‘Religion est un héritage’

A comparison of the religious practices between people in Mali and Malian migrants in the Netherlands

Wageningen University – Department of Social Sciences

MSc Thesis Chair Group: Rural Development Sociology

A comparison of the religious practices between people in Mali and Malian migrants in the Netherlands

May 2012

International Development Studies

Jorien van Lambalgen

Specialisation:
Rural Development Sociology

Supervisors:
Dr.ir. Gerard Verschoor
Dr. Hilje van der Horst

Thesis Code: RDS 80436

Acknowledgements

Besides the aim of making my master thesis, this research is meant as a contribution to the book of Janneke Barten about migration from Mali to the Netherlands. The book is a long term project, but the ambition and imagination are there. It was great to keep in mind that the material I gathered was maybe going to be used for other things than only my thesis. I want to thank Janneke for everything. She gave me the opportunity to work together on this complex but interesting topic in a very nice country. Her company in Mali helped me feel at home in Bamako very quick and together we met many wonderful people.

Making this thesis has been a long process. I want to thank my supervisors for their patience during my struggles with preparing the fieldwork and their support while guiding me through the process of writing the research. I learned a lot from it.

To all my respondents in Mali I am very thankful. For sharing their time, stories, ataya. Special thanks to Kama who brought me along to a marriage, gathered all her female relatives to braid my hair. To Tamba, my 'brother' who I could always call or ask for help. To Ali, for his kind greetings every day. To the family Bagayoko, for their hospitality.

My respondents in the Netherlands showed me the 'Dutch side' of Malian life. I want to thank them for the nice and interesting conversations and the Tabaski. It felt a bit like being in Mali again although they gave me very interesting new insights in Malian and Dutch life.

Homies, bedankt! For being my housemates in the cosiest student house of Wageningen. Melissa for the hours of finger painting as creative therapy, Kenny for his refreshing rice lunches, Jerôme for playing Doodle jump and sharing frustrations of thesis matters, Dick for knowing me so well and always listening to me, on the green bench and on the other side of the world. And regular visitor Jorrit, for ice skating, drinking zopie, and the many hours in the garden.

Finally I would like to thank my parents, for everything. Marloes and Arno, thanks for the warmth and many hugs. Christoph, thank you for your support, for sharing the thesis stress and for the very relaxing power naps on the fatboys in Forum.

Dankjewel – Thank you – Merci – I ni ce

Summary

This thesis makes a comparison of religious practices between people in Mali and Malian migrants in the Netherlands. The main question is how habitus and reflexivity are reflected in the religious practices of people in Mali and Malian migrants in the Netherlands. This can be an interesting addition for migration studies, because there is not much attention paid to the role of religion in the assimilation process and the possible change of religious practice after migration. This thesis can also be enrichment for the further exploration of reflexivity within the habitus theory of Bourdieu.

Habitus is usually defined as predominantly pre-reflexive. It is our pre-disposed way of thinking and acting in a social field. It requires a stable social field. For the case of migration, this field doesn't stay stable. Migrants undergo big changes and have to get used to a totally new environment. A time of crisis can trigger a reflexive way of looking at their formerly pre-reflexive practices. This thesis focuses on religious practices and views on being Muslim in Mali and the Netherlands.

In Mali it is found that religious practices are mainly pre-reflexive. Children are being raised with religious practices and in that way the religious practices are repeated and reproduced and incorporated in the habitus. Most Malian people I spoke to in Mali list the five pillars of Islam when asked about Islam and good Muslimhood. They do not really know what to say more about Islam. However, a couple of young men I spoke admitted that they do not always live up to this. Sometimes they drink alcohol. They know it is wrong but they justify their practices in such a way that they don't feel guilty. Contact with non-Muslim people or television programs are found to work as times of crisis.

In the Netherlands Malian migrants have pre-reflexive religious practices as well. They are mainly reflected in values and norms like taking care of the family, being good and helpful for all the people around them. They have different reflexive religious practices than the people still living in Mali. The act of migration caused a time of crisis after which they started reflecting on the meaning Islam has got for them. They practice less religious rituals than in Mali, but they justify this with saying that they are Muslim 'from the inside', that they 'really' believe in God.

The conclusions of this thesis are that the pre-reflexive religious practices Malian migrants are still showing are a product of their habitus. In a certain way this is reproduced in the Netherlands because there probably exist a similar social field for these practices. The reflexive practices have occurred because of various times of crisis, such as a lack of religious facilities in the Netherlands, living in Dutch society and conversations with Dutch non-Muslim persons. In Mali these times of crisis were only short, but in the Netherlands a long term disjunction between habitus and field occurred, which may have led to the change in reflexivity.

Glossary

Ataya	very strong green tea with sugar
Balimaya	Malian association in the Netherlands
Bamako	capital of Mali
Bamana	most widely spoken language in Mali
Chaleur	French for warmth (in this thesis 'warmth of the people')
Five pillars of Islam	1: being a monotheist and accept Muhammad as the Prophet of God, 2: doing the daily prayers, 3: aims giving, 4: fasting during Ramadan, 5: going on pilgrimage to Mecca
Fonctionaire	French for someone who has got an office job
Goudron	French for asphalt road
Gris-gris	an amulet which brings luck to the bearer and protects him from evil
Griot	West African oral historian
Haidara	Cherif Haidara, famous Muslim preacher from Mali
Ka'ba	cube-shaped building in the Big Mosque in Mecca, it is the most sacred site in Islam
Marabout	a marabout is a Muslim religious teacher combining knowledge of Islam with local 'traditional' practices
Nostalgie	French for nostalgia
ORTM	l'Office de Radiodiffusion Télévision du Mali: national radio and television
Sotrama	a Sotrama is the Malian word for a green van, modified for public transport in Bamako, approximately fifteen persons fit in and it brings the passengers along a fixed route. It is the cheapest way of public transportation in Bamako
Souvenir	French for memory
Tabaski	Festival of Sacrifice: celebrated by Muslims to memorize that Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son. This was a deed of obedience to God, but then God intervened and provided him a sheep which he could sacrifice instead

Table of contents

1. Introduction

In the first part of this chapter I describe the background of this study. I portray the prominence of migration, followed by a short historical overview of Islam in Mali. The second part on the theoretical framework consists of theories on habitus and assimilation; these are evaluated on the basis of their usefulness for the purpose of this thesis. The third part describes the methodology, research area and research group. Finally the outline introduces the four chapters which follow the introduction.

Problem statement

1.1 Mali, a country of migration

Twenty-one years ago, in 1991, the previous coup d'état in Mali commenced a period in which hundreds of thousands Malians left the country and migrated, mostly to other countries in West Africa (Findley, 2004). At the end of March this year, Mali was in the news again. Revolting soldiers took over Bamako (the capital of Mali) and ousted the regime in a coup. The mutineers were angry about the lack of weapons and support from the government for their fight in the north of Mali against the Tuareg (Hirsch, 2012). It might be that the recent coup d'état triggers an increase in outward migration again.

Mali has already got a long history of migration, dating back to the 4th century (Findley, 2004). This was and still is predominantly driven by drought in particular parts of the country, which causes a lot of migration within the country. According to the statistics of the Recensement Administratif à Caractère Electoral (RACE), there were around 925.000 Malians living abroad in 2001, which was 8,4% of the resident population (around 11 million at that time) of Mali. Of this number, approximately 745.500 Malians live in other African countries (CARIM Project, 2010, data from 2001). Within Europe, most Malian migrants can be found in France, their former colonial nation: around 120.000 Malian migrants live in France (Findley, 2004). The numbers however, are uncertain. CARIM Project speaks of other sources which estimate 2,7 million in 2001 or even 3,8 million in 2005. The estimations are hard to make, since there is also a significant number of Malians living illegally. But what is clear, is that most Malians migrate to other countries in West Africa, mostly Côte d'Ivoire and only a small number leaves the African continent. The number of *im*migrants in Mali is rather small. Less than 2% of the population comes from outside Mali.

The migration from Mali to other countries is mainly caused by poverty and demographic pressures (CARIM Project, 2010). The per capita gross national product of Mali is very low, compared to all other countries in the world. The lack of working opportunities forms a strong

economic push factor for migrating in order to look for work and a better future (Findley, 2004).

According to Findley (2004) the pressure to migrate will continue due to the conflicts on the borders. Probably the recent coup d'état can be added to this continuation of migration. Findley states that the pressure to migrate is coming from individual families, who benefit from the migration by the money which is often send to them. Also the government of Mali is not discouraging the migration, due to the value of all remittances sent back to Mali which benefit the government as well (Findley, 2004).

When zoomed in at the family level, the new income and compositions of the families are found to change the family dynamics in urban Mali, as is studied by Barten (2008). There is a tendency of individualism noticeable in urban Mali, Malians who feel obliged to take care of the family and contribute financially, would like to take a distance from the family. This is sometimes literally done by migration from Mali to Europe or from the tight Malian communities in France to the Netherlands. The increase of individualism might be seen as an extra reason to migrate, next to the dominant reason to find work and earn more money than would be possible in Mali (Barten, 2008). The tendency for individualism can be further increased by migration, because the lack of social pressure, in for example the Netherlands, makes it easier for them to make individual choices. The lack of social pressure might have influence on religious practices as well. It seems likely that a lack of social pressure has consequences for religious practices. However, the influence of migration on changing perceptions of religion is still poorly studied. With regard to the current debates on migration and Islam, it would be informative to know more about the possible consequences migration has on changing perceptions and practices of religion.

Nowadays there is much attention for Islam, especially in relation with integration. But the reports on assimilation of Muslim migrants are often very one-sided and focus only on the receiving country. Especially in the case of Mali, almost nobody in the Netherlands knows how (and which) religion is practiced in Mali, and that, for example, most Muslim women don't wear head scarfs. Because the number of Malian migrants living in the Netherlands is quite small (a couple of hundred) compared to, for example Moroccan migrants, it is interesting to study the sudden transition Malian migrants experience when they do not stay in a Malian community anymore. Only when knowing the background of a religious migrant, it is possible to say something about his or her religious practices in the Netherlands and what it means to this person. After the recent coup d'état, an increasing number of Malians might come to the Netherlands. Even though the number of future migrants is very uncertain due to the closing of borders and stricter immigration policies, it is likely that migrants find a way around it. It is important to know what is changing about the Malian religious views and practices when they come to the Netherlands. The last few years very negative and generalizing messages are being spread by the Dutch politician Geert Wilders and these messages do have an effect on the perception of the Dutch population about Islam and Muslim migrants. Wilders says for example that the 'ghost of Islam' is haunting Europe, and that the Qur'an evokes violence (van der Vaart, 2010). His judgements should be taken very seriously since his political party and views are very popular in the Netherlands. But his judgements are very generalizing. There isn't such a thing as one Muslim community and one way of being Muslim. Therefore it is relevant to look at the views on religion of individuals, by listening and getting to know their own story and possible new experiences of being Muslim from the time they came to live in the Netherlands. In the case of Malian migrants it is especially interesting to look at the effect of migration on their religious beliefs, because

they do typically not arrive in a community of Malians. It is interesting to study what happens to their religious beliefs after such an abrupt transition. They have to deal with specific situations in which they cannot rely on their community or family. Therefore their familiar environment in Mali and the effect of migration on their religious practices should be studied. The abrupt transition might accelerate assimilation, or slow it down. And changing views on religion might lead to assimilation, or prevent it. Research about the specific cases of Muslim migrants - their background and their views on religion after migration - can clarify this and prevent generalisation about Muslim migrants and their religious practices in the Netherlands.

