (1975:327) also observed that the use of deep wells and bore holes constructed by the administration provoked frequent conflicts between the first occupants of a region and Fulbe immigrants, in contrast to the use of other water points.

wells has remained unclear to me and it seems that in practice a kind of arbitrariness exists with respect to possibilities of access for Fulbe to these wells. In any case, not going to Bazao with the herds during the dry season would imply for Sadjo and Dembo a change of the location of their dry season settlement and thus either not manuring their field or changing the location of their fields.

With respect to the passages for cattle through the Ziinoogo village territory during the rainy season, I again did not encounter a straightforward situation. The Moose deny the existence of any passage agreed upon and to be kept free from fields. Fulbe however see things differently. For example, Fulbe from Yalanga claim to lead their cattle along the lowland of Gabaka to Soudougou and further to Nongo 'along the same places our grandparents used to follow and that is why we continue to go there', even though the presence of Moose fields near the lowland makes passages for cattle narrow and makes tensions between Moose and Fulbe rise. According to both Fulbe and Moose, Fulbe on several occasions in the past tried to persuade the administrative authorities to formally delimit passages for cattle on Ziinoogo village territory. It was however never accomplished because of the Moose's resistance to such delimitation. Still, in practice, Moose rarely block cattle passages, considered as such by Fulbe, with their fields. Frequently, Moose showed me places where they would not sow because of the cattle passing there and the risk of crop damage. In this sense then passages are accepted to exist 'informally', which is confirmed by the fact that Moose protect fields near to such passages by fences.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> I have encountered only one account of a case in which Moose fields effectively blocked a cattle passage used by Fulbe. At the end of the exposition of the first case above, Aruna maintained that he and his brother left Pempelsin because of the proximity of Fulbe and because the absence of water during the dry season. There seems to have been however no reason why they should have gone by Pempelsin before returning to Yiitaore, if the access to water really constituted a major problem (the pump had come already in 1987). It is then highly probable that the presence of Fulbe close to Gabaka and Pempelsin was an important factor in the two brothers' decision to farm at Gabaka in the first place. At least, that is what might be concluded from the explanation given by a Pullo elder from Yalanga: 'For a number of years, Saalfo and Aruna have blocked with their fields the passage we used to traverse with our cattle at Gabaka on our way to Nongo and Bagsin. To reach Bagsin at that time, we had to cross the lowland to the west, which was dangerous for our children during the rainy season. Only last year Aruna left the place, which made it possible again for us to pass. We have also complained to the "préfet" in Barsalogho and he told us that the "brousse" belongs to all, to all Burkinabé'. This problem at Gabaka was not an isolated event and appeared to be related to the conflicts between Biliga (of which village Yalanga is a ward) and Ziinoogo, which appeared time and again during the 1980s. It seems that the Fulbe moved their settlements at the beginning of the 1980s from the western to the eastern side of the lowland, thus settling on land claimed by Ziinoogo as belonging to their territory. The same Pullo elder: 'Before the Revolution, the Moose of Ziinoogo threatened to burn our huts because we had settled on their territory. Then too we went to the administration to complain and the people of Ziinoogo were given a warning. It is however only since the Revolution that each knows what belongs to him and that they didn't bother us any more'. Not only Fulbe crossed the lowland. In 1992, a barrage was constructed and a rice cultivation project was started. Both borders of the lowland were parceled out in favour of people from Biliga and Yalanga (Moose and Rimaïbé). The Ziinoogo *tengbiise* felt passed over: 'The rice fields are partly on our land. We saw the trucks come and go, but nobody asked us anything. Since the barrage has been constructed they have not harvested anything, nor will they this year and if they don't harvest anything in the years to come they will finally give up. That is the way it goes these days: those who come to construct a barrage think the land belongs to the government and that they do not have to consult those to whom the land really belongs. But, if the rice harvests continue to fail, we will see whether or not the land really belongs to the government'. While Rimaïbé and Moose from Yalanga and Biliga accepted parcels in the rice fields, the Fulbe are not pleased with the barrage as it entailed the disappearance of pastures for their cattle. Anyhow, the fact that Aruna and Saalfo decided to farm at Gabaka at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s can be seen as a statement by the Ziinoogo *tengbiise* towards the Fulbe of Yalanga. Even though for the moment the presence of Fulbe to the east of the lowland is tolerated, Saalfo and Aruna, by farming at Gabaka, have momentarily displayed the *tengbiise*'s power. The government extensionist commented in the following way: 'A few years ago, the Fulbe from Yalanga wanted to force matters and attempted to extend their access to the "brousse" of

## Discussion and conclusion

Very often, studies of Moose land use present a rather deterministic view of how the distribution of rights of control over land on a village territory evolves. A very good example is the influential work of Marchal (1983) on Yatenga. He starts from the *tenga*, territory over which a *tengsoba* exercises authority and which in most cases corresponds to a village territory. Originally an undivided territory under the sole authority of the *tengsoba* and used solely by the members of the autochthonous lineage, it becomes more and more fragmented in the course of time as, on the one hand, sub-territories are ceded to lineage segments which arrived later and, on the other hand, each sub-territory fragments according to segmentation of the human groups occupying it. In this way, a territory corresponds to each *saka* (localized lineage segment); within the *saka*-territory sub-territories are allocated to *yiya* (understood as localized units of giving and receiving women), which again are sub-divided into territories of *zakse* (*yiiri*-segments) (*ibidem*:291-293). Marchal stresses that the rights to land of respectively *tengbiise*, later founded *sakse*, *yiya* and *zakse* are each of a different order. Only the rights of the *zakse* are considered to be temporary in principle. They would however rystallize into permanent rights as time goes on.

Tallet (1985:312-313) and Kohler (1971) follow Marchal's analysis. In his study of the region of Yako ('Ouest-Mossi'), Kohler (1971:147) maintains that the evolution of the land tenure system is characterized in the first place by 'un processus d'appropriation des terres par des unités sociales de plus en plus réduites, à la suite d'une occupation du sol sans cesse plus dense en raison d'une forte expansion démographique'. In the end, the step to be taken to private property and the issuing of land titles would appear to be only a small one:

'L'élimination de la jachère [...] procède du désir de "personnaliser" la terre, ou [...] de lui ôter toute sa neutralité. [...] Il y aurait bien eu passage d'un droit d'usage à caractère social [...] au droit de culture de nature économique, du type: la terre est à celui qui la cultive. De collectifs et inaliénables, les droits sur la terre sont devenus des droits de "propriété". [...] Le droit fondé sur l'usage continu d'un droit de culture, par une même fraction familiale, s'est transformé en un droit personnel reconnu à chaque individu. Le terroir est aujourd'hui *approprié*, *aborné* [...]; un cadastre "utile" a été fixé avec rigueur' (Marchal 1983:355).

Luning (1989a:23) and Imbs (1987:58) emphasize much more the fact that the notion of private property in land - in the sense of individually appropriated land - is completely absent among Moose (cf. also Pageard 1969:392). Still, their work is not fully convincing because both maintain that there are two kinds of land, i.e. lineage lands and individual lands, which are transferred in different ways: lineage lands are managed by the lineage elder and at his death are taken over by his successor, individual lands are transferred from father to sons 'in direct line and inalienable' (Imbs 1987:57). Thus, although stressing the absence of a notion of private property, it is here again suggested that *particular* tracts of land are associated with *particular* small social groups in a process of ever-progressive fragmentation of a village territory.

I do not contest the proposition that a village territory progressively fragments as the village's population grows and becomes more diversified. What I do contest is the nature of this fragmentation process. My own findings suggest less mechanistic processes, with respect

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Ziinoogo in the rainy season. But there are some dangerous and strong men in Ziinoogo, such as Saalfo and his brother. People are afraid of Saalfo. Moreover, about Ziinoogo it is often said that even if you take up a stone there, something can happen to you'.

to the cession of sub-territories to newly arrived segments or segments created through fission, and with respect to inheritance of land from lineage elder to lineage elder or from father to sons. Mechanistic processes, as described above, suggest a more or less unequivocal distribution of land over the village's population and cannot account satisfactorily for conflicts over land as they have occurred in the past or for present day strategies that aim at an extension of controlled land or for that matter for mobility of people and their fields on the village territory. The data I collected gave much more support to the view - which is not new with regard to African land holding (cf. Faure & Le Roy 1990, Lambert & Sindzingre 1995, Shipton & Goheen 1992) - that a particular tract of land most often is the object of a multiplicity of claims, albeit each most probably having a different weight. One should then be very careful not to assume an automatic correspondence between a social group and a geographically fixed sub-territory. That is, I oppose Marchal's view that there is an exact correspondence between a 'group occupying a space and space occupied by a group' (Marchal 1983:291). My point of view as to the nature of the village territory and its internal fragmentation comes much closer to Imbs' remark that: 'Le terroir envisagé globalement, peut être considéré plutôt comme un champ d'action doté d'une certaine mobilité que comme un terroir définitivement fixe en un lieu précis. La structure interne du terroir présente des traits analogues' (1987:153).<sup>48</sup>

Faure & Ouédraogo (1993:36), in a preparatory document for a conference on land tenure and decentralization in Burkina Faso, sigh that 'if the problem of property most often consists of determining the owner of a good, the problem in rural Burkina Faso paradoxically appears to be the determination of the object of property' and 'what we know the least well is how far the rights, incontestable, of customary owners go'. In order to understand how rights to land are obtained and how they are transferred and to grasp the nature of such rights, one should be careful with the use of terms like 'ownership', 'property' and also 'tenure'. Although, as mentioned above, it is acknowledged in the literature that the notion of 'private property' in land is absent among Moose<sup>49</sup>, it seems to me that representations of the village territory and its internal fragmentation are nevertheless much influenced by western notions of property, land tenure and ownership. The discussion on Tiv land rights by Bohannan & Bohannan (1968:78-82) is very useful for understanding Moose land tenure arrangements. They first scrutinize western conceptions:

'Land, whatever else it may be, is for Westerners a measurable entity divisible into thing-like "parcels" by means of surveying and cartography. [...] "Tenure" assumes [such] a conception of "land". Only if it is divisible and the divisions stable and measurable can "land" be "held", [...] enter the market or [...] be subject to contract. Contract and market constitute specific types of relationships between men and land. However, holding a piece of "real property" is more than a mere relationship between a man and a thing-like piece of land. [...] "Tenure" has to do with rights *in* land *against* or *with* other persons. [...] "Rights" are attributes of persons *against* other persons. But in European languages, with the particular notions of land they reflect, "rights in land" can become attributes *of the land*. This "land right" links a person and a piece of land' (78-79).

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<sup>48</sup> It should be noted here that at least two older studies on land tenure among the Moose do stress just the opposite of the argument of authors like Marchal and Tallet. Thus, both Boutillier (1964) and Remy (1972) maintain that rights to land are inscribed permanently in space only on the level of larger social groups, i.e. lineages. Remy (1972:112) concludes that lineage land does not fragment, neither by internal partition, nor by fragmentation in favor of strangers to the lineage. As will be shown below, such a view does not suit my findings well either.

<sup>49</sup> As will become clear in later chapters, this contention needs to be put in perspective as well, since people may obtain private land titles, although not in their region of origin.

They go on to argue that such an equation of rights of people with rights in land does not occur in most African societies and label the tenure relationship of Tiv to land as a 'non-property system':

'[The] social organization is conceived in terms of pure space, and is only incidentally linked with the physical environment for comparatively short periods of time by activities such as farming. [The] idiom of descent and genealogy provides not only the basis for lineage grouping, but also for territorial grouping. This "genealogical map" of Tivland moves about the surface of the earth in sensitive response to the demands of individual farmers as those demands change from year to year. Association of the genealogical map with specific pieces of ground is of brief duration only; a man or a woman has [...] "farm tenure", i.e., precise rights to a farm during the time it is in cultivation. But once the farm returns to fallow, the specific rights lapse. However, a man always has rights in the "genealogical map" of his agnatic lineage, wherever that lineage may happen to be on the terrain. These rights, which are part of his birth-right, can never lapse' (80).

There are a number of similarities here with Moose tenure arrangements, in particular as to the distinction between 'farm tenure' and 'birth right' to land of the agnatic lineage. The first case clearly shows how actors are able to move their compounds and change the location of their fields over the dispersed lineage territory: they can obtain 'farm tenure' anywhere on the lineage land by invoking their birth right to land. What land an actor obtains for farming at a particular place depends then on the land qualities he is looking for and on his position within the lineage hierarchy, which is mainly based on seniority. We thus find here a confirmation of the contention that rights to land in Africa are strongly determined by a double temporary seniority, i.e. of the group having migrated most anciently and the seniority rank within a given group (Lambert & Sindzingre 1995:105; cf. also Kopytoff (1987:53) who uses the term 'principle of precedence' for the first seniority principle). The double seniority principle is however crosscut by the fact that each actor claims specific rights to land which has been farmed by his father, elder brother or any person with whom he shared a compound and under whose responsibility he worked the land before. That means that, contrary to what happens with Tiv, when a man leaves fallow a particular place his specific rights to that place do not completely lapse and are transferred to, inherited by, his younger brothers, sons or other men who have worked that land together with him. It would be wrong however to think of this transfer of *rights* to land as inheritance of the *land as such*. For, in the span of one generation, one particular plot in most cases will have been farmed by more than one compound head and hence several claims will exist on the same plot simultaneously. In order to maintain his father's claim, a son needs to return to the same place. It is by farming land that rights to particular plots are created in the first place, but also continued and secured for future generations.<sup>50</sup> Thus, what is transferred from generation to generation is firstly a right to land on the agnatic lineage land as a whole, and secondly a more specific right to particular fractions of that lineage land (i.e. the land farmed by one's father, elder brother, etc.).

It is by taking into account these two kinds of rights to land that the movements of actors and their access to land in the first case can be understood. In line with this distinction, the land use paths followed by the actors serve different projects (concerning rights to land<sup>51</sup>): on the one hand, the more institutional-like project of revalidation of the lineage's claim on land, on the other hand, a more individual project of securing access to land for one's own descendants. The first project involves the [re-]inscription of lineage land and village territory

<sup>50</sup> Again, there is a similarity with the Tiv situation, where it is also pointed out that it is important 'to keep enough land in legitimate use to be able to retain it [...]' (Bohannon & Bohannon 1968:90).

<sup>51</sup> Of course, other kinds of projects are involved, like the search for lowland in times of drought.

boundaries on the land use pattern, while the second implies the inscription of the boundaries of a *ba ziiga* for one's descendants. Although certainly not exempted from strife and dispute, the boundaries of the village territory and between lineage lands - i.e. lineage lands over which the respective lineages exercise a large autonomous control (cf. chapter 3) - are not very mobile. The boundaries of a 'father's place', on the contrary, are all but fixed. Not only is the number of 'father's places' multiplied within a lineage land as generations follow upon one another. Suppose a man had three sons and that each of these sons again had three sons. The sum of the three 'father's places' of the youngest generation does not necessarily correspond to the 'father's place' of the three men of the second generation. Next to circumstances which incite actors to divert their land use paths from exclusively 'father's place' (for instance, the droughts and concurrent conflicts over land with a neighbouring village and/or another lineage) there is one other obvious reason for such non-correspondence, which is that a man or a woman (cf. next chapter) has a right not only to land but to *sufficient* land too. The demand for land by sons and their families then may easily exceed the boundaries of their 'father's place' and so they will go and look for land elsewhere on the lineage land.

A right to *sufficient* land for farming is held by all who actually live on the village territory, i.e. for the resident population. That is, one does not necessarily need to have a lineage land, controlled autonomously by one's lineage, in order to claim such a right.<sup>52</sup> Thus, Yuma and Ousmane, the main actors in the second case, have a right to sufficient land on the Ziinoogo village territory. In the same way, people who do not find enough room on their own lineage land may ask and have a right to land on another lineage's land on the village territory. Thus, it is not so difficult to understand how different territories in the course of time become imbricated into one another. If a member of one lineage segment sees his occupation of a plot on the land of another lineage continued by his sons and grandsons, this plot may well come to be considered by his descendants as a part of their *yaab ziiga*, notwithstanding the fact that the members of the other lineage too continue to consider it part of their lineage land. In the same way, it is a continuity in the use of particular plots which in the course of time may produce lineage land on the Ziinoogo village territory for the descendants of Yuma and Ousmane. Such rooting in the village territory demands a relative immobility of fields and thus also of compound, whereas the geographic mobility of people and fields over the village territory of members of more firmly rooted lineages is greater and sometimes even, as the first case shows, impressive.<sup>53</sup>

To conclude this discussion on the village territory, it must be stressed once again that the simple use of a plot for farming always potentially carries a change of the distribution of rights to that particular plot over the village population and a change in the distribution of

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<sup>52</sup> On the other hand it cannot be claimed by non-residents, like Fulbe or Moose from neighbouring villages, who nevertheless may be farming on the Ziinoogo village territory.

<sup>53</sup> Marchal (1983:354-355) also noted a relation between the duration of occupation of land by fields and the durability of actors' rights to land. He sees it as one of the key factors which explain the rapid extension of the cultivated area. He furthermore maintains that farmers attempt to occupy plots as long as possible, thereby thus shortening or even suppressing fallow, in order to avoid a return of these plots to a 'common fund' controlled by larger kin groups. It is particularly at this latter point that I disagree. Even in those cases where actors in Ziinoogo clearly aim at an occupation of particular plots for a period as prolonged as possible (case of the Runtenga Yiyoose), it does not mean that these plots are intended to be withdrawn from 'common funds'. It may be intended to withdraw them from the 'common fund' of the *Yiitaore tengbiise*, but if that would happen it would most probably enter the 'common fund' - 'pool of territories' - of the Runtenga Yiyoose. This line of thought will be further strengthened in later chapters, in particular in chapter 7 where a closer look is taken at the status of land used by migrants in the south and west of Burkina Faso.

rights over the village territory. The main reason for this variability of distributions is twofold: firstly, one and the same plot most often is subject to claims held by different individuals and/or social groups, and, secondly, rights to land shift and merge due to the breaking up and recombining of compounds (cf. also Shipton & Goheen 1992:311). The observed correspondence between social groups on the one hand and territories on the other hand is but a snapshot: the boundaries of both social groups and territorial units are determined by the particular way in which production is organized at that moment. The next year, the situation may be different, and this is all the more likely as one goes from larger social groups to smaller ones.

The third case shows that, in order to understand processes of geographic mobility, it is important to realize that actors have rights to land at several places. The land use paths followed by individual actors are inscribed in more than one village territory and affect the possible land use paths of other actors. The discussion of case 3 was concluded by the assessment that actors have a right to land on all the territories controlled by members of their *yiiri*. The degree of the *yiiri*'s control differs from village to village and an actor's right to land on a certain village territory depends on the rights to land members of his *yiiri* there already have acquired (principle of precedence), on his own seniority rank within the *yiiri* segment at that particular place and on the possible existence of a 'father's place'. The contention that the essence of social relations is enacted within the *localized* lineage segment (i.e. the *saka*; cf. Imbs 1987:45) needs to be put into perspective. The first case convincingly shows that restricting such essence to a *saka* (e.g. Yiitaoore) would be merely artificial. The discussion of case 3 then suggests that the *yiiri* too may be considered as such an essential social entity, though geographically dispersed. It not only defines the patrilineally controlled pool of land to which an actor potentially has access, it is also the social entity for which the exchange of women is sanctioned by one and the same *buudkasma*. Finally, the *yiiri* is an important social entity with respect to the exchange of labour (cf. also chapter 5).

Without minimizing the relevance of the *saka* or ward for, in particular, daily social interaction, where neighbourhood plays an important role, I want to stress here the importance of the village and the *yiiri*. Both are ideologically backed and in a way constitute contradictory poles in actors' lives. In his work on the Tallensi, Fortes (1940:254) distinguishes between two ideological frameworks: the ideological framework of the lineage system, which is the ancestor cult, and the ideological framework of locality, which is the cult of the earth. Among Moose, the ideology of locality is expressed during a festival like the *kiuugu* and the performance of rituals like the *tengaana*, in which different lineage segments of the village associate and collaborate and express their attachment to the locality's earth shrines (*tengkuga*). Yuma and Ousmane (case 2), for instance, are tied to the locality, the village of Ziinoogo, through Yuma's occupation of the office of *kurita*. At the same time, actors, related through agnatic kinship, unite in ancestor cults which hold a dispersed lineage segment - what I called the *yiiri* - together and contribute to the enlargement of actors' land use perspectives way beyond the locality's (the village's) boundaries.<sup>54</sup>

In chapters 2, 3 and 4, time and again the consolidation and/or the extension of the area to which rights can be claimed came to the fore as an issue in actors' strategies, and this on different levels (village, lineage, smaller kin group). Already in the historical introduction at the beginning of this chapter, it may have occurred to the reader that today one speaks

<sup>54</sup> The fact that personal land claims depend on the actor's simultaneous insertion in several broader networks (e.g. lineage, village, age set) is also mentioned by Lambert & Sindzingre (1995) and Shipton & Goheen (1992).

respectfully and with praise of those men who in the past were able to clear large areas of farm land (Somwaoga in particular), thus opening up and securing access to those areas for their sons and grandsons. During my fieldwork too, people often expressed their pride as they showed me the extent of their fields. Often, it was said that 'one should work according to one's means', which I came to understand as 'one should maximize the area of one's fields', at least as far as the available labour force permits.<sup>55</sup> An elder told me that 'nowadays too, each person wants to occupy a lot [of land] because everyone thinks of having grandsons'. Surely, other reasons too justify the sowing of large areas: a large millet field, in case of a good season, means also full granaries, and, what is more, people regularly sow more than one field as a risk-reduction strategy (e.g. fields on different soils and heights in order to harvest under a range of humidity and rainfall conditions); also when a field is moved to a new place because of diminishing yields at the old place (soil depletion), the old place often is not immediately abandoned and for one or two seasons fields are maintained at both places (cf. Saalfo in case 1 and Ousmane in case 2).

In any case, the reputed expansionist attitude of Moose farmers seems once more to be confirmed. According to Benoit (1982b:36), the Moaga attitude towards 'nature' entails an irreparable consumption of space and a 'penetration' of nature. Migration thereby comes to the fore as the instrument that regulates the balance between population and resources. At one place, population grows and the soils impoverish which leads part of the place's population to move elsewhere: 'C'est la conquête de nouvelles terres qui règle en partie l'équilibre population ressources. La progression des zones de culture se fait "en tache" à partir de régions considérées comme saturées' (Benoit 1982a:24). Terms like 'penetration' and 'irreparable consumption' call to mind another term: predatory expansion, used by Sahlins (1961) in an article on the segmentary lineage. Sahlins restricts the application of the term segmentary lineage to 'tribes', notably Tiv and Nuer, which are to be distinguished for example from chieftancies. Nevertheless, as Sahlins admits, certain similarities exist with other organizations. Sahlins' remarks on the relative importance of population pressure in the explanation of the predatory encroachment by segmentary lineages are a point of interest: 'The need for "living-space" is built in: it becomes a cultural attitude and theory, particularly in that society which has decisive competitive advantage. [...] [For] them land hunger exists [...] even if, by objective standards, there is enough land to support the present population' (Sahlins 1961:341).<sup>56</sup>

Another aspect of the segmentary lineage organization treated by Sahlins (*ibidem*:340) concerns the fact that the 'divisive, segmenting tendency is [...] matched by fusion with lineage-equivalent segments in higher-order, relative groupings' (complementary opposition). I have certainly not been able to discern anything like the processes of fission and complementary opposition as they have been discussed by Sahlins. It is important, however, to stress that among Moose a lineage's history is not characterized by successive fissions: the

<sup>55</sup> A few men own a plough. Although it has often been maintained that the growing use of animal traction in Moaga agriculture has contributed to a further extension of cultivated areas (i.e. a more extensive instead of the hoped for more intensive use of the land), I have not been able to establish such a tendency. That the plough would help to enlarge fields was denied by all informants.

<sup>56</sup> Compare with Marchal (1983:355): 'La "faim de la terre", que l'on aurait pu croire essentiellement liée à l'augmentation des besoins réclamée par une population croissante, a donc été doublée d'une transformation de la pratique foncière, tendant à supprimer les espaces "neutres". La saturation du terroir [...] serait donc sous-tendue [...] par une inflation foncière, elle-même suscitée par l'angoisse des populations de ne pas disposer de terre en suffisance, à court ou moyen terme'.



three cases on Yiitaoore all show moments of fusion as well. Fission of compounds in space do not necessarily imply social fission and sometimes a fission at one place (e.g. Yiitaoore) results in the combining of forces of the wider kin group against 'outsiders' (another lineage, another village) at another place (e.g. Naba Bagre). In many cases, the fission of a compound resulted in an extension of the territories to which those who left as well as those who stayed behind have access (cf. also Kopytoff 1987:19,24 on the persistence of African social relations preventing definitive splits). Correlated to this is therefore the observation that processes of geographic mobility are not solely centrifugal. While the 'global' result of Moose movements is a centrifugal expansion, the 'localized' strategies of actors are characterized by centrifugal as well as centripetal movements.

In this chapter I analyzed actors' land use paths by focusing on their rights to land and the way in which these rights can be consolidated and extended. It emerges that land use *per se* implies geographic mobility and that as such it is problematic to try and separate one from the other for analytical purposes: the reproduction of the land use pattern necessitates geographic mobility of people. As should have become clear by now, the effectuation of these paths highly depends on the actors' capacities to mobilize labour, since labour was and still is the most important production factor next to land and since the number of one's dependants is of primary importance for making valid claims to farm land (cf. also Bohannan & Bohannan 1968:97). Labour constitutes the subject matter of the next chapter. While in the present chapter I implicitly focused on what Moose call *puugsobdamba*, i.e. those men who are entitled to their own farms, the next chapter allows me to show how rights to land within a farm are distributed.

## CHAPTER 5

# MARRIAGE AND RELATED PROCESSES OF GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY AND RIGHTS TO LAND

### Introduction

Chapter 4 further demonstrated how land use practice and processes of geographic mobility are inextricably bound up with one another. It showed, in particular, how geographic mobility is related to securing and extending rights to land, on the one hand of the wider patrilineal kin group as a whole and, on the other hand, of male farm heads within the territories controlled by their lineage segments (*yiya*). In the course of the process, fission and fusion of compounds of patrilineally related people occurred time and again. Actors' movements could either be limited to the village territory or widely cross its borders. The relevance of the patrilineal kin group, *yiiri*, as constituting a social space in which processes of geographic mobility are enacted, was emphasized. However, the social space in which people move extends beyond the boundaries of this patrilineally defined space in several ways. This appeared already in chapter 4, for instance, when it was said in the account on the Rumtenga Yiyoose (case 2) that Yuma's father settled in Ziinoogo with, and was allocated farm land by, his mother's brothers, the *Yiitaoore tengbiise*. Use of land of and/or movement to mother's brother appeared to be common practice. Two questions then immediately arise: firstly, how is the movement to the mother's brother motivated, and, secondly, what is the nature of entitlement to land with the mother's brother? The answer to the first question is twofold<sup>1</sup>: a) children move at a young age to a mother's brother when they are fostered by the latter, and b) compound heads may decide to move with their dependants to a mother's brother after having experienced some kind of misfortune. Each of these points is treated separately.

While, as it will also be stressed below, it would be wrong to reduce fosterage<sup>2</sup> solely to a redistribution of labour, the latter nevertheless constitutes an important aspect. The issue of labour availability and mobilization has not been touched upon in the previous chapters, except for one concluding remark in chapter 4 which said that, in order to secure or extend rights to land, actors tend to bring into use or to keep in use as much land as possible - 'according to one's means' - and that therefore the mobilization of sufficient labour is crucial. Nothing has been said on how labour actually is mobilized. The issue of fosterage permits another entry to the analysis of land use practice: whereas until now the question has been 'how can rights to land be gained and secured?', I turn now explicitly to the question 'how is

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<sup>1</sup> That is, if the analysis is restricted to movements within a smaller region. In the following chapters it will be shown that other motivations for movement to mother's brother come into play when the scope is widened to include movements to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso.

<sup>2</sup> Pageard (1969:375-376) maintains that the Moose do not know 'adoption' in the strict juridical sense, because 'adopted' children would not obtain succession or religious rights with the 'adoptive' lineage. 'Adopted' children would always remain members of their biological father's lineage and not be able to become members of the 'adoptive' lineage. While Pageard speaks of 'pseudo-adoption', the term 'fosterage' (cf. also Goody 1976:82) seems more appropriate.

labour mobilized and distributed?'. Before discussing fosterage in this respect, some words are dedicated to the internal distribution of fields and labour within the farm unit in general. Indeed, in chapter 4 I focused exclusively on the land use paths followed by male farm heads (i.e. male *puugsobdamba*) and on their rights to a place (*ziiga*) and to farm land. Most farm units are however internally differentiated, consisting of several fields with different statuses, in particular with respect to the labour which is allocated to each of them and thus to each of the members of the farm unit. The issue of fosterage can then be approached by discussing which members of a farm unit are in a position, have the authority, and are likely to foster a child to add to their work group. Three types of fosterage will be discussed: a) fosterage by a close male agnate or his wife, b) fosterage by a father's sister, and c) fosterage by a mother's brother.

Before taking up the second motivation for movement to mother's brother (misfortune), a short discussion on the use of land by non-resident sister's sons with mother's brothers is inserted - that is, on the use of land with mother's brothers without geographic mobility of the actors *directly* involved occurring. I do this not only because it permits a better and more complete understanding of the nature of sister's son's entitlement to land with mother's brother - cf. the second question mentioned above - but also because it allows me to bring to the fore how *antecedent* geographic mobility of women, at their marriage in a virilocal society, has implications for the *consequent* potential rights to land of her in-laws - rights that can be realized without movement having to take place. However, clues to the answer to this second question will be found in the accounts on fosterage and on movement after having experienced misfortune as well. I conclude on this issue by using the concept of 'submerged claims' introduced by Goody (1959).

The chapter ends with an introduction to friendship relations among Moose. For one thing, these relations complete the picture of allocation of land, for if land is not allocated to a kinsman it appears to be most often that a friend is the beneficiary. Inserting an introduction on friendship at this point of the argument is also necessary because of its relevance to the migration processes analyzed in the next chapters.

### **The development cycle of domestic groups: members' rights to land and access to labour**

It was demonstrated in chapters 3 and 4 that with respect to rights to land on the village territory a 'hierarchy of choice' exists among farm heads (*puugsobdamba*), based on a double seniority principle, i.e. based, on the one hand, on the times of arrival of the farm heads' patrilineal kin groups, and, on the other hand, on their seniority rank within that group. Each farm unit, however, is itself again hierarchized in terms of members' rights and duties with respect to land, labour and harvests. These rights and duties are related to gender and age while at the same time following the development cycle of the farm unit.<sup>3</sup> In this respect, there is an essential distinction to be made between, on the one hand, the *puugkasense* for which the *puugsoba* is responsible, and, on the other hand, the *beolse*, to which other members of the farm have a right. While the terms *puugkasenga* and *beolga* are referring generally to fields in the 'brousse', the distinction between the two types of fields also holds for the fields near the

<sup>3</sup> Such a hierarchy of rights and duties internal to a domestic group (e.g. a farm unit) is a common feature of African land tenure systems (cf. Lambert & Sindzingre 1995:105, Shipton & Goheen 1992:310).

compound (*karaase*), because a *karaaga* too is the responsibility of the *puugsoba*, while the so called *karabeolse* refer to fields near the compound which are farmed by other members of the farm on an individual basis.

The *puugsoba* has a right to part of the labour of all the members of his farm unit, who, during the growing season, work for the greater part of the day on the *puugkasenga*. The sorghum [and/or millet] harvested from this field is destined primarily for consumption by the members of the farm and for social obligations (e.g. gifts at funerals and marriage ceremonies). It is generally maintained that part of this sorghum harvest is sold only in case of abundant harvests. Still, it happens that sorghum from the main field is sold even when the harvests were not so good, for instance if something unexpected happens.<sup>4</sup> Whatever may be the case, the harvest of the *puugkasenga* is stored in separate granaries managed by the *puugsoba*. The composition of the group of people constituting the 'permanent labour force' of a farm of course varies greatly from one farm to another. The group may consist of only one man or woman or may be very large consisting of a man, his wives, his younger brothers and their wives, his own and his brothers' married sons and wives, his and his brothers' non-married children and grandchildren and other kinfolk, where it should be noted that children from the age of about seven start helping in the fields.

Next to the *puugkasenga*, a farm is generally composed of several *beolse*, that is several members of a farm have a right to land for cultivation for themselves too. The place (*ziiga*) allocated to a *puugsoba* (cf. chapter 4) is indeed subdivided into several fields, the largest being the *puugkasenga*, the others being *beolse*. Boys and girls start working on their individual *beolse* from the age of about twelve years onwards. Girls continue to do so until they are married into another compound at the age of seventeen or nineteen. After their marriage, young men generally do not establish their own farm: they go on working with their *puugsoba*, i.e. most often their father or an elder brother, on the *puugkasenga*, besides exploiting a *beolga*.<sup>5</sup> While a non-married man has only his own labour, a married man can mobilize his wife's labour for his *beolga* and, later on, his children's. If it is said above that a farm is internally hierarchized this then refers not so much to the tenancy status of the land on which the different fields are established<sup>6</sup>, but first of all to the labour quantity and time which can be mobilized. Whereas all members of a farm work most of the day on the *puugkasenga*, the *beolse* are only worked by smaller work groups early in the morning and/or late in the afternoon or when the work on the *puugkasenga* is finished.

A woman marrying into a compound also has a right to farm land, to a *beolga*. Although always remaining a 'stranger' (*saana*) in the compound of her husband, this right to land, acquired through her husband, is inalienable. The moment at which in-married women realize this right, as well as the conditions, may vary from one farm to another according to

<sup>4</sup> Yuma, Rumtenga Yiyooga: 'It happens that I sell some sorghum, but only in case of an in-law affair or funerals which are announced late and at a moment that I have no money at hand'. It is very difficult to obtain an idea of the amount of produce which is sold if one does not observe the actual transactions. Generally, during interviews, it was maintained that no part of the harvest is sold, whatever the product in question, except for sesame and groundnuts and except for exceptional occasions. Nevertheless, trade at local markets is lively and, as will appear later on (chapter 8), neighbouring Fulbe also buy sorghum in Ziinoogo and other Moose villages or at local markets at the end of each rainy season. This 'not selling of farm produce' then also is often a matter of discourse: 'Is a Moaga going to sell his food?', a woman asked me rhetorically.

<sup>5</sup> Something more will be said in chapter 7 about circumstances in which a man establishes his own farm.

<sup>6</sup> When a *puugsoba* is allowed to establish his farm at a certain place, he receives the space not only for the *puugkasenga* but also for the *beolse* of the members of his farm.

the specific circumstances of each farm, which are, again, related to, in particular, labour availability. With respect to the existence of such a right it is useful to refer to the work of Moore (1986:67-68), who argues for the Marakwet in Kenya that, while there exists a dominant ideology of complete male control, this control is in practice not absolute but constrained by the fact that women have certain rights too, notably to land; it is the marriage 'contract' which requires a man to supply his wife with land. For the Moose, Luning (1989a:21) notes that a man is always supposed to put land, and even good land, at the disposal of his wife for her to establish her *beolga*.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the status of the land to which in-married women are entitled generally changes as their status in the compound changes in the course of time. Again, this shift of status is not so much a shift of tenancy status. It is expressed in the first place by a shift in the distribution of labour over the farm's fields. The first rainy season after a woman's arrival in her husband's compound, a field is sown to welcome her. This field is called '*sunkaamroogo*', i.e. 'house of groundnuts'. The work on this field is done not only by the members of the woman's new compound but also by others from the village and even neighbouring villages who are invited to come and work in labour parties (*si-soose*). Next to groundnuts other crops are sown on this field as well, notably okra and roselle, that is all crops relatively well suited to be sold. The woman is indeed allowed to sell the harvest on her account and to use the profit as she pleases, although it is said that part of it generally is used to 'pay for the construction of her house'.<sup>7</sup> Such a *sunkaamroogo* is understood to constitute a woman's first wealth with her husband and it was argued that providing a newly arrived woman with such a field is compulsory: 'If the rains are good during the first year of a woman's marriage, she will be able to make a fine start in her new compound'. The land on which the *sunkaamroogo* is sown is provided for by the woman's husband or his *puugsoba*, who reserves part of his place (*ziiga*) for it or extends his place in order to be able to do so.

Generally a woman is allowed to sow her own *beolga* after having given birth to a first child, which is often also the second rainy season of her stay in her husband's compound. However, if the woman happens to be married to a man who himself is not a *puugsoba* and thus has his own *beolga* to take care of in addition to his work on the *puugkasenga*, she too has to work firstly on the *puugkasenga* and then her husband's *beolga* before being allowed to spend time on her own *beolga*. In terms of allocated time and labour such a field clearly has a low status. In the course of her stay in her husband's compound, the status of a woman's field is likely to change. Firstly, when her husband at a certain moment becomes himself *puugsoba*, she will have to work on only one other field, the *puugkasenga*, before being allowed to turn to her own *beolga*. Moreover, she will be entitled to some of the labour of her children and, after her sons are married, to assistance from her sons' wives. Thus, in the course of time, she will be able to spend more time and to mobilize more labour for her own *beolga*. There is even more: a woman may come to have her own farm and thus be *puugsoba* too, discharged from all labour obligations on the *puugkasenga*. It is said that an elder woman may ask her *puugsoba* to be thus discharged from the moment she has married sons: the sons as well as their wives may then help her now and then with the work on her field (no longer a *beolga*, but a *puugo*).

The crops sown do not vary much from one field type to another. Generally, the main crop on *puugkasense*, *beolse* as well as elder women's *puuto*, is millet or sorghum,

<sup>7</sup> When a newly married woman arrives in a compound she does not immediately receive her own house; she starts living with one of the older women already there, generally her mother-in-law (cf. also Lallemand 1977:226-227).

intercropped with sesame, roselle and cowpea. All those entitled at least to a *beolga* generally also cultivate small patches of groundnuts, Bambara groundnuts and calabashes (groundnuts and Bambara groundnuts are relatively more important to those having a *beolga*, especially to the women, than to the *puugsobdamba*; very often these crops are sown at some distance from the other fields as they thrive better on sandy soils). The sorghum and millet harvests of the *beolse* are stored in granaries separately from the *puugkasenga* granary. Often, the sorghum and millet of the *beolse* of a woman and her sons are kept in the same granary. Although it is maintained for some of the compounds that the granaries of *puugkasenga* and *beolse* alternate in providing for the preparation of meals (for example, the *beolse* provide for the morning meals and the *puugkasenga* for the evening meals, the latter constituting the main dish), it is generally said that the *beolse* granaries are drawn on only when the *puugkasenga* granary becomes exhausted.<sup>8</sup> If then the harvest of the *puugkasenga* is sufficient, the *beondba* (sing. *beonda*, person farming a *beolga*) are free to do with their harvests as they please, which for young men most often comes to selling and for women to the preparation of 'dolo' (*raam*, sorghum beer) and then selling.

It is my contention that this stressing of the primacy of the *puugkasenga* in providing for subsistence serves mainly to confirm the normative obligation of the *puugsoba*, who is supposed to be able to feed those who depend on him. Although I did not study consumption in depth, I found indications that practice is different. For instance, it was said: 'As long as the *puugkasenga* granaries are not exhausted we do not touch the sorghum from the *beolse*. Still, the women say that they do not cultivate sorghum to leave it uneaten and so they regularly take sorghum from the *beolse* granaries to prepare, even when the *puugkasenga* granaries are not yet exhausted. The women and the *rakoopa* can use and sell what remains in the *beolse* granaries as they please'.<sup>9</sup> It also appeared that 'an exhausted granary' may be a relative notion: 'During one month, one calabash of sorghum per woman is taken from the *puugkasenga* granary for preparation. After one month, I say that the sorghum [from the *puugkasenga* granary] is finished [*ki saame*], whereafter during five days the women take in turn sorghum from their *beolse* granaries. Then, sorghum is again taken from the *puugkasenga* granary and afterwards it is the turn of the granaries of the *rakoopa*'.<sup>10</sup>

Women having their own farm dispose freely of the harvests from their *puuto*. The degree to which they are supposed to provide for their own subsistence varies however. In most cases I encountered, the women do prepare their meals from their own granaries but are regularly allowed to take sorghum from the *puugkasenga* granary. While Luning (1989a:15) stresses the fact that farming one's own *puugo* contributes to a woman's economic independence and social prestige, Lallemand (1977:56-58) points out that it may also be that such a woman has been cast out by other members of her compound and that her situation is particularly vulnerable.<sup>11</sup> In the latter case, the woman works the land on her own, is isolated

<sup>8</sup> Luning (1989a:24) also maintains that, 'except for calamities', the complete harvest (sorghum and other crops) of a *beolga* belongs to the woman who farmed it. Kohler (1971:71), however, warns that 'the modalities of the distribution of consumption goods vary a lot from region to region in Moaga land, just as they do among the compounds of one and the same locality'.

<sup>9</sup> Ousmane, Runtenga Yiyooaga.

<sup>10</sup> Rawaage, Kamsin *tengbiise* lineage elder.

<sup>11</sup> This point of view is also defended by Kohler (1971:65): 'Normalement, les femmes âgées doivent être nourries par leurs maris ou par les héritiers des maris défunts. Cependant, il n'est pas rare que ceux-ci négligent leurs devoirs, en sorte que ces femmes se trouvent dans l'obligation de produire elles-mêmes les biens nécessaires à leur subsistance, surtout quand elles n'ont pas de fils adulte auprès de qui se réfugier. Elles forment alors des unités de production

from her own lineage as well as from the agnates of her often deceased husband. *Luning* seems to refer to successful women. Women, that is, who succeed in mobilizing support from their brothers, their sons and their daughters. With respect to these women's farming enterprises, the most important expression of this support is the labour provided to them.

### Fosterage and redistribution of labour

With respect to the areas occupied by the different fields (*puugkasenga*, *beolse*, *puuto*) of a farm, the same general statements as for the farm's *ziiga* as a whole can be made, that is, the area of each field is supposed to correspond to 'the means' of the person directly responsible for the field.<sup>12</sup> Again, these 'means' refer essentially to the labour that the actor responsible for the field is able to mobilize. While it certainly happens that, within a farm, people help on each other's fields without being obliged to do so (e.g. co-wives helping on each other's *beolse*), stable work groups associated with each field do exist in practice (cf. also Lallemand 1977:49). For example, a married *beonda* works early in the morning on his *beolga* together with his wife and children. The larger part of the day he works together with the *puugsoba* and the other *beondba* on the *puugkasenga* and in the late afternoon his wife and one or two of her children work on her personal *beolga*. Whereas, for the *beolse* of children, young single men and young in-married women, these work groups most often consist of solely the actor responsible for the field, and, whereas, for the *beolse* of married men they generally consist of a man, his wife (or wives) and their own children, a *puugsoba's* work group - the *puugsoba* being either a man or a woman - often comprises members not born or married into the farm unit or the compound in question: these persons may be either agnates or affines who came to live, generally at an early age, in the compound of the *puugsoba*.

In her analysis of a 'Moaga family', Lallemand (1979:189) observes that it is common practice to entrust the education of a weaned daughter or son to a woman other than the child's biological mother. A redistribution of children takes place within the compound from younger to elder women, from women having many children to women having few children, from women with a low status in the compound to women with a high status, this status among other things being related to the authority of a woman's husband in the compound (*ibidem*:191-194). The latter point makes it very difficult for a woman who is not married to a *puugsoba* to have children of a *puugsoba's* wife entrusted to her.<sup>13</sup> Lallemand then also concludes that such a redistribution of children internal to a compound benefits directly an

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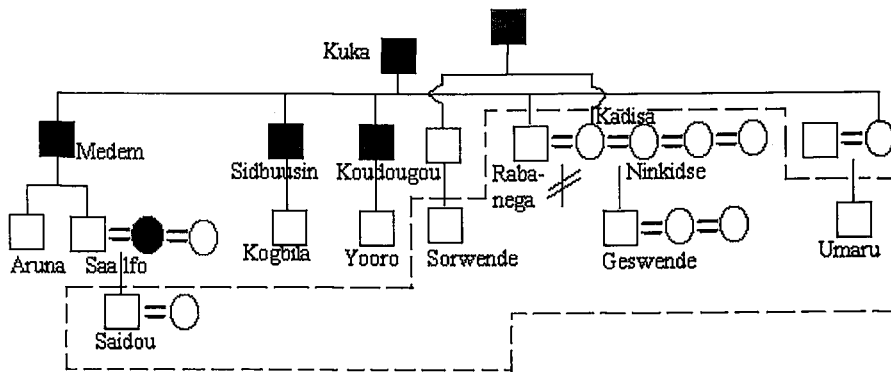
distinctes, particulièrement précaires'. Elderly women who are cast out constitute a widespread image of Moaga society and it was, for example, the subject of Idrissa Ouédraogo's movie *'Yaaba'*.

<sup>12</sup> This 'farming an area according to one's means' at all levels of a farm is one of the reasons why one often finds *beolse* which are at some distance from the main field. It may indeed happen that a woman or a young man thinks she or he can work more land than her or his *puugsoba* is able to provide on his place (*ziiga*), and looks for an additional place to establish a second and even third *beolga*. The woman or the young man may directly address the person who has the authority to allocate the land in question, and she or he may also ask her or his *puugsoba* to act as intermediary. Another reason for the dispersion of *beolse* can be found in the fact that *beondba* too may try to minimize the risk of crop failure by seeking *beolse* on different soil types and/or altitudes.

<sup>13</sup> While Lallemand (1977:194) points to the economic implications of such fosterages internal to a compound, notably with respect to shifts in the distribution of farm labour over the compound's fields, she also suggests other possible motivations, like for example preventing young women who would try to run away from taking their children with them.

'educator', but most of all 'the production group' (i.e. what I call 'farm'), the head of which is 'an eminent member of the compound' (*ibidem*:211).

At the beginning of the presentation of case 1 in the previous chapter, it was mentioned that Saalfo's eldest son, Saidou, lives in the compound of Saalfo's father's brother, Rabanega, in Bagsin (cf. genealogy 5.1). Rabanega: 'Saidou came here when he was only two years old. I have educated him. It is good to have your *yagense* [grandchildren] with you, because later on they will take care of you until you die' [note that, to Saidou, Rabanega indeed is a classificatory grandfather]. On another occasion, Rabanega observed that 'you may be better helped by your *yagense* as your own children may let you down'. Saidou's mother died shortly after his birth. The fact that Rabanega's first wife had only one child [Rabanega married his three other wives after Saidou had been fostered] and that Rabanega himself belongs to a senior generation as compared to Saidou's father Saalfo, may explain why Saidou came to Rabanega's compound [at that time, Saalfo had no other wife]. Saidou learned to farm with Rabanega and helped the latter on his *puugkasenga*. He also received his first *beolga* with Rabanega, but in the course of time things have changed for the better in Rabanega's compound. In the period from 1972 to 1992, Rabanega married three other women, and although, except for his eldest son, his children are too young to assist substantially on the fields, he claims to have enough labour at his disposal nowadays. This labour is provided by two of his wives (the other two having their own *puuto*), by his eldest son and his two wives, by a sister's son and by a wife's brother's son. Saidou, for his part, no longer works together with Rabanega but has been allowed to join, together with his wife, the work group of his father Saalfo at Soudougou [and before at Gabaka] (cf. map 3.3 and case 1, chapter 4). He continues to live in Rabanega's compound and farms *beolse* both at his father's place at Soudougou and at Rabanega's place at Bagsin. Rabanega: 'Kogbila, Aruna and Saalfo are all my children [*kamba*] and I asked Saalfo to leave me his son Saidou. Today, however, I have more people than Saalfo and so I told Saidou to go and help his father on his fields. If I had not given that permission that wouldn't have been possible'.



Genealogy 5.1  
Rabanega's compound

Saidou's case corroborates Lallemand's thesis in that children are transferred to the farm of an authoritative male agnate and that a redistribution of [potential] farm labour is an important aspect of such fosterage. However, Lallemand's contention that these 'transfers of parental rights within the group of paternal kin' do not entail a change of residence (1977:211), is contradicted. While the distance between the compounds of Saidou's father and Rabanega today is limited to some seven kilometers and while Saidou stayed in his father's village, I encountered other cases where the patrilineally related foster parents lived at a considerable



distance from and in other villages than the child's father. For instance, in *tengsoba* Yuunrawa's compound (cf. case 3, chapter 4) children have been fostered from the patrilineally related compound in Loada. On these latter fosterages, one elder commented: 'If an older brother has no sons old enough to help him on the farm, while a younger brother has two sons who can help, then it is only normal that the younger cedes one of his sons to the elder. If things are the other way around, the elder brother also cedes one of his sons to the younger, which is also the way things went for the *tengsoba*'s compound'.<sup>14</sup> Such fostered children come to constitute part of what I called 'stable' work groups associated with the compound's farms. While one of the main 'rationales' behind this type of fosterage is a redistribution of labour, it also has implications for the future distribution of rights to land. I will not dwell upon this 'mode' of gaining right to land since it was treated extensively in the preceding chapter, in particular with regard to Yooro (case 1) who obtained rights to land farmed by the different *puugsobdamba* (Somwaoga, Pasemdba) on whom he has depended. In the same way, Saidou, in the future - i.e. when he has become responsible for his own farm - may claim a right to land farmed by his own father Saalfo and to land used by his foster father Rabanega (i.e., among other places, at respectively Soudougou and Gabaka, and Bagsin). Both are *ba ziinse* ('father's places') for him.<sup>15</sup>

Two other 'types' of fosterage occur frequently: firstly, the fosterage of a child by a father's sister (*pogdba*) and, secondly, by a mother's brother (*yasba*) or mother's mother (*yaaba*). It is to these fosterages that Lallemand ascribes 'considerable geographical displacements' (Lallemand 1977:221).

Three members of Rabanega's compound have their own farm. Firstly, there is of course Rabanega himself who is responsible for the *puugkasenga* on which he works together with his third and fourth wife, his eldest son Geswende and his two wives, and two other children of respectively sixteen and eighteen years old, Umaru being Rabanega's sister's son, Sorwende his second wife's brother's son (a man's sister's child is his *yagenga*, while a child's mother's brother is its *yasba*; a woman's brother's child is her *pogdanga*, while a child's father's sister is its *pogdba*). The members of Rabanega's work group, Rabanega himself of course excepted, each farm one or more *beolse*.<sup>16</sup> Of these *beondba*, Geswende's wives have labour obligations other than on the *puugkasenga* and their own *beolse* as they also work together with their husband on his *beolga*. Rabanega's first wife, Ninkidse, has a separate farm too. The third responsible for a farm is Kadisa, Rabanega's second wife. While Ninkidse can count on the assistance of her two daughters-in-law on her *puugo*, Kadisa works mostly alone. For the moment I concentrate on the fosterage of Sorwende. Below, in a following section, I return in detail to the fosterage of a *yagenga* by his *yasba*. Sorwende is a son of an elder brother of Kadisa. He came to Rabanega's compound at the age of five, according to himself because his father's sister Kadisa had no children of her own, which was why she asked her brother, who lives in the village of Sika, to send him. Rabanega confirmed that 'Kadisa took Sorwende because she has no children of her own. When you have no children you are in need of help and in such circumstances you go and ask for help from a kinsman who does have children. When the child is old enough to return [to its father's compound] you bring the child back. There is no [fixed] age at which you are supposed to return the child and even if you bring such children back they remain yours, because they have to continue to visit you. It is even possible that they do not return at all and stay with you. For example, if I received a woman now, I could give her to either Umaru or Sorwende. I could then return them to their father, but, just as well, they might stay here if necessary'.

<sup>14</sup> Nomba, *Yiitaoore tenghiiga*.

<sup>15</sup> When I discussed with him his future rights to land, Saidou explicitly cited Rabanega as 'his father', whose land he would 'take care of' together with Rabanega's eldest son Geswende.

<sup>16</sup> In 1994, Sorwende, for example, had as much as three *beolse* at three different places at Fotiimde, not very far from each other. He did not make one large *beolga*, because now 'if it does not go well at one place, it might do so at one of the other places'. His explanation for the choice of the sites referred, on the one hand, to the proximity of both Rabanega's *puugkasenga* and *karaaga*, on which Sorwende was supposed to work as well, and, on the other hand, to the differing water-retaining capacities of the soils (*ware*).

In literature on Moose, the *pogdba* is most often referred to in the context of marriage, funeral and baptism ceremonies at her agnates' compound (Bonnet 1988:52, Lallemand 1977:324). Less well documented seem to be the claims that a *pogdba*, or her husband, can make on her brothers' children's labour as well as the possible consequences for a child's future rights to land with the *pogdba*'s husband after the child has stayed for some prolonged period at his compound. The work of Lallemand (1977) constitutes a notable exception. She maintains that the fosterage of a *pogdanga* by its *pogdba*, contrary to the fosterage of a *yagenga* by its *yasba*, is mainly an affair between agnates, that is between a sister and her brother. Again contrary to the fosterage of a *yagenga*, it would be possible for a brother to refuse his sister's request for a child and his consent is said to be completely voluntary.<sup>17</sup> Lallemand suggests that a *pogdba*'s request for a brother's child is most likely to be successful when the *pogdba* has no children of her own and when her brother is in some kind of difficulty himself to educate the child (e.g. wife run away or deceased). In line with the contention that what is at stake here is an arrangement between agnates without involvement of in-laws, Lallemand tends to conclude that the labour the fostered child provides benefits mainly the *pogdba* and not directly her in-laws (*ibidem*:215-217). My own findings are in line with Lallemand's in the sense that the *pogdanse* are fostered by women who do not have children of their own or women who have only married daughters. My data do not permit me to say much about the circumstances in which a brother cedes a child to his sister, except for the latter to be 'childless'. That the *pogdanga*'s fosterage benefits mainly the *pogdba*, and not so much her in-laws, may however be put in perspective. For example, Nomba (cf. case 3, chapter 4) sent a son of his at a very early age to his sister in Yaka because the child's mother had died. In the meantime, however, his sister has died too but the child stayed at the in-laws' compound. Nomba commented: 'There is no specific age at which the child has to come back here. But, when I think that the time has come for him to return, so that he can be with his elder brothers and understand the *buudu*'s history, I will get him back'. The case of Sorwende at Rabanega's compound, presented above, also shows the importance of the *pogdanga*'s presence for the in-laws. Indeed, although, when he was old enough to help on the land, Sorwende started by helping on his *pogdba*'s *beolga*, he also participated in the work on the *puugkasenga* and has been responsible, together with Rabanega's *yagenga* Umaru, for the herding of the compound's sheep and goats for several years.<sup>18</sup> In 1994-95, both boys were old enough to take care of the two head of cattle which were kept at Rabanega's compound, leaving the herding of goats and sheep to the compound's smaller children. What is however striking in Sorwende's case is that, at the time of my fieldwork, he maintained he had no longer any labour obligation on the field of his *pogdba* Kadisa, which permitted him to extend the area for his own benefit<sup>19</sup>: 'This year I have sown more *beolse* than in previous years because I no longer work with my *pogdba*. She is old now and this year she was told to work on her own. That is also why she

<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, Meillassoux's contention that women 'if childless [...] cannot, as men can, adopt a descendant' is contradicted (Meillassoux 1981:77).

<sup>18</sup> I found that in many cases one of the most important, if not the most important task assigned to a *yagenga* or a *pogdanga* was the herding of the compound's animals.

<sup>19</sup> Within the compound, the granary of the *beolga* of a fostered child, be it a man's brother's child, a *pogdanga* or a *yagenga*, is treated in the same way as the granaries of other persons' *beolse*. Still, it may happen that, if the fostered child's own father is short of millet, he or she sends him part of his or her personal harvest.

no longer works on the *puugkasenga*'.<sup>20</sup> Whereas this does not mean that Sorwende does not help Kadisa on her *puugo* occasionally, it clearly tells something about the relative claims the in-laws have on the *pogdanga*'s labour, since Sorwende continued to form part of the *puugkasenga*'s work group. Finally, while reflecting on the future residence of his wife's *pogdanga* (cf. above), Rabanega does not distinguish between Sorwende and his own *yagenga* Umaru, maintaining that both could receive a wife through him and that, afterwards, both might even stay in the village, thereby implicitly acknowledging their possible access to land in Ziinoogo.

### Mother's brother and sister's son

In the previous chapters, in particular chapter 4, it may have been noticed that during their lives a number of the actors involved in the cases presented stayed for certain periods, and were also permitted to establish a farm, with their 'mother's brothers'. As a matter of fact, the Rumtenga Yiyoose (cf. case 2, chapter 4) still obtain land to farm from their 'mother's brothers', i.e. the Yiitaoore *tengbiise*. While not forsaking the issue of labour mobilization and the role of the *yagenga-yasba* relation therein, I also intend to achieve here a better understanding of the origin and the nature of rights to land with mother's brothers, all the more so because a movement to or with mother's brother appeared time and again in all the geographic mobility processes studied during my research.

Such a better understanding can initially be realized by taking, firstly, a closer look at the fosterage of sister's child by mother's brother. This type of fosterage is so widespread in the village that one seldomly encounters a compound which had not either at least one child 'taken' by mother's brother - and thus educated elsewhere - or itself fostered a sister's child (Skinner 1964b:468 made a similar observation). Contrary to the fosterage of a *pogdanga* by its *pogdba*, the fosterage of a *yagenga* by its *yasba* is said to be not an affair between siblings, but in the first place between in-laws (*reemdamba*). A brother is said to hold a strong claim on his sister's children for it was his agnates who 'put his sister on the world' and who 'gave' her to her husband. According to Lallemand (1977:212), a man cannot refuse a request for his child by his wife's brother, except when he himself has only one child. A refusal would be shameful, ceding one of his children would be part of the services expected of a man who has received a woman.<sup>21</sup> Lallemand then interprets fosterage by mother's brother explicitly in terms of redistribution of labour: mother's brother's group has lost labour by giving a woman and gets temporarily the labour of a child of the out-married woman in return.<sup>22</sup> For both the

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<sup>20</sup> Thus, Kadisa seems to be an example of a woman who has been forced to establish her own farm and whose situation is rather precarious as she cannot count on any 'structural' help from other compound members on her farm. It is significant in this respect that Sorwende maintains that Kadisa 'was told' to farm on her own, while in some other cases of women, who farmed independently and who could count on structural help from kinsmen, it was maintained that it had been the women themselves who had asked to be exempted from labour obligations on the compound's main field.

<sup>21</sup> The initiative for fosterage does not always come from mother's brother or father's sister. For example, I encountered a few cases where a child was sent to its mother's brother or father's sister and where it was explicitly stated that with its foster parents the child would have the possibility of attending school.

<sup>22</sup> Meillassoux (1981:58-59) interprets 'adoption' in terms of an 'adjustment of social product', which takes place not through a redistribution of produce but through a redistribution of children because 'the number of children born in each household is bound to vary more often and more rapidly than does production [...]'. He goes on to say that

fosterage of a *yagenga* and a *pogdanga*, Lallemand furthermore stresses its temporary nature: a girl is bound to leave her foster parents at her marriage, which would be arranged by her father, and a boy too would return after some ten to fifteen years to his father's compound, as, according to Lallemand, the responsible person of that compound is the only one 'able to permit him to use in a permanent way the land which he will need for the subsistence of his elementary family' (*ibidem*:220). For his part, Pageard (1969:63) points to the fact that 'in certain circumstances (abundance of labour in the paternal lineage, unfavourable ranking in descent, manifest benevolence of mother's brother) one goes to live with the *yasba* with the consent of the father', and that in the end 'one founds a new *buudu* in his village'. According to Pageard (*ibidem*), mother's brother then 'intervenes' in order to have land allocated to his sister's son and takes charge of finding him a woman to marry.<sup>23</sup>

While Pageard does not make clear what exactly mother's brother's 'intervention' consists of, nor with whom he intervenes, his observations are more in line with my findings: land for family subsistence is not necessarily available solely with one's patrilineage, and the implications of fosterage go further than only a redistribution of labour. For one thing, it has been said elsewhere that 'access to land through membership and *labour* has been familiar across Africa since earliest recorded history' (Shipton & Goheen 1992:312). Moreover, that the fact of having provided labour at a farm, other than father's farm, indeed may add to an actor's claims to the land occupied by that farm has already been shown in the case of boys fostered by father's agnates or their wives (cf. above and chapter 4). Finally, Rabanega's contention (cf. above) on a possible stay in Ziinoogo of his male *yagenga* (and also his wife's *pogdanga*) also suggests that a boy's fosterage does not necessarily end by his return to his father's compound (a girl, of course, is supposed to marry and to go and live in her husband's compound<sup>24</sup>). We now return again to the case of the Rumtenga Yiyoose (cf. case 2, chapter 4).

The larger part of the dry season of both 1994 and 1995, Ali, a rather loud man of about 35 years old, stayed at Yuma's compound. In each case he came from the Ivory Coast where he and his elder brother own a cocoa and coffee plantation since 1985. Ali is Yuma's *yagenga*, i.e. his younger sister's son, and spent most of his youth at Yuma's compound in Ziinoogo. Yuma: 'Ali's mother, Puywende, is my younger sister and when Ali was born my mother demanded Ali to be educated by her, because her daughter's son is also hers. Thus it has been so that Ali has been educated here for some twenty years and that he has also farmed here. This is his *zaka*. About fourteen years ago he

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'[This] strategy of redistributing people according to the needs of production is revealed in various institutions - for example adoption of nephews and nieces. [...] These institutions, by manipulating kinship relations, encourage permanent reconstitution of the relations of production'. Cf. also Wilk & Netting (1984:15): 'Widespread adoption or fosterage can even out the access to children among differentially reproducing families'.

<sup>23</sup> Pageard (1969:65), while citing Izard, maintains that a foster father, whether he is mother's brother, father's brother or some other, *has* to provide a wife for his foster son 'like for his real sons'.

<sup>24</sup> There exists, however, one kind of fosterage in which a girl may marry in the compound where she has been fostered. When the relations between the *yiiri* of a married woman and the *yiiri* of her husband are particularly good and when it is recognized that the woman herself contributes in an important way to this success, it may be decided by the woman's agnates to give her a young girl, which she then can give for marriage either to her husband or to one of his agnates. It happens that this girl, often the woman's *pogdanga*, is fostered while yet at an early age by the woman (cf. also Luning 1989a:7-8). In such a case, there is a great probability that, at her marriage, she does not have to leave the compound where she was fostered. Such a girl is called a *yiirpaga*. The institution of *yiirpaga* can bring a man and his wife into a rather peculiar situation. Binta (cf. case 3, chapter 4), for instance, is her father's sister *yiirpaga*. Her father's sister was married to an elder agnate of Binta's present husband Bagre. When she became a widow, she was married to Bagre. Now, the husband of father's sister is one's joking partner (*rakiia*, cf. below). As her father's sister has been married to her own husband, Binta considers her husband as her *rakiia*, which gives the relation between Binta and Bagre a particular flavour.

left the compound for the Ivory Coast. It may be so that thus he did not stay here, but, if a *yagenga* asks to stay and live with his *yasba*, his mother cannot refuse'. One day, shortly after Ali's return from the Ivory Coast, Kogbila, Yuma's *tengbiiga* neighbour, spotted Ali when he entered Yuma's compound and said playfully: 'This is not your *yiiri*', to which Ali replied: 'If this is not my *yiiri* where then could it possibly be?'

I will return to the case of Ali and his *yasbdamba* in Ziinoogo when I discuss migration towards the Ivory Coast in chapter 6. This short passage however permits me to make some preliminary remarks on the relationship between *yasba* and *yagenga*. Firstly, there is the loud behaviour Ali displays at Yuma's compound - rather disturbing if you are used to the seemingly much more reserved relations between the other members of the compound. An explanation lies at hand, as Ali's mother's brothers' wives are his *rakiia*, i.e. his joking partners<sup>25</sup>. The freedom of speech between Ali and these women, and also the physical contact which is part of their teasing, is striking. Hammond (1964:261) labels also the relationship between a man and his mother's brother as a joking relationship. This is certainly not unequivocally confirmed by my observations. It indeed was said that 'a *yagenga* may snatch chickens at his *yasba*'s compound' and that 'a *yasba* is allowed to say what he likes to his *yagenga* and even to mock him', while conversely, 'a *yagenga* is allowed to tell his *yasba* the truth', but on the other hand 'there is no *rakiia* between a *yagenga* and a *yasba*; certainly a *yagenga* may joke with his *yasba*'s wives, but not with his *yasbdamba* themselves for they are his mothers and you should not joke with your mothers; they are the ones who put you on the world'. Thus, I am more inclined to follow Goody (1959:70) who maintains for the Lowiili and LoDagaba (northern Ghana) that 'the relationship with mother's full brothers is characterized by a certain degree of respect' and that 'it is certainly not a joking relationship in any ordinary sense of the term', neither is the relationship between a man and other close agnates of his mother's brother. The argument that a sister's son 'is put on the world' by his mother's brothers is not only advanced in order to explain why a mother's brother may expect to see his demand for the fosterage of a sister's son acknowledged, it also serves to account for several other prestations performed by sister's son for mother's brothers. Thus I saw how young men occasionally went to work on the fields of their mother's brother or, more frequently, on the field of their mother's mother. And, a matter to which I come back in the following chapters, a sister's son is supposed not to forget his mother's brothers whenever he has some means (e.g. migration remittances): 'If a *yagenga* has means and his *yasba* not and if then the *yagenga* does not help his *yasba*, others will condemn him. Having means yourself and leaving your *yasba* without is a bad thing since it were your *yasbdamba* who put you on the world'. Still, it is important not to understand the relationship between sister's son and mother's brother as a static one. As Goody (1959:64) notes, the relationship is bound to change 'as a result of the movement of actors through the life cycle'. In Ziinoogo, when sister's son is still young, his relationship with the compound of mother's brothers is mostly characterized by obligations and duties, in particular also material obligations (providing labour, bringing gifts). When sister's son however grows older and establishes his own compound, these kind of obligations tend to diminish and the relationship may change to such an extent that sister's son becomes a very respected figure in his mother's brothers' compound. He will be called upon to mediate and arbitrate in conflicts between women or agnates in mother's brothers' compound, he is supposed to watch over the good conduct of the

<sup>25</sup> Hammond (1964:259) cites Radcliffe-Brown's description of joking as being a 'relationship between two persons in which one is by custom permitted, and in some instances required, to tease or to make fun of the other, who in turn is required not to take offense'.

compound's daughters, and he may perform important ritual tasks for his mother's brothers' patrilineage (cf. also Lallemand 1977:332-338, Pageard 1969:312, Skinner 1964b:469).

A second point that needs some clarification is that Yuma declares that it was not Ali's mother's brother (i.e. Yuma himself) but his mother's mother who demanded that Ali be fostered. For one thing, Yuma was not in a position to ask his sister's husband for a child as he was not even married yet. But it seems that the demand for fosterage may issue just as well from mother's mother as from mother's brother. Accordingly, a fostered sister's child may join the work group of either mother's brother or mother's mother or both.<sup>26</sup> According to Lallemand (1977:213), mother's mother indeed has an individual right to her daughter's child, next to the in-laws' right (i.e. brother's right to his sister's child), derived from her status of mother and grandmother (*yaaba*). This means that mother's mother may ask for her grandchild to come and live with her, but there would be no guarantee whatsoever that she also receives custody (sister has been 'given' by her father, not by her mother). Only her in-laws' support for her demand would be able to break possible resistance on the side of sister's husband to cede his child, as the latter, still according to Lallemand, cannot refuse mother's brother's request for sister's child. Although I have not been able to clarify this point from my own data, it should be stressed that the fosterage of daughter's child can be of utmost importance for elder women who either asked or were told to establish their own farm, for it constitutes one of the few possibilities to add to their own labour force.

Finally, the above passage again raises the question of possible rights to land of sister's son with mother's brother, because of the reference that is made to belonging to the same *zaka* and also *yiiri* (cf. chapter 4). The following account further clarifies the above points.

In 1994, the first year of my stay in the village, Rimpanga, a boy about sixteen years old, lived in Yuma's compound. He is Ousmane's younger sister's son and came from his father's compound in Tifu to the compound in Ziinoogo ten years before. Ousmane: 'I asked my sister whether Rimpanga could come and live with me and she agreed'. Just like Ousmane's own children, Rimpanga was allowed to work a *beolga* from the age of about twelve, while he assisted Ousmane on his *puugkasenga*. Often he was able to sell his *beolga*'s harvest and from the money thus earned he sent some to his father in Tifu 'because where his parents are, the harvests are not abundant'. One other task assigned to him was to take care of Ousmane's animals, first the goats and sheep and later, when he was older and when there were other children to care for the goats and sheep, the few head of cattle Ousmane kept at his compound. During the year 1994, I asked Ousmane more than once about Rimpanga's future. Was it possible for him to decide not to return to his father in Tifu and to settle in Ziinoogo? 'That is up to him', answered Ousmane, 'He can decide to return to Tifu just as he might prefer to stay here. If he does stay here, he will at first continue to work with me [on my *puugkasenga*] and keep a *beolga*. Also when he marries, he will continue to work in this way. If, at a certain time, he wants to have his own farm and if he then wants to have his field on land outside my *ziiga*, then he should ask permission from the *tengsoba* and a place will be allocated to him. As to his marriage, if he remains here, it may be that I find a woman for him, just as he may receive a woman through his father'.

One year later, however, Rimpanga had left Ousmane and lived again with his father in Tifu. After the harvests, he had gone to his father's compound to attend funerals and never came back. Shortly after his departure, Yuma told me that Rimpanga certainly would come back. Only a few weeks earlier Rimpanga and one of Yuma's own sons had been circumcised together. A little later, Lucien, Ousmane's eldest son, said that he had heard that Rimpanga had tried to escape to Kaya [and from there to the Ivory Coast] on a truck: 'That is also why my father will not let me go to the Ivory Coast this year', he explained, 'If Rimpanga tried again to escape, my father would have to

<sup>26</sup> That, in many cases, the fostered *yagenga* joined mother's mother's 'work group' is further endorsed by the fact that regularly a child returns to father's compound when her or his *yaaba* dies. Cf. for example the introduction to case 1, where it was mentioned that in 1994 Pasemdba's widow lived on Kogbila's compound, as well as her daughter's son. During the rainy season of 1994, she had her own farm on which she was assisted by her grandson, who did not participate in the work of any of the compound's four *puugkasense*. Immediately after the widow's death in 1995, her grandson returned to his father's compound. Also, in 1995, Yooro's daughter (about eight years old) returned to her father's compound after the death of her mother's mother, by whom she had been fostered. It may be added that the same may happen with a *pogdanga* fostered by his or her *pogdba*: the child returns to its father when its *pogdba* dies.

face the work here on his own'. Only some two months later, just before the rainy season, I was told that Rimpanga would not return. Lucien said that now it was certain that he would not leave for the Ivory Coast: 'The problem is not so much the work on the land, but the cattle'. According to Ousmane, Rimpanga had not come back because his elder brother had left for the Ivory Coast, which would have left his father alone with the work on the farm in Tifu if Rimpanga had not returned home. Lucien, however: 'I saw Rimpanga at least four times at the market of Samtaaba, but not once has he come to greet me. It is as if he is afraid that by greeting me he will be forced to come back to Ziinoogo'.

For one thing, this case shows that it is difficult to predict how long a fosterage will last. What is more, it may well be that Rimpanga's return to Tifu was not decided upon by either his father or his uncle, but that he took the decision by himself. Lallemand (1977) too maintains that, while a child's fosterage is initially arranged between adults who do not seek the child's consent, a refusal of the child later on generally is taken into consideration. And, although Rimpanga obviously does not intend to settle in Ziinoogo, such an option clearly existed and was expressed by Ousmane in a way which equally suggests the sister's son's liberty of choice in this respect. The same attitude to a fostered sister's son's possibility of remaining with mother's brothers was apparent in a case in which sister's son effectively stayed. Today, a sister's son, Ouseni, is living in the compound of the Yiitaoore *tengbiise* in Loada (cf. case 3, chapter 4). He is married and already a senior man of whom Nomba told me: 'Ouseni was born in Beguemdré. He is a son of our elder sister. We took him and gave him to one of our mothers when he was still very young. He stayed with us until his circumcision and afterwards he chose not to leave anymore. Today, he is even the eldest in the compound at Loada. But that is because we [Nomba, Yuunrawa, Pogsada] are not there, otherwise one of us would be the eldest'.

### Land loans to sister's sons in neighbouring villages

A fostered sister's son thus has the option to remain in mother's brother's village and to establish a farm there. His right to land seems undisputed. While I was able to trace only a limited number of cases where sister's sons effectively settled with their mother's brothers after a fosterage, the use of land by sister's sons with mother's brothers is a widespread practice and this regardless of any prior fosterage of the former by the latter. First, a closer look is taken at land loans to non-resident sister's sons by their mother's brothers. In the next section, the settlement with and allocation of land by mother's brothers is treated in cases where fosterage has not occurred.

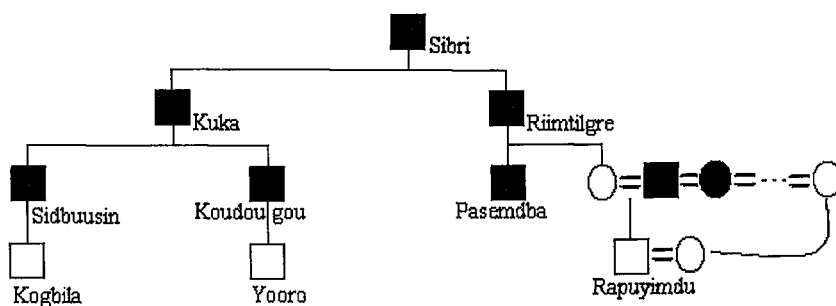
In chapter 3 it was mentioned that the strangers who ask for land and to whom it is allocated are not complete strangers: in many cases they are sister's sons of those responsible for the allocation of the land in question.

Non-residents using land on the village territory most often are living in villages bordering Ziinoogo.<sup>27</sup> To the eastern side, the most important village in this respect is Tamsin. When I arrived in Tamsin at the compound of Rapuyimdu (cf. genealogy 5.2), a man who farms land on the Ziinoogo village territory, one of the first things he said was: 'I am a

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<sup>27</sup> It also happens that people living further away come and farm on the Ziinoogo village territory. For example, in both the rainy seasons of 1994 and 1995, Souleymane, a brother of the Piugtenga *naaba* and living normally in the village of Delga, sowed a field in Ziinoogo on land allocated to him by the Yiitaoore *tengbiise*. I was not able to establish the exact kin relation between Souleymane and the *tengbiise*; it was simply said that there was *rogem* between them. When he was in the village to take care of his field, Souleymane stayed in the compound of the *nayiirdamba* of Balongo, who are his mother's brothers.

Ziinoogo *yagenga*'. He was born in Tamsin and worked during his youth together with his father and brothers. They had their *puugkasenga* as well as their *beolse* all on their own lineage land [*yaab ziiga*] which is situated on the Tamsin village territory: 'Only when I started to farm together with my brothers, there wasn't enough space any longer on our own *yaab ziiga* and I went to ask for land elsewhere. When my father fell ill, I took care of him and after he had recovered I left for the Ivory Coast [in about 1981]. When I returned two years later, he had died. I married his youngest wife and started working the land together with my eldest brother. It was then that I saw that things were not the same any more. There was not much room on our *yaab ziiga* and it was also the year that the Tamsin *naaba* had returned from Kaya and taken a part of the lowland on our *yaab ziiga*.<sup>28</sup> I decided to ask for land in Ziinoogo and to establish my own farm. That is eleven years ago now and since then I have farmed each year a field in Ziinoogo, next to another field on our own *yaab ziiga*'. I asked him why he asked for land in Ziinoogo and not with someone of his own village or another neighbouring village. To this he answered: 'You can go and ask for land where you know you will not receive, just as you can go and ask where you know you will receive, and that is with people with whom there



### Genealogy 5.2

#### *Rapuyimdu and the Yiitaoore tengbiise*

is *rogem*. My fields in Ziinoogo are on my mother's *yaab ziiga*. The first year I wanted to clear a field in Ziinoogo, I first went looking in the "brousse" to choose a place and then went to see Pasemdba, my *yasba*, who at that time lived in Naba Bagre [cf. case 1, chapter 4]. He told me to go and talk with Kogbila [in Yiitaoore] to find out whether I could have the place I wanted. Thus, Kogbila went with me and I showed him the place I wanted. He then told me I could farm the place. At first, I had my field to the east, near Nongo. As the soil became exhausted and each time dried out, I asked for another place, near the water passage at Soudougou, next to Yoro's field' (Rapuyimdu's father had five wives. It was his own mother who was a sister of the Yiitaoore *tengbiiga* Pasemdba. Thus, Rapuyimdu asked for land with his mother's full brother). I tried to find out how sure Rapuyimdu could be of his access to land in Ziinoogo. Fairly sure, as it appeared from other actors' comments. According to the Tamsin *naaba*, there was no reason at all for Rapuyimdu to be afraid that one day land in Ziinoogo would be refused to him, because: 'His mother comes from Ziinoogo and he asked land from his mothers. He cannot take a wife from them, neither receive one. It is only the land he wants to farm. If he stole a woman from those who gave him land, then easily they could refuse him the land, but that is impossible for a *yagenga* to do'.

In his explanation of Rapuyimdu's security of access to land with his mother's brothers, the Tamsin *naaba* clearly refers to the fact that this security is somehow related to the sister's

<sup>28</sup> Rapuyimdu and the Tamsin *naaba* do not live in the same compound but belong to the same *yiiri* (cf. chapter 4).



son's trustworthiness in matters of rivalry over women.<sup>29</sup> In chapter 3, it was mentioned that in dominant discourse in Ziinoogo too this kind of trustworthiness is stressed. It seems however that there is more to it than that. Luning (1989a:25) suggests that sisters are in a position to mediate between their children and their brothers in order to obtain farm land for the former with the latter. On the other hand, she also maintains that mother's brother cannot refuse land to sister's son or to father's sister's son. My own findings did not bring to the fore even one case in which such mediation indeed took place. Each time, things were arranged, or said to be arranged, in the way described by Rapuyimdu: sister's son went directly to mother's brother. Surely, the exclusion of women from these accounts may be deceptive in a patriarchal society like the Moose's. But, when it is said that mother's brother cannot refuse land to sister's son one may indeed wonder why mediation is necessary at all and also whether trustworthiness is indeed the decisive factor in these allocations of land. While, as explained above, the marriage of a woman into another lineage in a way gives her brother a certain right to the labour of one of her children, it seems that these children for their part have a certain right to the land controlled by their mother's brothers, regardless of having been fostered by the latter. Before discussing the nature of this right, I first treat one other situation in which sister's sons establish a farm on land controlled by mother's brothers.

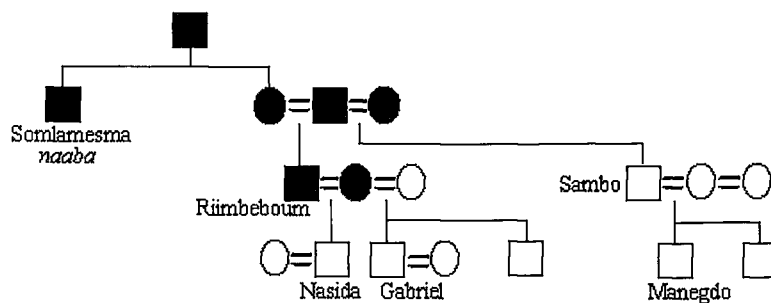
### Misfortune and movement to mother's brothers

Again, this matter was already touched upon in chapter 4 when it was related, in case 2 on the Runtenga Yiyoose, how Yuma's father left Silaalba to settle with his mother's brothers in Ziinoogo after a smallpox epidemic had struck his compound. The following account of another case of movement motivated by misfortune experienced at the place of departure is inserted because it gives hints on the status of mother's brother's land relative to the status of patrilineally acquired land (the actors involved farm at the same time on their mother's brother's land and on their patrilineage's *yaab ziiga*).

When I first came to Ziinoogo, the *saka* of Sorpoore consisted of three compounds, one of which originally had been at Kamsin. In 1995, this compound split, with a son of the then compound head's elder brother establishing his own compound nearby (cf. chapter 7). For now, only the situation prevailing before the split occurred is considered (cf. genealogy 5.3). In about 1940, the present-day compound head at Sorpoore, Sambo, was born in the compound at Kamsin: 'Before, our compound and our *karaaga* were next to Nomba's *karaaga*. But hunger and death chased us away. Many died while our compound was there and it was only after my elder brother moved the compound to Sorpoore, 33 years ago, that many children were born'. In 1994, next to Sambo, his brother's son Nasida also had his own farm. Both had, near their compound *karaase* extending to the south, while their *puugkasense* were respectively at Longre and at Bolle (cf. map 3.3). Sambo also farmed an additional small *karaaga* at the place in Kamsin where their compound used to be 33 years earlier. The *puugkasense* of both Sambo and Nasida were relatively small as compared to their *karaase* near the compound, which is, certainly for the ward of Ziinoogo, rather exceptional. Moreover, it appeared that these *karaase* were not even located on the Ziinoogo village territory, nor was their compound or the other two compounds of Sorpoore. Their *puugkasense*, on the other hand, were sown on their *yaab ziiga*. Nasida: 'The Somlamesma *naaba*<sup>30</sup> authorized me to use the land for my *karaaga*. As a matter of fact, it was my father, Rümbeboom, who first went to ask for this land. He did so because, 33 years ago, he moved his compound

<sup>29</sup> Skinner (1964b:470) notes that '[sister's sons] are [...] not permitted to inherit the most valuable asset of a Mossi lineage, its wives'. Pageard (1969:311) too observes that sister's son cannot possibly receive a woman who belongs to his mother's brother's lineage because the rule of exogamy prohibits it 'indefinitely'.

<sup>30</sup> Somlamesma is a ward of the village of Tamsin. The Somlamesma *naaba* is not a *nakombga* chief. He is the elder of the ward Somlamesma.



### Genealogy 5.3 Sambo's compound

from Kamsin to Sorpoore and he wanted also to have fields near his compound. It happened that it was possible for him to use land of his *yasbdamba* and that was what he did. The Somlamesma *naaba* was my father's *yasba* and my father's *yasbdamba* are my *yaabdamba*. After my father died, I continued to farm at this place, because I wanted a field near the compound too. After we did the funerals for my father, three years ago, my *yaabdamba* came to see me and they asked me if I intended to continue to respect *rogem* between us and whether I intended to act in the future as my father had before. I told them I wouldn't do anything my father wouldn't have done and that I wouldn't do anything which might displease them. That is why they have let me continue to use this land near to the compound. Today, I can farm from here to Somlamesma wherever it pleases me. If the soils here on the land of my *yaabdamba* should become exhausted, I would extend my fields at Bolle. Once the soil was restored, I would again extend the fields near the compound'.

Thus, when Riimbebourm's compound was struck by misfortune, death and hunger and when he decided to move the compound, he did not have to travel far in order to arrive at his mother's brother's place. It was only one step over the village border. The fact of having made this movement did not mean that he had left the village. Quite the contrary, for Riimbebourm in 1987 was even inaugurated as the Ziinoogo *tengsoba*, which he remained until his death in 1990. The movement of compound and *karaase* to the territory of a neighbouring village did not make him an inhabitant of that other village.<sup>31</sup> What is of interest here, however, is not this peculiarity but, as mentioned above, more the issue of rights to land with mother's brother in general. Note firstly that, in Nasida's account, once again trust - based on *rogem* - between the person responsible for the land and the user is particularly stressed. But there is more. Nasida seems to consider land used on his *yaab ziiga* as interchangeable with mother's brother's land.