In order to understand the religious practices of Malian migrants in the Netherlands, it is relevant to explore the background of Islam in Mali. In the next paragraph I go back to the beginning of Islam in Mali and continue with the more recent developments regarding Islam in Mali.

1.2 Islam in Mali

Islam in West Africa was introduced around the eleventh century. In the region of contemporary Mali at that time, the combination of traditional and Islamic religious tradition was very important. The epic tale of Sundiata and Soumaoro illustrates this. In their contest of power, Sundiata wins and he is being portrayed as 'good', because he embraced Islam, Soumaoro was portrayed as 'evil' because he trusted on witchcraft. In the urban area it was very important to have Islamic traditions, but also traditional background for the rural area. Sundiata had this ideal mix (Gilbert and Reynolds, 2004). The leadership of Sundiata and the good position on the trade routes from north to south, turned Mali into one of the wealthiest states in the world and with the increased contact with Muslims in the north, the influence of Islam increased as well. In the sixteenth century they lost control over their resources and trading routes and a new state was established: Songhai. This state was actually still controlled by what we would now call 'Malians', since the new rulers were inhabitants of Gao, a city in the north of Mali. However, the new leaders lost legitimacy by not praying in public and drinking alcohol. The influence of the urban Muslim population had grown and they decided that the new leader was not a good Muslim and thus he couldn't be a rightful ruler. The government had to meet Islamic standards and this led to an increase in Islamic schools (Gilbert and Reynolds, 2004). First, Islam occurred within the leaders and successful traders. People in political and economic power were the first ones who got converted, only much later followed by the poorer people and those living in rural areas. But the conversion didn't rule out nor replace traditional African religions. They blended in with each other and were used just whatever religious practice was applicable in a certain situation (Gilbert and Reynolds (2004). In the colonial era (after 1880) many people converted to Islam and the majority of them did so in order to be part of the Muslim identity: they prayed, had certain dress codes and food prescriptions (Schulz, 2006).

Only in the twentieth century, Islam had become the major religion in Mali (Soares, 1999). It is estimated that 70 to 90% of Malians population is Muslim and around 30% is non-Muslim, although the estimations are hard to make, there exist a big variety of discourses and practices. Concerning Muslims, they are broadly divided in three groups: Sufi's, Sunni's (who try to live up to the 'correct' way of practicing Islam as is done in the Arab Middle East), and one which is developed in the post-colonial period (Soares, 1999). The French colonizers tried to limit the influence of the Sunni's (and therefore the influence of the Arab world) by supporting marabouts[1] (associated to Sufi's). In that way marabouts got influence on the

[1] A marabout is a Muslim religious teacher combining knowledge of Islam with local 'traditional' practices

'construction of Islam as norm of public order' (Schulz, 2006, p. 212). Soares' experience in Mali leads him to define an own description of 'the Malian Muslim', as far as it is possible to speak of this:

> 'Most Malian Muslims are neither formally affiliated with any of the Sufi orders nor especially enthusiastic about the Sunni. In Mali, there is increasingly a more generally shared (though hardly uniform) sense of being Muslim and a commitment to Islam as a religion that has developed in the postcolonial period, which allows Muslims to imagine themselves as part of the global Islamic community' (Soares, 1999: 229).

According to Soares (1999) most Malian Muslims object to some of the un-Islamic practices (like spirit possession). These kinds of practices have probably been influenced by Islam in their turn, but it should be pointed out that there are tensions between the viewpoints. Regarding politics, the last two presidents favoured a secular constitution and they wouldn't let prominent Muslim leaders come close to their political leadership (Schulz, 2006).

Schulz (2006) reports that in the past twenty years there is an upcoming of new kinds of religious leaders. They use the restructuring of the individual moral as a promotion of Islam. Schulz notes that, besides the already very visible symbols of Islam in Mali (like mosques, reformed schools, and Islamic welfare associations), the Islam is very present in the media. Especially because local radio stations became easier to establish after the introduction of the multiparty democracy of 1991, religious leaders saw their chance to spread their religious messages to all Malians (Schulz, 2006: 210).

There isn't one general form of Islam, but as is being explained before, there are roughly three groups. These have got aspects of traditional African beliefs. Overall Islam in Mali might be functioning as a group identity, to be part of the Muslim identity (Schulz, 2006) and global Islamic community (Soares, 1999). But when a Malian person migrates, what happens to his or her religious identity and practices? And how does this work out for a migrant after a longer period of time? Does he or she get totally used to a new environment, does he or she keep certain habits or adapt them to new situations? Some things can't be changed that easily – habits that you didn't know you had them, and while being in your own country you didn't realise you were doing them. Like the way of communicating, making appointments (or, in the case of Mali, making hardly any appointments at all). This is just something that you're not thinking about or even knowing that there is another way of doing it. The same goes for religion in Mali. The great majority living in the capital Bamako is Muslim (around 90%). It is taken for granted, everyone is practicing religion (praying, going to the mosque), facilities and work are being adapted to it. But what happens to a Malian person migrating to Europe? He or she is getting confronted with a society in which Islam is not part of everyday life for most people. How do Malian migrants deal with this abrupt transition?

1.3 Personal motivation

Regarding Islam as one of the biggest and most talked-about religions in the world, it seems to be relevant to consider the relationship between religion and migration in order to avoid generalisation. I find it very disturbing that influential politicians, like Geert Wilders, generalise 'the Muslim population' without being strongly contradicted. The country Mali is not very well known in the Netherlands and (before the coup d'état of this year) I rarely read about it in the newspaper. In contrast, Islam is a thoroughly studied phenomenon and the newspapers are full with it, but what do we know about it really? Stories about migration… People do not just leave their houses without reason. When they are going to migrate, it will

be preceded by a process of preparation. But probably no preparation does exist in order to know exactly what will happen. They will be confronted with a new country and culture, and in the case of Mali and the Netherlands, with a 'new' religion. I have a lot of admiration for people who take this huge step into an unknown and uncertain new life. Regarding Muslim migrants, the current negative view it gets in the media is too generalizing and not fair. With this thesis I would like to describe the practice of and view on religious practices of Malian Muslim migrants. And these stories can provide, in combination with the background of religious practices I encountered in Mali, a specific case of the religious experience of Muslim migrants in the Netherlands.

Theoretical framework: theories on habitus and assimilation

Sociology is about how people live together and how people deal with changes in their social environment and social lives. How do they cope with this? What strategies do they use in order to adapt to change? The concept of people living together and having particular habits and behaviour can be explained by Bourdieu's theory of the habitus and the field. However, habitus is a rather static concept. Assimilation theory could perhaps also contribute to the understanding of the changing social environment which people experience because of migration and how this evolves over time. In this chapter I discuss the habitus theory of Bourdieu and the overview of assimilation theories of Sweetman. By reflecting the usefulness of the theories for explaining religious practices and cultural change I decide which one is most useful in order to build my research question.

1.4 The habitus theory

In relation to my subject I selected only a small piece of Bourdieu's work that could contribute to an understanding of people's religious practices and how these might change when an individual migrates from one country to the other, in this case, from Mali to the Netherlands. I will start with explaining his concepts of 'habitus' and 'field', before moving to a more specific part of that theory: 'pre-reflexive' and 'reflexive' habitus.

Habitus and field

According to Pierre Bourdieu, you could use the word 'field' to describe the social space people live and act in. And the way people cope with and perceive things happening in a field, Bourdieu would call 'habitus'. But this is a quite rough way of explaining the concepts. Let's start with Bourdieu's original definition of 'habitus':

> 'Habitus is a system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them an, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor.' (Bourdieu, 1977: 72)

Since Bourdieu's definition for 'habitus' has been written in very abstract language, I will try to explain it using more basic language. According to Bourdieu:

> ‘Habitus refers to our overall orientation to or way of being in the world; our predisposed ways of thinking, acting and moving in and through the social environment that encompasses posture, demeanour, outlook, expectations and tastes.’ (Sweetman, 2003: 532)

Habitus is also about our physical being: the way we talk, walk, and eat. It is a product of our upbringing, of being in a social field, of our class. It makes that everyone has got certain habits, which are produced by reproduction and repetition. These habits allow us to live in the various social fields that we are part of (Sweetman 2003). But it depends on the habitus a person has, in which field this person will feel at ease. The definition Bourdieu (1990) gives to field in relation with habitus is:

> ‘Habitus operates – or realizes itself – in relation to field, each field representing a relatively distinct social space – occupational, institutional, cultural – in which more or less specific norms, values, rules, and interests apply.’ (Sweetman 2003: 533)

In other words, Bourdieu reckons field as a social *space*, instead of a social *place*. This means that a field is not being defined as a tangible field, and in relation to this thesis, not a country. It is more abstract, something people have in common. You could say that the continuity of habitus is being formed by the specific norms and values in a social field of people who live and are raised in the same environment. In this sense place does matter as well, especially when they leave their familiar environment, which is the case when someone migrates, to a place where there are different fields, and thus different norms, values, rules and interests. Religion, and in relation to my research, Islam in particular can be called a field.

You could discuss about the extent to which religion and Islam are one field or multiple. Assuming religion is one field, then Islam is seen as one. In the context of migration, trans nationalism has to be taken into account and we should realise that people are moving to places where religion has got a different role in society. Thus, when you consider there are multiple fields of religion, you can compare the different fields, and confront them with each other by talking with the people who experience both. However, when taking religion as one field, it allows you to study the possible tension within a field, within a certain religion that can take many forms, depending on the environment in which it’s placed. The migrants still have the religion they grew up with, but they might see it in a different way after moving outside the environment in which the religion is incorporated. For this thesis I choose to consider the religious field as one single field.

Pre-reflexive habitus

The predisposed way of people moving through and thinking about this world refers to a habitus in a pre-reflexive state. Bourdieu reckons this as being the dominant state:

> ‘Habitus is predominantly or wholly pre-reflexive, however; a form of second-nature, that is both durable and largely unconscious, and which is disproportionately weighted towards the past’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 133)

Because of our past, we don’t think about how we talk, eat, and walk. And while you stay in the same social fields and behave in the same way, the habitus will be reproduced (Sweetman 2003). The habits that we have are physically part of ourselves and it became like that, because other people around us are doing the same. This may seem quite a deterministic view

- critics also argued that it looks like a closed loop: structures which are producing the habitus, habitus which generates practices, practices which reproduce the structures and then starting all over again (Sweetman, 2003). This criticism was not shared by everyone, Sweetman describes how several authors suggest that habitus is not *that* fixed, just like the practices that are structured by the habitus. Habitus should thus be seen as an underlying base of practice, instead of the only determinant. It could also be called a pre-objective framework for practice. Habitus should be conceived as a generative structure: several patterns of behaviour are possible, although limited in diversity. Bourdieu states it is like someone is playing a game and when the person knows the game well, he will know what to do at every moment of the game (Sweetman 2003). This implies a pre-reflexive habitus. Furthermore, stable social conditions are required so that people's social identities allow 'a sustained, coherent, and relatively secure relationship between habitus and field' (Sweetman, 2003: 541). Stable social conditions and stable social identities are generally already established for a long period. The house and family where a certain person is being raised and being taught norms and values are very important environments for pre-reflexive practice. Especially in extended families a certain stability is developed around a group of people that stays the same over a long period of time. There are predisposed ways of thinking which are part of social fields. People ought to behave there according to the norms, values and rules of that particular field. When someone is brought up with these kinds of social rules they will help someone feel at ease in the social fields where he or she moves.

Becoming reflexive

But what if big changes are coming up and taking place, for example when you leave the environment you know really well, the social field you know how to behave in, although you're probably not thinking about it? When you move to a place that is totally unknown for you, with people who are behaving in a different way, then the pre-reflexive state of your habitus is probably getting a big wake-up call. Or in other words, the pre-reflexive state of an individual becomes ill-at ease (Sweetman, 2003: 546). The person is going to reflect on his/her previous pre-reflexive behaviour and perhaps after a while, change their reflexivity to the new situation: environment and reproduced habits of other people. The person might move from a pre-reflexive habitus towards reflexivity on practices which were previously pre-reflexive. Does Bourdieu reckon there is reflexivity next to a, according to Bourdieu, dominant pre-reflexive habitus?

Bourdieu states habitus is limiting reflexivity in two ways, at least. First, the habitus is embodied and cannot be grasped consciously, so habitus cannot be transformed in a voluntary way. Second, in a way, habitus is irreversible and actions are still guided by the habitus, even actions that look like they are strategic, may in fact be guided by the habitus (Bourdieu in Sweetman, 2003: 535). Partly I can agree with his way of thinking, I think the part deciding and acting in a pre-reflexive way is well thought of. However, when he states that habitus cannot be transformed voluntarily, I think that in certain situations he might be underestimating people's mindfulness in observing and realising what the differences are between the known and unknown fields they encounter and how they want to be part of it – which habits they like to preserve and which habits they consider to adapt. Reflexivity is indeed not totally ruled out by Bourdieu:

> 'Times of crisis, in which the routine adjustment of subjective and objective structures is brutally disrupted, constitute a class of circumstances when ... rational choice may take over, at least amongst those agents who are in a position to be rational.' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 131)

In such a period ‘reflexivity is both cause and symptom of the failure of immediate adaptation to the situation and it engenders a temporary disjunction between habitus and field’ (Sweetman, 2003: 541). ‘Times of crisis’; it could very well be a description of the process of migration, especially intercontinental migration, because it will be a life altering happening in the lives and life worlds of migrants. They do get confronted with the differences between their former and new life worlds or fields ánd, most important in the context of this thesis, they can reflect upon this. Someone from Africa may have seen Europe on television, but as long as you haven’t been there yourself, you cannot know how it will be when you are physically there. It’s the same the other way around. We cannot know how it will be in a certain country in Africa, until we are really there. Especially in the beginning we will get confronted with many different habits, different ways of organisation and different culture. On a smaller scale, times of crisis can refer to daily life as well. Like a Dutch girl talking and discussing with Malian people, or discussion about a television show dealing with religious questions. In these kinds of cases pre-reflexive habitus could move to reflexivity due to small but significant times of crisis.

Since habitus generates practices, a pre-reflexive habitus produces pre-reflexive practices, like the way someone talks, eats, walks. After a time of crisis someone can become reflexive about the pre-reflexive practices and might produce reflexive practices in order to adapt to the rules of the new social environment. Adapting to rules of the environment comes very close to theories of assimilation which I discuss in the next paragraph.

1.5 Assimilation theory

Assimilation theories might contribute to an understanding of the effect of migration on people’s (religious) behaviour. Whereas habitus mainly deals with reproduction, assimilation focusses on change. Once, assimilation was the unquestioned concept for immigration processes in the field of sociology of ethnic relations. The study of Alba and Nee (1997) argues that assimilation theory is, despite the many critiques it received, still a very useful framework for the study of contemporary migration. In their article they give a canonical account of assimilation theories of which the work of Milton Gordon is discussed most extensive. The straight-line assimilation theory popularized by Gans and Sandberg serves as another big part of the canonical account. Considering recent developments of migration and assimilation research, Alba and Nee (1997) come up with a renewed definition of assimilation in order to render it useful in the study of the new immigration. Throughout the overview of assimilation theories I refer to the article of Alba and Nee almost without exception, because it provides such a complete overview of assimilation authors, their views, and the criticism on it.

Milton Gordon’s assimilation theory

Park and Burgess (1969) gave a definition of assimilation already in 1921. According to them assimilation is ‘a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life’ (cited in Alba and Nee, 1997: 828). This definition is being discussed, criticized, and adjusted many times. It is argued that it would miss the required notion of assimilation that ethnic origin and its signs would be erased totally (Alba and Nee, 1997).

The confusion about the wide variety of theories and concepts of assimilation was solved by Milton Gordon. He introduced a multidimensional formulation of assimilation inspired on American society. The most important distinction he makes is between ‘acculturation’ and

'structural assimilation'. With structural assimilation he means that people from the ethnic minority start having primary group relationships with the majority group. A limitation can be seen here immediately, which is that he doesn't integrate the concept of assimilation in large social processes. He focusses on the so-called micro-sociological level (Alba and Nee, 1997). But let's first go back to Gordon's concepts. He reckons acculturation comes first, which means that the minority group adopts cultural patterns of the receiving society, like values, rules and emotional expression. He makes a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic preferences. Intrinsic preference, like religion and music tastes, is an important part of cultural heritage. Extrinsic preferences are less central to group identity, because these are a product of what happened to the minority group during the acculturation process. About the intrinsic traits, and thus religious taste, Gordon didn't think of the implications it could have (Alba and Nee, 1997).

On the way from acculturation towards more complete assimilation, structural assimilation could work as a catalyst, according to Gordon. He argues that when assimilation has occurred on a structural basis (the entrance of the minority group into the social cliques, clubs and institutions of the core society at the primary group level), it will be followed by all other assimilation types (Alba and Nee 1997: 830).

Strengths and weaknesses of Gordon's theory

The measurement of assimilation was put on the individual level. It doesn't take the multi-group nature of American society into account, neither it considers the possibility of relationships between members of ethnic minorities. It doesn't tell how immigrants deal with the interplay of two or more cultures. Later authors, such as Alba and Nee, admit in their paper the importance of interaction between the group/community level and the individual. The ethnic change of an individual might even be influenced and decided by the community context. Another critique is that Gordon regards acculturation as a one-way process: the minority group adapts to the host culture while the receiving country's culture remains practically unchanged (Alba and Nee, 1997:830). In his definition it is assumed that only minority groups can assimilate, not majority groups.

The strength of Gordon's theory lies in his view of assimilation as a process that is being arranged in stages. The stages of acculturation indicate a gradually change and when structural assimilation is taking place, it indicates a certain maturity of the assimilation process (Alba and Nee, 1997: 831). However it lacks a framework to explain *how* the cultural changes happen: what do immigrants find important of their culture, what do they want to keep and how do they adjust certain practices. This relates to the most important limitation of the theory: it lacks a causal theory of assimilation. How does the process of assimilation work? It doesn't tell. Why and how do people assimilate, by what forces are they driven? Which practices do they include or exclude from the process. Also the dimension of socio-economic assimilation is being overlooked (Alba and Nee, 1997:835). He contributed to a multidimensional framework in which he brings together several theories, but he didn't include the causality behind, while the causality is important for my research.

Gordon's attempt to erase confusion about the conceptual framework of assimilation with his multidimensional formulation didn't quite satisfy Alba and Nee. In most general terms and after discussing the old and newer conceptions about assimilation and acculturation, Alba and Nee give the following definition of assimilation:

> ‘Assimilation can be defined as the decline, and as its endpoint the disappearance, of an ethnic/racial distinction and the cultural and social differences that express it.’ (Alba and Nee, 1997: 863)

The definition Alba and Nee give is not stating whether the majority group is involved and thus if the assimilation is either one-sided or mutual. So it suggests it is possible that also the majority group experiences change. This is also depending on the aspect of group difference. For example language is not likely to change much. Local cuisine on the other hand, might be influenced more. (Alba and Nee, 1997)

In a similar way the straight-line theory of assimilation was being criticized which I discuss shortly.

Straight-Line Assimilation

In the seventies Gans and Sandberg popularized the term ‘straight-line assimilation. It is based upon the idea that with every generation of an immigrant family, a step of further assimilation is taken. Each generation takes a new step toward adjustment to the receiving country (Alba and Nee, 1997). In response to the straight-line assimilation, critics argue that ethnic change is not only imported by immigrants, but also by conditions of the host society that have nothing to do with culture. Also the impact of historically specific changes is overlooked. Gans (1997) himself accepts these critiques, he modified the term to the ‘bumpy-line theory of ethnicity’. But he also blames the critics on the difference between the old and new immigration. He says today’s researchers do see few assimilation among the first generation. He argues this critique is premature since that days’ second generation has still to reach the same life cycle position as the second generation immigrants that have been studied by the researchers who studied the old immigration.

Conclusion

While considering these different approaches I should take into account the multiple country factor, the central concepts I should work with and the explanatory strength of the theory in qualitative research.

Assimilation theory has got a very strong background in the sense that it is being read, studied and rewritten by many authors. For my research however, it has got its limitations. The most important one is that it mainly focusses on the country where the migrant, or the migrant’s descendants, live after migration. This might be obvious, since the theories are about assimilation in the country where they plan to stay for a while, or forever. But what is missing here, is the background of the migrant. The environment where he or she grew up will probably have a great influence on his or her practices. An analysis of this side of the story is lacking. Also, the theories on assimilation discussed in this chapter, tend to put a big emphasis on the second generation. For the sake of my research, this emphasis is not useful, since I focus on the first generation of Malians in the Netherlands.

With Bourdieu’s approach of habitus and field I can study the situation in both Mali and the Netherlands, it actually forces the research to go back to ‘the roots’ of the persons who are studied. Their practices are influenced by the social fields in which someone has been raised. The act of migration and the (changing) practices it involves could probably be explained with Bourdieu’s theory of pre-reflexivity and reflexivity and the ‘time of crisis’. Although Bourdieu himself seems rather hesitant about leaving his statement of habitus as a predominant pre-reflexive phenomenon, several authors, such as Sweetman, explained how

reflexivity could get a place in the habitus theory of Bourdieu. Applying the habitus theory requires qualitative research methods, which suits with my methodology. Therefore in the rest of this research empirical findings are linked to habitus and pre-reflexive and reflexive practices (chapter 2 and 3). Chapter 4 combines the findings from Mali and the Netherlands in order to get a better understanding of changing reflexivity and its causes.