<sup>31</sup> 'We belong to the Ziinoogo *soolem*, we are attached to Ziinoogo', as Nasida explained.

## Nature of rights to land with mother's brother

Movements of whole compounds to, and use of land with, mother's brothers appeared time and again in the actors' life histories and nearly always the patrilineage was left because of some kind of misfortune. Sometimes such movements were temporary: sister's son's compound remained only ten or twenty years next to mother's brother's compound, after which a return to the patrilineage occurred. Other cases show that sister's sons can stay longer and even, as we have seen in chapter 3 (Kuritgo), become autochthonized.<sup>32</sup>

Skinner (1964b:468) mentions that about 15 to 20% of the 'households' in each Moaga village would be headed by sister's sons. Pageard (1969:311) explains this frequency of co-residence of sister's son with mother's brother by the fact that a number of boys spend the first years of their life in their mother's lineage, i.e. are fostered by mother's brother, and by 'the human and warm atmosphere' for sister's son at mother's brother's place. It is furthermore widely accepted in the literature that in patrilineal societies mother's brother's home constitutes an alternative to patrilocality for people in some kind of trouble (cf. Cleveland 1991:228, Goody 1959:71, Hammond 1964:261, Skinner 1964b:468). The nature of the relationship between sister's son and mother's brother has been a concern to some influential anthropologists, notably Radcliffe-Brown and Goody. In early explanations it was maintained that the importance of this relationship in patrilineal societies demonstrated that the latter once had passed through a matriarchal stage (Radcliffe-Brown 1952:15). Radcliffe-Brown (*ibidem*:25) argued that the indulgence of mother's brother towards sister's son and the liberty of behaviour which characterizes the relationship between the two should be explained in terms of the generalization and extension of the patterns, which arise in relation to the mother, to her kindred. Goody (1959) has criticized Radcliffe-Brown's 'extension of sentiment' hypothesis extensively and it is from this criticism that I draw below in order to come to grips with my own findings.

In the previous chapter it was shown that rights to land are essentially acquired by birth in a patrilineage and by inheritance from fathers to sons. How can the access to land by sister's son or even sister's husband be accounted for? Dominant discourse in the village stresses the trust which is supposed to reign in the relationships between mother's brother and sister's son to justify the frequent allocations of farm land to sister's son. This may be an important factor, but my data and certain literature (Luning's remark that one cannot refuse land to sister's son, for instance<sup>33</sup>) also suggest that sister's son has a specific right to land with mother's brothers. Moreover, if 'trust' were the [only] determining factor it may be wondered why one does not encounter equally often allocations from sister's son to mother's brother. While it happens that the right to land with mother's brother is actualized after being fostered by the latter, the fact that more frequently farm land is allocated to sisters' sons - both co-resident and non-resident - without such a fosterage ever having occurred would imply that it is not labour, provided by sister's son for mother's brother, that constitutes the ground for the allocation.

<sup>32</sup> Skinner (1964b:469) found that 'about eighty percent of those sisters' sons who go to live in their mothers' brothers' lineages eventually do return to their own patrilineages, the remainder do not'.

<sup>33</sup> A similar remark is made by de Zeeuw (1997) of land tenure among Samo in north-west Burkina Faso. It may be noted that according to de Zeeuw, the borrowing of land from mother's brother would constitute an actor's *only* possibility for access outside his own village (cf. also de Zeeuw 1995:25f), a situation obviously different from what can be found among Moose.

Goody (1959:77) points out that while 'land is owned by patrilineal groups' it is said by the LoDagaba of northern Ghana that 'a person and his mother's "house people" [...] have joint rights over uncultivated land'. He interprets this in the following way (*ibidem*:77-78):

'The meaning of this phrase is that should the "house" become extinct, then a sororilateral kinsman becomes the next of kin; he has a residual claim to the property of his mother's patrilineage. Moreover even at other times the residual claim cannot altogether be denied. If the son of a female member of the patrilan sector asks for land, the request must be seriously considered unless land is in short supply. Indeed, if land is vacant, it will be exceedingly difficult to refuse the request, for the nephew may just take up his hoe and farm, saying "It is my mother's milk I suck". [...] The taking of property of the mother's brother is seen as mediated by the mother [...].'

Among Moose, similar 'residual claims' seem to exist. Note Goody's use of the term 'house' (*yir* in LoDagaba) which probably shows much resemblance to the Moose's *yiiri*. In the account above about Yuma's sister's son Ali, Ali himself already claimed, albeit playfully, that his mother's brother's house was his house too. That the boundaries of a kinship group such as *yiiri* may be, at least in some circumstances, somewhat blurred - that is, membership is not strictly limited to patrilineal kin - was expressed in other ways too. It was said, for example, that sister's son, strictly speaking, does not belong to one's *yiiri* but that he nevertheless is 'an extension of the *yiiri*'. On the same lines, while considering his sister's son's right to land in Ziinoogo, Ousmane argues that 'Rimpanga and I belong to the same *buudu* and he also belongs to his father's *buudu*'. In his discussion of co-residence of sister's son with mother's brother among Moose, Skinner (1964b:470) also refers to Goody when he uses the term 'residual rights' of sister's son on mother's brother. He recognizes that sister's sons 'have no problem in obtaining land on which to farm from their mother's brothers' and that 'their descendants may stay and farm as long as they desire'. Nevertheless he also stresses the 'ideology of corporate exclusiveness' of lineages and their tendency to restrict their assets to their own members. Sister's son's access to lineage rights would be ritually licenced, implying 'lack of normal access' to them. By turning to Goody's own argument, I hope to demonstrate that sister's son's right to land with mother's brother may also be understood as normal, and that by doing so one is also better able to account for the fact that, while in most cases movement is towards mother's brothers, it also happens that widows or divorcees return to their own lineage and establish their own farm, or that a man decides to move his compound to his in-laws, that is to his children's mother's brothers, as Minata's father did:

Minata is Ousmane's first wife (cf. case 2, chapter 4). Her father was born in Tamsin and also married there. Minata: 'My father left Tamsin because he lost five children there. His *reemdamba* who live at Tangantanga told him that it would be better for him to move his compound to Tangantanga. I was his only child at that time. At Tangantanga we did the necessary ceremonies and my father had several children: Tiiga, Tiraooogo, Tipoko among others [these names indicate that there has been the intervention of a *tiibsoba*]. The first children were all girls. Afterwards he had also boys with his second and third wife. Now that he has many children, his brothers have asked him to return to Tamsin and I think he will'.

Goody's (1959:81-82) own discussion of such 'residual claims' is indeed more convincing and valuable for the situation I encountered. He introduces the term 'submerged claims' in order to express women's or their children's rights to 'property' of her patrilineage. He argues that patrilineal inheritance 'debars the sister from transmitting the property visualized as associated with the descent group. [...] [Not] only is she unable to *transmit* rights in the patrimony to her children, she cannot normally *exercise* those rights'. Still, '[despite] the male-to-male inheritance of the patrimony in societies of the Tallensi type, a woman has nevertheless a submerged claim on the property of her patrilineal descent group'. And, just like Goody with

the LoDagaa, I too occasionally came across women who either as widows or as divorcees had returned to their natal village and were allocated land to establish their own farm (e.g. Weebnaaba's daughter who returned to Ziinoogo at her husband's death, case 3, chapter 4).

More often, however, this submerged claim is actually realized through males: either through a sister's husband or a sister's son. That this can be done is by virtue of respectively wife's or mother's position in her patrilineage. According to Goody, such rights of a person '*vis-à-vis* members of his mother's patriclan must be related to the qualified rights [...] a woman possesses in her patrilineal descent group, to the rights she would have possessed had she been a man, and to the rights her offspring would have possessed had she not been the residual sibling'. This way of explaining sister's sons rights to land was also put forward in Ziinoogo. Tiiga, a man whose father settled in Ziinoogo only some thirty years ago and who married a Kamsin *tengbiiga* woman, explained his sons' future rights to land in Ziinoogo: 'At this time I farm land on a *ziiga* which was allocated to me by the *tengbiise*. My sons too will be allowed to farm there or to ask for another *ziiga* in Ziinoogo. Surely, they do still have a right to land on our *yaab ziiga* in Toece<sup>34</sup> as well. But they will stay here in Ziinoogo. This is my children's *yiiri*, for their mother is originally from this village and if she had been a man this would have been her village'. Note also that in one of the above accounts Rapuyimdu from Tamsin referred to the land he used on the Ziinoogo village territory as his 'mother's *yaab ziiga*'.

While Goody speaks of these rights as 'shadowy claims' held by sister's son, i.e. not 'full claims', it seems better to me to consider them as 'potential rights' similar to other potential rights, not yet and maybe never actually realized in practice, like those a man has to land controlled by agnates of the same *yiiri* living in other villages [or wards] (cf. chapter 4). In the same way as, when a man moves to another village where some of his agnates control land, his right to land there depends partly on the rights to land already acquired by members of his *yiiri*, a man's right to land with his mother's brothers [or his wife's brothers] depends on the rights to land acquired at that particular place by his mother's brothers' *yiiri*. But, while in the first case his right to land is further determined by his own status within the *yiiri* segment at that particular place (seniority, existence of a 'father's place'), in the second case a man's right to land depends on his mother's status within her *yiiri* of origin. The status of a woman with respect to land in her patrilineal kin group is inevitably very low (cf. Goody 1959:80, who maintains that a woman's role in her descent group is that of a 'jural minor'). Still, it is a right, and thus a man cannot refuse land to his sister's son. In a sense then, sister's son's right to land with mother's brother is 'normal' because it corresponds to his mother's position in her patrilineage. At the level of the Yiitaoore *tengbiise*'s lineage land, the right to land held by the Rumtenga Yiyoose can be understood to correspond to the right their 'mother' would have had. As described in chapters 3 and 4, the Rumtenga Yiyoose, sister's sons of the Yiitaoore *tengbiise*, figure as 'strangers' in the village's dominant discourse and their position in the so-called 'hierarchy of choice' with respect to rights to land is correspondingly low. It was also explained, however, how sister's sons can, in the course of time, free themselves more or less from this status of strangers and become autochthonized, in the process acquiring more autonomous control over land.

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<sup>34</sup> Tiiga's 'origin' is the village of Toece, located a few kilometers to the east of Ziinoogo. His father left there allegedly because of some 'misunderstandings' he had with the village chief. When he first came to Ziinoogo he settled with his wife's brother, a *nakombga*.

## Friendship

One final issue remains before, in the next chapters, the analysis of the two main migration processes, namely to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso, can be tackled. Friendship relations are directly relevant to this study in two ways. Firstly, friendship between two men often precedes marriage relations between their respective lineage segments. These friendship relations are characterized by several kinds of exchanges, one of them pertaining to land. Secondly, like the relation between mother's brother and sister's son, and related to the first point, one of the defining characteristics of a relation between friends is trust. 'Trust' will later on come to the fore as an important factor in the organization of migration as well as in the relationships between Moose and Fulbe, the latter having to be discussed in order to understand some of the implications of migration for land use practices.

According to Luning (1989a:10), Moose marriages start with friendship relations (*zoodo*) between men: 'On markets, family festivities men are looking for friends who can possibly give them a future bride. Once you get such a promising friend in view, you start courting this man with presents. You buy him millet beer and you meet on the market, you bring him a chicken at the *kiuugu* festivities. In the course of years this can indeed be rewarded. The rewarded man marries the girl himself or he gives her to a younger *buudu* member'. Lallemand (1977:347-360) stresses in particular the aspects of affection involved in friendship between persons of the same sex. Furthermore, she points to the fact that the number of friends a person has during his or her lifetime is very restricted and seldom exceeds three. This is confirmed by my own findings. Thus, Lallemand labels these relationships - *zoodo* - as 'institutionalized', that is to be distinguished from friendly relations between people who grew up together (*reementaase*, sing. *reementaaga*). The institutionalized character is further confirmed by the existence of related rights and duties, most obviously expressed by series of gifts and counter-gifts spread out over time. Lallemand 'explains' friendship by demonstrating its functionality for Moaga social organization: for example, it would permit a woman to escape the 'coolness' of her in-laws and a man to avoid stirring up a quarrel with his agnates; also, friendship would be functional in bridging the distance which marriage taboos impose on the relations between members of different population groups (for example, on the relations between *tengbiise* and Fulbe or Saaba; I will turn to this aspect in more detail in chapter 8). To Lallemand, then, the preparation of marriage relations is one other such functionality of friendship relations: since a daughter cannot be married to paternal or maternal consanguineal kin, friendship permits a man to select marriage candidates. It may be noted, finally, that Lallemand distinguishes friendship relations between men from those between women mostly because of the superior means men are able to bring into such relationships: men retain the bulk of social and family responsibilities and are in a position to let their friends benefit from the means they control. Thus, a lineage elder, for example, may 'give' a woman to his friend or allocate him farm land.

And, indeed, in the rare cases that land on the Ziinoogo village territory was allocated to a non-resident 'stranger' who did not happen to be a sister's son or a sister's husband of the person responsible for that land, friendship (*zoodo*) was evoked as the reason for compliance to the stranger's request. Surely, such a friend does not have a right to land as agnates or affines do, but it should be noted that friendship relations are claimed to be long-lasting, to be established for life. Furthermore, a man's friend may become a friend of the 'house', and friendship may thus continue, even if one of the initial partners has died (e.g. friendship may be transferred from father to son; cf. chapter 8). And, also confirmed by my findings, a

successful friendship between men very often culminates in the establishment of marriage relations between their respective 'houses' (*yiya*). Thus, while a man may initially gain access to land through friendship, his sons may later on continue to use that land, albeit possibly in another status, for example that of sister's sons of the person responsible for the land, and thus then have a 'right' to that land (cf. above).

Piot (1991) discusses friendship relations among the Kabre of northern Togo. He distinguishes three spheres of exchange (gifts and return-gifts) corresponding to stages of a growing friendship relation. He notes that friendship often begins with the borrowing, for example of a field, by one man from another. The relationship would still be 'breakable' and private at that stage. Only at the third stage, where women are exchanged, do the relations become 'unbreakable' and public and the two 'houses' involved become 'one' or 'the same' (*ibidem*:415-416). Piot (*ibidem*:418) suggests that friendship among Moose is likewise characterized by such stages. Lallemand, for her part, suggests that friendship relations among Moose are 'public' and very difficult to break from the beginning, thereby going counter to the idea of stages. To me it was explained:

'A friendship can begin in various ways. You can meet someone in the market, in the village or in town, and if you understand one another well you can decide to get to know each other better. It may also be that you are travelling and that, when you have a problem, there is one man who comes to help you. You continue your journey together then and if the conversation is good this can be the beginning of a friendship. You visit one another and the first time your friend comes to visit you, you prepare him a special meal. At next visits, presents will be exchanged, and these may be *soumbala* [condiment prepared from the grains of the neere tree], millet or animals. To further strengthen their friendship, friends will try to give one another wives'.<sup>35</sup>

One final point I want to invoke here with respect to friendship concerns the equality of the partners in the relationship. Lallemand stresses the existence of such equality and the reciprocal nature of gifts and return-gifts. She goes as far as to maintain that through friendship certain inequalities inherent to omni-present kin relations can be overcome (as in cases of friendship between an older and a younger man). Piot evaluates friendship among Kabre as equal only in the third stage, while the two first stages would be characterized by hierarchy or alternating hierarchy. In Ziinoogo it was said: 'A friend can do so much for you, that you finally reach a situation where you don't know any more how to thank him. And then you give him your daughter so that the friendship can be even stronger than before'.<sup>36</sup>

## Concluding remarks

Shipton & Goheen (1992:316) observe that in patrilineal societies the importance of affinal kinship often goes under-recognized by outsiders. The issues treated in this chapter, then, were not inserted merely to accomplish some kind of aesthetical wholeness of the land use and geographic mobility picture. Indeed, although the primary importance of patrilineal relations for many fields of social practice, land use and geographic mobility included, cannot be denied, an exclusion of other relations from the analysis, such as friendship (*zoodo*), in-law relations (*reemdo*) and, in particular, affinal relations (*rogem*), would have left us with only a partial understanding of the processes studied in previous chapters. Moreover, these relations

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<sup>35</sup> Ousmane, Runtenga Yiyooaga.

<sup>36</sup> Ousmane, Runtenga Yiyooaga.

will again come to the fore when one seeks to understand the dynamics of migration processes to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso (cf. next chapters).

Internal organization of the farm unit, fosterage, land use by non-resident actors, rights to land with mother's brother, friendship: while these are diverse issues at first sight, they nevertheless can be brought under a common denominator, that is marriage. Through marriage, men as well as women attain an adult status (Badini 1994:66, Kohler 1971:173-174). A man thus acquires a certain economic autonomy with respect to the farm head on whom he depends. He will be able to mobilize the labour of his wife and later on of his children, and thus the status of his field (*beolga*) within the farm unit changes. Marriage, however, does not automatically entail full adult status for a man. Indeed, in the context of farming, he will still be referred to as a bachelor (*rakoore*) as long as he depends on a farm head (*puugsoba*), i.e. as long as his field is a *beolga* and not a *puugkasenga*. All marriages of members of a farm unit contribute also to the labour at the disposal of the *puugsoba*, who is indeed entitled to labour of both his own wives and children and his dependants' wives and their children.

Geographic mobility of women constitutes a defining characteristic of the Moose's virilocal marriage system.<sup>37</sup> Women, at their marriage, move into the compound of their husband and are expected to stay there at least until his death. At a husband's death, the widow is normally married by a close agnate of the deceased (levirate), which may or may not imply a change of residence for the widow (cf. chapter 4 on the geographically dispersed *yiiri*). Otherwise, she generally returns to her father's compound.<sup>38</sup> The virilocality of marriage and the associated geographic mobility of women opens the way for other movements, related on the one hand to fosterage and on the other hand to the 'submerged claims' a woman maintains on her patrilineage's land.

Thus, when a woman marries, she can later on foster a brother's child (*pogdanga*). This movement of a child to father's sister appears to be temporary in most cases, except when a fostered girl is at the same time her aunt's *yiirpaga*. Note that such a fosterage may not only benefit father's sister but also her husband in the cases where the *pogdanga* joins the labour group of the male *puugsoba*. As expressed, for instance, by Rabanega in one of the accounts above, a male *pogdanga* has the option to stay at his father's sister's place and have farm land allocated to him. Still, I encountered only one case in which such a thing effectively happened (case 2 in chapter 4, where Yuma's grandfather was fostered by his father's sister and afterwards stayed in her husband's village Silaalba). A brother's son does not hold a 'submerged claim' on land of the patrilineage where his father's sister married of the kind sister's son has with mother's brothers. His 'residual right' may be understood to stem from the fact that brother's son provided labour for - has farmed with - father's sister's husband during fosterage.

A woman holds a 'submerged claim' to her patrilineage's land, i.e. she has a right to

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<sup>37</sup> Chant & Radcliffe (1992:9) consider movements associated with marriage as a separate 'type' of rural migration, constituting 'a significant proportion of rural-rural population flows in the Third World', among others in parts of West Africa where 'brides are expected to move to the villages of their husbands on marriage'. In their study of Upper-Voltaic migration, Coulibaly *et al.* (1980) also distinguish female permanent marriage migration from other migration types. Cordell *et al.* (1996:30-31) consider 'marriage migration' to constitute a 'major form of labor migration'.

<sup>38</sup> Thus, as Meillassoux (1981:63) maintains, '[a woman] moves only between her own community and another one, never between third communities'. This is no longer true if one takes into account the cases of 'evaded' and 'abducted' women (cf. also Kohler 1971:192-196).



her agnates' land which she brings with her to the compound of her husband when she marries. This right may then be realized in essentially three different ways, each of them implying probable geographic mobility. First, a woman may return to her father's compound after her husband dies or after a divorce and establish her own farm. Second, her husband may decide to move to his in-laws, most often because of experienced misfortune, but sometimes also because of tensions with the village chief or with his agnates. Finally, and this is the most frequent case, the right to land of a woman with her agnates may be realized by [one of] her sons. Indeed, the woman's right is transferred to her sons who can realize it either after having been fostered by mother's brother or, more frequently, only after they are already married and often after having experienced some kind of misfortune (or tensions with village chief, with agnates).

With respect to the issues I am mainly interested in, that is land use practice and geographic mobility, we thus find that the fact that a woman moves to her husband's place has as a correlate an increase in the number of people who have a potential claim on land of the woman's *yiiri*, notably her sons. Conversely, next to the [potential] rights a man has to the land controlled by his *yiiri* and 'farmed by his father', he also has a potential right to land with his mother's brothers. While this right may be realized without movement to mother's brother taking place - as in the case of land allocated to a sister's son from a neighbouring village - it is the very existence of such a right which makes movement to mother's brother such a viable option whenever a man decides to leave one place for another. It is the space of matrimonial relations, in the sense of the space defined by the localities where in-married women come from, which gives an idea of the places where men of a certain *yiiri* may gain access to land, other than land controlled by their patrilineage, and which may constitute optional destinations whenever it is decided to move.<sup>39</sup> It should be clear by now, that, when such a movement of sister's son to mother's brother is made, sister's son may be able, in the long term, to 'root' at mother's brother's place, acquire a degree of control over land there, and thus add it to the land already controlled by his *yiiri*.

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<sup>39</sup> This does certainly not mean that all men of a *yiiri* have a potential right to land at all these places. Although I cannot be conclusive on the issue due to lack of data, it seems that a sister's son has the strongest claims with his mother's *full* brothers.

## CHAPTER 6

### CHANGING PATTERNS AND MEANING OF MIGRATION TO THE IVORY COAST: FROM DISRUPTION TO 'RE-SOLIDARIZATION'?

'Tout sédentaire qu'ils soient, les [Moose] de Kumtaabo n'en sont pas moins marqués, dans leur relation à l'espace, par la mobilité et par une relative indifférence aux lieux. On déchiffre ce trait au travers de l'organisation interne du terroir et de ses relations avec les terroirs voisins et il se manifeste avec éclat dans la turbulence migratoire, à laquelle peu échappent et qui devient pour certains un genre de vie constitutif de l'existence' (Imbs 1987:183).

#### Introduction

As stated at several places in previous chapters, migration is often understood to constitute an essential characteristic of Moaga society. While there have been studies which take account of the geographic mobility processes I treated up to this point (notably Imbs 1987), the bulk of scholarly interest has been in the massive 'modern' migrations of Moose to the south and west of Burkina Faso and, particularly, to the Ivory Coast. The former is the subject of the next chapter. In this chapter, the significance of migration to the Ivory Coast for my research population is analyzed in a historical perspective.

Numerous studies have been carried out on Burkinabé migration to the Ivory Coast in general and of Moose in particular. Firstly, there have been a number of survey-based studies (surveys carried out in 1960-61, 1972-73, 1974-1975, 1984-85; cf. Coulibaly *et al.* 1980:13-16, Sautter 1980, and Sawadogo 1994). Next, or parallel to this quantitatively oriented research, qualitative research has been undertaken to obtain a better understanding of the historical context of migration to the Ivory Coast, of migrants' motivations and of the relationships between migration and social, political, economic and ecological change in Moaga society (notably Gregory *et al.* 1989, Kohler 1972, Remy *et al.* 1977, Skinner 1965). During the 1970s and 1980s, a number of studies by French geographers on changing land use and management among Moose were published, which inevitably also analyzed the relationships with migration to the Ivory Coast (Ancey 1983, Imbs 1987, Kohler 1971, Marchal 1983, Remy 1972). Finally, there have been a number of publications on African migration, and in particular labour migration, which analyze migration in a theoretical perspective and which explicitly refer to Moose migrations (Amin 1971, Cleveland 1991, Gregory & Piché 1978, Meilink 1978). In the course of this chapter I will refer at several points to some of this literature.

The analysis starts once again in the colonial archives, which provides a localized history of migration to the Ivory Coast. Next, based on life histories of former, present-day and future migrants I interviewed, changes in migration patterns and how these are related to land use practice in the village are analyzed. Thereby, the 'cultural construction' of these migrations and its changes over time are stressed. Thus, what is looked for are answers to questions like: what is the meaning of migration, who may be expected to migrate and who is supposed to stay in the village, what are the expectations with respect to migration held by

those who leave as well as by those who remain behind, what are accepted periods of absence and what are reasons for deviating from the 'norm'? I also look into how migration is socially organized from the perspective of the farm at home, an issue closely related to 'cultural construction'. The chapter is concluded by a section on how contemporary migration to the Ivory Coast is related to land use practice in the village. At this point I limit myself to those relations which appear in a relatively straightforward way from the presented ethnographic material and which pertain mainly to labour management and access to farm land. There is however also one other important change of land use practice which is at least partly related to migration to the Ivory Coast and which is passed over in this chapter. It concerns the buying of cattle which will be treated more fully in chapter 8. It may be noted that this passing over of the cattle issue is not simply some authorial device serving the logical unfolding of my thesis, but constitutes, as will be shown, an essential feature of social life in the village.

### The constitution of a 'free labour market' under colonial rule

The importance of present-day migration to the Ivory Coast, whereby hundreds of thousands of Moose each year work in different sectors of the economy of the Ivory Coast and thus earn a cash income, would suggest that, at least to a certain degree, Moose have come to embrace the market economy.<sup>1</sup> The origin of this migratory movement is invariably situated in the period of colonial rule (e.g. Amin 1971, Asiwaju 1976, Gregory & Piché 1978, Gregory *et al.* 1989, Remy *et al.* 1977, Sawadogo 1994). The first 'migrants' to the Ivory Coast were labourers recruited by force by the colonial authorities in the Upper Volta to work on the plantations and the construction sites of the Ivory Coast. At the same time, taxation policy forced the population of the Upper Volta to earn a cash income. Although the French were concerned with deflecting 'spontaneous' migration towards their own territories, there is little doubt that, until the eve of the Upper Volta's independence in 1960, the bulk of cash income to pay for taxes was earned in the competing economy of the British Gold Coast where salaries were higher and colonial rule less repressive.<sup>2</sup> Migration to the Gold Coast during colonial rule then is not to be understood solely in terms of the necessity for the population of the Upper Volta to earn a cash income for the payment of taxes, but also as the unintended consequence of French repressive policy ('prestations', labour and military recruitment, forced cotton cultivation).

Today, the practice of migration to the Ivory Coast has become firmly rooted in the village of Ziinoogo, and this section is devoted to a better understanding of its historical grounding. Much has already been said on this issue (Asiwaju 1976, Gervais 1990, Gregory *et al.* 1989, Kohler 1972, Remy *et al.* 1977). Nevertheless, this section is included because, first,

<sup>1</sup> Based on the national census of 1985, the population of the province of Sanmatenga emigrated abroad is estimated at 7% of the administrative population (i.e. the resident population plus the emigrants) (DRPC 1990:98). The census of 1975 had already demonstrated that the main destination of these emigrants was the Ivory Coast (almost 90% of all emigrants) and this had not changed in 1985 (Sawadogo 1994:144). It is stressed that this 'emigration' rarely was permanent, but essentially a return migration concerning mainly men aged from 15 to 49 years (DRPC 1990:97).

<sup>2</sup> This is not to say that British colonial rule has not been harsh. Cleveland (1991:229) mentions that labour recruitment in northern Gold Coast for the mines was 'virtually forced' from 1920 to 1924, while Hawkins (1996:205) observes that the British administration demanded large amounts of labour and that some chiefs imposed even heavier demands upon their subjects. Still, labour recruitment by both the administration and private enterprises in the Gold Coast had stopped by the end of the 1920s (Cleveland 1991:229), whereas this happened only in 1946 in the Upper Volta.

an analysis of the archives of the former Cercle de Kaya permits one to present a *localized* historical perspective on the issue, and, second, because, by focusing on the relatively short period from 1937 to 1939, I want to bring to the fore an often forgotten early effort by the colonial administration to liberalize its labour policy. The creation of a 'free' labour market in the Ivory Coast and the Upper Volta was a stated objective from the beginning of colonization onwards. Adequate attention has been paid to the way in which the resistance of the population, mainly through the creation of opportunities for migration unintended by colonial policy (less controlled zones to the north, the Gold Coast to the south), frustrated colonial policy. But it seems that the constitution of a free labour market was not a smooth and straightforward process for another reason as well. Indeed, colonial policy was characterized by discontinuities related to the observed resistance of the population as well as to conjunctural and international contexts.

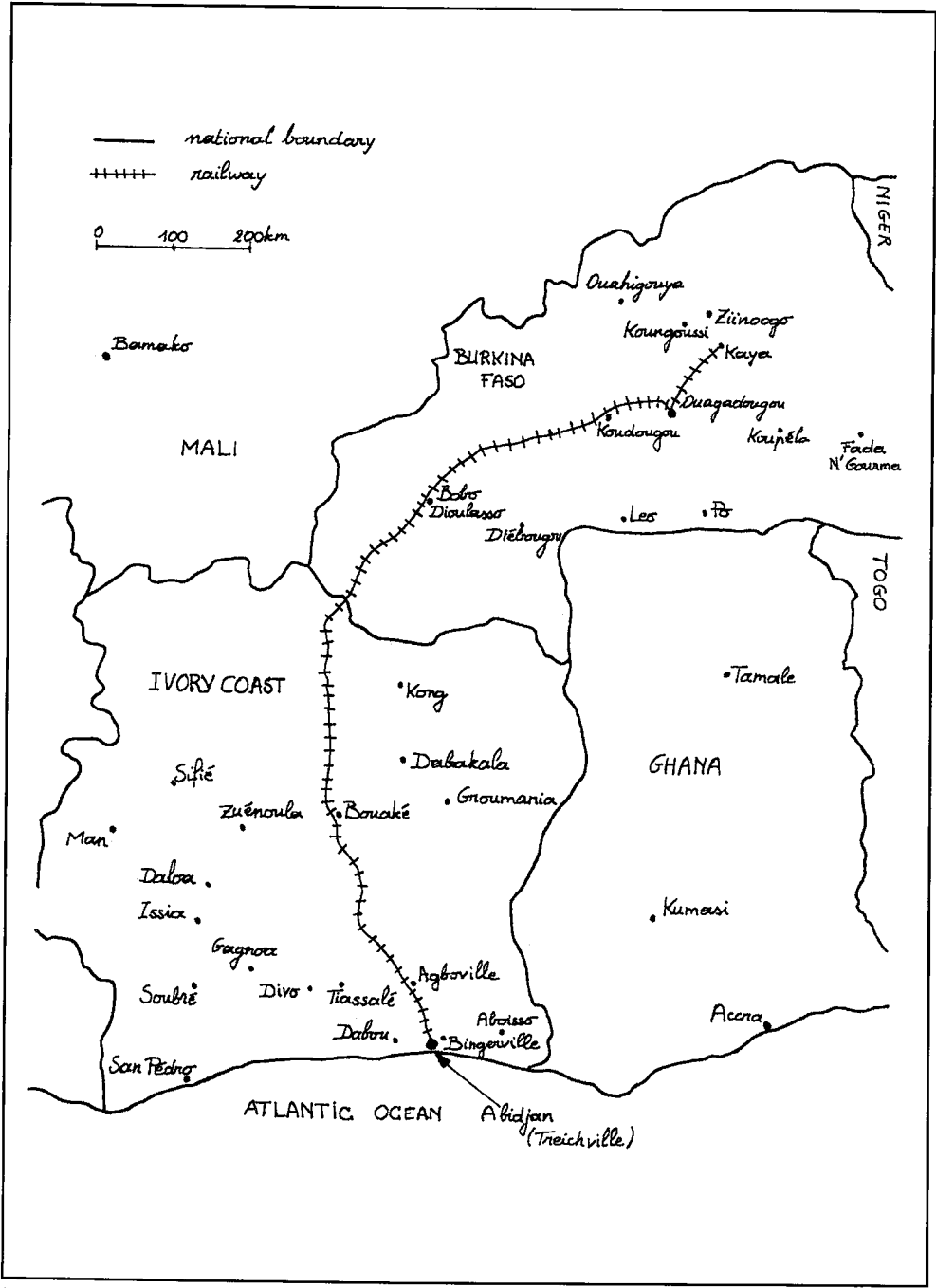
Impelled to do so because of economic recovery after the crisis of the early 1930s, the resistance of the population, and the international pressure to respect international treaties, the colonial administration attempted from 1937 to 1939 to pursue a labour policy, at least with respect to private interests, which differed radically from that of the preceding period as well as from that of the following war-economy period (1939-1946). By setting about this new approach, the administration was forced to undertake at least some self-examination, and by doing so has given us yet another insight into the practices which prevailed before 1937. Moreover, 'spontaneous migration' to the south of the Ivory Coast colony appeared not easy to establish. With all the financial, institutional and ideological means mobilized during that period, migration could not be deflected from the Gold Coast to the Ivory Coast. This permits, again through analyses provided by the colonial administration, an assessment of the impact of earlier policy on the population and, in particular, the population's distrust of the administration. Also, the colonial documents give an insight into what a successful spontaneous migration pattern might look like since analyses are presented of the Gold Coast's success in attracting Moose migrants.

In chapter 4, where among other things the occupation of the zone to the north of Ziinoogo was discussed in relation to colonial policy, it was shown how this census-based policy placed a heavy burden on the Moaga population, and how it was accompanied by repression. Thereby the focus was on the period which extended until 1933, the year the colony of the Upper Volta was dismantled. As stated above, the following historical reconstruction focuses on the years 1937-39. The preamble (1932-1936) to this period, and the subsequent war period (1939-1946) during which the relatively liberal policy received its death-blow, are touched upon only briefly to better situate the context.

It was mentioned in chapter 4 that, after the dismantling of the Upper Volta as an 'independent' colony, a shift in policy orientation took place. The former Upper Volta, from 1933 onwards the 'Haute Côte d'Ivoire', was meant to concentrate on its role of provider of labour for the coastal zone, the 'Basse Côte d'Ivoire'.<sup>3</sup> This meant, among other things, that the programme of forced cotton production was abandoned. The report of the inspection mission, which visited the Upper Volta in 1931 and which in 1932 exposed the Upper Volta's policy as pure 'brag', had been very severe. The question is not only how policy changed but also if and

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<sup>3</sup> That is, in 1933 the parts of the former Upper Volta which were added to the Ivory Coast, like the Cercle de Kaya, came to constitute the 'Haute Côte d'Ivoire'. Other parts joined the colony of Niger (Cercle de Fada, for example) and Soudan (Cercle de Ouahigouya, for example). The former Ivory Coast itself was divided into the 'Basse Côte d'Ivoire' and the 'Moyenne Côte d'Ivoire'.



Map 6.1  
Burkina Faso, the Ivory Coast and Ghana

how criticism was taken into account. Exercise of self-criticism by colonial administrators had appeared already before the official dismantling of the Upper Volta. In June 1932, the newly appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Upper Volta, Chessé, in connection with rumours that communist agitators were active in the Colony, expressed a kind of declaration of intent in which he distanced himself from former policy.<sup>4</sup> He considered the activities of these agitators as but a symptom of a general discontent of the colony's population, of which he claimed to want to eradicate the causes 'as much as possible'. He pointed explicitly to a number of abuses, and stressed that a turning-point had been reached. Policy had to change and be more oriented to rural development in the interest of the population. Still, the blame for the derailment of previous policy and its excesses were imputed to the indigenous chiefs rather than to colonial policy as such.<sup>5</sup>

An attempt was made to institutionalize the policy shift from cash crop to food crop production by the establishment, in 1932, of the so-called 'Sociétés Indigènes de Prévoyance' and the elaboration of a five-year plan (1937-1942). With respect to the latter plan, Gervais (1990:125) notes that 'after 50 years of colonial policy, the authorities finally recognized the urgency of acting for the supply of the administered population'. However, the 'Sociétés Indigènes de Prévoyance' (i.e. rural saving cooperatives intended to stimulate investment in rural development) quickly became instruments for the management of crop export (groundnuts, karité) in the hands of the Commandants de Cercle. The population saw the contribution paid for membership as just another tax (*ibidem*:152-153). As for the five-year plan, the second world war cut short any hope it might have aroused for the pursuit of rural development.

Attempts to get off the ground a rural development policy were furthermore continually overshadowed by the northern territories' obligation to provide the labour needed by the coastal economy. Indeed, the administrators of the 'Haute Côte d'Ivoire' came to take very seriously the role of their territory as a labour reserve for the coastal economy. Although a concern with the well-being of the population was continually reasserted, the administrators' zeal to meet the labour demands of the coastal economy again culminated in over-exploitation of the human resources of the northern regions. In this context, it was very disappointing to the administrators that, despite all their efforts to channel labour to the coast, it appeared that it was primarily the British neighbour who benefited, i.e. a rival capitalist economy (cf. also Gervais 1990:79). Whereas before 1932 the departure of people towards the Gold Coast had generally been downplayed (cf. also *ibidem*:17), deflecting migration from the Gold Coast to the 'Basse Côte d'Ivoire' afterwards became a central preoccupation for the colonial administrators at all levels.

From 1933 until the beginning of the second world war, colonial policy in the Ivory Coast was marked by a certain continuity in the sense that it was tried to match labour supply (from the north) and demand (in the south). Market laws appeared not to operate spontaneously and, thus, local administrators (Commandants de Cercle) were regularly urged to lend a helping hand. At first, no reference was made to legislation. Orders were rather opaque, leaving it to the imagination of the Commandants how exactly to meet the demands

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<sup>4</sup> Circulaire no.88 CC. du Lieutenant-Gouverneur p.i. de la Colonie de la Haute Volta à tous Cercles et Subdivisions, Ouagadougou, le 8 juin 1932.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. also, for instance, Télégramme-lettre circulaire no.2984 A.P. du Lieutenant-Gouverneur p.i. de la Haute Volta à tous cercles et subdivisions, Ouagadougou, le 13 septembre 1932.

addressed to them, whether these issued from private or public enterprises.<sup>6</sup> One is tempted to conclude that after 1933, practice with respect to labour recruitment for public as well as private interests remained unchanged. Although a legal body to regulate labour recruitment had existed since 1925 it had remained a dead letter and the system relied heavily on the 'competences' of local administrators - that is, the Commandant de Cercle and the *kombere* chiefs - to mobilize the requested contingents of labourers (quota based on population censuses, cf. chapter 4). Although the recruited labourers were offered contracts, specifying salaries<sup>7</sup> and duration, there is no doubt that recruitment was forced. The conditions on the worksites of the coastal economy (plantations, wood industry, railroad Abidjan-Niger, port of Abidjan) were dangerous and unhealthy. Food and medical provision were deplorable, salaries were paid only partly or not at all, and many were those who either died on or deserted the work sites (Toungara 1980:230-233, cf. also Cordell *et al.* 1996:69).

That these abuses effectively occurred could also be established from the archives of the Cercle de Kaya, albeit retrospectively. Indeed, from 1936 onwards, administrators' discourse at all levels changed radically, thereby exposing abuses which prevailed in the recent past. The year 1936 clearly constituted a transitional phase. On the one hand, already existing legislation was reformulated, while on the other hand, circular letters were issued which anticipated the more fundamental legal reforms of 1937. Thus, in March 1936, the Commandant of Kaya was informed of a series of decisions concerning the application of indigenous labour legislation, which, next to the establishment of new salary levels, for the larger part came to be a reminder of legislation already existing since 1925 and 1926.<sup>8</sup> The Commandants were asked to watch more closely than before over the rights of their circumscription's labourers, in particular with respect to salaries. In June of the same year, Lieutenant-Governor Lamy again referred to the same legislation of the 1920s to stress that labour recruitment should be based on the labourers' free will:

'J'ai l'honneur de vous faire connaître que le système de recrutement de la main-d'oeuvre actuellement en vigueur, ne repose pas sur l'exécution d'un ordre donné par le Commandant de Cercle, mais sur la libre volonté des travailleurs de s'engager pour une durée déterminée. Notre rôle se borne, à la lettre du texte, à mettre en rapport les parties contractantes et à faire respecter les engagements pris. L'article 10 du Décret du 22 octobre 1925, base de notre législation en la matière, dispose en effet que: "le Chef de l'unité administrative, avant d'apposer son visa, s'assurera de l'identité du contractant et de sa libre volonté de contracter".'<sup>9</sup>

According to the Lieutenant-Governor, the Commandants should refrain from direct involvement in the practical organization of labour recruitment for private interests. Nevertheless, he stressed that the industries and plantations of the coastal economy constituted

<sup>6</sup> 'Pour répondre à la reprise de l'activité de l'industrie locale [Basse Côte] déjà sensible, il importe que vous teniez soigneusement à jour le contrôle de l'offre et de la demande et que vous assuriez dans toute la mesure du possible une liaison permanente entre employeurs et employés. Je vous prie de continuer à réserver le meilleur accueil aux demandes d'emploi qui vous parviendront et de vous efforcer, comme vous avez su le faire en des temps difficiles aujourd'hui révolus, de leur donner une suite favorable. [...] [Je] vous demande d'organiser sur des bases pratiques le "marché du travail" dans votre circonscription' (Circulaire no.1067 A.E. du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire au Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, Bingerville, le 17 novembre 1933).

<sup>7</sup> Toungara (1980:234) notes that 'to avoid an association with slavery, the men were paid various token amounts throughout the colonial period' (cf. also Cordell & Gregory 1982).

<sup>8</sup> Circulaire no. 223 A.E. de l'Inspection des Affaires Administratives aux Cercles de recrutement et d'utilisation de la main-d'oeuvre recrutée par contrat visé administrativement, Abidjan, le 19 mars 1936.

<sup>9</sup> Lettre no. 962 A.E. du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire au Président de la Chambre d'Agriculture et d'Industrie, Abidjan, le 24 juin 1936.

one of the principal resources of the colony, for which labour provision should be facilitated, also by the Commandants. The latter's role should, however, be principally limited to control<sup>10</sup> and moral persuasion. Private enterprises should send so-called 'mandataires' or 'recruteurs' to the places where they intended to recruit labourers, and, still according to the Lieutenant-Governor, if the employers took care that their labourers worked under decent conditions, they should not encounter any difficulty in finding the labour they needed. By the end of the year 1936, it became clear that at least the higher levels of the administration took the policy change seriously. Thus, a circular letter from the highest level of French West Africa, written by the Governor-General himself, reached Kaya.<sup>11</sup> Once again, the Commandants were strictly forbidden to intervene in the recruitment of labourers for private interests and pointed to their 'educational' role; reference was made to the imminent ratification by the French of resolutions of the 20<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference.<sup>12</sup> Again, it was emphasized that it was up to the employers themselves to offer sufficiently attractive conditions to their labourers in order to solve their labour problem.

How should this sudden change of discourse by the colonial administration be interpreted? Surely, it was not the international labour conference which made the French distance themselves from their former policy. As early as 1926, the League of Nations had forbidden private use of forced labour and in 1929 the 12<sup>th</sup> International Labour Conference had morally condemned the French government for their colonial labour systems (Toungara 1980:248). Rather, it seems to have been the failure to meet the labour demands of the coastal economy in the period from 1933 to 1936, in the light of post-crisis economic recovery, which brought the French to change their mind. The dismantling of the Upper Volta had not brought what had been expected:

'Une des raisons déterminantes du rattachement de la majeure partie du territoire de l'ancienne colonie de la Haute-Volta à la Côte d'Ivoire a été la préoccupation de faire bénéficier cette colonie où la colonisation est déjà très développée, du réservoir de main-d'oeuvre que représente l'ancien royaume moaga groupant environ un million d'âmes. Cependant on constate que jusqu'ici les travailleurs moose employés en Basse Côte d'Ivoire sont relativement peu nombreux. Le courant de main-d'oeuvre sur la Gold Coast n'a pas été détourné'.<sup>13</sup>

A promising growth of the coastal economy, attributed to European as well as indigenous enterprise, was regularly mentioned in documents from 1937 to 1939. Scarcity of labour was identified as the most serious obstacle to the continuation of this growth. To meet the ever-growing labour demands of the coastal economy, the vocation of the northern territories as a labour reserve for the south was reasserted, and even the migration to the Gold Coast came to be used as an argument to support the thesis that, for the time being, it was also in the best

<sup>10</sup> 'Toutefois, la situation politique et la mise en valeur du pays nécessitent le contrôle des mouvements de main-d'oeuvre qui se produisent à l'intérieur de la colonie. Il est donc indispensable que les employeurs vous avisent, au préalable, de leur intention de recruter des travailleurs dans votre circonscription' (Circulaire no. 729/A.E. du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire au Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, Abidjan, le 25 septembre 1936).

<sup>11</sup> Lettre no.626 SE/9 du Gouverneur Général de l'Afrique Occidentale Française aux Lieutenants-Gouverneurs des Colonies du Groupe et l'Administrateur de la Circonscription de Dakar, Dakar, le 3 novembre 1936.

<sup>12</sup> The adherence of France to the international convention of 1930 on forced and obligatory labour was promulgated in French West Africa by a decision of the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1937 (Circulaire no.1459 du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire et aux Commandants de Cercle, Abidjan, le 26 décembre 1938).

<sup>13</sup> Lettre no.9.C.T. du Gouverneur-Général de l'Afrique Occidentale Française au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Dakar, le 8 novembre 1937.



interest of the development of the northern territories to provide labour for the coastal economy:

'La Côte d'Ivoire est la colonie du Groupe où le problème de la main-d'oeuvre se pose avec le plus d'acuité, en raison du développement très remarquable de la colonisation européenne et indigène de la Basse Côte [...]. Cette région de la Basse Côte est précisément la moins peuplée. [...] La seule partie de la Côte d'Ivoire qui soit réellement peuplée est le pays moaga rattaché à la colonie en 1933. La densité y atteint jusqu'à 24 habitants au km<sup>2</sup> [...]. Or ce pays est déshérité. Le climat est sec. Les terres sont pauvres ou appauvries et nourrissent difficilement les populations qu'elles portent. Les risques de famine sont graves. On ne pourra réellement remédier à cette situation que par la substitution des méthodes de culture intensive [...] aux méthodes de culture extensives pratiquées par les habitants. Mais cela suppose une révolution complète dans les mœurs et les habitudes des Moose et cette substitution demandera bien du temps. En attendant, ces Moose ne peuvent vivre qu'en allant s'employer chaque année sur les cacaoyers et dans les mines de la Gold Coast. [...] [L'impôt] de capitation des Moose était en fait payé avec l'argent gagné en Gold Coast'.<sup>14</sup>

Before 1936, the mobility of the population was supposed to be strictly controlled. A change of residence from one Cercle to another could officially not take place without permission granted by the administration. Labour for the coastal economy was recruited by force, and this use of force was considered to be a necessary evil in the pursuit of the creation of a free labour market (Gervais 1990:66). However, the use of force and the absence of control over conditions on the work sites turned against the French interests. People resisted recruitment or deserted the work sites. Very often young men did not present themselves when called for recruitment because they had left for the Gold Coast to earn the money to pay taxes or because they had fled. The fact that those who returned from the Basse Côte were often sick and weak, while others had died, contributed to the unpopularity of the French labour programmes. In the 1930s, the number of seasonal migrants from the [former] Upper Volta towards the Gold Coast was estimated to have been between 35,000 and 80,000 (Sawadogo 1994:138). The continuing migration to the Gold Coast convinced the French that in particular Moose did not resist selling their labour on a capitalist market. Efforts should thus not be directed to the liberation of labour from the domestic economy, but to an improvement of the coastal economy's competitiveness as compared to the Gold Coast in attracting labour. This then became the *leitmotiv* of the colony's labour policy from 1937 to 1939.<sup>15</sup>

The Gold Coast migrants became the main target of the administration's efforts. While before 1936, it had been in the interest of the French to overestimate population figures (forced recruitment was based on quota) and, concurrently, to minimize 'spontaneous' migration to the Gold Coast (cf. also Gervais 1990:169), from 1937 onwards migration to the Gold Coast is invariably estimated to be considerable: the very existence of this 'uncaptured' free labour force legitimated the policies which aimed to capture it for the French colonial economy. In particular the year 1937, then, was characterized by a number of measures which

<sup>14</sup> Lettre no.9.C.T. du Gouverneur-Général de l'Afrique Occidentale Française au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Dakar, le 8 novembre 1937. Also, in commenting on measures to channel migration to the 'Basse Côte', the administrator of the 'Haute Côte d'Ivoire' noted: 'Nous pourrions, de cette façon travailler efficacement à la mise en valeur de notre belle colonie, nous assurerons un développement parallèle à des régions différentes dont les intérêts - qui ont pu parfois, aux regards d'observateurs superficiels ou mal avertis, apparaître opposés - sont en réalité étroitement connexes. La prospérité de la Basse Côte est le gage de la prospérité de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire et réciproquement: leur richesse est celle de la colonie elle-même et la stagnation de l'une ou de l'autre serait celle de la Côte d'Ivoire toute entière' (Circulaire no.41 à tous Cercles de l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Région de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Ouagadougou, le 23 avril 1938).

<sup>15</sup> '[La] solution véritable du problème de la main-d'oeuvre réside dans le détournement vers la Basse Côte du courant de travailleurs qui se rendent chaque année en Gold Coast' (Circulaire no.112 de l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Région de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire à tous Cercles, Ouagadougou, le 4 octobre 1938).

aimed at the creation of conditions under which movement of free labour within the colony would thrive. In January 1937, the Labour Bureau ('Office de Travail'), which had existed in the Ivory Coast since 1926, was reorganized and regional committees, presided over by the Commandants de Cercle, were established.<sup>16</sup> The aim was to realize a better tuning of labour supply and demand in the colony. In March, all Commandants de Cercle received a circular letter<sup>17</sup> in which they were called upon to oppose as little as possible the free movement of people within the colony with the aim of favouring the movement to the 'Basse Côte'.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, control of movement to the Gold Coast was supposed to be tightened.

Understandably, free circulation within the colony constituted a necessary condition for a spontaneous migration from the north to the south to be established. However, the administration had to go further. And it did. Most measures taken referred explicitly to the conditions which labourers experienced in the Gold Coast: they had to provide conditions at least as 'favourable' as those prevailing in the neighbouring colony. Thus, employers were urged to pay salaries<sup>19</sup> which approached those paid in the Gold Coast and to make important improvements in the conditions on the work sites (sanitation, food, safety). Next, transport costs were diminished, in particular by a price reduction for the tickets on the Bobo Dioulasso-Abidjan train. And, finally, it was noted that returning Moose migrants were interested in buying cola nuts in the Gold Coast with the aim of selling them in the north on their way home: the local administrators in the south of the colony were instructed to facilitate the buying of cola nuts by Moose labourers, who should not be taxed for their import into the northern territories (in contrast to those returning from the Gold Coast).<sup>20</sup>

These measures issued from high levels of the colonial administration and one may wonder whether they had any effect in practice. The correspondence of the Cercle de Kaya suggests that they had. The Commandant was urged to inquire with labourers returning from the coast whether they had been well treated and paid and to report on abuses. At the same time, he was informed by the Labour Bureau on the Labour Inspection's findings with respect to conditions on the coastal work sites. Whenever this Inspection established an enterprise's responsibility for abuses, the Commandant was advised not to allow this enterprise to recruit new labourers until an improvement in conditions had been shown.<sup>21</sup> An important issue was

<sup>16</sup> Arrêté no. I A.E. portant sur la réorganisation de l'Office du Travail, Abidjan, le 18 janvier 1937.

<sup>17</sup> Circulaire no. 311 BP A/5 du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire aux Commandants de Cercle, Abidjan, le 22 mars 1937.

<sup>18</sup> A reminder was issued only three months later: 'J'ai l'honneur de vous rappeler les prescriptions [...] et de vous prier de faciliter dans toute la mesure du possible le mouvement vers le sud qui apporte à la Basse Côte une main-d'oeuvre précieuse dont elle a le plus grand besoin' (Circulaire no. 617 BPA/I du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire aux Commandants de Cercle, Abidjan, le 25 juin 1937).

<sup>19</sup> Somé (1991:15) notes that, throughout the 1930s, plantation owners in the Gold Coast paid salaries which were seven times higher than those paid by plantation owners in the Ivory Coast. In 1936, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Ivory Coast pressured the Moogo *naaba* in Ouagadougou to encourage Moaga migration to the south. The Moogo *naaba* agreed but recommended that salaries be raised. According to Cordell *et al.* (1996:73), both the administration and private enterprises complied, but by 1938, had reduced wages again.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. in particular G.C.1. Lettre no. 9.C.T. du Gouverneur-Général de l'Afrique Occidentale Française au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Dakar, le 8 novembre 1937.

<sup>21</sup> Cf., for example, Circulaire no. 41 à tous Cercles de l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Région de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Ouagadougou, le 23 avril 1938; Circulaire no. 36 de l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Région de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire à tous Cercles, Ouagadougou, le 17 mars 1938; Circulaire no. 827 O.T. du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire et au Commandants de Cercle, Abidjan, le 5 août 1938; Instructions aux Inspecteurs des Affaires Administratives et du Travail, Abidjan, le 9 mars 1937.

also whether or not the recruited labourers had presented themselves voluntarily. Thus, for instance, in June 1937, the Lieutenant-Governor wrote to the Commandant of Kaya:

'J'ai l'honneur de vous faire connaître que votre télégramme-lettre [...] rendant compte des opérations de recrutements effectuées dans le Cercle de Kaya permettrait de considérer que les engagés ne se sont pas présenter volontairement puisque vous annoncez une dizaine de volontaires sur un recrutement de 400 travailleurs. Tel qu'est rédigé ce télégramme on peut opposer le mot "contraint" au mot "volontaire". Je ne suppose pas qu'il faille ainsi traduire, mais je vous prierais de m'en donner l'assurance. [...]

[II] ne faut plus, j'y tiens absolument, que les représentants de l'Autorité Administrative soient les pourvoyeurs de main-d'oeuvre qu'ils ont pu être dans le passé. Je ne puis tolérer à ce sujet aucune exception. Le rôle de l'Administrateur doit se borner [...] dans l'action éducatrice qui lui incombe à inciter l'indigène au travail en vue de son mieux être et dans l'apostolat du travail qu'il vous faut entreprendre, il vaut mieux convaincre qu'imposer, persuader que contraindre. [...] [A votre rôle d'éducateur correspond] en montrant aux populations sous votre tutelle, que c'est par le travail qu'elles s'élèveront'.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, the Commandants de Cercle, who before had been the main executors of the harsh forced recruitment policy, were now charged to sell to the population the new 'free labour' policy as part of their civilization mission.<sup>23</sup> While they were formally forbidden to intervene in the practical organization of labour recruitment for private interests, they were ordered to carry on the propaganda<sup>24</sup> believed to be capable of making the population turn from the Gold Coast to the 'Basse Côte'. Thereby, the administrators presented themselves in a paternalistic way, sometimes offering themselves to the potential migrants as a kind of 'fathers' they would be lacking in the Gold Coast.<sup>25</sup> Thus, in November 1937, the Commandant of Kaya reported in the following way on a labour recruitment:

<sup>22</sup> Lettre no.634 O.T. du Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire au Commandant de Cercle de Kaya, Abidjan, le 21 juin 1937.

<sup>23</sup> In a circular letter on the issue of 'propaganda in favour of labour' the Governor concluded: '[Vous] êtes donc assurés de réussir et d'amener l'indigène à accepter et à comprendre dans toute sa plénitude l'obligation naturelle au travail, principal facteur de mieux être et de progrès social' (Circulaire du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, aux Commandants de Cercles et aux Chefs de Subdivisions, Abidjan, le 28 décembre 1938).

<sup>24</sup> The French closely followed events in the Gold Coast and called upon local administrators to intensify propaganda whenever troubles were reported in the neighbouring colony: 'Au moment où, à la suite des troubles qui ont éclaté en Gold Coast ("Hold-up", 1937/38), de nombreux travailleurs Moose attendent depuis plusieurs mois pour regagner leur foyer, le règlement des salaires qui leur sont dus par leurs employeurs et où nous constatons, d'autre part, de plus en plus, combien nombreux sont ceux qui reviennent de cette colonie étrangère atteints de maladies graves [...], il apparaît tout à fait indiqué d'entreprendre une propagande intense pour essayer de détourner vers la Basse Côte d'Ivoire le courant d'émigration qui porte périodiquement nos ressortissants vers la Gold Coast' (Circulaire no.36 de l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Région de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire à tous Cercles, Ouagadougou, le 17 mars 1938). The 'hold-ups', which took place in the Gold Coast between 1908 and 1938, were periods during which cocoa farmers refused to sell their produce to buyers to express their discontent with prices offered, in the hope of forcing prices up. The last 'hold-up' in 1937-38 was the most important and lasted for seven months (Miles 1978).

<sup>25</sup> This paternalistic attitude also became apparent in the way salaries were supposed to be paid. Part of the salary was paid each month directly to the labourer while the rest ('pécule', i.e. savings) was reserved until the end of the contract and paid at the labourer's return home by the Commandant of his Cercle of origin. The administration saw in the 'pécule'-system a way to educate the population, i.e. to create a spirit of 'looking ahead': 'Je serais donc assez disposé à envisager pour les populations du nord la suppression du pécule ou le paiement sur place soit de la totalité, soit de la moitié de ce pécule en fin de contrat pour éviter surtout qu'un gaspillage inutile de l'argent gagné en achats d'objets inutiles ne vienne contrecarrer l'oeuvre que nous poursuivons, de créer chez l'indigène l'esprit de prévoyance' (Lettre no.247 O.T. du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan, le 1 avril 1938).

'J'ai [...] donné mes instructions aux représentants des Chefs. J'ai surtout insisté sur le caractère volontaire des engagements à contracter et qu'en aucun cas les Chefs ne devaient forcer les indigènes à aller en Basse-Côte. J'ai naturellement fait ressortir les avantages que nous offrons aux travailleurs tandis qu'en Gold Coast ils sont livrés à eux-mêmes et qu'à leur retour de la colonie anglaise ils sont aussi pauvres qu'à leur départ.

[...] Les indigènes sont partis très contents. Je me suis engagé à les suivre et d'intervenir en leur faveur où qu'ils se trouvent toutes les fois qu'ils auraient la moindre réclamation à formuler. J'ai eu l'impression que cet engagement les a particulièrement touché'.<sup>26,27</sup>

While in the first instance measures were aimed at creating economic conditions competitive with conditions prevailing in the Gold Coast (salaries and other conditions on the work sites, transport facilities), it did not take long before an attempt was also made to establish certain social conditions in the colony which were believed to prevail in the Gold Coast and to be of utmost importance in the channelling of migrants to the south. One of the reasons why the French thought it very difficult to deflect migration from the Gold Coast to their own coastal economy was the fact that Moose, along the road to their work sites in the Gold Coast, were assured of the presence of people of their own ethnic group with whom they could stay, a situation which did not hold in the Basse and Moyenne Ivory Coast.<sup>28</sup> In 1934, it had been attempted to settle Moose farmers - among others from the Cercle de Kaya - in 'villages de colonisation' in the Cercle de Gouro (Moyenne Côte d'Ivoire), but this attempt seems to have completely failed.<sup>29</sup> In 1938, two 'centres d'hébergement' were created, one in Treichville (Abidjan) and another in Agboville, which had to help Moose migrants feel at home and to facilitate their search for work.<sup>30</sup> More ambitious was the re-attempt to create 'villages de colonisation' along two possible itineraries leading from north to south, respectively to the east and to the west of the railway Bobo Dioulasso-Abidjan. Next to a factor in attracting Moaga labour to the south, these villages were also intended to contribute to the exploitation of a thinly inhabited region (Kong).<sup>31</sup> Finally, it was attempted to persuade 'influential chiefs

<sup>26</sup> Lettre no.295 du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Kaya, le 3 novembre 1937.

<sup>27</sup> Regarding the role of chiefs in this respect, Deniel (1974:216) mentions that they pointed out as volunteers those subjects whom they deemed undesirable.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Lettre no.160 du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Kaya, le 28 juin 1938. Some Moose had settled definitively in the Gold Coast after each massive migration movement (e.g. after the hunger of 1914, the repression of the revolt of Dédougou and Koudougou in 1916 and the military recruitment of 1918).

<sup>29</sup> In 1937 it was reported for the Cercle de Kaya that 'plusieurs Moose, installés à Zuénoula depuis avril 1934, sont revenus définitivement à Kaya sur leur demande' (Rapport Politique, premier semestre 1937, Kaya, Colonie de la Côte d'Ivoire). In 1938, this failure was attributed to the bad choice of the villages' locations (in the forest), to the fact that individuals instead of complete families were recruited for these villages at random and to the fact that Gouro instead of Moose houses were constructed for the colonists (Lettre no.967 O.T. du Gouverneur Général de l'Afrique Occidentale Française au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Dakar, le 8 novembre 1937).

<sup>30</sup> 'Il y aura [...] le plus grand intérêt à ce que [les Commandants de Cercle] fassent remarquer que la Basse Côte n'est plus un pays où les voltaïques se trouvent isolés. Les travailleurs ont, en effet, la certitude d'être bien accueillis à leur arrivée au centre d'hébergement de Treichville et [...] d'Agboville. [Les deux chefs de ces centres] leur procureront rapidement du travail à d'excellentes conditions' (Lettre no.967 O.T. du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan, le 2 novembre 1938).

<sup>31</sup> 'Il existe d'autre part des pistes caravanières [...] conduisant de Bobo Dioulasso et Ouagadougou vers la Côte d'Ivoire. La principale de ces pistes [...] passait par Bobo Dioulasso - Kong - Dabakala - Groumania - Indénié - Aboisso. [...] Cette piste est encore très fréquentée des indigènes. Il semble qu'on pourrait la rendre attirante pour les Moose en la jalonnant, dans la région de Kong [...] de quelques villages de colonisation habités par leurs congénères. [...] En évitant [les écueils du passé] et en profitant de l'expérience acquise, les villages de colonisation peuvent et doivent réussir. Ils permettraient de mettre en valeur la région dépeuplée de Kong [...] et constitueraient des relais pour les travailleurs Moose allant s'engager sur les plantations de l'Indénié. [...] Il faudrait pareillement étudier un itinéraire conduisant à l'ouest (pays de Man) [...]. On disposerait ainsi de trois itinéraires partant en éventail de Bobo

from the north' to play a triggering role: they were to be the first to settle in the south, together with their families, and supposed to receive Moose migrants and to help them find employment.<sup>32</sup>

Throughout the period from 1937 to 1939 there were signs that the operations to divert migration from the Gold Coast to the Ivory Coast on a voluntary basis did not produce the results hoped for and that, if any progress was made at all, this happened very slowly. In 1938, still some 50,000 labourers were said to have migrated to the Gold Coast.<sup>33</sup> Of the 2,249 labourers recruited in the Cercle de Kaya in 1937, 6 had died while another 104 had deserted the work site before the end of their contracts.<sup>34</sup> One is tempted to conclude that habits were hard to change rapidly both for employers and potential migrants. That this might have been true for the latter could count on some understanding with the colonial administration:

*'Sans doute, dans la plupart des régions, subsiste-t-il parmi vos administrés, dominés par le souvenir de l'ancienne corvée gratuite, une incompréhension réelle ou feinte de la réforme entreprise. Cet état d'esprit devrait céder progressivement devant une propagande active, illustrée par l'exemple des travailleurs qui, désormais, retirent régulièrement un profit équitable de leur labour sur les chantiers, sur lesquels l'on peinait jadis gratuitement, et le plus souvent sans nourriture'.<sup>35</sup>*

It must have been difficult for the local administrators to gain the trust of the population, all the more so because the forced recruitment for the 'prestations'-system (public works, cf. chapter 4) had not been abolished: the same person responsible for the organization of the 'prestations' - experienced as exploitative as well - was proclaiming that practices in that other field of labour recruitment had suddenly changed.

At the beginning of 1939 impatience surfaced in Abidjan. The economy was said to be growing and, taking into account the development of public works, the demand for labour continuously increased and became more and more difficult to satisfy. Bitterly, the Governor referred to the 50,000 men who went to the Gold Coast in 1938 ('c'est autant de perdu pour notre agriculture et nos exploitations'). Thus, pressure was put on the administration of the 'Haute Côte d'Ivoire' to do its best to increase the number of labourers for the coastal economy. While he left it open to the Commandants de Cercle how to go about it, the Governor of the Ivory Coast nevertheless asked each Cercle to provide for a number of labourers for the coastal economy equal to 5% of the men recognized as able for 'prestations' labour. This percentage would come to constitute the norm in the following years. As for the policy change launched in 1936-1937, the Governor remarked: 'Je fonde [...] les plus grands espoirs sur les résultats que donnera l'organisation en cours pour déclencher un mouvement

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et Ouagadougou, avec le chemin de fer au centre' (Lettre no.9.C.T. du Gouverneur Général de l'Afrique Occidentale Française au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Dakar, le 8 novembre 1937).

<sup>32</sup> Lettre no.I.049 bis O.T. de l'Inspecteur du Travail au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan, le 16 septembre 1938. In the same letter, the Labour Inspector reported to have designated a Moaga chief for Agboville.

<sup>33</sup> Circulaire no.9 de l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire à tous Cercles, Ouagadougou, le 14 mars 1939.

<sup>34</sup> Lettre no.65 du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Kaya, le 18 mars 1938.

<sup>35</sup> Instructions du Gouverneur de l'A.O.F., le 16 août 1938.

spontané de descente vers la Basse Côte. Il est certain cependant qu'il faudra attendre quelque temps encore pour que le système porte ses fruits'.<sup>36</sup>

Whatever hopes this Governor may have had, with the second world war breaking out only a few months later, the whole project of creating *spontaneous* migration from the north to the south was jeopardized. This does not mean that there was not a certain continuity with respect to the policy pursued in the two preceding years: measures with respect to conditions on work sites continued to be adhered to, the principle of attempting to match labour supply and demand through the Labour Office and its regional committees was maintained and, in general, it was tried to 'favour' migration movement from the 'Haute Côte d'Ivoire' to the 'Basse Côte' and this mainly by deflecting the Gold Coast migration.<sup>37</sup> The Governor-General set the tone:

'Il m'a été signalé que certaines entreprises dont l'activité intéresse la Défense Nationale ou l'Economie Impériale éprouveraient des difficultés dans le recrutement des manoeuvres, en dépit des avantages qu'elles offriraient à ces derniers. Au moment où un effort intensif et soutenu s'impose à toute la Nation, il serait extrêmement fâcheux qu'une partie de la main-d'oeuvre physiquement apte et disponible pût rester insuffisamment employée. Je vous prie donc de vouloir bien inviter les Chefs de Circonscription placés sous vos ordres à s'efforcer d'obtenir, par une propagande active, la plus large utilisation des ressources locales en main-d'oeuvre. [...] Il va sans dire que l'action administrative, telle qu'elle est définie ci-dessus, ne doit s'exercer qu'en faveur des entreprises qui ont pour habitude de respecter scrupuleusement la réglementation sur le travail'.<sup>38</sup>

The point is that during the war, the emphasis in discourse on labour shifted heavily from the conditions of the labourers and their voluntary recruitment to the interests of the French metropole which had to be satisfied. As before 1936, the distinction between recruitment for private and public interests again became blurred<sup>39</sup> and local administrators again had to organize the recruitment for private enterprises.<sup>40</sup> In 1940, the Cercle de Kaya provided 2,965 labourers for the forestry and agricultural exploitations of the 'Basse Côte', which was almost twice the number in 1939 and respectively about 900 and 750 men more than in 1938 and 1937. Nevertheless, answering a question from his superior as to the limits on labour recruitment in Kaya, the Commandant maintained that, as no difficulties had been encountered with previous recruitment and as, according to him, people began to understand the advantages they obtained by working in the south, it would be possible - 'if imposed by circumstances and in the major interest of colonisation' - to recruit each year 5,000 men from

<sup>36</sup> Lettre no.165 O.T. du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan, le 19 février 1939.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Circulaire no.374 O.T. du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire et aux Commandants de Cercle, Abidjan, le 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1940.

<sup>38</sup> Circulaire no.31 AP/2(T) du Gouverneur Général de l'A.O.F. aux Gouverneurs du Groupe, Dakar, le 2 mai 1940.

<sup>39</sup> 'La discipline ne doit pas seulement s'exercer à l'égard des directives et des ordres de l'Administration, mais aussi bien à l'égard des employeurs qui participent à l'économie du pays et qui, comme tels, contribuent à l'oeuvre de Défense Nationale' (Lettre no.489 O.T. du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, aux Commandants de Cercle et aux Chefs de Subdivision, Abidjan, le 11 juin 1940).

<sup>40</sup> Cf. also. Lettre no.74I du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, Kaya, le 18 juin 1941.

his Cercle.<sup>41</sup> He was taken at his word<sup>42</sup> and in the months and years to follow supplementary recruitment was regularly demanded from the Cercle de Kaya.

In the same year 1941, when finally 3,531 persons were recruited for the 'Basse Côte', the intensified recruitment was reported to have caused problems for local subsistence production, hampered as it was by a lack of labour. On several occasions, the Commandant of Kaya now warned that the pace at which labourers were recruited in his Cercle could not be maintained and that there was a growing risk of a new exodus to the Gold Coast.<sup>43</sup> The burden for Kaya however was not lessened in 1942, since 3,568 persons were recruited on one year contracts, i.e. more than ever before. The Commandant noted that he saw himself confronted with 'a momentary exhaustion of human resources'.<sup>44</sup> In 1943, a reduction of recruitment in the 'Haute' and 'Moyenne Côte' was announced<sup>45</sup> and also reflected in the recruitment figures of Kaya, where in 1943 'only' 2,437 persons were recruited.<sup>46</sup>

By that time, the harm had already been done. While during the years from 1937 to 1939, efforts had been undertaken to abandon forced labour recruitment for private interests, the war period destroyed whatever progress had been made in this respect. The administration did not have any illusions as to the voluntary character of recruitment (the project of establishing a free labour market had already been abandoned earlier):

'Les devoirs des manoeuvres exigent d'être aujourd'hui strictement fixés parce que la disparition progressive des volontaires et les circonstances de guerre ont contraint l'Administration à prendre entièrement en main ce problème et à considérer le service de travail comme un service de guerre basé non plus sur le libre consentement, mais sur la discipline obligatoirement consentie'.<sup>47</sup>

The imposition of labour recruitment as a war service from which nobody could withdraw brought abuses again to the fore. Although it is said that the Labour Inspection continued to do its job, the deplorable conditions on the work sites could not be concealed (food shortages, illness).<sup>48</sup> Desertions from, or on the way to, the work sites in the 'Basse Côte' were frequently reported.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, it was also during this period that certain events suggested that a 'free labour market' did begin to appear, albeit not in the way it had been imagined by the colonial authorities. Indeed, next to the plantations owned by Europeans, working essentially with

<sup>41</sup> Lettre no.28/C du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Kaya, le 2 juin 1941.

<sup>42</sup> Only four months later, he was asked to provide a supplementary 2,000 labourers mostly for private plantation owners in the Basse Côte (Télégramme-lettre no.2.528 AS/I de l'Inspecteur du Travail à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan, le 7 octobre 1941).

<sup>43</sup> Lettre no.287 du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya au Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire, le 20 février 1942.

<sup>44</sup> Rapport Mensuel, mars 1943, Cercle de Kaya, Colonie de la Côte d'Ivoire.

<sup>45</sup> Lettre-Circulaire no.48/IT de l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire aux Commandants de Cercle, Ouagadougou, le 20 août 1943.

<sup>46</sup> Relève des travailleurs contractuels recrutés dans le Cercle de Kaya du 1<sup>er</sup> janvier au 31 décembre 1943. Kaya, le 24 janvier 1944. Songre *et al.* (1974:387) and Sawadogo (1994:136) also present figures of labour recruitment in the Upper Volta showing a substantial increase during the years 1941-44, with a peak in 1942.

<sup>47</sup> Note sur l'application de la réglementation du travail en temps de guerre en Côte d'Ivoire, Abidjan, le 9 juillet 1943.

<sup>48</sup> Circulaire de l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire aux Commandants de Cercle et Chefs de Subdivision, Ouagadougou, le 4 juin 1943.

<sup>49</sup> Lettre no.I.245 du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya à l'Inspecteur du Travail, Kaya, le 27 septembre 1941; Circulaire no.1075/IT de l'Inspection du Travail à tous Cercles, Abidjan, le 28 septembre 1943.

recruited labour, indigenous cocoa plantations appear to have developed equally well. The indigenous plantation owners too were entitled to recruit labourers through the Labour Office and they did so to such an extent that the administration deemed it necessary to protect the interests of the Europeans. Early in 1942, it was announced that the issuing of new concessions for plantations would be limited and that the supply of 'administrative' labour to indigenous plantation owners would be reduced. The latter were ordered to rely exclusively on family and voluntary labour so that recruited labour could be reserved for European plantation owners ('L'ensemble de ces dispositions permettra d'assurer une meilleure répartition de la main-d'oeuvre indispensable au maintien de l'économie présente et à son développement normal!').<sup>50</sup> These measures could not prevent the further development of a practice, already remarked in 1940<sup>51</sup>, whereby administratively recruited labourers left European plantations before their contracts had expired to work with indigenous plantation owners, i.e. so-called 'débauchage'. The 'débauchage' was draining the colony's labour reserve, from which in the first place the European enterprises were supposed to benefit:

*'Je veux que vous mettiez tout en oeuvre pour éviter le débauchage trop fréquent des travailleurs par des planteurs indigènes, qui, n'ayant pas à supporter les frais de recrutement ou de rapatriement, n'hésitent pas à offrir des salaires supérieurs pour un travail plus agréable, parce que conçu suivant les méthodes autochtones. [...] Tout débauchage, même toute tentative, doit être soumis au Tribunal Indigène. [...] Votre sévérité pourra seule réduire cette plaie du marché du travail. [...] Vous devez également éviter que les déserteurs - ou mêmes les engagés ayant fini leur contrat - ne s'établissent dans votre Cercle [...]. Chaque unité gagnée par vous est perdue pour le Cercle de recrutement. Or, la ponction des Cercles fournisseurs de main-d'oeuvre a été telle ces dernières années qu'il ne leur est plus possible de s'appauvrir en hommes.'*<sup>52</sup>

By the end of the second world war, the first unwelcome 'free' labour movement to the Gold Coast had not been suppressed and, what was more, another market for labour from the north had developed which was equally disapproved of by the colonial administration.

### **Labour migration in the 1950s: disruption of social organization?**

Based on the conventions of the Conference of Brazzaville of 1944, forced labour was abolished altogether in 1946, i.e. both for private and for public enterprise (cf. République de Haute Volta n.d.a:48). In 1947 the Colony of the Upper Volta was reconstituted. As the system of 'prestations' now was also abandoned, the conditions for free labour circulation were realized to a larger extent than before the war. Migrants were furthermore allowed to be accompanied by their wives and children, a proposition suggested already in 1932 but opposed by employers until 1947 (Marchal 1986:415). Until 1950, the administration even subsidized free transport of labourers by train to the Ivory Coast, as such linking up again with the pre-war policy to make the Ivory Coast more attractive as compared to the Gold Coast.

<sup>50</sup> Lettre no.25 AS-I du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire et aux Commandants de Cercle, Abidjan, le 18 janvier 1942.

<sup>51</sup> 'On me signale [...] un certain nombre de débauchages, le plus souvent pratiqués par de petits planteurs indigènes au détriment des entreprises de colonisation voisines' (Lettre no.489 O.T. du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, aux Commandants de Cercle et aux Chefs de Subdivisions, Abidjan, le 11 juin 1940).

<sup>52</sup> Circulaire no.464/IT du Gouverneur de la Côte d'Ivoire aux Commandants de Cercle de la Basse Côte, Abidjan, le 28 avril 1943.



Only a small fraction of the migrants made use of this opportunity, which was attributed, on the one hand, to the formalities which had to be complied with and, on the other hand, to the opposition of elders to the migration by the young because of which migrants tended to leave in secrecy (cf. also below).<sup>53</sup>

Although figures on the number of migrants to the Ivory Coast and to the Gold Coast have to be taken with caution and are often contradictory, migration to the Gold Coast, compared to the pre-war period, probably did not diminish until 1960, and certainly not in absolute numbers.<sup>54</sup> Still, it seems undisputed that in this period from 1946 to 1960 spontaneous migration developed also to the Ivory Coast.<sup>55</sup> Progressively, the balance began to turn in the latter's favour.<sup>56</sup> This is clearly confirmed by the life histories of elders now living in Ziinoogo who benefited from the newly gained post-war liberty of movement in the 1950s.<sup>57</sup> Those men who started to migrate in the early 1950s initially went to the Gold Coast, while their next migrations most often were directed to the Ivory Coast. Hereafter follows Rabanega's account<sup>58</sup>, which in many respects is representative of the migration histories of his peers.

'[In the early 1950s] I spent twice a period of one year in the Gold Coast. I was in search of money and not yet married. I walked from here to Ouagadougou and from Ouagadougou to Po. It was not easy to find transport at that time. At the frontier, near Po, I worked for five days on the fields to earn the money for the transport to Tamale and from there I travelled further into the Gold Coast. The work I did there consisted of clearing fields: cutting trees and cutting grass with the machete. At that time, the Ivory Coast did not yet exist for us. It had not been long that the Ivory Coast was only forced labour and "Bamako".<sup>59</sup> That, when I left the village again, I did not return to the Gold Coast but went to the Ivory Coast because money had come to the Ivory Coast. I walked to Ouagadougou and there we

<sup>53</sup> 'Un accroissement important de l'émigration saisonnière vers la Basse Côte d'Ivoire a été constaté. [...] Cette émigration au profit des entreprises des régions forestières a conservé son caractère clandestin, les émigrants, malgré toutes les assurances données relatives à la liberté totale des déplacements, du choix de l'employeur, des conditions d'engagement, se refusant de se présenter au moment de leur départ, aux bureaux du Cercle pour se munir des pièces d'identité indispensables [...]. [Je] n'ai donc pas la possibilité de renseigner exactement [...] sur l'importance de ces migrations de travailleurs' (Rapport Politique, mois de novembre 1947, Cercle de Kaya, Territoire de la Haute Volta).

<sup>54</sup> In 1952, the number of migrants to the Gold Coast was estimated at about 45,000 per year (Territoire de la Haute Volta 1952). In 1961, the number of people originally from the Upper Volta staying in Ghana was estimated at 150,000, of which about 100,000 were seasonal migrants. About 75% of the latter were Moose (République de la Haute Volta n.d.a:44-45). Rouch (1956:157) even maintains that the period after the second world war was marked by a new 'rush of migrants to Gold Coast' (the frontier had been closed in 1941-43).

<sup>55</sup> Except for the migrants recruited through the administration, even approximative figures on spontaneous migration to the Ivory Coast in the 1950s are lacking. Throughout this period, about 50,000 men, mainly Moose, were each year officially recruited for the Ivory Coast (Skinner 1965:61; Territoire de la Haute Volta 1952).

<sup>56</sup> Based on a survey of 1959, it was estimated that, of all Moose migrations to the coast, about two thirds were directed to Ghana and one third to the Ivory Coast (République de la Haute Volta n.d.a:46).

<sup>57</sup> I take the 1950s as a starting point for the analysis, based on my own fieldwork data, of migration to the Gold Coast and the Ivory Coast. This is done because, firstly, the life histories of people who were in the Gold Coast or the Ivory Coast before 1950 add no new insight to what could be learned from the archives on forced labour practices. Secondly, the number of such life histories I collected is limited. It is only for the period starting in the 1950s that I obtained a substantial number of life histories in which actors now living tell of their experiences in either the Gold Coast/Ghana or the Ivory Coast or both. The interest of beginning the analysis here and not later, is situated in the fact that it permits one to verify to what extent the actors' experiences and interpretations corroborate findings of earlier migration studies and, importantly, to establish changes in causes, effects and meaning of this migration over time.

<sup>58</sup> Rabanega, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*; cf. also chapter 4, case 1, and chapter 5 on fosterage.

<sup>59</sup> Rabanega is referring here to forced labour on the Bamako-Dakar railway.

were vaccinated like soldiers<sup>60</sup> and from there we were sent to the palm nut plantations. Transport costs were 3,520 FCFA and that took you all the way to the plantations. We needed no papers, only the vaccination. We went by train from Ouagadougou to Treichville and there the European who had employed us came to fetch us and brought us straight to the plantations. When I was there, it rained every day.

When you left at that time, you didn't tell anybody. Yes, on the eve of your departure you told one person you would be leaving and then you would sneak away during the night, leaving people to wonder the next day where you had gone to. And when you came back, you also did so at night without other people seeing you. Nowadays it is different. People are not afraid any more.

In our time too we helped those who stayed behind in the village. If you were able to return with some 25,000 or 30,000 FCFA, you had succeeded. With 3,500 FCFA you could buy a cow. No, I did not buy cattle on my return. I bought some goats and also clothes and a bicycle and I helped those who were in need of help. There were not many bicycles here at that time and if you returned with a bicycle that too was a sign of your success.

After I returned from the Ivory Coast, I got married and that is why I did not leave again. At that time, you did not take your wife into the "brousse".

Others as well pointed out that initially it was simply not customary to travel to the Ivory Coast ('In that period, we went to the Gold Coast. We didn't yet know the Ivory Coast'<sup>61</sup>). At the same time, actors' accounts refer to the fact that the Ivory Coast was still associated with forced labour. It probably took some time before these bad memories had been pushed aside. Still, the swiftness with which the Ivory Coast established itself first as an important and soon as nearly the only destination for migrants is impressive. While in the first years of the 1950s almost all men I interviewed migrated to the Gold Coast, this happened only occasionally afterwards. From then on, migration from the village of Ziinoogo was directed mainly, and later on even completely, to the Ivory Coast. Rabanega's observation that 'money had come to the Ivory Coast' is revealing in this respect. It was only when the Ivory Coast came to be perceived as more profitable than the Gold Coast/Ghana that the former became the primary destination.

It is indeed important to note that the development of a plantation economy in the Ivory Coast had lagged behind its development in the Gold Coast ever since the beginning of colonization. In the Gold Coast, commercial exploitation of cocoa, based mainly on indigenous farms, had started already at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hill 1963:176). Cocoa production and exports grew very rapidly until the eve of the second world war, except for a period of stagnation due to the economic crisis of 1929 (Gregory *et al.* 1989:85, Teal 1986:271). This development was made possible in no small part by the availability of abundant manual labour. The coming of Moose, who either fled French colonial repression or came to earn a cash income to pay taxes, was thus very much welcomed in this context (cf. also Rouch 1956). Although, in the Ivory Coast, a programme of forced cocoa cultivation was initiated in 1909 (Toungara 1980:262), the development of commercial cocoa and coffee production got going only in the 1920s<sup>62</sup>: on the one hand, the cocoa crop had been adopted by

<sup>60</sup> In 1951, the SIAMO ('Syndicat Interprofessionnel d'Acheminement de la Main-d'Oeuvre') was created by Ivory Coast plantation owners to facilitate the recruitment of labourers for the plantation and forestry economy which was continuously confronted with labour scarcity. Recruitment centers were opened in Ouagadougou, Bobo Dioulasso, Ouahigouya, Koudougou and Diébougou (République de la Haute Volta n.d.a:49, Sawadogo 1994:137). In 1956, probably the year that Rabanega went to the Ivory Coast, the government of the Upper Volta created a Labour Office, responsible for medical and administrative control of labourers recruited by the SIAMO for the Ivory Coast (République de la Haute Volta n.d.a:49).

<sup>61</sup> Raboke, *nakombga* lineage elder. Rouch (1956:158) also pointed to 'custom' as the predominating factor in directing migrants to the Gold Coast in the 1950s.

<sup>62</sup> Amin (1971:74) attributes this lagging behind of the Ivory Coast to the fact that its forest zone had remained inhospitable and isolated from the rest of the world, as compared to the coasts of, for example, the Gold Coast or Senegal, where early contacts with Europeans had taken place.