1.6 Scientific relevance

Migration is not something new in the world of researchers. This becomes clear in the overview article on past developments and future trends of transnational migration by Levitt and Jaworsky (2007). It has been extensively studied by sociologists, economists, anthropologists and historians and they all have their own perspective. However, the possible change of religious practices in the migration process has not been studied very well until now. This 'problem' is recognized by several authors: Levitt and Jaworsky (2007), Hagan and Ebaugh (2003), Levitt (2003) and Stepick (2005). Some studies have been done on the use of religion in the migration process: Hagan and Ebaugh (2003) wrote about the role of the Pentecostalism in the migration process from Guatemala to the USA. The state of Islamic experiences in Mali is described, for example in the study of Schulz (2006) on charismatic religious leaders in Mali who, through broadcast media, achieve a remake in the Islamic experience. Van Dijk (2007) studied the practice of Pentecostalism before and after the journey of migrants from Ghana to Europe. Studies about the Islam when migrants are already in Europe or the USA are quite easy to find: Van der Veer (2002) writes about Muslim movements in Europe, Grillo (2004) studied Muslim communities in Western Europe in very broad terms such as European Islam and European Muslim. But these are studies about religious *communities*. Since the number of Malian migrants in the Netherlands is very small (no more than a few hundred) there is no big religious community of Malian migrants. In the literature there are barely studies on how individual migrants deal with a new culture and specifically religion. Peek (2005) studied the role of religion in personal and social identity development for a group of second-generation Muslim American students. She divided the identities in ascribed, chosen and declared identity. Her research, however, does not include the views of the first-generation migrants who experienced living in both countries.

Regarding the theoretical framework for this thesis, it appeared that I had to search for theories that were not literally or directly linked with religious practices. In the previous paragraph I described the framework I am going to use to interpret the information I got in Mali and the Netherlands. Here I am shorty going to reflect upon the scientific relevance of the frameworks I discussed in the previous paragraph.

Research about the adaptation process migrants undergo once they arrive in a 'new' country, are usually grouped under the concept of assimilation. Assimilation theorists state that a migrant's stay in the receiving country will lead to a decline and in the end a total disappearance of social and cultural differences. But from the canonical account of Alba and Nee (1997) it seems that an explanatory framework is missing of how migrants deal with cultural change and the process of this so-called decline. So the lack of personal stories of a two-country study remains. In order to get a clear image of how Malian migrants practice religion after migration compared with the Malians living in Mali it is important is to do research in both the sending and the receiving country. In that way two contexts can be integrated 'into one social field' (Mazzucato in Levitt and Jaworsky 2007).

When I want to understand these kind of practices of individuals and the relation it has with their Muslim background, the theory that doesn't look specifically at migration and

assimilation, but focuses on the practices of people and how the practices came into being is written by Bourdieu. He would call these kinds of 'culture shocks' a 'time of crisis' when, like Bourdieu says, rational choice may take over. Could we say that someone becomes reflexive about his or her habitus? Or at least the religion part in the habitus could? I should find out to what extent religious practices are pre-reflexive in Mali and the Netherlands. And how does migration or another time of crisis affect the reflexivity on religious practices of migrants in the Netherlands. And if this reflexivity changes, does this lead to a change in practices as well?

1.7 Research questions

In order to study religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands, there is a need to study them apart from each other first. This should be followed by a description of similarities and differences found, which is subsequently leading to the question of how this can be explained.

The research question is:
How are habitus and reflexivity reflected in the religious practices of people in Mali and Malian migrants in the Netherlands?

I operationalized this main question in three sub-research questions:

1. What are indications of pre-reflexive and reflexive religious practices in Mali? (Chapter 2)
2. What are indications of pre-reflexive and reflexive religious practices in the Netherlands? (Chapter 3)
3. To what extent can changing reflexivity be used as an explanation for the similarities and differences between Mali and the Netherlands? (Chapter 4)

Methodology

In order to make a comparison of the religious practices between people in Mali and Malian migrants in the Netherlands, I designed a research which was located in two different countries. I started with a two month field work in Mali. I had never been in Africa before, so this was a new experience for me. On the one hand this could have been an advantage, because I was very open to all things I saw and because it was new for me, I was aware of a lot of particular practices that wouldn't have struck me when I had been there before. On the other hand this might have cost a lot of time. I had to get used to the language, the people, the way of communicating, and the city. I received great help from Janneke Barten, she made me familiar with all the Malian habits and 'rules' of Bamako and this made me feel at home much faster than would be the case if I had arrived alone in this big city. However, since so many things were new for me, it took a while before I could dive into the specific topic of my research. In the beginning I was listening to people, while talking about a wide range of topics. Just to make them at ease and because it was awkward to start talking about religion right away, but also to get to know Malian live and important topics of discussion. Slowly I managed to find ways of extracting information about their religious practices and the norms and values which were connected to the religious practices. It was hard to retrieve information about religious practices. On purpose I sometimes didn't hide the fact that I wasn't religious, that I was not even Christian. In other research this might hurt trust and might not be wise to do, but I noticed that it created discussion and reflection about religious practices. For the purpose of my research this was valuable information. This strategy didn't work out for all informants I had. Some were already familiar with Europeans and didn't expect me to be religious and in these cases it didn't trigger a lot of discussion, but for some others it was

quite a shock and it revealed interesting views about the meaning they give to religion and Islam in particular. Sometimes they just didn't know what to say about religion, or they started to list the five pillars of Islam. One woman I visited a couple of times, but one time she was busy all the time, with washing, taking care of her young daughter. This made talking more difficult.

Another way of getting to know religious practices in Bamako was by going to the market, the Friday prayer and by taking taxi rides. During almost all taxi rides I tried to start a conversation. Sometimes this didn't work out, just because the taxi driver was not talkative, or because it was very busy on the road. But many times they were curious about me as Dutch girl in Mali and by using this mutual curiosity I managed to have quite some conversations in the taxi. This didn't always lead to the subject of religion. The taxi rides were too short, or I didn't manage to find an opening in the conversation.

One aspect which helped a lot with making contact was that I could introduce myself with my Malian name. Already on the first day of my stay, a Malian woman I met looked at me for a while and then decided that my Malian name should be Mariam. As a last name I got the same name as Janneke: Sangare. So, in Mali I was not Jorien van Lambalgen anymore, but Mariam Sangare. I got used to it very soon and reacted automatically when somebody called 'Mariam!' The surname helped in making contact in the sense that Malian surnames do say from which region in Mali you're originally coming from. Sangare is one of the Peul-names, so I was originally from an area north of Bamako, where many pastoralists live who take care of their cows. Malians tease each other with their names, they have a joke or remark for every name. Particular names have stronger bonds with other names. This way of making contact and starting a conversation was a general thing to do in Mali and many problems and arguments are being solved by the bonds between names. It would be possible to write a whole thesis about the features and significance of Malian names, but for the purpose of this thesis methodology, it is enough to say that they were important for me to make contact with Malians and it is nice to keep in mind that it was, after the greetings, the typical start of a conversation with somebody I just met.

Overall, the two month period of fieldwork in Mali turned out to be too short to dive very deep into the religious practices of Malians living in Bamako. The research group was too small to make any general conclusion about the religious practices of all Malians living in Bamako, let alone of all Malians and this is by no means my purpose. Since I haven't been in rural areas, I cannot say something about that either. What this research does provide is a couple of cases to illustrate religious practices, taken from the largest city of Mali. My stay in Mali did also provide me with contacts in the Netherlands and gaining trust and open interviews with Malian migrants in the Netherlands.

Back in the Netherlands, I got my first contacts with Malian migrants through Janneke, and then in combination with snowball sampling I arranged seven interviews in total. I visited all my informants one time and then we had conversations for two or three hours. They were a lot more open about religious practices than people living in Mali, but still I took my time to get to know them a bit, talk about Mali, the Netherlands and migration and then move on to religious topics. Sometimes this occurred earlier, it depended on the person I spoke with. Because I visited everyone only once, I might have not gone very deep into the topic. There was not enough time to visit them multiple times since they were living at different places in the Netherlands, all at least one hour travelling by public transport. Nevertheless, I tried to ask the same questions during the conversations with seven different Malian migrants and in that

way I could compare their answers and also get some confirmation on certain things I expected or had heard before.

1.8 Research area

Bamako, the capital of Mali, has got two million inhabitants. Only a couple of buildings have got more than four floors. The rest are houses and shelters, connected by paved and unpaved roads. The unpaved roads lie in the different quarters, the paved ones (*goudron*, literally: asphalt) connect the different quartiers and form the main roads. Every single day there is business buzzing around in the streets. People try to make a living with small shops, restaurants and offices. The streets offer room to income generators as well, although the many taxi's, Sotrama's and bikes leave little space for each other. So working, but also living takes place on the streets: eating, washing, playing, chatting, napping and praying. While sitting in a taxi or Sotrama or just walking on the streets, I took part in the daily dynamics of Bamako and observed people doing their daily (religious) practices. There are rarely boring or quiet moments on the streets in the centre. But there are repetitive events that are being reproduced all the time, including religious practices.

Picture 1. Map of Mali

This research was carried out in two different countries. First a two month fieldwork visit in Mali, where I gathered data about the practice of religion by Malian people. The choice to do my research in Mali is directly linked with the opportunity I got to work together with Janneke Barten. Since she had done research in Mali before, it was very interesting for me to jump in and contribute to it. The research is carried out in an urban area: Bamako. When I started doing interviews in the Netherlands it appeared that most people I interviewed came from or studied in Bamako. This established a bond right away, because we could start talking about places and the situation in Bamako.

The second part of field work took place in the Netherlands. The Netherlands were chosen for practical reasons: I could visit and interview Malian migrants who lived all over the Netherlands by using public transport. Also I got some first contacts from Janneke. The Malian migrants were very open in the interviews. It helped a lot that I had been in Mali and got some basic knowledge about their culture, language and way of living. Talking about family names and the different quarters and places in Bamako established a trust that would not have been possible when I hadn't been doing research in Mali. Also I could better understand their answers and place them in a context.

1.9 Research group

In Mali:

The first two and a half weeks of my stay in Mali, Janneke introduced me to many people she already knew and we visited some new contacts together. They were all Muslim, like the great majority of the Malian population. Most people I met came from a family with a

'*fonctionaire'*: people who finished higher education and have an office job and therefore able to have some luxurious goods, like a nice television and furniture. I did interviews and/or group meetings. Some of them I met multiple times. I carried out seven in depth interviews with Malians living in Bamako. They lived in different quarters through the whole city. Another important 'research group' for me was the random meetings I had on the street, in the taxi, *Sotrama*[2] or elsewhere. They were not necessarily part of this earlier described group of people with an office job. By observing and undergoing random meetings I managed to see everyday life events that repeated themselves and which I saw many times.

In the Netherlands:
In the Netherlands I started my interviews using contacts of Janneke. This made it easier for me to gain trust and they were very welcoming and helpful from the beginning. Via them I got more contacts from Malians living at different places in the Netherlands: villages and the big cities. They have contact with each other, but they are not a tight Malian community like there exists in France. However they established a Malian association just two years ago which is called Balimaya. Its main aim is to encourage communication between Malians living in the Netherlands and support newly arrived Malians in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, the Malians who are living in the Netherlands already for a while, mainly keep in touch because they know each other already before Balimaya was established. They call each other regularly, like they would do in Mali. In total I did interviews with seven Malian migrants in the Netherlands. Six of them arrived in the Netherlands approximately eleven years ago, one person fifteen years ago. They all are the first generation. They have been raised in Mali. Almost all of them could speak Dutch quite well. They migrated because they didn't see job opportunities in Mali, although they finished higher education. Some of them didn't manage to finish higher education because they didn't agree to the way the university was politically involved and influenced. They wanted a better future with more opportunities to earn money and live a better life. They all deliberately chose to live in the Netherlands, after experiencing the Malian community in Paris. This makes their answers very interesting. Because they prefer to live outside a Malian community it is interesting to see in what way they still practice their religion without the social pressure of fellow Malians. All my informants were Muslim. One constraint is that I do not know how they practiced religion when they still lived in Mali. But having experienced the religious practices of Muslims in Mali I was able to see more or less a general practice.

A significant limitation and difference with Mali was that I was not there all the time. I made an appointment and then we talked, ate, chatted informally. But I couldn't get to know their religious practices, their daily habits, practices which would indicate influence from Islam. There is another important note I should make about the research group in the Netherlands. Malian migrants in the Netherlands are probably very atypical Malians, apart from the fact that they are living in the Netherlands now. Just the fact that they migrated is already a selection process. The second fact that they deliberately chose to live in the Netherlands, that they prefer it above the relative safety of a Malian community in France, indicates another selection process. They apparently have this very strong urge to be more individual, to manage things alone. This will also get clear in chapter three. The ability to reflect upon their religious practices is an effect of migration (time of crisis), but it is also an effect from this particular selection process that made them willing to live in the Netherlands. This means that they might have been different from other Malians already when they still lived in Mali. I

[2] A Sotrama is the Malian word for a green van, modified for public transport in Bamako, approximately fifteen persons fit in and it brings the passengers along a fixed route. It is the cheapest way of public transportation in Bamako.

cannot be sure about that, but it is important to consider. For the sake of privacy I changed the names of all informants in this thesis.

1.10 Research techniques

This research is explorative. The aim is to focus on religious practices by people in Mali compared to religious practices by Malian migrants in the Netherlands and find out how habitus and reflexivity are reflected in the religious practices. In Mali I approached this by observing everyday life trying to disturb as least as possible. Interviews were meant to see how they react on the topic and to trigger reactions to make people think about religion and religious values. In the Netherlands I was less able to catch these everyday life events, since I wasn't around Malians every day. However, their reflexive abilities were more developed so we could have very insightful conversations about religion and religious practice. Also I joined the *Tabaski* (festival of sacrifice/offerfeest), which served as an interesting event to see how Malian migrants are practicing a religious festival in the Netherlands.

The following methods were used in this research:
Literature research: prior to the fieldwork literature about migration, religion, assimilation and habitus was being studied.
Event analysis in Mali: different kinds of events were analysed. Planned events, like a marriage, visit to the Friday prayer, group discussion, etc. But also unplanned events, like the television show, or interesting conversations during taxi rides.
Ethnographic research in Mali: informal conversations and observations on the streets, in the taxi's and in people's houses.
In depth semi-structured interviews in Mali and the Netherlands: I tried to ask similar questions in the Netherlands as I did in Mali, using a list of questions and topics that could trigger reactions on religious practice or judgements about what is good and bad.

1.11 Outline of the thesis

Chapter 2 is about my findings in Mali. It is divided in a part on the environment where a Malian grows up, which is followed by indications of pre-reflexive religious practices in Mali. Then I describe the various times of crisis I encountered in Mali. These times of crisis triggered reflexive religious practices and the indications of this I describe with the help of quotes of informants and descriptions of events. Chapter 3 describes the environment where Malian migrants in the Netherlands start a new living and settle in houses and jobs. Indications of pre-reflexive religious practices are portrayed. The comparisons which Malian migrants make introduce the second part of chapter 3, namely times of crisis in the Netherlands and indications of reflexive religious practices. Chapter 4 makes a comparison between the religious practices in Mali and the religious practices in the Netherlands, based on the practices I encountered in my research. The chapter analyses the similarities and differences and explains the possible reasons. This is followed by Chapter 5, the conclusion. It consists of the most important conclusions and answers on the research question, a reflection on the used theory, and hints for future research.

2. Religious practices in Mali

In this chapter I describe the religious practices I encountered in Bamako and I link them to the theory. The first part illustrates the houses and religious environment where the Malians I met were raised. Indications of pre-reflexive religious practices follow. The second part focusses on times of crisis and gives indications of reflexive religious practices. However, such a sharp distinction cannot always be made. It serves as a way of structuring the chapter, while I give a more reflexive and subtle consideration about to what extent the religious practices are pre-reflexive or reflexive throughout the text.

Where a Malian grows up: Indications of pre-reflexive religious practices

In this first part I describe the environment and facilities in which Malians grow up and live. The things which are taken for granted, the things most Malian citizens don't think about, the religious practices that I, as an outsider, notice and pay special attention to. It illustrates where Malians grow up, by describing the interior of houses and the Friday prayer at the great mosque, and it illustrates and explains pre-reflexive religious practices in Mali: what people do and do not say about religion. I answer the question of which pre-reflexive religious practices I encountered in Mali and under which circumstances they are pre-reflexive.

2.1 Interior of their houses and the Friday prayer

It's a world of difference if you step from the dusty, warm, faded streets into a Malian house which is cool, very neat and simply furnished. Most houses where I have been had a couple of couches, placed centrally around the flat screen television. Then there was a small table, a cabinet with books, tapes and several photographs. The pictures featured family and children. The important role of education and jobs is visible in the pictures: the father sitting in an office and children sitting behind a desk at school. In a couple of houses I saw a poster with a Qur'an text and a picture of a particular imam. Posters of the Ka'ba in Mecca also suggested that Muslim were living there. Extended families live in one house and the house and furniture will be kept the same for many years. That means that children grow up surrounded by familiar images that are there for ages already. In other houses the pictures and images at the wall are very similar, this suggests that people's social identity stays stable for a long time; they are in the same social field. In this way Malians might also identify themselves with other Malians. It seems to reflect their way of looking at the world and furnishing their social environment with things that are important to Malian society: family (the pictures), work (the role in pictures), a welcoming house for everyone (enough couches, chairs, food). The way of furnishing in Mali seems to be a pre-reflexive practice rather than a reflexive practice. Practical reasons should also be considered, since there is only a certain variety in

supply of furniture and because of the dust and sand Malian interior ought to be simple and easy to clean.

Janneke told me about the house of one of her Malian informants. He wanted to show her a picture that was hanging in the hallway. It featured his mother in Mecca. The special invitation to watch the picture and the prominent spot in the hallway suggest that it is very important for the whole family and visitors of the house. Making the journey to Mecca is one of the five pillars of Islam and not many people in Mali are able to do it. When a family has got enough money, they will let one of the oldest persons in the family go first. The younger people have still got more chances to go to Mecca. The importance he attaches to the pilgrimage to Mecca shows his overall orientation of the world. His predisposed way of thinking and acting includes the importance and will to go to Mecca. His habitus of stable social conditions in the socials fields of which he is part of allows pre-reflexive practice.

For the Friday prayer, which is taking place every week, I went to the grand mosque in the centre. Normally the centre is crowded and chaotic, but at this time, just before the Friday prayer, almost everyone walks in the direction of the grand mosque: the men and the elderly women. Everyone is carrying a praying carpet. If you don't bring one, you can still buy it, there are enough street vendors being active at this moment, praising their luxurious carpets, or the much cheaper plastic sheets. The young women stay behind their little shops on the streets. They will pray later on. People are entering the mosque, but many fold out their carpet and find a spot at the pavement and streets around the mosque. A small child is sitting with his head in exactly the opposite direction of Mecca, his mother lifts him and turns him around. From the minarets the prayers are being spread. They resonate at the buildings around the mosque. It's impressive to see everyone bend and pray in the same direction, at the same time. After the prayer, everyone leaves the mosque and pavements and goes their own way again, back to business. Beggars catch up the leaving crowd. They are very active at that moment, hoping people are eager to give a sacrifice.

One of the five pillars of Islam is praying to God five times a day. Praying and other rituals give structure to daily life. This is being facilitated in Mali: there are prayer rooms at the airport and at all the big bus stations. Most Malian grow up in this social field. People are used to quit their activities at the time of prayers and especially for the Friday prayer. It's a matter of repetition and reproducing everyone else's behaviour. The illustration of the small child wanting to pray and joining the Friday prayer indicates that he wants to behave the same as his parents. If the parents pray and sit on their praying carpet, then the child wants to do it as well. Children copy their parents and by repetition and reproduction of these habits, it becomes part of their life and part of their identity. They can identify with the other people around them. They develop a social position. As long as everyone around him keeps doing the praying and visiting the Mosque and living through the same norms and values, there is a stability of people's social identities. Using Bourdieu's concepts; there exists a secure relation between habitus and (religious) field. People are then acting in a pre-reflexive way. If there is a particular disruption, or as Bourdieu calls it, a time of crisis, this repetitive pattern gets messed up. In the next part I will discuss cases in which this happened. But here, in the event of the Friday prayer, people seem to have pre-reflexive behaviour: the devotes who gather around the mosque and pray, as well as beggars who know from experience that the religious community in Mali concentrates at Friday and that people are doing a sacrifice regularly in order to be a good Muslim, as this is one of the five pillars of Islam. Also there are relatively stable social conditions which allow a relatively secure relationship between habitus and field; there is a certain structure in which people act, they go to the Friday prayer every week,

interrupt their work and do like the others do during the prayer. As long as almost everyone does this, particularly friends, families and colleagues, social life is maintained by rituals and repetitive: the habitus of the Malian Muslims operates in various social fields, of which the religious field is the one that is being discussed here. Since the habitus and field are relatively stable in the situation of the Friday prayer, we may call this pre-reflexive religious practice. Also the practice is in a way inherited. This implies that they don't make a rational decision over and over again. They do not think of the reason *why* they do it.

2.2 What people do and do not say - 'Religion est un héritage'

Group discussion

During a group discussion I tried to get to know how young men (mid-twenties) were thinking about Islam. We came together in the house of one of them. We sat in a circle with seven young men and Janneke and I in the living room of the house, the men were sitting on couches and chairs, we were sitting next to each other on chairs. They were friends and neighbours from each other and one man gathered them all for this occasion. Janneke introduced the topic of her research and I introduced my research. Then we asked questions about migration and religion and they were eager to help us and tell us as much as possible. I asked them about their religion and how they are practicing it. They mentioned and explained the five pillars of Islam and that they would do them when they were able to. They said they pray five times every day. The men and elderly women go to the Mosque at Friday. At school they didn't learn a lot about Islam, it's more like something that goes from generation to generation. One of the young men:

> 'Here in Mali, religion is a heritage. If your parents are Muslim, you are automatically also a Muslim.'