Ivorian farmers who lived near the frontier with the Gold Coast, on the other hand it was undertaken by European planters on an extensive scale from 1925 onwards (Tricart 1957:212). As explained above, the development of this plantation sector was subsequently pursued through so-called administrative - i.e. forced - labour recruitment for private, mainly European interests, except for the short period from 1937 to 1939. The French did not succeed in deflecting 'spontaneous' migration to the Ivory Coast and the plantation economy continued to grow relatively slowly (Gregory *et al.* 1989:91). The continuing success of the Gold Coast in attracting Moose migrants can then be attributed partly to the fact that, there, the plantation economy had been well established and labour conditions remained better by far. The latter situation could persist among other things because, until 1946, the colonial administration of the Ivory Coast had been too concerned to protect European interests<sup>63</sup>, which hampered the development of indigenous plantations on the one hand, and gave European planters no incentive whatsoever to improve labour conditions on the other hand. The fact that the 'prestation' system had been maintained when forced labour recruitment for private interests was abolished in 1937, made colonial policy half-hearted. It is not difficult therefore to understand that this too contributed to continued migration to the Gold Coast.

The shift of migration from the Gold Coast to the Ivory Coast cannot be accounted for without referring to the complete abolition of forced labour recruitment in 1946. However, at least as important for the swiftness with which this shift took place were economic and political developments in the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast. The plantation economy in the Ivory Coast grew very rapidly in the fifteen years after the second world war. Amin (1971:74-75) maintains that this rapid growth was made possible by the liberation of 'immense forces' when forced labour was abolished<sup>64</sup>, by the political power of indigenous plantation owners, organized in a syndicate led by Houphouët-Boigny, and by the completion of large infrastructural works during the 1950s (e.g. the railway Abidjan-Ouagadougou, the Vridi canal, the port of Abidjan). At the same time, cocoa production in the Gold Coast stagnated. More important even, throughout the 1950s, producer prices for cocoa, in both economies the primary crop, were significantly higher in the Ivory Coast than in the Gold Coast (Teal 1986:274). Finally, the climate for Moose migrants had deteriorated in the Gold Coast during the first half of the 1950s, when some of their leaders got involved in the strife between political parties and sometimes were repatriated (Skinner 1963:313).<sup>65</sup>

In the 1950s, the pattern of migration by young men to the Ivory Coast showed a certain continuity with the pattern prevailing under forced labour conditions. Indeed, like Rabanega (cf. above), other men too found employment either through recruiters, sent by Ivorian employers to the Upper Volta, or recruitment centres of the SIAMO. While it may

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<sup>63</sup> That this was so, even during the short period of liberalization of 1937-39, clearly comes to the fore from the above account on that period.

<sup>64</sup> 'Ironiquement, [...] la fin des politiques du recrutement forcé ou quasi-forcé - qui avaient comme but d'assurer la force de travail nécessaire au développement de la Côte d'Ivoire - a été un des plus importants facteurs dans l'augmentation de l'offre de la main-d'oeuvre burkinabé' (Gregory *et al.* 1989:96).

<sup>65</sup> The Gold Coast was granted self-government by the British in 1951, which resulted in confrontations between different political factions (Skinner 1963:312). Economic growth in Ghana was negative in the 1950s and continued to be so in the 1960s and 1970s, with cocoa exports stagnating in the 1950s and 1960s and declining in the 1970s (Teal 1986:269). Migration to Ghana later on was further hampered by the Alien Compliance Order of 1969, which led to the expulsion of all foreigners without a valid residence permit (Zachariah & Condé 1981:38; cf. Adomako-Sarfoh (1974) for the motivations behind this Order and its consequences for the Ghanaian cocoa economy). In the meantime, the Ivory Coast realized what came to be known as 'the Ivory Coast economic miracle' (Hecht 1983).

have been so that, already at the time of forced labour recruitment, Moose settlements had been created at several places in the Ivory Coast, either spontaneously or organized by the colonial administration, such 'nodes' were not accessible to migrants from Ziinoogo. The first acquaintance with the Ivory Coast's free labour market was realized mainly through organized recruitment. Migrants did wage work in different sectors, mainly plantations and also construction, the employers often being Europeans, so that in this respect as well a continuity with the past existed: 'What we looked for was to work for Europeans. To work with an African was thought to be no good'.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, as before, time spent abroad seldom exceeded one year in the 1950s. Only from the 1960s onwards did migrants regularly stay away for two, three years or longer, before paying visits to the village.

An important aspect of migration at that time was the secrecy with which it is said to have been surrounded. Migrants left during the night, notifying as few people as possible, and also returned secretly. While secrecy has not disappeared, it is nowadays explained differently. For migrations until the 1970s, it is stressed that permission of the elders was not sought. Consensus reigns as to the fact that departures for either the Ivory Coast or the Gold Coast were still not 'free', this time not because of forced recruitment but because of the elders' opposition to their sons' leaving:

'At the time I went to the Ivory Coast [second half of the 1950s], one didn't ask permission to leave. You went into the house of your father and stole some money to pay for the journey or you took your mother's cloth to sell it on the way and have the money to continue the road. My parents thought that those who left for the Ivory Coast would never return, that they would die there. They were afraid. I was not afraid myself to leave because when I did so I knew that forced labour was over. It was because my parents had known the time of forced labour that they thought the Ivory Coast had not changed'.<sup>67</sup>

This fear was generally put forward as the main reason for the elders' resistance<sup>68</sup>. Furthermore, elders thought things were going well at home making it superfluous to go and look for money elsewhere, or they claimed not to have enough labour at home to allow their sons to leave. I return to this issue below, but it can be remarked here that whenever someone touched upon the earlier resistance of elders, this always was contrasted with today's situation: 'Before, the road was not open and elders thought that if you left you would die. Nowadays the doors are open'.<sup>69</sup>

As also expressed above in Rabanega's account, men often travelled alone, and marriage most often put an end to a man's travelling abroad. Only a few men who started to migrate in the 1950s continued to do so after they were married. Finally, it is generally maintained by present-day elders that they too, when they migrated in the 1950s, helped their kin who stayed in the village, among other things to pay taxes, and that they brought cola nuts, partly as presents, partly for trade. Money earned abroad was also used for personal purchases: some goats or sheep, but more often status symbols like clothes and, in particular, a bicycle. Nowadays too, a bicycle still constitutes an important acquisition by a young man after his first migration, but it has certainly lost the significance it had before:

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<sup>66</sup> Saalfo, Yiitaoore *tengbiiga*.

<sup>67</sup> Ranini, Kuritgo.

<sup>68</sup> Hinderink & Tempelman (1978:104) made a similar observation with respect to migration of young Senoufo men from the northern Ivory Coast to the coast in the 1950s: elders tried to prevent young men from leaving, but to no avail because the young men left in the middle of the night.

<sup>69</sup> Ousmane, Rumtenga Yiyooa.

In the 1950s, Yuma went once to the Gold Coast and twice to the Ivory Coast: 'I went to the Ivory Coast to earn money. Labour was not paid well then, but money had more value than today. When I returned from the Ivory Coast the second time, I bought a bicycle in Ouagadougou. It cost me 12,500 FCFA. I still have the same bicycle today. Once, it has been stolen and for four months I had no bicycle. It is 34 years old now [1994] and no man in this compound, except for Ousmane and Jean [cf. case 2, chapter 4], can say that he is older than my bicycle'.<sup>70</sup>

It is not possible to quantify the importance for Ziinoogo of migration abroad in the 1950s. It could however be established that those men who were aged about twenty at that time, and who were still living in the village at the time of my fieldwork, with only a few exceptions, had taken their chances. Whatever the number of men that migrated, the return home appears to have constituted a very glorious occasion:

'I have been to the Gold Coast. Our parents most certainly did not agree to our departure. It was an escape on our part. Young men left to earn the money to buy a red hat [Muslim-type fezzes], or nice clothes or shoes, which they then wore at feasts like the Namisigi *kitoaga*<sup>71</sup>. You saw someone who had left coming back with nice clothes and then you wanted to leave too to have it yourself so that at your return too "griots" and tamtams would sing your glory in the markets. Nowadays there is no longer any singing when you return'.<sup>72</sup>

In many ways, the above accounts corroborate earlier findings for that period. Gregory *et al.* (1989:94) note that throughout the period from 1947 to 1959 the relative importance of the Ivory Coast as the migrants' destination progressively increased. The large majority of the migrants found employment as wage workers in the coastal economies (mainly plantations and forestry). Durations of a Moaga migrant's stay in the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast were, at average, respectively 1.42 and 1.30 years. A new phenomenon is observed: repeated migration (short stays abroad are alternated with stays in the village of origin; *ibidem*:97). A survey on Upper Voltan migration to Ghana and the Ivory Coast, carried out in 1959, showed that two thirds of Moose migrants were single. Almost all migrants were men and 75% of the migrants were aged between 20 and 34 years (République de la Haute Volta n.d.a:46). Although in particular in the Gold Coast some Moose appeared to have settled definitively (plantation owners, traders, civil servants)<sup>73</sup>, Moaga migration in the 1950s therefore was essentially a male dominated temporary and circular migration, with a preference for wage labour in the agricultural sector (Gregory *et al.* 1989:95 observe that, from 1947 to 1959, 92% of Upper Voltan migrants became 'proletarians' as soon as they had arrived either in the Gold Coast or the Ivory Coast).

What were the effects of this migration on the village economy and social organization at home? In particular in the period extending from 1933 to 1947, the effects of migration on the home land had been subordinated to the pursuit of development of the coastal economy and the supply of the 'metropole'. Still, the principle of migration was viewed positively also in the sense that fewer people had to be supported by the scarce resources of the northern regions while at the same time wages earned at the coast were supposed to constitute a welcome complement to subsistence agriculture. In the 1950s too, migration continued to be

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<sup>70</sup> Yuma, Runtenga Yiyooaga.

<sup>71</sup> The *kitoose* (sing. *kitoaga*) are feasts, held at the end of the millet harvests, to honor lineages' ancestors (cf. also Lallemand 1977:327).

<sup>72</sup> Sumdugudu, Baskondo.

<sup>73</sup> Both in the Gold Coast/Ghana and in the Ivory Coast, the search for work and housing was facilitated by the existence of so called settlement nodes, where Moose migrants tended to live together, and which were established around the earliest arrived immigrants.

conceived of as an important potential resource for the Upper Volta. The administration concluded agreements with employers in both the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast on the conditions of labour recruitment (notably with respect to salaries) in order to better safeguard the benefits of migration for its own economy. It was for instance estimated that in 1953 migrants would enrich the Upper Volta with some 40 million FCFA of remittances (Territoire de la Haute Volta 1952).<sup>74</sup> At the same time, however, migration was also viewed by the Commandant of Kaya as his Cercle's greatest evil and cause of poverty:

Il convient de ne pas cacher le mal dont souffre le Cercle. Le pays se dépeuple chaque année perdant ainsi toute la jeune couche en âge de travailler ne conservant que des improductifs; vieillards et enfants en bas âge d'où une pauvreté très marquée et la difficulté rencontrée par l'Administration à recouvrir l'impôt. [...] Le tableau de la main-d'oeuvre recrutée en Haute Volta pour la Côte d'Ivoire montre que le Cercle de Kaya vient en tête de tous les Cercles. [...] On ignore le chiffre des jeunes gens qui partent pour la Gold Coast'.<sup>75</sup>

With respect to the relationship between migration to the Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast and changes in village economy and social organization in the 1950s, the work of Skinner (1960, 1965) has been influential. According to Skinner (1960:380), labour migration had become 'an integral part of the Moaga economic system' by the time forced labour was abolished in 1947. When he observes that young men migrated 'in search of money' to pay taxes, a bicycle or clothes, this confirms findings in Ziinoogo. He maintains that in the 1950s, Moose had succeeded in building up 'an ideal pattern of the way in which migration must take place if it is not to upset their socio-cultural system', i.e. seasonal migration not overlapping with the growing season at home. However, one of the major characteristics of migration at that time was the failure of about 20% of the migrants to return home within the year. These migrants' families were obliged to sow smaller fields since, also due to migration, many other families too were confronted with labour shortages and thus communal help systems (notably *si-soose*) declined.<sup>76</sup> Next, the absence of young men led to a shift in the land use system, in the sense that there was simply not enough labour to farm personal fields (*beolse*) next to the main field (*puugkasenga*). Hence, the access of young men and women to a personal 'income' (the *beolse* harvests) diminished. A kind of vicious cycle was established: in order to obtain desired objects (clothes, bicycles), young men had to migrate.

I have not been able to reconstruct the effects of migration in the 1950s on land use practice in Ziinoogo, certainly not to such an extent abling me to compare with Skinner's findings. In other respects, however, a comparison is possible. Firstly, Skinner also found that migration took place without the elders' approval. Secondly, the earnings of a migrant were generally spent on a bicycle and clothes and, on his return, he let himself be fêted for one day at the market place. Migration brought no long-lasting assets or prestige, and this

<sup>74</sup> 'Il est nécessaire de favoriser et d'organiser les migrations sur les territoires voisins [...] de façon que les migrants considérés individuellement, et la Haute Volta en général, tirent un avantage substantiel d'un phénomène qui, jusqu'ici, a surtout profité aux territoires employeurs. Nous devons chercher, de toutes manières, d'améliorer leurs conditions d'installation et de travail' (Territoire de la Haute Volta 1952).

<sup>75</sup> Rapport Politique annuel 1955, Cercle de Kaya, Territoire de la Haute Volta.

<sup>76</sup> In this respect, it may noted that both Gervais (1990) and Remy *et al.* (1977) maintain that the combinatory effect of repressive colonial policy and migration to the Gold Coast previous to the second world war had been an 'atomization' of farming enterprises.

notwithstanding the considerable value of goods and cash repatriated each year.<sup>77</sup> Whereas Rouch (1956:158-159) saw Moaga labour migration essentially as a blessing because of the remittances sent home<sup>78</sup>, Skinner (1960, 1965) considered it to constitute a factor contributing to the disruption of 'traditional' social organization. Alongside the decline of communal help systems, he noted that 'the structural basis of the Moaga marriage system' was undermined. Labour migration of a large number of young men prevented the elders from pursuing marriage arrangements, which were based customarily on long-term gift exchanges. Attempts by returned migrants to obtain wives by being generous to lineage heads through gifts brought from abroad were disliked and equated with 'buying women'. On the other hand, the money earned abroad by migrants constituted resources which enabled them to abduct women. While 'theft' of women also occurred previously, the fact that women were taken all the way to the Gold Coast or the Ivory Coast inhibited sanctions and procedures to recover them.

### Individual-centred migration in the 1960s and 1970s

During the first years after independence, the national government of the Upper Volta did not break with the labour policy of the 1950s. Through agreements with the government of the Ivory Coast it was attempted to let the Upper Volta benefit from migration. In 1960, the SIAMO, considered to be a colonialist organism, and accused of having continued abuses which prevailed during the epoch of forced labour recruitment, was dismantled (Deniel 1974:217, Songre *et al.*:388). The independent governments of the Upper Volta and the Ivory Coast negotiated a Convention on migratory labour, in which it was agreed that recruitment of labourers would be ensured by the 'Service de la Main-d'Oeuvre de Haute Volta' and that the Ivory Coast would contribute to the costs of recruitment in the Upper Volta, executed by this Labour Service, by paying to the Upper Volta 1,500 FCFA per labourer and 1,000 FCFA per non-contracted accompanying woman. In order for this system to function well, it was necessary that the employers in the Ivory Coast should recruit labourers through the official Labour Office. Only then would the state of the Upper Volta benefit from the migrations. This implied control of the movement of people, not only to the Ivory Coast but to Ghana as well (Deniel 1974:217-220, République de la Haute Volta n.d.a). It was supposed, finally, that stricter control of migration movements would not only bring the largest part of this migration to the Ivory Coast, but would also help to keep migration within bounds, so that labour necessary for the economic development of the Upper Volta was available. However, most

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<sup>77</sup> In 1954, the Commandant of Kaya reported: 'Pourquoi les jeunes gens s'en vont-ils ainsi? C'est une tradition nettement établie, un jeune homme n'est vraiment homme que lorsqu'il a voyagé et vu "la ville" que ce soit Kumasi, Bouaké ou Abidjan. L'attrait du voyage y est pour beaucoup. [...] On a parlé aussi des désirs de s'enrichir. Certes le jeune Moaga qui part espère bien revenir avec un peu d'argent mais il sait bien qu'à moins d'une chance exceptionnelle, il ne rentrera qu'avec peu de chose et cela ne l'arrête pas. Il prolongera son séjour sur les plantations ou les chantiers du sud jusqu'à ce qu'il est acquis de quoi "paraître riche le jour de son retour au village". Cette richesse apparente sera constituée par un beau boubou, une bicyclette, quelques habits à distribuer généreusement aux parents et un peu d'argent à dépenser follement pendant quelques jours quand ce n'est que quelques heures. Et dès le lendemain de ce brillant retour, le jeune Moaga retournera sans regret travailler la terre et ne tardera pas également à vendre son vélo si la chance ne lui sourit pas' (Rapport no.PC/STD, Documentation sur la situation des originaires étrangers dans les territoires africains, Kaya, le 10 juillet 1954).

<sup>78</sup> 'The only drawback would seem to be the too prolonged absence of the Moose migrants which is prejudicial to good farming in the Upper Volta'. This drawback could easily be removed if customs controls were relaxed (which would favour an early return of Moose migrants) (Rouch 1956:159).

migrants preferred to cross the borders clandestinely. For employers, 'unofficial' labour recruitment was easy and, importantly, cheaper.<sup>79</sup>

In practice, a number of aspects of migration to the coast changed very rapidly. Firstly, Ghana vanished completely as a destination for migrants.<sup>80</sup> Secondly, recruiters and recruitment institutions disappeared from the stage. Migration to the Ivory Coast progressively became self-sustaining. Also, changes occurred in the marital status of migrants and in the kind of employment sought for. Finally, there are signs that migration started to be socially valued in a different way than before.

Men from Ziinoogo who started to migrate at the age of about twenty in the 1960s in most cases stayed in the Ivory Coast for a period of one year or less (dry season migration), in particular when they were employed as wage workers on plantations (cocoa, pineapple, banana). They alternated a stay in the Ivory Coast with remaining one or two years in the village. A few men obtained a job in the city of Abidjan as guards or apprentice drivers and then stayed away uninterruptedly for up to four years. A young man left the village together with one or two other men, each little group most often including one man for whom it was not the first trip. Generally, the men who left together had grown up together in the village - i.e. they were *reementaase* - or a man took off together with his mother's brother. Travelling expenses for a first trip were paid for by selling part of one's *beolga* produce or by doing wage work along the road (e.g. the fabrication of bricks in Kaya or Ouagadougou). Subsequent trips were mostly financed either by any cash remaining from a previous trip or by selling one's bicycle, also acquired after a previous trip. I have not been able to establish unequivocally whether or not the elders' permission was sought before departure. Yooro, for example, who was in the Ivory Coast from 1973 until 1976, maintained: 'The others in the compound did not agree that I left for the Ivory Coast. They thought there was not much money to earn and that I would barely be able to take care of myself there'.

While others too said they had left against the will of their parents, it was also said that 'it was difficult to succeed abroad if the elders at home didn't agree with your departure'. Tiiga, who in the 1960s and early 1970s spent seven dry seasons doing wage work on coffee plantations in the Ivory Coast:

'At that time, just like today, we asked permission from our parents before we left. If they gave the permission you could go, and also without permission you could leave, but without permission it was difficult to succeed. If your father however saw that you left to search [for money] in order to return and help the compound at home, you easily obtained permission. At that time, we gave, on our return from the Ivory Coast, money to our parents and clothes to everybody. We arranged all problems for which money was needed'.

Regardless of this issue of parents' consent, it seems as if, for the people of Ziinoogo, it was especially during this period of the 1960s and 1970s that migration to the Ivory Coast was conceived of as an adventure. Time and again it was stressed that where they went to they 'didn't know anybody'. Unlike in the preceding period, labour contracts were not obtained beforehand with recruiters or an institution like the SIAMO, but work was sought on the spot in the Ivory Coast.

<sup>79</sup> The Convention between the Upper Volta and the Ivory Coast was officially suspended in 1974 (Somé 1991:18).

<sup>80</sup> It should be noted that in this respect the northern regions of the Upper Volta differed importantly from southern regions, in particular those bordering Ghana. While, based on a survey of 1964, it was maintained that 100% of the migrants from such Cercles as Kaya, Koungoussi and Ouagadougou went to the Ivory Coast, 100% of the migrants from, among others, Po, Léo and Koupéla went to Ghana (Remy 1973).



'When we left for the Ivory Coast a first time, we took the train. When we arrived we waited until everybody got out so that we could be sure that we had indeed arrived at the station of Treichville. Then we got out too. We didn't know where to go next. We had no name of any city in mind. A taxi-man asked us if we wanted to go to Dabou and we said yes and got into his car. He however dropped us on a bridge in Abidjan and took our money. We then wanted to leave the city and go to the "brousse". We met a Moaga who brought us to the bus station. We took the bus to Dabou and when we arrived there we sat on our luggage and waited for the sun to set. We still didn't know where to go. Then, a European came by with a pick-up. He talked to us and although we didn't understand him we climbed onto the pick-up. The European brought us to a plantation and there we worked. On the plantation we met other Moose and started to live again'.<sup>81</sup>

Men, who migrated at that time, today associate these migrations with a particular phase of their lives, i.e. their youth:

In the 1960s and early 1970s, Sambo spent three times one year working as contract labourer and *abusa*<sup>82</sup> on cocoa plantations: 'At that time, we didn't go to the Ivory Coast because we had no means, but because all our friends did so. We did it for the adventure. Nowadays it is different. Then, it was "youthfulness"'.

Still, it became more usual to migrate after marriage and in some cases a man's last migration was undertaken together with his wife and then lasted longer than previous migrations (two to four years instead of one year or less). While it was said of migrants in the 1950s that they were supposed to stay in the village after their marriage, a shift took place during the 1960s and 1970s to a situation where a man's migration 'career' ended definitively only when he became 'responsible' either for a compound (*zaksoba*) or for a separate farm (*puugsoba*). *Beondba*, whether still single or not, were still in a position to migrate to the Ivory Coast.

In 1968, Ousmane left a first time for the Ivory Coast together with a man of his own age from Kamsin. He was 18 years old. They found work on a banana plantation in Sifé (?) and returned to Ziinoogo one year later. The years 1971 and 1974 he also spent in the Ivory Coast, doing wage work respectively on a pineapple and banana plantation and on coffee plantations (Gagnoa and Tiassalé). Both times he travelled together with a mother's brother, respectively Nakelgwende and Gabriel. The years in between his migrations he worked on his *beolga*, and together with his and Yuma's father, on the *puugkasenga* (cf. case 2, chapter 4). After his third trip to the Ivory Coast, he stayed for one year in Ziinoogo and in that year he married his first wife Minata. In 1976, he left again, this time together with Minata and worked for two years on a coffee plantation. His first son was born in the Ivory Coast. Ousmane: 'It was then that I received a message that my father was ill and that is why I returned to Ziinoogo. Two years later, my father died. No, I didn't want to return to the Ivory Coast afterwards. When I left in 1977, my *yasba* Gabriel, who was also there at the time, told me he would help me to purchase my own plantation if I returned. But, I didn't want to return, I needed to stay with my sick father and afterwards I became responsible [for my own farm].

I cannot say that there has been anything that I got from my working in the Ivory Coast that helped me any further here in Ziinoogo. It did not bring in anything. At that time, you went to the Ivory Coast to work and to earn money enough to allow you to travel back to your village. At present, since many Moose have seen that the plantations in the Ivory Coast are profitable, there are many who want to buy land. If they succeed, they can go and work there and eventually be relieved by others'.

In 1994-95, Ousmane had a thriving small trading business, based mainly on cola nuts. He did not link his success to his migration experiences, maintaining that he had built up this trade 'little by little' after his final return. Neither did the only other man of his generation to have acquired some wealth - also a trader - attribute this to earnings from his personal migrations, although it was the Ivory Coast money which allowed him to start:

<sup>81</sup> Koasa, Kuritgo.

<sup>82</sup> Sharecropper; the *abusa* generally is entitled to one third, sometimes one half, of the cocoa harvest. This sharecropping system was originally developed in the Gold Coast (cf. Hill 1963:188-189).

'I returned from the Ivory Coast sixteen years ago. Ten years ago I started my trade. The money I had taken with me from the Ivory Coast ran out and with the remaining 8,000 FCFA I went to Kaya to buy merchandise. That is how it started'.<sup>83</sup>

Thus, cycles of return migration were broken off definitively at the moment men became *zaksoba* or *puugsoba*. Both between migrations and after their definitive return, their main activity became what it had always been, i.e. agriculture which did not differ in any respect from the agriculture practised by others, and this is true even for the two traders mentioned above. In many ways, then, the money earned in the Ivory Coast was spent in the same way during this period as in the period of earliest 'spontaneous' migrations. Return migrants contributed to the payment of their compounds' taxes, spent money on gifts for kin and friends; and as before, a bicycle remained a sign of having been successful abroad.<sup>84</sup> The money earned also served to prepare for a young man's first marriage (e.g. small gifts of money to future in-laws, visited for salutations at each return from the Ivory Coast).

Migration to the Ivory Coast had become a general phenomenon. All men of about twenty years old in the 1960s or 1970s migrated at least once, and in most cases several times. It was essentially a return migration and those who did not return to the village eventually were exceptions (cf. below). The former migrants of this generation did not state that migration in one way or another fitted into any kind of long term project. Money earned in the Ivory Coast was spent in the village, invested in a bicycle and sometimes in some goats and sheep, only exceptionally a cow was bought. When they ran out of money ('when the money was eaten'), they prepared for another trip, often selling their bicycle to pay for transport. The same kind of wage work or contract labour as obtained during a previous migration was generally sought for in the Ivory Coast, although there were already signs of change: I encountered one man who during his last migration worked as a share cropper (cocoa), another who had rented land to cultivate rice and even one man who had bought land (cf. below). The preference for a European employer had completely disappeared.

Thus, with only a few exceptions, these men did not make a 'career' in the Ivory Coast - no assets were acquired there, during successive migrations wage work generally remained the sole activity - and a man's 'career' in the village was not affected by migration (the other way around, however, passing through one's career in the village inevitably would put an end to migration when one became a *puugsoba* or a *zaksoba*). Although undertaken most often with an age mate and/or an affine, migration was an individual-centred affair (marriage preparation, purchase of a bicycle) and associated with 'youthfulness', but not excluding certain contributions to the cash needs of one's kin.<sup>85</sup> Again, that in the 1970s a number of married men migrated, sometimes accompanied by their wives, may be understood as the announcement of a change which was consolidated in the following ten years.

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<sup>83</sup> Tengo, Balbou Seya.

<sup>84</sup> Yooro: 'Those who migrated to the Ivory Coast drew some personal profit from it. We still have the bicycles we were able to buy thanks to the Ivory Coast. But, only those who had God's blessing were able to improve their family's situation and not everyone has had that blessing'.

<sup>85</sup> Like those who migrated in the 1950s, migrants in the 1960s and 1970s maintained that they helped to pay their compounds' taxes. It may be questioned whether they effectively did so and an observation made by Skinner (1960:384) suggests that already in the 1950s migration probably was essentially individual-centred: 'Although [...] "the search for money to pay taxes" is given as one of the main reasons for migration, not many migrants contribute to imposts of their household, nor do many elders ask for this help. [...] Young men insist that their elders are responsible for all taxes. They point out that they worked for their fathers before they started to migrate for work, and will continue to help the old people when they have ceased to migrate'.

A number of my findings confirm what could already be ascertained from existing literature on this period. Studies of migration in the 1960s and 1970s state that the number of migrants who left northern regions of the Upper Volta for Ghana had become insignificant (e.g. Kohler 1971, Remy 1973), while the number of migrants in general, in particular Moose migrants, steadily increased.<sup>86</sup> Migration to the Ivory Coast remained a male-dominated return migration. Most men were single and young, although some also continued to migrate after marriage and then stayed abroad longer than others when they took their wives with them (Kohler 1971:215-216), and migration grew relatively faster in higher age groups (Remy *et al.* 1977:633).<sup>87</sup> The phenomenon of repeated migration gained in importance (Gregory *et al.* 1989:102). The essentially adventurous character of migration is equally confirmed (Kohler 1971:218 notes that, in the region of Yako, nine out of ten migrants left without knowing anyone at the place of destination). The majority of migrants were wage labourers (mainly on cocoa and coffee plantations) in the Ivory Coast (cf. Coulibaly *et al.* 1980, Songre *et al.* 1974:399). But, Kohler's study on the region of Yako showed that also one out of ten migrants became an 'agricultural entrepreneur', i.e. acquired a plantation of his own or rented land.<sup>88</sup>

Whereas Remy *et al.* (1977:648-649) considered migration to the Ivory Coast to be an important factor of 'immobility' in Moaga society (drain of labour, drain of innovative forces), Kohler (1972) was less negative. He studied, from 1969 to 1971, migration in the region of Yako. He argued that young men's decisions to migrate were rational in view of the economic situation of their home land: migration revenues were at least three times higher than what could be earned staying at home. He considered equally rational the fact that these revenues were not invested in agriculture at home, as most migrants did not hold any land to invest in (they were *beondba*) and as, moreover, agriculture at home was not even profitable to begin with. Furthermore, the goods they purchased did enter, albeit indirectly, into the production cycle as exemplified by the bicycle. He thus concluded that migration to the Ivory Coast was an absolutely necessary evil, which alleviated pressure on land at home, procured necessary cash income and constituted a source of innovation (openness towards new ideas). However, since Kohler saw the perspectives for development of Moaga agriculture (e.g. through irrigation) as rather gloomy, he concluded that Moaga society might find a way out of its crisis, of which migration to the Ivory Coast was a symptom, by the colonization of new areas ('terres neuves').

Marchal (1983) concentrated on the changes of land use practice at home. An important conclusion of his major work on Yatenga, which extends up until the 1970s, was that the areas cultivated increased faster than population and that land use tended to become more and more extensive. Marchal attributes this extensification to complex interrelated

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<sup>86</sup> In 1974-75, the Moaga region supplied 70% of all Upper Voltan migrants, compared to 60% in 1960-61 (Vaugelade 1974:147; the Moose constitute about 50% of the country's total population).

<sup>87</sup> The increase of the number of married men taking their wives with them to the Ivory Coast constituted, according to Vaugelade (1974:137), one of the major findings of a survey on Moaga migration carried out in 1973.

<sup>88</sup> Below, it will be demonstrated that this phenomenon became important for Ziinoogo in the 1980s. Chauveau (1979:69) found that when the Central West of the Ivory Coast was colonized from the 1970s onwards, there was a tendency for migrants to establish plantations of their own, contrary to what had happened in the east of the Ivory Coast where migrants had been involved much more as wage labourers (cf. also Hecht 1983:35). It may be noted that Kohler (1971:219) maintained that these 'entrepreneurs' no longer had to be considered as 'migrants' but as 'émigrants'. From my analysis, it will become clear that it would be wrong to do so.

processes, among them 'individualization' and migration.<sup>89</sup> Production units tended to become smaller and the absence of young men who had migrated was not compensated for by a reduction of the cultivated area, but by a general decline of crop maintenance: bad or no preparation of the soil, 'slack' sowing, little manuring, rapid weeding, etc. (Marchal speaks of a 'technical regression' and a 'banalization of cropping modes').<sup>90</sup> He also observed a severe decline of mutual aid mechanisms. Moreover, migration contributed to an increase in the importance of *beolse*, notably of migrants' wives and their children who, in the absence of their husbands, worked more independently than they otherwise would.<sup>91</sup>

One would conclude from Coulibaly *et al.* (1989:88), who found that migrants were often supported by relatives when they left and that the family context tended to facilitate migration, that migration to the Ivory Coast was socially more approved than before. More numerous, however, are studies, based on fieldwork carried out in the 1960s and 1970s, stressing that migration, its causes and consequences, were to be interpreted in terms of youngsters' contestation of elders' privileges. Thus, when Kohler (1972) saw Moaga society in a crisis, of which migration to the Ivory Coast was but a symptom, he was referring to, among other things, the control over land and women which elders tried to maintain and which youngsters tried to escape. He observed that the conditions of production and of the distribution of goods were thus that youngsters had no interest whatsoever in working on the land at home. Remy *et al.* (1977:639) saw migration to the Ivory Coast as a 'rupture of solidarity' and as a 'progressive rise of contestation' by youngsters who in Moaga society would remain for too many years without social power and economic resources. Elders would resist the introduction of money into the relevant social exchanges at home (land and women) and thus prevent youngsters from becoming independent or investing in agriculture, even if the latter would have been profitable. Ancey (1983) pushed this kind of analysis further. He maintained that there existed in Moaga society two separated and parallel spheres of activity: on the one hand, the sphere of social reproduction where factors (land, women and cattle) were controlled by elders and which almost completely escaped from the monetary economy, and, on the other hand, the economic sphere, where money from migration circulated, for example through trade, and which was controlled by youngsters. Access to the economic sphere through migration and money did not automatically entail a rise in social status, which was related to non-monetary factors. This dichotomization of Moaga society could exist only because the factor of land was not monetized, which again could be understood only by taking into account the specific integration of Moaga society in the world economy. In contrast to

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<sup>89</sup> Benoit (1982b:73) and Remy *et al.* (1977:648) maintained that migration absorbed the larger part of natural demographic growth, but according to Stanneveld *et al.* (1987:27) population density on the Central Plateau increased from 35 inhab./km<sup>2</sup> in 1960 to 54 in 1985. Population growth then is also indicated as a major factor contributing to extensification as more and more marginal areas were exploited. Yields decreased and crops became more sensitive to rainfall instability, thus further affecting the home land's capacity to sustain its population. Note also that Coulibaly *et al.* (1989) found that the drought of 1972-73 was of no influence on the incidence of migration to the Ivory Coast.

<sup>90</sup> According to Marchal, the extensification was enhanced because of a transition of modes of access to land, which prevented land from being left fallow. He maintains that, when a village territory gets saturated due to population growth, collective rights of appropriation of land tend to give way to individual rights (no longer is land pooled within a *yiiri*, inheritance from father to sons gains the upper hand). While I have not observed such a fundamental transition for the Ziinoogo village territory, Marchal's contention that this 'individualization' leads to disuse of fallowing because one needs time and again to confirm one's claim on a particular plot (leaving land fallow would return it to its 'neutral' status), clearly can be understood within the framework I exposed in chapter 4.

<sup>91</sup> Note the difference with Skinner's conclusions with respect to the previous period (reduction of cultivated areas, decreasing importance of *beolse*).

land in the Ivory Coast, Moaga land was not profitable. Migration was then seen as contributing to the perpetuation of this situation and to the maintenance of the status quo of Moaga society.<sup>92</sup>

It is rather difficult to re-establish in retrospect to what extent, in the 1960s and 1970s, relations between elders and youngsters in Ziinoogo might or might not corroborate analyses of this kind. For my purpose, the discussion above is interesting in particular for comparing contemporary migration patterns with those prevailing say twenty years ago. At this point, my own findings only permit me to subscribe to the contention of Remy *et al.* (1977:641) that 'migration [was] an activity specific to youngsters, turned to themselves' (what I call individual-centred) and that returned migrants have not been able to invest their earnings in any profitable way in agriculture at home (they were re-absorbed into the 'usual' village life). The argument that migration during that period could only be well understood in the context of the opposed interests of youngsters and elders appears to be persuasive, all the more so because of the regularity with which it comes to the fore in various analyses (Ancey 1983, Gregory *et al.* 1989, Kohler 1972, Remy *et al.* 1977).

### Contemporary migration management

It is difficult to point to a particular moment at which it happened - probably it has been a gradually evolving process - but from the 1980s onwards the meaning of migration seems to have altered substantially. One main indicator of this change is the fact that migration to the Ivory Coast as such no longer constitutes an issue of strife between youngsters and elders. Whereas it is possible to characterize migration to the Ivory Coast (and, initially, the Gold Coast) from the 1950s to the 1970s as an important aspect of the lives of the young, one is tempted to conclude that, in the 1980s, migration established itself as a social, cultural and economic dimension of village life *taken as a whole* - of course within the limitations of my research population (cf. chapter 1). This timing coincides with the period in which those who were the first to migrate under 'free' labour conditions in the 1950s and 1960s took over as compound heads in the village. In what follows, it will be shown that this omnipresence of migration as a dimension of village life is reflected by the fact that it has come to constitute an integrated aspect of farm management in the village, which seeks to reconcile the interests of youngsters and elders, of the farm in the village and the potentialities of migration to the Ivory Coast. It was also in this period that, on the one hand, migrants started to make a migration 'career', something which nowadays also is consciously pursued, and, on the other hand, the migration economy structurally linked up with the village economy, most obviously so with respect to labour management but also through the investments in the village economy by means of migration remittances. All these changes are also related to the access gained by migrants to other resources and labour opportunities in the Ivory Coast.

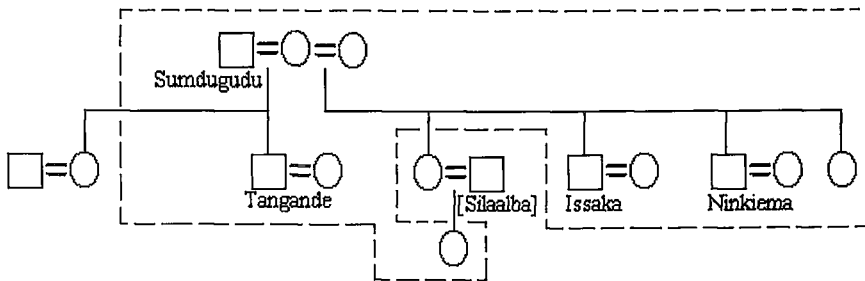
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<sup>92</sup> Conversely, the distribution of social capital in Moaga society among elders, youngsters and women was said to serve an external capitalist system, which could take advantage of Moaga migratory labour. It may be noted here that Ranger (1983:254-257) argues that small-scale gerontocracies in 'custom-bounded, microcosmic local' societies in Africa are a 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon backed by 'local, but colonially invented, tradition'.

*From labour migration to agricultural migration*

In the 1980s and early 1990s, migrants from Ziinoogo continued to do wage work in the Ivory Coast. However, wage work has declined in importance and is often a secondary activity combined with another main activity for which individual access to land has to be obtained: renting or purchase of land or share-cropping. I first present a case in which cocoa/coffee plantations, owned by migrants or their affinal or agnatic kin, play no role.

Sumdugudu has three grown up sons, who, at the time I left the village, were all three married (cf. genealogy 6.1). All three have migrated at least once to the Ivory Coast, making their first trip at the age of about nineteen. Since the eldest son started to migrate, the three sons did not once spend a full rainy season together in Ziinoogo. Tangande, the eldest son: 'I would lie if I said that I wasn't married when I left the first time. Just before my departure, in 1984, I married a widow of my deceased *babila*. I went to Tiassalé together with a man from Naba Bagre. I worked for almost two years on a pineapple plantation, where the husband of my older sister was already employed. Then, I was one year in Ziinoogo before I left again, this time to Soubré together with Michel, Yuma's eldest son. Michel worked on the cocoa plantation of his *yasba*. I also worked on a cocoa plantation, but of another owner. I returned to Ziinoogo for four years and in 1993 I left once more, again to Tiassalé, because I was tired of the work on the cocoa

*Genealogy 6.1**Sumdugudu's compound*

plantations. In Tiassalé, I was employed again on the pineapple plantation where, in the meantime, my sister's husband had become "chef" [i.e. responsible for the recruitment of labourers on the plantation]. With the money I earned in one year, I rented a field the next year and sowed rice, which I harvested and sold. Last year, I came back to Ziinoogo'. The second son, Issaka, left a first time to the Ivory Coast in 1986, just after Tangande had returned from his first trip. He worked for two years on cocoa plantations in Soubré. After this first migration, he bought a bicycle, which he still has, as he was able to finance his next migrations by selling his *beolga* harvests. He returned to Ziinoogo and married. In 1989-91, he was again in the Ivory Coast, and worked for two years on the same pineapple plantation in Tiassalé as his brother had done before him. The third year, he rented a field of three hectares (16,000 FCFA per hectare) at Ndouci (near Tiassalé), paid for by the money earned the years before, and sowed rice: 'I had left my wife in Ziinoogo, but when I rented the rice field I sent money so that she could come too. She helped me with the work in the rice field'. In January 1995, after both his elder and younger brother had returned from the Ivory Coast, he left again, this time directly to Ndouci, where he again rented land to sow rice. Only eight months later, at the end of the rainy season of 1995, he was back in Ziinoogo. The youngest brother, Ninkiemma, went only once to the Ivory Coast, where he worked on a cocoa and coffee plantation in Issia in 1993-94. Early in 1995 he married, and now that he has a first child he is the one who is expected to leave soon again (cf. below).

It is a rather general phenomenon that young men, if they have no close kin owning a plantation, engage in wage work during their first migration, either on large industrial plantations (e.g. a pineapple plantation) or on smaller farm enterprises (mainly cocoa and/or coffee plantations, most often owned by a Moaga or a Baoulé). During subsequent migrations, a more independent type of employment is sought for: most often either rice cultivation on rented land, as in the case above, or cocoa/coffee sharecropping. Hence, it also becomes easier and more attractive for migrants to bring along their wives who can then participate in the work as well (cf. Issaka above). Doing wage work for an employer is seen as a necessary phase to go through:

Ninkiemba explained: 'As long as I do not have profitable work in the village, like a trade for example, and as long as I have the strength to do so, I cannot stop travelling between here and the Ivory Coast. This does not mean that I will continue to do wage work for an employer, like I did the first time I went. The work for an employer gives me the opportunity to prepare for my future, to learn the work of coffee and cocoa. What I want is to buy a cocoa or coffee plantation myself and continue to work for an employer until my plantation starts to produce. And then I would be able to tell those who are in the village that I have implanted something in the Ivory Coast. Whatever the duration of one's stay in the Ivory Coast, however, one cannot stay there without visiting those who stayed behind in the village. I cannot stay definitively in the Ivory Coast, eventually I will return to Ziinoogo for good. If I acquired a plantation I might stay some time in the Ivory Coast until it produces well, but when I grow older I will return to the village, and if I then have people I will send them to the plantation to work there and send me money. It is good here in Burkina, the problem is that there is no money. Otherwise we wouldn't be going into the forest to live among the leaves like animals'. He concluded, sighing: 'Ivory Coast is big work' [*'Abidjan yaa tuum bedre'*].

The purchase of land to establish one's own cocoa and/or coffee plantation in the Ivory Coast has come to constitute an ideal to pursue for those men who are still in a position which allows them to migrate.<sup>93</sup> They are thereby inspired by the successful examples set by some of their fellow villagers. Most plantations acquired by migrants from Ziinoogo date from the 1980s and the early 1990s (the one exception encountered will be treated below). The eldest son of Somyasya (cf. case 1, chapter 4; genealogy 6.2), for instance, bought 2 hectares in 1987:

Somgomedo, Somyasya's eldest son, went to the Ivory Coast in 1982. He started to work as an *abusa*<sup>94</sup>, i.e. as a sharecropper, on a cocoa and coffee plantation in Divo.<sup>95</sup> The owner of the land took two thirds of the harvest, Somgomedo one third. Five years later he could buy 2 hectares from the man he had worked for. He paid 100,000 FCFA, but it should be noted that the coffee and cocoa on this small plantation had already begun to produce. Since the year Somgomedo bought the plantation, two of his younger brothers, Sombutin and Salaam, have taken turns in helping him; occasionally there was an overlap in the period that both Sombutin and Salaam were in Divo. Six years after having left, in 1988, Somgomedo started to visit his kinsmen in Ziinoogo regularly again. During these visits he

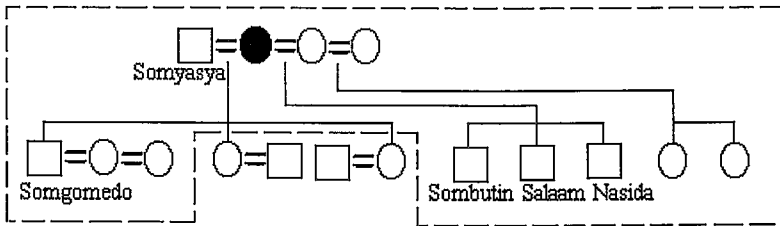
<sup>93</sup> This is confirmed from a very different source. While discussing the labour problem in the south western pioneer zone of the Ivory Coast, Lena (1979:93-94) notes that the goal of most immigrants is to pass from wage worker to plantation owner. If the immigrant does not find work through his kinsmen who were already there, he will go to the employer who offers him the best conditions and, above all things, good prospects for access to land.

<sup>94</sup> It seems not exceptional that being an *abusa* constitutes a step towards land ownership. Lambert & Sindzingre (1995:121-122), for example, explain how an immigrant may start working on a sharecropping contract allowing him one third of the harvest, increasing to one half later on, until after a delay of four to eight years he becomes owner of the land. Early immigrants would have obtained land from the moment they arrived, while later ones first had to pass through different forms of sharecropping.

<sup>95</sup> All plantations bought by migrants from Ziinoogo are located in the south-west of the Ivory Coast, in particular in the region of Soubré and San Pedro. This happens to be the last pioneer zone in the coastal forest, opened up from 1970 onwards (Schwartz 1979). The Ivorian administration encouraged the establishment of plantations by immigrants through maintaining the principle of 'the land belongs to him who exploits it' (Lambert & Sindzingre 1995:108).

married his two wives. Next to the plantation, he rents at Divo each year three hectares to sow rice and maize (10,000 FCFA per hectare). During the rainy season of 1994, only Sompomodo's youngest brother Nasida worked with Somyasya and his wives in Naba Bagre. In 1995, both Salaam and Sombutin returned, together with one of Sompomodo's wives, and all spent the rainy season in Naba Bagre, while Nasida was allowed to make his first journey to the Ivory Coast, relieving his older brothers at Divo.

Salaam explained that, when they do not have enough labour in Divo, they generally ask 'people they know from when they were in Naba Bagre and who at present are also in Divo' to lend a helping hand, for which maize and rice is paid in return. Conversely, he and his brothers and the women too go and help others. They do not hire wage labourers.



### Genealogy 6.2 *Somyasya's compound*

As to the remittances sent to the compound in Naba Bagre, Salaam maintained: 'We take that part of the maize and rice harvests we would like to send home and we sell it. The money is sent to our father. Sometimes we also send some money from the coffee and cocoa sale'.

Finally, Salaam laughed at the idea that Sompomodo might decide to settle definitively in the Ivory Coast: 'That is impossible. One day he will return for good to Naba Bagre where he has his kin and wives. When Sompomodo returns to settle in Naba Bagre, either I or Sombutin will take over the work on the plantation in Divo'.

Several issues brought to the fore in this case are of interest to my argument. First, the compound's labour is pooled between the farm in Ziinoogo and the plantation in the Ivory Coast and it appears that the compound's latest migrant (Nasida) does not make his first trip to the Ivory Coast 'in search of work' but merely to work on his brother's plantation. Next, it is suggested that each year a more or less 'known' amount of money is sent from the Ivory Coast to the elders in the village. Finally, like Ninkiemba above, Salaam too does not consider settling definitively in the Ivory Coast a realistic option, even if one has an asset as valuable as a cocoa or coffee plantation. All these issues are treated in more detail below. The point I want to emphasize in this section is that, in the 1980s, migration has come to be seen in a long-term perspective. In the first place this holds for the 'career' which migrants see for themselves, and also actually pursue, in the Ivory Coast: from wage labourer during first journeys to more independent types of employment later on. But there are important repercussions on social and economic village life as well (cf. the section below on 'the end of a migration career' and chapter 8).



*Individual-centred first migrations: access to adulthood*

The cases presented above were chosen, among other things, because they exemplify how in the 1980s, in contrast to earlier periods, the migrations have come to be managed, at least to a certain extent, jointly by those who migrate and those who remain behind, i.e. essentially by both youngsters and elders. This point can be further clarified by taking a closer look at young men's first migrations.

It is fully accepted by compound or farm heads that their sons will migrate as soon as they have reached a suitable age, which is about nineteen. Although a phenomenon of a substantially different order, a boy is expected to leave his compound at that age as 'naturally' as a girl is supposed to go and live with her husband at the age of seventeen or nineteen. Young men generally ask their elders' authorization before they leave and it is presented as common sense nowadays that 'one cannot succeed abroad if one doesn't have one's elders' approval'. Elders, for their part, acknowledge the benefits their sons' migrations may bring in for themselves and for other members of their compound. Still, they do not support them whole-heartedly, at least not publicly, and stress that the initiative to leave is generally taken by their sons. Time and again it was said: 'Yes, I let them go. What do you expect me to do? It is difficult to keep them here if you don't have anything to offer them' or 'For our sons, a departure to the Ivory Coast has become compulsory. You cannot keep here the young men of today. If you don't give them permission, they will find ways to leave anyhow'.

The openness between elders and youngsters does not however imply that a journey to the Ivory Coast at present is widely announced. Men discuss their plans to leave with some close friends or kinsmen and inform only a few people of their exact date of departure. For example, when Jean, Yuma's brother (cf. case 2, chapter 4), left early in 1994 for the Ivory Coast, only Yuma, Ousmane and Fidèle (cf. genealogy 4.2) were informed beforehand: 'I didn't know, nor did the women of our compound. Some people in the village learned only three days later that Jean had left. He wanted to be out of the village before too many people were informed so that, even if they tried, others would not be able to prevent him from leaving or sabotage him by magic. You might inform everybody, but one of the persons thus informed may be your malefactor, who then prepares a *tiim* which can cause your death in the Ivory Coast. If you leave without everybody knowing about it you will be far away by the time your malefactor finds out about it and he will not be able to do anything'.<sup>96</sup> The situation thus still holds that migrants sneak away during the night or very early in the morning, no longer to 'escape' from their elders - who are nowadays generally very well informed on their youngsters' plans - but to deceive possibly envious fellow villagers.<sup>97</sup> In chapter 8, the issue of envy will be treated in detail with respect to the assets migrants may obtain.

In particular mothers, next to the young men themselves, stress the importance of 'knowing the Ivory Coast'. A woman talking about her six year old son explained: 'I certainly do want him to go to the Ivory Coast. His friends too will go and thus it is a good thing for him to leave as well. Even although he will not go to school, he will then learn to talk, to

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<sup>96</sup> Lucien, Ousmane's eldest son, Runtenga Yiyooa.

<sup>97</sup> Thus, it is when others see a young man rebuilding or placing a new roof on his hut that they conclude that 'he surely will not leave for the Ivory Coast before the end of the rainy season'.

speak like his friends'.<sup>98</sup> Apart from whatever benefit migration to the Ivory Coast may bring them personally or their kin, young men too consider it a necessary endeavour to undertake in order for their education before marriage to be completed. Thus, it is said that 'if you have not been in the Ivory Coast before your marriage, your wife may some time say that you don't know foreign countries'. Clearly, migration to the Ivory Coast has come to constitute an essential 'rite de passage' to go through in order to attain the first phase of adulthood, i.e. marriage. Young men who do not leave are accused of laziness, unless it was exceptional circumstances that forced them to stay at home.

While I was talking with Tiiga's sixteen year old son about his plans for the future, he said that 'it is only when you are lazy that you do not go to the Ivory Coast [when you are old enough to leave]'. His father then added: 'In the world as it is today, you have to search. It is no problem if you don't find profit, the problem exists if you do not search. If you go to look, even when you don't find anything, at least you will find ideas'. And his father's younger brother, who owns a cocoa and coffee plantation in the Ivory Coast since 1985, added: 'Those who do not leave are like lazy-bones. But, if then others return [from the Ivory Coast] they become curious and want to leave too. When they return, they buy a bicycle and then they too have become men [*rapa*]<sup>99</sup> like those who went before them'.

It may be noted here that young men rarely omit to stress that migration to the Ivory Coast means hard work, which cannot be done at home, at least not during the dry season: 'In the Ivory Coast we work hard. Here, it is possible to work hard during the rainy season, but in the dry season there is nothing here.'<sup>100</sup> It is difficult to live in a village without water. If you stayed here, you would see your youth go by while looking for water all the time'.<sup>101</sup> According to Badini (1994:77-78) hard work constitutes for Moose the 'supreme' value and the key to success, present in all phases of life. He maintains that it is considered as truly liberating, determining to a large extent a man's chances to obtain a wife.

The first one or two journeys of a young man to the Ivory Coast are then relatively individual-centred in the sense that they fit into the construction of his personal adulthood. Adulthood is achieved firstly by the completion of the journey itself and secondly by marriage which is realized, at least partly, by means of the revenues earned on the journey[s]. At the same time, elders look rather benevolently on migrants who return from their first journeys and who show off whatever they acquired in the Ivory Coast. Money is invested in a bicycle, with which the 'revenant' goes visiting friends and kinsmen taking with him small gifts. Whatever money remains is spent during village festivities and on market days. Thus, it was said that 'someone who returns from one of his first journeys to the Ivory Coast will buy a bicycle along the road and he will arrive with it in the village pretending to be a real gent. However, someone who has already been several times to the Ivory Coast and who has been successful will on his return first go to the village to be informed about the problems of his

<sup>98</sup> Hawa, Yooro's wife. Interestingly, a local administrator noted in 1967: 'Quand ces jeunes reviennent [de la Côte d'Ivoire], ils bazzagouinent en général un dialecte autre que le dialecte natal et se croient plus dégourdis que les autres' (Rapport Politique année 1967, Cercle de Kaya, Subdivision de Korsimoro).

<sup>99</sup> *Rawa* (pl. *rapa*) literally means 'man'. The term is often used to denote virility and courage (cf. chapter 2, the men who went to assist Zindawende in the border conflicts with Ratenga). Badini (1994:68) notes that *rawa* signifies 'man' in the sense of 'being a man', i.e. a responsible person.

<sup>100</sup> One of the few opportunities to earn some money in the region during the dry season is gold-seeking. During my stay, each dry season the rumour went around that at one place or another gold might be found. Mostly young men, but sometimes also children, women and elders, went to these sites to try their luck, especially when it was said that someone had found a considerable amount of gold. I did not however encounter anyone who had been able to earn more than a few hundred FCFA after sometimes several days of hard work.

<sup>101</sup> Fidèle, Yuma's second son, Runtenga Yiyooaga.

compound and to help his kinsmen. Only thereafter he may buy something for himself'.<sup>102</sup> Benevolence is restricted to migrants on their first journeys and clearly related to the 'youthfulness' of the travellers. Yuma's two eldest sons married relatively recently, and he commented in the following way on their previous migrations: 'That they have not yet acquired something in the Ivory Coast, like a plantation, is only because of their youthfulness [*yaadre*]. They have both gone to the Ivory Coast to earn something for themselves and to return to the village where they acted as if they were "des grands monsieurs" [*yaare*]. This time, however, it may very well be that Michel [who at that particular time was in the Ivory Coast again] attempts to purchase land to start a plantation of his own'. The elders' benevolence then rapidly makes way for contempt for those who after subsequent migrations continue to act in the same way.

Thus, these first migrations of young, single men are 'compulsory' and tend to serve in the first place the migrants' individual interests. Remittances to relatives are most often only token gifts. The money earned is furthermore spent on a bicycle, gifts for future in-laws and during festivities, and contribute in particular to the migrant's individual status. In the sense that these migrations are part of the process of an individual's identity construction and thus of an individual's positioning *vis-à-vis* society, it would be wrong to understand them solely in ego-centred terms. It was pointed out above that migration to the Ivory Coast is highly valued because one learns 'to talk like one's friends' and because it prepares for an individual's access to adulthood. Certain young men went very far in stressing the fact that migration to the Ivory Coast, instead of being an element of disintegration of domestic community life, constitutes an integrative force: 'My preparation for my journey to the Ivory Coast consists of obtaining the permission of those who put me on the world. I will ask the money to pay for transport from my father. Surely, I want to go to the Ivory Coast to search [for money], but also to learn respect. If you go like that for two years to work for a father [an employer], you learn to respect that father, and that makes you better respect your own father on your return to the village'.<sup>103</sup>

In more direct and practical ways too, young men's first migrations are fully embedded in the social relations and daily affairs of the compounds of which they are members. This comes to the fore firstly when those young men who do not leave, and who are not expected to do so either, are taken into account. Although migration is perceived as 'compulsory' in the sense explained above, there are circumstances in which young men are exempted from leaving. It is generally ascertained that a man will stop his travelling to and fro between the village and the Ivory Coast when 'the compound comes to him' (*'zak san wa ta fo'*). Thus, if a young man's compound head dies and there is no elder brother or father's brother to take up responsibility for the compound, the young man succeeds as compound head at an early age. He may marry one of his deceased compound head's widows, and as a person responsible for a compound (*zaksoba*) he is not supposed to migrate to the Ivory Coast. If, thus, his father died before he had the occasion to leave, he will probably never see the Ivory Coast. Taken literally, the above expression - *zak san wa ta fo* - implies that a man is supposed to stay in the village when he is called to succeed as compound head (*zaksoba*), but in practice this is also the case when he succeeds as head of an independent farm (*puugsoba*): 'Those young men who don't go to the Ivory Coast have become *zaksobdamba* at a young age. Suppose my father died, then I could not leave for the Ivory Coast and leave the women and my younger brothers

<sup>102</sup> Rabanega, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

<sup>103</sup> Lucien, Ousmane's eldest son, Runtenga Yiyooaga.

and sisters in Ziinoogo.<sup>104</sup> I would have to stay here and by the time my younger brothers were old enough to leave [for the Ivory Coast], I would no longer be of that age'.<sup>105</sup>

Also young men who are not yet farm or compound heads, but who nevertheless are *de facto* responsible for the compound's farm activities, may be compelled to stay at home, notably if the compound or farm head is of advanced age.

Boureima is twenty years old, but has not yet left for the Ivory Coast. 'That is because of *ba yelle* [father-problem]', he explained. His father, Ninkiemba (cf. case 3, chapter 4), died in 1992 and, for two years, Boureima became compound head and responsible for the farm on which he worked together with his mother and younger brother and sister. In 1994, after the funerals for Ninkiemba had been completed, Bagre, i.e. his father's younger brother, married his mother and relieved Boureima as compound and farm head. However, Bagre is an old man and Boureima argued: 'Under normal circumstances I cannot leave for the Ivory Coast because I have no older brother here. I cannot go because I cannot leave my elders here. When my younger brother grows older, he will be the one to leave, not me'.<sup>106</sup>

Secondly, when a young man attains the age at which he is supposed to leave (nineteen or twenty), the date of his departure is negotiated, notwithstanding the elders' assertion that they are 'in no position to oppose a young man's wish to leave'. A young man's asking permission to leave is not a simple formality. An elder - compound or farm head - may and also does regularly refuse to comply with a young man's request to leave at a particular time, depending on his calculation of his compound's or farm's situation, notably with respect to labour availability.

Early in 1995, Ousmane's eldest son, Lucien, had obtained his father's permission to make a first journey to the Ivory Coast. By then, he was already 21. It was arranged that he would accompany his mother's brother, who knew the Ivory Coast, in the months to follow. That he was not allowed to leave earlier was because his father's younger brother, Teewende, who had left for the Ivory Coast in 1991, was supposed to come and relieve him in the village but had not yet returned.<sup>107</sup> In 1994 Lucien had written Teewende a letter asking him to come back. Teewende answered, not however giving any assurance but only telling Lucien that he should not worry and 'wait another two days'. Lucien thus had waited for almost two years for his uncle to return and finally his father had given in: Lucien was allowed to leave without Teewende having returned. Before Lucien was able to leave, however, again something unexpected happened. It became apparent that Rimpanga, Ousmane's sister's son, would not return to his uncle's compound (cf. chapter 5 on fosterage) and Ousmane then withdrew his permission. Lucien: 'Even if Rimpanga had returned before the start of the rains, I couldn't have left because he might attempt to escape once again and leave my father to face the work here alone'. The account was confirmed by Ousmane who concluded that 'it was in the name of all of us that Lucien stayed. But, next year I will allow him to leave, regardless of Teewende having returned or not'. And, indeed, early in 1996, Lucien had finally left for the Ivory Coast. Ousmane had told him to go first to the place where Teewende was and to take him to another place where he might have more luck than he had had until then. Thus, Lucien and Teewende went together to Kwasikro where they rented land to sow rice. With the rice

<sup>104</sup> Note that Ousmane, Lucien's father, is not the compound head, but only the head of one of the independent farms which the compound is composed of.

<sup>105</sup> Lucien, Ousmane's eldest son, Runtenga Yiyooga.

<sup>106</sup> It should be noted that Bagre has two sons of his own who are older than Boureima. However, both are absent. Bagre's eldest son has bought land in the Ivory Coast and has had a cocoa plantation in production in the region of Soubré since 1992. As will become clear below, expectations with respect to a man's return to the village, if he is called to succeed as farm or compound head, are different from what has been described so far if this man happens to have succeeded in buying land in the Ivory Coast: he does not necessarily take over responsibilities in the village. Bagre's second son has joined the evangelical church 'Assemblée de Dieu' in Nawoubkiiba. Although he sowed a field in Ziinoogo in 1994 (not in 1995), he did so on his own account, i.e. not joining the farm of either his father or mother.

<sup>107</sup> Below, it will be discussed why, in this particular case, Teewende stayed away so long and also why, more generally, migrants may exceed a period of two years away from home.

harvest they earned enough money to pay for Teewende's journey back to Ziinoogo. By the end of 1996, Teewende had returned home where he joined Ousmane's farm. Lucien stayed in the Ivory Coast to work there for one more year. In the meantime, Ousmane had succeeded in getting a younger brother of Rimpanga to come to his compound.

### *Migration mediated by kinsmen*

While elders in this way solicit their youngsters' patience, young men, when the moment to leave has finally come, often can count on more than just their elders' acquiescence. They no longer depend solely on whatever means they are able to acquire themselves in the village - selling of *beolga* harvests or of small ruminants, let alone theft of elders' possessions - to pay for transport to the Ivory Coast, but are regularly assisted by elders who sometimes provide all the money needed. At the same time, of course, the flavour of adventure which is said to have surrounded the Ivory Coast migrations in preceding decennia, and which still is evoked in accounts of present-day migrations, has diminished. Young migrants not only leave with their elders' permission and are often assisted financially, they also make their first journeys together with kinsmen and/or friends who are already experienced migrants and they go to places where they know they will be assisted by acquaintances, most often kinsmen, to find jobs. With respect to financial assistance as well as travel companions and acquaintances at the place of destination, the migrant's mother's brother is prominent, making him a dominant figure in almost any account of present-day migration.

The predominance of mother's brother in migration experiences is best captured by referring to the expression 'he went to visit his *yasba*', which has come to constitute the equivalent of 'he went to the Ivory Coast to work'. Even if the migrant did not go at all to his mother's brother, it is nevertheless in these terms that other members of his compound at home answer a question on his whereabouts. In practice, then, regardless of how many times he has already been in the Ivory Coast, a migrant does indeed often join his mother's brother abroad. Mother's brother is said to help in finding a job or housing and so forth.

In 1994-95, three members of Yuma's farm migrated to the Ivory Coast, and initially it was maintained that all three went to their mother's brother. Shortly before he left in March 1994, Jean, Yuma's younger brother, said that he intended 'to visit his mother's brother' soon. One morning he was gone and later on Yuma said that Jean effectively had arrived at the place where his mother's brother then was and that he had rented land and sown rice.

One morning in May of the same year, Michel, Yuma's eldest son, had suddenly disappeared together with his wife. Yuma explained: 'A *yasba* of Michel has a cocoa plantation in the Ivory Coast, near Soubré. He came to visit his kin in Koundbokin and came here to ask Michel to go and take care of his yams until he himself returns to the Ivory Coast. The first time Michel went to the Ivory Coast, in 1987, he also went to work on the plantation of the same *yasba* because he did not yet know the Ivory Coast. He stayed there for two years'. During the rainy season of 1995, Michel returned to Ziinoogo for a few weeks to bring back his wife (cf. below). Next to helping his mother's brother, he had rented land to sow rice and furthermore worked as *abusa* on still another cocoa plantation.

Finally, only two weeks after Michel's departure, his younger brother Kirsyamba left as well. It was his first journey. Again, it was said that he had left 'to visit his mother's brother'. However, in this case it was afterwards explained that he had left together with his mother's sister's son (*yagentaaga*) who owned a plantation in the Ivory Coast where Kirsyamba was supposed to work.

The extent to which cocoa or coffee plantations owned by in particular fathers, elder brothers, father's brothers or mother's brothers, have come to constitute an important location for work in the Ivory Coast for migration *novices* is striking. Taking into account that most of these plantations have been acquired only during the 1980s, this is a relatively recent development, probably not without consequences for the management of labour at home. Below, I treat in detail the case where members of a compound go and work on an agnate's plantation in the

Ivory Coast. The case of a mother's brother taking with him his sister's son to work on his plantation is however somewhat peculiar, in the sense that the conditions under which a mother's brother can solicit his sister's son labour seem to have become enlarged through the possession of land in the Ivory Coast. In chapter 5 it was said that mother's brother can foster a sister's son at a young age and that the latter then grows up with his uncle and works on his farm. Although a redistribution of labour thus occurs, it should be remembered that the fostered child initially does not constitute a full labour unit. Due to his young age, the only task which can be fully entrusted to him is the herding of small ruminants. Only after having been for some five to ten years on his uncle's compound, he becomes, with respect to agricultural work, a full labour unit. If now a farm head faces a labour shortage during a certain growing season, due, for instance, to the fact that several of his dependants have left for the Ivory Coast, he cannot compensate by asking an adolescent sister's son to come and work with him. When I discussed with Yuma his possibilities to compensate for the departure of four of his dependants in 1994 (Jean, Michel and his wife, and Kirsyamba), he rejected the option of asking a sister's son to come and help him: 'I might ask my sisters for one of their children, but then they will only send me a small child, just capable of guarding the goats and sheep. They will not agree to send an older boy'. This impossibility of drawing on a sister's son labour for the farm in the village then stands in contrast to the frequency of a mother's brother employing a sister's son on his cocoa or coffee plantation in the Ivory Coast. It is said that mother's brother asks his sister's son to join him on or to take care of his plantation in the Ivory Coast, and, probably also due to the compulsory character of young men's migration, it appears difficult for the sister's husband to oppose the mother's brother's request: 'If your wife's brother comes to ask you whether he may take your son with him to the Ivory Coast, for instance to assist on his plantation, you cannot refuse. For your son's *yasha* gave the matter serious consideration before coming to you. He knows that everything that belongs to you belongs to him as well. Moreover, he also wants the well-being of your compound. You cannot refuse his request. It is only your son who may decide to stay with his father and tell his *yasha* to leave without him for the Ivory Coast and to wait for him next year'.<sup>108</sup> A mother's brother appears thus to have access to sister's son's labour without having to foster him, but only if sister's son is employed in the Ivory Coast.

### *Continued migration in the compound's collective interest*

Above it was mentioned that the expectations of elders remaining in the village with respect to migrants' achievements change when the latter have already migrated several times, in particular when they are married. Migration activities come to be narrowly attuned with the farm activities at home. Again, migrants generally do not leave without their elders' consent. On the contrary, the eldest in the compound - himself no longer migrating - most often comes to the fore as the actor pulling the strings as to who leaves and who stays behind. While strife between elders and youngsters certainly has not disappeared - nor the dependence of youngsters on elders - and although disagreement over the timing of a man's departure may occur and be symptomatic for a more fundamental problem between an elder and a youngster, migration to the Ivory Coast as such is no longer questioned.

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<sup>108</sup> Ousmane, Runtenga Yiyooaga.

Since Sumdugudu's sons started to migrate to the Ivory Coast, they were never all three away at the same time. Moreover, only during three out of eleven years were two of them absent from the village during the same period: Tangande and Issaka in 1987 and Tangande and Ninkiemba in 1993-94. With respect to this latter period, Tangande stressed that he left before Ninkiemba's return only because his father had asked him to go and inform Ninkiemba that they had found a wife for him to marry and to urge him to return to Ziinoogo for that marriage. After Issaka's last return, Tangande explained: 'Ninkiemba will be the next to leave again. We relieve one another and now it is Ninkiemba's turn. That is the way we do it. One of us leaves for the Ivory Coast to remedy the situation at home, the two other brothers stay here to help with the work'. Ninkiemba said, at a time when Issaka had not yet returned: 'I would have liked to have left already, but I have to wait for Issaka to return. It is our father who wants it that way. It would be a bad thing if Tangande were the only one to remain, it is better to have two sons here for the work on the land'. Sumdugudu himself commented: 'Surely it is possible to earn some money here with the cultivation of tobacco and calabashes and thus to cover some expenses. Still, it is thanks to the money my sons earn in the Ivory Coast that expenses can really be covered and that the millet can stay in the granaries'. He then pointed to two big granaries and said that two months before, just after the harvests, both were completely filled but that now one of them was already half empty. He stressed that selling millet should be avoided as it serves not only as food but also as gifts at funerals and marriages.

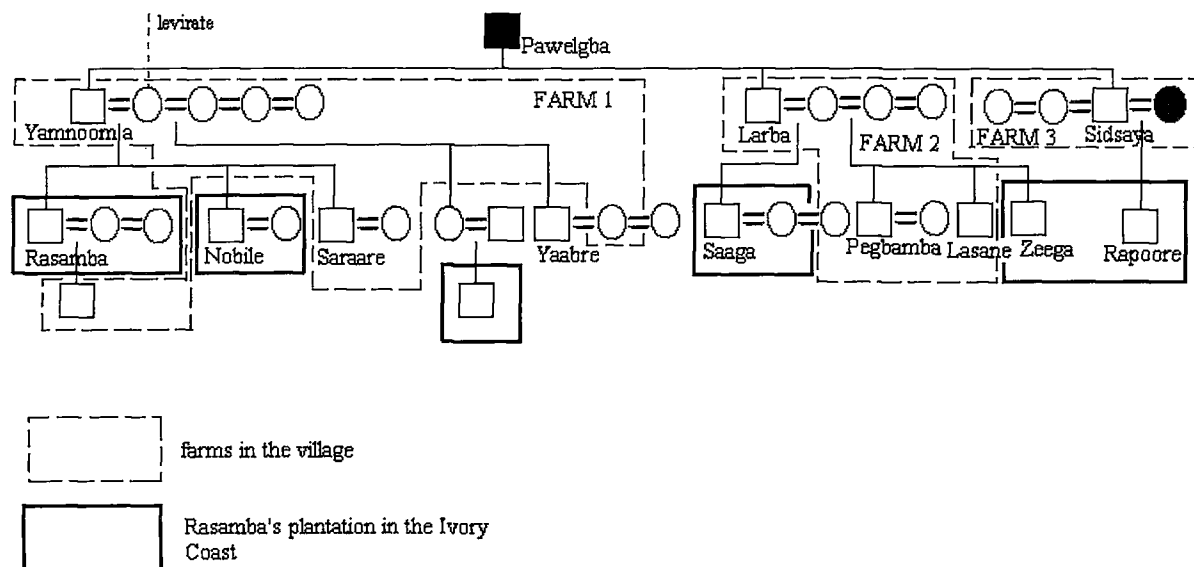
This taking of turns by brothers in migrating to the Ivory Coast is a general phenomenon. The compound or farm head is pointed out as the one who supervises the distribution of labour between, on the one hand, the farm in the village and, on the other hand, the undertakings in the Ivory Coast. A balance is sought in order to cover both the need for labour in the village, in particular to produce the compound's millet subsistence, and the need for cash which for the larger part has to be earned in the Ivory Coast. 'Having some people in the Ivory Coast' is also an insurance against the risk of crop failure at home. Thus Yuma declared that 'it is a good thing to have Jean, Michel and Kirsyamba in the Ivory Coast. They help us here. The best situation is to have part of your people here in the village and another part in the Ivory Coast. Moreover, if crops fail here, those in the Ivory Coast can always compensate'.

The integration of the village farm and the Ivory Coast undertakings comes to the fore markedly when a member of a compound has succeeded in establishing a cocoa or coffee plantation in production. The same principle holds, as explained for Sumdugudu's case, of brothers taking turns on the compound's farm in the village. However, at least one brother does not participate in this relief scheme, i.e. the man who is in charge of the management of the plantation in the Ivory Coast.

Yamnooma is the head of a large compound in the ward of Bagsin. He lives together with two younger brothers, Larba and Sidsaya, both having their own independent farm (cf. genealogy 6.3). Yamnooma has four wives, one of them being a widow of his deceased father's brother's son Nawood (levirate). In 1984, Nawood's eldest son, Rasamba, bought a cocoa plantation (15 hectare) in the region of Soubré, the Ivory Coast. Regular visits to the village excepted (among other things to get married), Rasamba stayed in the Ivory Coast to take care of the plantation. The genealogy shows how labour was distributed over the different farms of the compound and the plantation in the Ivory Coast in 1995. Note that also in this case a sister's son is working on the plantation.

The conditions for Yamnooma's compound are thus that labour is not a constraining factor for Yamnooma's or Larba's farm, nor for the plantation in the Ivory Coast. Only Sidsaya, the youngest of the three farm heads, complained in this respect (cf. below).

While belonging to different farms in the village, the sons of the three brothers, Yamnooma, Larba and Sidsaya, all (except for Yaabre, cf. chapter 7) go and work on the cocoa plantation of Rasamba, at least if they are old enough to migrate. Thus, Nobile and Saraare take turns in leaving for two years for the Ivory Coast, just as Lasane, Zeega and Saaga do. Lasane: 'This year Zeega and Saaga are at the plantation. Saaga left on my return and my father, Larba, will not allow me to leave before Zeega has returned home'. Labour is pooled between the village and the plantation for each farm separately, and supervised by the respective farm heads. Sidsaya's problem clearly is that such pooling is not possible in his case since he has only one adolescent son. It is remarkable, then, that the labour for the plantation comes from all three farms in the village, while a pooling of labour *between* the farms in the village is said not to be possible. Sidsaya just laughed at my proposition that he could have compensated for the departure of his son Rapoore to the plantation by asking one of his brothers' sons to join him on his farm. I return to the role of assets in the Ivory Coast and migration in general in processes of 'individualization' in chapter 7.



Genealogy 6.3  
Yamnooma's compound



When a member of a compound has a plantation in the Ivory Coast, then, the 'necessary' migration of other members of the compound as well as of other kin, in particular sister's sons, is often channelled essentially to this plantation. These migrants who go and work on the plantation of a kinsman are not paid a salary. For example, Lasane (case above): 'Because we belong to the same compound, Rasamba does not pay me a salary. However, when I have done my work he will do his best to give me satisfaction so that I can return home'. Moumini, another plantation owner (cf. below), commented on his taking with him his sister's son to his plantation where he also hired two wage labourers (both Moose 'from Sanmatenga', but not kinsmen): 'My *yagenga* is not paid in the same way as the wage labourers. As he is my kinsman [*rogdba*], I give him what I have to give. It is good to work with kin. You have fewer expenses, but, in a way, also more. You don't have to pay him a salary, and in that sense, he demands fewer expenses, but whenever he has a problem you have to solve it, and as such he demands more expenses'.

Just as in Sumdugudu's case, remittances coming from a plantation owned by a member of the compound are said to serve in the first place the collective interest of the farms at home (each migrant assists his own farm head at his return). Yamnooma too maintained that remittances serve primarily to buy millet and to pursue marriage negotiations. However, he also mentioned that if harvests in the village have been satisfactory, it will be possible to buy animals for those who sent the money home. It would be wrong indeed to deny that 'continued migration' serves the migrant's pursuit of individual wealth besides his supporting the compound in the village. In practice, only part of the money is handed over to the farm head (and to a lesser extent to other persons, like one's mother and mother's brother). A migrant also tries to build something for himself in the village, being most interested in the construction of a house with a corrugated roof, the establishment of a small trade and the purchase of small ruminants and/or cattle. While only two or three individuals in the whole village have succeeded in either constructing a house with a corrugated roof or establishing a more or less flourishing trade, the purchase of animals with money earned in the Ivory Coast is common practice.

I come back to the issue of the destination of remittances, as well as to their size, in chapter 8 where I discuss how migration processes are related to changes in land use and to processes of socio-economic differentiation. In chapter 7, I argue that it is difficult to separate the pursuit of individual wealth from serving the collective interest of one's farm at home. The point I want to make here is that, although the assistance brought to the compound in the village is highly appreciated, the fact of regularly bringing home some money from the Ivory Coast is not sufficient for the migrant to be respected. A man who continues to migrate without building something up - either in the Ivory Coast (a plantation!) or in the village (cattle!) or both - is not esteemed. He will be spoken of in negatively tinged terms that associate the Ivory Coast with the 'brousse' (*weoogo*), like for example '*kaos weoogo*' (literally, he who stayed a long time in the 'brousse', i.e. a returned migrant who stayed away too long and who did not realize anything constructive).

### ***Migration periods: a two years norm and a plantation ideal***

Whatever the period a man has stayed in the Ivory Coast, he is generally expected to return eventually, whether he is the owner of a plantation or not. Only rarely is a man not expected to return, and in such a case the hope is not lost to recover at least his children (cf. below). Still,

when a man leaves and when he is not in charge of a plantation in the Ivory Coast one generally assumes that he will stay away for two years, regardless of how many times he has already migrated.<sup>109</sup> In explaining on what this assumption was based, it was maintained that this period was enough to earn 'sufficient' money (at least 150,000 FCFA) to return home.

Notwithstanding the fact that a period of two years is said to be more or less normative, it is equally pointed out that one can never be certain when exactly a migrant will return. Thus it is said that 'if God makes the adventure go well, he [a migrant to the Ivory Coast] will stay away for two years', but also 'you may know the date of your departure but not the date of your return' and 'you never know with someone who leaves for the Ivory Coast; he may stay away for a short period as he may stay away longer'. Two main reasons were invoked to account for migrants staying away longer than two years.<sup>110</sup> Firstly, a migrant may find it hard to earn enough money. It may even happen that after two years he has not the means to pay for his transport home. When I discussed with men in the village the destination for their future migrations, they often commented on certain regions where they knew other villagers were staying for long periods (i.e. longer than two years) and concluded that it must be hard to find profitable work in those regions: 'That he has not returned yet [being away four years] is because, at the place he went to he earns no money. That is also why I will go to another place, to a new place'.<sup>111</sup> And: 'Some fifteen years ago, Gagnoa was the best place to go to in the Ivory Coast. If you go there nowadays, you may stay away for five or six years and still come back with little money. There are too many Moose, too many strangers now in Gagnoa'.<sup>112</sup> It should be noted that illness also may be the reason for a migrant not to have earned enough money after two years and so to stay away a while longer.

Secondly, whenever a migrant stays away longer than two years, people in the village also start speculating whether he might be attempting to establish his own cocoa or coffee plantation in the Ivory Coast. Obviously, this observation is based on what is known about those who have already succeeded in doing so. The case of Moumini, as far as I was able to establish the first man from Ziinoogo to have bought land in the Ivory Coast, clarifies the point.

Moumini has been a pioneer in the sense that he succeeded in purchasing land and establishing a plantation long before any other migrant from Ziinoogo did so. He bought land as early as 1967. Still, there appears to be much in common between the ways followed to acquire a plantation by, on the one hand, Moumini, and, on the other hand, those who did so in the 1980s. In 1963, at the age of about twenty, Moumini left for the Ivory Coast. He went to Sifé (?) and worked for one year for a European. Next, he went to Daloa where he did contract labour on cocoa and coffee plantations for three years. Moumini: 'After those three years, I could have decided to return to Ziinoogo where I would farm the same field as I did before and where I would encounter the same water problems. I chose to stay in the Ivory Coast and to buy land in Daloa. I didn't buy the land from the man for whom I did contract labour. That was a Moaga who already had his own plantation. I bought land from a Bété to whom the forest belonged. Since then I have never again worked on anyone else's account. There were only trees on the land I bought, which I felled before I planted cocoa and coffee and sowed food crops in between. For five years I worked on my own. No one here knew at that time where I was. After those five years [i.e. in 1972], the coffee and cocoa started to produce and I informed my elder brother Raado who came to visit me together with my younger brother Naabraoogo. Naabraoogo stayed with me

<sup>109</sup> This contrasts sharply with what Skinner (1965:68) observed for migration periods in the 1950s, when the generally stated objective was to return home within five or six months.

<sup>110</sup> It also happens that a migrant returns within one year. I found that in such cases often a woman to marry had been 'given' to the migrant, who then was urged, either by letter or by verbal message, to return home for his marriage.

<sup>111</sup> Lucien, Ousmane's eldest son, talking about his father's younger brother.

<sup>112</sup> Yooro, Yitaore *tengbiiga*.

to help on the plantation.<sup>113</sup> In 1973, then, I left Naabraogo to look after the plantation and visited Ziinoogo for the first time in ten years. My elder brother had become the head of our compound in Naba Bagre. As for my later visits to Ziinoogo, I stayed for only three months during the dry season and then returned to Daloa. Since then I regularly visited the village, except for the period in between 1986 and 1990, when my cocoa did not produce well and coffee prices were low, 45 FCFA per kilo. I couldn't pay for the transport to travel home then. During two of such visits, in 1985 and 1986, I married my first and second wives. Naabraogo continued to work with me in Daloa until 1985, whereafter he became our compound head here in Naba Bagre. Raado left for the Ivory Coast at that time. Next to my wives, my other younger brothers, Noaga and Kirsyamba, came to help me then on the plantation. Last year [1994], I spent, for the first time since I left, a rainy season in Naba Bagre. I have decided to stay here now. With two brothers taking care of the plantation, this is my chance to return home. I am a stranger in the Ivory Coast'.

Although having decided to settle in Naba Bagre again, which he underlined by pointing to the large house roofed with corrugated iron, he seemed not inclined to cede control over his plantation completely. During the dry season of 1995 he went for two months to Daloa to take care of his business there. On this trip he took with him one of his wives and his sister's son Puire, who both stayed behind to work together with one of his younger brothers. The other younger brother returned together with Moumini to Naba Bagre and worked on the land in the village during the rainy season. Next year, the two younger brothers will relieve one another.

Accounts by other migrants, who more recently purchased land and established a cocoa or coffee plantation, equally stress that in order to succeed one has to give up visiting the village for a number of years, until the plantation provides a more or less steady income: 'First you have to work one or two years to earn the money to buy land, and then you have to work a number of years before the plantation starts producing'.<sup>114</sup> Younger men often have the establishment of a plantation in the Ivory Coast as their main goal. In reflecting on how they might succeed, they always refer to the necessity to stay away longer than two years.

Fidèle, Yuma's second son, was in the Ivory Coast for a first time in 1990-91. He returned to Ziinoogo and, in 1994, married. Early in 1995, he said: 'I would have liked to leave again this year, but as my elder brother, Michel, has not returned yet, I am not allowed to go. I do expect to leave next year, because if Michel doesn't return, at least Kirsyamba will. This time I want to buy land and plant cocoa and coffee and maybe some bananas. Therefore, it will be necessary to work one year to earn the money. One year can indeed be sufficient. With the money thus earned you may buy maybe two hectares and start a plantation. I might also agree with a land owner to start planting and pay off only progressively. The problem nowadays is that the prices for land have increased considerably. Whereas it was possible five years ago to buy land at 20,000 FCFA per hectare, you have to pay these days maybe 50,000 FCFA. When I was in the Ivory Coast the first time, my employer offered to sell me land at 20,000 FCFA, but I refused because I wanted to return to Ziinoogo. Anyhow, if I succeeded in buying land, I would stay away for at least four years because it takes some time before the plantation starts to produce'.

### *Migration and theft of women*

The above presents quite a harmonious picture of migration practice: migrations are undertaken with due consideration of one's compound's interests, brothers wait for one another, elders' decisions regarding who is to stay and who may leave are respected, etc. As may be expected, this constitutes only part of the story and migration, just like other social practice, is also an element in social struggle, albeit probably in a different way than before.

Looking into the reasons for remaining in the Ivory Coast longer than the usual two years, one other issue brought to the fore but not mentioned above was constituted by 'illegal' marriages or, as it was most often paraphrased, 'theft of women'. To a large extent, marriages

<sup>113</sup> Moumini's plantation consists of 6 hectares of coffee and 9 hectares of cocoa. In 1967, he paid 10,000 FCFA per hectare. Nowadays, the price per hectare in the region of Daloa would reach 50,000 FCFA, according to Moumini.

<sup>114</sup> Ali, Yuma's sister's son, who stayed for a period of six years in the Ivory Coast without visiting the village, during which he established a cocoa and coffee plantation in the region of San Pedro.

are arranged, i.e. girls are formally promised at a young age by the elder of one *yiiri* (cf. chapter 4) to the elder of another *yiiri*. In practice, an agreement on a future marriage destination for a girl may be reached at lower levels of the kin groups, for example, between two compound heads, but the girl will be 'given' formally by one elder to the other. Also, it may happen that a young man and a young woman mutually agree on a marriage, which then can be sanctioned by the respective kin groups as long as the future marriage partners, in particular the man, respect the different phases to be passed through before marriage can effectively be concluded, and which consist of several salutations and gifts to be paid to the elders of the girl's *yiiri*. There are however also men who either do not have the patience to wait for a woman to be allocated to them by their elders or who do not have the means to pursue the elders' consent for a marriage with a girl of their own choice. They then may 'steal' a woman (*n zu paga*) and the place to hide in such a case is incontestably the Ivory Coast. A man who thus leaves with a 'stolen' woman to the Ivory Coast may be expected to stay away relatively long for two reasons, as becomes clear from the following case.

Earlier in the text it has been mentioned at several places that Ousmane's younger brother Teewende had been abroad since 1991. While others said that the reason for his delay might be either that he was at a place where money could not easily be earned or that he might be attempting to buy land, it was at the end of my stay in the village that Ousmane came up with the following explanation: 'Teewende is in the Ivory Coast at the same place as his *yasba*. Next to having sown a rice field, he also works as *abusa*. When he left here he stole someone else's wife and he took her with him. That is why he stays away so long. If you have stolen a woman, then the quicker you come back the higher also will be the chance that the woman will be taken from you at your return. So, by remaining in the Ivory Coast, Teewende hopes that the problem will fade away so that he can return without being bothered.'<sup>115</sup> It may be that he intended to buy land in the Ivory Coast, but because he left with a woman who does not belong to him it is difficult to achieve such a thing. It is difficult to leave together with a woman whom you have to take care of and at the same time try to earn money to buy land'.<sup>116</sup> When, at the end of 1996, Teewende finally returned in Ziinoogo, members of the family to whom his wife had been promised in the first place came to claim her back. It was expected, however, that they would not insist as this family was itself accused of having 'stolen a daughter of Ziinoogo' and that Teewende would be able to normalize relations with his in-laws little by little.

On the one hand, Teewende stayed away in the hope that time would appease hard feelings towards him, on the other hand it is suggested that the expenses of taking care of the woman prevent him from earning enough money to return. The latter point was also brought up whenever the issue of taking one's wife to the Ivory Coast was raised. Whereas Skinner (1960:391) could write of Moose women who migrated to the Gold Coast/Ghana in the 1950s that they were 'certainly almost all deserters', today's migrants consider it inevitable to take their wives at least once to the Ivory Coast for, nowadays, 'women also want to know the Ivory Coast, maybe even more so than men'. If a man does not take his wife with him he risks finding her 'stolen' on his return to the village. It is maintained that this risk is highest when a woman does not have children yet, for if she ran away later on she would lose her children by doing so. For a man to take his wife with him, he has to be able to support her. Migrants thus always stress the importance of being experienced when you take your wife with you (hence, once more the importance of having migrated before marriage). In order to make such a trip a success, the migrant needs to know which are the most profitable jobs, how one can make a

<sup>115</sup> Skinner (1968:74) noted that this kind of practice has been supported, first by a French law, and later by a Burkinabé law 'stating that a woman cannot be forced to marry or remain with her husband against her will'.

<sup>116</sup> Note that when he is in the Ivory Coast also, mother's brother remains a person with whom a refuge can be found in case of 'problems' at home (cf. chapter 5).

living in the most efficient way, etc. Otherwise, one risks being unable to make ends meet and either having to remain for too long a period abroad or to return indigent.

When a man who has abducted a woman and taken her to the Ivory Coast returns with the woman to the village he cannot expect to settle down quietly as if nothing had happened. Due respect will have to be paid to the woman's elders for the marriage to be sanctioned *post facto*.

Yuma's sister's son Ali has also 'stolen' a woman. After he and his elder brother had bought land in 1984 and established a cocoa and coffee plantation near San Pedro in the Ivory Coast, he came back to the village for two months in 1987 and left again with a 'stolen' woman. For six years afterwards he stayed away. In the Ivory Coast he got four children with the woman. He started to visit his family again from 1993 onwards. In the meantime, however, both his own father and his father-in-law had moved to the south-west of Burkina Faso. In 1994, he went to visit his in-laws, together with his wife and four children. His father-in-law immediately withdrew his daughter and Ali was forced to leave that year for the Ivory Coast without his wife and children. As it turned out the following year, Ali's father-in-law demanded due respect to be paid before he would be ready to release his daughter. Ali was ordered by a sister's son of his father-in-law, who acted as an intermediary, to perform the salutations he should have done before taking the woman in the first place. Thus, in April 1995, when he visited his mother's brother Yuma, Ali explained: 'I will be patient and I will, step by step, do what is necessary to have my father-in-law grant me the woman I have stolen and whom he now has taken back. I will not take her again without permission. I heard that my father-in-law arrived three days ago in the neighbourhood and that he intends to settle this affair with me. You know, I have already spent more than 150,000 FCFA on my father-in-law and still he asked me how many times I have come to visit him. I answered him that I came only once this year, but last year I visited him at least twelve times and that did not suffice him to settle the affair. At the forthcoming funerals and *so-toaka*<sup>117</sup>, I will each time give him 500 FCFA and tell him to use it to prepare *dolo* for his guests. I will say no more'. After having listened to Ali's account, Yuma and Ousmane advised Ali to just take the woman again without waiting for her father's permission.<sup>118</sup> Ali replied however: 'He won't be able to give her to someone other than me because she already has four children by me', and, finally, sighing: 'I won't receive my wife at the next *so-toaka*, they will put my patience to the test'. However, all is well that ends well, because less than one month later Ali's in-laws sanctioned his marriage.

I present here one final case to show that migration can still be an ostentatious act of resistance by youngsters towards their elders.

In 1994, Issaka, Sumdugudu's second son, was already married and had two children. It was not a good marriage however, and Issaka talked openly about sending his wife back to her parents as 'she does not want to get along with

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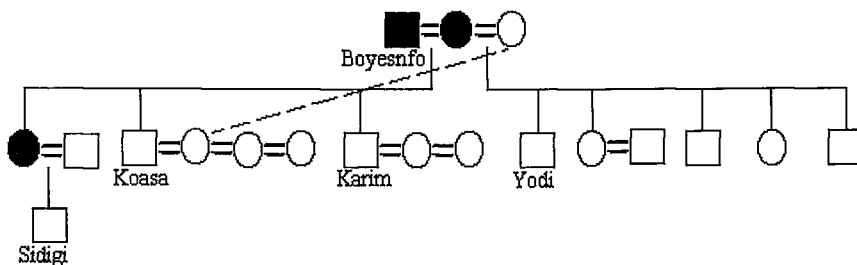
<sup>117</sup> Ceremony at which those who receive a woman are informed by the girl's agnates of the date she will join her husband.

<sup>118</sup> Yuma told me later on that Ali's father-in-law had been wrong when he took back not only his daughter but also the four children. According to Yuma, the children were Ali's. Nevertheless, this encouragement of what seems in any case rebellious behaviour on the part of sister's son took me by surprise. Later on, things became even more strange, when Ali, shortly after having received his wife back, abducted yet another woman and wanted to take her with him to the Ivory Coast. He informed his mother's brothers, Yuma and Ousmane, of what he had done and instead of disapproving this act - which is what might be expected from responsible elders like Yuma and Ousmane - they tried to help him to succeed. Ousmane intervened with my assistant, asking him if he could hide the girl for a few days in his compound in Kaya, allowing Ali to prepare for the journey. Ali persevered and brought the 'stolen' woman to the south-west. He immediately came back to Ziinoogo together with his first wife with whom he needed to perform some final salutations to make her his legitimate wife. However, things went wrong and Yuma and Ousmane became heavily involved. The legitimate in-laws of the 'stolen' woman found out what had happened and came to complain and accuse Yuma and Ousmane of having assisted Ali in abducting the woman. These in-laws were supported by the Yiitaore *tengbiise* who happened to be their sister's sons. Ousmane and Yuma denied having been informed of Ali's plans, but the in-laws insisted that someone had to be sent to get the woman back. Ali admitted the abduction and at first maintained that one of the in-laws should accompany him to the woman so that he himself wouldn't be obliged to return once more to the north. This enraged the in-laws who cursed Ali as well as Ousmane and Yuma. Only then Ali gave in and brought back the woman himself, while Yuma and the in-laws went together to the *tengsoba* to ask for grace and to undo the curse.

the others in the compound'. During the dry season of 1994, he abducted a woman, only for a few days, which was explained by other young men in the village as a courageous act since in this way he showed his wife that even if she wouldn't change her attitude and was sent home, Issaka had no problem in finding another woman. The woman however did not change, and in the course of the year she was sent away. In the meantime however, Sumdugudu had received two girls who were of an age to marry in the dry season of 1995. As far as I could find out, Sumdugudu intended to give one girl to his eldest son Tangande and the other to Issaka. But Tangande opposed this distribution: he would either receive both girls or none. It was said that Tangande threatened to curse his father, and Sumdugudu had to give in to the claim of his eldest son (there is a Moore proverb saying '*buum pa ko d yaw bas keem ye ti wada zaka*': 'favour is not given to the younger brother but to the elder brother if the compound is not to break'). This then, not surprisingly, was unacceptable to Issaka who said: 'At this moment, if friends come to visit me I have no wife to offer them water, and if the situation does not change I will leave for the Ivory Coast'. He started preparing to leave for the Ivory Coast (among other things, arranging for his identity papers) at the same time carefully performing his obligations at home (e.g. hard work in helping to build his father's new compound). He also spread the rumour that he intended to 'steal' a woman to take with him. While among the three brothers, Tangande, Issaka and Ninkiemba, it was in any case Issaka's turn to leave for the Ivory Coast (cf. above), in particular this latter rumour gave his leaving a meaning out of the ordinary. If he left with a 'stolen' woman, he might stay away for a long period, thereby, among other things, threatening the migration arrangement in his compound. He did leave in February, alone, not with a 'stolen' woman. Nevertheless, his father got the message. One month later, Sumdugudu was already looking for a person to take Issaka the message that he had found a woman for him. The fact that Sumdugudu sent Issaka some tobacco, 'because everything has to be paid for in the Ivory Coast', which was the only case I encountered where something else than a letter was sent from the village to a migrant abroad, confirmed how badly he wanted to straighten things out with his son. In October, Issaka was already back in the village.

### *The end of migration careers*

Above, where the situation of young men who are not expected to migrate at all was discussed, it was mentioned that a man is supposed to put an end to his migration career when 'the compound comes to him', which in practice means that he will remain in the village when he effectively or *de facto* takes over as either compound or farm head. Migration to the Ivory Coast, from then on, is left to younger brothers or sons or sister's sons. It has happened that, in the presence of others, a compound or farm head has suggested leaving again for the Ivory Coast. The responses of those present were revealing:



Genealogy 6.4  
Koasa's compound

Koasa is about 35 years old. Since 1977, when he was 18, he went four times to the Ivory Coast for periods of one or two years. He worked first near Dabou at a banana plantation owned by a European, and during later migrations first as contract labourer and later as *abusa* on cocoa and coffee plantations. In 1986, he returned from his fourth migration. During that year his father died and he married his father's second wife (cf. genealogy 6.4): 'I became *zaksoba* and thus I had to stay here. Recently I even constructed a compost pit. Don't think that if I had no wives I would stay here to construct compost pits'. In the years to follow, Koasa and his brother Karim started to work apart, each taking care of his own farm in the village and leaving migration to a younger brother, Yodi, and a sister's son, Sidigi, who grew up in their compound. Yodi left in 1992 for the Ivory Coast, did contract labour on cocoa plantations for two years and in 1994 succeeded in buying 5 hectares of land in the region of Soubré where he planted cocoa. Sidigi went to help him and returned at the beginning of 1995. In June, Koasa received a letter from Yodi who asked whether either he or Karim could come to the Ivory Coast to collect some money which could then be used to buy millet for those who remained in the village, because Yodi himself would not be able to return before the first cocoa harvest of 1996. Koasa, enthusiastically, after having swallowed several calabashes of *dolo*: 'I don't know whether I will find the time to go. You know, now that I have wives and children I cannot stay away long. But even if I left now for only six or nine months, I could be back in February and it would be long enough to earn something to take home. But, of course, you cannot know exactly when you will return. Yodi may have some money for me, but I don't know how much. Maybe it is not enough and I should stay a while in the Ivory Coast to work and earn money'. Sidigi commented, confidently, that after having worked on the field in the village, he would leave again to work next year with Yodi, but that neither Koasa nor Karim would leave as 'both are *puugsoba* now and that is why they will not go any more. Yodi and I are the ones who go to the Ivory Coast'. Koasa's father's brother Ranini, who lives in the compound next to Koasa's, simply commented: 'Of course Koasa or Karim won't leave for the Ivory Coast. They have a lot of wives. Where should they place them if they left?'. By the end of the year neither Koasa nor Karim had left.

The situation is somewhat different when a man is only *de facto* farm or compound head. His father or elder brother is still alive and there appeared to be circumstances in which he could take up migration again, after having stayed for a long period in the village. Crop failure may 'open the road' for these men.

I talked with Rabanega's eldest son, Geswende, just before the harvest of 1994. He explained that he had stopped going to the Ivory Coast since 1990 because he had to take care of his old father. Before that, he had migrated about six times. The rainy season of 1994 was particularly wet and many older men said they hadn't seen such rains for at least 25 years. Many crops sown on the bottom land of Bagsin failed partly, sometimes completely. Rabanega saw the crops on his field along the river being washed away. His strategy to minimize crop failure consisted of sowing rice close to the river and sorghum on the higher parts of the field. The force of the water had however been so great that even the rice, sown to be harvested with certainty in case of a wet year, did not survive. Some two months after the harvest, I passed Rabanega's compound and found that Geswende had disappeared. 'He went to visit his *yasba*', Rabanega said. 'Yes, it is true that he said he wouldn't leave again, but this year we harvested very little millet. He went to the Ivory Coast so that he can send us money to support the compound here. It was not possible for me to disagree as the one granary you see before the compound is the only thing we harvested this year'. It appeared that Geswende had left to take care of the cocoa plantation of his mother's brother, who came to spend the rainy season of 1995 at his home in Tanmiiga, a neighbouring village. While, in September 1995, Geswende himself had not yet sent anything with which Rabanega might compensate for the bad harvest of the previous year, his mother's brother had given five bags of sorghum. 'That is what we ate during weeding', said Rabanega.

There is an important exception to this rule of ending one's migration career. In particular when the compound head is still alive but requires the care of a younger brother or son, it is less certain that the eldest youngster will stay permanently in the village if he owns land in the Ivory Coast. But even if a compound or farm effectively 'has come' to a man, he does not necessarily return immediately but may leave affairs in the village in the hands of a younger brother until he thinks the moment suitable to hand over daily affairs on the plantation to younger brothers or sons (that is also what Moumini (cf. above) has done; for a number of

years, after his father's death, his younger brother Naabraogo managed the farm in the village).<sup>119</sup>

Although it may thus appear as if the centre of gravity of a compound's interests sometimes shifts to the plantation in the Ivory Coast, and although plantation owners frequently appear to postpone their return to the village, as compared to migrants who have not come to own land in the Ivory Coast, there is no indication that they consider staying abroad definitively. All the plantation owners I interviewed during their visits to the village made clear that they intended to return eventually to the village. Some of them had already started to build houses with corrugated roofs. As for the plantation owners I did not meet, their compound members in the village without exception stressed the plantation owners' regular visits to the village, the fact that some of their children grew up in the village as well as the presence of some of their wives during rainy seasons. They made it seem very hard to imagine that their kin eventually would not return.

### *The meanings of migration to the Ivory Coast and holding on to lineage membership*

Throughout the case material presented in the course of this chapter, a number of reasons for migration to the Ivory Coast have been highlighted. First of all, whatever period one considers, the earning of money was and still is an always present motive. Earning money, that is, for the improvement of either the migrant himself or his compound or both. Secondly, I have mentioned the 'compulsory' nature of migration for young men, as if it constitutes a necessary element of their education. Thirdly, we saw that migration even today can still be understood as an act of resistance, in particular with respect to elders' decisions on the allocation of wives. Fourthly, when migration has come to be directed towards the cocoa and/or coffee plantation of one of the compound's members, an additional reason can be distinguished: next to being part of the migrant's education and to his wish to earn money, this migration is also undertaken simply because family labour is needed, not only on the farm in the village, but on the plantation as well.

What is more, young men depict an idealized image of the Ivory Coast, whereby they emphasize that the opportunities for work are as plentiful as blackberries. In contrast, life in the village at home is felt to be harsh and difficult, without labour opportunities in the dry season, and where money is scarce:

'The Ivory Coast is beautiful [*Abidjan yaa nooma*]', young men often asserted with a dreamy expression in their eyes. 'It is beautiful because there is much work and money circulates plentifully. You can sit together like we are now and an old man will come by and ask if there is someone who has time to work and then you can earn 1,000 FCFA on one day. Even for the cutting of grass on a rather small field you may be paid 1,000 FCFA. It is better to go to the Ivory Coast'.<sup>120</sup> 'My father is not very enthusiastic about me leaving again. But staying here in the village and working together leads nowhere either. Here, we find the millet to eat, and that's it. When I worked on a plantation in the Ivory Coast I was paid 500 FCFA a day or 18,000 FCFA a month'.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Even if a plantation owner has an older brother who does not own land in the Ivory Coast himself, the latter too may back out of taking upon him the responsibilities of compound head; this will be discussed in chapter 7.

<sup>120</sup> Fidèle, Yuma's second son, Runtenga Yiyogga.

<sup>121</sup> Lamina, Kogbila's eldest son, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.



Still, whatever the migrant's motivation to leave, whatever the benefits drawn from the Ivory Coast, whatever also the duration of absence or the frequency of migration, it is generally stated, by those who stay behind as well as by migrants themselves, that migration to the Ivory Coast is a return migration. Definitive emigration was not considered an option to be taken seriously. Why?

There is a reverse side to life in the Ivory Coast. There is not only the facility of earning money: 'Everything in the Ivory Coast is money [*faa yaa raaga*]', 'In the Ivory Coast you have to pay for your food, for your health, you have to pay for everything'. The Ivory Coast is presented by the migrants as a fully commoditized economy. One pays to buy or rent land, plantation owners pay for fertilizers and insecticides, and, if they are not able to mobilize [enough] kin, they often pay for wage labour. One plantation owner summarized the difference between the Ivory Coast and the village in the following way: 'Here it is difficult when rains are insufficient, whereas there it is difficult when prices are insufficient', thus comparing rainfall variability at home with price variability in the Ivory Coast. Life in the Ivory Coast then is not all roses. Although much less evoked then the aspect of affluence, there certainly is a hard side to it, among other things because of the competitive atmosphere: 'I don't like to make appointments with Moose who for example work for Europeans. Those people work alternately day and night shifts and often, when they make an appointment, they do not yet know which shift they are on. If they then keep their appointment although they had to go to work they are immediately fired, because if you work in the Ivory Coast for a European there are always others who follow you and who want to take your place'.<sup>122</sup> In a way then, notwithstanding the fact that migration to the Ivory Coast is a massive phenomenon and that the journey nowadays is undertaken with or towards kin and/or friends, it is also a relatively lonely experience: 'It is difficult to meet one another in the Ivory Coast. If you are here in the village you can miss an appointment, but that is no problem since you can meet again the next day. If you make an appointment in the Ivory Coast and you miss it, then you don't know how to find one another again afterwards'.<sup>123</sup>

Also, one should not conclude that migration to the Ivory Coast entails success all the time, as becomes clear, for instance, from the return of migrants who are either physically or mentally ill. Life far away from home is not supported equally well by all. That Michel returned after just one year to the village to stay a few weeks before he left for the Ivory Coast again (cf. above), was because his wife, who had accompanied him, 'didn't feel well': 'She fell to the ground while collecting wood. She had become mad. Michel then wanted to return home as quickly as possible to have her treated. Already during the journey back home, the symptoms disappeared and now it looks as if she is cured. You know, Michel really was right to come back. His *yagentaaga* also had been afflicted by madness in the Ivory Coast. He didn't return and he hanged himself'.<sup>124</sup>

Time and again, the main argument proposed by either migrants or those remaining behind to explain the sheer impossibility of a definitive emigration to the Ivory Coast refers to the primary importance of one's own kin group. Whatever you may find in the Ivory Coast, 'one cannot find there a better *buudu* than one's own *buudu*'.<sup>125</sup> To explain why he had decided

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<sup>122</sup> Ali, Yuma's sister's son.

<sup>123</sup> Tangande, Sumdugudu's eldest son, Baskondo.

<sup>124</sup> Yuma, Rumtenga Yiyooga.

<sup>125</sup> Boureima, Bagre's brother's son, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

to return to the village definitively and let his brothers take care of his plantation in the Ivory Coast, Moumini (cf. above) argued: 'If you are there, you will always think about your kin back home. You always want to do something for them. Here in the village you have your kin. There, in the Ivory Coast, we do get along with the "Ivoiriens", as it is shown by the fact that we are allowed to use land there, but there exists only an agreement and an agreement can be broken one day'.

Whatever the number of migrations, whatever the length of his stay abroad, a Moaga is doomed to remain a stranger in the Ivory Coast. And, if migration to the Ivory Coast is 'compulsory' in the sense explained above, the eventual return home is equally so. Hence, paradoxical statements such as: 'I want to go again to the Ivory Coast for here in the village there is no money and no work during the dry season. And, if I reach the Ivory Coast I am forced to work very hard, otherwise I won't earn the money that permits me to return home'.<sup>126</sup> A migrant's attachment to his kin at home is most obviously expressed through marriage, which often is arranged for him when he is abroad.

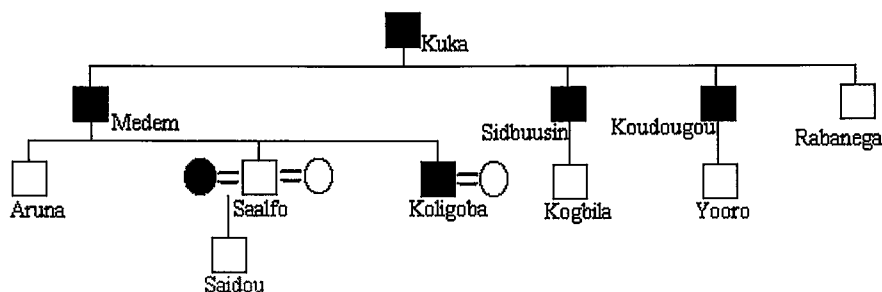
Rawaage, the Kamsin lineage elder, has two brothers who own a cocoa plantation in the Ivory Coast. Timbila, Rawaage's father's brother's son: 'Sure, we regularly receive money from our brothers in the Ivory Coast. On the other hand, we at home help them to pursue the steps necessary to receive women. All the women who are with our brothers in the Ivory Coast have been obtained thanks to Rawaage's efforts'. Rawaage commented: 'Even if my brothers never settled here again and died in the Ivory Coast, their children would still have a place in our *buudu*. One day, they may return and they will join my *zaka* then. However, there is one condition, namely that they come to Ziinoogo to marry as it is thus that the tie with the *buudu* is maintained. If you marry a woman from here, you can stay as long as you like in the Ivory Coast, not knowing when you return. Your tie with the *buudu* is maintained, you will not forget your *buudu*'.

As shown above, even when a woman has been abducted it is possible to have the marriage sanctioned by the responsible elders *post facto*, which then constitutes a declaration of attachment to kin groups at home. Therefore, one seldom speculates about the possible non-return of a migrant who ran off with a woman. When, however, it is learned that a migrant has married a non-Moaga woman, the danger of a rupture with the *buudu* is stressed: 'If a man marries an "Ivoirienne", he will not be able to take his children with him [if he decided to return home]. Then, the *buudu* ends with him'.<sup>127</sup> But even in the case of a mixed marriage not all hope of recovering the children is necessarily lost.

Koligoba, younger brother of the Yiitaore *tengbiise* Aruna and Saalfo, left for the Ivory Coast in 1972 (cf. genealogy 6.5). Saalfo: 'He left for Abidjan and married an "Ivoirienne". We don't know her. From 1972 to 1977, I left three times for the Ivory Coast and I tried to find him. It was only the third time that I found him and I asked him to come back to Ziinoogo, but he refused. He never even came to visit us although he has written some letters. We know that he has at least five children'. Early in 1995, Aruna received a letter from Nomba's son Salaam (cf. genealogy 4.3), who worked in Ouagadougou. Another letter, addressed to Salaam, was included. The latter was written by Adama, originally from the compound in Loada, who worked in Abidjan and who announced the decease of Koligoba. He explained how he had taken care of the funeral. Furthermore he wrote: 'Someone should come soon to Abidjan to get the woman and the children. It would be best that he who comes presents himself as the woman's future husband. Someone should come quickly. If I don't have an answer before the end of the month I am ready to come home and to bring the woman and the children myself. I do not want the widow for myself, but it would be a bad thing if nothing is done'. Salaam commented on Adama's letter: 'We should respond quickly. The woman has said she will not give up the children if there is not a man who is ready to marry her. I suggest we therefore send someone to Abidjan to get the children and the woman and to tell her that we will let her have her way. The moment they come to Ziinoogo, we can

<sup>126</sup> Fidèle, Yuma's second son, Rumtenga Yiyooga.

<sup>127</sup> Rawaage, Kamsin lineage elder.



*Genealogy 6.5*  
*Koligoba*

then keep the children and send her away'. The children were supposed to join the compound of Kogbila, Aruna, Saalfo and Yooro.

Shortly afterwards, it was decided to send Saalfo's eldest son Saidou, probably not accidentally a very good-looking young man, to fetch Koligoba's family. Within two weeks after the letters were received, Saidou had left for Abidjan. Rabanega, Saidou's foster father: 'We would like to have Koligoba's children here. But, as another people<sup>128</sup> is involved it will be difficult. Often, the children have to be divided. Yes, we are only interested in the children, not the woman. Even if she came here, we would not know how to take care of an "Ivoirienne". If she is of good faith, she comes to know the family of her husband and then returns leaving the children here. If she is not of good faith, we might be obliged to take the affair to court in order to arrange a partition of the children'.

However, six months later it appeared that Saidou had not been able to trace the woman and the children. Saalfo: 'The woman has gone back to her home and she took the children with her. We cannot discover where her home is. That is the problem with "Ivoiriennes". Such a thing cannot possibly happen here. Here, you are not allowed to educate a child who doesn't belong to you, while there it is exactly the opposite'. Saidou did not return home immediately. It was explained that he had run out of money and had to spend at least that year's rainy season in the Ivory Coast to earn the money to pay the fare home.

### *Migration to the Ivory Coast and land use practice at home*

A major conclusion to be drawn from this chapter is that the 'modern' migration activities of the members of a farm are undertaken while taking into account the labour requirements of the farm at home. Each year the situation is evaluated and an attempt is made to keep enough people in the village so that under reasonable rainfall circumstances it may be expected that at least the farm's subsistence needs can be produced. The taking turns of different members of a farm in leaving for the Ivory Coast leads in many cases to a situation in which a farm can count on a relatively stable labour force. The number of people who are allowed to stay abroad varies. Whereas in the case of Sumdugudu's compound two adult sons are expected to

<sup>128</sup> *Gagnenga*: who speaks another language, who you do not understand.

be present in the village each rainy season and only one in the Ivory Coast, in other cases the farm head is in a position to have more dependants abroad [or, sometimes, in the city]. Nomba, for instance, has one son who owns a plantation in the Ivory Coast and has not spent a rainy season in Ziinoogo for eight years, and another son with a steady job in Ouagadougou, who has not farmed in Ziinoogo since 1978: 'It is enough for a *puugsoba* to have with him in the village one adult son who helps him with the work on the farm. The other sons can then leave for the Ivory Coast. I have two sons who are away, but my eldest son, Tegre, is with me and takes care of all the work on the fields in the "brousse". As I am old myself, I only work on the *karaase*'. Surely it is possible for Nomba to talk in this manner because not only has his son Tegre a daughter of about fifteen years old who constitutes, together with Tegre's wife, a fully-fledged labour force for his farm, but he can also count on the labour of his wife's sixteen year old *pogdanga*. As to the people needed on the village farm, one should thus distinguish between, on the one hand, the need for a stable labour force, and, on the other hand, the need for a person in charge of farm activities. Sumdugudu still works on the *puugkasenga* and still is directly responsible for that field. When it is said that he needs two sons with him in the village, this means that they are needed essentially for their labour force. Nomba, however, needs his eldest son to take responsibility for the farm activities in the 'brousse' from which Nomba due to his advanced age has retired. The difference between these two kinds of needs is also expressed by the fact that Tegre is not supposed to migrate any longer, he acts as a *de facto puugsoba*, while all three sons of Sumdugudu are still supposed to continue their going to and fro between the village and the Ivory Coast.

It is not possible to be conclusive on the issue of how a loss of labour with respect to a previous season is compensated for. For example, in the rainy season following the departure to the Ivory Coast of Michel and his wife, Jean and Kirsyamba (1994), it was said that the other members of Yuma's farm sowed a smaller area than the year before: 'We might have organized *si-soose*, but that was not possible this year because of the abundant rainfall. If it rains so often, those who come to work on a *si-soaga* do not do a good job and afterwards you will have more work than you would have had without organizing it'.<sup>129</sup> One year later, Rabanega, who had seen his eldest son leave unexpectedly for the Ivory Coast, did organize a *si-soaga* to have his *puugkasenga* weeded. Still others maintained that they had been able to sow the same area as the year before, even though they had seen one of their dependants leave: 'I will sow the same area as last year, because how much you sow depends on your will and on your heart', said Sidsaya (Yuumnooma's youngest brother) whose son left a few months before for the compound's plantation in the Ivory Coast. In this respect, it may be noted that to minimize the risk of crop failure it is in any case a regular practice to sow an area larger than what can possibly be harvested at the end of the season with the available labour. In the course of the season, depending on rainfall conditions and crop development, certain fields or parts of fields are often abandoned and not taken care of any longer (during a relatively wet season, for example, the lowest fields on bottom land).

When I tried to find out whether migrants should be worried about losing access to [good] land because of their absence, almost everyone reacted rather unconcernedly, in particular when they had access to a well inscribed lineage land (cf. chapter 3). Tangande: 'If on my return someone else had occupied the place I used before, he should normally leave the place to me again and go and find a place somewhere else. It may happen that someone who returns has to find another place, but it is not a problem'. His father, Sumdugudu, commented:

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<sup>129</sup> Marcel, Yuma's younger brother, Rumlenga Yiyooaga.

'We even give people from other villages permission to use our land, so how could it be a problem for someone who returns from the Ivory Coast to obtain good land? In any case, someone who comes back from the Ivory Coast can always make his field next to his *zaksoba's puugkasenga*'. But also those whose *yiiri* did not control an inscribed lineage land, like the Rumtenga Yiyooga Marcel: 'Those who left [Michel, Jean, Kirsyamba] don't have to be afraid of losing access to good land. If they come back, they have only to ask for it and they will receive, they know that'.<sup>130</sup>

This contention by migrants of being certain that at their return they will have no problem in having farm land allocated to them is of course not surprising if the discussion on rights to land in chapters 3 and 4 is remembered. The right to lineage land is inalienable and does not lapse if one leaves the village for a shorter or longer period, even if one is not born in the village. Neither does such a right lapse at any other place where one's *yiiri* has been able to inscribe a territory. And, even if a *yiiri* has not [yet] inscribed a lineage land on the village territory, its migrant members can always reintegrate and obtain farm land because of the continued presence of and use of land by members who remained behind (e.g. the Rumtenga Yiyoose).<sup>131</sup> Still, again with reference to the *yiya* who, in Ziinoogo, occupy a relative low position in the so-called 'hierarchy of choice' with respect to rights to land, one would expect them to be more preoccupied with keeping *particular* places occupied in order to advance their claim to that place. One is equally tempted to hypothesize that it should be especially important for the farms of these *yiya* to have a stable, or at least not declining, labour force in the village to ensure this continuous occupation. However, I have not been able to determine such a relationship, nor to justify speaking of a relationship between, on the one hand, incidences or patterns of migration and, on the other hand, compounds' rights to land - which, as demonstrated in chapters 3 and 4, are differentiated.

As a matter of fact, I found only one direct indication that considerations of keeping land occupied interfered at all with migration to the Ivory Coast. The right to land of the Saaba from Mané is, in the village's context, relatively precarious (cf. chapter 3). Young men from Larba's compound do not migrate less often than other young men in the village, but I found it remarkable that in 1994 one of Larba's sons had left just after having sown his *beolse*. One year later he was back, and I asked him why he had sown before leaving. He answered: 'By migrating to the Ivory Coast, we might lose the use of certain good plots. That is why I sowed before I left and, moreover, that is also why we do not take our wives with us to the Ivory Coast. We help them with sowing and afterwards they take care of the fields. In this way, we keep those places occupied'. As explained earlier, the Saaba's position in the 'hierarchy of choice' with respect to farm land is low. For them, the risk is always present of having to move their field because someone else, in a higher position, laid eyes on the place they use. If then they leave fallow a place allocated to them this risk only increases.

In the course of this chapter, some things have already been said on the destination of remittances issuing from respectively actors' first and later migrations. No mention has been

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<sup>130</sup> It may be that the relative unconcernedness with respect to this issue is due to the low pressure on land in Ziinoogo. The neighbouring village of Tamsin had a notably smaller territory for about the same number of people and, as noted in chapter 5, one of the reasons that Rapuyimdu started to use land of his mother's brothers in Ziinoogo was the return to Tamsin of people who had been away for some time.

<sup>131</sup> Luning (1989a&b) maintains that migration has caused a tendency to postpone the 'definitive' allocation of father's land to sons, i.e. migration tends to reinforce the collective management of lineage lands. Land for which the allocation to migrated men is postponed then is mostly used by women, who thus obtain access to better land than they would have had otherwise.

made of any direct investment in farming. In most cases it was said that, if any money was left after millet granaries had been completed and social obligations met, it was invested in small ruminants or cattle. Nevertheless, it was obvious that those men whom I knew owned cattle were in most cases also those who owned a number of tools which others had not, notably a plough, a cart and an oil drum. Although only in a few cases it was possible to establish that the money to buy these assets came from migration remittances, it seems very probable that in many other cases too they could be obtained at least partly thanks to such remittances. The oil drum, in combination with the cart, is used almost exclusively to fetch water from pumps, wells and *bouli's*. The cart is also used to transport the manure of goats and sheep to the fields and to transport harvests from the fields to the compound. It is the possession of a cart which allows people to fertilize not only the fields near the compound, which is done by all, but also the fields further away in the 'brousse'. As to the plough, it was categorically denied that it constituted a labour saving technology which allowed the farm in the village to be worked with fewer people, thus allowing more people to migrate to the Ivory Coast.<sup>132</sup> It was mainly argued that, although the plough might permit the preparation of larger areas for sowing, labour shortages would inevitably occur later on in the crop's growth cycle when weeding has to be carried out without the plough. The most farmers were willing to admit was that the plough allows for more flexible responses, for example to early rains or dry spells early in the rainy season, and that, in general, it helps to avoid arrears in crop development.<sup>133</sup>

## Conclusions

Surveys carried out on a national scale also show that the average age of Burkinabé migrants to the Ivory Coast has increased significantly since the 1960s. The proportion of migrants aged between 10 and 39 years old diminished from 90.3% in 1960-61 to 70.5% in 1985. At the same time, the proportion of single migrants as compared to married migrants decreased from 75%<sup>134</sup> in 1975 to 52.1% in 1985 (Sawadogo 1994:146-147). As early as 1975 it was observed that relatively more women were migrating to the Ivory Coast than in earlier years (Cordell *et al.* 1996:237-238, Zachariah & Condé 1981:42). Changes in age, gender and marital status clearly are related to changes of, on the one hand, the meaning of migration, both for migrants and for those who remain behind, and, on the other hand, the interrelationships between migration and land use practice in the region of origin. My findings, as expounded above, do however differ in some important respects from what might have been expected, especially in the light of findings in earlier studies on Moose migrations and land use practices and the predictions derived from them.

Above, it was explained how in, the 1970s, the relations between, on the one hand, migration patterns and, on the other hand, changes in social organization and land use practice were often interpreted in terms of the opposed interests of elders and youngsters. A consensus

<sup>132</sup> Remy *et al.* (1977:649) attributed the 'failure' of the development of plough agriculture to the fact that many farm heads simply did not have enough labour at their disposal to implement it.

<sup>133</sup> Apart from such investments of remittances, I have come across only one attempt to innovate which derived directly from migration experiences. Sumdugudu's eldest son (cf. above) brought rice seed from his last journey to the Ivory Coast, which was sown on the lower parts of the *puugkasenga* at home in 1995.

<sup>134</sup> Unlike the figures on migrants' age, the figures on marital status refer to migrants both external and internal to Burkina Faso.

seems to have reigned among these authors about the existence of two parallel economies, one non-monetary and controlled by elders (circulation of land and women in particular), the other monetary and controlled by youngsters (trade, circulation of prestige goods). The latter thrived on the money earned in the Ivory Coast and provided no opportunities to improve one's social status or one's economic position in the village economy. Migrants are seen by them to abide in an ante-room pending their reception of a wife and their access to the status of elder through succession. Once this status was obtained, whatever means had been acquired through migration quickly withered away as the non-monetarized village economy offered no opportunities to make profitable investments. Certain tendencies of change in migration patterns, which surfaced already in the 1970s and which were re-affirmed in the 1980s, were interpreted as signs that the gap between the two parallel economies was widening and might be expected to continue doing so. Thus, the fact that the average age of migrants increased and that more and more married men - still dependent on a *puugsoba* in the village - migrated, often accompanied by their wives, and that moreover migration periods increased from seasonal to several years, is understood by Remy *et al.* (1977) as a deepening of the de-solidarization of youngsters from the village economy managed by elders who no longer migrate. They furthermore maintained that, in the 1970s, migrants increasingly reserved the money earned in the Ivory Coast for themselves and that they chose to leave, 'in the full sense of the term', provisionally their village farms (Remy *et al.* 1977:642).<sup>135</sup>

By successfully protecting social and economic village life from monetary contamination, elders were said to have become in a way accomplices in their own society's immobility. The selling of labour by youngsters through migration only served the development of the coastal economy, while at the same time innovative forces were drained from the economy at home. By continuing to migrate massively to the Ivory Coast instead of confronting the elders at home, youngsters equally contributed to the stagnation of the village economy and to the yawning gap between the coastal economy and the economy in their home region. This persistent situation of course owed a great deal to the historical development of regional disparities between coastal and inland economies since earliest European colonization: the meagre economic possibilities of the homeland discouraged migrants from investing in village agriculture and helped elders to maintain their power protected from money (cf. Remy *et al.* 1977:640). A way out of this bind was for Remy *et al.* only conceivable 'if migration came to contaminate the whole of the social body or if a real social mutation deprived elders of their traditional power' or else if Moaga country became able itself to produce a monetary surplus 'thus allowing money to conquer the fundamental exchanges of society from the inside' (*ibidem*:653).

It should be noted that Imbs (1987:179-180), based on fieldwork carried out in 1969-73, already discerned a tendency for migration to lose its character of rupture, protest and liberation with respect to the stagnant village economy. She maintained that no longer would Moaga society be dichotomized, but only the framework in which society functions and in which a bipolar life is enacted. My findings suggest that Imbs may have been right. Behind figures which show an increase of migrants' average age and of the duration of migration as well as a change of the marital status of migrants are not necessarily hidden a de-solidarization of migrants from their elders and a further decoupling of migration economy and village

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<sup>135</sup> They even suggested that in the future migration to the Ivory Coast would become more and more definitive, that the end point would be the uprooting of migrants from their home land (Remy *et al.*:643).

economy or a 'disintegration of lineage economy'<sup>136</sup> (Gregory *et al.* 1989:103). Migration to the coastal economies initially, under forced labour conditions notably, constituted a factor of rupture of the village economy and social life. In the 1960s and 1970s, for the village of Ziinoogo, findings corroborate the thesis that the interests of elders and youngsters were opposed, and migration indeed seems to have been pursued mostly in the individual's interest. Also, migration earnings seem to have circulated mainly in what can be called a 'prestige economy', although this prestige was not long-lasting. But, from the 1980s onwards, a dramatic change took place and migration became linked to the village and lineage economy.

Elders are not deprived of their 'traditional' authority, in the sense that they continue to be the ultimate authorities with respect to the allocation of wives and land.<sup>137</sup> Marriage arrangements have remained formally in the hands of elders. Practice, as I have been able to observe it, was that in most cases those who remained at home took care of the salutations necessary to obtain wives for a migrant when the latter was abroad. Marriage then took place when the migrant returned [temporarily] to the village. Often, it was said that a migrant was urged to interrupt his stay in the Ivory Coast prematurely because 'a woman had been obtained' and marriage had to take place soon. The dependence of youngsters upon elders thus still persists in the important domain of marriage. However, instead of migration constituting an act of resistance or escape, it seems much more as if nowadays there exists a widely accepted division of tasks, whereby migrants, during their absence, leave marriage arrangements in the hands of those who remain in the village. It may be noted in this respect that, as in the case of Rawaage cited above, elders consider the acquisition of wives for migrants as a favour in return for the remittances received, and even as the sole favour in return that they are able to provide. Thus, it is possible for migrants to stay for very long periods in the Ivory Coast (cf. the case of Mourmini above) - not excluding regular short visits to the village - and to obtain nevertheless one or several wives at home. 'Theft' of women however still occurs, and, as explained, may constitute an act of resistance or protest. In none of the three cases discussed above, however, did such theft entail a rupture with or alienation from the compounds at home. Ali continued to support both his father's and his mother's brother's compounds and *post facto* fulfilled his obligations to his wife's agnates. Teewende's affair was still pending when I left, but it is significant that, while staying in the Ivory Coast, he maintained contact with his brother and sent remittances home. Issaka's conduct is very instructive for the understanding of actual relations between elders and youngsters. Confronted by a decision of his father by which he felt unfairly treated he started to organize his departure for the Ivory Coast, which was imminent anyhow, in such a way that his discontent became apparent. He thereby contested his father's decision, though not his father's authority to decide.

For their access to land too, youngsters remain dependent on elders: either they continue to adhere to their elders' farm as *beondba*, or they decide to found their own farm and then have to accept less good farm land as their position in the 'hierarchy of choice' is relatively low. Whatever a migrant's career in the Ivory Coast, it does not alter his possibilities

<sup>136</sup> The term 'restructuration of lineage economy', also used by Gregory *et al.* (1989:102) seems more appropriate.

<sup>137</sup> Nor has Moaga country become able to produce a monetary surplus, at least not from agriculture. Except from a few traders and artisans (blacksmiths notably), farms depend heavily on migration remittances for their monetary income. One might speculate then whether or not migration has come 'to contaminate the whole of the social body' (i.e. the third way out of the society's immobilism proposed by Remy *et al.*). The fact that men, who have succeeded to the position of *puugsoba* or *zaksoba* in the village, may continue to migrate, notably when they own a plantation, can be understood as an indication that it has.



with respect to farm land at home, as the latter remains completely outside monetary circuits.<sup>138</sup> Again, access to farm land does not seem to constitute an issue of tension between youngsters and elders. Within the prevailing framework of procedures for farm land allocation in the village, returning migrants smoothly reintegrate into their farms, either sowing a *beolga* on the *ziiga* of their *puugsoba* or establishing their own *puugkasenga* when they take over as farm head.

As said before, processes of 'individualization' will be discussed in the next chapter. At this point, it may be concluded that there does not appear to be a clear relation between migration to the Ivory Coast, on the one hand, and a growing 'atomization' of production units, on the other hand. The cases above demonstrate that an attempt is generally made to attune migration activities and farm activities at home. Those men who are not farm or compound heads, *de jure* or *de facto*, are in a position to continue to migrate to the Ivory Coast. That is, a farm's youngsters take turns in migrating to the Ivory Coast in such a way that labour availability at the farm at home is stabilized as much as possible. This coordination was most obviously expressed by the fact that the head of the village farm is also the one whose authorization is sought before a migration is undertaken, and it became most evident in the cases presented above where a member of a farm succeeded in obtaining a plantation of his own in the Ivory Coast.

Migration to the Ivory Coast has come to constitute one among the various routine activities of members of a village farm. This routine character of migration (all farms are involved, all young men are expected to leave, etc.) is certainly one of the reasons why it has been so difficult to establish what *changes* in land use practice may be related to migration processes. As migration generally is organized in such a way that labour availability for the farm at home is not affected, and as labour has remained the single most important production factor for village farming, it is hardly surprising that relatively recent migration practices did not affect farming practices at home. As will be shown in chapter 8, things are very different with respect to the relations between animal husbandry and migration - a subject treated apart because of the secrecy with which cattle are surrounded.

Migration as such is thus no longer contested by elders nor can it be understood nowadays as an expression of youngsters' resistance to elders' authority with respect to the allocation of wives and land. The meaning of migration to the Ivory Coast has indeed changed. Whereas, in the 1960s and 1970s, it was associated mainly with 'youthfulness' and the migrant's pursuit of his individual interest, this nowadays remains true only for a young man's first migrations. With that it should be noted that, in contrast to the previous period, these first migrations today are considered to form part of a young man's pre-marriage education. Not excluding the pursuit of individual interest (cf. also chapters 7 and 8), later migrations, and in particular post-marriage migrations, are evaluated differently: the migrant is expected not only to support the village farm with remittances, but also to make progress, either in the Ivory Coast<sup>139</sup> (typically from labour migration to agricultural migration with the purchase of land as the ultimate crown) or in the village (cattle).

That migration to the Ivory Coast has come to be fully accepted is finally confirmed by its integration in wider kinship networks, which already played a primary role in other social practices like marriage and land use practice at home. Indeed, members of the migrant's *yiiri*

<sup>138</sup> It may be noted that at least small amounts of money have entered marriage circuits.

<sup>139</sup> For an example of how Moose and other migrants may make such a 'career' in the Ivory Coast, cf. van den Breemer (1984:230).

or his affines' *yiiri* (notably, mother's brother) - elders and youngsters alike - come to the fore in migration experiences either as providers of financial assistance, as travel companions or as employers or mediators for employment in the Ivory Coast. Again, this becomes most evident in the case of a plantation owned in the Ivory Coast: the potential labour pool from which a plantation owner can draw is at least the same, and sometimes even larger, as the one from which his farm at home can draw. What is more, it appears that a plantation owner has more easy access to this pool: for instance, whereas a mother's brother at home can only obtain a sister's son at a very young age, it is readily accepted that he employs an adolescent sister's son on his plantation in the Ivory Coast. Conversely, however, a plantation in the Ivory Coast cannot simply be considered as one other territory among the territories to which a member of a *yiiri* has access at a particular moment (i.e. a *yiiri*'s territories at different places, mother's brother's territory; cf. chapters 4 and 5). I will come back to this point in the next chapter.

Serpantie *et al.* (1988:41) maintain that contemporary migration to the Ivory Coast contributes to the maintenance of the equilibrium of the Moaga production system. And, indeed, the above discussion seems to confirm this contention: migration does not disturb farm activities in the village and remittances are said to constitute much appreciated and often necessary supplements to farm production and income earned in the village. It is no longer tenable that migration has to be understood as a de-solidarization by youngsters from elders or that migration contributes to the disintegration of the lineage economy. It seems much more as if youngsters and elders found a new solidarity, 're-solidarized', around the issue of migration to the Ivory Coast and that, for that matter, the lineage economy had to be somewhat restructured (the latter being apparent in the changing age and marital status of migrants and in the fact that a man does not necessarily have to end his migration career when 'the compound comes to him'). Does this 're-solidarization' mean that social peace reigns in the village? Certainly not. Although no longer signifying a rupture between elders and youngsters, migration to the Ivory Coast nowadays too plays a role in social conflict in the village, albeit more indirectly. The fact that it has become possible for migrants to pursue what I called a migration 'career' in the Ivory Coast, and that members of a farm join together in the organization of their migrations, has profound implications. Indeed, while whatever wealth which was acquired through migration in previous periods quickly withered away in what has been called the 'prestige economy', it is nowadays possible, as it has been shown at several places above, 'to build up something', either in the village or in the Ivory Coast. That is, it has become possible to build up wealth in a more or less sustained way. In the village this is mainly done through the purchase of cattle. In chapter 8, it will be demonstrated that wealth, exemplified by cattle, constitutes at present an important divisive element of village life. Processes of socio-economic differentiation have taken shape and overshadow oppositions between elders and youngsters, and this in a context where elders were able largely to maintain their authority in issues of land allocation and marriage and where land and labour in the village remained non-commoditized.

## CHAPTER 7

# MIGRATION AND THE DIVERSIFICATION OF LIVELIHOOD PRACTICES - MIGRATION TO THE SOUTH AND WEST OF BURKINA FASO

### Introduction: the persistence of evolutionary thinking

'En particulier, des phénomènes sociaux aussi importants que la vie et la transformation de la famille ont été négligé [...]. La question mérite pourtant d'être examinée avec soin, car la famille apparaît de plus en plus comme l'élément principal sur lequel doit et peut s'appuyer le progrès dans les territoires africains. Or, pour en comprendre l'organisation et le fonctionnement, il ne semble pas nécessaire de remonter jusqu'à l'antiquité classique. Un parallèle s'impose entre la collectivité soudanaise et la communauté [...] qu'a connue notre moyen-âge. Héritière du manse et chañon intermédiaire entre ce dernier et le simple ménage, cette forme d'organisation familiale nous fournit très à propos toutes les comparaisons désirables; son histoire éclaire et illustre les phases d'une évolution commencée en Afrique tropicale il y a trente ans et dont le terme, facile à prévoir, n'est plus très éloigné' (Labouret cited by Wooten 1993:440).

Henri Labouret, cited here by Wooten, was one of the 'administrator-ethnographers' (cf. chapter 1), who came to have a great deal of influence on colonial administrators, on colonial policy and on French ethnographic writing (Wooten 1993:433). As comes clearly to the fore from the above citation, Labouret was an evolutionary thinker who argued that West African peoples found themselves in an early phase of social evolution and were to pass through a similar evolutionary process as European peoples had in earlier times. He firmly believed that the colonial enterprise could accelerate this process and this to the benefit of the populations concerned (*ibidem*:440, cf. also Labouret 1941:207-208). This idea of a 'unilinear process of social evolution' assumed that rural social organization would be transformed in such a way that the extended family would fragment into 'more individualistic family units, smaller units with more autonomy' (Wooten 1993:430,440-441). Not only, then, was the liberation of the individual from the constraints of the community part of the colonial project (Gervais 1990:50, Gregory *et al.* 1989:73), it also constituted a policy orientation backed by the predictions of the influential ethnographers and administrator-ethnographers of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In the post-colonial era as well, at least until the 1980s, thinking about rural change remained dominated by unilinear, deterministic models, displaying some remarkable similarities with colonial evolutionary thinking. Theoretical approaches can be divided broadly into neo-marxist approaches on the one hand and modernization approaches on the other hand, whereby transformations of social relations were categorized in terms of respectively 'penetration of capitalist relations' or 'commoditization', and 'monetization' or 'commercialization' (cf. Bernstein 1978, Iliffe 1983, Long *et al.* 1986, Vandergeest 1988). The often ideologically informed explanations for transformations of social relations differed as did the perceived beneficial or detrimental character of changes in rural communities (cf., for instance, Popkin 1979 on the debate between 'moral economists' and 'political economists'; cf. also Vandergeest 1988). However, the two perspectives concur in their unilinear and deterministic view of social change, notably with respect to the future of 'traditional' forms of cooperation, which are bound to be undermined and to become obsolete (cf. Long 1992:19). The inescapable growing importance of

monetary relations would go hand in hand with a growing 'individualism' and an 'atomization' of production units, marked by the pursuit of personal interests and the breaking up or dissolution of kinship based institutions, thus leaving individual production units, which tend to become smaller, to reproduce themselves through market relations and in relative isolation from one another (cf., for instance, Schott 1988:102-105, and also den Ouden 1981&1995 for cases in Cameroon and Benin).<sup>1</sup>

Migration, in particular labour migration, has often been accorded a major significance in processes of change in African rural communities, perceived as both cause and consequence of the growing importance of monetary relations (van Binsbergen & Meilink 1978:13, Mabogunje 1990, Standing 1981:195-198), and directly related to processes of 'atomization' and growing 'individualism' at the places of origin (cf., for instance, Le Bris 1978:119, den Ouden 1981:249, Pottier 1983). The latter point is explained as follows by Mabogunje (1991:336-337):

'In social and economic terms, therefore, outmigration has set in motion agrarian responses whose long-term effect is to strengthen the integration of the nuclear family [...] into the capitalist system. [...] The extended family system [...] is less and less able to perform its traditional economic role. [...] On the other hand, the nuclear family [...] became the institution more adaptable to capitalist manipulation. Consequently, as the impact of outmigration deepens, the nuclear family increasingly emerges as the primary social organization [...], gradually replacing kinship, gender, age, or guild as the unit of organization'.

It would seem undeniable that, ever since the establishment of colonial rule, Moose farmers have increasingly become involved in monetary relations.<sup>2</sup> The imposition of the head tax, forced labour recruitment and forced cultivation of cash crops were instrumental in this respect. Today, actors are tied up in many ways with monetary relations. Tools, such as hoes, ploughs and carts, are acquired through the market; inputs like fertilizers and insecticides are purchased and applied to crops; a market exists for all cultivated crops - although some (groundnuts, sesame, tobacco, cassava) are commercialized to a greater extent than others (sorghum, millet, maize, roselle) - as well as for livestock (sheep, goats, cattle, pigs); and, importantly, actors' growing needs for all kinds of goods (bicycles, clothes, radios, medicines, etc.) can only be satisfied through the market. Money has also entered marriage circuits and may be offered at funerals. Moreover, the most obvious way in which Moose are integrated into the monetary economy is through migration to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso (cf. below). In the Ivory Coast migrants either 'sell' their labour or they undertake a commercial activity (mainly involving cocoa or rice cultivation), while in the south and west of Burkina Faso the accent of agricultural production is much more on cash cropping (mainly cotton) than in the migrants' region of origin. The process of monetization in the home communities is, then, fuelled by these migration processes, either directly through remittances or indirectly by the creation of new needs.

Studies on social change in rural Moose communities, published mainly in the 1970s and 1980s, tend to support unilinear, deterministic positions. Marchal (1983:526-527; 1985:267), for instance, observed for Yatenga a progressive segmentation of kinship units and, concurrently, a scattering over village territories of 'atomized' production units, which tended to become smaller

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<sup>1</sup> Bernstein (1978:424-425) expressed this in the following way: '[The] destruction of the reproduction cycle of natural economy gives way to a different process of social reproduction in which the reproduction of households takes place increasingly on an *individual* basis through the relations of commodity production and exchange. The relations between households [...] are increasingly mediated through the place *each* household occupies in the total nexus of relations of commodity production and exchange'.

<sup>2</sup> Monetary relations here refer specifically to relations involving general purpose money. The cowry was a widespread currency, in use before colonial rule, which, for that matter, the colonial authorities found quite hard to ban.

and smaller (cf. also Kohler 1971:64-65 for the region of Yako, and Broekhuysen & Allen 1988:333, Maatman *et al.* 1992:173, Mathieu 1992:435). The growing importance of money was it seems a major factor in this process. More and more people would pursue their personal interests, at the expense of those of larger kin groups (cf. also Kohler 1971:65). And, the presumed individualization of control over farm land (cf. the discussion in chapter 4) has to be understood as integral to this process (cf. also Tallet 1985:322-337). Hence, the combined effect of population growth and the seeking of economic independence by youngsters would have entailed the scattering of farms, each trying to secure its own access to farm land.

The multiplication of compounds and farms (production units) is of course not surprising, considering the population increase and growing life expectancy (cf. also Gervais 1990:44-45). This was, for instance, expressed in Ziinoogo by Yamnooma, elder of a compound composed of six farms (three-male headed and three-female headed), who responded to my question on the reason for the multiplication of farms on his compound with a Moaga saying: 'The head of a Moaga does not grow white while depending on someone else', meaning that it is only logical for a man [or a woman, cf. chapter 5] to become economically independent at a certain stage in his life. Likewise, in the village of Ziinoogo, it is generally acknowledged that today's compounds and farms have become smaller compared with those prevailing some fifty years ago. Compounds composed of 25 to 40 persons each belonging to one single labour group, which, according to Marchal (1985:268), constituted the rule at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, are nowadays an exception in Ziinoogo as well. The few larger compounds are most often composed of several independent farms. Furthermore, some actors' explanations for recent splitting-up of farms, taken at face value, might be understood as a confirmation of the thesis of 'growing individualism'/'atomization'. For instance, a first answer to a question on the reasons for setting up one's own farm often took the following form: 'In the world of today everyone wants his own goods and belongings'. It was also pointed out that, as nowadays millet is traded on the market, it was better to have smaller production and consumption units to allow each and everyone to dispose freely of his own harvests: 'With separate farms, each *puugsoba* is free to decide on the sale of millet from his *puugkasenga* if he is in need of money. It also means, however, that when harvests are insufficient, each *puugsoba* is responsible for buying millet for his own dependents'.<sup>3</sup>

However, the scattering of compounds over the village territory - and well beyond - that occurred during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (cf. chapters 2 to 4), could not, it was argued, be understood simply in terms of 'atomization' of production units and the breakdown of kinship based institutions, in a context of growing pressure on land and of actors increasingly pursuing their individual interests. An important objective pursued by actors in their movement over the village territory, for instance, was to affirm not only their personal claim on land but also their *yiiri*'s. The fission of compounds which occurred during the process appeared to be not necessarily definitive and in several cases it was shown that, alongside compound fission, fusion also took place. Hence, the scattering of compounds over the village territory fitted well within the framework of 'traditional' land use practice and the institutions governing it, which were backed rather than contested by those who moved.

From the findings in the preceding chapters, it follows that one should be careful not to take 'individualization' of control over land, 'atomization' of production units and the like as uni-directional processes, thereby suggesting that local [kinship based] institutions cannot but become obsolete. In the remainder of this chapter I argue that migration over longer distances often continues to be inscribed, or is re-inscribed, in projects of larger kin groups. This is not to say that

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<sup>3</sup> Yooro, *Yiitaore tengbiiga*.

no cases of 'atomization' of production units have been encountered nor that there are no actors who attempt to minimize kinsmen's claims to their wealth to maximize their personal profit. But, actors' livelihood practices are diverse, relying to varying degrees on wider kin groups, and this both from one actor to another as for one and the same actor in the course of time. Below, I first take up again the issue of migration to the Ivory Coast before tackling in detail internal rural migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso.

### **Migration to the Ivory Coast: some additional observations regarding kinship**

The extensive elaboration on migration to the Ivory Coast in the previous chapter should at least have made clear that it is not possible to conclude that this migration is related to a withdrawing of actors from wider kin groups and related rights and obligations. Nor does it seem to contribute to a growing isolation of farms or to a progressive splitting up of production units at home. One would argue rather the contrary. That is, although certainly not the totality of what is earned in the Ivory Coast is redistributed at home (a substantial part of migration revenues is used by migrants to obtain personal goods such as bicycles, radios and clothes), in many of the cases presented in chapter 6, migration to the Ivory Coast in the 1980s and 1990s was accompanied by a revitalization of kin relations. Not only do migrants coordinate their departures with farm activities at home, in particular by taking turns, and reintegrate themselves smoothly into their farms on their return. In a way, cocoa or coffee plantations purchased in the Ivory Coast also become integrated with the farm at home, most obviously through practices of labour management.<sup>4</sup> It should be emphasized once again that the pool of labour from which workers are drawn for the plantations mainly consists of kinsmen and often is larger than the pool from which labour for the farm at home is mobilized. While migrants initially may pursue mostly individual projects either at home or in the Ivory Coast, these may become reintegrated into 'collective' enterprise (cf., for instance, the plantations in the Ivory Coast when they start to produce; cf. also below with respect to the acquisition of cattle).

Still, such integration or reintegration of migration enterprises with farm enterprises at home should not be taken for granted. Firstly, if it has been said that mother's brother plays a predominant role in migration experiences, this could be interpreted as an expression of forces that tend to divide agnatic groups. Indeed, it might be that a woman tries to favour her own sons against the sons of co-wives or husband's brothers' wives by urging her brother to assist her sons in their migration enterprises (e.g. pay for transport, mediate for a job, employment on his plantation). It goes without saying that the relationship between a sister's son and his mother's brother is a rather particularized one and a potential source for differentiation.<sup>5</sup> Yet, my findings do not permit me to conclude on the relevance of such a divisive force. As far as I could establish,

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. also Wilk & Netting (1984:19) on how migrants may contribute to preventing coresident 'households' from fragmenting.

<sup>5</sup> Cf., for instance, Sahlins (1976:12-13) for a discussion of the divisive force of kinship ties through the mother: 'It is a phenomenon known generally to the anthropology of patrilineal systems: the lineage is internally divided by external alliances and obligations, such that wives and mothers, indispensable to the continuity of the group, become at the same time the genealogical focuses of its segmentation'.

it has not been able to break the renewal of solidarity I set out in the previous chapter.<sup>6</sup>

With respect to migration to the Ivory Coast, I found one particular situation in which a [temporary] fission of production units becomes highly probable, i.e. when a [classificatory] younger brother succeeds in acquiring a cocoa or coffee plantation before his elder brother does, and this at the moment when the elder brother is not yet farm or compound head at home.

This is what happened in the case of Moumini's compound (cf. chapter 6). As already explained, Moumini bought land in the Ivory Coast, in Daloa, in 1967. After having worked for five years on his own, when his plantation started to produce in 1972 he informed his elder brother Raado, who came to visit him with his younger brother Naabraoogo. Whereas Naabraoogo and other younger brothers assisted regularly on Moumini's plantation, Raado never did. After their father died, he took on the responsibility of compound head in Naba Bagre. Not for long however, since he resumed migrating to the Ivory Coast in 1985, leaving the compound at home in the hands of Naabraoogo. Only recently, at the beginning of the 1990s, he too succeeded in buying land in the Ivory Coast, in Divo, and in establishing a plantation which, according to Moumini, did not yet produce in 1995. Moumini: 'Surely, it would have been better if he had joined me on my plantation. But, because I am his younger brother and because I was the first to have a plantation, Raado went to search for a plantation of his own. If Raado had been the first to acquire land I certainly would have gone to work with him'.

That Raado's plantation can be considered a separate production unit, unlike Moumini's plantation which appeared well integrated with the compound's farm at home, was also expressed by the fact that, while labour for Moumini's plantation was essentially provided by his brothers and a sister's son, Raado was assisted in Divo by Kogbila's son (Yiitaoore *tengbiiga*), a relatively distant agnatic kinsman (although a member of the same *yiiri*).

In Yamnooma's case a similar thing happened. In chapter 6 it was explained that each of the compound's three brothers had their own farm in the village and that labour exchange between those farms did not occur. The plantation acquired in the Ivory Coast by Yamnooma's brother's son Rasamba, however, tied the three farms together, as all three farm heads received remittances from their sons who all regularly went to and worked on the plantation. With one exception, however. Just like Raado in Moumini's case, Yamnooma's eldest son Wambila refused to join in the exploitation of Rasamba's plantation. Instead, he continued to migrate separately to the Ivory Coast where he finally, in 1992, succeeded in buying land and establishing a plantation of his own, which is not [yet?] integrated with the farms in Bagsin.

One last point needs to be stressed here. Although when a migrant becomes the owner of land and establishes a plantation in the Ivory Coast, he becomes a possible destination for members of his *yiiri* and for his sisters' sons, this nevertheless is conceived of differently as compared to other land used by the members of the *yiiri*. Indeed, it was stated that land bought in the Ivory Coast will in principle be inherited by the owner's sons, though it might happen that, if younger brothers were intensively involved in the establishment of the plantation, the latter receive a share as well. In any case, the group of people that is expected to benefit in the long run from land bought in the Ivory Coast is more restricted than the group that has access to what I called a *yiiri*'s pool of territories. Thus, it is possible to observe a certain 'individualization' of land rights here. On the other hand, those men who go and work on a kinsman's plantation, and who do not expect to inherit a part of it, claim that the plantation owner will assist them in establishing a plantation of their own in the future. This expected assistance - not only with regard to the establishment of a plantation but also, for example, concerning any other enterprise, marriage arrangements or treatment of illnesses - may explain why young men often prefer to migrate to a kinsman's plantation where they accept 'whatever the plantation owner has to give them' in return for their

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<sup>6</sup> It may be noted that it is to be expected that, if women are involved in negotiating their own sons' progress against other wives' sons, this will not appear in public discourse.

labour, instead of taking some other work (wage labour, share cropping or renting of land) where they can expect a higher monetary income.

All migrants from Ziinoogo who bought land in the Ivory Coast were still alive at the time of my fieldwork and in most cases still actively involved in the management of their plantations. That makes it rather difficult to verify assertions made on this point. Evidence from studies in other regions, however, indicates that actors' expectations may very well be realized. Berry (1980:410, 1985:11), for example, in her study of migrant Yoruba cocoa farmers in western Nigeria, found that young men who worked on cocoa plantations of elder kinsmen did so not for cash wages, but later on 'acquired the right to ask for whatever assistance might be needed when the time came to establish his [...] own farm or firm'. Hill (1963:109-131), in her study of migrant cocoa farmers in Ghana, was in a position to evaluate inheritance of personally acquired cocoa farms since cocoa farming already had a long history in Ghana. Her contention is that the relationship between a migrant farmer and cocoa farm land is characterized by 'indeterminateness' and 'vagueness' and that, although over the generations individual control over such land would diminish and lineage control would increase, the question of whether the land is, in practice, individually controlled or to be considered as lineage property should be regarded as a matter of degree (*ibidem*:112,118).

In the next sections internal rural migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso will be discussed. An important distinguishing characteristic of these movements is the fact that complete farms tend to be transferred, and, thus, it is interesting to find out how this fits into livelihood practices and the 'management' of kin relations.

## **Migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso: introductory remarks**

Next to migration to the Ivory Coast, the rural Moose areas are characterized by yet another migratory movement which is often conceived of as 'modern', i.e. migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso. The latter undoubtedly increased impressively from the 1960s onwards. Nevertheless it is not a recent phenomenon. Moose from Yatenga had attempted, with varying success, to found villages in the region inhabited by Samo long before French colonization (Izard 1985:538). Bridier (1990:55) notes that the establishment of the first Moose migrants in the southern zone of the Mouhoun river dates from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In particular with respect to Yatenga, these early migrations are often interpreted as having been associated with the expansion of the sphere of influence of the Moose kingdoms (cf. also Lahuec & Marchal 1979:117). After the imposition of colonial rule, population movement towards and across the borders of the former kingdoms accelerated, firstly, because the pacification opened up regions which had been unsafe before and, secondly, because repressive colonial policy incited people to seek shelter in less controlled areas. As became clear in chapters 2 and 4, these migration processes were not only directed to the south and west of the former Upper Volta, but equally to the north. It was furthermore explained how, also under radically changed circumstances, the expansion of the political influence of chieftancies continued to play a role in population movements. In francophone literature, the areas so occupied during the colonial epoch are called 'aires-refuges', thereby referring to the fact that flight from colonial exactions constituted a primary reason for movement. According to Remy *et al.* (1977:626-627), there have been two peaks in the movement of Moose to the 'aires-refuges' before independence, namely early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with momentary accelerations during periods of hunger (1908-1914, 1925-1930 and 1932-1934), and during the second world war. Thus, for example, Moose further penetrated the



western Samo region (reaching for example Tougan) and the northern Fulbe region (Lahuec & Marchal 1979:118).<sup>7</sup> After 1946 (abolition of forced labour), and during some twenty years that followed, the movement slowed down considerably (Remy *et al.*:635)<sup>8</sup> and some migrants even returned to their villages of origin (Lahuec & Marchal 1979:119; cf. also below).

Since the 1960s, the migration of Moose in particular to the south and west<sup>9</sup> of Burkina Faso has regained momentum and, this time, has been actively promoted by the national government (cf. below). At first, migrants came mainly from the former 'aires-refuges', that is, those who had already settled along the borders of the Moaga region moved further on<sup>10</sup>, later on attracting others directly from the Moogo (Remy *et al.* 1977:646; Sawadogo 1994:159). In contrast to the internal migrations of the preceding epoch, for which causes were mainly sought in repressive colonial policy, they now were attributed in the first place to the fact that 'Moaga country attained a point of saturation' (Remy 1973:87). Population growth and, concurrently, soil exhaustion made people look for new land to exploit and, hence, this latest migratory movement is essentially an agricultural migration (cf. also Broekhuysse & Allen 1988:333, Lahuec & Marchal 1979:119), although Remy (1973:87) acknowledges that the achieved 'dilatation' of Moaga country may be understood also in terms of Moaga expansionism.<sup>11</sup>

Based on censuses from 1975 and before, Zachariah & Condé (1981:64) maintain that the internal mobility of the population of Upper Volta had been low until then and was yet to gather momentum, especially if it was compared with external migration to the Ivory Coast. They claimed that there was a negative relation between the two migration processes and that internal mobility would increase if external migration decreased (*ibidem*:59). Referring to the research of Coulibaly *et al.* (1980), however, Sawadogo (1994:149) concludes that as early as 1969-73 rural internal migratory movements in the Upper Volta had come close, in numerical importance, to external migratory movements (47% had a destination abroad, 41% a rural destination in the Upper Volta and 12% an urban destination in the Upper Volta).<sup>12</sup> Still others point to the fact that internal migration, in particular from Moose areas to the south and west, had increased impressively from the second half of the 1960s onwards and especially in 1969-72, i.e. coinciding with a cycle of years of insufficient rainfall (Coulibaly *et al.* 1980:42, Mathieu 1992:439, Remy 1973:91, Remy *et al.* 1977:647).<sup>13</sup> By 1972, more than 35,000 Moose were living in the so-called

<sup>7</sup> By 1956, 27,000 Moose were reported to live in the Cercle de Tougan (4,000 in Nouna where immigration had only just begun) and 25,000 in the Cercle de Djibo, making up one third of the latter's population (Remy 1973:87, cf. also Marchal 1986:415).

<sup>8</sup> Still according to Remy *et al.* (1977:635), the remaining migrations had a 'socio-familial character', i.e. they involved people who left after having 'stolen' a wife, after disagreements or because of 'socio-religious' anxieties.

<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that a migration to the north also continued to exist, as is for example shown in my research region by the continuous growth of northern villages like Nawoubkiiba and Namissiguima.

<sup>10</sup> As Remy (1973:91) puts it, the former 'aires-refuges' constituted relays on the way to new villages of colonization.

<sup>11</sup> I.e., as a continuation of expansionism by 'peaceful conquest' following the 'belligerent imperialism' of ancient times (Remy 1973:87; cf. also Laurent & Mathieu 1994:6). Cf. chapter 2, where it was said, among other things, that it is not so evident that subsequent epochs in the Moogo's history were characterized by intrinsically different strategies of expansion.

<sup>12</sup> The latter is confirmed by Imbs (1987:165), who, for her research population, found that in 1971-72 52% of the migrations were directed to the 'terres neuves' in the south and west and only 42.5% to the Ivory Coast and 5.5% to cities in the Upper Volta. Discrepancies in the conclusions of different studies may be partly related to differences of the areal units on which the respective studies are based. Zachariah & Condé (1981:57) counted the movements between the relative large departments, while Coulibaly *et al.* (1980:56) took the much smaller 'sous-préfecture' as the basic unit.

<sup>13</sup> Coulibaly *et al.* (1980:85-86) found that the drought of the early 1970s had no significant influence on migration in general. They suggest that the effects of drought, also when taken as a cause of migration, must have been very localized.

'terres neuves' - which must be distinguished from the earlier colonized 'aires-refuges' - to the south and west of the Moogo. Three quarters of these migrants came directly from Moose areas, mainly from the western parts, the others from nearby rural areas or towns or from abroad (return migrants) (Remy *et al.* 1977:636). More recent studies showed that during 1975-85 migration from Moose areas to the south and west of Burkina Faso became a generalized and massive phenomenon. According to Sawadogo (1994:156) this happened to such an extent that internal migration came to predominate over external migration and would probably do so even more in the future.<sup>14</sup> For the north-central region, composed of the provinces of Bam, Sanmatenga and Namentenga, one out of eight persons left between 1975 and 1985 for another region in Burkina Faso. This out-migration was particularly spectacular for the province of Sanmatenga from which one out of six persons had left. It has to be noted that these migrants were said to settle no longer solely in what had been considered poles of attraction (notably the provinces of Sissili and Mouhoun), but also in provinces more to the south-east (Boulgou) and the east (Gourma, Gnagna) (DRPC 1990:99-101).<sup>15</sup> At several places in the west of Burkina Faso, Moose migrants now outnumber the autochthonous population (Mathieu 1992:439).

The patterns and meanings of Moose migrations to the south and west of Burkina Faso are often compared with those to the Ivory Coast. With respect to general patterns, it is argued firstly that the former is generally prolonged and most often even definitive whereas the latter has remained essentially a return migration (Bassolet *et al.* n.d.:47, DRPC 1990:97, Imbs 1987:164, Remy 1973:89-90, Remy *et al.* 1977:617). Still, Remy (1973:91), commenting on studies carried out in the region of Nouna in the second half of the 1960s, points to the lack of attention in these studies to return migration, which probably existed as reported regularly by local administrators. Secondly, and again in contrast to migration to the Ivory Coast, migration to the south and west involves the departure of complete families (Coulibaly *et al.* 1980:52, DRPC 1990:97, Imbs 1987:164). It is said that in most cases the migrating group was led by a man who already was farm head at his place of origin (Remy 1973:88). Remy *et al.* (1977:644) note, moreover, that these migrants are relatively young. Hence, most male migrants were young married farm heads and two out of three migrations to the 'terres neuves' consisted of a transfer of a farm from one place to another (*ibidem*:648). Imbs (1987:167) puts this contention in perspective by observing that, in four out of nine cases of migration to the 'terres neuves', the departures followed the death of compound heads, which in any case would have constituted an occasion to split up the farms or compounds concerned. In these four cases only part of the members of the compound or farm headed by the deceased migrated.

Whereas, according to most literature, migrants to the Ivory Coast are said to leave their villages mainly in search of a personal monetary income, those who leave for the south and west are said to do so mainly because of problems of obtaining good farm land at home (Remy *et al.* 1977:617). Above I mentioned that the combined effect of population pressure and soil exhaustion in Moose areas is indicated as a major cause for internal rural migration. The fact that this migratory movement showed peaks during periods of insufficient rainfall (cf. also Bassolet *et al.* n.d.:36) underscores that often it is a *relative* land scarcity which incites people to move: during such periods, especially those who do not have access to *good* farm land are no longer able to provide for their family's subsistence. In the south and west, these people not only hoped to

<sup>14</sup> This last contention was based on the evaluation of economic problems the Ivory Coast was going through and which supposedly would attenuate external migration of Burkinabé.

<sup>15</sup> The number of Moose in the eastern provinces of Gnagna and Gourma is estimated at respectively 10,000 and 60,000 (DRPC 1990:101).

find sufficient good farm land but also more favourable conditions in other respects: better rainfall conditions, the possibility to produce profitable cash crops (cotton, sesame, groundnuts) and a commercialisable surplus of food crops, and better infrastructural conditions (Bassolet *et al.* n.d.:53, Coulibaly *et al.* 1980:31, Laurent & Mathieu 1994:6-7, Remy *et al.* 1977:636). The effect of this migration on the regions of origin is mainly an attenuation of land scarcity. Since in general a complete farm is transferred, the impact on labour availability for the farms remaining behind would be small. Nevertheless, because it is mainly the youngest category of farm heads who leaves, an ageing population at home results (Remy *et al.* 1977:648,650).

Although it is thus maintained that external and internal migration differ in important respects, points of continuity between the two processes are also discerned. Firstly, migrating farm heads are generally either still youngsters or members of non-autochthonous lineage segments. Hence, the propensity to migrate to the south or west would be greatest among those whose rights to farm land are relatively precarious (cf. chapters 3 and 4). Imbs (1987:157), for example, found that in her research village *nakombse*, who compared with others controlled a large area of land, were the least inclined to migrate to the 'terres neuves'. The fact that relatively many youngsters participate in internal migratory movements again, as in the case of external migratory movements, is interpreted in terms of the youngsters' contestation of elders' privileges. Remy *et al.* (1977:639) push this line of analysis and consider migration to the 'terres neuves' as constituting yet another stage in the deepening process of 'de-solidarization' of Moose youngsters within a society dominated by their elders. It is more radical<sup>16</sup> than migration to Ivory Coast firstly in the sense that it is supposed to be permanent and secondly because it constitutes a 'real innovation', in contrast to external migration which in most cases amounts to a temporary withdrawal from 'traditional' society. The migrants to the 'terres neuves' are thus said to really take in hand the problems they are confronted with at home by establishing 'a new village economy' in the south or west (Remy *et al.* 1977:646).

Hence, like migration to the Ivory Coast, migration to the 'terres neuves' is interpreted in terms of a repudiation of village life. In the former, however, mostly unmarried youngsters are involved, in the latter youngsters one step further in their life cycle (they generally are already either farm or compound head before they migrate). Migration to the 'terres neuves' then is an expression not only of the scarcity of good farm land and the need to provide for one's family's subsistence but also of 'growing individualism'. It would be an extension of the breaking up of habitat and fractioning of 'lineages or extended families in atomized family units' (Mathieu 1992:435) which had already begun earlier, and which entailed the scattering of compounds over village territories and a tendency towards extensification of land use, and which is equally understood in terms of youngsters' withdrawal from elders' authority. Not only by the assumed permanence of this migration, this interpretation is further supported by the fact that, although internal rural migrants continue to visit their village of origin regularly (funerals, ritual ceremonies), generally no money or goods are sent home, except occasionally (Remy 1973:86-87, cf. also Bassolet *et al.* n.d.:45); the movement would be economically effective mainly for the migrants themselves (Remy *et al.* 1977:650-651). It should be noted that, in order to explain why it is mainly youngsters who migrate to the 'terres neuves', Coulibaly *et al.* (1980:123) refer not to youngsters' contestation but to the fact that for elders, because of their family responsibilities and ritual functions, it is much less possible to make such a move, even if they would like to do so (cf. also Bassolet *et al.* n.d.:44).

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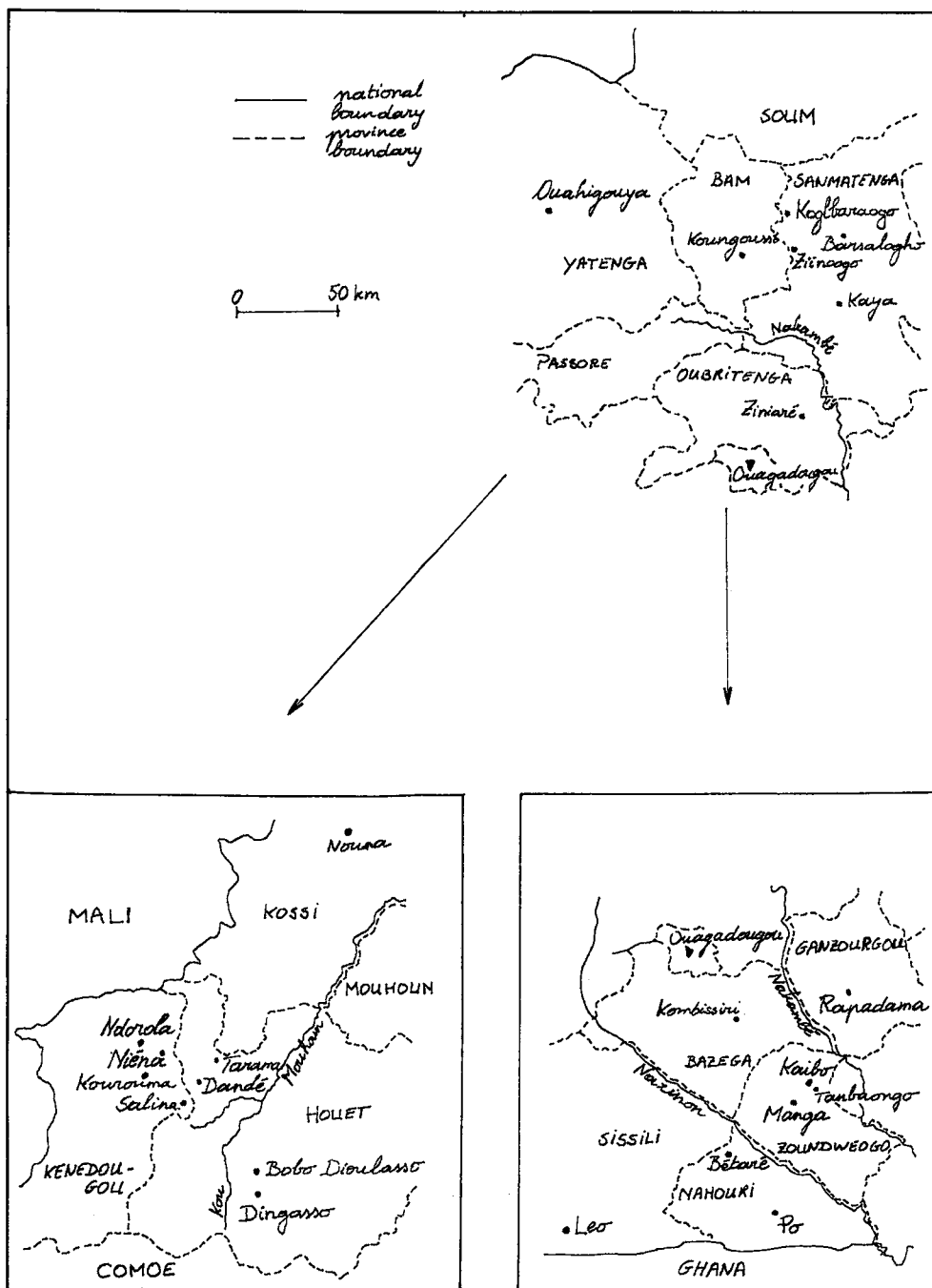
<sup>16</sup> More precisely, migration of young farm heads to the 'terres neuves' is understood to constitute a radicalization of the phenomenon of married youngsters migrating to the Ivory Coast (Remy *et al.*:638).