This shows very clear the habitus that is being reproduced by being in a social field. It indicates that the social identities of people are quite stable and allow for a relatively secure relationship between habitus and field. Also it shows the predisposed thinking of this young man. It might even be called resignation to his class, his social position and identity. He is showing no initiative to change the situation, which will stay stable in this way. This doesn't mean that it is a conscious choice he is making. Thus his remark suggests a pre-reflexive practice which is not a result of such a rational decision he is making, it is a practice and attitude which is produced by his habitus. But the habitus doesn't make it possible to predict his practices, times of crisis can make him reflexive about his pre-reflexive practices.

They did not really know what to tell more about Muslim practices. I asked them to whom they would go when they were having problems. It depends which problem you have, one of the young men tells me. Some go to the marabout, others regard the imam as their chief and ask him for advice. When I told them about the taxi driver having a very small leather bag around the steering wheel, they found that very normal. The leather bag contained a Gris-gris, something which brings luck to the 'bearer', the Gris-gris is given by a marabout. The conversation dies out and it implies that they have told me what Islam is about. They told me about the obligations. It's a part of life and doing the rituals doesn't imply that they think about it a lot. However, later on, when I talked to two of the young men from this group, it appeared that they were thinking more about it regarding the practices and rituals which they sometimes failed to fulfil. I will illustrate this situation later on in this paragraph.

In the meanwhile, the discussion topic switches to migration, because Janneke is asking them questions about migrated family members and whether they also have the dream to leave Mali

and seek their luck elsewhere. It appears that they are actively thinking about this topic a lot more (in comparison with the topic of religion) and they are eager to share and discuss their ideas about it with the rest of the group. Almost every guy in the room dreams of migration. All of them have friends or family members who migrated. Some of them just graduated and think they might find a better job abroad. They say that you can't find a proper job in Mali, even if you have had good education. Only one guy says that he will definitely stay in Mali, close to his family, the people who raised him. They can't stop talking about migration, it's obvious that the subject is very alive and that they are thinking and discussing about it often.

In contrast with the topic of migration, it seems that they don't talk about religion or practicing Islam with each other. The group has difficulty with understanding the questions about religious practices, for them the answers are very logical and it seems they cannot imagine what I would like to hear about it. Religion is something they are all doing, it is pre-reflexive practice that is being formed by their habitus. Their parents probably raised them with it, and if not, they do not want to tell it. By practicing religion every day, the children copy it. The young men say that they didn't learn a lot about Islam at school, suggesting that they are being taught religious behaviour by their parents and family or other people in their environment. It became their way of being in the world and also formed predisposed thinking and acting. Since the young men in the room do have a similar habitus and they grew up in a similar social field, they do not discuss their own or other's religious practices. Is it being taken for granted and so it is not a topic for discussion. While talking about migration they were discussing with each other whether or not to go and what their chances would be, basing their opinions on what they have heard from family and friends. Unlike with the religious topic, the group of young men was very actively involved in the discussion and they showed agreement, as well as disagreement. Comparing these two different topics, the different reactions from the men make sense when you get back to Bourdieu: everyday religious practices are pre-reflexive when people's social identities are stable and last already for a long time. Migration however, is something that not everyone does, especially intercontinental migration. Those men are confronted with friends or family going abroad and that makes them see opportunities they can dream of. The stability of people's social identities gets dented and causes reflexive thinking. I tell about these kinds of situations in the next part of this chapter.

Outside the group session, I spoke to two of the young men who were also present in the group discussion. This time they told me that they were drinking beer sometimes. They were a bit vague about whether they go to the marabout or not. When they were part of the big group everyone confirmed what the other said about religious practices. Now, with only the three of us, the two men were a bit more reflexive about their practices. It seems that when talking with big groups about something that everyone ought to do, social pressure is influencing the conversation. This suggests that practice and discourse do not coincide.

Small talk

When I spoke with educated people about getting chances to study, they didn't speak about it as something they were able to do because/with the help of God. As one informant said when I asked him why he was the only one in his family who went abroad for his study, while his sisters and brothers didn't. He said:

> 'I am getting chances, but I am also working hard for it.'

He grabbed the opportunities he got with both hands. On the one hand he is aware of the fact that he got chances while others didn't, as being it his fate. This implies that he is taking it for granted that some people get chances and others not, his assumption is produced by his habitus. On the other hand, he is quite rational about it and admits that he had to work very hard in order to get his next chance. That might suggest that he's not considering God responsible for his study chances, but his own skills. Still the whole account is referring to an overall orientation to or way of being in the world which depends on a lasting experience of social position. Habitus and field are in a relatively secure relationship and thus this would be a pre-reflexive thought.

Such a two sided view on fate was also illustrated during a taxi ride I had in Bamako. Taxi drivers are very fond of their taxis and often decorate it with Qur'an texts and prayer beads. This time I saw many prayer beads hanging on the rear-view mirror. I asked the taxi driver if it was meant for praying in the car. He answers:

> 'The prayers beads protect me, but the most important is that I know my car very well', and he pads his wheel.

This shows that the taxi driver beliefs that the prayers beads protect him. This might be called pre-reflexive practice, because his predisposed way of thinking and acting through his particular social environment – the traffic and taxi world and Islamic Mali – define his practices. They are habits and thoughts produced by reproduction and repetition. On the other hand, he considers his driving skills as being most important. Although the taxi driver is saying that he should know his car very well in order to be protected, he was raised with Islam and he has got prayer beads in his car. Religion might be more important for him than he admits. During other taxi rides I got a similar impression of their fate in God protecting the taxi driver: I saw many stickers of Haidara, a well-known and beloved preacher from Mali. Stickers with fragments from the Qur'an were attached to the dashboard and a couple of times I saw a leather bag around the steering wheel. Inside the bag was a Gris-gris the taxi driver got from the marabout which is meant for protection.

When I got back in the Netherlands, I was having an email conversation with one of my informants in Mali. I was telling him that soon I would be looking for a job, but that it would not be easy to find. His encouraging words are:

> 'Du courage que le bon DIEU d'accompagne'

He is relying on God to help him and others. Whether that would happen, that was just a matter of having faith and praying that God could help. It is part of his orientation of the world and the way of thinking in his social environment. He is used to talk in this way, his family and friends are used to talk in this way. He is not reflecting on what he says, he sincerely means it. This kind of faith was recognizable also by what they often said for example at the end of a conversation when they said they hoped to see you again: Insha'Allah (If Allah wills). Malian Muslims grew up with having faith in God ('Religion is a heritage'). In these little sentences and words you can recognize pre-reflexive behaviour: pray and leave the decision about someone's well-being to God.

2.3 Conclusion: immersed in the environment

Pre-reflexive religious behaviour is a product of being immersed in a particular environment and field. Since their childhood, Malian Muslims experience repetition of religious practices (Friday prayer, giving sacrifices, praying five times a day). This creates a very stable social environment, since (almost) everyone is doing the same. People act in accordance with their habitus and, would there be no disturbance, they will practice their religion in a pre-reflexive way. Nevertheless, sometimes Malian Muslims are to some extent quite reflexive about their faith, for example the taxi driver, and the man who got good chances to study. Reflexive practices could be caused in a great deal by the presence of the researcher. The next chapter investigates the reflexive practices and the role of the researcher.

Times of crisis: Indications of reflexive religious practices

Talking to Malians about religion and rituals and spending time with them triggers them to think about and reflect upon their practices. By undergoing small 'times of crisis' like that, people reflect upon their habitus. In this paragraph, three events are analysed which discuss a particular 'time of crisis' and the reflexive responses and actions of people: giving sacrifices, watching a television show, and discussions with young Malians about being Muslim. I illustrate which reflexive religious practices I encountered in Mali and when they became reflexive.

2.4 Giving sacrifices – 'Sacrifice or what else?'

One time Janneke en I were sitting in a taxi in the centre of Bamako. Janneke was sitting in the front, next to the taxi driver, and I was sitting in the back of the car. At a very big crossing with traffic lights, children from the Qur'an school approached our taxi and started to sing a religious song. Janneke gave some coins to the children. The taxi driver asked:

'Are you doing this as a sacrifice?'

Janneke explains that she gives the money because the children are poor and they can now buy something with the coins, hopefully. The taxi driver doesn't understand this reason to give money. It appears that Malians give money to the children for sacrificing themselves, and in the middle of the city it works as a visible sign of acting like a good Muslim. But the fact that the taxi driver is asking Janneke whether she gives a sacrifice, is a sign that he thinks about other possibilities, probably because he suspects we are not Muslim. He is taking into account that there might be people who give money on the street for reasons other than sacrificing. His reflexive behaviour is triggered by replacing himself in the foreigners sitting next to him, our presence is most likely the time of crisis in which he considers other options and practices.

2.5 Watching the television show 'Nour' – 'But when you wear socks…'

It is a quiet evening, Janneke and I are sitting on the couches in the living room of the guest family were we stay a couple of days. Late in the night we watch the show 'Nour' on a Malian television channel (ORTM) together with the chef de famille: Mamadou. In the television show an Islam expert deals with three hypothetic cases of religious dilemma's.

Question 1:

'Should you wash your feet before you go praying when you are wearing socks?'

Answer:

> ‘That depends on the thickness of the socks: thicker socks mean cleaner feet, but when you are wearing very thin socks, your feet will still be dirty and you should definitely wash them. Also it depends on the particular school of Islam.’

Question 2:

> ‘A father doesn’t approve the intended marriage of his daughter with a certain man. Then the father dies, is she allowed to marry the man now?’

Answer:

> ‘She should first ask permission to the next men in line (brother/uncle) who can give his opinion. When there is no such person, someone else can be asked, unless this person is ‘crazy’.’

Question 3:

> ‘A Griot (a West African singer/musician/story teller) man doesn’t manage to find a wife. Then he makes a woman pregnant while they are not being married. The Griot man argues it is his right because he couldn’t find a wife while being a Griot.’

Answer:

> ‘The fact he is Griot doesn’t necessarily mean he can never find a wife. So he is not allowed to get children before he is married. For him the same rules apply as for anybody else.’

Mamadou is nodding while the Islam expert is giving the answers and he agrees with the judgements of the Islam expert.

This television program makes the viewer think about his or her religion in a reflexive way: what is allowed and what is not? How far does a certain rule stretch? To whom do the rules apply exactly? Something external like a television program provides material to think about. Or probably it is meant to educate people about the guidelines for good Muslimhood. But then still it triggers reflexive behaviour. People are being stimulated to think, to step out of their daily pattern. Using Bourdieu’s concepts, this could be called a ‘time of crisis’. It involves a temporary disjunction between habitus and field. In this case that means the habitus of Mamadou, a Muslim man, grown up in Mali and raised with Islam, is being disconnected from the religious field he is in usually. For example, washing your feet before prayer, is something that kids are being raised with, it is a repetitive action. They are used to take off their socks and go praying with bare feet. But now, suddenly another possibility is suggested, which make people think outside their usual repetitive habits. Mamadou’s practice is pre-reflexive in the sense that he is agreeing with the Islam expert. He has got a predisposed way of thinking that the Islam expert would be right. In the end I consider this case as being reflexive practice, because people are being triggered to think about Islam before the Islam expert is giving his view on the cases.