This introductory section may be concluded by putting into perspective the 'novelty' of the village economy as established by migrants at their destination. Remy *et al.* (1977:645) already do this by observing that youngsters' contestation does not go so far that Moaga society is questioned. Moose migrants in the south and west tend to reconstitute 'the social landscape' they left. In the zones of immigration, Moose settle in wards or villages separated from autochthonous and other immigrant population groups (cf. also Bridier 1990:55). At a particular place, first Moose migrants are followed by kin (agnates and affines) or else by friends with whom they share the same origin (Bassolet *et al.* n.d.:49, Remy *et al.*:637). Village structures as they prevailed at their origin are reconstituted (village chief, earth priest) (Remy 1973:87-88). Also, with respect to the acquisition of access to farm land there are strong indications of a continuation of practices at home. Migrants who arrived first tend to occupy key positions. It may be that they have been allocated by the autochthonous population group a vast zone which they are then authorized to allocate to Moose who come later. Or, they may come to act as intermediaries between newly arrived migrants and autochthonous earth priests (Remy 1973:89). It is striking to note how confidently authors characterize land use practice by Moose in the south and west as 'manifesting their "état d'esprit occupant"', 'predatory' and 'space consuming' (*ibidem*:89,94) or as 'massive and disordered clearings of land' (Sawadogo 1994:149).<sup>17</sup> On the one hand, their extensive land use strategies are understood as a continuation of practices at home and a consequence of the 'atomization' of farm units which, in the absence of technological innovations, lack the labour force to pursue more intensive strategies (Mathieu 1992:435). On the other hand, when Sawadogo (1994:149-150) remarks that migrants keep their fields at the same place for periods shorter than autochthonous farmers and when Remy (1973:91) notes that the 'ownership titles' of the autochthonous population may be effaced if Moose migrants use land that had never been farmed before or if they keep it occupied long enough, one may wonder, with the analysis of land use practice in mind (chapters 3 and 4), to what extent the space consuming attitude of Moose migrants is motivated by the wish to lay claims on as much land as possible.<sup>18</sup> Mathieu (1992:436) indeed interprets migrants' strategies as 'strategies of anticipation', in view of the necessity to guarantee future access to land.

The question then also arises whether these claims are made for the benefit solely of the involved farmer and the members of his farm, or whether, in one way or another, the claimed land enters a pool of territories of the kind described in chapter 4. Another interesting issue in this respect is the way in which Moose migrants act in the context of resettlement schemes initiated by the administration, i.e. when resettled farmers are supposed to use the land according to strictly prescribed rules. One final remark to be made concerning the 'novelty' of the migrants' village economy is that Moose farm heads who settled in the south and west still see their youngsters leaving for the Ivory Coast (Coulibaly *et al.* 1980:48, Remy 1973:90), notwithstanding the fact that agriculture is more profitable (commercialisable food crop surplus, cash crops) than in the village of origin.

<sup>17</sup> Moose are not the first to be accused of such a space-consuming attitude in their migrations. For example, the same has been said of migrations by the Lobi (population group of southern Burkina Faso and the northern Ivory Coast), equally evaluated as destroying the environment (Savonnet 1962).

<sup>18</sup> Bridier (1990:55) notes in the Mouhoun a 'race for land' in which migrants (mainly Moose) and the autochthonous population confront each other: migrants try to take in as much land as possible through the use rights they have been accorded, while the autochthonous population 'reactivates' its rights to land by sowing it.



Map 7.1

Migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso

## Migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso from the village of Ziinoogo

From the end of the 1970s onwards, migration from Ziinoogo to the south and west<sup>19</sup> of Burkina Faso expanded considerably. For the preceding period, only two cases of such departure were reported (a man who did not return and another who stayed away for only a few years, both having left during a period of hunger, probably in the 1930s). Nowadays, there is no compound in Ziinoogo that is not closely related to compounds in the south or west either through agnatic or affinal relationships or both. The relationship between a compound in Ziinoogo and a compound in the south or west can take several forms: one or more younger and/or elder brothers of a compound head may have left, a sister or daughter may have married a man living in the south or west, or mother's brother or sister's son may have settled there. Most migrants went 'spontaneously', i.e. they did not participate in a government-initiated resettlement programme. Still, especially at the end of the 1970s, a number of families left for the provinces of Zoundwéogo and Ganzourgou where they were received in an AVV ('Autorité des Aménagements des Vallées des Volta') resettlement scheme.<sup>20</sup>

Before taking a closer look at some cases, a number of preliminary remarks are needed concerning the extent to which my findings do or do not corroborate other findings in the literature. Firstly, it is not surprising that before the 1970s so few migrations to the south and west took place from Ziinoogo. The 'aires-refuges' for Ziinoogo were situated to the north of the village (e.g. Loada, Bottogo, cf. chapters 2 and 4) and by the end of colonial rule Ziinoogo did not have 'outposts' in the south and west as villages of the western and southern Moogo did. In the 1970s, the AVV actively recruited colonists in Sanmatenga for the resettlement projects in the south and the first migrants at the end of the 1970s left within this framework (cf. below). Many more followed 'spontaneously' throughout the 1980s, to AVV-project zones as well as to other places in the south and west. Bassolet *et al.* (n.d.:36) note that years of insufficient rainfall in the 1980s correspond to peaks in the number of departures from the provinces Soum, Yatenga and Namentenga. From observations made by local administrators, things appear to have been the same for the province of Sanmatenga.

In 1978, the 'sous-préfet' of Kaya noted: '[De] plus en plus les populations émigrent vers la Vallée du Kou ou l'AVV [...]. Cette émigration dont le taux va de plus en plus croissant est dûe au manque d'eau ou manque de vivres vu les mauvaises récoltes effectuées dans la région cette année'.<sup>21</sup>

After three consecutive years of drought, the 'sous-préfet' of Barsalogho (which at that time included Namissiguima) wrote: 'L'année 1981, qui a été l'année de la sécheresse, a obligé beaucoup de paysans et toutes leurs familles à aller vers les vallées des Voltas (AVV); ces déplacements sont très difficiles à suivre puisqu'ils sont faits dans le désordre'.<sup>22</sup>

Finally, the 'Haut Commissaire' of the province of Sanmatenga on the year 1985: '[A côté des migrations externes, il y a] un déplacement de familles entières dans certaines régions plus fertiles du pays (notamment l'ouest). A cause des mauvaises pluviométries répétées et des mauvaises récoltes qui entraînent de grandes famines, cette forme

<sup>19</sup> In the case of only one compound I found a man who migrated with his wife and children to the east (region of Fada n'Gourma) where he farmed and attended a Koranic school.

<sup>20</sup> Migrants from Ziinoogo went mainly to the provinces of Houet (Dandé, Tarama and Dingasso, i.e. mainly the valley of the Mouhoun, the former Black Volta) and Kénédougou (Sadina and Kourouma) in the south-west, and Zoundwéogo (Kaibo) and Nahouri (Bétaré) in the south (i.e. the valleys of the Nakambé and Nazinon, respectively the former White Volta and Red Volta).

<sup>21</sup> Lettre du Sous-Préfet de Kaya au Préfet du Département du Centre-Nord, Kaya, le 19 décembre 1978.

<sup>22</sup> Rapport Annuel Année 1981, Sous-Préfecture de Barsalogho, Département du Centre-Nord.

d'émigration prend de plus en plus d'ampleur et se situe entre novembre et février. Il a été constaté que plus de 350 familles ont quitté définitivement leurs villages'.<sup>23</sup>

It stands out that the poor rainfall conditions and the ensuing inability to provide for one's family's subsistence incited many to leave. The same argument was put forward by migrants interviewed in the south<sup>24</sup> as well as by those who remained behind: people left to the south or the west 'in search of millet', so it was said, whereby it was added that rainfall had been insufficient in the villages of origin and sometimes also that not enough good farm land was available. Local administrators reported that complete families migrated and this too is confirmed by findings in Ziinoogo: in all cases, at least a farm head, his wife and children left. On other points, however, my findings put in perspective, if not contradict, the contentions of local administrators as well as earlier research findings.

To begin with, it has not been possible to be conclusive on the relationship between, on the one hand, migration to the south and west, and, on the other hand, rights to land. Farm heads of all categories of *yiya*<sup>25</sup> have left Ziinoogo. From a survey I carried out it could only be concluded that the proportion of the number of families that left (the number of compounds established in the south or west) to the number of compounds that stayed behind was the same for all categories (one new compound for two compounds that stayed behind). Moreover, it was not necessarily younger farm heads who left. At this point, however, there arises a difference between, on the one hand, *tengbiise* and more or less autochthonized (cf. chapter 3) lineage segments, and, on the other hand, 'strangers' and Saaba. Only among 'strangers' and Saaba did elder brothers migrate, leaving younger brothers behind. An explanation seems obvious: the elders of *tengbiise* and autochthonized lineage segments are not supposed to migrate since they have to assume or already occupy ritual offices (lineage elder, *tengsoba*). Strangers too might become elder of their lineage, but, in the case of the lineage's *kiimse* being at a place other than Ziinoogo, the accession to the office of lineage elder would require the *movement* of the lineage elder to the *kiimse*. Only if the *kiimse* are brought to Ziinoogo, would such a new lineage elder not be required to move, and, this would indicate an autochthonization of these strangers.

A second issue central to arguments on internal migration, which must be questioned, relates to its duration. While it certainly is true that migration to the south and west extends over several years, it appears not necessarily to be permanent. Firstly, temporariness is stressed by those who remained behind, and, secondly, at the time of my fieldwork, a number of migrated families had indeed returned to Ziinoogo. In which way this migration can still be considered definitive in character will be explained below. Related to this is the nature of the relations which are maintained by migrants with their villages of origin. As mentioned above, it is generally assumed that such relations are relatively weak and consist mainly of regular visits of migrants to their village of origin on occasions such as funerals and other ceremonies. As demonstrated below, important social and economic ties continue to exist or are re-established between migrants and their kin who stay behind. Also, from the survey carried out in Ziinoogo it appeared

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<sup>23</sup> Rapport Politique Année 1985, Province du Sanmatenga.

<sup>24</sup> A student from the University of Groningen, Eppy Boschma, interviewed Moose migrants in the village of Kaibo, province of Zoundwéogo, during the rainy season of 1995 (Boschma 1996). Among these migrants were also families who had left Ziinoogo.

<sup>25</sup> *Tengbiise* (both from Kamsin and Yiitaore), lineage segments controlling an inscribed lineage territory (e.g. Kuritgo, *nakombse*, *nayiridamba* having controlled the village chieftancy, Balbou Saaba), 'strangers' (members of lineage segments that arrived in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) and Mané Saaba (cf. chapter 3).

that more than half of the compounds which had agnatic relatives in the south or west received regular support ranging from three 'tines'<sup>26</sup> to two bags of millet or from 2,000 FCFA to 15,000 FCFA each year.

### *Temporary migration to the AVV-zone in the province of Zoundwéogo*

#### The Volta Valley scheme

From 1952 onwards a number of studies were undertaken to investigate the possibilities of large scale land use schemes along the valleys of the Upper Volta's rivers (République de la Haute Volta n.d.b:152). The first studies concerned mainly the Sourou river valley in the north-west, where it was intended to implement a land use scheme of at least 40,000 hectares, partly irrigated, for cotton and rice production. One of the main goals of the Sourou river scheme was to relieve the nearby Moaga region of Yatenga, from where it was planned to recruit settlers (Remy 1973:85). In the years that followed, similar plans were developed for other regions (among others the valleys of the Volta rivers and the Kou river), covering a total area of 78,000 hectares (weak estimate) to 136,000 (strong estimate). The creation of reception zones for the 'demographic surplus' of Moose areas became one of the plans' 'global objectives'; it was estimated that 94,000 migrants could be resettled within the schemes (République de la Haute Volta n.d.b:147,149).<sup>27</sup>

The Volta valley scheme - 'Aménagement des Vallées des Voltas' - covering the valleys of the Mouhoun, Nakambé and Nazinon rivers (formerly the Black, White and Red Volta), was conceived of as a project of a similar scale to the Sourou river scheme. Thirty thousand hectares along the Mouhoun river and 20,000 hectares along the Nakambé and Nazinon rivers were to be affected by it and a total of 48,000 people were expected to be resettled in a zone which in the early 1960s counted no more than 2,000 inhabitants. A major problem to be overcome was the presence of onchocerciasis, which had prohibited human occupation of the Volta valleys and which had to be eradicated before any resettlement could be undertaken (République de la Haute Volta n.d.b:156).<sup>28</sup> In 1974, after onchocerciasis had been eradicated in the project area in 1973<sup>29</sup>, the 'Autorité des Aménagements des Vallées des Voltas' (AVV), a state agency, was established (Heringa *et al.* 1978:9, Murphy & Sprey 1980:1).<sup>30</sup> The AVV received the complete responsibility for the development of the Volta valleys, i.e. it was responsible for studies, experiments,

<sup>26</sup> The 'tine', a current measure on the Central Plateau, corresponds approximatively to seven kilos of millet (Laurent & Mathieu 1994:24).

<sup>27</sup> The three other 'global objectives' were: 1) bringing into production the important resources constituted by the river valleys, 2) the establishment of zones of high agricultural productivity and thus the creation of 'centres of economic polarisation', and 3) bringing about an increase of the gross agricultural product at the level of the producer (République de la Haute Volta n.d.b:146-147).

<sup>28</sup> Hervouet (1978) argues that the Volta river valleys were already populated at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and that since then the cultivated area was progressively expanded. He maintains that onchocerciasis did not constitute an absolute obstacle to the human occupation of the Volta river valleys, if only population densities were sufficiently high. Low population densities, caused by the dispersion of population during colonial conquest and rule and, later on, by migration to Ghana and the Ivory Coast, would have been conducive to the spread of the disease.

<sup>29</sup> This happened in the context of a large WHO-programme for the control of onchocerciasis in seven countries (Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Niger and Mali).

<sup>30</sup> In 1991, the AVV became the 'Office National de l'Aménagement des Terroirs' (ONAT).



recruitment and installation of settlers, extension, etc. (Heringa *et al.* 1978:7). A rigid farm model was developed which farmers settled by the AVV were supposed to apply: crop rotation, cotton and food crop acreages and production methods were prescribed for the 10 hectares of farm land which each farm received.<sup>31</sup> The farmers were supposed to use inputs (seeds, fertilizers) which they could buy on credit and in the second year they were supplied with a pair of oxen, also on credit (*ibidem*:8,55).

The AVV advertised throughout the country to select settlers from among volunteer candidates. The basic requirements to be selected related to the size and the stability of the labour force: the family had to include at least two adult workers, including at least one married couple. By 1977, 905 families (6,100 people) were settled, of which 66% were Moose and 13% came from the provinces of Bam, Sanmatenga and Namentenga (Murphy & Sprey 1980:4-6). The number of spontaneous migrants that settled either on land reserved by the AVV or its surroundings quickly increased and soon progressed ahead of the settlement by the AVV (*ibidem*:82-83).<sup>32</sup>

#### Case 1: Extension of a *yiiri*'s pool of territories

Early in 1994, a new compound was built in the ward Bagsin of Ziinoogo. It appeared that the head of this compound, Kombassa, had only just come back from the AVV-village of Kaibo (province of Zoundwéogo), while his classificatory younger brother (cf. genealogy 7.1), Ranini, had returned one year before. Their story gives a first glimpse of how internal migration may actually be managed and perceived by the actors themselves.

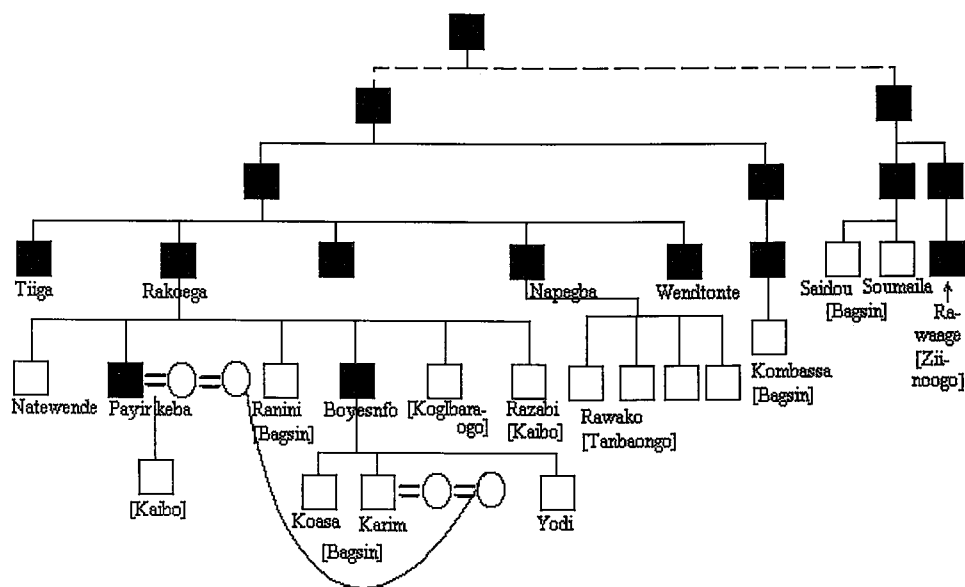
Ranini and Kombassa were both born in Ziinoogo, respectively in about 1917 and 1920. While Kombassa stayed most of his life in the village of Ziinoogo, except for one year of work in a Gold Coast gold mine and another year of forced labour in Dandalga (Ivory Coast), Ranini spent most of his youth elsewhere. In the 1920s, his father Rakoèga left Ziinoogo for Koglbaraogo (cf. chapter 2), together with three younger brothers, to hide from colonial exactions. The eldest brother, Tiiga, remained in Ziinoogo. From Koglbaraogo, Ranini migrated twice to the Gold Coast and twice to the Ivory Coast. In about 1965, after his father had died and he was married, he returned together with his younger brother, Boyesno, to the village of Ziinoogo, where he settled in the ward of Bagsin. Indeed, by that time a number of members of his *yiiri* (Kurigo) had moved from Ziinoogo to Bagsin. Among them were Kombassa and also Ranini's father's brother Wendtonte, the latter having returned already earlier from Koglbaraogo to Ziinoogo.<sup>33</sup> Four other brothers of Ranini, just like two of his father's brothers, stayed in Koglbaraogo.

Initially, both Ranini and Boyesno joined the compound of Wendtonte with whom they also farmed. Soon, however, each established his own compound. Ranini: 'Wendtonte had many children of his own and as we were the children of his elder brother he gave us a place to build our compound and a place to farm'. Hence, Ranini became compound and farm head and sowed his fields on his *yiiri*'s *yaab ziiga*, until, in 1978, he applied for a place in the AVV scheme. One can hardly say that he did so on his own: also his elder brother, Payirkeba, until then still living in Koglbaraogo, and the Kamsin lineage elder's father's brother's son, Soumaila, did. All three were settled with their respective wives and children in the recently created AVV village Kaibo Sud V5. Ranini: 'We arrived at Kaibo when the

<sup>31</sup> The first year, a settler received three hectares of bush farm land and one hectare of land near the compound. In each of the four following years he was allocated another one and a half hectares of bush land (Murphy & Sprey 1980:11).

<sup>32</sup> Although the government allowed, next to the 'dirigistic' AVV-approach, people to settle 'spontaneously' in the areas opened up thanks to the eradication of onchocerciasis, they were supposed to do so outside the AVV area. Spontaneous migrants did not have access to facilities offered by the AVV, nor did they have to follow the AVV-prescriptions. When they had settled on and farmed land which was situated within the AVV scheme, it was tried to persuade them to join and conform to the scheme (Murphy & Sprey 1980:83).

<sup>33</sup> Note that these returns may be understood as an example of return migration from 'aires-refuges' (cf. above). Ranini, commenting on his own return to Bagsin: 'I wanted to be back in our *buudu* and as there was no risk any more of being beaten I could indeed return'.



### Genealogy 7.1

#### Case 1: Kuritgo and the Kamsin tengbiise

works there had only just begun. We had been informed that it was a good place. We didn't have to ask for land. At our arrival, the European showed us the boundaries of our fields and we were given tools to farm. After the first harvest, they also gave us a pair of oxen to work with'.

More kinsmen were to follow these first settlers at Kaibo. In 1980, Kombassa as well applied for a place in the AVV scheme, as did Ranini's younger brother Razabi and their father's brother's son, Rawako. The latter two had been at Kogibaraogo until that time. Ranini explained that Kombassa did not subscribe to the AVV scheme at the same time as he, because, while for him 'things were really hot' in 1978, Kombassa still managed to survive in Bagsin. Kombassa commented: 'The only reason for my departure was hunger and the fact that Europeans had come to tell stories about the aid that was awaiting us with the AVV. But these were only vain promises'. The intention of Kombassa, Razabi and Rawako had been to get themselves admitted in the same village as their kinsmen Ranini, Payirkeba and Soumaila. However, they were told that there was no place at Kaibo.<sup>34</sup> While Kombassa got a place in Rapadama (province of Ganzourgou), i.e. another AVV village, Rawako and Razabi joined Ranini on his compound in Kaibo Sud V5, where they assisted during one season on the farm. In the meantime, they went to see the nearby *tengsoba*, who allocated them an

<sup>34</sup> In its first years of existence, the AVV found it difficult to recruit settlers for the scheme and a high percentage of candidate settlers withdrew. Later, these problems occurred less frequently, since the AVV became better known and the minimal requirements for a family to be settled were lowered (Heringa *et al.* 1978:17, Murphy & Sprey 1980:76). The six villages of Kaibo Sud (V1 to V6) were populated progressively from 1974 to 1979; in 1978, 84 new families were settled, in 1979 only one - the last - arrived (AVV 1980).

area to establish their own farms.<sup>35</sup> The land they were allowed to use was situated within the AVV area and was planned to be lotted out in the near future. After the crops on Ranini's fields were harvested, they each built their own compound at Tanbaongo, a village founded in the late 1970s by Saaba from the Sanmatenga village Saaba ('spontaneous' migrants).<sup>36</sup> Again one year later, i.e. in 1982, Rawako and his family were joined in their compound by three younger brothers. He did not have to ask the *tengsoba* for additional farm land. The area allocated to him the year before was large enough to accommodate the newcomers. Ranini's elder brother, Natewende, came straight from Koglbaraogo to Tanbaongo and established his own compound and farm.

In 1987, Soumaila, who in the meantime also had been joined by at least two close married kinsmen, decided to leave Kaibo Sud V5, because the 10 hectares allocated to him by the AVV were no longer sufficient for him and the members of his expanding compound and offered even less perspective for the next generation.<sup>37</sup> He went to Betaré, a village to the south-west of Kaibo, and was followed by Natewende. Soumaila: 'I had been informed by others that there was a good "brousse" at Betaré. Thus, I went to see the Gurunga<sup>38</sup> *tengsoba* there and he showed me a place where I was allowed to farm what I needed. I was told that if I needed more land in the future, I would receive more'. Kombassa came to Kaibo to take over Soumaila's farm, returning his farm at Rapadama to the AVV. Kombassa: 'It was not that bad at Rapadama, but I wanted to be close to my kinsmen. I got the land my brother used before, and as he was among the first to be settled at Kaibo, I did not have to pay for the land'.

In 1993, Ranini returned to Bagsin, together with his wife and sons<sup>39</sup>, according to himself because of the death of his brother Boyesnfo, whose sons Koasa and Karim were too young to be left on their own; according to others because his strength had diminished.<sup>40</sup> When, one year later, Kombassa also returned to Bagsin the latter argument was stressed: 'His sons saw that he had grown old and that he no longer had the strength to work on the land. Thus they proposed he returned to Bagsin'.<sup>41</sup> Early in 1996, finally, Soumaila too returned to Bagsin together with his wives and children. He maintained that, after his lineage elder Rawaage had died in 1995, his presence in the village, close to his elder brother and new lineage elder Saidou, had become necessary. Ranini, however, claimed that the reason for Soumaila's return, as for that matter the imminent return of his brother Natewende, was that the Gurunse were recovering the land they had allocated to migrants at Betaré: 'They force the migrants back to their origin'. It may be significant that Soumaila told me that the land he left at Betaré was immediately occupied by Gurunse farmers.

<sup>35</sup> This Moaga *tengsoba* is responsible for the territory of Toula and dependent on the *tengsoba* of Bindé. In 1974, the government declared all land which was not farmed in 1972 and which was situated within the planned AVV scheme to be state property. Still, rights to that land were and still are claimed by the population which was already present in the region before 1972. AVV settlers who did not receive the approval of the local *tengsoba* were, within the framework of customary practices, considered to be trespassers. Hence, an important number of AVV settlers went to ask the local *tengsoba*'s permission to farm the AVV land, to be 'reassured about the legitimacy of their fields'. Local *tengsobdamba* also allocated land, both within the as yet not allocated AVV area and in the immediate surroundings of the AVV scheme, to 'spontaneous' migrants (Murphy & Sprey 1980:82-83). They are the elders of lineages - Bissa or Moose - that were the first to settle in the area, among others at Toula. According to Traoré (1996:33), the region of Kaibo has constituted, for almost a century, a hinge zone between Moose dependent on the kingdom of Ouagadougou, and Bissa.

<sup>36</sup> The first Seya arriving at Tanbaongo had followed a kinsman who was settled by the AVV in Kaibo Sud V5. Since this kinsman did not have enough land within the scheme to accommodate them, the latecomers established compounds and farms outside the area already lotted out. The village of Tanbaongo came to be referred to by the AVV as Kaibo Sud V7, although by 1995 the area had not yet been lotted out.

<sup>37</sup> The expansion of families settled by the AVV evidently constitutes a difficulty. It is allowed to borrow land from other settlers, but very few families within the scheme have land to spare. It is not allowed by the AVV to open new fields in the 'brousse' and, although it has occurred that an expanding family was accorded a double farm within the same scheme, often the only solution is that at least part of the family moves, sometimes to another AVV village (Murphy & Sprey 1980:92). The limited area of land available within the scheme may have been one of the reasons why Ranini, on his return to Bagsin, handed over his farm at Kaibo Sud V5 to Razabi and not to Rawako who has many dependents (cf. below).

<sup>38</sup> The Gurunse (sing. Gurunga) are a population group that occupies a large area in the central-south of Burkina Faso. They constitute about 5% of the country's population (Laurent & Mathieu 1994:1).

<sup>39</sup> At the time of this movement, one of Ranini's sons was living in the Ivory Coast. He returned to Bagsin after having been away for two years.

<sup>40</sup> Boyesnfo had already died in 1988. His compound was taken over by his eldest son Koasa. On his return to Bagsin, Ranini did not join Koasa's compound but established his own next to it.

<sup>41</sup> Kimbila, Kuritgo (Bagsin).

Ranini's farm in the AVV scheme was taken over by his younger brother Razabi, who therefore moved from Tanbaongo to Kaibo Sud V5. As far as I could establish, Kombassa's farm was not yet occupied in 1996. Soumaila: 'We wanted Rawako's younger brother, who had started a farm of his own at Tanbaongo, to take over Kombassa's farm at V5, because at Rawako's compound there are many people. But the chief of V5 refused, he wanted to allocate it himself. However, it is only when I give permission that someone can occupy that land and maybe Natewende will do so when he leaves Betaré'. With respect to the third farm in Kaibo Sud V5, it may be noted that Payirkeba has died. The farm was taken over by his eldest son. Of his two wives, one stayed in Kaibo, the other was married to Koasa's younger brother Karim in Bagsin (levirate).

The migrants who were settled in Kaibo by the AVV all stressed the drought and the particularly difficult situation (hunger) they were experiencing as reasons for their departure. They saw their situation in their village of origin (Ziinoogo, Koglbaraogo) as hopeless and it seems that they were no longer able to provide for their family's subsistence. Those who followed them 'spontaneously' also pointed to the bad rainfall conditions in the north, but, whereas the AVV settlers explained that they, and not others, had moved because the latter's situation was not as bad as theirs, the spontaneous migrants pointed to the fact that, unlike those who stayed behind, they had the means to pay for their move. Only one settler at Kaibo referred to the situation of conflict with his elder brothers who had taken land which he had fertilized at home. More frequently, however, it was suggested that close agnatic kinsmen decided collectively on who should stay behind and who should leave for the south in order to alleviate the food situation at home.

Although a direct effect of migration to the south certainly has been to alleviate pressure on land at home, migrants from Ziinoogo did not mention scarcity of good farm land as a reason for moving. This is not surprising, considering that migrants from Ziinoogo to the AVV scheme belong to the *yiya* of Kamsin and Kuritgo. Both these lineages have access to extensive lineage territories over which they exercise autonomous control (for Kuritgo this is true both at Ziinoogo and at Koglbaraogo<sup>42</sup>). Moreover, these territories cover slopes as well as bottom lands, of which certain parts are allocated to non-lineage members. Hence, it seems improbable that the issue of land availability would have intervened in these actors' decisions to move. Still, the social climate seems to have been not very favourable in Ziinoogo during the 1970s and 1980s for the members of the Kuritgo *yiiri*, considering their conflicts with the *Yiitaoore tengbiise*, which were discussed in chapter 3 (withdrawal of the *kuritnaam* in about 1972, conflicts over bottom lands at Naba Bagre in the 1980s). This deteriorated micro-climate may have encouraged some to leave Ziinoogo.

The migrated farms appear to have come to constitute autonomous entities, all the more so if one compares them with migration enterprises in the Ivory Coast. The latter were integrated with the farms at home through a kind of joint labour management. For example, brothers, brothers' sons or sisters' sons employed on a plantation in the Ivory Coast remain members of their farm in the region of origin. Labour exchange between farms in the south of Burkina Faso and farms in the region of origin occurs, namely through fosterage (e.g. the compounds in Kaibo may foster children of non-migrated brothers, sisters, or wife's brothers), but the fostered child then becomes a full member of the migrated farm.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Migrants from Kuritgo in Kaibo, whether they left Koglbaraogo or Ziinoogo, consider the land controlled by their elders at both places as their lineage land (*yaab züga*), which is yet another confirmation of the existence of a pool of territories, scattered over different places, to which members of a *yiiri* claim to have rights (cf. chapter 4).

<sup>43</sup> Although such fosterages in no way imply some sort of joint management of migrated farms and farms at home, it nevertheless expresses a continuation of ties between the two. Often, a fosterage in one direction is to be followed by a fosterage in the opposite direction in the next generation. Lallemand (1977:210) also mentions that fosterage of an

At the same time, however, the migration process and the migrants themselves remain fully embedded in kinship networks, both at their destination and at the place of origin. Indeed, the departures were not the affair of individual compounds. Three related compound heads<sup>44</sup> joined the AVV scheme in 1978 and the 'spontaneous' migrants who followed later on did so in groups of compounds as well. Kinship relations continued to be exploited at Kaibo, firstly emerging in the way in which the settlement of the first migrants from Ziinoogo and Koglbaraogo canalized later migrations of their kinsmen (temporary stay at a kinsman's compound, access to land either directly or indirectly through a kinsman). I mentioned above that migrants' relatives who stayed behind often maintained that they received support from their migrated kinsmen. This was confirmed by the migrants themselves who claim to bring each year either millet or sorghum or money. In addition to remittances, relations with the place of origin are maintained through ceremonies (funerals and other ceremonies in the north are attended by migrants) and, importantly, through marriage. The large majority of women married by men in Kaibo come from the region of origin through mediation of their non-migrated lineage elders, and also the large majority of migrants' daughters are married in the region of origin or at least through mediation of the non-migrated lineage elders.<sup>45</sup>

The fact that three of the farm heads, and their families, who migrated to the south resettled at Bagsin within a period of fifteen years of course underscores the importance of the maintenance of relations with the place of origin. Migration from Ziinoogo to the south seems a phenomenon too recent for one to be conclusive about the importance of possible permanent migration. The case above suggests that it is not the migration of individual farm heads and their dependents which is permanent. What tends to be permanent is the establishment of a compound, which is then inhabited by families who succeed one another at that place. The compound might be understood as constituting a kind of relay. With it is associated a territory to which kinsmen, in particular when they belong to the same *yiiri*<sup>46</sup>, can gain access. Here it should be noted that this process by which one farm head succeeds another on an AVV farm, when the latter either returns to his village of origin or moves further south, was observed on several occasions during the fieldwork in Kaibo. Also, it was no exception that the 'new' AVV settler had first stayed for a number of years with his farm in the village of 'spontaneous' migrants, i.e. Tanbaongo.

However, the case also shows how the expansion of the pool of territories may at certain times be halted or even reversed. The issuing of land titles within the AVV scheme, for example, might be such an instance. In this respect, it is revealing to cite once more Ranini, who reacted to the issuing of individual land titles within the AVV scheme at Kaibo in the following way: 'Razabi has visited me and he told me about the reallocation of land in Kaibo. This means that the land cannot be withdrawn any more from the owners, even not by the *tengbiise*. Still, it also means that, if I would like to return to Kaibo, I can no longer go to V5. I can only go now to Tanbaongo'. Tanbaongo was not affected by the reallocation as it was not yet included in the AVV scheme and, put in the terms used here, Ranini considers the land used at Tanbaongo by Rawako

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agnate's child may constitute a check on the erosion of kinship.

<sup>44</sup> Note that the *yiiri* of Kombassa and Ranini (Kuritgo) and the *yiiri* of Soumaila (Kamsin) are related and that it has been claimed that they belong to the same *buudu*. Kombassa and Ranini call Soumaila their *yawa* (younger brother).

<sup>45</sup> Cf. also Konfé (1997). According to Traoré (1996:44), marriages between Moose migrants and autochthonous Moose, i.e. Moose present in the region before the initiation of the AVV scheme, do occur.

<sup>46</sup> Note that Kombassa claims to be a kinsman of Soumaila, who he replaced at Kaibo V5, but that these two men did not belong to the same *yiiri* since they are dependent on different ancestor shrines.

as still pertaining to the pool of territories to which he has access. The land used by Razabi at Kaibo Sud V5, however, is recognized by him to be governed now by other rules.

Also the return of Soumaila to Bagsin indicates that there are limits to the expansion of a *yiiri*'s pool of territories, due to the resistance by autochthonous populations to the expanding Moose migrations. In recent years, conflicts over land between Moose migrants and autochthonous population groups have become more frequent (cf. Konfé 1997, Laurent & Mathieu 1994, Mathieu 1992, Nebié 1987:292, Traoré 1996). Laurent & Mathieu (1994:26) cite a Gurunga chief according to whom Moose migrants have become too numerous and have to be sent back. They point to the growing confusion on the nature of rights to land of both autochthonous and migrant populations, which, next to the fact that more and more marginal lands are allocated to migrants, partly explains the continued mobility of migrants.<sup>47</sup>

The returned migrants seem to have been smoothly reintegrated into the home village. They arrived at the beginning of the year, thus having time to construct their compounds before the onset of the rains. Fields were sown on their lineage's territory (*yaab ziiga*), either at the same place they left years before (the case of Ranini) or elsewhere (for example, Soumaila farmed on the place which had been last used by his father's brother). Both at Kaibo and Tanbaongo, production methods differ importantly from those at home: generalized use of the plough and animal traction, cotton cultivation, more extensive use of fertilizers, to name a few. Explaining the differences of land use between Bagsin and Kaibo, Ranini said: 'In Kaibo I used fertilizers, I ploughed my fields before sowing and I sowed in lines. In Kaibo it was also easy to earn money. It was not like here where it is difficult even to earn 5,000 FCFA. Not only did I sell my cotton harvest, it was also possible to sell part of the millet and sorghum harvest. It makes no sense to sow in lines or to use a pair of oxen here in Bagsin because there are too many tree trunks which can only be removed by machines. Moreover, it does not rain enough to use fertilizers. The only thing we learned in Kaibo and which can be applied here is the compost pit'. Before returning to Bagsin in 1993, Ranini sold his tools and animals, not only because they were of no use at home but also because it would have been far too expensive to transport them and because he needed the money to pay for the transport of his family.<sup>48</sup> The only thing he bought again was a cart, to be pulled in Bagsin by a donkey. Since the construction of compost pits and the use of the plough with donkey traction had been introduced in the region independently of returned migrants from the south, the overall impact on land use for farming of migration to the south - and, for that matter of internal rural migration in general - appears rather limited. The migrations themselves alleviate pressure on land and other resources at home. While it may be true that in many cases migrants do return home eventually, an extension of the pool of territories to which their *yiiri* has access nevertheless still results.

One may wonder whether the observed continuity of mobility of migrants in Kaibo and Tanbaongo (return to the north, migration further south, migration to the Ivory Coast) and the strength of ties with the region of origin are in one way or another related to the specific situation created by the presence of the AVV scheme. Murphy & Sprey (1980:92) obviously suggest that this might be so, mainly because of the limited possibilities for compound expansion within the scheme and the fact that migrants are not accustomed to the production methods imposed by the

<sup>47</sup> It may be noted that in this respect Mathieu (1992:440-441) only mentions a migration further south, i.e. an advancement of the pioneer front, not any return migration. De Zeeuw (1997:590), in his study of Samo land use, also mentions that, at least in certain villages, Samo have become very reserved in issuing 'permanent borrowing rights' to Moose migrants.

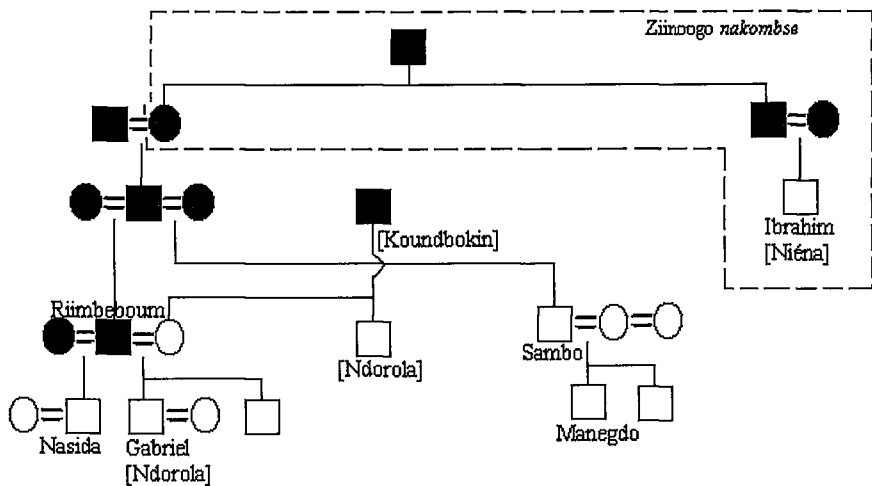
<sup>48</sup> Soumaila claimed to have spent no less than 250,000 FCFA on the transport of his family from Betaré to Bagsin.

AVV. Insecurity experienced within the AVV scheme (cf. also Sidibé 1986:191 and Traoré 1996:59) would thus have to be compensated by the security of a network of social relations, tying the migrants with their origins, on which the migrants can fall back in case of failure. In order to say more on this issue, it is necessary to turn to cases of migration where the AVV or some other government authority did not intervene.

*Case 2: Spontaneous internal rural migration to the west and south-west*

Most internal rural migrations from Ziinoogo have been directed to the south-west of Burkina Faso and took place from the 1980s onwards. The following case sheds further light on the dynamics of internal rural migration and the different motivations which underlie them.

On my arrival in Ziinoogo early in the year 1994, Sambo, Nasida and Gabriel (cf. genealogy 7.2) were still sharing one compound at Sorpoore. Much was to change in the year to come, but before presenting an account of these latest events I present a reconstruction of the compound's history (cf. also chapter 5), focusing on migration.



*Genealogy 7.2*

*'Spontaneous' migration to the south and west: the compounds of Sambo and Nasida*

All three men have migrated to the Ivory Coast: Sambo worked on cocoa plantations in the 1960s and early 1970s (three times for a period of one year), Nasida went once in 1976-77 undertaking wage work for sixteen months, and Gabriel travelled numerous times to the Ivory Coast and continues to do so. As has been the case with most others who migrated to the Ivory Coast until the 1970s, both Sambo and Nasida drew only temporary benefit from these migrations. Gabriel's case is different.

In 1983, Nasida was waiting for Gabriel's return from the Ivory Coast to go himself for a second time. Gabriel told him however that harvests in the Ivory Coast were bad at that moment, and that Nasida might as well go to the west

of Burkina Faso if he wanted to earn something. Thus, Nasida decided to follow his kinsman Ibrahim<sup>49</sup>, who already had planned to migrate to the region of Kourouma. Ibrahim had been informed, by migrants from neighbouring villages who visited home, of places where it would be not too difficult to obtain farm land. Nasida: 'Finally, we went to Niéna. We went to see the *tengsoba*, who is a Bambara, and told him we had come to submit ourselves to him and that we were looking for land to farm so that we could eat. He showed us the "brousse" and we were allowed to choose a place and that is where we have sown'. It may be noted that before he left for Niéna, Nasida had not been farm head. He left together with his wife and very young children. Gabriel, not married yet, was supposed to stay with their father Riimbeboum in Ziinoogo.

However, he soon came to visit Nasida in Niéna, saying that he couldn't stay in Ziinoogo and that it would be better to ask their father to come to Niéna as well.<sup>50</sup> This, Nasida refused. Because their father would not come of his own free will, he ordered his younger brother to return to Ziinoogo. Gabriel would not obey and insisted on farming with Nasida. After the harvests, he visited his father in Ziinoogo but came back to Niéna at the beginning of the next season. That year, 1984, Sambo - 'I was in search of food' - and Gabriel's mother's brother too had left Ziinoogo and found a place to farm in Ndorola, not far from Niéna. As Gabriel refused to stay with their father, he and Nasida had an argument and Gabriel farmed with his mother's brother in Ndorola.

In the meantime, Gabriel was preparing for his marriage. Both he and Nasida had millet harvests that permitted them to sell a surplus. Gabriel took the money for his marriage salutations in Toyende, a village not far from Ziinoogo. The marriage took place in 1985, after which Gabriel again visited Nasida in Niéna. The latter claimed he offered Gabriel 20,000 FCFA to persuade him to return to Ziinoogo to take care of their father. Instead, Gabriel took off to the Ivory Coast to do contract labour on plantations. The next year, Nasida, Gabriel and Sambo returned to Ziinoogo because, after *tengsoba* Belgre's death the year before, Riimbeboum had become the Kamsin lineage elder and ceremonies had to be performed. Nasida: 'When I left Niéna, I gave the land I had farmed to Ibrahim. Gabriel too came back from the Ivory Coast. He offered to buy me a motorcycle, so that I would be able to take good care of the family here at home, he said. I told him that if that was what he wanted he'd better buy me a cart, as I don't have the means to keep up a motorcycle. He then bought a cart in Kaya for 105,000 FCFA'.

Whereas Sambo and Nasida joined Riimbeboum's compound and from then on stayed in Ziinoogo, Gabriel continued to spend most of his time elsewhere, either in the Ivory Coast or in Ndorola with his mother's brother. He attempted to set up in trade, on the one hand buying sheep in the region to the north of Ziinoogo and selling them in the Ivory Coast (in particular shortly before the Islamic *tabaski* feast), and, on the other hand, together with his mother's brother, buying fruit in the region of Ndorola to sell on the markets near Ziinoogo. In 1989, Riimbeboum died.

The next season, the compound's farm was split: Sambo and Nasida each established their own farm, Gabriel in principle belonging to Nasida's farm. In 1994, Gabriel sowed his *beolga* and also assisted on Nasida's *puugkasenga*, but nevertheless was most of the time in Ndorola. During the next dry season, he was occupied with a *voaaga* (flower leaves) trade (buying in Ndorola, selling on the markets near Ziinoogo). In April 1995, Nasida then left Sambo's compound together with his wife and children to build next to it for himself. No house was constructed for Gabriel, and shortly afterwards it became known in the village that Gabriel intended to settle in Ndorola, next to his mother's brother. By the end of the month, he had indeed left, taking with him his wife, mother, children and a sister's child. Nasida assisted him by giving him some millet to help him through the next rainy season.

A number of things can be learned from this case. First, the reasons for internal rural migration may be diverse. Sambo was driven by drought and hunger. For Nasida, migration to Niéna constituted an alternative to the Ivory Coast, where, at that time, opportunities would have been less favourable. Although Nasida emphasized it would have been easier to earn money in the Ivory Coast, he nevertheless claimed that he was able to make money in Niéna, in particular through the sale of millet surpluses<sup>51</sup>: 'I could sell a whole granary and thus earn some 50,000 FCFA, which is not so much if you compare it to the possibilities in the Ivory Coast where it is possible to earn 1,000 FCFA with a job which is finished before noon'. Gabriel's migration to the west appeared more as an escape from village life and his obligations towards his father (cf. below).

<sup>49</sup> Ibrahim is Nasida's and Gabriel's *yaaba* (cf. genealogy 7.2).

<sup>50</sup> The years 1983-84 were particularly difficult in the region of Ziinoogo because of the drought.

<sup>51</sup> Although the pursuit of a monetary income most often was not a primary motivation to settle in the south or the west, returned migrants never failed to stress the relative ease with which money could be earned, both through millet surpluses and through the cultivation of cash crops.



A second point of interest is the fact that the case shows that, as in the previous case, internal rural migration is not *a priori* permanent. Nasida does not seem to have considered the possibility of a prolonged stay in Niéna, always stressing the importance of the offices (lineage elder, *tengsoba*) his old father was soon to occupy, making it impossible for the latter to move. Once his father became lineage elder, his eldest son's presence with him would be imperative, according to Nasida. It should be noted that Sambo too claims to have returned to Ziinoogo because his presence with his elder brother would have been obligatory once the latter became lineage elder. Hence, the rhythm of return migration is modulated by developments within the lineage (*yiiri*) at home.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, while he clearly rejects staying in Ziinoogo, Gabriel nevertheless relied on his *yiiri* for the arrangement of his marriage. The visits home in the years 1983-85 served among other things for the performance of necessary salutations to future in-laws and his marriage was approved of by his *yiiri's* elders.<sup>53</sup>

Again, it emerges that internal rural migration is not the affair of isolated families or farm units: it remains embedded in kinship networks at home and at the place of destination. Nasida's as well as Sambo's departure took place in association with other kinsmen and in the west they settled close to one another. Access to land was not acquired individually by Ibrahim and Nasida: they submitted their applications together to the Bambara *tengsoba*. Nasida maintained that, when he returned to Ziinoogo, he did not return the land he used to the Bambara *tengsoba* but to his kinsman Ibrahim. By having farmed in Niéna, he established a kind of relay for himself and his kinsmen: 'If I want to, I can always return to that land or ask for another place in that village which won't be refused'. That by migration to the west the pool of territories, to which the members of the migrant's *yiiri* (cf. chapter 4) as well as the migrant's sister's sons (cf. chapter 5) have access, is extended is confirmed by Gabriel's latest migration to Ndorola, where he obtained farm land through his mother's brother.

### *Withdrawing from kinship networks: tendencies and counter-tendencies*

Notwithstanding the prominent role of kinship networks, the continued establishment of marriage relations through lineage elders who remained in the northern villages, the provisional character of migrations, the reported regularity of mutual aid (remittances, assistance by those who remain behind to help a migrant leave) and the tendency for the land used in the south and west to enter a *yiiri's* pool of territories, migration to the south and west still seems to promote 'atomization' of production units. Indeed, whereas it was observed for movement over the village territory and to villages to the north of Ziinoogo that besides compound fission fusions also occurred, the result of *all* migrations to the south and west was, either immediately or ultimately, a multiplication of farms and compounds. An integration of migration enterprises and farm enterprises at home - as demonstrated to be the case for migration to the Ivory Coast - seems absent: each appears to be managed autonomously, except sometimes during a transitional period when newly arrived and related migrants spend a season on the farm of an earlier settled migrant (cf. first case above). Moreover, it has been suggested at several points that, compared to migrants who leave for the Ivory Coast, those who move to the south and west do so because of more selfish considerations. Rawaage, the Kamsin lineage elder who, at that time, had three men of his *yiiri* settled with their families in the south and west explained:

<sup>52</sup> Note that Ranini and Soumaila, in the first case, claimed to have returned for similar reasons.

<sup>53</sup> In order to help Gabriel with his marriage, Riimbeboum sold a cow.

'It is better to have members of your *yiiri* in the Ivory Coast than to have them in the south or west. Those who went to the south and west did so to farm, they did it in their own interest, while those who go to the Ivory Coast do so with the intention also to help their compound at home'.

Furthermore, Gabriel's case suggests that 'individualization' is more important here than with migration to the Ivory Coast. Whereas in the first case presented above, migrations and related fragmentation of production units seem to have been provoked by the hopeless situation experienced at home (drought, hunger), Gabriel's case points up that internal migration also can be motivated by the wish to at least restrict the group which is to benefit from the migrant's wealth. This case indeed deserves further attention since Gabriel's refusal to stay with his father constituted one of the rare instances I encountered of such overt defiance of family expectations. His latest movement too is extraordinary if compared to other migrations to the south and west. First, the year he settled at Ndorola followed upon two years of relatively good harvests in Ziinoogo, at least for the farm he belonged to. The millet Nasida gave him to get through his first rainy season in Ndorola came from the harvest of 1993! His prospects, with respect to farm land in Ziinoogo (or for that matter in Bottogo in the north), were favourable as well. Being a Kamsin *tengbiiga*, the lands to which he has potential access are vast and diverse. Second, following observations made by his kinsmen and other villagers, it is evident that his trade was flourishing. From year to year, he took up more activities, starting with the sheep trade towards the Ivory Coast, followed by millet trade, and finally *voaaga* and mangoes. His wealth was invariably estimated by others as extensive; for example, it had become accepted as fact that he owned at least 250,000 FCFA in cash: 'It is difficult to understand why someone who has here 250,000 FCFA still feels the need to search [for money] elsewhere', it was said. One might indeed wonder whether it would not have been more efficient for Gabriel's trade activities, given his association with his already migrated mother's brother, if he had stayed in Ziinoogo.

Other actors' explanations indicated out that by moving to Ndorola Gabriel hoped to protect his wealth from demanding, less wealthy kin. Even his elder brother acknowledged that an important reason for Gabriel's move was 'his fear that in the village his means might diminish', while another kinsman explained that 'someone who is wealthy may want to leave because those around him, who are wretched, detest him'. Until then, Gabriel had regularly supported the compound in Ziinoogo by giving part of what he earned. Did he want to put an end to this assistance? It was not considered to be a coincidence that Nasida built his own compound in Ziinoogo, for it implied that whatever Gabriel earned in the future would have to be shared between Gabriel and Nasida in the first place and to a lesser extent with Sambo.

Still, the case - and notably the fission of Sambo's compound - can be viewed from a perspective other than the one which focuses on Gabriel's [and Nasida's] concern to restrict the group able to profit from their wealth. It appeared that there had been a disagreement between Sambo on the one hand and Nasida and Gabriel on the other hand. Sambo had 'received' a wife, intended to be passed on to his eldest son Manegdo. However, he attempted to marry her himself, which Nasida and Gabriel opposed. Their lineage elder, Rawaage, intervened to settle the affair to the advantage of Manegdo. The atmosphere in Sambo's compound had deteriorated once and for all. He could not get along with his son's wife and she expressed her unhappiness by threatening to go back to her parents, which she ultimately did. Nasida:

'Gabriel and I did the necessary salutations to obtain the wife for Manegdo. Sambo wanted her for himself, which we were able to prevent. But then she said that her husband's father didn't like her and even that her husband didn't like her. She was right to say so. We have tried to save the situation by proposing to Manegdo and his wife that they accompany Gabriel to Ndorola. Since we had seen that things didn't work out for the woman in Sambo's compound, we thought it better for her and Manegdo to leave either to the Ivory Coast or to the west. In that way, they would have been able to obtain some

means for themselves and also help Sambo by buying him a bicycle, for example, or send him millet. If they then returned to Ziinoogo, not only would the woman have acquired some means for herself, she would also have a child [and no longer try to run away]. But as the woman has returned to her parents before Manegdo could migrate, there is nothing we can do any more. Our expenses have been useless and if Manegdo intends to leave for the Ivory Coast now, we will not intervene. If he himself finds the means to leave or if Sambo wants to help him, that is all right with us. We will just watch and see'.

Although Nasida's and Gabriel's plan was never realized, it manifests the concern to limit the damage caused by discord among agnates. Temporary migration to either the Ivory Coast or the west of Burkina Faso in this case was seen as giving an opportunity to relieve current tensions within the compound. Father and son would have been temporarily separated, but only in order to achieve a stronger unity afterwards. On the one hand, migration would permit Sambo to reconcile himself to his son's marriage (through the assistance which would be sent to him) and, on the other hand, by having given birth to a child the woman would be more tied to her husband's compound.

Finally, there are two other issues to touch upon briefly, since they show how migration enterprises in the south or west still may be, or may become, tied up indirectly or directly with farms at home. Firstly, in the same way that a plantation in the Ivory Coast can tie together different farms in the village of origin (cf. above), so it can constitute a binding element between farms in the south or west and farms in the village of origin. Thus, for example, Tengo, Balbou Seya in Naba Bagre, saw in 1985 some of his brothers and a few years later also his father leave for Sadina in the west of Burkina Faso.

Tengo: 'We had at least forty persons here on the compound. We were many and the land of our *yaab ziiga* was barely sufficient for all of us. But the reason that my brothers left was the paucity of rain. It is discouraging to work hard and to finally have only a little to harvest. My brothers left in search of *sagbo* and they founded a new compound in Sadina. When they left, I helped them to pay for transport. Each year, some of them come to visit us and they bring along some bags of millet. Those who migrated stayed together in Sadina, except that from Sadina too they continue to migrate to the Ivory Coast'.

Indeed, one of Tengo's brothers even succeeded in buying land in the Ivory Coast - in Issia - in order to establish a cocoa plantation. Both from the compound in Sadina and the compound in Naba Bagre young men nowadays migrate to this plantation, where they relieve one another. Thus, both compounds are involved in the mobilization of labour for the plantation in a sustained way and both compounds benefit from the remittances from the plantation.

Secondly, migration enterprises, both in the Ivory Coast and in the south and west of Burkina Faso, and farms at home join together in the domain of livestock and in particular cattle. Herds in the village of Ziinoogo, whether entrusted to Fulbe or not, may be composed of animals owned by residents of the village as well as migrants. Indeed, cattle are one of the most preferred objects for the investment of migration remittances. On the one hand, farm heads at home, having received remittances, may, when there are no other urgent problems to be solved, decide to buy cattle. Migrants too may either buy themselves cattle with the migration income they have reserved for themselves, or order their farm head at home to do so. Thus, for example, Tengo (cf. above) has entrusted to a Pullo nearby a cattle herd which is composed of animals owned by himself and by brothers in Sadina and in the Ivory Coast. Tengo: 'My brothers who are in the Ivory Coast as well as those who are in Sadina have animals here, and as I am the one who stays here I am taking care of the animals. I entrusted the cattle to a Pullo'. Hence, the situation is that

the farm head at home takes care of the herd either directly when it is held at his compound, or indirectly by managing relations with a Pullo herdsman.<sup>54</sup>

The ways in which an individual entrusts his cattle are in practice far more diverse and complex - I intend to clarify this in the next chapter - but the point I want to make here is that actors who have pursued divergent paths for some time - and this holds in particular for farms in the south or west and at home - may from a certain time onwards find their paths crossing again. Whether or not this effectively happens is linked to the extent to which migration enterprises are successful, since this is a precondition for a migrant ever being able to invest in cattle.

## Concluding remarks

In the above, the importance, patterns and meanings of migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso were discussed. At the same time, I demonstrated that the extent to which actors remain involved in and rely on kin relations and kinship-based institutions for their livelihood practices (notably here migration) varies, both from actor to actor and for one actor in the course of time, and should thus be contextually situated.

Certainly, compounds have broken up into smaller entities over an ever expanding space. To speak of 'atomized' entities would however be misleading, among other reasons because this term has often been used to indicate a 'dissolution' of ties in wider kinship networks and an autonomous development of these entities. The foregoing chapters have shown that this is not what happened. Processes of geographic mobility are firmly embedded in kinship networks and, what is more, important resources such as land and labour continue to be pooled within wider kin groups, also in the new circumstances created by the migration processes to the south and west of Burkina Faso and to the Ivory Coast. And, 'new' forms of wealth, like land in the Ivory Coast and cattle, may tie otherwise independent entities together. There seems to be some similarity with the processes analyzed by Smith (1984), who argues that migration by people from Huasicanha in highland Peru was not a single-household affair but occurred in the context of 'confederations of households'. Ties (concerning labour mobilization, distribution of land, animal husbandry, etc.) between households, situated in a range of geographically dispersed economic zones, had to be taken into account in order to understand the practices of any one household (*ibidem*:224-225). Moreover, in that case too, both tendencies and counter-tendencies to 'atomization' [of households] were discerned, without there being any clear-cut 'historical trend' (*ibidem*:231-234).<sup>55</sup>

Similarly, Berry's (1985:78) study of social change in West Africa highlights how farmers' strategies of resource use rest on the assumption that individual and communal advances are closely and positively related. For the present study too, the question of whether migrants pursue in the first place their own interests rather than those of their families left at their place of origin, appears an irrelevant issue since it is difficult to conceive of one without the other. Migrants continue to express their allegiance to their compounds and/or *yiya* at home through remittances (cash, bags of millet), through the investment in housing at their home village, through their attendance at funerals and rituals. In order for migration enterprises to be successful, the approval

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<sup>54</sup> Migrant farmers in Kaibo confirmed that the investment in livestock in the region of origin, thereby leaving the management of the herd to a non-migrated kinsman, is a regular practice.

<sup>55</sup> Smith also shows how membership of specific confederations is changed as people ('households') move in and out of particular confederated networks. This is tied to changes in resource components.

of kinsmen remaining behind is deemed necessary, and the latter often support migrants by contributing to transport expenses or to the establishment of a new farm in the south or west (millet). Importantly, migrants both in the Ivory Coast and in the south and west of Burkina Faso depend heavily on their kinsmen for marriage arrangements. Thus principles of kinship have not been obliterated by these diverse processes of geographic mobility. The importance of the principle of seniority for the mobilization of both land and labour was explored in chapters 3 to 5, and chapters 6 and 7 demonstrate that it continues to play an important role in migrations to the Ivory Coast and to the south and west of Burkina Faso. Issues of return migration from the south and west and the end of 'careers' of migration to the Ivory Coast cannot be understood without reference to this principle, and its importance also appeared in the mobilization by elders of youngsters' labour for their plantations in the Ivory Coast. This was further underscored by the fact that fission occurred when the principle could no longer be respected: elder brothers seeking their own way rather than working on the plantation owned by a younger brother. The acquisition by a youngster of a private title to land is indeed incompatible with the principle of seniority, according to which the elder has ultimate authority over land allocation.

The foregoing discussion has concentrated upon acquiring an understanding of the meanings and causes of different processes of geographic mobility and of the ways in which resources (mainly labour and land) are mobilized in the processes. Whereas migration and the growing importance of market relations have not led to any clear-cut 'atomization' of production units or weakening of ties with larger kin groups, migration enterprises (both in the Ivory Coast and in the south and west of Burkina Faso) are nevertheless pursued with varying success and have permitted some to accumulate, and others only to acquire some 'luxury' goods or earnings to complement the farm's subsistence at home. The issue which will be addressed in the next chapter concerns the ways in which differential accumulation of wealth has affected both social relations and land use practice at home. Here it will be necessary to go beyond the contention that strategies of accumulation take place within the framework of wider kin groups, where the control of land and labour is largely governed by principles of seniority. It will be demonstrated that it is not so much the opposition between elders and youngsters, or competition between separate farms, which is responsible for social tension and land use conflicts, but rather opposition between cattle-owning and non-cattle-owning [corporate] groups.

## CHAPTER 8

# SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIFFERENTIATION, CATTLE AND INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONSHIPS

'Observons que [...] rien ne nous a permis de dire que les pasteurs avaient une connaissance précise de l'effectif de leur troupeau. Le problème est, pour eux, s'agissant toujours de répondre à un interlocuteur déterminée, de mesurer le danger ou le bénéfice qu'ils tireraient en déclarant plus ou moins que ce qu'ils possèdent effectivement. Leur réponse n'est information qu'en apparence; elle serait plutôt une intervention dans le cadre d'une stratégie que seule une analyse de contexte peut rendre intelligible' (Pouillon 1988:190).

## Introduction

The land use conflicts I witnessed during my stay in the village of Ziinoogo almost invariably opposed Fulbe herders and Moose farmers. During the rainy season, conflicts frequently occurred because cattle herded by Fulbe entered the Moose's fields and damaged the crops. In the dry season, conflicts revolved around the access to different water points in the village territory of Ziinoogo. Furthermore, the year round it was possible to overhear accounts of conflicts over cattle owned by Moose and entrusted to Fulbe, although these latter stories were mostly about others and, certainly during the first year of my stay, not directly involving the persons who gave me the accounts. Finally, publicly expressed opinions of Moose about Fulbe and *vice versa* were generally unfriendly if not outright hostile. Both Moose and Fulbe publicly dealt in stereotyped images of the other: according to Moose, Fulbe are not to be trusted, likely to be thieves, physically weak, disrespectful of any authority, and uncivilized people of the 'brousse'; Fulbe depict Moose as badly educated, extremely submissive and not to be trusted either. One may wonder what might be the relevance of the relations between Moose and Fulbe for this study. Nevertheless, in the course of this chapter, the relationships between Moose and Fulbe and the substance and meaning of the conflicts between them will be analyzed in detail. Indeed, the objective of this chapter is to assess the effects, on land use practice and social relationships in the village of origin, of processes of differential accumulation of wealth realized through migration processes. An understanding of these effects requires an analysis of the relationships between Moose and Fulbe, the latter being the trustees of a not negligible part of the wealth accumulated by Moose, and the changes therein. It should be noted that, although the possibilities for earning a cash income in the village are limited, they nevertheless do exist, in particular in trade, animal husbandry and forging, and also in intensive cultivation of crops like tobacco and cassava. As there are no indications that the incomes derived from these latter activities were invested otherwise than were incomes and remittances from migration, much of what is said in the following is also valid for accumulation and differentiation in general, i.e. not only with respect to migration enterprises.

First, I attempt to evaluate the relative importance of migrants' monetary incomes in general, and of the remittances to those who stay in the village, with respect to average monetary incomes. Next, a closer look will be taken as to how migration incomes and remittances are spent and invested. Then, based on survey data, an analysis of how monetary

incomes are constituted and an assessment of the extent to which differential incomes are related to socio-economic differentiation are made. It is concluded not only that the possession of cattle is the outstanding sign of wealth but moreover that cattle are considered to constitute a pre-eminent object of investment for the accumulation of wealth in the village. It would follow, then, that, in order to understand differential accumulation processes in the village, one needs to come to grips with the way cattle are accumulated. Hence, a way to understand how differential accumulation processes affect social relations in the village is through the analysis of how differential possession of cattle intervenes in these relations. Yet from the survey data it would appear that such differential accumulation based on cattle is hardly taking place at all.

The next section presents some general features of animal husbandry in the village. Whereas the management of small ruminants is readily observable, discussed and explained by the actors, this is not the case with respect to cattle. Indeed, cattle owned by Moose are largely kept out of sight while actors generally prefer to remain silent on issues of cattle when reference is made to specific cases. Nevertheless, cattle appear on the front stage of village affairs in the year-round conflicts with Fulbe herders over damages caused by cattle in the fields and over access to water points. A superficial reading of such conflicts suggests that they reflect opposition between the two ethnic groups. A problem with such an interpretation, however, is the paradoxical fact that a substantial part of the cattle involved in the conflicts are undoubtedly owned by Moose themselves.

This paradox may be resolved by a more in-depth analysis of the relations between Moose and Fulbe, placed in a historical perspective. This is undertaken after a short overview of studies and opinions on the relationships between farmers and herdsmen, and their transformation, both in the research region and in other parts of [West] Africa. With respect to the relations between Moose and Fulbe, the widespread opinion that these relations are deteriorating because of the increased pressure on natural resources and the disappearance of complementarity between the two groups, is shown to be based on false assumptions. Whereas public discourses of each group about the other seem to endorse the ethnic conflict thesis, the history of these relations as well as the importance and diversity of actual contemporary relations between Moose and Fulbe point to the need for quite different explanations.

In a final section, then, the conflicts between Moose and Fulbe are re-examined and re-interpreted taking into account the tensions which exist within the Moaga community due to differential accumulation of wealth, i.e. notably cattle, among Moose.

## **Migration revenues and remittances, their use and investment**

Very little is known about the exact amounts of money which are earned by Moose migrants in the Ivory Coast, let alone the extent of remittances sent home, among other things because probably only a fraction of the sums concerned pass through official channels (cf. also Zachariah & Condé 1981:12). For a long time, however, the goods and money repatriated by migrants, at first mainly from Ghana and later on mainly from the Ivory Coast, have been considered to play an important role in the economy of Burkina Faso, although probably not compensating for the costs of bringing up migrants to working age (*ibidem*:12). Skinner (1960:387) noted that migrants returning from Ghana in 1953 paid \$ 1,027,100 into the treasury of the Upper Volta as custom duties and that the goods brought home from Ghana in

1956 represented a traffic of more than a billion francs. For 1970, the amount repatriated from the Ivory Coast was estimated at about six billion FCFA in goods and money (Remy 1973:69). During the period 1970-74, Burkina Faso received 137 million dollars in remittances from migrants abroad through official channels only - i.e. 27.4 million dollars a year (Somé 1991:18, Zachariah & Condé 1981:52), and in the mid 1980s the yearly transfer from abroad was calculated at about 40 billion FCFA (DRPC 1990:103). According to Kessler & Breman (1995:59), yearly remittances of migrants represent about 8 percent of the country's GIP. With respect to the remittances from migrants who moved within the country, no data at all seem to be available.

Migration remittances are then said to have consistently contributed in an impressive way to cash incomes in the home villages. Kohler (1972:97) estimated that, in the early 1970s, each migrant brought home on average 26,000 FCFA per year of stay in the Ivory Coast, which was notable in relation to the fact that yearly net monetary incomes - migration revenues not included - were estimated at between 2,000 and 3,000 FCFA per person (cf. also Gastellu 1979:27). At farm level, migration revenues represented 35% of net monetary incomes (Remy *et al.* 1977:651).<sup>1</sup> In the mid 1980s, contributions from abroad to monetary incomes of farms in the north-central region were evaluated at between 13,000 and 25,000 FCFA per year, while studies on farms' monetary incomes proposed total monetary incomes of 20,000 to 30,000 FCFA per year and per farm (Broekhuysen & Allen 1988:338, DRPC 1990:103).

In order to obtain a notion of the relative importance of migration remittances to farm monetary incomes, I carried out a survey in Ziinoogo too. Distinguishing two categories, i.e. male and female farm heads, it was found that the stated average total monetary incomes per year and per farm head were respectively about 55,000 FCFA and 15,000 FCFA. For the female farm heads this income was more or less evenly distributed over agriculture (37%), animal husbandry (29%) and remittances from the Ivory Coast (31%), the remainder coming from remittances from internal migrants (3%; mainly from migrants to the south and west of Burkina Faso). Almost half of the monetary income of male farm heads appeared to be made up of revenues derived from animal husbandry (45%), while another quarter came from remittances from the Ivory Coast (23%). Income from agriculture contributed 17%, trade 5% and remittances from internal migrants 2%. Finally, 8% of the income was derived from other sources, mainly craft (weaving, forging) and renting of carts and ploughs.

In these figures, the importance of animal husbandry for male farm heads in particular is remarkable. This result confirms findings of another recent study in the province of Sanmatenga, where it was concluded that, for a majority of farms, animal husbandry constituted the main source of income (Barning & Dambré 1994:2,6; cf. also Maatman *et al.* 1992:166). Next, it appears that for both male and female farm heads remittances from the Ivory Coast contribute in a substantial way to monetary incomes. It should be noted that remittances from internal migrants are in practice more important than what solely monetary

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<sup>1</sup> With respect to these latter figures, it should be noted that although *total* savings of migrants are thus said to contribute to incomes of farms at home, it was at the same time maintained that migrants kept almost 80% of these savings to themselves, i.e. redistributed no more than 20% to the members of their farms and others who remained behind (Remy *et al.* 1977:641). According to Somé (1991:17), the average savings of a returning migrant could be estimated at about 39,000 FCFA in the 1970s, consisting as to three quarters of 'consumer goods, presents and gifts' and to only one quarter of cash.



figures imply. Many farm heads claimed to receive regularly one or more bags of millet or sorghum from their migrant kinsmen.<sup>2</sup>

There is reason to doubt the reliability of the absolute amounts of income reported by respondents. On several occasions during the survey, farm heads claimed to have received remittances which were much smaller than what I had witnessed them receiving in practice. One farm head, for example, claimed at the survey to have received only 5,000 FCFA from his kinsmen in the Ivory Coast, although in the preceding months he had received from the latter at least two letters, each containing 12,500 FCFA for him. Although reported incomes from all sources may have been systematically underestimated, it seems that this is especially the case with remittances from migrants. Probably then, the share of remittances in total farm income is somewhat higher than what appears from the survey figures.

The above figures on remittances refer to the sums which farm heads received from migrated kinsmen. For one farm head, then, the sources of remittances may be many: he or she may have one or more sons, brothers, sisters' sons and/or friends (*zoadamba*) who have migrated to the Ivory Coast or to the south or west of Burkina Faso. All of these relatives may send him or her smaller or larger sums. One remittance could vary from 1,000 FCFA to 100,000 FCFA. Conversely, each migrant sent remittances to several people at home. Generally, with respect to migrants to the Ivory Coast, the farm head on whom the migrant depends at home received the largest amount (a minimum of 12,500 FCFA for each year of migration seemed to constitute a kind of norm), while other relatives (e.g. [other] brothers, father's brothers, mother, mother's brother) and friends (*zoadamba*) of the migrant were allocated smaller sums (for example, the migrant's mother typically 5,000 FCFA). Migrants to the Ivory Coast, generally not yet farm heads themselves (cf. chapter 6), were reluctant to give information on the proportion of the earnings they kept for themselves. However, as there seems to exist a consensus that, on average, about 75,000 FCFA a year can be saved in the Ivory Coast, i.e. if the migrant does not own a cocoa or coffee plantation, and taking into account the amounts and numbers of remittances, it can be supposed that migrants often keep to themselves at least half of what they earned.<sup>3</sup>

How do farm heads use and invest the remittances they receive? And how do migrants themselves use and invest the earnings they keep to themselves? A number of observations on this subject were remarked in chapter 6. Remittances are used by farm heads to buy millet and sorghum to complement consumption needs in years of insufficient harvests. In good years, the remittances are mainly invested in livestock (notably goats, sheep and cattle), both by female and by male farm heads. Sometimes, a male farm head uses the remittances to buy a cart or a plough. Migrants returning from the Ivory Coast spend the earnings which they keep to themselves partly on a bicycle, shoes, clothes, sunglasses, a radio or for the arrangement of

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<sup>2</sup> Remittances in kind from internal migrants, then, are often of substantial importance (e.g. one or more 100 kilo bags of millet or sorghum; shortly after the harvests of 1994, the price of such a bag at the markets near Ziinoogo was 6,000 FCFA, to rise quickly in the months to follow and to exceed 10,000 FCFA at the end of the 1995 rainy season). Moreover, it should be noted that, unlike migrants to the Ivory Coast, migrants to the south and west are accompanied by their whole family (wives, children, elders), which implies that they have less room to economize. Relatively more of the earnings are consumed by the migrants themselves. Migrants to the Ivory Coast are most often not accompanied by dependants who do not also constitute an active labour force. Even plantation owners, who, except for regular visits to the village, may spend several years in the Ivory Coast often leave one of their wives and a number of young children to be taken care of by their kin in the village (cf. also Chauveau 1979:67 who shows that the ratio of consumers *versus* producers is relatively low among Burkinabé plantation owners).

<sup>3</sup> It should be stressed that all these amounts are *averages*. In practice, migrants' incomes and savings per year may of course vary widely, as may also remittances (cf. also Gastellu 1979:27).

a marriage, but they too have a preference for investing in livestock. Even when they do not return home but send remittances by letter, they often instruct their farm head at home to keep a certain sum to himself, to give some money to brothers and mother, and to use the remainder either to buy millet if the harvests were insufficient or else to buy livestock for the migrant. Of course, a migrant may also decide to invest his earnings in land in the Ivory Coast to establish a cocoa and/or coffee plantation (cf. chapter 6). A few successful migrants, owning a relatively large cocoa and/or coffee plantation, invested in the construction of a house with a corrugated roof in the village.

### **Socio-economic differentiation and the accumulation of wealth**

The monetary incomes of female farm heads, as noted above averaging about 15,000 FCFA, differ from one another, ranging from 3,000 to 30,000 FCFA per year. Still, if one compares the incomes of female farm heads with those of male farm heads, it is observed firstly that all incomes of the former are relatively low (the highest female income is lower than the average male income), and, secondly that the range of income variation is much smaller among female farm heads (from 3,000 to 30,000 FCFA) than among male farm heads (from 3,000 to 231,000 FCFA). The wide income variation among male farm heads suggests processes of socio-economic differentiation and differential accumulation taking place. In order to obtain an idea of the way in which these processes are shaped, it is proposed to take a closer look at the constitution of the incomes of male farm heads with respectively a low income (i.e. not higher than 50,000 FCFA) and with a high income (i.e. higher than 50,000 FCFA). Data are presented in table 8.1, for which it was decided to classify the two farm heads possessing a working forge separately in an additional category, because of the singularity of their main income source, i.e. the forge.

Below, the data on female headed farms and blacksmiths will be briefly discussed. First, however, the low and high income male farm heads are compared. Except for the two sources which are of less importance for both groups<sup>4</sup>, it stands out that, in absolute figures, annual incomes of the high income category are substantially higher from *all* sources. Next, although for them too animal husbandry is the main income source, low income farm heads depend more on agriculture and appear to be relatively less supported by migrants in the Ivory Coast.

Two explanations for the importance, in absolute as well as relative figures, of remittances from the Ivory Coast to high income farm heads lay at hand. First, two thirds of the survey's high income farm heads had a member of their farm who owned a cocoa or coffee plantation in production. Not only do these farm heads receive part of the earnings of members of their farm who regularly migrate to the Ivory Coast to work on the plantation (cf. chapter 6), they also share in the profit obtained from the sale of the plantation's produce.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Data on monetary incomes are somewhat misleading for both groups because both remittances from internal migrants and earnings from 'other sources' (notably renting out of cart or plough) are most often in kind (millet or sorghum).

<sup>5</sup> The monetary revenues from cocoa and coffee plantations are substantial, all the more so when they are compared to Burkinabé standards. A study by Chauveau (1979:67) showed that the *per capita* incomes of Burkinabé cocoa and coffee farmers in the Ivory Coast reached 7,000 to 8,000 FCFA in the early 1970s. While these farmers were considered to be marginalized according to Ivorian standards (*ibidem*:66), such revenues are three to four times higher than monetary revenues in the Moaga region during that same period. Equally, when Hecht (1983:44)

Second, the high income farm heads appear to control a higher number of active farm members (on average 9.9 versus 6.9 for low income farm heads; cf. table 8.2)<sup>6</sup>, which allows them to have at any one moment at least one and most often two or more members of their farm earning money in the Ivory Coast. Conversely, a [low income] farm head may have such little labour at his disposal that it is not possible for him to organize migration to the Ivory Coast in the way described, for example, for Sumdugudu's compound, where three brothers relieved one another on the farm at home and in the Ivory Coast (cf. chapter 6): such a farm head either forsakes income from the Ivory Coast or risks disrupting the activities on the farm

*Table 8.1*

*Annual estimated incomes per farm head and their sources (1,000 FCFA)*

	total income	agricul- ture	animal husbandry	trade	remit. Ivory Coast	remit. internal migration	other
female n=19	14.9	5.5 37%	4.4 29%	-	4.6 31%	0.4 3%	-
male n=59	55.1	9.3 17%	24.5 45%	3.0 5%	12.6 23%	1.1 2%	4.6 8%
male low income n=36	23.6	7.4 31%	10.4 44%	1.6 7%	2.5 11%	1.1 5%	0.6 2%
male high income n=21	90.6	13.0 14%	40.8 45%	5.6 6%	30.1 33%	1.1 1%	-
male black- smiths n=2	203.0	9.0 4%	68.5 34%	-	0.5 <sup>7</sup> 0%	-	125.0 62%

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maintains that the large majority of cocoa and coffee farmers in the Ivory Coast earn a *per capita* income well below the Ivorian national mean, the picture changes radically when compared to the Burkinabé national average. For example, it is noted that the 10.7% of cocoa and coffee farmers with 10 to 20 hectares - a few of the bigger plantation owners from Ziinoogo would fall into this category - had a *per capita* income of \$387 in 1978, while the Ivorian national mean figure for that year was \$653. The Burkinabé national figure for 1978 however was only \$160 *per capita* (World Bank 1980:110).

<sup>6</sup> The number of active farm members as calculated in table 8.2. includes the farm head himself and the members of his or her farm migrated to the Ivory Coast.

<sup>7</sup> These low remittances were reported by the farm heads during the survey. There is reason to doubt this figure. Dependants of both farm heads of this category migrate no less than others to the Ivory Coast. Recently returned sons of one of the two farm heads stated that they support their *zaksoba* with part of their earnings on their return from the Ivory Coast.

Table 8.2

*Number of animals per farm head and number of active persons*

	goats	sheep	cattle	active persons
female n=19	2.4	1.3	-	1.5
male n=59	7.4	5.4	1.8	8.1
male low income n=36	4.5	4.3	0.4	6.9
male high income n=21	13.0	7.3	1.9	9.9
male black- smiths n=2	6.5	7.5	25.5	10.0

at home. In any case, if a farm head has for example only one dependant of an age to migrate to the Ivory Coast, it is to be expected that in at least one out of three years he has no substantial income from the Ivory Coast (as, generally, after having worked for two years in the Ivory Coast, a man stays a year in the village, and as remittances from other relatives migrating to the Ivory Coast generally are relatively small as compared to the remittances of one's own son or brother).

Whereas differential access to commoditized land in the Ivory Coast (cocoa and/or coffee plantations) appears to contribute to socio-economic differentiation, it is important to note that the growing importance of monetary relations, mainly as a consequence of migration, has not resulted in the commoditization of land in the migrants' home villages, as it did in other parts of the world (cf. for instance Laite 1984:125 for Peru, who maintains that 'the main impact of [...] migration on the structure of landholding [...] has been to bring land within the cash arena', thereby giving way to an increasing differentiation and polarization). In the Moaga region, the market appears not to intervene in any way in issues concerning rights to and allocation of farm land. Notwithstanding the fact that the consolidation and extension of claims on land, either for oneself and one's dependants or for one's *yiiri*, constitute an important aspect of actors' land use strategies (cf. in particular chapters 3 and 4), it is not through an extension or accumulation of such claims that actors or groups of actors differentiate themselves socio-economically from other actors or groups of actors. The principle that each farm head, and for that matter his dependants for their *beolse*, get allocated an area of farm land according to his or her needs and labour force appears to be respected. Although, as I argue in chapter 4, following the double seniority principle, the distribution of *good* farm land at any one moment certainly is not equal, and one actor may attempt to frustrate another actor's success in farming, the former having a higher position in what I called the 'hierarchy of choice', it seems not very probable either that this aspect of land tenure plays a significant role in processes of socio-economic differentiation, as there is no

correlation to be found between on the one hand 'position in the hierarchy of choice' and 'income from agriculture' on the other hand.

Still, the higher income group derives more money also from agriculture. This is because, although farm land as such is not commoditized, monetary means nevertheless can make a difference. First, those who have monetary means are able to invest in a plough and/or a cart. The plough permits a farmer mainly to react in a flexible way to the unstable rainfall circumstances at the beginning of the rainy season, thus reducing somewhat the risk of crop failure. Owning a cart means, among other things, that manure can be transported to fields in the 'brousse', which influences yields positively. It has to be noted here that ploughs and, more importantly, carts are rented out to others, most often in return for payment in kind (e.g. five 'boites' of millet to transport one cart of millet from a field in the 'brousse' to the compound).<sup>8</sup> They thus constitute an additional source of income for the high income farm heads as they, together with the farm heads owning a forge, own twelve out of fifteen ploughs and thirteen out of seventeen carts.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, more wealthy farm heads also have the means to construct wooden enclosures within which relatively profitable crops are intensively cultivated (tobacco, cotton, eggplants, sweet sorghum, cassava, early maize) and fruit trees such as mango are planted.<sup>10</sup>

The crucial domain for the understanding of processes of differential accumulation and of socio-economic differentiation, however, is constituted by animal husbandry as this would be, following actors' assertions on preferred objects for investment, the domain where accumulation actually takes effect at village level. This is confirmed by the figures in table 8.2., which show that high income farm heads own more goats, more sheep and more cattle than low income farm heads. The differences in income derived from animal husbandry - high income farm heads earn four times as much from animal husbandry as do low income farmer heads - may then be explained by the fact that a higher number of animals also means more offspring each year and thus the possibility to sell a higher number of animals each year.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, although husbandry techniques do not differ substantially, low income farmers may receive lower prices for their animals than high income farmers for two reasons: firstly, they have fewer means to pay for additional feeding of animals that are fattened up, and, secondly, they may be forced to sell at inopportune moments (e.g. an urgent need for cash to buy millet or sorghum shortly before the harvest can bring a farmer to sell an animal when prices are relatively low or when an animal is not yet completely fattened up).

With respect to the data on female farm heads, it appears clearly that these women are not in a position that would make accumulation easy. Indeed, remittances from the Ivory

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<sup>8</sup> Carts are also rented for the transport of water, mostly during the dry season at times when important quantities of dolo have to be prepared for funerals.

<sup>9</sup> This income does not appear in table 8.1. as it is generally non-monetary. Kohler (1971:70) noted the high prices prevailing for the renting out of carts and their role in the 'exploitation' of poor farmers by more wealthy farmers.

<sup>10</sup> In order to construct an enclosure one needs to obtain a wood cutting permit, issued by the forester and costing 1,800 FCFA per cart of wood. If the forester finds out that a farmer built an enclosure without having the allowance, the farmer is fined. Some farmers build the enclosure themselves, others pay - often in kind - Bella, on transhumance from the north, to do the job during the dry season. Besides the costs involved, there is some confusion concerning the regulations relating to the building of enclosures. The foresters have a bad reputation in the villages, because of their harsh way of acting, and many farmers claim to fear being fined if they construct an enclosure, or seem to be convinced that it is simply forbidden to do so.

<sup>11</sup> A national survey conducted recently also found that profit margins increased with herd size (Ministère de l'Agriculture et des Ressources Animales 1996:4).

Coast are comparatively low and so are incomes from agriculture and animal husbandry. The income level is too low to permit for instance the purchase of a cow, a cart or a plough. Of course, an important factor in the limited prospects of the female farm heads to accumulate is also the restricted labour force at their disposal (cf. chapter 5).

The two blacksmiths making up the fourth category in tables 8.1 and 8.2 are Mané Saaba farm heads (cf. chapter 3). Revenues from their forges contribute disproportionately to their high income. On their own, these revenues are higher than all other revenues taken together for the large majority of the other farm heads. The profitability of the forge is well known to other villagers. It is then often suggested that Saaba who have a working forge - this is the case for only a small fraction of the Saaba in Ziinoogo - have at their disposal an alternative way to build up wealth, whereas for other Moose the sole possibility to get such a process started would be through migration to the Ivory Coast: 'Certainly, those Saaba are wealthy. They have cattle, many cattle. They were able to build up herds because of the work of their forge. The forge gives them an occupation during the dry season, whereas for us, Moose, there is little to do here in the dry season. The production and sale of tools is very profitable and permits them to earn at least 100,000 FCFA a year'.<sup>12</sup> Still, as with other high income farm heads, here too the importance of animal husbandry as source of income and domain for investment appears clearly. The relatively high number of cattle owned by the Saaba farm heads contrasts sharply with the small numbers which were reported by other categories. It is however almost entirely attributable to only one of the two Saaba, who stated that he owned fifty head of cattle, the other one claiming to have only one (cf. below).

I tried to find out what makes a Moaga man or woman 'wealthy'. Invariably, actors' explanations pointed out that being wealthy means owning cattle. In daily conversations the word used for both cattle and wealth is often one and the same (*arzeka*).<sup>13</sup> A man is not considered wealthy if he owns only a few head of cattle; being wealthy refers much more to the possession of a herd: 'You recognize a rich man by the cattle he owns. Still, if a man owns only a few head of cattle [*nii a yebe*], he should not say that he has cattle, as they are even not sufficient to pay for the millet you need in a year that harvests are bad. Only when you own a herd [*naag bagre*] you can say you have cattle'.<sup>14</sup> It appeared that the line between 'owning a few head' and 'owning a herd' is drawn at about ten head of cattle. As already noted, none of the female farm heads mentioned owning cattle. The Seya mentioned above excepted, none of

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<sup>12</sup> Fidèle, Rumbenga Yiyooa.

<sup>13</sup> That people who are seen as essentially farmers measure wealth in livestock or, in particular, cattle, is not very exceptional (cf. Horowitz 1972:110, Piot 1991:410).

<sup>14</sup> Lucien, Rumbenga Yiyooa. Others added that a wealthy man also has his granaries filled and that 'he does not eat from last year's harvest but from the harvest of the year before'. A difference in the degree of self-sufficiency in millet and sorghum could not be established from the survey, where it was asked whether and for how much money the farm heads bought millet and sorghum for consumption, either each year or only in case of harvest failure. A large majority of the female farm heads claimed never to buy millet or sorghum for consumption, which is an indication that although these women are independent *puugsobdamba* many of them still receive support from other members of their compound (cf. chapter 5). Only one out of three bought millet or sorghum, on average for about 7,500 FCFA per farm head, in years of harvest failure. One blacksmith claimed never to buy millet or sorghum, the other only in years of harvest failure, for sums averaging 100,000 FCFA. Among the low income male farm heads, 16% never had to buy millet or sorghum, 6% bought millet and sorghum each year and 78% did so only in years of harvest failure (average sum spent: 18,500 FCFA per farm head). Finally, all high income farm heads bought millet and sorghum in years of harvest failure (average sum spent: 51,000 FCFA per farm head; this much higher sum may be partly explained by the fact that the high income farm heads have more dependants to feed). In any case, millet and sorghum are too perishable to constitute wealth to be accumulated.

the other male farm heads would own a 'herd'. The majority of cattle owners claim to have only one or two head. Two farm heads would own seven head, two others would possess four and finally there is one farm head reporting three head of cattle. The Seya would, according to local standards, be the only wealthy farmer.

On the other hand, it is common knowledge in the Moaga region that Moose cattle owners regularly entrust their cattle to Fulbe herdsman. During the survey, only one farm head acknowledged having entrusted his four head of cattle to a Pullo. All the others claimed to have their animals herded by their own children. These animals which are kept at the Moose's compounds are mainly bulls bought young with the purpose of fattening them up for sale (cf. below). This practice of seeking profit by fattening up bulls, however, has been well established for many years and it is not quite clear why it would not lead to a building up of cattle herds. It is as if - with the one exception which will be discussed further on - the process of accumulation of wealth does not succeed in taking the final step to cattle herds. Or, else, the data provided by the survey hide something from the eye.

## Animal husbandry in the village of Ziinoogo

### *Some general features*

At first sight, it seems as if Moaga animal husbandry is mainly based on goats and sheep. Within all compounds one or more small enclosures (*rumdoogo*, lit.: animals' house) exist where these small ruminants spend the night. During the dry season, animals of different members of one farm are most often kept in one single herd. They graze, often unattended<sup>15</sup>, in the surroundings of the compounds and in the 'brousse', most often relatively close by. They drink at the village's *boulis* as long as the latter contain water. After the *boulis* have dried up, which for the ward of Ziinoogo is often already in February, they drink at wells and pumps (e.g. for the animals of the ward Bagsin) or they are brought to the *bouli* of a neighbouring village (e.g. the animals of the ward of Ziinoogo drink at the *bouli* of Balbou), guarded by one or more small children. During the rainy season, from the moment fields are sown and crops start to grow, goats and sheep are closely watched. Each owner generally brings his or her animals to the fields where he or she works and where they are either tied to a tree or a stake or closely guarded by a child. The animals then drink at the *boulis* and at the numerous places in the 'brousse' where water can be found at that time.

It does happen that one or more of these small ruminants, tended according to extensive husbandry methods, are sold, e.g. when its owner urgently needs cash or when an animal is sick or has suddenly died. Still, it is not from these animals kept in herds that a substantial income is derived. In particular male farm heads keep a small number (one to three) of sheep and/or goats stabled at their compound to fatten them and then sell them either at one of the neighbouring markets (notably Samtaaba, Nasre and Nawoubkiiba) or to traders, who scour the villages in particular in the period shortly before the Islamic *tabaski* feast (especially during that period many animals are exported to the Ivory Coast). These animals receive additional feeding, in particular during the dry season when they are given crop residues. At the time of my fieldwork, non-fattened sheep and goats fetched respectively about

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<sup>15</sup> Still, it seems that more and more people find it necessary to have their goats and sheep guarded during the dry season as well because of the increase of theft.

7,500 FCFA and 5,000 FCFA per animal, fattened ones averaged respectively 17,000 FCFA and 12,000 FCFA.

Those farm heads who own a plough or a cart generally also have a donkey as draught animal. Next, a few men also keep some pigs with the specific aim of commercializing them. Pigs are appreciated because they have more offspring than goats and sheep and because good prices can be obtained, but their husbandry is considered laborious as they have to be given the year round additional feeding, to be purchased at the market, and residues from preparing dolo.<sup>16</sup>

I mentioned in the previous section that there are also cattle in the village, of which the large majority are stabled at the compounds. I also noted that these cattle mainly consist of bulls which are fattened for sale at the market or to traders passing by, and that only exceptionally are more than two animals kept by one farm head.<sup>17</sup> Most of the farm heads concerned maintained that they bought a bull calf (at about 45,000 FCFA), fattened it over a period which might be as long as four years, and then sold it (at a price of at least 90,000 FCFA) before buying another bull calf. These animals drink at the same places as the goats and sheep. They are however supposed to be tied with a rope to prevent them from entering *bouli* water when they drink, a regulation enforced only during the dry season. Indeed, unlike goats and sheep, cattle, if not tied, go right into the water thus making it muddy and less well suited for human and even animal consumption<sup>18</sup> (the latter in particular during the dry season when the water level has dropped). Like sheep and goats they graze near the compounds and in the 'brousse' nearby during the dry season - although never unattended - and near the fields, tied to a tree or a stake, during the rainy season. They also receive additional feeding (e.g. crop residues and cotton seeds) and salt. The herding of a farm's cattle is generally assigned to one of its adolescent boys.

In addition to the cattle kept at Moose compounds, cattle herded by Fulbe who have settled nearby, at Yalanga and Péoukoy in particular, make use of pastures and water resources on the Ziinoogo village territory. In chapter 4, case 4, a number of aspects of the pastoral use of the Ziinoogo village territory by Fulbe herders were discussed and they are only summarized here. During the dry season, grazing by Fulbe cattle is free from the time that all the crops have been taken away from the fields. During the rainy season, the herds have to make their way between the fields farmed by Moose to reach pastures, mainly located at Nongo and Soudougou (cf. map 3.3). Although the Moose from Ziinoogo do not formally recognize the existence of passages for cattle on their territory, they still seem to respect them, as they generally do not sow on places which Fulbe from Yalanga and Péoukoy consider to constitute passages to which they are entitled, and if they establish a field near these passages they protect it with fences. With regard to watering places, it may firstly be noted that Fulbe are not entitled to dig their own wells on the Ziinoogo village territory (cf. chapter 4, case 4). Their cattle drinks at wells, constructed by Moose villagers or by organizations (governmental

<sup>16</sup> The distribution of donkeys over the survey's farm heads coincided more or less with the distribution of carts and ploughs (high income farm heads owned eleven out of fifteen donkeys). High income farm heads owned on average more than twice as many pigs than low income farm heads (the highest number of pigs owned by a single farm head was six), but even for the former the number of pigs was less than one per farm head. None of the survey's female farm heads owned donkeys or pigs.

<sup>17</sup> It should be noted that also *beondba*, notably on their return from a period in the Ivory Coast, may buy and fatten a bull calf on their own account.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Benoit (1984:47) who notes that water from pools in the northern Oudalan region becomes unsuited for cattle from March or April onwards, among other things because the water gets stirred up by cattle entering the pools.



and non-governmental) which have intervened in the village, and at the *boulis*. During the dry season, both with regard to the wells and to the *boulis*, the enforcement of regulations by Moose from Ziinoogo affects in particular Fulbe herders. Indeed, it is practically impossible for Fulbe to hold the cattle they herd with ropes in order to prevent them entering the *boulis*, and consequently their herds are regularly chased away when they try to let them drink at the *boulis* (in particular the *bouli* at Bazao in Bagsin, which is located between the pastures of Nongo and Soudougou and the dry season settlements of Fulbe from Péoukoy and Yalanga). Although I have, on several occasions, seen cattle kept at Moose compounds enter *boulis* without being chased away, it is relatively easy for Moose to keep their animals tied and to continue watering them at the *boulis*. The water from two concrete wells (*gargaase*) at Bazao is primarily reserved for human consumption during the dry season, although Moose continued to water their goats and sheep there. Cattle, however, are strictly forbidden to come, again a prohibition which affects mostly Fulbe herders. As explained in chapter 4, the locally-constructed wells provide only a small water supply, certainly not sufficient to meet the needs of the cattle herds passing by.

Animals, be they sheep, cattle or to a lesser extent goats, are often entrusted by the owner to someone else. This is true in the first place for the animals which are bought by men who subsequently migrate to the Ivory Coast and leave their animals to the care of another member of their farm at home (most often the farm head). As mentioned above, it also happens frequently that a migrant sends money from the Ivory Coast and orders his farm head at home to use part of the money to buy one or more animals. In the same way, migrants in the south and west of Burkina Faso may buy animals and add them to the flocks managed by a farm head at home. The practice of entrusting animals to others is however more complex than that, as animals may also be entrusted to members of other farms of the patrilineal *yiiri* or to affines, in particular mothers' brothers, and thus often are no longer to be found in the village of the owner.<sup>19</sup> The owners of animals most often motivate such entrustment by referring to the fact that they do not have the labour necessary to take care of the animals, while the trustee would. An implication of these entrustment practices is that the concept of individual ownership of animals gets somewhat blurred.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the entrusted animals are added to the herds of the trustees, and on several occasions it was pointed out that trustees 'act as if all the animals were theirs', which might, according to some, go so far that the trustee, if he is in urgent need of cash, is allowed to sell an entrusted animal without informing the owner (cf. also Frantz 1975:343, where it is explained that the ownership of cattle is not the same as the right to dispose of it). Finally, mothers' brothers may give animals to their sisters'

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<sup>19</sup> With respect to cattle, the situation can become even more complicated if, for example, a man decides to entrust his cattle to his mother's brother who himself has entrusted his cattle to a Pullo herdsman.

That entrustment of animals to others is common practice was well expressed by an elder from Bottogo (member of the Kamsin *yiiri*), who, when I asked him whether there were in his herds animals of people who lived in Ziinoogo, answered: 'If you have three or four head of cattle or more, then it cannot be otherwise than that some of the animals were entrusted to you. It is the same as when you have several chickens at your compound: in that case too, there will always be some of them that have been entrusted to you'.

<sup>20</sup> For an interesting discussion on the concept of property with respect to animals, see Pouillon (1988) and also Baxter (1975:212). Cf. also Goody (1959:73) who observed for the matrilineal LoDagaba that 'the fact that both mother's brother and sister's son belong to the same wealth-holding corporation means that the wealth which each individually possesses at any one time is in some sense subject to joint rights'. With the Moose this 'wealth-holding corporation' is patrilineal and father/elder brother and son/younger brother seem to have joint rights in the wealth each individually possesses, as was frequently expressed by sons/younger brothers: 'What belongs to my father/elder brother, belongs to me'.

sons. Thus, although animals are in principle inherited by the owner's sons<sup>21</sup>, sisters' sons also may benefit from a man's wealth. Animals given by mother's brother to sister's son may remain in the former's herd until his death or may be transferred earlier to the latter's herd.<sup>22</sup>

### *The invisibility of Moaga cattle*

During the survey, respondents were asked about the numbers of animals they owned. From interviews afterwards it appeared that they had mentioned the animals for which they were directly responsible at their farm, i.e. both their own and entrusted animals, and had not mentioned animals they had themselves entrusted to others. Given the variety of persons and places where animals may be entrusted it becomes a difficult operation to assess an actor's wealth in livestock.<sup>23</sup> This is already so with respect to small ruminants and all the more so with respect to cattle. Indeed, while cattle constitute *the* undisputed form of wealth and sign of success, and while it was possible to discuss the issue in general terms and with reference to others, preferably not living in the village of Ziinoogo, silence tended to reign whenever specific questions were asked about an actor's own assets in cattle, apart from the one or two bulls possibly fattened at his compound.

As my stay in the village continued and as I heard more stories - gossip as a matter of fact - about Moose from other villages having most of their cattle entrusted to Fulbe, I grew more and more suspicious about actors' assertions that they themselves had not done this. Moreover, while at all compounds Fulbe women passed now and then to sell milk or to buy some beans or vegetables, or Fulbe men came by to buy cola nuts or simply to chat, it was notable that some compounds were visited by Fulbe more than others apparently for no specific reason, and that regularly these Fulbe visitors and their Moaga host went to sit apart from others and whispered secretly. During my talks with both Moose and Fulbe<sup>24</sup> men I started to press a little more on the subject of cattle, repeatedly asking Moose whether they had entrusted cattle to a Pullo and whether they knew someone from the village who had, and asking Fulbe whether they had animals owned by Moose in their herd and whether they knew other Fulbe who had. The answers remained mainly evasive and standard (typically: 'Not me, but someone else may and even so I cannot know').

Thus, for instance, I asked the elder of Naba Bagre, Somyasya, whether there was anyone in his ward who entrusted cattle to Fulbe. Although there were a few farm heads at Naba Bagre who had some cattle at their compounds, he bluntly answered: 'There are no cattle in Naba Bagre'. Another man present at this conversation then intervened, saying that Somyasya could not be sure whether a person had cattle with Fulbe or not, unless that person himself had told him so. Somyasya gave in and concluded: 'If cattle were kept at the compounds, you would see that the animals

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<sup>21</sup> If a farm head dies and is succeeded, even only temporarily, at the head of the farm not by a son, but, for instance, by his brother or even brother's son, then the latter will also have a part in the inheritance and he will even be the one 'who receives [the inheritance] to give to the deceased's sons', i.e. he will be responsible for the distribution of the inheritance.

<sup>22</sup> With respect to the devolution of wealth to sons and sisters' sons, cf. also Goody (1959:74) on 'Cow of Breeding' and 'Nephew's Cow'.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. also Comaroff & Comaroff (1992:138). Pouillon (1988:184) also notes the problem that, even if one succeeds in determining the number of animals in a Bedouin herd, there still is the difficulty of establishing which persons own animals in it.

<sup>24</sup> I am referring to interviews with Fulbe from Péoukoy and Yalanga.

are there and then you would be able to say: that person has a cow and that other person has a cow, etc. But since the cows are entrusted to Fulbe, you cannot know'.

Tying bits and pieces of information together, I became more and more convinced that a considerable number of Moose from Ziinoogo had entrusted cattle to Fulbe and that the entrusted animals outnumbered the animals kept at the compounds. Combining observations on secretive visits by Fulbe to Moose and on presumed wealth of certain Moose farmers, I decided during the last months of my stay in the village to bluff my way through. I went to see a Pullo whom I had seen secretly visiting a Moaga and asked him, for example, when the Moaga had entrusted him an animal for the first time, pretending I knew it all. In the same way, I approached the Moaga, asking him, for example, what the Pullo received in return for herding his cattle. This constituted, in a way, a breakthrough. With a number of Fulbe and Moose the issue of cattle and their entrustment became discussable, and some cases of cattle entrustment and their history could thus be reconstructed.

It thus appeared that the cattle Moose had at their compounds constituted only a fraction of what they owned. From simple observation it would follow that all, except one, cattle owner in Ziinoogo possessed only 'a few head' (i.e. *nii a yebe*) and not 'a herd' (i.e. *naag bagre*). After taking into account the cattle entrusted to Fulbe, the picture changed and probably several farm heads could be conceived of as 'wealthy' (cf. above). I use the word 'probably', because, although it has been possible to establish for several actors that they entrust cattle to Fulbe, I was left ignorant as to the numbers of animals entrusted. It was only ascertained in several cases that the cattle entrusted by a Moaga to a Pullo outnumbered the cattle kept at the Moaga's compound.<sup>25</sup>

The remainder of this chapter is for the larger part devoted to the disentangling of relations between Moose and Fulbe, with the objective of better understanding the impact of differential accumulation of cattle among Moose on social relations in the Moaga village. It is indeed possible to come to certain conclusions concerning this issue, without knowing exactly the numbers of cattle involved. Pouillon (1988:180) can usefully be cited here: 'The laws of silence risk being much more instructive than what people seek to hide'.<sup>26</sup>

## Relations between Moose and Fulbe: from symbiosis to polarization?<sup>27</sup>

### *Deteriorating relations between farmers and herdsmen*

Relations between farmers and herdsmen in the Soudano-Sahel and the Soudan climatic zones have on several occasions been a central object of study (Benoit 1982b, Diallo 1995 & 1996, Diarra 1975, van Driel 1994 & 1996, de Haan 1995, de Haan *et al.* 1990). The general picture which emerges from these studies is one of deteriorating relations. Thereby, an important assumption appears to be that formerly - i.e. in an often unspecified epoch in the past - relations between farmers and herdsmen could be conceived of in terms of symbiosis, that is a

<sup>25</sup> Fulbe were not prepared to discuss numbers either. Hence, which animals in their herd were owned by themselves and which by others, in particular Moose, remained veiled. Benoit (1977:44f) already noted the impossibility of knowing what part of a herd was owned by farmers and permanently entrusted to herdsmen.

<sup>26</sup> 'Les lois du silence risquent d'être bien plus instructives que ce que l'on cherche à cacher'.

<sup>27</sup> Subtitle derived from de Haan *et al.* (1990).

relationship based on mutual dependence and mutual advantage with implied complementarity in ecological and economic spheres (cf. e.g. de Haan *et al.* 1990:62). More specifically, pastoral and agricultural societies are supposed to have been complementary, first, in their exploitation of mutually exclusive ecological niches<sup>28</sup>: during the rainy season, pastoralists' herds grazed the non-cultivated pastures, which may have involved transhumance, while during the dry season herds also grazed the stubbles of harvested fields, thus bringing the farmers the advantage of manuring in return. Second, economic complementarity would have existed because of the specialization of each of the two societies in one sector of activities - agriculture *versus* livestock raising. Farmers entrusted their cattle to herdsmen, the herdsmen receiving, in return for the herding, milk and a number of heifers. At the same time, exchange relationships permitted each group to complement its diet (barter of meat and milk for millet or sorghum).

Nowadays, symbiotic relationships are said to have disappeared, the complementarity between the two groups is said to be no longer existent. The explanations for this change are remarkably similar for a wide range of geographical and ethnic contexts. Indeed, the destruction of complementarity between farmers and herdsmen is generally attributed to the extension of cultivated areas under the combined pressure of population, cash cropping and plough agriculture, thus restricting grazing areas and access to water resources and salt lands for pastoralists with their herds. Moreover, since originally farming groups nowadays raise more and more cattle themselves and as pastoralists are growing millet and sorghum, production systems tend to become more uniform. The process is said to have been accelerated by the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s. Thus what is generally observed is a tendency towards a saturation of space - i.e. a transgression of the carrying capacity of the natural resources, due to the extension of cultivated areas as well as the increase of herds - rendering the exploitation of mutually exclusive niches impossible, while at the same time the economic specialization of each group has disappeared, thus putting an end to economic complementarity as well (cf. e.g. Benoit 1982b, Bonfiglioli 1991:250, Cissé 1980:321, Frantz 1975:339-341, de Haan *et al.* 1990, Kessler & Breman 1995:141-147, Rabot 1990:27-28). Finally, although it is sometimes mentioned that the symbiosis which formerly existed did not exclude conflicts between both groups (de Haan *et al.* 1990:62), it is nevertheless strongly suggested that tension and conflicts between farmers and herdsmen, as well as their violence, have risen as a consequence of the destruction of complementarity, in a context where land legislation is vague and national policies disfavour pastoralists (cf. also Bonnet 1990:57, Kessler & Breman 1995:45).

Studies on Fulbe in Burkina Faso are thin on the ground, except for the work of Benoit (1982b) and, in particular, Riesman (1974) on the Fulbe of Djelgodji. The relationships between Fulbe and Moose most often are touched upon only indirectly, and seem not to have been the main object of any research, although the economically oriented study of Delgado (1979) comes a long way. Yet, a number of publications on land use on the Central Plateau of Burkina Faso mention that tension between Moose and Fulbe is rising and/or that conflicts over resource use are becoming more and more frequent (Benoit 1982b, Lekanne dit Deprez 1995:9, Marchal 1983:156-157, Serpantie *et al.* 1988:36). Here too, a sometimes implicit assumption is the former existence of symbiotic relationships between Moose farmers and Fulbe herders (Benoit 1982b, van Haaften & van de Vijver 1995:15, Lekanne dit Deprez

<sup>28</sup> A concept borrowed from Barth (1981:181): '[Niches are] positions in a biotic food web, or, from man's point of view, potential sources of organic energy'.

1995:2). Likewise, the diagnosis of causes for the disappearance of symbiosis between Moose and Fulbe fits neatly with the diagnosis proposed for other regions. Competition between the two groups over natural resources is said to have increased due to the extension of cultivated areas, notably into the formerly sparsely cultivated bottom lands, which is generally attributed to population growth, extension of cash crops (cotton and groundnuts) and droughts, and further accelerated by the extensification of farming practices (Lekanne dit Deprez 1995:2, Stanneveld *et al.* 1987, Zanen 1996:65; cf. also Benoit 1977:43, Marchal 1983:156-157). Thus, on the Central Plateau too, pastures have become scarcer, and the access of Fulbe herds to salt lands and to water resources increasingly restricted. Moreover, the fact that Moose farmers more and more raise cattle themselves while this formerly would have been the exclusive domain of Fulbe, to whom Moose entrusted whatever cattle they owned, is understood to constitute a major change on the Central Plateau. Benoit (1982b) suggests that this latter change is one of the main causes of the destruction of complementarity and mutual dependence, and the ensuing polarization of relations between Moose and Fulbe in Yatenga.

Conflicts between Moose and Fulbe, mostly concerning cattle entering fields and access to wells and pools, are an almost daily issue in Ziinoogo village affairs. It seems to be a plausible line of argument, then, that, in a situation where pressure on natural resources is growing and where the 'utility' of one group for the other and *vice versa* is disappearing as a consequence of an increasing uniformity of production systems, conflicts over natural resources come to follow ethnic lines of division, all the more so if one takes into account the relatively marginal position of Fulbe with respect to rights to land and other resources on Moose village territories (cf. chapters 3 and 4). Still, there remains the disturbing fact that Moose from Ziinoogo continue to entrust to Fulbe herdsmen the greater part of their cattle assets, i.e. their wealth. In what follows, I demonstrate that conflicts between Moose and Fulbe, which, when superficially interpreted, point to a growing competition over natural resources following ethnic lines of division, in fact conceal a process of internal differentiation within the Moaga community. On second thoughts, it will appear that these conflicts do not epitomize a breaking up of dependency between originally farming and pastoral groups, but much more internal cleavages within the Moaga community.

### ***Conflicts over Ziinoogo's natural resources between Moose and Fulbe***

In chapter 4, the use by Fulbe and their herds of water resources in the Ziinoogo village territory, and conflicts thereover, were discussed (case 4). In this section, I focus on conflicts related to cattle herded by Fulbe entering and damaging Moose fields. Such conflicts are numerous throughout the rainy season but are, in many cases, settled very rapidly and without major complications.

At the end of the rainy season of 1994, Charles, a *nayiirdamba* farm head from Ziinoogo, spent the night near his field of millet and beans, in order to chase away herds that might come and graze. He had fallen asleep and woke up only after cattle had already entered his field. As soon as the children who herded the animals noticed Charles they ran away. Charles took the torch dropped by the children and followed the cattle to their paddock at Yalanga. Thus he found out who the children were. The next day, early in the morning, he went to see the children's father, the Pullo Yero, to inform him about the damage which the cattle had caused to his crops. At the same time, he summoned Yero the same morning to his compound to determine the exact damage and to settle compensation. Several other men from Ziinoogo attended this gathering, among them the village's 'délégué' Yooro, but it was notably the Rumtenga Yiyooaga Ousmane who took the lead in this 'judgment'. Ousmane: 'At first Yero denied that it was a herd that had entered the field and maintained that it had been only one cow. But after some talking back and forth, he admitted that it had been

several animals and the affair was quickly settled'. Charles himself afterwards said that he was satisfied with the outcome of the 'judgment'. It had been agreed that Yero would pay 6,500 FCFA within ten days. After twelve days the money had not yet been handed over and Charles visited Yero to ask for it. Yero said he had not yet succeeded in gathering the complete sum. He paid 6,000 FCFA that day. Charles, a few months later: 'There still remains 500 FCFA to be paid, but I will not complain about it'.

If cattle damage a crop and the herdsman responsible for the cattle is known, a gathering like the one described in the case above is often organized, presided over by either the village's 'délégué' or the village chief.<sup>29</sup> Based on the extent of the damage, the responsible Pullo herdsman and the aggrieved Moaga farmer are brought to an agreement on a sum of money to be paid by the Pullo as compensation. Still, if the damage is relatively small and if it happens to be the herdsman's first infraction he may get off with no more than a warning. In such a case, however, Moose attach great weight to the Pullo admitting his guilt and offering apologies: 'If the Pullo admits his guilt and apologizes, then we can receive his excuses and accept that it was just an accident'.<sup>30</sup>

At such gatherings a settlement is not always easily reached. The Pullo herdsman summoned may deny that it was his animals who entered the field. If the Moaga is convinced of the Pullo's guilt he may curse him, which affects not only the herdsman himself but his whole kingroup as well. It may then also happen that the Pullo responds by cursing the Moaga. Such curses (*soosgo*) are taken extremely seriously<sup>31</sup> and most often one of the two parties backs off so that a settlement is eventually reached. If not and if the damage is substantial, the case is brought before the authorities of the 'Département'. Also when the Moaga does not know the identity of the responsible herdsman he may curse him, and although I was not able to check them, Moose told several such stories where a Pullo infractor eventually showed up and paid a compensation: 'We can destroy a Pullo's herd by cursing. What we found at our birth [*rogem miki*, 'traditions'] is our strength'.<sup>32</sup>

Conflicts between Moose and Fulbe over crops damaged by cattle are only seldom brought before the administrative authorities, partly because the procedure is cumbersome and not least because of the additional costs involved. The herdsman, if found guilty, not only has to pay the fine but also the so called 'frais de divagation', to be paid to the administration; they amount to 250 FCFA per animal that entered the field and would often be higher than the fine

<sup>29</sup> During the Revolution of 1983-87, the village chiefs (*nanamse*) were not supposed to intervene in conflicts between Moose and Fulbe. Local level jurisdiction was assigned to the CDRs ('Comités de la Défense de la Révolution') and the 'délégués' who presided over them. Sankara wanted to break the power of the 'feudal' chieftainship. Only after Sankara was deposed by Compaoré in 1987, was the authority of village chiefs and other local office holders gradually acknowledged again by the administration, and nowadays village chiefs are again involved in the settlement of disputes and in contacts in general with government institutions.

<sup>30</sup> Somyasya, *Yiitaore tenghiiga*. The value Moose attach to the apologies of a Pullo herdsman is underscored by the assertion that, in the case of more serious damage, the fine to be paid by a Pullo is diminished significantly when he offers his excuses: the notably insubmissive Pullo submits.

<sup>31</sup> One day, a Moaga elder said: 'Hassan, the deaf-mute Pullo from Yalanga, has been fined. He has to pay 100,100 FCFA. Cattle entered the field of a man from Sampaalo and that man has accused Hassan. Hassan, however, denied that it was his cattle that entered the field. Hence, the man from Sampaalo has cursed Hassan and demands a sum of 100,100 FCFA to be paid in order for the curse to be lifted. In the meantime, Hassan has become paralyzed in both legs. The curse will not be lifted before the fine is paid'. Such curses are very often sanctioned by a *tiibsoba* or a *tengsoba*. The procedure to follow is to hand over the fine first to the *tiibsoba* or *tengsoba*, who performs the necessary rites to lift the curse, and only then is the fine handed over to the claimer.

<sup>32</sup> Yamnooma, Kuritgo.

itself. Conflicts not settled locally most often relate to cases where either a field was destroyed for the larger part or even completely, or where there were casualties.

Towards the end of the rainy season of 1994, at Soudougou, a Pullo, Alai, had let the cattle he herded into the field of Mankido, a Moaga farmer from the neighbouring village of Zongo (ward of Yaka). Mankido had caught Alai on the spot. The fine to be paid by Alai was set at 15,000 FCFA, which according to Moose informants was not too much. It would not have been enough to compensate for the damage. But Alai was only prepared to pay 500 FCFA. After some negotiating, both parties agreed on a fine of 12,500 FCFA which had to be paid within six days. Payment day coincided with the market of Koundbokin and there Alai met Mankido and his son. He asked them whether they would spend the night in Koundbokin. They said they would, but returned home since they suspected that Alai would again bring his cattle into their field. He did indeed and was caught again by Mankido and his son. Mankido went to see the Pullo chief in Péoukoy, while his son pursued Alai who had run away. He caught him and beat him up. When Mankido returned he too wanted to beat him, but other Moose who had rushed up to the place of trouble held him back. The following morning, Mankido went to inspect his field and found that the damage to his crop was enormous. He was enraged to such a point that he could have killed Alai. Although other Moose tried to persuade Mankido to settle for an arrangement with Alai, Mankido could not bear his loss and decided to bring the affair before the administrative authorities. It was decided that Alai had to pay a fine of 80,000 FCFA. However, Mankido's son was sentenced to a number of days in prison for injuring Alai. It should be noted that Alai had settled for that rainy season with his father's brother at Péoukoy. His 'permanent' settlement, where he also returned for the dry season, was at Sam, almost 35 kilometers to the north-west of Ziinoogo.

Finally, it must be noted that conflicts also occur after crops have been harvested, but not yet completely transported to the compounds. It then happens that cattle enter the fields to graze the stubble and damage the harvest which is temporarily stored in the field.

Both Fulbe and Moose maintain that conflicts are on the increase, and Fulbe in particular point out that a growing scarcity of natural resources is an important cause. They argue that the population has grown and that Moose from Ziinoogo have more and larger fields than before, which are moreover more scattered over the village territory and increasingly situated in the bottomlands which constitute the Fulbe's preferred pastures. One Pullo expressed the problem in the following way: 'Moose are people who destroy the "brousse". Everywhere they cut trees to make their fields. They prevent us from having space and pasture for our cattle. But if there is no "brousse", a Pullo cannot live, the "brousse" is life'.<sup>33</sup>

Relations between the two groups would have been better in the past, and one other expression of the fact that the situation would be deteriorating is the way in which crop residues are used nowadays as compared to in the past. The *jooro* of Péoukoy: 'When I was young, there were no problems between Moose and Fulbe. We were invited by the Moose to come with our cattle onto their harvested fields. Nowadays, there are more people and among them some badly educated Moose. Now it happens that Moose either sell millet stalks or feed them to their own animals', and another Pullo: 'Nowadays it happens that we are even not allowed to let our cattle graze the stubble of harvested fields. The millet stalks are taken away by the wind instead of being grazed by our cattle'. In addition to the fact that the raising of animals, and among them cattle, by Moose means restricted access to crop residues for cattle herded by Fulbe, it is suggested here that Moose consciously prevent Fulbe from using

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<sup>33</sup> Pullo elder from Péoukoy. Note that this statement corresponds remarkably with how Moaga land use is often characterized in the literature (cf. above). However, pastoral peoples too are often accused of a 'predatory behaviour' towards their natural environment. Interestingly Monod (1975:130) not only mentions this aspect of pastoralists' land use but also explicitly compares it with behaviour of sedentary Moose which would be similar and Ouedraogo (1995:210) also finds a similarity of attitude between Moose and Fulbe with respect to space, mockingly concluding that a Moaga may be considered to be 'a Pullo following the land [instead of the herd]'.

resources which they themselves do not even need. It was also said that the Moose leave some harvested crops purposely on the field with the sole intention of preventing cattle from grazing the stubble. Fulbe even accuse Moose of ill will with respect to the access to bottomland pastures: 'Even if a Moaga has his field at a distance of 200 metres from a bottomland, he will chase us away although the passage is wide enough for our cattle. Anyhow, the fact that we always send a herdsman with our cattle is enough proof that we do not want the animals to enter their fields. If it were our intention to damage crops, we would simply not herd the cattle'.<sup>34</sup>

Whereas in the past cattle herds would have left their paddocks only early in the morning to go and graze, nowadays Fulbe bring their animals regularly to the pastures during the night, in particular at the end of the rainy season. It was explained by Fulbe that the main reason for this change has to be sought in the growing scarcity of pastures and the increasing competition among Fulbe over pastures. The same competition would be at play with respect to the access to the stubble on harvested fields. Herdsmen would be in a hurry to have their cattle graze stubble and it is acknowledged that this hurry sometimes provokes accidents: 'There is a lack of food for our animals. And, who comes first is best served. Some of us are then too much in a hurry. You know, it is not for nothing that our cattle sometimes enter the property of others'.<sup>35</sup>

There are two points on which Moose agree with Fulbe, i.e. that formerly relationships between the two groups were better and that it was only recently that Moose started to own cattle (cf. below). Although it is admitted that fields are more numerous than before and more scattered over the village territory, the idea that space grows scarce is generally vigorously dismissed by Moose: 'The Fulbe can use the whole space in between here [Ziinoogo] and Bagsin to let their cattle graze, but that is not what they do. Each time, they look for the grasses between and near to the fields. And, with their herds of often some hundred animals, accidents cannot but happen. We have a large "brousse" and the only reason there are problems is because the Fulbe want to provoke us'.<sup>36</sup> Many times it was said by Moose that the reason for the increase of conflicts was not to be found in the scarcity of resources, but in a change in the Fulbe's attitude: 'Before, we had no problems with the Fulbe. But they no longer herd their cattle the way they did before. And, as they let their cattle enter our fields it is no longer possible for us to have a good understanding with them, even not during the dry season'.<sup>37</sup> The Fulbe are reproached with sneaky behaviour, of which all Moose know numerous examples: 'Fulbe bring their cattle close to our fields because that allows them to let one of their old cows into a field. The old cow will eat some millet and that will rejuvenate her blood'<sup>38</sup>, 'A Pullo herdsman may approach a field with his herd and then let only six cows into the field, while he continues on his way with the rest of the herd. Those six cows will eat well, and the damage will not be great. The next day, he will do the same thing, but then with six other cows, and so forth. Each time, only a little millet is eaten and, because the herdsman

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<sup>34</sup> Pullo elder from Yalanga.

<sup>35</sup> The *jooro* of Péoukoy.

<sup>36</sup> Sumdugudu, Baskondo lineage elder.

<sup>37</sup> Koaagda, *nakombga*.

<sup>38</sup> Aruna, *Yiitaoore tengbiiga*.



continues with the majority of his animals, it is as if those six broke away from the herd by themselves without the herdsman having noticed it'.<sup>39</sup>

Still, despite this apparent disagreement between Moose and Fulbe on causes, there seems to be much confirmation here for the thesis that growing pressure on natural resources and growing uniformity of production systems has put a strain on the relationships between both groups. The cultivated area has been extended and fields have become scattered over the village territory (cf. chapters 3 and 4). This cannot but have rendered access to pastures and water resources more difficult and restricted for cattle herded by Fulbe. Whereas formerly a complementarity existed on the level of harvested fields (manure in exchange for crop residues), it seems to have been destroyed because Moose fatten at their compound their own animals, and among them cattle, to which they feed part of the crop residues. Moreover, it can be noted that, if population growth has been a factor, the growth of cattle herds has probably<sup>40</sup> been at least equally important.<sup>41</sup>

It has to be stressed that this section is based mainly on accounts, by both Moose and Fulbe, which were given while other persons were present and which may rightly be referred to as 'public discourse'. Such accounts by Moose and Fulbe corresponded remarkably in their tendency, regardless of whether the Moose had cattle entrusted to Fulbe or not, and regardless of whether the Fulbe had Moaga cattle in their herds or not. Moose who had cattle entrusted to Fulbe even went so far, in public, as to strongly advise against entrusting animals to Fulbe, saying for instance that 'it would be better to eat your money than to entrust the cow you bought to a Pullo, as there will always be a time when the Pullo comes to tell you that your cow is dead'.<sup>42</sup> Comparing such public discourse with the fact that cattle are nevertheless entrusted to Fulbe, one tends to obtain a rather schizophrenic image of these Moose cattle owners, an image which deserves further attention and explanation. For instance, what is the basis for the cattle entrustment system within a context of apparently generalized animosity opposing Moose and Fulbe? And, must there not be, in the herds of Fulbe, cattle owned by Moose entering fields sown by Moose?

Finally, there is one other point which suggests that the accounts above do not tell the whole story. Both Fulbe and Moose, in spite of claiming that relationships between them were relatively trouble-free in the past, have on several occasions mentioned beatings and fights which occurred in earlier days. Moose elders explained that in their youth, if cattle entered a field, they were allowed to beat the herdsman up and to shoot at the cattle: 'Nowadays these beatings and shootings are forbidden and that is why we look for a financial arrangement'. And, even worse: 'When my father Somwaoga was here at Naba Bagre together with Yooro's father and Yamnooma's father [cf. chapters 3 and 4], they once took their hoes and destroyed the huts of Fulbe who had a settlement here. They chased those Fulbe away. If the Fulbe continue to act the way they do nowadays around here, we may very well do the same thing

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<sup>39</sup> Tengo, Balbou Seya.

<sup>40</sup> Figures on cattle should be handled with extreme caution as they are often based on household censuses (it is not to be expected that respondents give 'true' information on the number of cattle they own), or derived from tax rolls or vaccination figures, equally unreliable (cf. also Pouillon 1988).

<sup>41</sup> In 1948, there would have been about 0.5 head of cattle per head of population in the Cercle de Kaya, while in 1978 this figure would have been about 0.6 for the north-central region (coinciding more or less with the former Cercle de Kaya plus the Bam province) (cf. respectively *Présentation du Cercle de Kaya*, 1948, and *Monographie du Département du Centre-Nord, Kaya*, 1978). Rietkerk *et al.* (1996:513) mention that, in the Sahel, human and livestock populations both increased by a factor of about 2.3 between 1950 and 1983.

<sup>42</sup> Tuba, Rumtenga Yiyooaga.

again to them. It cannot be that Fulbe have millet themselves which grows well and they then send their cattle into the fields of Moose'.<sup>43</sup> Although it is very difficult to situate these violent incidents in any exact way in time, and although it was not easily possible to reconstruct what were the issues of strife, one nevertheless wonders whether a 'symbiosis' between Moose and Fulbe has ever existed.

### *Evidence from the past*

Two related questions are addressed here, namely to what extent have relations between Fulbe and Moose been 'symbiotic' in the past and, if conflicts occurred, what were they about? As mentioned above, actors' accounts on the existence of conflicts were contradictory, but conflicts as such do not exclude 'symbiosis' in the sense of a relationship based on mutual dependence and mutual advantage with implied complementarity in ecological and economic spheres. I will attempt now to present a glimpse at the relations between the two groups during the colonial period. That this is merely a glimpse is due to the fact that the accounts by Moose and Fulbe themselves on their past relationships seem to a large degree to be informed by their respective present day interests (cf. below and also chapter 3 with respect to land issues) and do not give many clues for answering the questions posed here. Hence, my 'reconstruction' is based for the larger part on only one source, namely documents found in the colonial archives of the former Cercle de Kaya supplemented with information on the Cercle de Ouahigouya collected by Marchal (1980). In general, colonial documents give only scarce information on relationships between Moose and Fulbe and, for that matter, on Fulbe in general (cf. chapter 2), with one exception however, namely the records of the Customary Law Tribunals. Considering the poor conditions in which the archives were kept, it seems unlikely that the records traced were in any way complete. Nevertheless, a relatively good overview could be obtained of the kind of cases involving Moose and Fulbe, and their respective frequencies, handled by the Customary Law Tribunals of Kaya between 1920 and 1950.

It seems very likely that also before 1920 conflicts between Moose - or other farming populations - and Fulbe were no exception. Indeed, Marchal (1980), in his chronicle of the Cercle de Ouahigouya, presents several examples.

He cites the Commandant of Ouahigouya who wrote in 1908 (*ibidem*:28): 'Un léger incident s'est produit sur la limite du Cercle de Koury, entre les Samos de ce territoire et quelques Peuls du Cercle de Ouahigouya. Il y eut échange de coups entre certains d'entre eux; un Samo et un Peul furent tués. Cette affaire survint à la suite de dégâts causés par les troupeaux des Peuls dans les lougans samos; aussi ne faut-il pas voir en cette incident aucune question politique mais simplement un fait relevant des juridictions indigènes... D'ailleurs, ces querelles entre Peuls et Samos voisins [...] ne sont pas rares. De fréquentes tournées effectuées dans ces régions seront les plus sûrs moyens d'empêcher ces indigènes de se faire justice eux-mêmes et de les obliger à venir nous trouver pour faire régler leurs différends'. In May 1909 (*ibidem*:33): 'Comme le fait se passe chaque année à cette époque, de nombreuses contestations naissent au sujet des cultures. Quelques rixes éclatent entre les indigènes, principalement entre Peuls et Mossis; les premiers laissant circuler leurs troupeaux dans les cultures de ceux-ci, peu tolérant et prompts à tirer des flèches sur les animaux. Des ordres très sévères ont été donnés et quelques punitions infligées, pour faire cesser cet état de chose'. Finally, in August 1911 (*ibidem*:50): 'Malgré les nombreux différends journaliers entre les indigènes, surtout entre les Peuls et les Mossis au sujet des dégâts causés par les troupeaux, l'esprit des populations est resté satisfaisant'.

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<sup>43</sup> Somyasya, Yiitaore tengbiiga.

What strikes one most here is that conflicts are presented as having been a daily occurrence. Later on, the archives of Kaya implied a similar routine character with respect to conflicts between Moose and Fulbe over crop damage caused by cattle. For example, for the years 1939-40, the Commandant of Kaya commented on the functioning of 'indigenous justice': 'Il n'y a rien de particulier à signaler en ce qui concerne la Justice du 1<sup>er</sup> degré. La criminalité dans le Cercle semble cette année avoir diminuée. Les crimes qui ont été le plus enregistré sont les coups et blessures ayant entraîné la mort sans intention de la donner, rixe entre Peulh et Moaga à propos de déprédations de champs, disputes entre Mossi souvent après boire'.<sup>44</sup> In 1949, reporting on a case of crops damaged by cattle, which had escalated and led to the murder of a Moaga by a Pullo, the Commandant noted: 'Tous deux [Peulhs] nient avoir eu l'intention de donner la mort, ce qui est probablement exact car ces querelles qui se terminent par quelques coups de bâton sont fréquentes et n'ont pas en général de suites graves'.<sup>45</sup>

What the archives do confirm then is not so much that relations between Moose and Fulbe were better in the past, but rather that they were frequently accompanied by beatings and shootings. Besides the bare fact of the frequency of conflicts, it also appears that the competition over natural resources between cattle herding, an activity associated with Fulbe, and millet cultivation, associated with Moose, is not of recent date either.

In a case from 1938, where this time a Pullo was killed by a Moaga, one Moaga witness stated: 'Il y a six jours, au matin, me rendant à notre champ j'ai trouvé que des dégâts avaient été commis par des boeufs. Je suis allé chercher mon frère T. dans son champ et je l'ai amené avec moi pour voir les dégâts. Celui-ci s'est alors dirigé vers le parc à bétail des Peulhs. Je lui ai dit: "N'y vas pas. Les Peulhs cherchent des histoires car voilà plusieurs fois qu'on leur dit de quitter le village ou bien de garder leurs animaux pour les empêcher de faire des dégâts". Mon frère ne m'a pas écouté et il est allé au parc. Il est revenu [...]. Pendant que nous parlions, A. [Peulh] est arrivé, accompagné de son frère I. Nous avons dit à A.: "Nous t'avions déjà dit de quitter ce village d'où vous êtes étrangers ou bien de garder vos bétail pour les empêcher d'abîmer nos cultures. Nous allons voir le Chef de Canton [...] pour avoir une indemnité ou bien d'obtenir qu'il vous fasse partir". Alors A. a dit: "Les boeufs n'abîment pas le mil, ils engraisent la terre". T. a dit: "Tu paieras ces dégâts".' After which the fight started.<sup>46</sup>

Also there is very early the suggestion of Moose fields impinging on passages for Fulbe cattle, and, during the dry season, problems with respect to access to water resources. In 1927, for example, a fight between a Moaga and a Pullo was brought to trial, where the Moaga stated: 'Je cultivais mon champ de mil, lorsqu'un troupeau de boeufs conduit par le Peulh traversait ma propriété', to which the Pullo responded: 'Il voulait m'empêcher de passer avec mes boeufs qui suivaient une piste au bord de son champ. Les boeufs n'ont pas abîmé ses cultures'.<sup>47</sup> Marchal (1980:52) cites the Commandant of Ouhiougouya in November 1911: 'Nous signalons toutefois que les Peulhs qui nous ont fort occupé pendant tout l'hivernage, en raison de pâturages plus ou moins "captés" par les Mossis cultivateurs, nous assaillent maintenant de réclamations contre les mêmes Mossis qui défendent l'accès de leurs puits aux troupeaux'.<sup>48</sup>

The majority of conflicts between Moose and Fulbe brought before the Customary Law Tribunals dealt with crop damage caused by cattle, an issue which is just as prominent today. A minor number of cases concerned conflicts over farm land - generally, Fulbe

<sup>44</sup> Bilan de deux ans d'administration dans le Cercle de Kaya, Kaya 1940.

<sup>45</sup> Rapport à Monsieur le Procureur de la République, Kaya, le 14 novembre 1949.

<sup>46</sup> Procès-Verbal d'interrogatoire, le 25 juillet 1938, Kaya.

<sup>47</sup> Régistre Tribunal du Premier Degré 1923-27.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. also Régistre Tribunal de la Subdivision de Kaya, 1925.

bringing Moose to trial, the former accusing the latter of occupying land they, the Fulbe, claimed to have been farming for decades, while the Moose countered that the land involved constituted part of their ancestral land.<sup>49</sup> Another important category of cases opposing Moose and Fulbe, however, concerned the entrusting of cattle by Moose to Fulbe. Moose contested Fulbe's claims that entrusted cattle died in a rinderpest epidemic, Moose accused Fulbe of having sold entrusted cattle, Fulbe accused Moose of not having paid the compensation for the herding of entrusted cattle, and so forth. These cases too occurred from the 1920s onwards.<sup>50</sup> They constitute a point of interest as it is claimed today by Moose in Ziinoogo that not only is the keeping of cattle in their compounds a recent practice, but also that, during the period of colonial rule and before, Moose - *nanamse* and in particular *kombere nanamse* excepted - *did not own any cattle at all* and, hence, did not entrust them to Fulbe either (cf. below).

From this short overview, it becomes clear that the tensions between Moose and Fulbe during the colonial period, as shown in court records, were not very different in content from the tensions which are publicly displayed nowadays. Nor probably was their frequency. As is also the case nowadays, it can be supposed that only a fraction of the conflicts ever reached the court in Kaya<sup>51</sup>: in those days as well, it was first attempted to come to an agreement between the actors directly involved. If that agreement was not reached, the case was brought before the Moaga village chief and the local Pullo chief (*jooro*), and if a solution still was not found the case was taken to the *kombere* chief.<sup>52</sup> Only if the latter could not settle the conflict was it brought to the court in Kaya. This holds for so-called 'civil cases', for when violence was involved, possibly with fatal casualties, the colonial administration could intervene directly. Moreover, it can be noted that, because of the repressive nature of the colonial administration, the threshold before the colonial court was probably higher than it is at present before the administrative court.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. e.g. Régistre du Tribunal du Premier Degré, Kaya, 1930-31.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. e.g. Régistre Jugements Civils du Tribunal de la Subdivision de Kaya, du 29 janvier 1920 au 24 février 1921; Régistre Tribunal du Premier Degré 1923-27.

<sup>51</sup> A few cases present in the court registers deal with conflicts between Moose and Fulbe having occurred in the territory of Ziinoogo. For example, in 1924, four Fulbe from Napalgué and Momné and five Moose from Ziinoogo appeared in court because of a fight which had occurred at the beginning of the rainy season: 'Le 25 mai 1924, [les Moose] portaient plainte contre [les Peulhs] qu'ils accusaient d'avoir [...] Ziinoogo, aux champs laissé leurs boeufs piétiner le mil à peine levé et d'avoir porté des coups sur leurs personnes. [Les Peulhs] accusaient à leur tour les prévenus mossi de les avoir [...] frappés avec des bâtons et leur avoir occasionnés des blessures' (Régistre Tribunal de la Subdivision de Kaya, 1925).

In 1940, a Pullo was killed at Bagsin in a conflict between Moose from Ziinoogo and Fulbe from Yalanga. The Commandant of Kaya noted with respect to this case: 'Il résulte de l'information que Y.S. [le Moaga] et T.D. [le Peulh] s'étaient déjà disputé il y a une vingtaine de jours au sujet d'un troupeau de boeufs appartenant à T.D. qui serait venu paître dans le champ de gros mil appartenant à Y.S.

[Deux semaines après] la dispute recommença et les deux indigènes se battirent. T.D. porta à Y.S. des coups et blessures sans gravité [...] et Y.S. [...] occasionna à T.D. des coups et blessures tels que ce dernier décéda sur place' (Rapport d'information, Kaya, le 20 septembre 1940).

This latter affair was remembered by some Ziinoogo elders today: 'The Pullo had opened an enclosure within which Y.S. had sown cotton and he had let his cattle enter. Y.S. gave the Pullo a blow. The Pullo then went home but came back shortly afterwards with seven other Fulbe in order to teach Y.S. a lesson. Y.S. called for help and P. arrived. In the fight that followed a Pullo was killed. Afterwards, we, Moose and Fulbe together, sent a cart full of eggs to give to the Sanmatenga *naaba*. This was done because the Fulbe didn't want to be punished. For the case was such that the Fulbe had entered the cotton field and were chased away, to come back shortly after with the intention to kill Y.S.' (Raboke, *nakombga* lineage elder).

<sup>52</sup> Today, a conflict not settled at the village level is transferred to the 'préfecture'. The *kombere* chief no longer becomes involved.

In short, there is no indication that 'symbiotic' relations ever existed between Moose and Fulbe. From the earliest days of colonial rule onwards - i.e. well before population growth and extension of cash crop areas had their impact, and well before the time at which Moose would have turned to keeping cattle themselves - reports exist on conflicts between the two groups which were about issues which are equally current today and which point to an already tangible competition over natural resources. The image of two ethnic groups exploiting mutually exclusive ecological niches at some historically distant point in time is an illusion. Certainly, just as in the past, present-day conflicts between Moose and Fulbe are an expression of competition over scarce natural resources, but as such they tell little about the supposed ending of complementarity between the two groups or about the direction in which their relations might evolve.

### *Contemporary relations between Moose and Fulbe disentangled*

It was mentioned above that Moose have a preference for investing revenues from Ivory Coast earnings or remittances, or, for that matter, from any profitable activity, in livestock and in particular in cattle. Although Moose keep cattle at their compounds, this involves in most cases only one or two bulls and generally not more than ten animals. Most cattle owned by Moose seem to be entrusted to Fulbe herdsmen, in spite of the conflictive relationship between the two groups. Conflict very probably has been an element of this relationship for a long time and, what is more, cattle have been at the centre of most of these conflicts throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century (cattle damaging crops, cattle denied access to water resources, no compensation paid for entrustment to Fulbe, and so forth). How should the ambiguity in attitudes of Moose cattle owners be understood? On the one hand, they maintain a hostile public discourse towards Fulbe, often focusing on the fact that Fulbe are not to be trusted at all, and they vehemently chase cattle from around fields and from water points, while, on the other hand, they acknowledge that trust is the basis on which cattle can be entrusted to those same Fulbe.<sup>53</sup> What, then, is the substance of the particular relations within which cattle, an incontestably valuable resource to both, are entrusted by a Moaga to a Pullo? And, if it has been clarified what kind of relation makes entrustment of cattle possible, why do Moose feel it necessary to entrust their cattle to Fulbe at all? Why is it that they do not take up cattle-raising themselves?

The picture of animosity between Moose and Fulbe painted in public discourse showed cracks when I asked Moose about the possibility that they might have a Pullo friend (*zoa*). The following answer well summarizes the responses: 'Of course a Moaga can have a Pullo friend. If you want cattle you need a Pullo friend. How could a Moaga ever buy cattle if

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<sup>53</sup> Delgado (1979:125-126), whose work in the south-eastern Tenkodogo region constitutes one of the rare studies going into some detail of the cattle entrustment system between Moose and Fulbe and who, equally supporting the thesis that relations between the two groups are deteriorating, also points out the importance of trust between the two parties: 'Mutual trust is the cornerstone of the cattle-entrusting system. This traditional relationship between the two ethnic groups is currently degenerating because of bad feelings on both sides caused by two types of incidents which are occurring with increasing frequency. First, the expansion of Mossi bush fields into traditional grazing areas and the fencing of lowland plots for market gardening in the dry season are responsible for a rising number of incidents involving crop damage by livestock. Second, the steady impact of material and individualistic values spread from return migrants is eroding the ability of the Fulani elders to guarantee the safety of livestock entrusted to them'.

he doesn't look for a Pullo friend?'.<sup>54</sup> Understanding friendship between Moose and Fulbe indeed proved to be essential for coming to grips with the practice of cattle entrustment. In chapter 5, where friendship (*zoodo*) among Moose was briefly discussed, it was mentioned that, according to Lallemand (1977), *zoodo* also allows Moose to bridge the distance between themselves and other population groups. She maintains more specifically that individual friendship relations between Moose and Fulbe, firstly, mean a 'relief' for those Moose who have entrusted cattle to the Fulbe they still distrust, and, secondly, help to counteract the tensions between the two population groups caused mainly by conflicts over crop damage by cattle (*ibidem*:362-364). It seems as if she interprets friendship between Moose and Fulbe as a kind of functional necessity in circumstances where population groups that are complementary in their production are bound to share living space. Moreover, she suggests that relations between Moose and Fulbe are almost solely economic and that friendship is instrumental for the more or less smooth management of these economic relations:

'Il est certain que ces deux groupes qui se heurtent fréquemment sans jamais envisager la séparation, interdite par leur interdépendance économique, nécessitent des médiateurs à un niveau plus humble que celui de leurs chefs respectifs; les amis [...] aident à désamorcer les tensions, fruits de la richesse des échanges matériels entre communautés, conjuguée à la pauvreté des relations dans tous les autres domaines; particulièrement, comme vachers et cultivateurs [...] ne veulent ou ne peuvent resserrer leurs liens par alliance matrimoniale, l'affinité individuelle apparaît alors comme la seule manière d' "humaniser" une association créée par les exigences des répartitions de la production [...]'  
(*ibidem*:364; emphasis added).

In what follows, it is shown that reducing relations between Moose and Fulbe to purely economic relations does not do justice to their complexity. Indeed, although some economic opportunism may often be present in a Moaga's pursuit of a friendship relation with a Pullo, or *vice versa*, its significance extends also to other domains of social organization.

I tried to find out in which ways friendship between a Moaga and a Pullo differed from friendship between two Moose. At first, there was said to be no difference, but eventually nuances were added suggesting that friendship between a Moaga and a Pullo involved more opportunistic motives:

'Friendship between a Pullo and a Moaga is the same as friendship between two Moose. Still, if a Moaga and a Pullo visit one another frequently and are friends, then the Pullo will say that what he would like most is for the Moaga to entrust him an animal. Hence, if you have the means you may buy a bull calf and entrust it to your Pullo friend. When the bull has grown up you can sell it and the Pullo can ask you to buy a cow. By entrusting the cow to the Pullo you help him and his family to feed themselves. Still, in a friendship between a Pullo and a Moaga it is the Pullo who eats the Moaga [i.e. the Moaga is made dependent on the Pullo]. Moreover, a Pullo will not often follow and build friendship with a Moaga if he does not see some profit for himself'.<sup>55</sup>

Although young Moose especially claimed to have Fulbe friends without owning any cattle to entrust, cattle owned and/or entrusted very often played a central role in Moose's explanations of friendship with Fulbe, even to such an extent that it sometimes became unclear which came first, entrustment of cattle or friendship. For example, explaining how a friendship relation with a Pullo comes into being, it was said:

<sup>54</sup> Ranini, Kuritgo.

<sup>55</sup> Ousmane, Runtenga Yiyooa. Opportunistic motives may certainly also be involved in friendship between two Moose, for instance, when a young man attempts to build a friendship with the aim of obtaining a wife through his friend (cf. chapter 5).

'If I see something with you that I want, we will rapidly become friends and that is also the way it goes with Moose and Fulbe. If a Moaga has cattle you will see Fulbe approaching him, because he has something they want. The Moaga then wants a Pullo friend and the Pullo wants a Moaga friend. Even if you do not want to entrust your cattle to a Pullo you will have a Pullo friend because the Fulbe will run after you'.<sup>56</sup>

Others were less clear on which comes first, cattle or friendship:

'If a Pullo wants to sell something and that is also what you want to buy, then you can buy it from him and he will tell you that you can either take it with you or entrust it to him. If you trust the person, you can leave the bull or cow with him and, when you go and have a look next year, you will know whether he treated the animal well and whether you can trust him in the future. Between friends one has to have trust [*ksida*!'.<sup>57</sup>

Fulbe too know particular friendship relations (*yiguiragu*: friendship, *yiguow*: friend), which involve the mutual entrustment of cattle and the exchange of women in order to strengthen ties between them. In Fulbe's explanations of friendship with Moose cattle are equally central:

'There does not have to be friendship necessarily between a Moaga and a Pullo before the Pullo asks the Moaga to entrust his cattle to him. Wherever a Pullo sees an animal he will want to herd it. The animal is his friend. He does not look much at the person but rather at the animal. Nevertheless, friendship will arise afterwards. It is especially the Moaga's trust in the Pullo that will strengthen this friendship: if the Moaga does not take back his animals, there is trust and friendship will grow'.<sup>58</sup>

Friendship and the entrustment of cattle are built on trust, and trust has to be built. Therefore, a Moaga who is only beginning to build up his own herd may at first buy animals from several Fulbe and leave them with the different herdsmen in order to find out who can be trusted most before transferring most or all of his animals to only one herder.

The compensation Fulbe herders receive for herding Moose cattle varies greatly. Still, there seem to be some rules of principle, like, for instance: each three years the Pullo receives a heifer and if the Moaga sells one of the entrusted animals the herder takes a share of 5,000 FCFA. The entrustment, and related friendship, however also often involve some less formalized exchanges of gifts (e.g. the Moaga may receive milk, the Pullo may receive millet, the Moaga may go and work in the fields of the Pullo): 'For friendship there are no specific gifts. If you have something, you can give, if the other has something, he can give', it was said.

Reasons for withdrawing one's cattle from a herd, other than the pure necessity to sell animals in order to solve some problem, are most often the regular damaging of crops by the herd (for the compensation of which the Moaga cattle owner also pays, cf. below), and the fact that a herder cannot account for the disappearance of an animal. Also, it happens that cattle are withdrawn when after an owner's death the inheritance is divided. A Pullo, for his part, may refuse to herd the cattle of a Moaga any longer if the latter does not fulfill his obligations towards him, for instance after having sold an animal. Still, once established, friendship appears to be remarkably durable and even if a conflict occurs and the Moaga decides to withdraw his cattle, friendship may last. Often, it is transferred from father to son or from brother to brother as a Pullo becomes 'a friend of the house' to Moose or *vice versa*. On the

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<sup>56</sup> Moumini, *Yiitaore tengbiiga*.

<sup>57</sup> Ali, *yagenga* of Yuma, Runtenga Yiyooaga.

<sup>58</sup> The *jooro* of Péoukoy.

other hand, it may also happen that at the death of one of the two friends the relationship is broken, because, as one Moaga said: 'What the father has, the son does not necessarily have'.<sup>59</sup>

One reason for the relative durability of friendship between a Moaga and a Pullo is probably that cattle are often only one aspect of the relationship. While Moose entrust cattle to Fulbe, the entrustment of millet by Fulbe to Moose is also a common practice. Shortly after the harvest, Fulbe who have the means to do so buy large quantities of millet which they store with their Moose friends. In the course of the following year, they come to collect it little by little. The way in which the millet is obtained varies: it may be bought from the same Moaga who also stores it, the Pullo may buy it on the market place and then transport it to the Moaga's compound, or he may ask the Moaga to buy it for him. Finally, it also happens that a Moaga harvests a Pullo's field and stores the millet at his place. The important point here is, however, that the entrustment of millet also takes place within the context of friendship.

'Not every Pullo can entrust millet to a Moaga. Those who have the means to sell animals can do so. That Moaga then does not necessarily have cattle with the Pullo. What is however necessary between the two is friendship. Because our millet does not last with the Moose, there is no compensation to be paid'.<sup>60</sup>

'That Fulbe come and store millet with me is through friendship. If I ate his millet, he would look for another Moaga to whom to entrust his millet; if I don't eat it, he will come back next time. There is no compensation. It happens through friendship'.<sup>61</sup>

Ties between members of the two ethnic groups may furthermore be strengthened in ways that extend beyond material exchanges, in particular through the mutual role they play in the namegiving ceremonies of their children and through marriage ceremonies. The frequency of Moose with Fulbe names (Sambo, Mariam) and of Fulbe with Moose names (Noraogo, Noaga) is indeed remarkable. When a Pullo woman loses several children at a young age she may decide to go and see a Moaga diviner (*baga*) and offer a cock or a hen. After the ceremony, the Pullo woman's next child is supposed to be named after the animal killed (Noraogo or Noaaga).<sup>62</sup> Such a ceremony does not entail further relationships between the Moaga diviner and the Fulbe involved.

With respect to Fulbe names given to Moose children, the situation generally is different. Moose conceptions of fecundity and procreation are rather complex and for details I refer to the work of Bonnet (1988) and Lallemand (1978). Each human being has its double in a kind of counter world, which is the reflected image of the human world and which is inhabited by spirits, among them *kinkirse* (sing. *kinkirga*). Conception occurs when with sexual intercourse between a man and a woman such a *kinkirga* enters the womb of the woman, the twin *kinkirga* remaining in the counter world. Thus, it is a *kinkirga* that makes fecundation possible. For the pregnancy to succeed, however, transmission of *siiga* (vital force) is necessary in the third or fourth month of pregnancy and it is this *siiga* that links the unborn and later on the child with one of his ancestors who is then said to be its *segre* (cf. Bonnet 1988:88). This *segre* is determined during the namegiving ceremony. Badini (1994:45f) stresses the importance attached to a correct identification of a child's *segre* since a

<sup>59</sup> Yamnooma, Kuritgo.

<sup>60</sup> The *jooro* of Péoukoy.

<sup>61</sup> Tingo, Balbou Seya.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. also Bonnet (1988:89) on the giving of names to Moose children: 'Si la naissance d'un enfant a été propitiée par une offrande de poule en vue de conjurer les effets qui résultent d'une faute l'enfant se nommera *noaga* (poule)'.



mistake may provoke its return to the counter world. Knowledge of a child's *segre* is moreover essential to be able to offer it a correct education:

'Savoir d'où vient l'enfant, qui il est ou plus exactement qui vit à travers lui, sera indispensable pour organiser tout ce que l'on fera avec ou pour cet être-là' (Badini 1994:45).

In the case of a young child with health problems, an incorrect definition of the child's ancestral *segre* can be pointed out as cause. Pardon then has to be solicited from the offended ancestor and the child has to be renamed, so that it finally receives its real *segre* (Bonnet 1988:94). It then happens that when the parents of an ailing child consult a diviner, the latter diagnoses that the child comes from a Pullo *kinkirga* (that 'the place of its *kinkirga* is Pullo') or that its *segre* is 'Pullo' (during pregnancy, a 'bad' *kinkirga* may have taken the place of the initially present 'good' *kinkirga* and thus introduce a Pullo *segre*). In order to end the child's suffering, the diviner will advise having a Pullo woman rename the child.<sup>63</sup> Therefore, the Moose go and see a Pullo in whom they trust and whose wife will give the child a Pullo name.<sup>64</sup> In almost all cases I came across, this Pullo appeared to be a friend (*zoa*) of one of the members of the Moaga compound.<sup>65</sup>

If, now, such a child happens to be a girl, she should, when she has grown up, marry according to Fulbe 'traditions', that is, the receiving husband will be informed that 'his future wife is Pullo'. The husband will then arrange that the woman is introduced into his compound by a Pullo woman, again solicited through a friendship relation. It also happens that it is the mother of the 'Pullo' girl who seeks to build friendship with a Pullo woman from the moment she knows her daughter is 'Pullo', and this in view of the future marriage ceremony where it will then be her Pullo friend who introduces her daughter into the husband's compound. This introduction of a girl to her husband by a Pullo woman is necessary because, when the girl's *segre* is determined to be Pullo, the *baga* at the same time asserts the necessity of a tie with a 'real' Pullo woman for the girl's future marriage to be fertile. Sometimes, a temporary Pullo hut is built for the new spouse on her husband's compound - 'the compound becomes like a Pullo compound' - and there the woman will have to spend the first weeks of her stay before joining her husband for sexual intercourse, again in order to increase the chances for a fertile marriage.<sup>66</sup> In this way, the Pullo involved in a Moaga marriage ceremony gets implicated in a triangular alliance: his or her family, the family that 'gives' the wife and the family that 'receives' the wife. Moreover, the child named by a Pullo woman also becomes the child of

<sup>63</sup> Strangely, neither Bonnet (1988) nor Badini (1994) go into the role of Fulbe in namegiving ceremonies.

<sup>64</sup> It also happens that a child is given a Pullo name without a Pullo naming it. This is done, for instance, when a woman gives birth to a boy and then to several girls before having a boy again. The first boy after a series of girls is named Sambo.

<sup>65</sup> The importance of the involvement of Fulbe in namegiving ceremonies should not be underestimated. As Badini (1994:50) explains: 'Le nom, une fois déterminé, va devenir une composante intrinsèque de l'homme au même titre que son âme (*siiga*). Par lui, on peut agir en bien ou en mal sur l'individu lui-même: nommer c'est agir sur ce qu'on nomme; se nommer c'est aussi se particulariser en affirmant sa personnalité, son individualité; se nommer c'est aussi et par conséquent, s'exposer, se livrer socialement et métaphysiquement à ses ennemis'.

<sup>66</sup> This namegiving or introduction of a wife into her husband's compound is not always an affair between friends: 'If a Moaga comes to ask us to do good, we will never refuse. And, it is not my affair if, afterwards, the Moaga is not appreciative of our act' (Yero, Yalanga). Also, it may be that a Moaga who has no Pullo friend approaches another Moaga who does and asks him to act as an intermediary. Thus, for example, when Tegre's wife - a 'Pullo' - had to come to Ziinoogo, neither Tegre nor his father Nomba had a Pullo friend. Nomba's father's brother Weebnaaba however did and he was asked to solicit his Pullo friend's help for the marriage ceremony.

her and her husband as will be the children from a marriage in the arrangement of which they were involved - 'if you introduced a Moaga woman into her husband's compound, her children become like yours' - which may be affirmed by gifts that the Fulbe bring for 'their' child (the latter is not necessarily the case, cf. footnote 66).<sup>67</sup>

The entrustment of cattle by Moose to Fulbe takes place within the context of friendship relations, whether these relations are established before or after the initial entrustment. The above discussion of friendship clearly shows that the social relations which make entrustment of cattle possible extend beyond the domain of cattle and also beyond purely economic exchanges. Although it is true that entrustment of cattle and millet play an important role in the relationships between individuals from both groups, ties are further strengthened and widened through the involvement of Fulbe in the domains of Moaga childbirth and marriage. After having shown which relations make the entrustment of cattle possible, it remains to be explored now why Moose deem it necessary in the first place to entrust their cattle to Fulbe herdsmen. They do not find any difficulty in taking care themselves of one to three and sometimes even seven head of cattle, so what are the reasons for not building up herds of more than, say, ten animals under their own direct management?

Horowitz (1972,1975) has attempted to explain why Manga farmers in Niger continue to entrust their cattle to Fulbe herdsmen, despite the fact that they acknowledge that cattle are the most satisfactory source of wealth and that there are no environmental reasons for them to refrain from herding the cattle themselves. Horowitz concludes that restraints on Manga pastoralism are cultural. Development of cattle herding by a farmer would imply a deviation from behavioural standards: in order to herd cattle he should abandon farming altogether and he should go and live in the bush in order to avoid the herds damaging crops. The pastoral way of life is looked upon with contempt, and assuming a pastoral existence would imply refraining from full participation in relations which 'give their lives richness and meaning' (Horowitz 1972:114). Horowitz' analysis seems at first to be at least partly confirmed by the present study. Moose did often express their contempt for Fulbe and their way of life, notably depicting them as 'people of the "brousse"' or claiming that 'he who herds cattle becomes stupid like the cattle'. Still, it is remarkable to observe that some Moose who own large herds of goats and sheep opt for herding these animals themselves and, in order to avoid damaging the crops of other villagers, do not refrain from living isolated in the 'brousse' during the rainy season. Some of these same Moose also own cattle which they have however entrusted to Fulbe.

To explain the entrustment of their cattle to Fulbe, Moose also argued that they did not have the labour at their disposal to take care of the animals.<sup>68</sup> Whereas the herding of sheep and goats is generally confided to small children - younger than ten years old - and whereas, in case one does not have such a child oneself, there is the possibility to foster a *yagenga* or a *pogdanga*, the herding of cattle generally has to be assigned to an adolescent boy who

<sup>67</sup> Although most often a Moaga calls his Pullo friend simply 'my friend' (*m zoa*) or also 'my man' (*m rawa*), kinship terms are also in use ('my father', 'my child', 'my brother'). Next to friendship other effective and fictive kinship relations may exist between Moose and Fulbe. Inter-marriage is possible for certain Moose subgroups, especially *nakombse*, and Fulbe. Members of a *nakombga* lineage may also consider themselves and Fulbe of the *jooro's* lineage as belonging to one and the same 'lineage' (*buudu*) because of the fact that the *nakombse* chiefs and the *jooro* both receive their power from the same *kombere* chief (for example, both the Ziinoogo *naaba* and the *jooro* of Péoukoy received their power from the *kombere* chief of Piugtenga) (cf. also chapters 2 and 3).

<sup>68</sup> Horowitz (1975:399-400) also discusses the difficulty for farmers to manage both a farm and a herd, due to problems of labour availability.

constitutes a valuable worker on the farm. Moreover, as mentioned in chapter 5, fosterage of a boy of that age to add to one's work force generally will not be accepted by the boy's own parents. Another plausible argument put forward by Moose is that they would simply not have the knowledge to herd cattle otherwise than on a very small scale. As a matter of fact, both Fulbe and Moose often asserted that 'a Moaga cannot take care of a cow'. Moose attribute to Fulbe an intimate knowledge of the procreation and fecundity of cows. This, then, also helps to explain why the large majority of the cattle kept by Moose at their compounds are bulls.

There certainly is some plausibility in all three arguments. Yet, can it be that this is the whole story? Do the advantages obtained by entrusting cattle to Fulbe outweigh the potential detrimental consequences? Looking at the accounts of Moose cattle owners one is struck by the many worries they seem constantly to have, despite the existence of friendship relations between them and the Fulbe herdsman: is the Pullo well enough avoiding damaging crops, was the calf that died really the Moaga's calf, does the Moaga calf receive enough milk or do the Fulbe reserve the milk for themselves or for their own calves, does the Pullo really feed the cotton seeds bought by the Moaga to the Moaga's sick animal, and so forth? Horowitz' argument (1975:401) on the usefulness of 'the ethnic other' in such situations of potential conflict - both parties expect the other to attempt to obtain advantage and it is less difficult to bring to justice the ethnic other than one's own kin - might have some relevance, but only if one first accepts that cattle have to be entrusted at all.<sup>69</sup> I will demonstrate below that a better understanding is reached if one takes into account an additional argument - seldom publicly expressed, neither by Fulbe nor Moose - which is that Moose feel the need to hide their wealth from fellow-villagers.<sup>70</sup> This argument will then also shed a new light on the publicly staged conflicts between Moose and Fulbe, and in a way explain the contradictions apparent in the practice of entrusting cattle to a publicly despised and distrusted 'other'.

## Differentiation and identity

### *Ethnic<sup>71</sup> identities: millet versus cattle discourses*

In daily life, ethnic identities of Moose and Fulbe are most obviously expressed by language, dress, house types and settlement patterns, which differ significantly from one group to the

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<sup>69</sup> Moreover, this argument is also based on the observation that relationships between farmers and herdsman are single-stranded (cf. Monod 1975:148), which obviously is not the case for the relations between Moose and Fulbe friends.

<sup>70</sup> Although he does not explore the issue in detail, Frantz (1975:342) does mention that in Nigeria cattle owners who accuse herdsman of stealing and improper management nevertheless entrust their cattle to these herdsman 'in order to conceal their ownership'.

<sup>71</sup> Moose and Fulbe are referred to here as constituting ethnic groups. This is done because what is discussed here are clearly relations between the two groups in which cultural difference is communicated, i.e. ethnicity (Eriksen 1991:127). A consensus on what is to be understood by 'ethnicity' does not exist (cf. for instance Banks 1996:4-5). Still, the work of Barth (1969) has been very influential and since then attention in studies of ethnic groups has shifted to social processes at the boundaries of those groups (cf. also Vermeulen & Govers 1994). According to Barth (1981:202-203) ethnic groups should be understood 'as a form of social organization [i.e. ethnicity is the social organization of cultural difference], with as a critical feature the characteristic of self-ascription and ascription by others. A categorical ascription is an ethnic ascription when it classifies a person in terms of his basic, most general identity, presumptively determined by his origin and background. To the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and others for purpose of interaction, they form ethnic groups in this organizational sense'.

other. Next, the stereotyped images each group uses with respect to the other (cf. above) clearly can be considered to constitute ethnic ascriptions too. Here, the focus will be on the aspects of ethnic identities that come to the fore specifically in conflicts between Moose and Fulbe over natural resources and in comments on those conflicts. Not surprisingly, discourses in this respect appeared to be built on contrasting 'cattle' with 'millet'.

The most important explicitly expressed objective of a Moaga farm head is to be each year self-sufficient in millet. Not being able to provide the millet to feed one's family is socially degrading. People who come and work on the fields of others in order to obtain millet in return are referred to as *yaanweoose* (sing. *yaanweooga*, i.e. 'those who ask for life'). It is only when the granaries are empty and no money is at hand to buy millet that members of a farm will degrade themselves as *yaanweoose* to get millet, 'which then will be eaten that same evening'.<sup>72</sup> Likewise it was said: 'If you are not hungry you will not go and work as a *yaanweooga*'.<sup>73</sup> Millet is an important asset, not only in terms of food self-sufficiency. It also opens the way to strengthening one's status within the village and constitutes a potential source for the mobilisation of labour, for those who are rich in millet are able to organize labour parties (*sisoose*), e.g. to weed or harvest a field. These are valued social gatherings at which *sagbo* and *dolo* are offered to the participants.

The building up of stocks, then, that last until the end of the next rainy season is a source of pride to the owner. These stocks are visible to everyone and stored around one's compound in larger (*kiuuri*) and smaller (*tiidougou*) granaries. During the harvest period, villagers comment vividly on each other's harvests and praise those who succeeded well for their skill and ardour. For instance, a successful farmer was commented on in the following way:

'It is thanks to his work that he does so well, even though he doesn't have a large family as others do. Others go to their field but do not concentrate on the work as he does. When his father was still alive, they could have four granaries in front of their compound, two of which belonged to him. Even at that time, he had that much millet as if he himself was already responsible for a family with two wives. It is the concentration on the work that leads to success'.<sup>74</sup>

As suggested here, hard work is an important value for Moose - the supreme value according to Badini (1994:77). To work hard and to have filled millet granaries are related, and it is in particular the effort delivered during farm work which is highly esteemed. This effort is, at least partly, reflected in the area a person is able to farm. Of course, the area of a farm also depends on the number of dependants one is able to mobilize, and it is certainly true that the latter tends to take the place of the personal effort delivered as a measure of social respect as one grows older and attains the status of elder (*ninkiem*, cf. also *ibidem*:74-76). Nevertheless, and although it was shown in earlier chapters (in particular chapter 4) that other factors also contribute to a tendency to maximize the areas exploited for farming according to the available labour force, this work-ethic constitutes yet another factor explaining space-consuming attitudes.

The extension of cultivated land, at the expense of fallow and thus pastures, is stimulated in yet another way. One has to have strong reasons to refuse access to fallow land if

<sup>72</sup> Nomba, *Yiitaore tengbiiga*.

<sup>73</sup> Youssouf, *nakombga*. Badini (1994:78) notes that the fact of seeing one's granaries empty is one of the essential causes of suicide among Moose men.

<sup>74</sup> Nasida, *Kamsin tengbiiga*.

someone asks for it to farm: thus, if someone from another lineage or another village asks permission to farm a certain place, access will be granted or, if the person responsible for that land has no legitimate reasons to refuse, he will have to farm the portion himself or instruct a close kinsman to do so (cf. chapters 3 to 5). Interestingly, in the arguments proposed to explain the allocation of land to others, millet and cattle/grass were explicitly contrasted.

A man from a neighbouring village had asked permission to farm a plot on the territory of Ziinoogo. When a *tengbiiga* elder went to designate the place for this plot, he told the applicant: 'I prefer the well-being of men to that of animals, so you can choose the limits for your field according to your possibilities'<sup>75</sup>, thus indicating that the applicant was allowed to clear what he needed, for otherwise the grasses growing there would only benefit cattle.

Another elder, who had transferred his fields and allocated the place he left to someone else, explained: 'It is better this way; now that we left there, others live and sow there. If we had refused them, only grass would be growing there, and, as things are now, if we go and visit them they will serve us *sagbo*'.<sup>76</sup>

It is as if grazing grasses by cattle would even not be a valid 'use of space', and it certainly is depicted as useless compared to the growing of millet for human subsistence purposes. Thus, although cattle are considered to constitute a valuable asset and the expression *par excellence* of wealth, the growing of millet and the investment of hard work on the farm is most valued socially. In this respect it is of interest to remark who is considered to be a 'great' man (*mimnengsoba*, lit. 'he who knows himself') in contrast to a 'wealthy' man (*rakaagre*). While a wealthy man is a man who owns a cattle herd, a 'great' man is not necessarily rich: 'It is not so that wealth makes a man great. A great man is he who has his affairs arranged just according to his means. He does not steal and succeeds in satisfying himself and his family, even if he has a problem and even if he has to solicit a loan'.<sup>77</sup> A great man is also known to be a good host, a man able to offer strangers to drink and to eat, i.e. millet.

Conversely, the identification of Fulbe with the cattle they herd is relatively well documented (cf. for instance Dognin 1975:300-304). Whereas the dignity of a Moaga is closely related to his ability to produce the millet for himself and his dependants, the dignity of Fulbe is reflected in their cattle and their ability to be self-sufficient in milk. As a Pullo explained:

'That Fulbe do not often go to the Ivory Coast, while Moose go there again and again is because Moose don't have anything here. They go to the Ivory Coast and buy a plantation and that will be their wealth and, then, their children and grandchildren can go there too to earn money. Fulbe always come back'<sup>78</sup> to stay here with their wealth, with their cattle that is. Even in case of crop failures I will stay here as long as my herd keeps growing. It is only if my herd decreases that I would be forced to go to the south'.<sup>79</sup>

Moose stress whenever possible Fulbe's disregard for their main means of subsistence, i.e. millet. This is expressed most vehemently in cases of conflict and particularly so when cattle have damaged crops in the fields. Again, millet and cattle are frequently contrasted in explanations of the opposed interests of Moose and Fulbe: 'The problem with the Fulbe is that

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<sup>75</sup> Kogbila, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

<sup>76</sup> Yamnooma, Kuritgo.

<sup>77</sup> Yuma and Lucien, Rumtenga Yiyoose; Raboke, *nakombga*.

<sup>78</sup> Young Fulbe men also migrate to the Ivory Coast, among other things to work for one or two years on cocoa and coffee plantations. It may be noted that, in such cases, they often follow and are introduced in the Ivory Coast by their Moose friends (*zoadamba*).

<sup>79</sup> Amadou, Péoukoy.

for them cattle is their *zaka* while for us our fields constitute our *zaka*. If, then, Fulbe come with their *zaka* to destroy our *zaka* we cannot agree'.<sup>80</sup> According to Moose, it is by not herding their cattle well that Fulbe show disrespect for the millet they grow, that they show their indifference. Thus, damage caused by cattle entering fields is often not understood to have been accidental. The Fulbe provoke and lead cattle on purpose into the fields (cf. above). When, during the dry season, Fulbe come to the Moaga village to buy millet, it is frequently exclaimed: 'Look at them. They lead their cattle into our fields during the rainy season, and during the dry season they have no millet and it is they again who come to buy our millet'. And, even when a Pullo apparently has made an effort to protect the crops in a field, a reason may be found to underscore his disregard for millet:

A Moaga farm head had finished harvesting his field. Some stacks of millet were still on the field, but he had given a Pullo permission to come and have his cattle graze the stubble. The Pullo came during the night and to protect the stacks on the field, he covered them with mats on which he lay down to rest. The following morning, Moose expressed their discontent: 'Even our children would not do such a thing. Sleeping on the millet, never before we saw such a thing'.

Although, then, Moose farmers do keep some cattle at their compounds and in some cases even own herds entrusted to Fulbe, they still depict themselves, and are depicted as such by Fulbe, as first and foremost millet farmers. In the same way, Fulbe herdsman all grow millet and a few other crops, but identify themselves, and are identified as such by Moose, as cattle herders. In spite of a certain tendency to uniformity of production systems, the specialization of each group has not disappeared. Cattle remain the domain of Fulbe, millet the domain of Moose. Both groups reinforce the mutual conceptions of one about the other in this respect. Fulbe maintain that, unlike Moose, they do not know 'how to farm well' and the fact that they often ask Moose friends to purchase millet for them is motivated by the fact that 'only those in the [Moaga] village are able to know who has millet to sell'. On the other hand, they assert that 'a Moaga does not know how to take care of a cow'. Moose do not hesitate to confirm the latter, often stressing that the herding of cattle never was part of their 'tradition' (*rogem miki*), in contrast to of course to millet farming.