2.6 Discussions with young Malians about being Muslim – ‘We are still young!’

On a Sunday afternoon I am sitting in front of a house in Bamako together with two young men, Seydou and Oumar, talking about Islam and being Muslim. For them it is a nice and quiet afternoon, last night they came home at four o’clock in the night after their pub crawl. They are very open about the issue of drinking alcohol:

> ‘We know that it is not allowed to drink alcohol, but in the weekends we drink some beers. We’re still young, we want to enjoy life now that it is still possible!’

According to Seydou and Oumar, it's mainly the elder people who practice religion in a proper way. The two of them find it difficult to be Muslim in exactly the way as the five pillars of Islam prescribe. Doing the prayer five times a day is going really well, because everyone does it, the times are scheduled and room is provided. Seydou admits that he finds praying quite difficult. Because officially you should think of nothing but God during your prayer. But he finds it very hard not to think of his family and his problems at the same time as well. He can't help it, he admits. When he was in China for four months, he found it was hard to find time to pray. Chinese life is just not adjusted to it. At the same time he found it very strange that the Chinese he met didn't have a religion. Living in a different country made him realise that it would be hard for the Malian migrants in the Netherlands to continue their religious practices.

There is one obvious practice of them which is against the guidelines of being a good Muslim that makes them reflexive about their religion: drinking alcohol. They know it is not allowed and they are looking for an excuse that lies outside their religious field: 'we are still young'. And, although they are not explicit about it, they know that some other Malian Muslims drink alcohol as well. This reflection and my presence and questions marked a time of crisis for them. Although they were already conscious about the fact they were not behaving like good Muslims when they were drinking alcohol. They already thought about an excuse for justifying the drinking themselves.

Seydou's stay in China confronted him with the role of praying in his life. Reflexive practice is also being described as the failure of immediate adaptation to the situation. It happened to him in China, where he encountered a whole new and different social environment and had to find his place and a way to keep doing or adapt his habits. He also found out the possibility that some people don't have a religion in the way he knows it. He tells me that he just cannot imagine that. It suggests that he finds support and comfort in Islam and that he cannot imagine a life without it. It supports the idea that Islam is part of society and social life in Mali and Malian Muslims practice religion in a pre-reflexive way. Everyone prays, visits the mosque, does the Ramadan, and tries to live according to the five pillars of Islam. And yet, while they are confronted with alcohol and different cultures, they are kind of forced to think about different practices. At these moments they think and act in a reflexive way. People's social identity is unstable and thus the relationship between habitus and field is (temporarily) disconnected.

Another day I was talking with Mohamed, a married man around thirty years old with a daughter. When we speak about Malian migrants living in the Netherlands and how they might practice their religion in a different way than in Mali, Mohamed starts asking questions:

> 'But are they still going to the Friday prayer in the Mosque? And do they do the Ramadan? And the naming ceremony when his child is born? Do they baptise their child a week after it's born? And do they butcher a sheep afterwards?'

He was especially worried about the naming ceremony. Before we were talking about migrants, he explained in a really clear and self-assured way what schools of Islam there are in Mali and which hierarchy. He can see the problems of today get bigger: Muslims drink more alcohol and pray less. When he realises that Malian migrants might change their religious practice, he is quite shocked. He could see the current trends in Mali, but why would the migrants do similar things abroad? This 'time of crisis' triggers reflexive practice and also

reveals his habitus. The things he finds most important in Islam appear to be the rituals concerning a new born child. Maybe because he's got a very young daughter, he is being extra sensitive about it. He knows a lot about the Islam and is practicing it very seriously. He said that he used to drink when he was young, but now he totally quit drinking alcohol. So he disapproves it, but admits that he has been drinking alcohol as well. It is a trend that people become more serious in practicing Islam when they get older than twenty-five, Mohamed argues. He is reflexive about the different degrees of religious practice he can see around him.

I met Moussa on the street when my taxi dropped me off at the wrong place (an orphanage instead of the immigration office) and Moussa, who was volunteering in the orphanage, offered me a lift on his motorbike. Moussa studied English at the University of Bamako. We exchanged telephone numbers and at one evening we met at his home for an interview. His two room house was dark, warm and barely furnished. We sat on a carpet on the floor, radio switched on and one of the neighbours brought us some fries. I tell him that I know some Malian young men who go out on Saturday evenings and drink some beers. He reacts very disapprovingly. He argues:

> 'Young Malians get more and more influenced by the Western world, by Europe. Especially television has got a major impact on practicing religion. It is very bad that they call themselves Muslim and drink alcohol at the same time. But there are also other rules and one of them I break as well at this very moment: sitting with an unmarried woman together in the same room. Actually that is bad as well.'

My remark about young Muslims drinking alcohol works as a time of crisis for Moussa. He reflects upon not living up to the guidelines of Islam and realises he is sometimes breaking them as well. He also reflected already on the cause of this kind of practices: the influence of the 'Western' world.

When he asks me whether I am Christian or Muslim or have any other religion, I tell him that I haven't got a particular religion. His eyes become big and he says he can't believe me and he cannot imagine something like that.

> 'To whom do you go when you have problems and need advice or comfort when you don't want to tell the people around you? To whom do you tell these problems? And isn't it hard to have nobody that is just perfect and stands above everything, like God does?'

I tell him that I believe there is something, but that it doesn't fit in any religion. And that I believe that every religion is about social norms and values, but when you don't have a religion, you keep yourself to similar social norms and values. When I've got problems I can go to my family or best friends. It's unlike in Mali, where you're not save telling anyone about your problems because they gossip about it and soon your neighbours, family and friends know about it. That's why Moussa trusts his problems to God or to paper. He tells me he writes poems. I explain that in the Netherlands I can trust people who are close to me to not gossip about my problems. Moussa can understand a bit more after this explanation, but he is not totally convinced. The 'times of crisis' in this conversation is most likely my presence and bringing the topic to religious practice. He's getting reflexive about having religion or not but at the same time his fierceness and defence about Islam show a pre-reflexive practice and his predisposed way of thinking and acting. It shows what he finds most important of being Muslim: trust your problems with God and have faith that God will hear

you and try to help you. Nevertheless it appears that he has got some strong opinions about drinking alcohol and that implies that he thought about it, was reflexive about it, already before I brought up the subject.

2.7 Conclusion: the external factor

Reflexive behaviour occurred when there was an external factor which worked as a time of crisis and which made them think about their religious practices. Meeting and talking with a foreigner having a different or no religion triggered them to think about how that person would cope with giving money, or solving problems. Within the country, without interference of foreigners, the television program 'Nour' makes Malians think about the flexibility and applicability of Islam guidelines. When Malians stay in their community and comfort zone, without discussing or being confronted with their religious practices, they practice religion in a pre-reflexive way. But when they do get confronted with other ways of religious practice, they start reflecting on formerly pre-reflexive practices.

3. Religious practices in the Netherlands

After migration from Mali to the Netherlands, the migrants are very much aware of all the differences like culture, religion and the way of living and this triggers reflexivity. However, they arrive there with a certain habitus. Norms, values and practices which are embodied are likely to remain and influence the practices of the migrant in a pre-reflexive way. This chapter presents and analyses indications of pre-reflexive and reflexive practices of Malian migrants in the Netherlands which are gathered during interviews. Background information on the environment in which they settle supports indications of pre-reflexive religious practices and the comparisons Malian migrants make support the indications of reflexive religious practices.

Where a Malian migrant settles: Indications of pre-reflexive religious practices

The first part of this chapter illustrates the situation in which Malian migrants find themselves in the Netherlands. The interior of their houses sketches how they make themselves at home in the Netherlands. It appears that they show a certain resignation towards their current situation. When I discussed with them what good Muslimhood is according to them, they come up with several norms and values of the Islam which lead to indications of pre-reflexive practices.

3.1 Interior of their houses – Mali in the Netherlands

All Malian households which I visited I was welcomed very hospitable. Most houses reminded me of the interiors of houses in Mali: simple, neat, clean and similar furniture as in Mali.

Malian couples

In the house of a Malian couple with two children there are two couches, a small table and a television. A china cabinet was used for books and pictures of their children and of themselves during their wedding day, similar to what I saw in most houses in Mali. I see French books, Dutch books, dictionaries and books about Islam and Qur'an. A big carpet covers the floor where also the couches stand. In the toilet the plastic watering can is most likely imported from Mali. These two-coloured plastic water cans, used instead of toilet paper, wouldn't find a big market in the Netherlands. The house is situated in a quarter with many families in one of the big cities of the Netherlands

Another Malian couple lives on the first floor of a big house. A Dutch family lives at the ground floor. I get tea and some cookies and settle on one of the two couches. There's a small table and a fridge. A huge flat screen television, linked to the computer next to it, shows a Malian soap series and other French spoken programs. At eight o'clock we watch the Dutch

news. In the small room there seems to be no place for books or anything else. But since they are renovating another room, this one is a bit crowded for the time being.

The houses of Malian couples and singles have a similar interior to the houses in Mali. A couple of couches, a china cabinet with many pictures in frames, a carpet on the floor with a side table. Only the big dinner table with six chairs seems to be a typical Dutch thing which is being adopted by most Malian households living in the Netherlands. In Mali I didn't see such a table. They either ate outside with the pan on a small table or stool, or inside while sitting on the couches with food on the side table. The television has got a very prominent spot and is huge and flat. This is very similar to Malian households, where the television is also placed in such a way that you can immediately see it when you enter the house. In the house of the Malian couple with children the Malian artefacts were for daily use. They both grew up in Mali, they are used to the same kind of interior. This way of furnishing might be called pre-reflexive, even when the house is not part of an extended family and is being passed on which makes it likely that not so much changes. It resembles the social field where they used to live. There might be changes in time which I cannot see in such a short time span. They get in touch with Dutch interior, that's very likely. The couple living together with a Dutch family certainly sees what furniture their Dutch housemates use. And the Malian couple living in a big city get certainly influenced by Dutch house interior. With their two children they most likely will enter houses of Dutch friends. The mother has got a job in child care and did do several other jobs before that, so she knows Dutch living habits most certainly. And she might, maybe without realising, slowly take over some of these 'living' practices.

Malian man living together with Dutch girlfriend
Another informant invites me at his house in the Indian quarter; he thinks it is very funny to live in the Indian quarter while being an African. The most eye-catching object in the house is a big cupboard with books and music in there. Malian artefacts are scattered through the house: a low, typical African wooden chair, small wooden statues in front of the window and a colourful Malian hand-held fan somewhere in the cupboard. This house is furnished in a more light way: there is no heavy, big furniture like in the houses of the Malian couples. In the kitchen a big pan with yam is boiling while we drink Moroccan mint tea in the garden.