For instance, Ousmane, who migrated to the Ivory Coast in the sixties and early seventies: 'At the time I travelled to the Ivory Coast we did not yet have clear ideas about cattle. We did not have the idea to buy cattle on our return to the village. We left behind the money we had earned on a previous trip and left again and, when we returned home again, the money we had left would still be there'.

It is maintained that, in the past, only Moose chiefs and their close relatives owned cattle. Other Moose would have discovered the profitability of cattle only recently. And, thus, it was asserted that, until recently, not only did Moose not keep cattle at their own compounds but they generally did not own cattle at all, i.e. they had no cattle entrusted to Fulbe either. Cattle raising and owning is presented as an innovation which took form over the last thirty to forty years. This was confirmed by Fulbe who maintain that 'at the time of their grandparents' Moose did not own cattle, or that only very few Moose did.

It seems plausible that cattle ownership has become more and more widespread among Moose since the end of colonial rule in 1960. The building up of property in cattle was facilitated by the monetary means to which Moose obtained access through migration to Ghana and the Ivory Coast and through the sale of crops like tobacco, cotton and groundnuts.

<sup>80</sup> Kogbila, Yiitaoore *tengbiiga*.

Moreover, in particular during the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s, the terms of trade for cattle in relation to millet deteriorated and forced Fulbe to sell relatively more animals in order to meet their subsistence needs in millet (cf. also Bonfiglioli 1990:261, de Lattre & Fell 1984:22). Kessler & Breman (1995:43-44) observe that it was mainly farmers with monetary means who were able to buy this livestock, and that certain farmers enlarged their herds enormously during the droughts (cf. also van der Graaf 1992:25). Whereas Marchal (1983:582) maintains that the droughts have been a factor in the withdrawal of cattle owned by Moose from Fulbe herds<sup>81</sup>, findings from Ziinoogo do not confirm this. As mentioned above, the secrecy surrounding cattle issues does not permit any exact figures, but it seems probable that Fulbe have sold cattle to Moose and then kept them in their herds, which gave them the opportunity to buy millet and continue to benefit from the milk production of these cattle. It should be noted, then, that the friendship relations between Moose and Fulbe in which cattle entrustment is involved may be characterized by a kind of debt bondage, as was also suggested by the following explanation of a Moaga farmer: 'Friendship between a Moaga and a Pullo is created through problems. If a Pullo needs money or millet, he can come and see you and you will help him and in this way he will not forget you'<sup>82</sup>, meaning that the Pullo will repay the debt by cattle which remain in the Pullo's herd.<sup>83</sup>

If, then, cattle ownership among Moose has increased significantly since independence, some caution seems appropriate with respect to the assertion that this cattle ownership constitutes a real innovation. Indeed, court records of the archives of the Cercle de Kaya show that Moose were involved, from the 1920s onwards, in conflicts with Fulbe over the entrustment of their cattle (cf. also above). It appears that at that time too, it was certainly not exceptional for Moose to buy a cow from a Pullo and then to leave it in the Pullo's herd. Although only in a very small minority of the cases in the court records were Moose chiefs involved, it is not possible to ascertain whether the other cases involved mainly close relatives of chiefs or not. Other colonial documents, however, suggest that the entrustment of cattle to Fulbe simply was a frequent practice among 'common' Moose too.

For instance, in 1940, the Commandant of Kaya calls for an improvement of animal husbandry in his Cercle and for Moose to be stimulated to raise cattle themselves: 'Pour la conservation et l'amélioration de l'élevage [il est proposé]

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<sup>81</sup> '[Des] propriétaires [moose] de bovins qui, auparavant, confiaient leurs bêtes aux Fulbe, ont été dans l'obligation de récupérer leur bien. [...] [Cela] est une conséquence directe de la sécheresse des années 1970. De nombreuses familles de pasteurs ont quitté la région et, en partant, ont rendu aux villageois les animaux dont ils assuraient la garde. Parmi les propriétaires, certains ont pu conclure de nouveaux contrats d'élevage mais ils représentent une minorité car les Fulbe n'ont pas pu (ou voulu) répondre à toutes les demandes. Dans ce refus, rentre en ligne la difficulté de prendre en charge de nouveaux animaux alors que le pâturage est de moins en moins accessible' (Marchal 1983:582). Bernardet (1984:221), on the other hand, mentions that, in order to be able to establish their own herd and constitute independent production units, Fulbe in the northern Ivory Coast sometimes incorporate cattle of other ethnic groups (notably Senoufo farmers) in their herds.

<sup>82</sup> Sambo, Kamsin *tengbiiga*.

<sup>83</sup> Such debt bondage was also suggested in friendship between Moose: 'A friend can do so many things for you, that you come to a point at which you no longer know how to thank him. You give him your daughter then for the friendship to grow' (Ousmane, Rumtenga Yiyooa; cf. also Piot 1991, who maintains, with respect to friendship among Kabre, that this relationship, characterized by alternating hierarchy, turns into an equal one only in its final stage, i.e. when wives are exchanged). Another example of friendship relations, this time crossing ethnic boundaries, characterized by debt is given by Baxter (1975:211), citing Barth (Nomads of South Persia, 47,98-100): '[The] most enduring relationships a Basseri appears to form, outside his immediate nuclear family, are a set of dyadic relationships with sedentary "friends". Relationships which are marked by extended and renewable, but always honoured, debt'.

une propagande intensive auprès des "Mossi" pour qu'ils deviennent éleveurs pour deux raisons: a) Le "Moaga" est plus actif que le Peulh, moins routinier et se fait "escroquer" par l'éleveur Peulh qui ne lui rend rarement le cheptel confié, b) Le "Moaga" est plus commerçant que le Peulh qui trop souvent conserve ses boeufs et vaches jusqu'à l'extrême vieillesse empêchant ainsi toutes transactions sur le bétail et privant le Cercle d'une source de gains appréciables'.<sup>84</sup>

Moreover, it is probable that Moose regularly kept a few head of cattle at their compound as well, at least in the early days of colonisation. The colonial administration required Moose chiefs to provide draught animals - donkeys and cattle ('boeufs porteurs') - to transport cash crop harvests (cotton, groundnut), and also cattle to supply the colonial armies with meat. The animals were confiscated from the Moose in the villages. The chiefs, in particular the *kombere* chiefs, are said to have taken advantage of their position and to have seized any cattle of commoners they could lay their hands on.<sup>85</sup> In Ziinoogo, it was stressed that the repressiveness of the colonial regime would have prevented common villagers from owning cattle, even if they had wanted to. Entrustment to Fulbe would not have been a solution at that time: 'Only chiefs could own cattle. If other Moose owned cattle, they were seized by the chiefs. And, even if cattle were entrusted with Fulbe, the chiefs knew ways to force the Moaga owner to reveal where they were'.<sup>86</sup>

What may have happened can be clarified somewhat by referring to the work of Marchal (1980), who demonstrates that there were at least two events in the early colonial period during which many cattle perished in the northern parts of the colony: the drought of 1913-1914 and the rinderpest epidemic of the mid-1920s. Herds were thus decimated and Marchal (1980:166) furthermore notes, in a comment on the period 1924-1932, that Moose farmers got rid of their remaining draught animals so that they no longer had to meet the requisitions of the administration. What seems to have happened then is that disasters of the early colonial period brought severe losses to cattle owners, both Moose and Fulbe, and that in any case Moose were not inclined to rebuild their cattle assets or that they even cut them back further. There appears reason to hypothesize that cattle ownership is not as strange to Moose, not as absent in 'what they found at birth' (*rogem miki*), as contemporary discourses make us believe. The political and economic circumstances of the colonial period made cattle unattractive to Moose, that is the least one can say, but it may well be that this unattractiveness was but an intermezzo. It is then only a relatively recent past which really fits contemporary discourses that stress the inextricable link between Moaga identity and millet farming, and the non-'traditionality' of cattle for Moose as opposed to the identification of Fulbe as cattle herdsmen.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Bilan de deux ans d'administration dans le Cercle de Kaya, Kaya, le 21 décembre 1940.

<sup>85</sup> Sometimes, *kombere* chiefs were disciplined for such abuses of power by the higher administration (cf., for instance, Lettre no.65/C du Commandant de Cercle de Kaya à l'Administrateur Supérieur de la Haute Côte d'Ivoire, Kaya, le 14 décembre 1945, concerning an inquiry on the abuses of power by the *kombere naaba* of Pissila, accused, among other things, of having illegitimately appropriated cattle from his subjects).

<sup>86</sup> Saalfo, Yiitaore *tengbiiga*.

<sup>87</sup> It is thus suggested that a tendency among Moose towards some kind of 'agro-pastoralism' may have occurred in the pre-colonial epoch as well. Interestingly, Burnham (1996) maintains that among Fulbe shifts from pastoralism to agro-pastoralism are neither exceptional in history nor necessarily definitive. Bonfiglioli (1990:265) argues that a transformation of production systems of both pastoralists and farmers towards agro-pastoralism should not be interpreted as being situated in some kind of linear, evolutionary process. Originally farming populations may at a certain moment return to solely farming or further develop animal husbandry, originally pastoral populations may return to pastoralism or engage more in farming, depending on both endogenous and exogenous factors.



### *Conflicts between Moose and Fulbe re-examined*

Processes of accumulation through which certain Moose have acquired more cattle, in a context of a growing scarcity of natural resources and a tendency towards increasing uniformity of production systems (agro-pastoralism), do not necessarily entail a decreasing importance of complementary economic relations between Moose and Fulbe. It can even be assumed that, because more Moose nowadays own more cattle than in the colonial epoch and because the majority of these cattle are entrusted to Fulbe, a multiplication of dyadic relations has taken place. These relations are labeled as friendly, and, although they are often initiated through economic interest, they transgress the economic domain and generally are wider and more enduring than the objects of economic transaction (cattle). Such a multiplication of friendly relations suggests a potential for an improvement of the relations between Moose and Fulbe, which, regarding the frequency of conflicts and also the publicly displayed character of conflicts (opposing two homogeneous ethnic groups) seems not to have been realized. A re-examination of conflicts between Moose and Fulbe will demonstrate that at least part of the explanation of the way conflicts are played out is to be found in tensions internal to the Moaga community, related to the differential accumulation processes which take place. Hence, it is the analysis of conflict between Moose and Fulbe, and the different possible interpretations, which will clarify the impact of differential accumulation processes, partly nurtured by earnings derived from migration, on social relations in a Moaga community.

Whereas the first interpretation of conflicts between Moose and Fulbe was based on 'public discourse', the re-interpretation which follows here has been made possible by the confidences of both Moose cattle owners, who entrusted their animals to Fulbe herdsmen, and those same Fulbe herdsmen. The following account is based on what was said by Lucien, son of Ousmane<sup>88</sup>, a Moaga cattle owner, and Ali, Ousmane's *yagenga*, when they visited me in Kaya (cf. also chapter 4, case2 and chapter 6).

We were talking about some of the village's old men and the reasons why they were widowers. In the middle of the conversation, Lucien suddenly changed the subject: 'You know, not everyone in Ziinoogo is on bad terms with the Fulbe. Nor is it true that we in Ziinoogo have no cattle with Fulbe. It is just that we have to hide our cattle from the *tengbiise*.<sup>89</sup> If the *tengbiise* found out about our cattle they might curse us and our cattle would perish or our harvests might fail'. I asked why they would do so and Lucien and Ali both responded: 'That is because they have no means themselves. It is their envy. There is Moore proverb saying that "a poor man has to have a heart" [*talg segdin n tal a suuri*]', meaning that a poor man has to be envious. If he has no heart he will not force himself to search and he will not be respected by those who have means'.

Lucien and Ali then took turns in telling stories about cattle, the need to hide them, and the particular position of Moose cattle-owners in conflicts with Fulbe herdsmen in the Ziinoogo village territory. Lucien: 'My father entrusted his cattle to Yero from Yalanga. One day, one of my father's cows fell ill and Yero came with the cow to Ziinoogo and tied her to a stake, this without having notified my father. My father got angry with Yero and told him never to do such a thing again because the others in the village were not to know about his cattle. My father brought the cow to Tamsin, at a place where other Fulbe are. I went there each day to bring her water and food, and after the cow had recovered we went to sell her so that the village would think that the affair [of us having cattle with Fulbe] had finished. However, with the money from the sale of the cow my father bought another cow which he again entrusted to Yero without others in the village being informed'.

'If Fulbe come to let cattle drink at the *bouli* of Ziinoogo, the people from Ziinoogo join together to chase the cattle away. Still, it happens that, among those chasing the cattle, there are men who know very well that among the cattle they are chasing some belong to them. Nevertheless, they participate as the others are very attentive: if they

<sup>88</sup> Ousmane and Lucien, Rumtenga Yiyoose.

<sup>89</sup> Lucien was referring in particular to the compounds of the Yiitaoore *tengbiise* Kogbila and Nomba.

notice somebody who does not participate they will think that that person has cattle among the animals they are chasing and they might curse that person. With respect to damages to crops caused by cattle things are similar. There too we participate in chasing cattle away even when some of the animals are ours. Still, we do not really beat the animals, we try to simulate. You remember the affair between Yero and Charles [cf. above]? Cattle herded by Yero's children had entered a field belonging to Charles and damaged the crops. There were animals of my father in that herd. At the judgment, which took place the following morning, my father was among the first to demand a compensation of 25,000 FCFA. He did so only because at such judgments it is important to do like the others, to show a common front with the village. The night following the judgment, Yero came to see my father who paid him and told him: "Here you have my contribution".<sup>90</sup> We call such nightly visits *yungkenda* ['nightly moves']'.

Finally, Lucien once again: 'It happens, during the rainy season, that we spend the night next to our fields in the "brousse" and that we notice a cattle herd nearby. If we see then that there are animals of ours in the herd we would not mind the herd entering our field, but we will not let it happen because of the others in the village with whom we have to show solidarity'.

When they left my house in Kaya that morning, Ali and Lucien made me understand that it was because we were in Kaya that it had been possible for them to speak frankly: 'It would not have been possible in Ziinoogo where the *tengbiise* are'.

In many respects, the above accounts speak for themselves. Conflicts over natural resources which apparently oppose Moose farmers and Fulbe herdsman are not what they seem. The way they are publicly staged is clearly related to *differential* accumulation processes among Moose and to the strain these processes put on social relations internal to the Moaga community.

On the one hand, a Moaga is not supposed to try and find out what his fellow-villagers possess, and even if he had found out he is not supposed to talk about it: 'One cannot know what is to be found in a rich man's house; one can only know what one has oneself, not what is with others' and 'The roof of the house covers what is in it'. When I asked if it would be possible to tell me who were the rich men of the village it was said: 'You want us to be beaten up? What if I told you that this or that man is rich and then a stranger went and visited him without being satisfied?'.<sup>91</sup> On the other hand, displaying one's wealth is equally not done and rather dangerous because, by doing so, one would very probably arouse another person's envy and risk being cursed: 'If you do not hide your wealth it will not be possible for you to get along with the people you live with'.<sup>92</sup> Cattle, wealth *par excellence*, has 'naturally' to be hidden then.

One farm head did not follow this 'rule' of not displaying wealth. This happened to be the Mané Saaba lineage head, who had a herd of more than one hundred cattle taken care of by his sons and kept in a paddock not far from his compound in Bagsin. He also had a lesser number of animals entrusted with a Pullo friend. The only explanation I could find for this ostentatious behaviour was the magical power this lineage elder held and the fear it inspired in others. As was mentioned earlier with respect to rights to farm land, Saaba are in a way outsiders within the village community. Moreover, they control fire, water and air, which makes their 'art' highly magical and prestigious (Ouedraogo 1995:214). Their position among Moose is one of 'free men possessing major symbolic power' (Martinelli 1992:38; cf. also Izard 1985:20). While in certain respects marginalized, Saaba also are respected and feared and, hence, relatively unassailable by ritual attack of others:

<sup>90</sup> The Moaga cattle owner is supposed to pay a sum proportional to the number of animals he owns in the herd.

<sup>91</sup> Yuma, Runtenga Yiyooga; Raboke, *nakombga* lineage elder.

<sup>92</sup> Lucien, Runtenga Yiyooga. Compare also with Comaroff & Comaroff (1992:138) who observe with respect to cattle owned by South African Tswana: 'Any display of stock wealth was believed to invite plunder and ritual attack'.

'Par les relations privilégiées qu'ils entretiennent avec les deux pouvoirs [politique et religieux], grâce à leur maîtrise du fer et du feu qui leur confèrent des pouvoirs particuliers sociaux et religieux, les forgerons (Saaba) occupent la position enviable d'intermédiaires, de médiateurs, et même d'intercesseurs écoutés et respectés de tous. Sur le plan social et religieux, cela se traduit par une relative liberté qui les dispense de la soumission à certains interdits et les place généralement au-dessus des règles courantes. De même, leurs positions politiques et religieuses font d'eux une entité sociale ambiguë: [...] le forgeron est craint et honoré, méprisé et recherché [...] (Badini 1994:19).

The herds of Fulbe constitute a very appropriate hiding place, not only because Fulbe are experienced and capable herdsmen and because the entrustment offers them a number of advantages too, but all the more so because they are generally esteemed to be reliable accomplices. Indeed, in spite of the hostile public discourse, employed by Moose cattle owners as well, the latter stress that their secret is safe with Fulbe: 'With a Pullo your secret is better protected than with Moose'.<sup>93</sup> To protect the secret, Fulbe herding cattle owned by Moose observe formalities, otherwise not deemed necessary by the direct parties involved:

'The Pullo herding our cattle always comes to ask permission before bringing his herd onto our fields to graze the stubble. That is not because we want him to do so, but because we want to show the other villagers that with us a Pullo has to ask such permission, and to avoid others getting the impression that we have cattle with Fulbe. No, the Fulbe will not betray us, they keep the secret'.<sup>94</sup>

Conversely, Fulbe equally count on their Moose friends to keep secret from others that the millet they bought is stored in the Moose's compounds: 'If you have your granary at your own hut everyone can see it, if you have it with Moose no one can'<sup>95</sup>; if other Fulbe happen to be present at the time a Pullo comes to fetch some millet from his stock with the Moaga, he and the Moaga may act as if the millet is being bought on credit.

This re-examination of conflicts between Moose and Fulbe, then, clearly demonstrates that a full understanding of the conflicts as well as of the way they are played out can only be obtained by taking into account differentiation within the Moaga community.<sup>96</sup> What happens cannot simply be reduced to a conflict over scarce natural resources opposing two ethnic groups. The latter was also explicitly articulated by, in particular, cattle-owning Moose:

'We, Moose and Fulbe, do insult one another, harshly even, but each knows of the other that these are only false insults, only words. In reality, we do understand one another very well. The insults serve to arouse no suspicion with the others'.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Lucien, Rumtenga Yiyooaga.

<sup>94</sup> Nasida, Kamsin *tengbiiga*.

<sup>95</sup> Sadjo, Péoukoy.

<sup>96</sup> A rather similar observation has been made by Little (1987:201), who, from an analysis focusing on herdsmen in Kenya, concluded that it would be inappropriate to analyze land use conflicts with an ethnic farmer-*versus*-herder model. He argued that to understand conflicts the differentiation processes internal to the herdsmen communities should be taken into account.

<sup>97</sup> Nasida, Kamsin *tengbiiga*.

*Egalitarian ethos and the masking of differentiation*

A concern to maintain egalitarian relations in West African rural communities has been pointed out before (cf. for example Meillassoux 1981:65). With respect to Moose, Kohler (1971:69-70), for example, suggested not only such a concern but also that relations were indeed more or less egalitarian from an economic point of view:

'Les contraintes qui empêchent les producteurs d'aller au-delà [d'un] minimum vital sont diverses. La collectivité exerce un contrôle permanent sur ses membres, pour s'opposer à ceux qui seraient tentés d'acquérir par la production agricole une situation économique privilégiée [...]. Même les inégalités structurelles des statuts sociaux ne créent habituellement pas d'importantes disparités économiques. [...] [L'uniformité] des besoins, des contraintes et des possibilités est caractéristique d'une économie régie par un certain égalitarisme économique'.

Kohler's contention was based on the observed 'homogeneous character of the agrarian system' and 'technological ignorance' of the Moose, and of the non-existence of farm land scarcity (those not having access to good land compensated for lesser yields by sowing larger areas). He did however discern signs of a forthcoming change: social and economic inequalities would arise through differential access to farm equipment (ploughs, carts) and credit, and, importantly, through a progressive monetarization and privatization of farm land (*ibidem*:70). In Ziinoogo, the role of credit is marginal and monetization of farm land non-existent. Differential access to farm equipment has occurred and does play a role in constituting differing incomes, but the motor of differentiation processes clearly is constituted by migration to the Ivory Coast and animal husbandry, not by farming in the village.

In the village, *accumulated* wealth is more or less exclusively constituted by cattle, for the larger part entrusted to Fulbe herdsman. From the above analysis of ethnic identities and conflicts between Moose and Fulbe, it follows that an attempt is made to maintain an appearance of equality within the Moaga community. The fact that accumulated wealth can be hidden away with Fulbe permits Moose 'to behave *as if* we were all equal here' (cf. Cohen 1985:33), thereby relying on a public discourse stressing the primary importance of the Moose's 'traditional' subsistence activity of millet farming. Above, this acting '*as if*' was straightforwardly expressed by Moose cattle owners. It should be added here that those who do not have cattle entrusted to Fulbe also know very well who among their fellow-villagers does, albeit not which cattle nor which numbers.<sup>98,99</sup>

Hence, it is important not to confuse a community's rhetoric of egalitarianism with a description of actual social relations (cf. *ibidem*:33). Success in migration enterprises in the Ivory Coast and animal husbandry, and to a lesser extent in trade and agriculture, has been transformed into cattle, an asset so durable and visible to all that 'pragmatic egalitarianism' would become impossible to uphold, if it were not for the possibility to entrust the larger part of it to Fulbe. By 'hiding' cattle with Fulbe, ostentatious display of socio-economic difference is avoided, socio-economic differentiation is covered up. The gatherings whereby a Pullo herdsman is 'put on trial', to establish a fine to be paid for crop damage, or the chasing of

<sup>98</sup> Probably this secrecy on the identity and numbers of entrusted cattle is what protects the cattle from curses.

<sup>99</sup> The acting '*as if*' is not limited to Fulbe herdsman and Moose farmers. The agricultural service's extensionist, for instance, said, with respect to conflicts between Moose and Fulbe: 'It is always as if a Moaga owner of millet confronts a Pullo owner of cattle. A Moaga owner of cattle will never show up, not even if the other Moaga involved and the Pullo kill one another. Surely, we know that Moose have cattle with Fulbe, but we act as if we don't know, because it is not our business'.

Fulbe-herded cattle from water points by the Moaga village community *as a whole*, can be interpreted in terms of a ritualized affirmation of the Moaga community's boundary, i.e. 'the mask presented to the outside world' (*ibidem*:74). In this way, Moose cattle owners stress their community membership. They indeed '[mask] [...] reality [thus] contributing to the maintenance of social relations in their customary form over the longer term' (*ibidem*:87). Lies and deception are thereby acknowledged devices for concealing the reality of intra-community differentiation, and inherent tensions become externalized. In other words, public discourse on Moose-Fulbe relations and conflicts appears to be what Murphy (1990:26) calls a 'consensual discourse', which, he argues, is a strategy for managing divisive interests. Public, 'consensual' discourse is expressed at what Giddens (1984:126) would call the 'front region'. The private comments of, in particular, Moose cattle owners, then, can be understood to be expressed at a 'back region', which, according to Giddens (*ibidem*), '[forms] a significant resource which both the powerful and the less powerful can utilize reflexively to sustain a psychological distancing between their own interpretations of social processes and those enjoined by "official" norms'. These comments do indeed come to the fore as a kind of 'cultural deconstruction' (Murphy 1990:33).

Ethnic discourse contrasting millet and cattle and stressing the occupational specialization of Moose and Fulbe, equally can be interpreted in terms of masking internal differentiation and, at the same time, as a boundary maintaining discourse. Whereas the structural bases of the Moaga village community's boundary are at least threatened by the fact that over the last three decades some Moose are accumulating cattle, thus accentuating differences within the community, this turning towards cattle has not been translated into a decrease in the degree of proclaimed ethnic specialization of Moose and Fulbe. What is found is a confirmation of Cohen's thesis that 'the symbolic expression of community and its boundaries increases in importance as the actual geo-social boundaries of the community are undermined, blurred or otherwise weakened' (*ibidem*:50). Stressing the non-'traditionality' of cattle for the Moaga way of life contributes to the legitimization of ethnic specialization. The above demonstrated contradiction with respect to the importance of cattle for Moose in the past would suggest that this non-'traditionality' is somehow 'invented': to legitimize present practices, a continuity is established with a *suitable* historic past (Hobsbawn 1983:1; cf. chapter 1). At the same time, then, ethnicity, as it is expressed today, would not have arisen from history conceived of as its 'objective source and cause' but from history understood as 'a struggle to appropriate the past' (Barth 1994:12-13).<sup>100</sup>

Whereas, as Cohen (1994:62) also points out, ethnicity thus has a definite appearance, its substance is rather indefinite. Indeed, although the Moose of Ziinoogo may be *publicly* joining in creating the appearance of discontinuity by embracing 'a few neatly contrasting diacritica' (Barth 1994:16), everyday practice shows rather a blurring of personal identities.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, although the boundary, 'as a matter of ideology, may be given dogmatic form', it may

<sup>100</sup> Ranger (1983:248-249) emphasizes the role of colonialism in immobilizing populations, re-enforcing ethnicity and imposing a greater rigidity of social definition. Under colonial rule, people were to be "returned" to their [invented] tribal identities; ethnicity was to be "restored" as the basis of association and organization'. Besides the fact that colonial policy discouraged Moose from engaging in cattle-keeping, it may have contributed in other ways also to a reinforcement of ethnic identities and specialization.

<sup>101</sup> In this respect, Barth (1994:30) cautions that one needs 'to recognize that the dichotomized cultural differences thus produced are vastly overstated in ethnic discourse, and so [...] the more pernicious myths of deep cultural cleavages [can be relegated] to the category where they belong: as formative myths that sustain a social organization of difference, but not as descriptions of the actual distribution of cultural stuff'.

appear as 'amorphous' and 'ambiguous' from the angle of individuals' experiences and consciousness (Cohen 1994:69-70). For instance, a Moaga explained that in 'the old days', things were clear-cut. If cattle entered the fields, it was obvious what had to be done. The cattle had to be chased away, and a fine had to be claimed from the Pullo herdsman to compensate for the lost crop. Such ethnic certainty no longer exists:

'The cause of problems nowadays is that Moose entrust so many cattle to Fulbe. Fulbe themselves have fewer cattle than before and the Moaga who entrusts cattle to a Pullo promises to contribute in case of damage caused by the herd entering a field. Even if the herdsman were a Moaga, how would you expect him to herd his cattle well if he can count on such support? Moreover, as it is possible that among the cattle entering our fields there are animals owned by our own kinsmen, it has become difficult for us to claim fines that cover the damage. And, not everyone does claim compensation. If cattle enter the field of a cattle owner, he can sell animals in order to compensate for the millet lost. If, however, cattle enter the field of someone who has no cattle himself, the compensation will not be sufficient to cover the damage'.<sup>102</sup>

And, indeed, Moose cattle owners are sometimes inclined to act contrary to their ethnically ascribed identity of millet farmers (cf. also the case above, where Lucien maintained that he and his father would not mind their cattle eating their millet, if it were not for the other villagers):

'If cattle, herded by a Pullo, enter my field and damage my millet, I do not take a fine, because at that moment we are among herdsman. Even if my whole field were destroyed, my animals would permit me to survive until the next year. Others then accuse me of taking sides with the Fulbe. You know, I was born to find agriculture<sup>103</sup> and although I own cattle now and herd goats and sheep, I cannot leave agriculture'.<sup>104</sup>

Hence, public discourse may express a certainty with respect to, on the one hand, the Moose's 'traditional' occupation, and, on the other hand, who is right and wrong in conflicts opposing Moose and Fulbe. But what is masked behind this is an uncertainty in both these respects, an uncertainty which is nurtured by ongoing differential accumulation processes and changing social relations both within the Moaga community and across its boundary.

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<sup>102</sup> Kogbila, *Yiitaore tengbiiga*.

<sup>103</sup> Again this is a reference to 'tradition', to 'what one finds when one is born' (*rogem miki*).

<sup>104</sup> Poynaaba, Moaga from Toece, farming on the Ziinoogo village territory. Bonfiglioli (1990:263) cites a number of examples of originally farming populations, among whom the engagement in livestock and the contacts with pastoralists did entail a 'cultural and linguistic reorientation', an 'ethnic conversion'.

## CHAPTER 9

### CONCLUSIONS

#### Geographic mobility and the opening up of new frontiers

The place where Tensyande settled at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century to found Ziinoogo is perceived of as having been 'empty', albeit on the fringes of the, at that time, expanding Moose kingdoms. The mobility processes which affected the subsequent development of the village are said to have been for some three centuries mainly centripetal. The earliest settlers, Yiyoose who had left Béléhédé in the north and who came to constitute the *tengbiise* section of the village population, were joined by groups of diverse origins who had fled adverse circumstances elsewhere (e.g. hunger, insecurity caused by raids). A hierarchy of firstcomers and latecomers (first seniority principle, principle of precedence) was thus established, crosscut by the arrival of the Moose chiefs (*nayiirdamba* and *nakombse*) in Ziinoogo, probably at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (cf. chapters 2 and 3). This hierarchy of status is essential to any understanding and legitimation both of how the land use pattern has been inscribed on the 'village territory' in the past and of how rights to land are distributed today. Clearly, Ziinoogo was a frontier settlement and its development shows many of the characteristics of frontier processes as outlined by Kopytoff (1987:16-17)<sup>1</sup>: movement towards the frontier in groups, perception of the settlement zone as an institutional vacuum, kin-group model of integration, authority legitimized by being a 'firstcomer' (authority over land derived from primacy of physical occupation, authority over people derived from primacy in the sense of having established social order).

By the time French colonial rule was imposed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Ziinoogo had been incorporated into the Moaga political structure, notably in the Piugtenga *kombere*. Yet, it continued to constitute a typical frontier location, putatively bordered by 'no-man's land' to the west and north, thus separated respectively from the Moose kingdoms Ratenga and Rissiam and the Fulbe chieftancies of Djelgodji. Colonial 'pacification' triggered population movement to the north, not only because the area became 'safe' but also because of the repressive character of colonial rule (cf. chapters 2 and 4). Although people's motivations to participate were various (the search for farm land, droughts, flight from labour and military recruitment, prevention of neighbouring villages from occupying land), the geographic mobility processes directed to the north resulted in the expansion of both the Piugtenga *kombere* and the physically inscribed territory under the ritual control of the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* (*tengpeelem*). Again, this must be understood to a large extent in terms of a frontier process, whereby the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* delegated ritual power over land to the first settlers in the north (e.g. Baskondo, Koglbaraogo) - maintaining direct ritual authority only

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<sup>1</sup> Kopytoff (1987:9) focuses on frontiers consisting of 'politically open areas nestling between organized societies but "internal" to the larger regions in which they are found - what might be called [...] "internal" or "interstitial frontier[s]"'.

over what nowadays is called the 'village territory' of Ziinoogo - and whereby new village chieftancies were established under the authority of the Piugtenga *kombere naaba* (e.g. Baskondo, Namissiguima). The first settlers in the north thus became, in practice, the local 'firstcomers', which supports Kopytoff's assertion that, however adverse the circumstances which urged people to move, for certain among them 'the trauma was offset by [...] reward - the achievement of self-realization by "being first"' (Kopytoff 1987:22). With respect to movements confined to the present 'village territory' which took place in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (i.e. towards the nearby frontier (Bagsin, Naba Bagre)), it was observed that certain 'latecomers' (e.g. people from Kuritgo, Balbou Saaba) were authorized by the Ziinoogo *tengsoba* to clear as yet 'virgin' land, from which the descendants of these 'latecomers' would again derive a certain claim to primacy, thus complicating the land use pattern (cf. chapters 3 and 4).

Interestingly, from observations made on Moose migration to the British Gold Coast, French colonial authorities became aware of the success of a 'frontier model' in starting off and sustaining a process of 'voluntary' migration by Moose to the Ivory Coast, viewing this as indispensable for the continuation of the latter's economic growth. Thus, they attempted in the 1930s to create 'relays' ('centres d'hébergement', 'villages de colonisation') where Moose migrants would be received by a Moaga chief and where they could expect to 'feel at home'. These attempts were relatively unsuccessful, all the more so because the second world war cut short the relatively liberal labour recruitment policy of the years 1937-39. The so-called 'débauchage', whereby Moose labourers, formally recruited to work on European enterprises in the Ivory Coast, deserted to work for Ivorian cocoa and coffee plantation owners, already suggested that the latter in one way or another offered more favourable conditions to Moose migrants than their European 'counterparts' did. In this respect, one important factor was that with Ivorian plantation owners the perspective to acquire control rights over land was present, among others in certain existing *abusa* sharecropping arrangements (cf. chapter 6). In other words, the possibility of opening new frontiers existed. Migrants from Ziinoogo succeeded in doing so only from the end of the 1960s onwards and especially in the 1980s and 1990s. The policy of the post-colonial Ivorian government actually encouraged migrants to go to pioneer zones by proclaiming that land would belong to 'him who exploits it'.

Just as the Ivorian government created new frontier opportunities, notably by providing for infrastructure in pioneer zones (Schwartz 1979), so the government of Burkina Faso, together with international and donor organizations, opened up new areas for occupation. Chapter 7 demonstrates how also in the case of the AVV settlement scheme and nearby 'spontaneous' settlements frontier processes came to be of overriding importance. Moose migrants created space for their frontiers by acquiring control rights over land most often from already resident population groups (Bissa, Gurnse) and subsequently partook of a process of social construction wherein the social organization of their place of origin clearly served as a template. They thereby inserted themselves into already existing hierarchies of 'firstcomers' and 'latecomers'. This again confirms yet another point of Kopytoff's frontier perspective, that is, that the cultural distance between new and old settlers on African interstitial or internal frontiers is apt to be small, thus allowing for migrants to deal with already present populations 'in terms of common cultural understandings' (Kopytoff 1987:27).

What comes strikingly to the fore from all the foregoing chapters is that the movement of an individual or a group towards some other place almost never entailed a definitive break with those who remained behind. Although, in some instances, the relationship between



migrants and their 'home' might, as it were, be held in reserve, it will often be resurrected again later (cf. Kopytoff 1987:19). For example, a migrant may 'disappear' for several years into the Ivory Coast, but nearly always will show up again on the village scene, be it as a successful plantation owner or as a 'failed' migrant or otherwise. Whenever migrants or a migrating group obtained rights to land somewhere else, these rights were extended to their kinsmen. Thus, I argued that men in Ziinoogo have potential access to land situated within a geographically dispersed 'pool of territories', controlled to a greater or lesser extent by members of their 'corporate kin group', i.e. their *yiiri*. This idea of a 'pool of territories' also embraces the land controlled by a man's mother's brothers (cf. chapter 5).

Not only, then, did and does migration of individuals or groups seldom entail a definitive break with 'home' (see also the continuation of ties through marriage, ritual, remittances, and labour pooling), the movements themselves seldom or are definitive either. Indeed, migrants tend to return 'home' eventually. 'Home', however, is a rather relative notion and might be best understood in relation to the *yiiri* to which a migrant belongs. The *yiiri* is geographically dispersed over places where it is more or less 'rooted' or 'autochthonized', where it has greater or lesser control over land.<sup>2</sup> In this respect, the frontier perspective is illuminating for it helps one to understand not only how in the past rights to land were obtained and control over land progressively extended (in the sense of both the area controlled and the degree of control), but also how in present-day migration rights to land are acquired and processes of autochthonization initiated and pursued. Although control over land at a particular moment may be vested in a specific individual, that is the elder of a *yiiri* at a particular place, he nevertheless acts only as the custodian of a territory to which other members of the *yiiri* also have use rights, regardless of whether they are actually living on the territory or not. This implies also that the maintenance or extension of control over land is not confined to the initial settlers and their direct descendants. It may also be pursued by other members of the *yiiri*. Hence we can understand how during their lives people spend periods at several places, at each place having a right to farm land dependent on their position within the 'hierarchy of choice' prevailing at each particular place (cf. chapter 4). Of course, the fact of having potential access to a *yiiri*'s pool of territories only explains the existence of a variety of possible destinations for each actor. Whether and where an actor actually moves to depends on a host of other factors, such as, for instance, the actor's motivation (pursuit of a monetary income, adventure, the search for good farm land, consolidation of one's wealth), climatological (droughts) and social circumstances (misfortune, 'theft' of a woman, succession to office), the appeal which is made on the actor by others (e.g. elder brother or mother's brother).

The general picture outlined above has to be put in perspective somewhat, especially with regard to migration to the Ivory Coast. First, although it is not possible, from the findings of the present study, to be conclusive regarding land bought in the Ivory Coast, it may well be that what nowadays is the private property of the buyer will be transformed into corporate property in the future. Still, the kin group involved will probably be more restricted than the *yiiri*. The same might be true for the land in the AVV scheme for which private titles

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<sup>2</sup> What is confirmed here is the relative indifference of 'Africans' to rootedness in physical space, together with an indifference to a permanent attachment to a particular place' (Kopytoff 1987:22). This relativity does not mean that there would be no place which is understood to be more 'home' than others. For, indeed, one might say that such a place is constituted by the place where a kin group's ancestor shrines are kept. As however also became apparent in chapters 3 and 4 (in particular with respect to Kuritgo/Namissiguima), ancestor shrines can be moved from one place to another, i.e. 'the rootedness of one's own social structure' can be carried from one place to another (*ibidem*:23).

are issued (cf. chapter 7). The latter of course is an expression of the fact that the outcome of the social construction in which migrants engage is necessarily affected by the circumstances they encounter. The 'alien' private property regime has to be accommodated. Relatively close by, to the north of Ziinoogo, it was possible to mould social organization in newly established villages more or less in accordance with the model brought from 'home'. This was already more difficult in the region further north, formerly controlled by Fulbe (e.g. Bottogo). 'Spontaneous' migrants to the west and to the south, for their part, had to submit to the ritual authority over land held by autochthonous earth priests (respectively Samo and Gurunse), but, at least in a number of cases, they were granted relatively extensive control rights which permitted them to receive other migrants, most often kinsmen. However, here too I demonstrated that frontiers may be closed down, when autochthonous population groups 'push back' Moose migrants. Second, the places where kinsmen have obtained control over land do not exhaust possible destinations for migration, in particular to the Ivory Coast. Work also is sought with Ivorian and non-related Moose employers, for instance under contract labour or *abusa* arrangements on plantations, or land is rented to cultivate rice. Nevertheless, the fact that migration to the Ivory Coast nowadays is often understood to fit into a 'career perspective' (cf. chapter 6) - according to which the acquisition of a plantation is the pinnacle of one's career - justifies the general picture presented here.

## Geographic mobility, neighbourhood and locality

The above discussion of geographic mobility in terms of a frontier perspective provides mostly an outward view. It explains how past geographic mobility processes affected present ones - in the sense that a number of 'relays' have been established as possible destinations - and how present processes are likely to affect future ones. Also, the idea of migrants initiating or pursuing a process of autochthonization, not so much for themselves as individuals but as members of a wider kin group, helps to explain some of the dynamics of geographic mobility (notably, no break with the 'home' base, non-permanence of migration, kinsmen relieving one another). The present section aims to provide an inward view of the interplay between geographic mobility and land use, that is looking inwardly to the research location. This raises the following question: how are processes of geographic mobility related to changes in social life and, in particular, to land use practice at one particular place, namely the village of Ziinoogo?

It is useful, then, to return once again to Appadurai's conceptualization of neighbourhood and locality (cf. chapter 1). Ziinoogo can be conceived of as a neighbourhood, a situated community, which constitutes the context in which locality is produced - that is, as an autonomous neighbourhood of interpretation, value and material practice (Appadurai 1995:211). Especially in chapters 3 and 4 it stands out how the land use pattern inscribed in the village territory - an aspect of the spatial production of locality - is continuously produced, reproduced and transformed, related dialectically to the [re]production of locality as 'a structure of feeling, a property of social life and an ideology of situated community'. Far from being mechanically reproduced, the land use pattern and related tenure arrangements are the object of struggle. In the process of their reproduction actors' social identities in the setting of the neighbourhood (the village) are produced and reproduced as well. Geographic mobility of fields and people was demonstrated to be crucial in these processes.

However, it would be wrong to identify a discrete population with the single, bounded space of the 'neighbourhood' Ziinoogo (cf. also Rouse 1991:10). Actors' lives are far from being confined to this one neighbourhood. People have moved and continue to move in and out for shorter and longer periods. As a matter of fact, during their lives, they participate in locality-producing activities in a wide set of contexts, at different, geographically dispersed places. There seems to exist, then, a dialectical tension between, on the one hand, geographic mobility and the related deterritorialization, and, on the other hand, the production of locality. Geographic mobility as such destabilizes locality production at the place of departure and may be symptomatic of some crisis. But, on the other hand, geographic mobility entails locality-producing activities at the place of destination and may be supportive of locality-producing activities at the place of departure.

Paraphrasing Appadurai's example on Yanomami villages (*ibidem*:210-211), the present study has also demonstrated how the village of Ziinoogo 'through [its] actions, preoccupations and strategies, actually [produced] a wider set of contexts for [itself]'. It is in this sense that the above mentioned 'relays' can be understood as well, namely as contexts (themselves neighbourhoods) produced by a particular neighbourhood (Ziinoogo). Next there are also neighbourhoods encountered and the context-producing activities of these encountered neighbourhoods (for instance, Fulbe settlements, neighbouring villages in Ratenga, autochthonous villages in the south and west of Burkina Faso and in the Ivory Coast), and the context-producing activities of larger-scale social formations, notably the nation state (e.g. the AVV in the south of Burkina Faso, the Ivorian government in pioneer zones) which shape the outcome of a particular neighbourhood's context- and locality-producing activities.

From the perspective of the inhabitants of Ziinoogo, especially those neighbourhoods in whose production their ancestors and/or living kinsmen have participated and still participate constitute 'the set of possible lives' (cf. Appadurai 1991:198) they are readily able to consider for themselves. Thus, members of the *yiiri* of Kuritgo, for instance, living today in Ziinoogo can imagine themselves in the future at diverse places such as Koglbaraogo and Namissiguima in the north, Kaibo or Tanbaongo in the south of Burkina Faso, or a plantation in the Ivory Coast (cf. a.o. chapters 6 and 7). This 'imaginability' depends, however, on, for instance, an actor's marital status or his economic and social situation (cf. chapters 4, 6 and 7). It seems self-evident that the mere existence of this set of possible lives and the evaluation of these possibilities, through the migration of actors or of people they know, affect actors' views of the smaller and larger world around them. Consequently, actors' understandings of the village Ziinoogo both as a neighbourhood and as a locality change as well (since neighbourhood and locality are always produced 'from, against, in spite of, and in relation to' (Appadurai 1995:209)). This may be illustrated, firstly, by the occupation of land to the north of Ziinoogo in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This entailed an expansion of the social space of the village's inhabitants - an expansion which continues to be reproduced today through, for instance, movements of actors between different villages and numerous exchanges (social, ritual and economic) - and also reinforced the identification of Ziinoogo as a Piugtenga village, i.e. of *tengbiise* 'firstcomers' with 'ruling' *nakombse*.

Migration to the Ivory Coast provides a second illustration. Since the early years of French colonial rule, the Ivory Coast has constituted a 'possible life' for inhabitants of Ziinoogo. For many years, however, it was a feared possibility and many were those who preferred to 'escape' to the north or to the Gold Coast, to hide from colonial exactions, to earn cash and sometimes to create new 'relays' for their kinsmen. Colonial policy regarding the

recruitment of labour for the Ivory Coast, like other colonial policies (e.g. forced cotton production), had a profoundly disruptive effect on neighbourhoods and localities like Ziinoogo, to such an extent that, at certain times, they saw their reproductive capacity undermined (see Ziinoogo's depopulation in the 1930s, the antagonism between elders and youngsters, and the extensification of land use, technical regression and 'banalization' of cropping techniques, reported in other studies, which probably also occurred in Ziinoogo). After the abolition of forced labour, migration to the Ivory Coast came to signify for youngsters, next to the pursuit of a monetary income, adventure and the expression of one's 'youthfulness', while elders continued to view it with fear or contempt. Today too, youngsters' first migrations are still perceived as youthful adventures. Moreover, migration has come to constitute an element of a man's education, an element of locality in Ziinoogo to be reproduced. Concurrently with the way in which the perception of migration to the Ivory Coast changed - notably the idea that nowadays it is possible for migrants to pursue a 'career' in the Ivory Coast - Ziinoogo underwent changes as a neighbourhood, as a social form that is. This is reflected by the fact that it is now fairly well accepted that married men and women continue to migrate, and in the way labour mobilization for farm enterprises at home and migration enterprises are organized.

Migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso and, in particular, to the Ivory Coast has, however, also added to the 'possible lives' which may be lived in Ziinoogo itself. 'Within' the village, different lives are imaginable and also realized depending on whether and to what extent wealth is accumulated. Earnings derived from migration to the Ivory Coast and, to a lesser extent, from migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso, have an important part to play in differential accumulation at the level of the village (cf. chapter 8). Differential accumulation of wealth is mainly related to livestock, especially cattle. Although in practice the relative importance of livestock *versus* agriculture varies widely from one farm to the next, one might phrase the conclusions of chapter 8 in yet another way: namely, that in the village one has the 'possibility' of a life in which millet cultivation is central, and, on the other hand, of a life in which cattle is central. Indeed, it seems justified to say that on the front stage of social life in the village millet cultivation appears as central to all, i.e. public discourse suggests the existence of only one 'possible life'. In contrast, the life of cattle (strongly associated with accumulation processes) is almost always confined to the backstage. Hence, the impact on neighbourhood and locality of differential accumulation processes and related 'possible lives' remains somewhat ambiguous. On the one hand, it was demonstrated that on the front stage Ziinoogo's locality as distinct and intrinsically different from the neighbouring Fulbe localities is re-asserted time and again. Thus, locality is unanimously defended on the front stage against other Fulbe neighbourhoods. The boundary is re-asserted and contributes to a 'sense of belonging, of identity', among the Moose living in Ziinoogo (cf. Cohen 1985:52-53). At the same time, Fulbe localities are distanced. When, on the other hand, backstage commentaries are taken into account, the distance between Fulbe and Moaga localities appears to a large degree to amount to 'conceptual distance, which is elaborated and embellished to maintain the authentic distinctiveness [of the Moaga locality]' (cf. *ibidem*:37). Indeed, the fact that cattle are hidden among neighbouring Fulbe has facilitated alliances between Moose and Fulbe and the recognition of certain common interests and mutual trust - all relegated to the backstage, where at the same time Ziinoogo's internal cleavages are stressed.

## Geographic mobility, land tenure arrangements and land use intensification

### *Dynamics and security of tenure, and extensification*

Each of the chapters of this book has convincingly shown that geographic mobility constitutes an essential characteristic of actors' past and present social, economic and political strategies. People move in search of a monetary income or better farm land or both (notably migration to the south and west of Burkina Faso and to the Ivory Coast), which in some instances constitutes a 'survival' strategy (escaping hunger and drought in the north, earning money for the purchase of food in the event of bad harvests). Others move because of social tensions generated at the place of departure - sometimes manifesting themselves through illness and death. Also, as explained, migration to the Ivory Coast has come to be perceived of as an essential element of a young man's education. Elders, on the other hand, may see themselves obliged to move when they accede, or are close to acceding, to certain [ritual] offices (notably, *buudkasma*). Finally, movements can often also be interpreted in terms of the expansion or contraction of political spheres of influence of, for instance, the *kombere*, the village (*tengsoba*, village chief), a *yiiri*. Concurrently, actors' movements must be understood within the context of the different social entities to which they simultaneously belong (e.g. farm, compound, ward, village, *yiiri*).

In practice, then, it is often difficult to distinguish between the different motivations involved in processes of geographic mobility. Still, one important general point must be emphasized: the pursuit of strategies which necessitate actors' movements is facilitated - if not made possible in the first place - by the nature of prevailing land tenure arrangements - whose production, reproduction and transformation can only be understood if previous geographic mobility processes are taken into account. Not only are those who leave a particular place most often ensured access to land when they eventually return, i.e. their rights to land 'at home' do not lapse and give long-term social security (cf. von Benda-Beckmann *et al.* 1988:13-14), but migrants often have certain rights to land at places where they move to, be it with their mother's brothers, with members of their *yiiri* who control land in another ward, another nearby village or further away in the west or south of Burkina Faso. In many cases, previous movements of kinsmen have contributed to the increase in the number of options open to any one actor obliged or desiring to move. Indeed, one cannot overestimate the importance of the existence of these options in a context of precarious, and often adverse, economic, ecological and climatic circumstances which characterize life in villages like Ziinoogo.

Land tenure arrangements are such that it is relatively easy both to leave a place without losing one's rights to land and to insert oneself into another place. The reverse side of this is that rights to land are continuously shifting and merging. Particular plots are often subjected to several claims simultaneously, thus giving rise to frequent strife at different levels of society (between individuals, compounds, lineage segments, and villages). Moreover, it should not be forgotten that in no way do land tenure arrangements guarantee equity with respect to access to land. While in principle all residents at a particular place are entitled to *sufficient* farm land to provide for their subsistence, certain actors are more privileged than others in the use of more fertile or more humid land. The second case in chapter 4 provides a clear example of how actors' successful farm enterprises may be frustrated by other actors who occupy a higher position in the prevailing 'hierarchy of choice'.

Finally, just as they have contributed to the progressive expansion of actors' geographical, social and economic space, so geographic mobility has been instrumental in the maintenance of extensive land use practices. New frontiers have been opened up, thus removing in part the pressure on land at the place of origin.

### *Legislation and the dynamics of prevailing land tenure arrangements*

These three points - namely that rights to land are not univocally defined, are unequally distributed and are conducive to extensive land use practices - are exactly the arguments put forward by advocates of legislation allowing for the registration of land titles (cf. also Sawadogo 1996:27). As explained in chapter 1, there exists at present a strong tendency, notably among important donor organizations and countries (cf. Sawadogo 1994:165), to force through legislation which would allow for the introduction of individual private land titling. The establishment of a land register, by which property titles are allocated for each parcel, however appears to constitute a policy option that provides few or no links with prevailing land tenure arrangements and their dynamics. Although in the region where I did research a 'densification' of land use clearly took place, sometimes even to the extent that certain plots can be considered 'permanently' cultivated, this did not entail some kind of pseudo-private property system (cf. chapter 4). 'Permanent' cultivation of a plot, for that matter, does not mean that the plot is used by the same actor all the time, nor solely by members of one and the same smaller or larger kin group, nor does it imply that control of that plot is univocally associated with one individual or group. Flexibility and the merging and shifting of rights have remained a defining characteristic of land tenure arrangements - flexibility, merging and shifting allowing for and at the same time fuelled by diverse processes of geographic mobility. Moreover, an important assumption underlying private titling programmes is that land constitutes essentially a productive resource to be allocated optimally through the market. Thus, the embeddedness of prevailing land tenure arrangements in ecological, social, cultural and political life tends to be ignored. The present research in fact underlines once more that land should not be viewed simply as a productive resource. That is, in Bourdieu's terms, rights to land do not solely provide actors with economic capital. They may also be converted into symbolic capital, for example, in intra- and inter-village strife (cf. Bourdieu 1991).

The application of legislation establishing private property rights runs the risk, then, of being highly disruptive. It entails an undue rigidity, obstructing, among other things, the risk-averting strategies currently pursued by farmers, and endangering the existence of an important social security mechanism for migrants. Furthermore, the implementation of such legislation would probably prove to be extremely difficult to realize, and this not only because of the high costs involved. As Shipton & Goheen (1992:316) observe, the embeddedness of land tenure arrangements in in ecological, social, cultural and political life 'means that one tenure regime can seldom be legislated away in favour of another'. Just as in other West African countries, an official, 'modern' land legislation exists in Burkina Faso, but is only partially or ambiguously applied (cf. also Kessler & Breman 1995:36).

Hesseling & Mathieu (1986:311-312) argue that this [partial] non-application should be understood, not in terms of the laws' inadequacies nor of the lack of means to apply them, but as a transitory phenomenon necessary to realize land reform in practice: even if not applied, the law nevertheless exists and is present and would encourage land users to adopt

'behaviours of anticipation', i.e. to position themselves with respect to a law of which 'they know that the future application is inevitable'. The existence but non-application of land tenure legislation would thus allow for a 'soft and adapted transition through which this law enters into social "habits"' (*ibidem*:317-318):

'Paradoxalement cette mutation ne se réalise donc pas directement comme une application de la loi, mais grâce à "l'absence" relative de la loi ou grâce à son application partielle, floue, ambiguë. Ainsi, beaucoup plus que l'application stricte de dispositions réglementaires, l'effet principal des lois et réformes foncières - appliquées ou non - est peut-être de mettre en branle cette mutation sociale globale au terme de laquelle la terre sera définie comme facteur d'une production marchande' (*ibidem*:317, emphasis added).

It seems to me that Hesselting & Mathieu are probably too 'optimistic'. It is difficult to conceive of how the mere presence of a non-applied law could persuade land users to adopt behaviour which in many respects would risk being in conflict with otherwise still vital strategies of risk aversion, such as the sowing of 'security fields' or migration with the guaranteed possibility of return.

It has been observed that in many contexts private property regimes have evolved in response to technological improvements and intensification of land use, commercialization of agricultural produce and the emergence of agricultural markets, and population pressure (cf. Lambert & Sindzingre 1995:107). But it would be all too easy to suppose that the reverse might also be true, that is that intensification of land use practice results from the establishment of a private property regime. For land use intensification to occur - which supposes, among other things, increases of labour and capital investments in agriculture - agriculture would first have to be perceived of as a profitable activity, and preferably more profitable than migration, which presently is not the case. Still, the extensive land use practices prevailing at present both in out-migration zones like the north-central region and in immigration zones like the south and west, do constitute a problem which urgently requires adequate policy. Regarding the former, one main concern is that the well-being, and even survival, of its population depends all too heavily on migration enterprises in the south and west of Burkina Faso and, in particular, in the Ivory Coast. The continuity of these migration enterprises in the near and distant future is however by no means guaranteed, dependent as it is on economic and social developments at the places of destination (e.g. economic circumstances and political developments with respect to the position of non-nationals in the Ivory Coast, attitudes of 'autochthonous' population groups in the south and west of Burkina Faso and developments in Burkina Faso's internal migration policy).<sup>3</sup> Moreover, since migration does not absorb population growth completely and the expansion of the cultivated areas tends to pace ahead of population growth, another problem is bound to become more and more pressing in the north-central region, that is, the relationship between pastoral and agricultural activities and Fulbe rights to natural resources (cf. below). In the south and west of Burkina Faso - with its resettlement schemes and 'spontaneous' migration flows - the situation seems compounded by the fact that in certain schemes 'modern' legislation is effectively implemented. This adds to confusion and conflicts, among others between migrant and autochthonous farmers.

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Blaikie & Brookfield (1987:14) who observed: 'Land degradation can affect, presumably adversely, the options of people living in the afflicted area, and future generations. However, if these future generations have the option of migrating elsewhere the issue becomes hypothetical. If, on the other hand, they do not have this option [...] then the impact of degradation of a region on the present population becomes a very real question for analysis'.

Finding solutions to these complex problems is bound to be extremely difficult, as several sensitive issues are involved: for instance, the position of 'customary' office holders such as chiefs and earth priests, the relations between ethnic groups, and rights to land of women and minority groups such as blacksmiths and Fulbe. To conclude this section, I confine myself to citing with approval Mathieu (1993:444-446). He argues for land tenure legislation which is sufficiently broad and flexible to take account of specific local situations and which proceeds by 'institutional experiment'.<sup>4</sup> Private property regimes are, then, not a necessary outcome, though they should not be *a priori* excluded. They may be suitable within the context of, for instance, irrigated agricultural settlement schemes or peri-urban zones, but Mathieu emphasizes that they are neither indispensable, nor desirable nor even realisable in the foreseeable future. Finally, he stresses that legislation on land tenure cannot be successfully developed if not accompanied by a coherent agricultural and development policy. Only such a broad and open-minded approach would allow for the preservation of a certain flexibility of land tenure arrangements, essential to risk aversion and social security in current circumstances, and for the establishment of a climate in which investments in agriculture might be stimulated.

## **The articulation of agriculture and animal husbandry and inter-ethnic relations**

### ***The mixed-farming model***

An open-minded approach to land tenure arrangements and reform is particularly important if rights of pastoral groups are to be taken into account. Various authors have observed (e.g. Kessler & Breman 1995:36-37, van Zutphen 1991:121) that the formal appropriation of land by the state, which acknowledges only use rights for local land users, has been largely detrimental to pastoralists and favourable to farming populations. According to Kessler & Breman (1995:37), this is because the areas cultivated by the latter correspond to 'well defined boundaries' and to 'precise use rights', contrary to the use rights with an 'open character' that pertain to grazing lands. Hence, it is far from clear how private land titling programmes would accommodate the rights of pastoralists. That these rights tend to be marginalized in discussions about land reform is not surprising, since in prevailing development paradigms, that advocate private land titling in order to stimulate land use intensification, [extensive] pastoral land use seems to have no right to exist. We can understand this better if we take a closer look at how the articulation of agriculture and animal husbandry is conceived.

Since the 1940s, one specific mode of articulation has been promoted, first by scientists and administrators during French colonial rule (Gervais 1990:140, Labouret 1941:235-237), and later on, after independence, also by government services and development agencies. According to this, so-called mixed-farming model, the integration of agriculture and animal husbandry - and the intensification of both - on the level of individual farms (implicitly considered as autonomous socio-economic entities comparable to European

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. also von Benda-Beckmann (1991:87), where it is argued that 'new regulations should be the outcome of (rather than the precondition for) local level interactions concerning the control and use of natural resources'.



farming enterprises) constitutes the foundation of agricultural and economic progress (Landais & Lhoste 1990:218-220). This integration - also perceived of as the key to the development of tropical animal husbandry - is to be realized through the introduction of fodder crops in cropping cycles, plough agriculture and the use of manure (cf. also van Raay 1975:136). One important expected result of the introduction of such mixed farming, attempted by numerous development projects, is, in addition to the transformation of extensive and itinerant agriculture into intensive and fixed patterns (Landais & Lhoste 1990:220), the sedentarization of pastoralists and the stabling of their livestock (cf., for instance, Bonfils 1987:68, Kessler & Breman 1995:37, van Zutphen 1991:122).

Although this mixed-farming model has been criticized from its first formulation, among other things for ignoring the 'professional specialization' of many ethnic groups and, more generally, for not taking into account the different forms that the relations between agriculture and animal husbandry take locally, and although attempts to implement it in practice have been characterized by failures, it nevertheless was progressively elaborated and refined (Landais & Lhoste 1990:218-219). According to Landais & Lhoste, the mixed-farming model has taken the proportions of a 'technocratic myth'. It nevertheless continues to inform development projects and government policies, notably, in the region where I carried out research, in the national 'fight against desertification' and the LUCODEB-project in the provinces of Sanmatenga, Passoré and Yatenga (van Zutphen 1991). Likewise, the 'Gestion de Terroirs' approach often in practice focuses heavily on intervention at the level of individual farms, thereby repeating the themes so characteristic of the mixed-farming model (cf. below).

### *Multi-level articulation of agriculture and animal husbandry*

In chapter 8, it was demonstrated that, although Moose are involved in animal husbandry, the integration of livestock and agriculture at the level of the farm remains limited. It was also pointed out that the production specializations of Moose and Fulbe continue to mark their interrelations. My research firstly highlighted, as do Landais & Lhoste (1990:228) for the wider Soudano Sahelian region, that the frequent practice of entrustment of livestock makes it difficult to conceive of an exact correspondence between 'farm' and 'livestock effectively controlled by the farm', not only because of the physical dissociation of both, but also because of the fact that decision making with respect to the management of livestock tends to be dispersed. Secondly, it was shown that the articulation of cattle raising and agriculture does not, for the greater part, take place at the level of individual farms but mostly across the ethnic boundary between Moose and Fulbe. While economic, ecological and climatological conditions do encourage Moose 'to go into cattle' (van Zutphen 1991:119), in order to add to their monetary incomes (profitability of cattle), to accumulate wealth and to secure their production systems through diversification (Landais & Lhoste 1990:225-226), *social and cultural* conditions explain the particular ways in which they do so.

As revealed in chapter 8, earnings from migration enterprises in the Ivory Coast are an important source of differential patterns of accumulation of cattle among Moose in Ziinoogo. This happens in such a way that, at the level of farms, accumulation of wealth (cattle) remains largely dissociated from agricultural production, because those Moose who acquire cattle entrust them for the larger part to Fulbe neighbours (cf. also Landais & Lhoste 1990:227). Two major characteristics of this, for the articulation of cattle raising and agriculture, crucial

entrustment system are, first, secrecy, and second, particularized friendship relations across the ethnic boundary. At the same time, the relations both between cattle raising and agriculture and between Fulbe and Moose are expressed in public discourse as antagonistic and conflict-ridden. Thus, the fact that migrants as well as elders who remain behind prefer to invest incomes and remittances in cattle, progressively reinforces the importance of cattle raising in particular and animal husbandry in general (cf. also Landais & Lhoste 1990:227). Apart from possible technical impediments related to the application of the mixed-farming model (discussed by Landais & Lhoste 1990:221-223), the fact that cattle are entrusted to Fulbe, however, has obstructed further integration of cattle and agriculture at farm level among Moose, notwithstanding the 'densification' of both population and fields. Once more, it should be stressed that public antagonistic discourse in no way provides an adequate picture of the diversity of relations between Moose and Fulbe as they exist in practice. This discourse has to be understood in terms of the re-assertion of the symbolic boundary of the Moaga community, the masking of tensions and uncertainties caused by differential accumulation within the community, and by changing social relations both within the Moaga community and across its boundaries.

The problem of increasing competition over scarce natural resources is nevertheless very real. However, local developments - which with respect to inter-ethnic relations are to an extent contradictory - call for a cautious approach. A case in point is the way in which, for instance, certain interventions in the domain of water resources (cf. chapter 4, case 4) have been turned locally into issues of inter-ethnic strife.<sup>5</sup> If policy followed problem assessment as it is staged locally in public discourse, it would be bound to start from an analysis emphasizing inter-group rather than intra-group differences and conflicts, and thus risk ending up by proposing measures which would further differentiate Moose and Fulbe. Little (1987:195) cites the example of zonal policy in Niger which does not permit cultivation above a certain latitude. Concluding his analysis of land use conflicts in Kenya, involving farmers and herdsman, he observes that solutions to conflicts 'are no less straightforward than [they] are the causes of those conflicts. [...] [They] must be perceived in a historical context and should be evaluated at several different levels' (*ibidem*:207). Landais & Lhoste (1990:228-230) likewise argue for a multi-level approach, that stresses that land use problems, especially those concerning the articulation of agriculture and animal husbandry, must be analyzed and tackled simultaneously at the level of the farm, the village and its territory, the small region, etc.

### ***Gestion de Terroirs : a multi-level approach?***

The mixed-farming model, then, obviously offers a very limited perspective due to its exclusive focus on the farm level: it bypasses and disregards the importance of inter-ethnic relations for the management of cattle in particular and of natural resources in general. Hence it is not able to grasp precisely where the articulation of agriculture and animal husbandry occurs and thus where it might be strengthened.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. also von Benda-Beckmann (1991:76), who points to the fact that new normative regulations, generated by development projects for target groups ('project law'), may add locally to the complexity of and confusion regarding rights to natural resources.

Because of its multi-levelled stance, the 'Gestion de Terroirs' approach does seem to constitute a break with earlier development approaches. Although the approaches usually designated by 'Gestion de Terroirs' are in practice rather diverse (cf. Ouédraogo & Faure 1993), a critical assessment of some common features nevertheless seems possible and is attempted here, once again with particular reference to the issue of articulation of agriculture and animal husbandry. That 'Gestion de Terroirs' can be understood to be multi-levelled is mainly because it devotes part of its analysis and intervention to the level of the 'village territory', not only the farm level. The national programme of 'Gestion de Terroirs'<sup>6</sup>, initiated in 1986, provides for the establishment of provincial committees<sup>7</sup>, charged with the elaboration and implementation of provincial land use schemes and in which both government services and non-governmental organizations are supposed to take part. However, in many provinces these are not operative (Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:38).

In its analysis of land use problems, the 'Gestion de Terroirs' approach continues to focus heavily on individual farm enterprises, conceived of as autonomous, purely technical entities. Thus, it fails to take cognizance of [aspects of] social relations and social organization, which, to a large extent, determine land use management (Rabot 1990:23-24). At farm level, then, a transformation of production systems is once again pursued following the mixed-farming model (i.e. introduction of plough agriculture and fodder crops, production of manure). Interventions undertaken at the level of the village territory often seem to be mainly aimed at the creation of the [physical] conditions deemed indispensable for interventions at farm level to succeed (cf., for instance, Dugué 1990:6, where it is asserted that a precondition for 'the improvement of production in general and to the utilization of technical innovations [at farm level]' is the improvement of the water supply to crops, to be attained through the construction of stone bunds at village territory level). This technical focus, combined with the conceptualization of farms as autonomous units, is not conducive to an understanding of the *loci* of articulation of agriculture and animal husbandry other than at the individual farm level. Moreover, the focus on village territories as the level of analysis and intervention, situated above the farm level, tends to obscure in yet other ways the complexity of this articulation.

Although in a few rare cases an attempt has been made to extend the approach to include so-called pastoral 'terroirs', the implementation of 'Gestion de Terroirs' in Burkina Faso has mainly been limited to village territories (Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:39). An essential element of this approach is the zoning of the village territory according to different productive activities (notably agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry). This exercise risks marginalizing animal husbandry as it is presently practised by the Fulbe in a double way. First, taking into account Fulbe's marginal rights to land (cf. chapters 3 and 4) and the fact that Moaga ideology strongly favours agriculture over animal husbandry - especially over extensive cattle herding (cf. chapter 8) - there exists the danger that zones allocated to animal husbandry will tend to consist of marginal, degraded lands. Furthermore, zoning also implies the fixing of pastoral land, which is obstructive to pastoral land use practice since it is unable to accommodate to the shifting of pastures and water resources both within a year and from year to year. It is as if, at least a partial, sedentarization and de-mobilization of pastoralists is already pre-supposed (cf. also Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:28-29).

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<sup>6</sup> PNGTV: 'Programme National de Gestion des Terroirs Villageois'.

<sup>7</sup> CPAT: 'Commission Provinciale d'Aménagement du Territoire'.

The general non-correspondence of agricultural and pastoral territories is unlikely to be solved when village territories are privileged. As is also apparent from the present study, pastoral territories extend widely over single village territories and the territorial conceptions of Fulbe and Moose are quite different. This point has been made by several authors already (e.g. Barrier 1990:36, Bonnet 1990:50, Mersadier 1991:11, Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:39). On the basis of this it has been argued that the interests of pastoralists constitute an issue of regional development (Bonnet 1990:61, Rabot 1990:28), that a re-orientation is necessary so that 'inter-village' spaces can be considered as well (Ouédraogo & Faure 1993:39), or that different spatial frames are to be chosen in order that different kinds of intervention can take full account of the complexity of land use situations (Mersadier 1991:11). It is not made clear, however, how land use schemes elaborated for a village territory are to be reconciled with those for a 'pastoral territory' or with regional (provincial, departmental?) schemes which would, presumably pay more attention to pastoral interests than village schemes.

In any case, the 'Gestion de Terroirs' approach, as it has been implemented so far, seems incapable of grasping the articulation of animal husbandry and agriculture other than at the level of the individual farm. What is more, the focus on village territories tends to marginalize Fulbe. At the same time, the approach seems to consider villages as relatively homogeneous social entities (cf. also Rabot 1990:22), whose populations can be expected to reach consensus on matters relating to zoning or access to water resources. Internal power struggles and processes of socio-economic differentiation are thus implicitly disregarded. In this manner, then, the approach tends to underestimate intra-group differences and conflicts, while at the same time it risks accentuating inter-group polarization.

### *Towards a de-territorialization of development approaches*

The improvement of land use systems involving a stronger integration of animal husbandry and agriculture, surely calls for a multi-level approach: attention can thereby be paid to the integration at farm level, but should recognize as well the potentialities of further integration situated at the level of inter-ethnic relations between Moose and Fulbe. What is needed, then, is an approach sensitive to the *diversity* of relations between Moose and Fulbe and to the processes of differentiation actually taking place both within and between ethnic groups. The importance of such sensitivity should not be underestimated. In chapter 8, I clearly demonstrated that there may simultaneously exist forces that tend to polarize as well as integrate ethnic groups. In other contexts, inter-ethnic relations, characterized by variety, have subsequently deteriorated, resulting in inter-ethnic wars which in retrospect might have been prevented by more sensitive policies (cf. Barth 1994:24-26). For the particular case studied here, a 'sensitive' approach would thus have to start from an explicit recognition of the diversity of relations between Moose and Fulbe, and attempt to reinforce them. This is in line with an argument developed by Delgado (1979:124-132) in an economic study of land use in the region of Tenkodogo (also populated by Moose and Fulbe). He proposes, instead of stimulating a transition to mixed farming, to strengthen Moose and Fulbe in their respective specializations, namely agriculture and animal husbandry, by measures concentrating on the improvement of milk production of Moose-owned cattle (entrusted to Fulbe), the encouragement of manure use on Moose vegetable gardens (and also on making acceptable the sale and purchase of manure), the improvement of the access of Fulbe to purchased food grains, and the bolstering of the cattle entrusting system.

A territorial approach, i.e. starting from and giving primacy to one or more different nested and overlapping territory levels, might well end up in unresolvable contradictions when attempting to grasp the potential for development and land use intensification present in the articulation of agriculture and animal husbandry at the level of inter-ethnic relations (not in the least because of the different territorial conceptions held by Moose and Fulbe). Therefore, it may be better to let go of the primacy of territoriality, and give more weight to levels of social organization - embracing farm and village organization and also corporate kin group and ethnic group - and to the relations both among entities at the same level and between levels. Territorial entities on which interventions are then planned and implemented would be much more like 'emerging entities'. Moreover, it would then be possible to escape the straitjacket of the village territory and to start from a more 'realistic' understanding of prevailing land tenure arrangements which do not tie actors to neatly territorialized spaces.

In order for development approaches to link up with local realities, an understanding of how history shaped prevailing land tenure arrangements and their dynamics is necessary. Only then is it possible to take into account the diversity of 'projects' pursued by actors at one particular place as well as the multitude of options in their livelihood strategies which extend widely beyond village territory boundaries. In this book, land tenure arrangements were shown to be inherently dynamic, that is they allowed actors to develop diverse livelihood strategies in response to wider political, economic and environmental change. Land use practice was shown to be characterized not by some kind of rigid 'traditionality' trapped in a deadlock, but by what can be termed 'autonomous' development (cf. Long & van der Ploeg 1989) whereby new social, economic and geographic spaces were created time and again. In different interlocking domains of activity change occurred. 'Security fields' are sown, the cart and plough used in the agricultural production process, crop residues fed to livestock, and the pool of territories to which members of a *yiiri* have access is enlarged. Livestock is fattened in compounds, cattle accumulated and entrusted to Fulbe herdsman. Labour is pooled in diverse ways among patrilineally related farms, with affinal kin and between farm enterprises at home and in the Ivory Coast. Concurrently, the meaning and patterns of migration to the Ivory Coast have changed. The livelihood strategies and their changes imply the involvement of actors at several levels of social organization simultaneously: the farm, the compound, the ward, the village, the *yiiri*, the ethnic group. Finally, it should be emphasized that 'autonomous' development does not imply 'homogeneous' development: it is complex, in certain respects contradictory (cf. the inter-ethnic relations between Moose and Fulbe) and to be understood in the context of ongoing social struggle. Whatever land reform or development programme aimed at land use intensification is formulated, will necessarily be inserted in and become an element of complex settings. It should deal with them consciously in order to succeed.

## GLOSSARY

<i>abusa</i>	sharecropper
<i>ba</i> (pl. <i>badamba</i> )	father
<i>babila</i>	father's younger brother
<i>baongo</i>	lowland
<i>ba ziiga</i> (pl. <i>ba ziinse</i> )	father's place
<i>beolga</i> (pl. <i>beolse</i> )	field farmed by a person, or a group of persons, who depend on a <i>puugsoba</i>
<i>beonda</i> (pl. <i>beondba</i> )	man or woman responsible for a <i>beolga</i>
<i>bissigan</i>	sandy soil
<i>bouli</i>	water pool
<i>buudu</i>	lineage, patrilineal kin group
<i>buudkasma</i> (pl. <i>buudkasmdamba</i> )	elder of a patrilineal kin group, <i>yiiri</i> elder
<i>dolo</i>	millet or sorghum beer
<i>gargaaga</i> (pl. <i>gargaase</i> )	concrete well
<i>jooro</i>	Pullo chief
<i>kamaandga</i> (pl. <i>kamaandse</i> )	maize field (always near the compound)
<i>karaaga</i> (pl. <i>karaase</i> )	field near the compound
<i>kasma</i>	elder
<i>kiimse</i>	ancestor shrines
<i>kiimsroogo</i>	house of the <i>kiimse</i>
<i>kinkirga</i> (pl. <i>kinkirse</i> )	creature of the 'brousse', of the counter-world
<i>kiuugu</i>	moon
<i>kombere</i> (pl. <i>kombemba</i> )	chieftancy; intermediary level between kingdom and villages
<i>kurita</i>	ritual office associated to the office of <i>tengsoba</i>
<i>kuritnaam</i>	'power' of the <i>kurita</i>
<i>Moogo</i>	term designating the territory occupied by all the Moose kingdoms
<i>naaba</i> (pl. <i>nanamse</i> )	chief
<i>naam</i>	'power', the quality to rule over people
<i>nakombse</i> (sing. <i>nakombga</i> )	descendants of the first Moaga chief Ouédraogo
<i>pogdanga</i> (pl. <i>pogdanse</i> )	a woman's brother's child
<i>pogdba</i> (pl. <i>pogdbadamba</i> )	father's sister
<i>puugkasenga</i>	lit. large field; field located in the 'brousse', farmed by a <i>puugsoba</i> and his dependants
<i>puugo</i> (pl. <i>puuto</i> )	field
<i>puugsoba</i> (pl. <i>puugsobdamba</i> )	lit. master of the field, farm head
<i>rakoore</i> (pl. <i>rakoopa</i> )	bachelor; man not having his own farm, i.e. farming a <i>beolga</i>
<i>rataaga</i> (pl. <i>rataase</i> )	rival (over a woman)
<i>ratado</i>	rivalry (over women)
<i>rawa</i> (pl. <i>rapa</i> )	man
<i>reemdo</i>	in-lawship

<i>reemdamba</i>	in-laws
<i>reementaaga</i> (pl. <i>reementaase</i> )	those with who one grew up
<i>rima</i>	lit. eater of power, king
Rimaibe	former 'slaves' of the Fulbe
<i>rogem</i>	lit. birth, cognatic kin tie
<i>rogem miki</i>	lit. what one finds at birth, 'tradition'
Saaba (sing. Seya)	blacksmiths
<i>Saabnaaba</i>	blacksmiths' chief
<i>saana</i> (pl. <i>saamba</i> )	stranger
<i>sagbo</i>	millet or sorghum porridge
<i>saka</i> (pl. <i>sakse</i> )	ward
	localized lineage segment
<i>si-soaga</i> (pl. <i>si-soose</i> )	work party
<i>soolem</i>	lit. that what is owned, people submitted to a chief
<i>tabaski</i>	Islamic feast on which the offering of Abraham to Allah is celebrated by slaughtering a sheep
<i>tenga</i> (pl. <i>tense</i> )	village
	earth divinity
<i>tengbiiga</i> (pl. <i>tengbiise</i> )	lit. child of the earth, autochthon (e.g. Yiyooga, Kiibga, etc.)
<i>tengkugri</i> (pl. <i>tengkuga</i> )	lit. stone of the earth, earth shrine
<i>tengneba</i> (sing. <i>tengneda</i> )	lit. people of the village, villagers
<i>tengpeelem</i>	territory under the religious and ritual authority of a <i>tengsoba</i>
<i>tengsoba</i> (pl. <i>tengsodbamba</i> )	earth priest, <i>tengbiiga</i> lineage elder
<i>tiibsoba</i> (pl. <i>tiibsodbamba</i> )	earth priest
<i>tiim</i>	charm, medicine
<i>ti-toaga</i> (pl. <i>ti-toose</i> )	small pickaxe (ritual)
<i>toodo</i>	ritual obligations
<i>yaaba</i> (pl. <i>yaabdamba</i> )	ancestor
	grandparent, grandfather, grandmother
<i>yaab ziiga</i> (pl. <i>yaab ziinse</i> )	ancestors' place, lineage territory, kin group's territory
	grandfather's place
<i>yagenga</i> (pl. <i>yagense</i> )	grandchild
	sister's son
<i>yagentaaga</i> (pl. <i>yagentaase</i> )	mother's sister's child
<i>yasba</i> (pl. <i>yasbdamba</i> )	mother's brother
<i>yiiri</i> (pl. <i>yiya</i> )	home, compound, group of patrilineal related compounds
	agnatic kinsmen belonging to the same <i>kiimsroogo</i>
Yiyoose (sing. Yiyooga)	pre-Moaga population group
<i>zaka</i>	compound
<i>zaksoba</i> (pl. <i>zaksodbamba</i> )	compound head
<i>ziiga</i> (pl. <i>ziinse</i> )	place
<i>zoa</i> (pl. <i>zoadamba</i> )	friend
<i>zoodo</i>	friendship

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## SAMENVATTING

*In beweging:*

*mobiliteit, landgebruikspraktijken en praktijken om in levensonderhoud te voorzien op het Centraal Plateau in Burkina Faso*

Reeds aan het begin van de 20<sup>ste</sup> eeuw wezen reizigers en Franse koloniale bestuurders in hun verslagen op de extreme gevoeligheid van het Centraal Plateau in Burkina Faso voor regelmatig terugkerende calamiteiten, zoals droogten en hongersnoden, tengevolge van de relatief hoge bevolkingsdichtheden en extensieve systemen van landgebruik. Tevens werd er reeds toen opgemerkt dat geografische mobiliteit van de bevolking - onder meer met het oog op het koloniseren van nieuwe gebieden over de grenzen van de Moose koninkrijken - van groot belang was voor het regelen van het evenwicht tussen bevolking en beschikbare natuurlijke hulpbronnen. Tegenwoordig is het gebied blootgesteld aan ernstige omgevingsdegradatie en bedreigd door de oprukkende Sahara woestijn. Landgebruik wordt nog steeds gekenmerkt door extensieve praktijken en mensen nemen massaal deel aan verscheidene processen van geografische mobiliteit. Zo migreren tienduizenden mannen en vrouwen jaarlijks naar de steden en plantages in Ivoorkust. Elk jaar keren ook tienduizenden terug naar 'huis'. Duizenden mensen verlieten de noordelijke provincies van Burkina Faso en vestigden zich in het zuiden en westen van het land. Elk jaar verhuist een onbekend, meestal hoog ingeschat aantal mensen binnen kleinere regio's. Al deze bewegingen zijn, elk op hun manier, gerelateerd aan landgebruikspraktijken in de dorpen van degenen die vertrokken. Dit boek is de weerslag van een onderzoek naar de wisselwerking tussen enerzijds veranderende landgebruikspraktijken en anderzijds veranderende processen van geografische mobiliteit bij de bevolking van het Centraal Plateau in Burkina Faso.

De onderzoeksregio bevindt zich in de zogenaamde Soudano Sahel zone, gekenmerkt door een kort regenseizoen van ongeveer vier maanden en een gemiddelde jaarlijkse regenval van 500 tot 600 mm. De regenval varieert sterk van jaar tot jaar en is vaak ongelijk verdeeld, zowel in de ruimte als in de tijd. De Moose vertegenwoordigen ongeveer 80% van de bevolking. Daarnaast leven in de regio verschillende minderheidsgroepen, waarvan de Fulbe (10%) de belangrijkste vormen. Meer dan 90% van de bevolking is hoofdzakelijk actief in de landbouw en veeteelt. Sorgum en gierst zijn de belangrijkste gewassen en worden in de eerste plaats geproduceerd voor de zelfvoorziening. De veeteelt van de Moose is voornamelijk gebaseerd op geiten en schapen, terwijl de Fulbe, hoewel ook actief in de landbouw, sterk gericht zijn op het houden van runderen. Zowel landbouw als veeteelt worden op een extensieve wijze bedreven. Er wordt weinig geïnvesteerd in kunstmest of verbeterde zaden en in 'modern' of 'traditioneel' landbouwgereedschap, en er wordt weinig gebruik gemaakt van dierlijke trekkracht. Bovendien is de integratie van landbouw en veeteelt op bedrijfsniveau gering en wordt dierlijke mest alleen op de velden dichtbij de erven toegepast. Het vee graast de natuurlijke weidegronden, braakliggende gronden en gewasresten van pas geoogste velden. Het toedienen van bijkomende voeding, zoals katoenzaad en gewasresten tijdens het droge seizoen, gebeurt slechts in beperkte mate.

De omgevingsdegradatie, zich manifesterend, onder andere, in het verdwijnen van vegetatie, bodemerosie, het dalen van grondwaterniveaus en onzekere en mislukte oogsten, wordt voornamelijk toegeschreven aan menselijke factoren: er is een onevenwicht tussen,

enerzijds, de vegetatieve produktie, en, anderzijds, het onttrekken van produkten aan de omgeving door mensen en vee. De draagkracht van de natuurlijke hulpbronnen is overschreden als gevolg van de groei van de bevolking en de veestapel, in combinatie met het blijven toepassen van extensieve landgebruikspraktijken. Marginale gronden worden in gebruik genomen, en om het risico van oogstmislukking tegen te gaan zaaien boeren meer velden in dan uiteindelijk geoogst worden. Zo verloopt de uitbreiding van het bebouwde areaal sneller dan de bevolkingsgroei. Natuurlijke weidegronden worden schaarser en de toenemende aantallen vee dragen bij aan de degradatie van overblijvende graasgebieden door overbegrazing.

Verscheidende auteurs wijzen er op dat extensieve landgebruikspraktijken hun grenzen bereikt hebben in de Soudano Sahel regio in het algemeen en op het Centraal Plateau in Burkina Faso in het bijzonder. Om de neerwaartse spiraal van omgevingsdegradatie te doorbreken hebben de overheid, donororganisaties en ontwikkelingsprojecten zich tot doel gesteld bestaande produktie systemen te transformeren in duurzame - lees: meer intensieve - systemen. Daarvoor dient een multi-sectorale, geïntegreerde benadering gevolgd te worden, i.e. vanaf de jaren tachtig de zogenaamde 'Gestion de Terroirs' benadering. De nadruk ligt daarbij op een intensiever gebruik van dierlijke mest en externe inputs (kunstmest, verbeterd zaaigoed), en op het stallen van vee en verbouwen van voedergewassen.

Een tekort aan arbeidskrachten, welke nodig zijn voor de toepassing van arbeidsintensieve innovaties, en onzekere landgebruiksrechten, investeringen in land in de weg staand, worden dikwijls genoemd als belangrijke obstakels voor de transformatie van produktiesystemen. Het tekort aan arbeidskrachten wordt geweten aan migratie van veelal jonge mannen naar vooral Ivoorkust. Migratie zou bovendien tot gevolg hebben dat allerlei regelingen voor arbeidsuitwisseling in onbruik raken. Onzekerheid van landgebruiksrechten wordt enerzijds veroorzaakt door het naast elkaar bestaan van een overheidswetgeving en een 'gewoonterecht'. Anderzijds zouden de gebruiksrechten op grond binnen het gewoonterecht voor grote groepen gebruikers (vrouwen, jongeren, Fulbe, 'vreemdelingen') intrinsiek onzeker zijn. Lange termijn zekerheid van gebruik van grond wordt beschouwd als een voorwaarde *sine qua non* opdat landgebruikers zouden investeren in grond en opdat een proces van intensivering op gang gebracht zou kunnen worden.

De transformatie van bestaande extensieve produktiesystemen in 'duurzame' en intensievere systemen veronderstelt een immobilisering van zowel mensen als vee en velden. Om die reden, en vanwege de bestaande diversiteit van processen van geografische mobiliteit waarin de actoren betrokken zijn, besloot ik niet bij voorbaat bepaalde processen van mobiliteit van de studie uit te sluiten. Bovendien, om een beter begrip te verkrijgen van de wijze waarop verschillende processen van mobiliteit in elkaar grijpen en overlappen kende ik in dit onderzoek een centrale positie toe aan historische gegevens.

De hoofdrolspelers in dit boek zijn de Moose en Fulbe actoren afkomstig uit enkele dorpen van het noordelijke deel van het Centraal Plateau in Burkina Faso. Gedurende twee jaar, van december 1993 tot en met november 1995, voerde ik veldwerk uit in het Moaga dorp Ziinoogo en in twee nabij gelegen Fulbe nederzettingen, Péoukoy en Yalanga.

In het tweede hoofdstuk wordt de historische achtergrond van de onderzoeksregio geschetst. Op basis van de vertellingen van ouderen uit Ziinoogo wordt de ontwikkeling van het dorp vanaf zijn stichting tot de aanvang van de Franse koloniale overheersing op het einde van de 19<sup>de</sup> eeuw gereconstrueerd. Gedurende deze periode blijken processen van geografische mobiliteit gericht geweest te zijn naar een beperkt aantal nederzettingen, waarvan Ziinoogo er één was. Een relatief talrijke bevolking leefde samen op een beperkte oppervlakte en

gebruikte grond binnen een beperkte straal rondom de woonplaats. Hoewel ook gedurende de 20<sup>ste</sup> eeuw de samenstelling van de bevolking van Ziinoogo veranderde als gevolg van immigratie, bracht de koloniale overheersing een opmerkelijke discontinuïteit teweeg in mobiliteitspatronen: naast migratie naar Goudkust en Ivoorkust kwam eveneens een beweging op gang naar het gebied ten noorden van Ziinoogo. Deze laatste wordt geanalyseerd aan de hand van een bespreking van een aantal conflicten over grond die in de jaren twintig en dertig plaatsvonden langs de grens van de 'Cercle de Kaya' met de 'Cercle de Ouahigouya', en waarbij inwoners van Ziinoogo betrokken waren. Er wordt aangetoond dat de koloniale 'pacificatie' het gebied ten noorden van Ziinoogo openlegde en dat koloniale repressie de beweging van mensen daarheen versnelde. Diverse projecten kwamen samen in de kolonisatie van het gebied. In de eerste plaats trachtten mensen de verschillende koloniale vorderingen (arbeid, belasting) te ontvluchten door zich te vestigen in gebieden die aan de controle van het koloniale bestuur ontsnapten. Ten tweede had de bevolkingsdruk zich opgebouwd in de 19<sup>de</sup> eeuw en was er een behoefte aan nieuwe landbouwgrond. Relatief droge periodes zetten mensen aan deze nieuwe gronden te zoeken in de vochtigere, lager gelegen 'bas-fonds' die Ouahigouya en Kaya van elkaar scheidden. Daarnaast diene de bewegingen naar het noorden begrepen te worden in de context van de politieke verhoudingen tussen de naburige koninkrijken en 'chieftaincies', waarvan de grenzen verondersteld werden min of meer samen te vallen met de grenzen tussen koloniale administratieve eenheden. De bewegingen naar het noorden resulteerden in de uitbreiding van het gebied geassocieerd met de Piugtenga *kombere*. In nieuw gestichte dorpen als Baskondo en Namissiguima werden dorps hoofden benoemd door de *kombere naaba*. Ook de verwantschapsgroep van de stichters van het dorp Ziinoogo (de *tengbiise*) wisten het gebied onder de rituele controle van hun oudste (de *tengsoba*, aardepriester) uit te breiden. Daarbij werden oudsten van verwantschapsgroepen die Ziinoogo [deels] verlieten geïnstalleerd als aardepriesters van nieuw in gebruik genomen gebieden. Tenslotte legden actoren die zich verplaatsten in de jaren twintig en dertig de basis voor het complexe landgebruikspatroon zoals dat vandaag de dag bestaat. Door grond in gebruik te nemen wisten zij niet alleen te ontsnappen aan koloniale repressie en te voorzien in de behoeften van hun familie, tegelijkertijd legden zij ook claims op die gronden voor zichzelf, hun verwanten en hun nakomelingen.

Fulbe lijken geen rol van betekenis te hebben gespeeld in de kolonisatie van de gebieden ten noorden van Ziinoogo. Niettemin is het meer dan waarschijnlijk dat juist zij reeds lange tijd gebruik maakten, voor het grazen van hun vee, van gronden in die gebieden die de Moose van Ziinoogo als 'leeg' beschouwden. Dat hun rol in de conflicten over grond gedurende de jaren twintig en dertig niet naar voren komt is niet zo verwonderlijk wanneer rekening gehouden wordt met hun marginale positie als het gaat om rechten op grond. Dit wordt verder verduidelijkt in de volgende hoofdstukken. Hoewel het moeilijk is de komst van Fulbe in het gebied exact te situeren in de tijd, lijdt het geen twijfel dat zij een lange geschiedenis hebben in de Piugtenga *kombere* en het naburige koninkrijk Rissiam. De leiders van zowel Péoukoy als Yalanga zijn geïntegreerd in de politieke structuur van de Moose van respectievelijk Piugtenga en Rissiam. In de keuze van hun plaatsen van vestiging speelden naast ecologische ook sociale en politieke overwegingen een rol, in het bijzonder het al dan niet welwillend zijn van Moose dorps- en *kombere* hoofden.

De volgende twee hoofdstukken gaan dieper in op hoe controle over grond is geregeld en hoe gebruiksrechten op grond zijn verdeeld. Daarbij wordt opnieuw de nodige aandacht besteed aan hoe deze regelingen en verdelingen historisch gegroeid zijn. In hoofdstuk 3 wordt allereerst nagegaan of er een territoriale eenheid bestaat die beschouwd zou kunnen worden

als Ziinoogo's dorpsterroir. Tegen de verwachting in blijkt dat niet de *tengpeelem* vallend onder de rituele autoriteit van de *tengsoba* te zijn, doch veelmeer een verzameling van territoria die in meerdere of mindere mate gecontroleerd worden door de verwantschapsgroepen die in Ziinoogo leven. In Ziinoogo bestaat geen eenduidig discours betreffende de verdeling van de controle over de gronden die samen dit 'dorpsterroir' vormen. Wel is er een dominant discours te onderscheiden dat op hoofdlijnen onderschreven wordt door alle Moose inwoners. Volgens dit discours moet het dorpsterroir opgevat worden als een ondeelbare territoriale eenheid onder de ultieme autoriteit van de *tengsoba*. Uitsluitend de *tengbiise*, dat is de eerstgekommenen, kunnen claimen dat zij in Ziinoogo beschikken over een zogenaamde *yaab ziiga*, letterlijk 'plaats van de voorouders', door mij vertaald als 'lineage land'. De *tengbiise* zijn de enige autochtonen, alle andere dorpelingen stammen af van voorouders die zich na hen in het dorp vestigden, en zijn 'vreemdelingen' die toestemming om grond te gebruiken verkregen via de *tengbiise*. Volgens het dominante discours kan geen toegang tot grond verkregen worden door 'vreemdelingen' zonder voorafgaande toestemming van de *tengbiise*. Niettemin is het eveneens zo dat grond die niet gebruikt wordt voor landbouwdoeleinden in principe openstaat voor eenieder die van 'goed vertrouwen' is en zich 'correct' gedraagt, of die nu in het dorp woont of niet. Echter, om te weten of iemand van 'goed vertrouwen' is en zich naar verwachting 'correct' zal gedragen, dient die persoon enigszins gekend te zijn. Wanneer inwoners van andere dorpen het gebruik van grond toegekend krijgen, blijkt het dan ook niet om volledig vreemden te gaan. Het bestaan van vertrouwen wordt vaak uitgedrukt in termen van verwantschaps- en huwelijksrelaties en het zijn dan ook meestal cognatische verwanten en leden van schoonfamilies die grond vragen en toegewezen krijgen in Ziinoogo. De inwoners van het dorp zelf hebben recht op voldoende grond om in hun voedselbehoeften te voorzien. 'Correct' gedrag, zowel van 'vreemdeling'-inwoners als van niet dorpelingen, impliceert dat het recht van de *tengbiise* om eerder toegewezen grond terug te nemen erkend wordt. Het gaat daarbij echter meestal niet om het intrekken van het recht als zodanig op gebruik van grond binnen het dorpsterroir, maar slechts om het terugnemen van een specifiek stuk grond. Over het algemeen zal de 'vreemdeling' een andere plaats op het terroir mogen uitzoeken en de toestemming krijgen om daar zijn velden te zaaien. Enkel in gevallen van 'rivaliteit', meestal over vrouwen, zal het recht op een plaats (*ziiga*) binnen de *yaab ziiga* van de *tengbiise* ingetrokken worden.

Alhoewel in het bijzonder de ultieme rituele autoriteit van de *tengsoba* over het dorpsterroir als geheel en de bijzondere autochtoniteit van de *tengbiise* door geen van de inwoners van Ziinoogo ontkend wordt, bestaat er geen consensus over de betekenis van *yaab ziiga*. Verschillende manieren van uitleg voor dit begrip bestaan en laten verschillende interpretaties toe van het landgebruikspatroon in het dorpsterroir. Samenlopend hiermee worden verschillende betekenissen toegekend aan het begrippenpaar *tengneda* (mensen van het dorp) en *saamba* (vreemdelingen). Een aantal verwantschapsgroepen in Ziinoogo claimen een *yaab ziiga* in het dorpsterroir te controleren en daarbinnen autonoom te kunnen beslissen over de toewijzing van gebruiksrechten aan 'vreemdelingen'. Enerzijds zijn deze claims gebaseerd op de langdurige aanwezigheid van de verwantschapsgroepen in het dorp en op het feit dat voorouders, in het verleden, van de *tengbiise* de toestemming verkregen om tot dan toe ongebruikte gronden te ontginnen. De leden van deze verwantschapsgroepen beschouwen zichzelf als *tengneda*, zij beschouwen Ziinoogo als hun oorsprong en zijn als het ware 'geautochtoniseerd'. Anderzijds claimen de leden van de verwantschapsgroepen die de positie van dorpshoofd (*naaba*) controleren of in het verleden gecontroleerd hebben eveneens de beschikking over een *yaab ziiga*, op grond van het feit dat de *tengbiise* grond afstonden aan



hun voorouder die als eerste deze positie bekleedde. Tenslotte zien ook degenen wiens verwantschapsgroep zich slechts recentelijk in het dorp vestigde de mogelijkheid van een *yaab ziiga*, dan wel niet voor henzelf, doch wel geprojecteerd in de toekomst voor hun zonen en kleinzonen.

Het dorpsterroir kan dus opgevat worden als een verzameling van 'lineage lands' die verschillende statussen hebben. Deze statussen hangen in hoge mate samen met de momenten van aankomst in het dorp van de voorouders van de verschillende verwantschapsgroepen, en kunnen daarom begrepen worden als bepaald zijnde door een zogenaamd 'principle of precedence' of eerste senioriteitsprincipe.

De smeden (Saaba) die in het dorp wonen zijn uitgesloten van autochtonisering en hun rechten op grond lijken op het eerste gezicht marginaal. Hun gebruiksrechten worden echter erkend en geformuleerd in termen van hun specifieke sociale identiteit, refererend naar de mythen die de complementariteit tussen *tengbiise* en Saaba benadrukken. Ook de Fulbe van naburige dorpen nemen een marginale positie in met betrekking tot rechten op grond. Binnen het dominante discours worden de Fulbe beschouwd als vreemdelingen bij uitstek, als mensen die dan wel reeds verschillende generaties min of meer ter plaatse gebleven zijn, maar die op een zeker moment weer verder zullen trekken. De opvattingen van Fulbe met betrekking tot territorialiteit verschillen sterk van Moose noties en worden uitgedrukt in een 'antagonistisch' discours, in tegenstelling tot de alternatieve opvattingen van *yaab ziiga* die door niet-*tengbiise* Moose verdedigd worden. De tegenstelling tussen Moose en Fulbe opvattingen kan teruggebracht worden tot een oppositie tussen een filosofie gebaseerd op exclusieve rechten op grond, aangehangen door de landbouwende Moose, en een 'pastoral free range' filosofie, die de veehoudende Fulbe toegedaan zijn. Wanneer echter het niveau van het dorpsterroir overstegen wordt blijkt dat de Fulbe toch ook een territoriale entiteit erkennen die eveneens voor Moose relevant is, namelijk de Piugtenga *kombere*.

In hoofdstuk 4 worden aan de hand van vier cases landgebruiksstrategieën van actoren en gerelateerde processen van geografische mobiliteit geanalyseerd. Daarbij wordt het in de eerste plaats duidelijk dat, om een vollediger begrip te verkrijgen van de verdeling van rechten op grond binnen het dorpsterroir, het eerste senioriteitsprincipe aangevuld dient te worden met een tweede principe, namelijk van senioriteit binnen de verwantschapsgroep. Rekening houdend met het dubbele senioriteitsprincipe kan dan als het ware een 'keuzehiërarchie' onderscheiden worden waarin iedere actor een plaats heeft. Eenieder die in het dorp leeft heeft een recht op voldoende landbouwgrond, doch de mate van controle die de actor kan uitoefenen over die grond is afhankelijk van zijn positie in de 'keuzehiërarchie'. De verdeling van rechten op grond wordt echter verder gecompliceerd door de overdracht van specifieke rechten van vader op zoon of, meer algemeen geformuleerd, van hoofd van een produktieëenheid naar mannelijke actoren die deel uitmaken van die produktieëenheid. Deze overdracht van *rechten* op grond mag echter niet verward worden met de overdracht van specifieke stukken grond. Hoewel als gevolg van de groei en de diversificatie van de dorpsbevolking een progressieve fragmentatie van het dorpsterroir heeft plaats gevonden, gebeurde dit niet op een mechanistische wijze en ontstond er geen onduidelijke verdeling van grond waarbij welbepaalde stukken grond geassocieerd zijn met welbepaalde produktieëenheden. Over het algemeen is een specifiek stuk grond steeds onderworpen aan meerdere claims, die evenwel niet noodzakelijk elk hetzelfde gewicht hebben. In de loop der tijd zijn deze claims bovendien voortdurend in beweging. Inderdaad, hoewel men een voorkeur heeft om grond te gebruiken die eerder gebruikt werd door het hoofd (meestal vader of oudere broer) van de produktieëenheid waarvan men deel heeft uitgemaakt (wat ik 'vaders

plaats' noem), zijn er meerdere redenen om daarvan af te wijken. In geval van een opeenvolging van droge jaren, bijvoorbeeld, zal men de voorkeur geven aan het zaaïen op vochtigere, lager gelegen gronden die niet noodzakelijk deel uitmaken van 'vaders plaats'. Ook conflicten over grond met naburige dorpen kunnen het ontginnen van gronden ver van 'vaders plaats' noodzakelijk maken. Tenslotte heeft, zoals gezegd, eenieder recht op 'voldoende' grond. De vraag naar grond van zonen en hun families kan dan ook makkelijk de grenzen van hun 'vaders plaats' overschrijden en zij zullen grond in gebruik nemen elders op het land gecontroleerd door hun verwantschapsgroep of grond vragen die gecontroleerd wordt door een andere verwantschapsgroep. Het is dan ook niet moeilijk te begrijpen dat, in de loop der tijd, verschillende territoria kunnen gaan overlappen. Als een lid van een verwantschapsgroep zijn gebruik van grond op het territorium van een andere groep gecontinueerd ziet door zijn zonen en kleinzonen, is het zeer wel mogelijk dat deze laatsten deze grond beschouwen als deel uitmakend van hun *yaab ziiga*, niettegenstaande het feit dat ook de leden van de andere verwantschapsgroep die grond nog steeds zien als deel van hun 'lineage land'. Het is ook een continuïteit in het gebruik van specifieke stukken grond die voor 'vreemdelingen' in het dorp een 'lineage land' ingeschreven in het dorpsterroir kan produceren. Het wortelen in het dorpsterroir vraagt een relatieve onbeweeglijkheid van velden en dit vormt een gedeeltelijke verklaring voor het bestaan van verschillende strategieën al naargelang de mate van autochtoniteit van de betrokken actoren. De cases tonen inderdaad de opmerkelijke mobiliteit van de velden [en erven] van *tengbiise* in tegenstelling tot de relatieve immobiliteit van velden van 'vreemdelingen'. Het blijkt in veel gevallen dat deze laatsten hun velden van plaats veranderen slechts wanneer zij daartoe gedwongen worden door degenen die de door hen gebruikte grond controleren.

De rechten op grond die een actor heeft zijn niet beperkt tot het dorpsterroir waar hij woont. De 'landgebruikspaden' die individuele actoren gedurende hun leven volgen zijn vaak ingeschreven in meerdere dorpsterroirs en beïnvloeden de mogelijke landgebruikspaden van andere actoren. Actoren hebben inderdaad een recht op grond binnen elk van de territoria die gecontroleerd worden door leden van hun *yiiri*. *Yiiri* verwijst hier naar een geografisch verspreide, patrilineaire verwantschapsgroep verbonden aan een bepaalde voorouderlijke offerplaats (*kiimse*). De mate van een *yiiri's* controle over grond verschilt van plaats tot plaats en een actors recht op grond in een bepaald dorpsterroir is afhankelijk van de rechten die leden van zijn *yiiri* daar reeds opbouwden ('principle of precedence'), van zijn eigen senioriteit binnen het *yiiri* segment op die plaats, en van het eventueel hebben van een 'vaders plaats' aldaar. Het bestaan van een dergelijke 'pool van territoria' is een belangrijke factor waarmee rekening gehouden dient te worden wil men inzicht verwerven in processen van geografische mobiliteit en in de diversiteit van opties die actoren hebben wanneer zij willen of gedwongen worden te bewegen. Het vormt natuurlijk geen voldoende verklaring voor de bewegingen van mensen. Die kan slechts verkregen worden door gevallen in hun context te analyseren: actoren verplaatsen zich van een dorp naar een ander of binnen het dorpsterroir wanneer zij een rituele positie gaan bekleden, vanwege ecologische of klimatologische omstandigheden (bodemitputting, droogte), vanwege conflicten over grond (tussen dorpen of verwantschapsgroepen, tussen 'vreemdelingen' en 'autochtonen'), enz.

Er zijn echter meer plaatsen dan alleen de aan de *yiiri* gerelateerde 'pool van territoria' waar een actor naar toe kan verhuizen en toegang kan verkrijgen tot grond. Inderdaad, de *yiiri* is een sociale entiteit die de aandacht beperkt tot patrilineaire verwanten. In het vijfde hoofdstuk wordt het accent van de analyse verschoven naar matrilineaire verwanten. Dit wordt gedaan door verschillende vormen van 'adoptie' ('fosterage') te bespreken en vooral door

dieper in te gaan op de relatie tussen moeders broer en zusters zoon. In een groot aantal gevallen gebruikt zusters zoon grond bij moeders broer. Dit gebeurt soms wanneer zusters zoon, na eerst opgevoed geweest te zijn bij moeders broer, zich op volwassen leeftijd in het dorp van moeders broer vestigt. In andere gevallen verplaatst zusters zoon zich naar moeders broer en krijgt daar grond in gebruik nadat hem een of ander ongeluk, dikwijls samenhangend met sociale spanningen, is overkomen in zijn 'eigen' dorp. Vervolgens, in veel gevallen dat grond in het terroir van Ziinoogo wordt uitgeleend aan actoren uit andere dorpen zijn deze laatste zusters zonen van degenen die de uitgeleende grond controleren. Tenslotte dient opgemerkt te worden dat ook vrouwen bij scheiding of bij overlijden van hun echtgenoot kunnen terugkeren naar het dorp van hun vader en daar een onafhankelijke productie-eenheid opzetten. Dit alles wijst erop dat vrouwen een zogenaamde 'submerged claim' hebben op grond gecontroleerd door hun patrilineaire verwantschapsgroep. Mijns inziens kunnen deze claims begrepen worden als rechten op grond die zij zelf kunnen realiseren (in geval van scheiding of overlijden van echtgenoot), of die gerealiseerd kunnen worden door hun echtgenoot of hun zonen. Vertaald in de termen gebruikt in hoofdstuk 4 komt dit erop neer dat iedere man niet alleen recht heeft op grond binnen de 'pool van territoria' gecontroleerd door zijn *yiiri* maar ook op grond bij moeders broer. Het is het bestaan van een dergelijk recht dat een verplaatsing naar moeders broer tot een uitvoerbare optie maakt wanneer besloten wordt een bepaalde plaats te verlaten. De rechten op grond van zusters zoon bij moeders broer zijn afhankelijk van de rechten op grond die de *yiiri* van moeders broer verworven heeft op die bepaalde plaats en van de status van zijn moeder binnen die *yiiri*. Deze status is onvermijdelijk laag en zo zal de positie van zusters zoon binnen de 'keuzehiërarchie' zoals die in het dorp van moeders broer bestaat onvermijdelijk laag zijn. Echter, zoals uiteengezet in hoofdstuk 4, kunnen zusters zonen zich in de loop der tijd ontdoen van hun 'vreemdelingen' status en 'autochtoniseren', waarbij zij dan tevens een meer autonome controle over land verwerven.

Het zesde hoofdstuk is in zijn geheel gewijd aan migratie naar Ivoorkust, veranderende patronen daarvan en veranderingen in betekenisgeving aan deze migratie in het vertrekgebied. Eerst wordt een 'gelokaliseerde' geschiedenis van deze migratiebeweging geschetst met een accent op de relatief korte periode 1937-39, gedurende dewelke de koloniale overheid stappen zette om haar arbeidsbeleid te liberaliseren en een 'spontane' migratie vanuit Opper-Volta naar Ivoorkust op gang te brengen. De commentaren op misbruiken met betrekking tot rekrutering van arbeiders in de voorgaande periode en de analyses door koloniale bestuurders van het 'succes' van Goudkust in het aantrekken van migranten uit Opper-Volta - de migratie naar Goudkust diende omgebogen te worden naar Ivoorkust - werpen een bijzonder licht op het door de koloniale overheid gevoerde beleid. De pogingen om een 'spontane' migratie naar Ivoorkust op gang te brengen strandden bij het uitbreken van de tweede wereldoorlog. Gedwongen rekrutering van arbeiders werd pas afgeschaft in 1946.

Vanaf dat moment werd Ivoorkust geleidelijk, en ten koste van Goudkust, (later Ghana) de belangrijkste bestemming voor migranten vanuit Ziinoogo. De eerste 'spontane' migranten vanuit Ziinoogo naar Ivoorkust vertrokken veelal via officiële rekruteringscentra. Voornamelijk niet getrouwde jonge mannen migreerden. In Ivoorkust waren zij meestal actief als loonarbeiders bij Europese werkgevers op plantages en in de bouw. Zelden bleven zij langer dan een jaar weg. Deze migraties waren omgeven door geheimhouding: migranten verlieten het dorp 's nachts en tegen de zin van hun ouderen. Met het verdiende geld werden bij terugkeer verwanten in het dorp bijgestaan (betalen van belastingen, cadeaus) en vooral aankopen gedaan voor persoonlijk gebruik (fiets, kleren, kleinvee). Migratie bracht geen

langdurig prestige of duurzame bezittingen. In de jaren zestig verdween Ghana volledig als bestemming voor migranten uit Ziinoogo en ook de rekruteringscentra verdwenen van het toneel. Mannen die in die tijd ongeveer twintig jaar oud waren begonnen aan cycli van migratie naar Ivoorkust (meestal gedurende een jaar of korter) die zij afwisselden met verblijven in Ziinoogo (één of twee jaar). Zoals in de voorgaande periode waren zij in Ivoorkust meestal loonarbeiders. Migratie werd in die tijd beschouwd als een avontuur voor jongeren. Niettemin werd het in de jaren zestig en zeventig meer aanvaard dat mannen ook na hun huwelijk migreerden, en in sommige gevallen werd een mans laatste migratie ondernomen samen met zijn vrouw. In zo'n geval bleven zij vaak langer in Ivoorkust dan bij eerdere migraties (twee tot vier jaar in plaats van een jaar of korter). Mannen stopten definitief met migreren wanneer zij hoofd van een erf of produktieëenheid werden. Zowel tussen opeenvolgende migraties als na definitieve terugkeer in het dorp namen de migranten hun activiteiten in de landbouw weer op. Hun praktijken verschilden daarbij niet van die van anderen. Er werd niet op een of andere winstgevende manier in landbouw geïnvesteerd. Geld verdiend in Ivoorkust werd op een gelijkaardige manier als in de jaren vijftig besteed. Migratie paste niet in een of ander lange termijn project van de migranten.

Daar waar migratie naar Ivoorkust tot de jaren tachtig voornamelijk een zaak was van ongehuwde jonge mannen, en in de jaren vijftig, en in mindere mate gedurende de jaren zestig en zeventig, gerelateerd was aan spanningen tussen ouderen en jongeren, verandert haar betekenis vanaf de jaren tachtig gevoelig. Migratie werd een economische, sociale en culturele dimensie van het dorpsleven als geheel en vormt niet langer een onderwerp van onenigheid tussen ouderen en jongeren. Ondernemingen van migranten in Ivoorkust (loonarbeid, pachten van rijstvelden, teelt van cacao- en/of koffie) zijn tegenwoordig meestal goed geïntegreerd met de landbouwondernemingen in het dorp. Dit komt vooral tot uiting in de wijze waarop arbeid over de verschillende ondernemingen wordt verdeeld. Migratie is tegenwoordig ook geïntegreerd in bredere verwantschapsnetwerken. Migratie van jonge mannen voor hun huwelijk wordt beschouwd als een onderdeel van hun opvoeding. Tegelijk met de verandering van de betekenis van migratie in het dorp, zijn er ook veranderingen opgetreden in de kenmerken van de migranten. Zo is het aanvaardbaar dat mannen blijven migreren op reeds min of meer gevorderde leeftijd, migreren er relatief meer getrouwde mannen, en gebeurt het vaker dat vrouwen hun echtgenoot vergezellen.

Migratie wordt tegenwoordig ook gezien in een lange termijn perspectief, en dit in dubbele zin. In de eerste plaats streven migranten een 'carrière' na in Ivoorkust: gedurende hun eerste migraties werken zij veelal als loonarbeiders, maar tijdens volgende reizen trachten zij wat wel genoemd wordt 'zelfstandige ondernemers' te worden, dat wil zeggen, grond te pachten voor de teelt van rijst, in deelpacht te werken op cacao- of koffieplantages of zelf grond te kopen. In dat laatste geval wordt op deze grond over het algemeen koffie en/of cacao geplant en het verwerven van zo'n plantage wordt beschouwd als de bekroning van een migratie-carrière. Zodra de plantage begint te produceren, worden verwanten van de eigenaar (jongere broers, zonen, zusters zonen en broers zonen) bij de exploitatie betrokken. Ten tweede wordt van mannen die op latere leeftijd migreren verwacht dat zij 'iets' opbouwen in het dorp zelf. Succesvolle migranten investeren in duurzame bezittingen zoals huizen met golfplaten daken en, vooral, vee. In landbouw wordt relatief weinig geïnvesteerd, hoewel in veel gevallen ploegen, karren en ezels betaald worden met inkomsten uit Ivoorkust. Het routine karakter van migratie naar Ivoorkust maakt verder dat zij weinig interfereert met landbouwpraktijken, met name op het gebied van het mobiliseren van arbeid en de verdeling van rechten op grond in het dorp. Dit betekent niet dat hier ontkend wordt dat migratie in de

voorgaande tientallen jaren wel degelijk bijgedragen heeft aan het handhaven van extensieve landgebruikspraktijken, en zelfs aan een verdere extensivering.

In hoofdstuk 6 ligt de nadruk op de integrerende aspecten van de huidige migratie naar Ivoorkust. Het volgende hoofdstuk begint met een discussie van hoe deze migratie eveneens gerelateerd kan zijn aan splitsingen van erven en productieëenheden en hoe de rechten op grond gekocht in Ivoorkust meer 'geïndividualiseerd' zijn dan de rechten op grond in de 'pool van territoria' zoals besproken in hoofdstukken 4 en 5. Vervolgens wordt migratie vanuit Ziinoogo naar het zuiden en westen van Burkina Faso in detail geanalyseerd, i.e. zowel 'spontane' migratie als migratie in de context van door de overheid geïnitieerde 'resettlement schemes'. In eerste instantie lijkt het alsof deze migratie begrepen moet worden in termen van een 'atomisering' van productieëenheden, met name omdat complete families gedurende lange periodes migreren zonder dat economische banden met de productieëenheden in het vertrekgebied lijken te blijven bestaan. Bij nader inzien, echter, blijkt dit een te overhaaste conclusie. Opnieuw blijkt migratie goed geïntegreerd te zijn in bredere verwantschapsnetwerken, zowel op plaatsen van bestemming als van vertrek. Aanvankelijk 'geatomiseerde' eenheden, kunnen op een zeker moment weer bij elkaar aansluiten (bijvoorbeeld door het gemeenschappelijk beheer van vee, door het feit dat de grond gebruikt in het zuiden of westen opgenomen wordt in de *yiiri's* 'pool van territoria', of via een cacao-en/of koffieplantage waar leden van zowel bedrijven in het zuiden of westen als van bedrijven in het vertrekgebied samenkomen). De cases gepresenteerd in dit hoofdstuk tonen aan dat migratie naar het zuiden en westen vaak niet permanent is. Doordat er dikwijls rechten op grond verworven worden op de plaats van bestemming voor de bredere verwantschapsgroep draagt zij niettemin bij aan een vermindering van de grondschaarste in het vertrekgebied. Hierbij dient wel opgemerkt te worden dat, door toenemende conflicten over grond met de autochtone bevolkingsgroepen en door het uitgeven van individuele eigendomsrechten in 'resettlement' gebieden, de mogelijkheden voor een verdere uitbreiding van de 'pool van territoria' in het zuiden en westen van Burkina Faso in de toekomst beperkt lijken.

Het verdienen van geld was in het verleden, en is ongetwijfeld nog steeds, een belangrijke motivatie van in het bijzonder migranten die vertrekken naar Ivoorkust, maar ook, hoewel in mindere mate, van de migranten in het zuiden en westen van Burkina Faso. Het achtste hoofdstuk behandelt hoe de verdiensten uit migratie worden besteed, en welke de gevolgen zijn voor de sociale relaties binnen het dorp en met de Fulbe van naburige nederzettingen. Migratie-inkomsten worden hoofdzakelijk geïnvesteerd in vee en, indien de middelen voldoende omvangrijk zijn, bij voorkeur in runderen. Het is ook in termen van het aantal runderen dat iemand bezit dat zijn rijkdom wordt geëvalueerd. Hoewel het niet tot uiting kwam in de gegevens verzameld via een survey in Ziinoogo, is er sprake van een differentiële accumulatie van runderen. Degenen die er in slaagden te accumuleren bleken het grootste deel van die runderen toe te vertrouwen aan Fulbe herders uit Péoukoy en Yalanga.

Niettemin wordt het dagelijkse leven in Ziinoogo gekenmerkt door regelmatige conflicten met diezelfde Fulbe over schade aan gewassen veroorzaakt door runderen en over de toegang tot waterbronnen. In deze conflicten treedt de bevolking van Ziinoogo eensgezind naar buiten in haar veroordeling van de Fulbe. In publiek hanteren de Moose van Ziinoogo bovendien allen een etnisch antagonistisch discours ten aanzien van de Fulbe, waarbij de belangen van Moose, geformuleerd in termen van gierst, als in conflict met de belangen van Fulbe, geformuleerd in termen van runderen, worden gepresenteerd. De analyse van de relaties tussen Moose en Fulbe zoals gepresenteerd in het publieke discours vertoont een grote overeenkomst met analyses zoals die naar voren komen uit wetenschappelijke literatuur over

deze relaties en over relaties tussen boeren en herders in het algemeen: onder invloed van het schaarser worden van de natuurlijke hulpbronnen en het uniformiseren van produktiesystemen (zowel Moose als Fulbe bewegen zich in de richting van agro-pastoralisme) is de economische en ecologische complementariteit tussen de beide bevolkingsgroepen verdwenen en zijn de onderlinge spanningen en conflicten toegenomen.

Een analyse van conflicten tussen Moose en Fulbe, zoals die in de eerste helft van de 20<sup>ste</sup> eeuw optraden, leert echter dat de frequentie van dergelijke conflicten waarschijnlijk niet is toegenomen en dat de aard van de conflicten niet veranderd is. Zonder te ontkennen dat concurrentie om het gebruik van schaarse natuurlijke hulpbronnen een belangrijke oorzaak is van het optreden van conflicten tussen Moose en Fulbe, kan niet zonder meer worden aangenomen dat er sprake is van een verslechtering van de relaties tussen beide groepen. Een nadere analyse van deze relaties, rekening houdend met de zogenaamde 'backstage' (niet-publieke) commentaren van zowel Moose als Fulbe levert inderdaad een ander beeld op. Moose vertrouwen hun rundvee toe aan Fulbe binnen het kader van min of meer geïnstitutionaliseerde vriendschapsrelaties (*zoodo*) gekenmerkt door onderling vertrouwen. Deze vriendschapsrelaties overstijgen het puur economische domein. Fulbe vrienden worden door Moose betrokken in huwelijks- en naamgevingsceremonieën en zo opgenomen in allianties die de etnische grenzen overstijgen. Gezien de toename van het rundveebezit bij Moose gedurende de laatste tientallen jaren, en gezien het feit dat deze runderen hoofdzakelijk aan Fulbe vrienden worden toevertrouwd, ligt het voor de hand te stellen dat het aantal particuliere vriendschappelijke relaties over de etnische grens heen is toegenomen.

Niettemin zetten ook de Moose die hun runderen toevertrouwd hebben aan Fulbe herders zich in het publiek af tegen diezelfde Fulbe, en bij conflicten verjagen zij, evenzeer als andere Moose, runderen en hun herders uit de buurt van velden en waterbronnen. In de laatste paragrafen van hoofdstuk 8 interpreteer ik dit gedrag, deze conflicten en de manier waarop zij geësceneerd worden in termen van een 'masker van gelijkheid' dat de Moaga gemeenschap naar buiten toe presenteert. Door het toevertrouwen van runderen aan Fulbe en door tegelijkertijd eensgezind naar buiten te treden naar diezelfde Fulbe tijdens conflicten, wordt de economische differentiatie, hoofdzakelijk tot uiting komend in gedifferentieerd bezit van runderen, versluierd. Het is dus belangrijk de retoriek van gelijkheid en van etnisch conflict niet te verwarren met werkelijke sociale relaties, zowel binnen de Moaga gemeenschap als over de etnische grens heen.

In het slothoofdstuk worden de bevindingen van het proefschrift gerecapituleerd, eerst in een meer naar buiten toe gericht perspectief (gezien vanuit het onderzoeksdorp) en vervolgens in termen van de 'produktie van lokaliteit'. Vervolgens wordt ingegaan op de implicaties van dit onderzoek voor beleid, in het bijzonder op het gebied van landhervorming en de integratie van landbouw en veeteelt. Er bestaat een tendens bij overheden en belangrijke donororganisaties zoals de Wereldbank tot het invoeren van wetgeving die de introductie van privé grondbezit zou toelaten. Echter, in tegenstelling tot wat in het verleden voorspeld werd, toont dit onderzoek dat de 'verdichting' van het landgebruik en het soms nagenoeg permanent in gebruik zijn van grond voor landbouw niet geleid heeft tot een soort van pseudo-privé bezit van grond. Flexibiliteit en het mengen en verschuiven van rechten op grond blijven kenmerkend voor het huidige landgebruik in de onderzoeksregio. Het zijn deze flexibiliteit en dit mengen en verschuiven die tegelijkertijd de verschillende processen van geografische mobiliteit toelaten, en door die processen gevoed worden. Introductie van privé grondbezit loopt het gevaar in hoge mate ontwrichtend te zijn. De rigiditeit die het met zich mee zou brengen zou zekere risico-mijdende strategieën, zoals die vandaag de dag door boeren worden

toegepast, hinderen en een belangrijk mechanisme voor sociale zekerheid van migranten ondermijnen. Het lijkt ook al te makkelijk te worden aangenomen dat privé bezit zal aanzetten tot investering in grond en tot intensivering van de landbouwpraktijken. Zolang landbouw in het gebied geen winstgevende onderneming is, en niet winstgevender dan migratie naar Ivoorkust, is er geen reden aan te nemen dat dit inderdaad zal gebeuren. De extensieve landbouwpraktijken vormen echter een probleem dat dringend aangepakt dient te worden. Immers, vandaag de dag is de bevolking van het onderzoeksgebied al te afhankelijk van de inkomsten uit migratie naar Ivoorkust en het zuiden en westen van Burkina Faso. De continuïteit van deze migraties is zeker niet gegarandeerd, afhankelijk als zij is van economische en sociale ontwikkelingen in de bestemmingsgebieden. Bovendien vraagt ook de relatie tussen pastorale en landbouwactiviteiten om aandacht, aangezien het niet te verwachten is dat de spanningen tussen beide zullen afnemen bij een toenemende druk op de natuurlijke hulpbronnen. In plaats van eenzijdig te kiezen voor de invoering van privé grondbezit, pleit ik voor een brede en flexibele aanpak die het mogelijk maakt rekening te houden met specifieke lokale situatie en die ruimte laat voor 'institutioneel experimenteren' op het gebied van de regeling van rechten op grond. Een dergelijke open benadering is des te meer noodzakelijk wanneer men rekening wenst te houden met de belangen van veehouders zoals de Fulbe.

Een geëigende weg om tot een intensivering van landbouw en veeteelt te komen is via hun integratie. In de slotparagrafen van het boek wordt een kritiek geformuleerd op het feit dat sinds de eerste ontwikkelingsinspanningen in de jaren veertig het accent eenzijdig gelegd is op integratie op het niveau van individuele productie-eenheden. Zonder hierbij tegen te spreken dat integratie op bedrijfsniveau aandacht verdiend, betekende deze eenzijdigheid een verwaarlozen van andere *loci* waar de articulatie van landbouw en veeteelt plaatsvindt, met name in de ontmoeting tussen Moose en Fulbe.

Een ontwikkelingsbenadering die rekening wenst te houden met risico mijdende strategieën van actoren, die bovendien de intensivering van het landgebruik wil stimuleren, en die wil bijdragen aan constructieve relaties tussen de etnische groepen, dient dan in de eerste plaats op verschillende niveaus in te grijpen. In het recente verleden werd reeds gepleit voor een aanpak op verschillende territoriale niveaus (de 'Gestion de Terroirs' benadering). Echter, een dergelijke benadering loopt het risico te stranden in onoplosbare contradicties, met name vanwege de moeilijk in elkaar te schuiven territoriale eenheden die van belang zijn voor respectievelijk Moose en Fulbe, en voorbij te gaan aan het belangrijke potentieel voor intensivering aanwezig in de articulatie van landbouw en veeteelt op het niveau van inter-etnische relaties. Bovendien toont dit onderzoek dat de territoriale concepties van Moose evenmin zo plaats- (e.g. dorps-) gebonden zijn als dikwijls wordt aangenomen. In plaats van voorrang te geven aan en te vertrekken van één of meerdere in elkaar genestelde of overlappende territoriale eenheden, wordt hier gepleit voor een benadering die meer gewicht geeft aan niveaus van sociale organisatie. Territoriale entiteiten waarop interventies ingrijpen zouden dan gaande weg vorm krijgen, het wordt mogelijk te ontsnappen aan het keurslijf van het dorpsterroir en men kan vertrekken van een meer 'realistisch' begrip van de regelingen voor toegang tot grond zoals die vandaag de dag bestaan.

## RESUME

### *Mouvements:*

#### *mobilité, pratiques d'utilisation des terres et pratiques pour pourvoir à la subsistance sur le Plateau Central du Burkina Faso*

Déjà au début du 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle, des voyageurs et des administrateurs coloniaux français ont attiré l'attention sur l'extrême sensibilité du Plateau Central au Burkina Faso à l'apparition régulière de calamités, telles que sécheresses et disettes, cela étant attribué aux densités de population relativement élevées et aux systèmes extensifs d'utilisation des terres. Il a également été remarqué à cette époque que la mobilité géographique de la population - entre autres en vue de coloniser des terres au delà des frontières des royaumes moose - a été d'une grande importance dans la régulation de l'équilibre entre la population et les ressources naturelles disponibles. Aujourd'hui, cette région est exposée à une grave dégradation environnementale et menacée par la progression du désert du Sahara. L'utilisation des terres continue d'être marquée par les pratiques extensives, et la population participe massivement à divers processus de mobilité géographique. Ainsi, des dizaines de milliers d'hommes et de femmes migrent chaque année vers les villes et les plantations de la Côte d'Ivoire. Et chaque année, des dizaines de milliers également reviennent chez eux. Des milliers ont quitté les provinces du nord du Burkina Faso et se sont installés dans le sud et l'ouest du pays. Chaque année, un nombre inconnu - souvent estimé comme étant élevé - de personnes se déplace à l'intérieur de régions plus réduites. Tous ces mouvements sont, chacun à sa manière, en relation avec les pratiques d'utilisation des terres dans les villages de ceux qui sont partis. Ce livre est le résultat d'une recherche sur l'interaction entre d'une part, les changements de pratiques d'utilisation des terres, et d'autre part, les changements dans les processus de mobilité géographique de la population du Plateau Central du Burkina Faso.

La région de recherche se situe dans la zone dite Soudano-Sahélienne, caractérisée par une courte saison pluvieuse d'environ quatre mois et par une pluviosité annuelle moyenne de 500 à 600 mm. La pluviosité varie fortement d'une année à l'autre et est souvent répartie inégalement, tant dans l'espace que dans le temps. Les Moose y représentent environ 80% de la population. Le reste est constitué par différents groupes minoritaires dont celui des Fulbe, avec environ 10%, est le plus important. Plus de 90% de la population a comme activités principales l'agriculture et l'élevage. Le sorgho et le mil sont les cultures les plus importantes et sont d'abord produits pour l'autoconsommation. L'élevage pratiqué par les Moose est basé essentiellement sur les chèvres et les moutons, tandis que les Fulbe, bien qu'également actifs dans l'agriculture, se concentrent surtout sur l'élevage bovin. Aussi bien l'agriculture que l'élevage sont pratiqués de façon extensive. Il y a peu d'investissements dans des engrais chimiques ou des semences améliorées de même que dans l'équipement agricole 'moderne' ou 'traditionnel', et la traction animale est peu utilisée. De plus, l'intégration de l'agriculture et de l'élevage est faible au niveau des exploitations, et le fumier animal n'est appliqué que sur les champs proches des concessions. Le bétail broute les pâturages naturels, les jachères et les champs récemment récoltés. Pendant la saison sèche, une alimentation complémentaire, par exemple par des graines de coton ou des résidus de récolte, n'est appliquée que dans une mesure limitée.



La dégradation environnementale, qui se manifeste entre autres par la disparition de la végétation, l'érosion des sols, la baisse des nappes phréatiques et par des récoltes mauvaises ou incertaines, est attribuée principalement à des facteurs humains: il y a un déséquilibre entre la production végétative et l'extraction depuis l'environnement des produits utilisés par les hommes et le bétail. La capacité de charge des ressources naturelles a été excédée, suite à l'accroissement de la population et des cheptels, en combinaison avec la persistance des pratiques extensives d'utilisation des terres. De plus en plus, les terres marginales sont exploitées et, afin de limiter le risque de mauvaises récoltes, les agriculteurs sèment plus de champs qu'ils n'en récoltent. C'est ainsi que l'espace cultivé s'est étendu plus vite que la population ne s'est accrue. Les pâturages naturels deviennent de plus en plus rares, et l'augmentation du bétail contribue à la dégradation de ceux qui subsistent, à cause de surpâturage.

Plusieurs auteurs affirment que les pratiques extensives d'utilisation des terres ont atteint leurs limites au Soudano-Sahel en général et sur le Plateau Central du Burkina Faso en particulier. Afin de rompre la spirale descendante de la dégradation environnementale, l'administration burkinabé, les bailleurs de fonds et les projets de développement se sont proposés de transformer les systèmes de production actuels en des systèmes durables - lisez plus intensifs. C'est pour cela qu'une approche multi-sectorielle et intégrée doit être poursuivie, i.e. à partir des années quatre-vingts l'approche dite 'Gestion de Terroirs'. L'accent y est mis sur une utilisation plus intensive de fumier et d'apports extérieurs (engrais, semences améliorées), sur la stabulation du bétail et la production de cultures fourragères.

Le manque de main-d'oeuvre, indispensable pour l'application des innovations envisagées, et les droits d'accès à la terre incertains, qui découragent les investissements dans la terre, sont souvent cités comme des obstacles majeurs à la transformation des systèmes de production. Le manque de main-d'oeuvre est attribué à la migration - des hommes jeunes, pour la plupart - vers, surtout, la Côte d'Ivoire. La migration aurait, en outre, comme conséquence que les divers arrangements d'échange de main-d'oeuvre tombent en désuétude. L'incertitude sur les droits d'accès à la terre a d'un côté comme cause l'existence simultanée d'une législation gouvernementale et du 'droit coutumier'. De l'autre côté, l'accès à la terre selon le 'droit coutumier' serait, pour de grands groupes d'utilisateurs (femmes, jeunes, Fulbe, étrangers), intrinsèquement incertain. La certitude de pouvoir utiliser le sol sur une longue période est considérée comme une condition *sine qua non* pour que les utilisateurs investissent dans la terre et pour qu'un processus d'intensification puisse démarrer.

La transformation des systèmes de production extensifs en des systèmes 'durables' et plus intensifs suppose une immobilisation des hommes ainsi que du bétail et des champs. Pour cette raison, et compte tenu de la diversité manifeste des processus de mobilité géographique dans lesquels les acteurs sont impliqués, j'ai décidé de ne pas d'office exclure de l'étude certains processus de mobilité. En outre, afin de mieux saisir la manière dont différents processus de mobilité s'emboîtent et se chevauchent, j'ai accordé aux données historiques une position centrale dans cette recherche.

Les acteurs principaux de ce livre sont les Moose et les Fulbe originaires de quelques villages de la partie septentrionale (la région du centre-nord) du Plateau Central du Burkina Faso. Pendant deux ans, de décembre 1993 à décembre 1995, j'ai réalisé un travail de terrain à Ziinoogo, un village moaga, et à Péoukoy et Yalanga, deux communautés fulbe voisines.

Le deuxième chapitre présente une introduction historique à la région de recherche. Sur base des récits des vieux de Ziinoogo, le développement du village est reconstruit depuis sa fondation jusqu'au commencement de la colonisation française à la fin du 19<sup>ème</sup> siècle. Il

apparaît que, durant cette première période, les processus de mobilité géographique étaient dirigés vers un nombre limité d'implantations, et Ziinoogo en était une. Une population relativement nombreuse cohabitait sur une surface réduite et utilisait la terre située dans l'environnement immédiat de l'habitat. Nonobstant le fait qu'ensuite la composition de la population de Ziinoogo changea suite aux immigrations, la domination coloniale entraîna une discontinuité remarquable dans les modes de mobilité: en plus des migrations vers la Gold Coast et la Côte d'Ivoire, un mouvement était déclenché vers la région au nord de Ziinoogo. Ce dernier mouvement est analysé sur base de compte rendu d'un certain nombre de litiges de terre, ayant eu lieu au cours des années vingt et trente le long de la frontière entre le Cercle de Kaya et celui de Ouahigouya, et où les habitants de Ziinoogo étaient fortement impliqués. Il est démontré que la 'pacification' coloniale ouvrait la région au nord de Ziinoogo et que la répression coloniale accélérail le mouvement de la population vers cette région. Plusieurs projets se sont rencontrés dans la colonisation des terres du nord. Premièrement, en s'installant dans des lieux qui échappaient au contrôle administratif, les gens tentaient de fuir les différentes exactions coloniales, par exemple en matière de main-d'oeuvre et d'impôts. Deuxièmement, la pression démographique avait monté au cours du 19<sup>ième</sup> siècle, et il y avait un besoin de nouveaux espaces agricoles. Des périodes relativement sèches poussèrent les gens à chercher ces terres 'vierges' dans les bas-fonds plus humides qui séparaient Kaya de Ouahigouya. Par ailleurs, ces mouvements vers le nord doivent être compris dans le contexte des rapports politiques entre les royaumes et chefferies avoisinants, dont les frontières étaient supposées correspondre plus au moins aux frontières entre les unités administratives coloniales. Les mouvements vers le nord eurent pour résultat une extension du territoire associé à la chefferie (*kombere*) de Piugtenga. Dans les villages nouvellement créés, comme Baskondo et Namissiguima, des chefs de village furent nommés par le chef de Piugtenga. De même, le groupe de parenté des fondateurs du village de Ziinoogo (les *tengbiise*) surent étendre le territoire qui était sous le contrôle rituel de leur aîné (le *tengsoba*, prêtre de la terre). Les aînés des groupes de parenté qui quittaient - en partie - Ziinoogo furent installés comme prêtres de la terre des territoires nouvellement défrichés. Finalement, les acteurs qui se déplacèrent pendant les années vingt et trente, établirent les bases du modèle complexe d'utilisation des terres tel qu'il existe aujourd'hui. Par l'occupation des terres du nord, non seulement ils parvinrent à échapper à la répression coloniale et à pouvoir à la subsistance de leurs familles, mais dans le même temps, ils assirent leurs droits sur ces terres pour eux-mêmes, leurs parents et leurs descendants.

Les Fulbe ne semblent avoir joué aucun rôle d'importance dans la colonisation des territoires au nord de Ziinoogo. Néanmoins, il est plus que probable qu'ils utilisaient depuis longtemps pour le pâturage de leur bétail les terres que les Moose considéraient comme 'vides'. Leur absence apparente dans les litiges de terre durant les années vingt et trente s'explique compte tenu de leur position marginale relativement aux droits d'accès à la terre. Ce point est explicité plus en détail dans les chapitres suivants. Même si il est difficile de tracer exactement la période d'arrivée des Fulbe dans la région, il n'y a aucun doute qu'ils ont connu une longue histoire dans le Piugtenga *kombere* et le royaume avoisinant de Rissiam. Les chefs de Péoukoy et de Yalanga sont intégrés dans la structure politique des Moose de respectivement Piugtenga et Rissiam. Dans le choix des lieux d'implantations des Fulbe intervenaient des considérations tant écologiques que d'ordre social et politique - en particulier la présence ou l'absence d'une attitude bienveillante de la part des chefs moose.

Les deux chapitres suivants détaillent plus profondément la manière dont le contrôle sur la terre et les droits d'accès à la terre sont réglés. A nouveau, une attention particulière est prêtée au développement historique de ces arrangements. Dans le chapitre 3, il est tout d'abord examiné si il existe une entité territoriale qui pourrait être considérée comme le terroir villageois de Ziinoogo. Contre toute attente, il apparaît que le *tengpeelem* qui relève de l'autorité rituelle du *tengsoba* ne constitue pas une telle entité. Le terroir villageois se présente plutôt comme un ensemble de territoires contrôlés dans une mesure plus ou moins grande par les groupes de parenté qui habitent Ziinoogo. Il n'existe pas à Ziinoogo un discours univoque concernant la distribution du contrôle des terres constituant ce terroir villageois. Il est cependant possible de distinguer un discours dominant qui est souscrit, dans ses grandes lignes, par tous les habitants moose. Selon ce discours, le terroir villageois doit être conçu comme une entité territoriale indivisible sous l'autorité ultime du *tengsoba*. Seuls les *tengbiise*, c'est-à-dire les premiers arrivants, sont en droit de revendiquer la disposition de ce qu'on appelle un *yaab ziiga*, littéralement 'place des ancêtres', que j'ai traduit par 'terroir de lignage'. Les *tengbiise* sont les uniques autochtones. Les autres villageois sont des descendants d'ancêtres qui ne s'établirent que plus tard au village, et sont des 'étrangers' qui ont obtenu la permission des *tengbiise* d'utiliser des terres. Suivant le discours dominant, des 'étrangers' n'ont pas d'accès aux terres sans l'autorisation préalable des *tengbiise*. Néanmoins, les terres qui ne sont pas utilisées à des fins agricoles sont en principe ouvertes à toute personne 'de bonne foi' et 'de conduite correcte', sans distinction entre villageois et non villageois. Cependant, pour savoir si une personne est de bonne foi et de conduite correcte, cette personne doit être connue quelque peu. Il apparaît ainsi que les habitants d'autres villages qui se voient accordé l'utilisation de terre à Ziinoogo ne sont jamais totalement étrangers. La présence de confiance est souvent exprimée en termes de relations de parenté ou de mariage et dans la plupart des cas, ce sont donc des cognats ou des membres d'une belle-famille qui demandent et reçoivent accès à la terre à Ziinoogo. Les résidents du village possèdent un droit à des terres suffisantes pour pourvoir à leur subsistance. La condition de 'conduite correcte', aussi bien de la part d'étrangers résidents que de non villageois, implique que le droit des *tengbiise* de retirer des terres attribuées antérieurement soit reconnu. Le plus souvent il ne s'agit alors pas du retrait en tant que tel du droit d'utilisation des terres à l'intérieur du terroir villageois, mais seulement du retrait d'une parcelle spécifique. En général, l'étranger pourra choisir une autre place sur le terroir et recevoir la permission d'y semer ses champs. C'est uniquement en cas de 'rivalité', le plus souvent à cause de femmes, que le droit à une place (*ziiga*) à l'intérieur du *yaab ziiga* des *tengbiise* sera retiré.

Bien qu'aucun des habitants de Ziinoogo ne nie l'autorité rituelle ultime du *tengsoba* sur le terroir villageois ni l'autochtonité particulière des *tengbiise*, il n'y a pas de consensus sur la signification de *yaab ziiga*. Plusieurs façons d'expliquer cette notion coexistent et permettent différentes interprétations du modèle d'utilisation des terres qui est inscrit dans le terroir villageois. Cela peut être mis en rapport avec les différentes significations attribuées au couple de notions *tengneba* (gens du village) et *saamba* (étrangers). Divers groupes de parenté de Ziinoogo revendiquent contrôler un *yaab ziiga* dans le terroir villageois et de pouvoir y décider de manière autonome de l'attribution des droits d'utilisation à des étrangers. Certains de ces groupes fondent une telle revendication sur leur présence au village depuis longtemps, et sur le fait que, dans le passé, leurs ancêtres ont été autorisés par les *tengbiise* de défricher des terres jusque là incultivées. Les membres de ces groupes de parenté se considèrent comme *tengneba*, ils considèrent Ziinoogo comme étant leur origine et son soi-disant 'autochtonisés'. D'autre part, les membres des groupes de parenté, qui contrôlent ou qui contrôlaient dans le

passé la chefferie, réclament la disposition d'un *yaab ziiga* constitué des terres que les *tengbiise* auraient cédées à leur ancêtre qui était le premier de leur groupe à occuper l'office de chef de village. Enfin, même ceux dont le groupe de parenté ne s'est installé que récemment au village entrevoient la possibilité d'un *yaab ziiga*, quoique pas pour eux-mêmes, mais projeté dans l'avenir pour leurs fils et petits-fils.

Ainsi, on peut concevoir le terroir villageois comme étant un ensemble de 'terroirs de lignage' de différents statuts. Ces statuts, dépendants dans une large mesure des moments d'arrivée au village des ancêtres des différents groupes de parenté, peuvent alors être compris comme étant établis par un 'principle of precedence' ou premier principe de séniorité.

Les forgerons (Saaba) du village sont exclus d'autochtonisation et, à première vue, leurs droits d'accès à la terre semblent précaires. Leurs droits d'utilisation sont pourtant reconnus et formulés en fonction de leur identité sociale spécifique, en référant aux mythes qui soulignent la complémentarité des *tengbiise* et des Saaba. Les Fulbe des villages voisins occupent également une position marginale vis-à-vis l'accès à la terre sur le terroir villageois de Ziinoogo. Suivant le discours dominant au village, les Fulbe sont considérés comme des étrangers par excellence, comme des gens qui, bien qu'étant restés sur place depuis plusieurs générations, reprendront à un certain moment leurs errances. Les conceptions territoriales des Fulbe diffèrent fortement des notions moose à ce sujet et sont exprimées dans un discours 'antagoniste' (contrairement aux interprétations alternatives de *yaab ziiga* proposées par les Moose non-*tengbiise*). Cet antagonisme de conceptions entre Moose et Fulbe peut être ramené à une opposition entre une philosophie basée sur des droits exclusifs à la terre, à laquelle adhèrent les agriculteurs moose, et la philosophie pastorale de libre accès des Fulbe. Cependant, si on dépasse le niveau du terroir villageois, on s'aperçoit que les Fulbe reconnaissent tout de même une entité territoriale, le Piugtenga *kombere*, qui pour les Moose aussi est pertinente.

Dans le quatrième chapitre, les stratégies d'utilisation des terres des acteurs, et les processus de mobilité géographique qui y sont relatifs, sont analysés à l'aide de quatre études de cas. Il devient vite clair qu'une meilleure compréhension de la distribution des droits d'accès à la terre à l'intérieur du terroir villageois demande que le premier principe de séniorité soit complété par un deuxième principe, celui de la séniorité à l'intérieur du groupe de parenté. En tenant compte de ce double principe de séniorité on peut alors discerner une 'hiérarchie de choix' dans laquelle chaque acteur a sa place. Chaque habitant du village a droit à suffisamment de terres de culture, mais le degré de contrôle que l'acteur exerce sur ces terres dépend de sa position dans 'l'hiérarchie de choix'. La distribution des droits d'accès à la terre se complique encore du fait du transfert de droits spécifiques du père au fils ou, formulé plus généralement, du chef d'une unité de production aux membres masculins de cette unité. Un tel transfert de *droits* d'accès à la terre ne doit être confondu avec un transfert de *parcelles* spécifiques. Bien qu'en conséquence de la croissance et de la diversification de la population villageoise le terroir villageois s'est progressivement fragmenté, cette fragmentation ne s'est pas produite d'une manière mécaniste et n'a pas entraîné une distribution nette de la terre, où des parcelles bien déterminées sont associées à des unités de production bien déterminées. En général, une parcelle spécifique est soumise à plusieurs revendications simultanées, n'ayant cependant pas toutes le même poids. De plus, ces revendications évoluent continuellement dans le temps. En effet, bien qu'un acteur préfère utiliser des terres cultivées antérieurement par le chef (le plus souvent le père ou le frère aîné) de l'unité de production dont il faisait partie (ce que j'appelle 'le lieu du père'; *baziiga*), plusieurs facteurs peuvent le détourner de son *ba ziiga*. Ainsi, si plusieurs années sèches se succèdent, il préférera ensemercer des terres

plus humides situées aux bas-fonds, qui ne font pas nécessairement partie de son *baziiga*. De même, des litiges de terre avec des villages voisins pourront rendre nécessaire l'exploitation de terres écartées du *baziiga*. Ou enfin, chacun ayant droit à des terres suffisantes, les besoins en terres des fils et leurs familles peuvent facilement dépasser les limites de leur *baziiga*, ce qui mènera à l'occupation d'autres parcelles de terre, soit toujours sous l'autorité de leur propre groupe de parenté, soit dont il faudra demander l'utilisation à d'autres groupes de parenté. C'est ainsi qu'au fil du temps, différents terroirs peuvent se chevaucher. Lorsqu'on considère le cas d'un membre d'un groupe de parenté qui occupe une parcelle de terre située sur le terroir d'un autre groupe de parenté, si cette occupation est poursuivie par ses fils et ses petits-fils, il est possible que ces derniers vont considérer cette parcelle comme appartenant à leur *yaab ziiga*, même si les membres de l'autre groupe de parenté voient toujours terre comme faisant partie de leur 'terroir de lignage'. C'est en fait une telle continuité d'utilisation de parcelles spécifiques qui pourra produire pour des 'étrangers' un 'terroir de lignage' inscrit dans le terroir villageois. S'enraciner dans le terroir villageois demande une relative immobilité des champs, ce qui explique partiellement l'existence de stratégies différentes selon le degré d'autochtonité des acteurs concernés. Les études de cas démontrent la mobilité remarquable des champs [et des concessions] des *tenghiise*, contrairement à l'immobilité relative des champs d'"étrangers". Dans beaucoup de cas, les étrangers ne déplacent leurs champs que sous une contrainte exercée par ceux qui contrôlent les terres qu'ils utilisent.

Les droits d'accès à la terre d'un acteur ne se limitent pas au seul terroir villageois qu'il habite. Les 'trajets d'utilisation des terres' que des acteurs individuels suivent dans leur vie sont souvent inscrits dans plusieurs terroirs villageois et ont une influence sur les trajets qu'autres acteurs peuvent suivre. Un acteur a effectivement un droit d'accès à la terre dans chacun des terroirs contrôlés par les membres de son *yiiri*. *Yiiri* se réfère dans ce contexte à un groupe de parenté patrilinéaire, géographiquement dispersé, mais lié à un autel ancestral particulier. Le degré de contrôle qu'un *yiiri* exerce sur la terre diffère d'un endroit à l'autre, et le droit d'accès à la terre d'un acteur dans un terroir villageois particulier dépend des droits que les membres de son *yiiri* y ont déjà établis ('principle of precedence'), de sa propre séniorité au sein du segment du *yiiri* à cet endroit, et de l'éventualité d'y avoir un *ba ziiga*. L'existence d'un tel 'pool de terroirs' constitue un facteur important dont on doit tenir compte si on veut acquérir une compréhension des processus de mobilité géographique et de la diversité des options ouvertes aux acteurs qui désirent ou qui sont forcé à se déplacer. Elle ne constitue évidemment pas une explication suffisante des mouvements des gens, qui ne peut être obtenue que par l'analyse des cas dans leurs contextes propres: les acteurs peuvent se déplacer d'un village à un autre ou au sein du terroir villageois quand ils sont appelés à occuper un office rituel, à cause de circonstances écologiques ou climatologiques (épuisement du sol, sécheresse), à cause de litiges de terre (entre villages ou groupes de parenté, entre 'étrangers' et 'autochtones'), etc.

Cependant, il y a des endroits, autres que ceux contenus dans le 'pool des terroirs' relaté au *yiiri*, vers où un acteur peut se déplacer et obtenir de l'accès à la terre. En effet, le *yiiri* constitue une entité sociale qui réduit l'attention aux parents paternels des acteurs. Dans le chapitre 5, l'accent de l'analyse est mis sur les relations de parenté maternelle, notamment par une discussion de différentes formes d'adoption' ('fosterage') et par une élaboration sur la relation entre l'oncle maternel (*yasba*) et le neveu maternel (*yagenga*). Souvent le neveu utilise des terres de son oncle maternel. Parfois, il a décidé de s'installer au village de son oncle après avoir été éduqué chez ce dernier. Dans d'autres cas, il se déplace vers son oncle et y reçoit l'accès à la terre après qu'un malheur, souvent relaté à des tensions sociales, lui est

arrivé dans son 'propre' village. Aussi, si des terres du terroir de Ziinoogo sont prêtées à des acteurs d'autres villages, il apparaît que ces derniers sont souvent des neveux maternels de ceux qui contrôlent les terres. Enfin, il est à noter qu'après un divorce ou après le décès de son époux, une femme peut retourner au village de son père et y établir une unité de production indépendante. Tout cela indique qu'une femme possède un 'droit submergé' à la terre contrôlée par son groupe de parenté paternelle. Ce droit peut être réalisé par la femme elle-même (en cas de divorce ou de décès de l'époux), ou bien par son mari ou ses fils. Traduit en termes utilisés dans le chapitre 4, cela revient à dire que chaque homme a un droit d'accès à la terre non seulement à l'intérieur du 'pool de terroirs' contrôlé par son *yiiri*, mais également chez son oncle maternel. L'existence d'un droit pareil rend le déplacement vers l'oncle maternel une option viable si il est décidé de quitter un certain endroit. Les droits d'accès à la terre du neveu maternel chez son oncle maternel dépendent des droits que le *yiiri* de son oncle maternel a su acquérir à cet endroit particulier, et du statut de sa mère dans ce *yiiri*. Ce statut est inévitablement bas, et, ainsi, la position du neveu maternel dans l'hierarchie de choix, prévalant au village de l'oncle maternel, sera inévitablement bas. Néanmoins, comme il est expliqué dans le chapitre 4, les neveux maternels peuvent, à la longue, se défaire de leur statut d'"étrangers". Ils peuvent 'autochtoniser' et en même temps acquérir un contrôle plus autonome sur la terre.

Le chapitre 6 est consacré dans sa totalité à la migration vers la Côte d'Ivoire, aux changements qui ont eu lieu dans ce mouvement au cours du 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle, et aux changements de la signification culturelle, sociale et économique de cette forme de mobilité dans la région de départ. D'abord, une histoire 'localisée' de cette migration est présentée en concentrant l'attention sur les années 1937-39. Durant cette période l'administration coloniale entreprenait des démarches pour libéraliser sa politique de main-d'oeuvre et tentait de déclencher une migration 'spontanée' à partir de la Haute-Volta vers la Côte-d'Ivoire. Les observations des administrateurs coloniaux relatives aux pratiques de recrutement de la période antérieure, et leurs analyses de la 'réussite' de la Gold Coast à attirer des migrants de la Haute-Volta - la migration vers la Gold Coast devait être détournée vers la Côte-d'Ivoire - font ressortir la politique coloniale d'une manière particulière. Les tentatives d'établir une migration 'spontanée' vers la Côte d'Ivoire se brisaient quand la deuxième guerre mondiale éclatait. Le recrutement forcé de la main-d'oeuvre n'était aboli qu'en 1946.

Dès lors, la Côte d'Ivoire devenait peu à peu, et aux dépens de la Gold Coast (et plus tard le Ghana), la destination la plus importante des migrants qui partaient de Ziinoogo. En général, les migrants étaient des jeunes célibataires. Les premiers migrants 'spontanés' de Ziinoogo quittaient pour la Côte d'Ivoire en passant par des centres de recrutement officiels. En Côte d'Ivoire la plupart d'entre-eux travaillaient comme salariés pour des employeurs européens sur des plantations ou dans la construction. Rarement ils y demeuraient plus d'un an. Ces migrations étaient entourées de secret: les migrants quittaient le village pendant la nuit et à l'encontre de la volonté de leurs aînés. A leur retour, ils dépensaient l'argent gagné en Côte d'Ivoire surtout à des articles pour usage personnel (un vélo, des habits, des petits ruminants), quoiqu'ils contribuaient également aux paiements des impôts et apportaient des cadeaux pour leurs parents. La migration ne conduisait pas à un prestige de longue durée ou à la possession de biens durables. Au cours des années soixante, le Ghana disparaissait complètement comme destination des migrants de Ziinoogo, et les centres de recrutement quittaient de la scène. Les hommes, ayant environ vingt ans à cette époque, commençaient des cycles de migration vers la Côte d'Ivoire (le plus souvent un an ou moins) qu'ils alternaient avec des séjours à Ziinoogo (un ou deux ans). Comme dans la période précédente ils étaient

employés en Côte d'Ivoire principalement comme salariés. La migration était considérée une aventure pour les jeunes. Cependant, il devenait plus accepté pendant les années soixante que des hommes migraient également après leur mariage, et parfois un homme partait ensemble avec sa femme pour sa dernière migration qui durait alors plus longue que ses migrations précédentes (de deux à quatre ans au lieu d'un an ou moins). Les hommes ne migraient plus dès qu'ils succédaient à la tête d'une concession ou d'une unité de production. Aussi bien entre deux migrations qu'après leur retour définitif au village, les migrants reprenaient leurs activités dans l'agriculture, où leurs pratiques n'étaient pas différentes de celles des autres. Ils n'investissaient pas leurs revenus de migration dans l'agriculture. L'argent était dépensé d'une manière pareille que dans les années cinquante. La migration ne s'inscrivait pas dans un projet quelconque de long terme.

Là où jusqu'aux années quatre-vingts la migration vers la Côte d'Ivoire demeurait dominée par les jeunes hommes célibataires, et de plus, pendant les années cinquante, et dans une moindre mesure pendant les années soixante-dix, était relatée à l'antagonisme entre les jeunes et les aînés, sa signification change sensiblement ensuite. Elle devient une dimension économique, sociale et culturelle de la vie villageoise dans sa totalité et ne constitue plus un sujet de dissension majeure entre jeunes et aînés. Les entreprises des migrants en Côte d'Ivoire (main-d'oeuvre salariée, location de rizières, plantation de cacao et/ou de café) sont aujourd'hui souvent bien intégrées aux unités de production agricole au village. Cela est exprimé, par exemple, dans la façon dont la main-d'oeuvre est répartie entre les différentes entreprises. A présent, la migration est également intégrée aux réseaux de parenté étendus et, la migration de jeunes hommes, antérieure à leur mariage, est considéré un élément de leur éducation. Non seulement la signification de la migration a changé au village, en même temps des modifications ont eu lieu dans les caractéristiques des migrants. Ainsi est-il accepté que des hommes continuent à migrer même à un âge déjà plus ou moins avancé, y a-t-il relativement plus d'hommes mariés qui migrent, et arrive-t-il plus souvent que des femmes accompagnent leurs maris.

Aujourd'hui, la migration vers la Côte d'Ivoire est située dans une perspective à long terme, et cela dans un double sens. Premièrement, les migrants poursuivent une 'carrière' en Côte d'Ivoire: pendant leurs premières migrations ils travaillent le plus souvent comme salariés, mais durant les séjours suivants ils cherchent à devenir des 'entrepreneurs indépendants', c'est-à-dire, ils aspirent à louer des terres pour cultiver du riz, à travailler comme métayers dans des plantations de cacao ou de café, ou à acheter des terres. En cas qu'un migrant réussit à acheter de la terre il y plante généralement des cacaoyers et/ou des caféiers. L'acquisition d'une telle plantation est considérée le couronnement d'une carrière de migration. Dès que la plantation commence à produire, des parents du propriétaire (des petits-frères, des fils, des neveux maternels) sont associés à l'exploitation. Deuxièmement, il est attendu des hommes qui migrent à un âge relativement avancé qu'ils construisent 'quelque chose' au village. Des migrants qui ont réussi investissent dans des biens durables, comme des toits en tôles et, avant tout, du bétail. Relativement peu est investi dans l'agriculture, bien que dans de nombreux cas les charrettes et les ânes ont été payés avec les revenus provenant de la Côte d'Ivoire. Maintenant que la migration a un caractère de routine, elle n'interfère que peu dans les pratiques agricoles au village, notamment dans les domaines de la mobilisation de la main-d'oeuvre et de la distribution des droits d'accès à la terre. Ce qui ne signifie pas qu'il est dénié ici que, pendant les décennies passées, la migration a contribué à la maintenance des pratiques extensives d'utilisation des terres et même à une extensification plus poussée de ces pratiques.

Dans le chapitre 6, les aspects intégrant de la migration contemporaine vers la Côte d'Ivoire sont accentués. Le chapitre suivant commence par une discussion de comment cette migration peut également être relatée à des divisions de concessions et d'unités de production, et de comment les droits d'accès aux terres achetées en Côte d'Ivoire sont plus individualisés que les droits d'accès aux terres du 'pool de terroirs' analysés dans les chapitres 4 et 5. Ensuite, la migration de Ziinoogo vers le sud et l'ouest du Burkina Faso est traitée en détail, c'est-à-dire aussi bien la migration 'spontanée' que la migration dans le contexte de programmes de colonisation agricole initiés par l'administration. Au premier abord, il semble que cette migration doit être comprise en terme d'atomisation' d'unités de production, notamment parce que des familles complètes migrent pendant des longues périodes, apparemment sans que des liens économiques persistent avec les unités de production dans la région de départ. Cependant, une telle conclusion risque d'être trop hâtive. Il se révèle que cette migration aussi est intégrée dans les réseaux de parenté étendus aux endroits de destination tant qu'aux villages de départ. Des unités initialement 'atomisées' peuvent à un certain moment se relier (par exemple par la gestion commune du bétail, par le fait que la terre utilisée dans le sud ou l'ouest du pays est incorporée dans le 'pool de terroirs' du *yiiri*, ou par la voie d'une plantation de cacao et/ou de café où les membres des entreprises du sud ou de l'ouest et de la région de départ se rencontrent). Les cas présentés dans ce chapitre montrent que la migration vers le sud et l'ouest n'est souvent que temporaire. Elle contribue néanmoins à une réduction de la pénurie de terres dans la région de départ, parce qu'à l'endroit de destination des droits d'accès à la terre sont obtenus pour le groupe de parenté étendu. Il faut pourtant noter que les possibilités d'étendre les 'pools de terroirs' au sud et à l'ouest du Burkina Faso semblent limitées dans l'avenir, vu les litiges de terre de plus en plus nombreux qui opposent les migrants aux populations autochtones, et la distribution de titres de propriété individuels dans les zones de colonisation agricole encadrées par l'administration.

Aujourd'hui comme dans le passé, en particulier les migrants qui partent pour la Côte d'Ivoire, mais également ceux qui se déplacent vers le sud et l'ouest du Burkina Faso, sont motivés entre autres par le désir de gagner un revenu monétaire. Le huitième chapitre traite le sujet de l'usage des revenus provenant de la migration et les conséquences de cet usage pour les relations sociales au village et avec les Fulbe des villages voisins. Les revenus de la migration sont investis principalement dans le bétail et, si les moyens sont suffisamment larges, de préférence dans des bovins. C'est également en termes du nombre de bovins qu'un acteur possède que sa richesse est évaluée. Bien que ne ressortissant pas des données réunies par une enquête à Ziinoogo, il y est question d'une accumulation différentielle de bovins. Ceux qui ont abouti à accumuler apparaissaient confier la plupart de leurs bovins à des bergers fulbe de Péoukoy et de Yalanga.

La vie quotidienne à Ziinoogo est cependant marquée par des conflits réguliers avec ces mêmes Fulbe, concernant des dégâts aux champs, causés par des bovins, et concernant l'accès aux points d'eau. Dans ces conflits, la population de Ziinoogo agit de concert et, en public, condamne unanimement les Fulbe. A l'égard des Fulbe, les Moose de Ziinoogo s'expriment en public par un discours ethnique antagoniste, dans lequel les intérêts des Moose, formulés en termes de mil, sont présentés comme étant opposés aux intérêts des Fulbe, formulés en termes de bovins. On constate une concordance remarquable entre, d'une part, l'analyse des relations entre Moose et Fulbe telle qu'elle est présentée dans ce discours public, et d'autre part, les analyses de ces relations, et des relations entre agriculteurs et éleveurs en général, telles qu'on les retrouve dans la littérature scientifique: en conséquence de la rareté de plus en plus grande des ressources naturelles et de l'uniformisation des systèmes



de production (aussi bien les Moose que les Fulbe se dirigent vers l'agro-pastoralisme), la complémentarité des deux groupes de population a disparu et les tensions et les conflits qui les opposent ont augmenté.

Cependant, l'analyse des conflits entre Moose et Fulbe, enregistrés dans les archives coloniales de la première partie du 20<sup>ième</sup> siècle, démontre que la fréquence de tels conflits n'a probablement pas augmenté, et que les objets des conflits sont restés pareils. Sans dénier que la compétition pour l'utilisation des ressources naturelles est une cause importante des conflits entre Moose et Fulbe, il ne faut pas assumer qu'il y a nécessairement question d'une détérioration des relations entre les deux groupes. Une analyse plus approfondie de ces relations, tenant compte des commentaires non-publics ('backstage') des Moose et des Fulbe, donne en effet une image toute autre. Les Moose confient leurs bovins à des Fulbe dans le cadre de relations d'amitié (*zoodo*) plus au moins institutionnalisées et caractérisées par une confiance mutuelle. Ces relations d'amitié dépassent le domaine purement économique. Par exemple, les Moose introduisent leurs amis fulbe dans leurs cérémonies de mariage et de baptême, et ainsi ces amis fulbe sont incorporés dans des alliances qui franchissent les frontières ethniques. Vu l'augmentation de la propriété bovine chez les Moose au cours des trois décennies passées, et vu que les bovins des Moose sont confiés principalement à des amis fulbe, il est fort probable que le nombre des relations amicales particulières au delà de la frontière ethnique a augmentée.

Néanmoins, même ces Moose qui ont confié leurs bovins à des Fulbe, se dressent en public contre ces Fulbe, et, en cas de conflit, ils chassent, autant que les autres Moose, les bovins des alentours des champs et des points d'eau. Dans les derniers paragraphes du chapitre 8, j'interprète cette conduite, ainsi que les conflits et la façon dont ils sont mis en scène, en termes d'un 'masque d'égalité' présenté par la communauté moaga vers l'extérieur. En confiant les bovins aux Fulbe et en se manifestant en même temps unanimement en public envers ces mêmes Fulbe en cas de conflits, la différenciation économique, s'exprimant principalement dans la propriété bovine différenciée, est dissimulée. Il est alors important de ne pas confondre la rhétorique d'égalité et de conflit ethnique avec les actuelles relations sociales, aussi bien au sein de la communauté moaga qu'à travers la frontière ethnique.

Le chapitre final récapitule les résultats de cette recherche, d'abord en termes d'une perspective orientée vers l'extérieur (à partir du village de recherche), et ensuite en termes de la 'production de localité'. Les implications de ces résultats pour la politique, notamment dans les domaines de la réforme agraire et de l'intégration de l'agriculture et de l'élevage, sont traités dans les paragraphes suivants. On constate une tendance au niveau des gouvernements et des bailleurs de fonds, comme la Banque Mondiale, d'établir des législations qui devraient permettre l'introduction de la propriété privée de la terre. Pourtant, contrairement à certaines prédictions formulées dans le passé, cette recherche démontre que la 'densification' de l'utilisation des terres, et l'utilisation des terres parfois quasi permanente, n'ont pas mené à une sorte de propriété pseudo-privée de la terre. La flexibilité et le mélange et le glissement des droits d'accès à la terre demeurent des caractéristiques de l'utilisation des terres dans la région de recherche. Ce sont ces caractéristiques qui permettent et qui en même temps sont nourries par les différents processus de mobilité géographique. L'introduction généralisée de la propriété privée risque d'être extrêmement disloquant. La rigidité qu'elle entraînerait, générerait certaines stratégies pour éviter le risque que les agriculteurs poursuivent actuellement, et ébranlerait un mécanisme important de sécurité sociale des migrants. Il semble qu'on assume trop facilement que la propriété privée incitera à des investissements dans la terre et à une intensification des pratiques agricoles. Il n'y a pourtant pas lieu d'assumer que de tels

changements se produisent effectivement, tant que, dans cette région, l'agriculture n'est pas une activité rentable, ou aussi rentable que la migration vers la Côte d'Ivoire. Cependant, les pratiques agricoles extensives constituent un problème qui doit être attaqué d'urgence. Car, à présent, la population de la région de recherche dépend grandement des revenus provenant des migrations vers la Côte d'Ivoire et vers le sud et l'ouest du Burkina Faso. La continuité de ces migrations n'est pourtant pas garantie, dépendante qu'elle est des développements économiques et sociaux dans les zones de destination. De plus, la relation entre les activités agricoles et les activités d'élevage demande également une attention particulière, attendu que les tensions entre-elles ne diminueront pas dans un contexte de croissance de la pression sur les ressources naturelles. Au lieu d'opter unilatéralement pour l'introduction de la propriété privée, il est proposé ici de poursuivre une approche suffisamment large permettant de tenir compte des situations locales spécifiques, et laissant ouverte la possibilité d'expérimentations institutionnelles dans le domaine de l'arrangement des droits d'accès à la terre. Une telle approche devient encore plus appropriée si on veut tenir compte des intérêts d'éleveurs comme les Fulbe.

Une approche propre à parvenir à une intensification de l'agriculture et de l'élevage est par leur intégration. Dans les derniers paragraphes de ce livre, une critique est formulée sur le fait que depuis les premiers efforts de développement rural dans les années quarante l'accent a été mis sur l'intégration au niveau des unités de production individuelles. Sans contredire que l'intégration au niveau des entreprises agricoles mérite de l'attention, cette partialité a significé que d'autres *loci* d'articulation de l'agriculture et de l'élevage ont été négligés, notamment celui où les Moose et les Fulbe se rencontrent.

Une approche de développement qui veut tenir compte des stratégies des acteurs pour éviter le risque, qui de plus veut stimuler l'intensification de l'utilisation des terres, et qui désire contribuer à des relations constructives entre les groupes ethniques, devrait alors intervenir à plusieurs niveaux. Dans le passé récent, la nécessité d'une approche d'intervention à différents niveaux territoriaux a déjà été plaidée (cf. l'approche 'Gestion de Terroirs'). Une telle approche risque pourtant d'échouer dans des contradictions insolubles, notamment en raison de la difficulté de faire correspondre ou d'emboîter les entités territoriales pertinentes pour les Moose et les Fulbe, et de négliger le potentiel important d'intensification, présent dans l'articulation de l'agriculture et de l'élevage au niveau des relations inter-ethniques. Cette recherche montre en outre que les conceptions territoriales des Moose ne sont, elle non plus, pas tellement fixées sur un endroit particulier (e.g. le village) comme il a été assumé souvent. Au lieu de donner la primauté à, et de prendre pour point de départ une ou plusieurs entités territoriales emboîtées ou chevauchantes, il est proposé ici d'opter pour une approche qui accorde plus de poids à des niveaux d'organisation sociale. Les entités territoriales sur lesquelles les interventions doivent avoir lieu émergeront alors progressivement, il devient possible d'échapper au carcan du terroir villageois et de tenir compte d'une compréhension plus 'réelle' des arrangements qui règlent l'accès à la terre.

## CURRICULUM VITAE

Mark Breusers was born on December 20, 1962 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He grew up in Belgium. From 1974 to 1980 he attended the 'Koninklijk Atheneum Etterbeek' in Brussels, where he obtained his *humaniora* degree. From 1980 to 1985 he studied electronic engineering at the Free University of Brussels (B.Sc. and M.Sc. degree). In 1985-86 he was research assistant at the University of Antwerpen. In 1986 he moved to the Wageningen Agricultural University, where he obtained his M.Sc. degree in tropical crop science in 1990. From 1991 to 1993 he had several short term assignments as research assistant at the Department of Rural Development Sociology of the Wageningen Agricultural University. During this period he participated in the writing and the editing of a book on the dynamics of agriculture on the Adja Plateau in Benin. In 1992 he followed a training in interdisciplinary research at ICRA in Montpellier, France. In March 1993 he started his PhD research on geographic mobility and land use practices on the Central Plateau in Burkina Faso. He did fieldwork in Benin, from July 1989 to January 1990 and again from February to May 1991, in Burundi, from July to October 1992, and in Burkina Faso, from December 1993 to July 1994 and again from November 1994 to December 1995.