Malian man living alone
The house of a Malian man living on his own is just furnished because he moved, but he says he keeps it like that. He has a Dutch girlfriend but she is living somewhere else. In the weekends they are together. It is a neat and simple interior. The things hanging on the wall reveal most about this man: A dart board hangs on a prominent spot next to the dining table and opposite of the entrance door, darting is his hobby and competition sport. There is a picture of himself in Mali with a fully loaded wagon behind him. I cannot see pictures of his family. They may be not (yet) in that particular room, due to the recent moving. There is a couch, a cupboard and television. We eat chicken, fries and salad and have a Heineken beer with it.

In the houses of Malians having a Dutch partner, the Malian influences seem to be mostly souvenirs: mix of different cultures and styles of furniture, a product of the combination of Dutch and Malian culture. Malian furniture is used for decoration instead of durable article. There are also less couches and no china cabinet. These houses most certainly got a big influence of the Dutch girlfriends of the Malian man. These women probably had their own furniture already and it might have merged with the furniture of the man. And even when they would buy new furniture, they would be influenced by Malian and Dutch taste. In this sense

there would be more reflexive practices be involved, compared to the Malian couples, since two cultures have to be combined in a decision process.

3.2 Showing resignation – 'Ça va venir'

All the Malians I interviewed live in the Netherlands for already ten years or more. Most of them would like to go back when they are old. At this moment however, most of them would not be able to live in Mali. They are quite satisfied with living in the Netherlands. Among them is Oumou, he tells me:

> 'I want to go back when I am old, but not now. It was hard to build up a life in the Netherlands: you don't know anyone, there is only uncertainty. But for me the advantage of living in the Netherlands is that I can be alone, I have a lot of privacy.'

As Oumou explained before, he has always got the drive to prove himself. He wants to prove he can do it alone, that he can do without other Malian people. He left Mali 'pour avenir', for the future. He considered his chances of getting a job in Mali or abroad. Then he left. First he went to France, but there he was still in a Malian community. That's not what he wanted. He wanted to prove himself that he could manage alone. After the first four years, in which he didn't meet any other Malian migrant, it seems he got used living in his own and he appreciates it more than being part of a close Malian community or house. He is proved that he can do it alone indeed and this gives him a lot of satisfaction. Probably he is used to the privacy and living alone. He has got Dutch friends, a Dutch girlfriend, but is not living together. Still, he says he is missing Mali, especially the *chaleur* (warmth) of the people. Everyone is cheerful, they do not own a lot, but they are always cheerful. They drink their *ataya* (tea) very quietly and live without stress. Oumou points at his imaginary watch. Preferring privacy *and* missing Mali seems to be a contradiction. But he is very aware that his feelings of missing Mali are caused by an over-positive memory:

> 'The problem is that, when I am back in Mali, I live in a *souvenir* (memory). I live in the past, because I keep remembering how it was back in the days, what we did, where we went. *Nostalgie*...'

This implies that he wouldn't be able to live in Mali anymore, not at this moment. What he probably doesn't realise is that he is very satisfied in the Netherlands. He feels he's being drawn to Mali as well, but for the time being there is a certain resignation, acceptance. Oumou expresses this in several ways:

> '*Ça va venir. Tous le jours on èspère. Je vivre pour mon destin*. And every day I thank God. Malians are not afraid to die.'

He feels fine while he is living here, it doesn't really matter where he lives, as long as he feels stable and quiet. He doesn't think about the future, he's living in the present only. This acceptance and way of living can be traced back to his religion. He says he lives for his destination and thanks God every day. His religion helps him to live where he is at that moment. This way of living originates from his Malian and Muslim background.

Being in a stable situation seems to be very important. This is also nicely summarized by Cheick. During the festival of sacrifice (Tabaski), which was organized for Malian migrants in the Netherlands and where I was also invited to, I asked him how he is doing nowadays. 'Quiet', Cheick says. 'But that's good. Boring is good.' He laughs.

Quiet and boring, words a Malian person uses to tell that he is doing very well. At least for Cheick it means that he is satisfied with his way of life.

Ali is very satisfied in the Netherlands as well. He is living together with his wife. He followed technical education in the Netherlands and has got a good job. For him there are a couple of requirements to have a good life, wherever he is:

> 'You should just dare', Ali says. 'Migrating to the Netherlands, just dare to do it. This is our second home. After Mali, the Netherlands is the best. And as long as I don't seek problems, everything is okay. I am very satisfied in the Netherlands. I need not to have more than my house, job and wife.'

Ali lists what he finds most important in life. Besides living and working, his wife and family mean a lot to him. He is satisfied with his way of life. This way of thinking about life might be predisposed. The resignation about their situation is to a certain extent triggered by religion. It will be all right as long as you thank God for every day, as long as you make no problems and help others with solving their problems (this is an important value in Islam and will be explained in the next paragraph about norms and values of Islam). It's like they found a new stable social environment and are satisfied with it as long as there are certain stable factors like work, house, and people around them. The three of them reconciled to their new situations.

3.3 Norms and values of the Islam – 'God will judge you on your good deeds'

While interviewing Malians in the Netherlands, it was harder to detect pre-reflexive religious practices, because I didn't see the informants during their daily lives. In Mali I encountered quite a lot of daily religious practices and participated in a couple of events. In the Netherlands I didn't do these kinds of things, because of limited time and long distances. But by listening carefully to their judgements and descriptions of Islam practice and by asking them what they described as being good Muslim practice, I was able to extract some of their pre-reflexive practices when they were not openly comparing Mali and the Netherlands. The reflexive practices were far more obvious, but they will be described and analysed in the next part of this chapter.

Whereas Malians living in Mali described a good Muslim by listing the five pillars of Islam, Malian migrants in the Netherlands described it in a different way. They referred to values and norms as being the indicators of good Muslimhood. I will illustrate this with two accounts from informants who argued a certain value was most important and two accounts from informants who stated norms were most important.

Values

Ali tells me he is Muslim 'in name'. He finds it important to first think and then pray. That indicates a reflexive view on formerly pre-reflexive religious practices. When I ask him when someone is a good Muslim, he is referring to a very common and well known value.

> 'You are a good Muslim when you are nice to your family and other people and help them with solving their problems.'

The important issue for him is a common value, known in all religions and societies: that you should be good for other people. He is raised with this being a value which makes someone a good Muslim. Although he is now living in the Netherlands, he didn't change his view on this. There is no time of crisis, migration didn't affect his view on good Muslimhood, nor did other times of crisis probably. It implies a stable relationship between habitus and field. Cheick is referring to another value as being the indicator of good Muslimhood. He quotes his father.

> 'My father always said that, right before you die, God will judge you on what you did for the people around you. Not on the times you didn't pray or didn't do Ramadan. He judges you on your good deeds.'

This value is partly the same as the previous one: it once again emphasises that you should be good for the people around you and help them with problems. In addition another value can be distinguished: full dedication to the will of God.

Cheick attaches a lot of value to what his father says, instead of what the Qur'an, imam or teacher says. This indicates that his thought about religious values is pre-reflexive, the values are reproduced and repeated messages from the people he grew up with. And in his turn, he repeats it and passes it on while saying it to me. It's something he didn't think of himself or found out himself. And he might have thought about it over and over again, making it therefore reflexive, but by not doubting the message, but by passing it on, it is an example of pre-reflexive religious practice. But his account can also be seen as an excuse for the lack of religious practice he has in the Netherlands. He tells me his father's view, after he said that his colleagues blamed him for not doing the Ramadan last year. Telling about the opinion of his colleagues could have triggered this kind of justification. He might remember what his father said, because it appealed to him as an attractive way of being Muslim. He could also have remembered what his teacher said, or the imam, but he apparently prefers or prioritizes his father's view.

Norms

Two other informants mention norms to indicate good Muslim behaviour according to good Muslim practice in a country. During his fierce argument about the behaviour of migrants from other African countries in Mali it is possible to filter out his position towards good Muslim behaviour.

> 'There are many people from other West African countries in Mali, but what do they look for? Mali is a very poor country! They think they can migrate to Europe by passing through Mali, they have 60% chance they succeed. But many people fail and they need money and start steeling money to get it. That's just very wrong!'

Daouda says this in a very indignant way. The norm he is referring to is that you shouldn't steal. He is especially harsh about this regarding non-Malians entering Mali and starting criminal activities. He is very much against this. His pre-reflexive reaction is being triggered by the values of Islam (like honesty, equality) which indicate norms like this.

Whereas Daouda is talking about foreigners' behaviour in Mali, Oumou has got a clear opinion about foreign people living in the Netherlands. When we talk about Geert Wilders his view on this matter is triggered.

> ‘Wilders’ intention is good, sometimes he goes too far, but yes his intention is good. Some Turkish and Moroccan man abuse girls in the Netherlands and that is not good. When you live here you should respect the Netherlands and its rules. You should work for your money. If you do that, then you can stay here I think. Also migrants or other people from abroad. If you don’t behave yourself, I can understand Wilders wants the people with misbehaviour to leave.’

The norms Oumou is referring to are: having respect for women, working for your money and obeying the rules of the country. Like Daouda, Oumou seems to reflect on politics of the Netherlands in a pre-reflexive way. It’s a product being in a social field and the norms stem from the values of his religion, like honesty, equality and liveability. They apply in the fields where he used to feel comfortable in Mali and they apply in the Netherlands as well. He notices when these values are being violated.

3.4 Conclusion: importance of family

This part explored the pre-reflexive religious practices of Malian migrants in the Netherlands. While talking about leaving Mali to go to the Netherlands, the importance of family came up. In Mali family is very important, as is being discussed in this thesis at several places already. The importance of family comes back while speaking about religion, in contrast with Muslims in Mali, the Malian migrants I spoke didn’t list the five pillars but emphasised the role of their parents in religion and a couple of important norms and values. Some of these values are in a certain way incorporated in their habitus; they are the product of reproduction. About certain things (like stealing and working for your money) they still think exactly the same as when they are in Mali. Habitus allows them to live in the various social fields that they are part of.

Times of crisis: Indications of reflexive religious practices

Reflexive practices of Malian migrants in the Netherlands are largely based on years of comparing Mali and the Netherlands with each other. Their daily confrontation with different cultures triggers a strong capacity to reflect upon their (religious) life in Mali in comparison with their (religious) life in the Netherlands. In this paragraph I describe how they compare the Netherlands with Mali view Dutch ways of taking care of the family. This comparison has not directly to do with religious practices, but it serves as an important background because it shows what is different between Mali and the Netherlands in *their* view. The considerations they have on either living in Mali or in the Netherlands are important to keep in mind while reading their accounts about religious practices. After this background, I discuss two themes which are indications of reflexive religious practice: talking about being Muslim in the Netherlands and giving their opinion on imam Haidara and marabouts.

3.5 Making comparisons – ‘France was not different enough’

Most Malian migrants I spoke migrated to the Netherlands when they were between twenty and thirty years old. At the moment of my research, they have lived approximately half of their lives in Mali. This might cause the strong tendency to compare Mali and the Netherlands and thus a strong reflexivity to both cultures. So it is important to start this paragraph illustrating in what way Malian migrants compare their current situation with their past ones. It shows that they deliberately choose a totally different life. How this might influence their religious practices and thoughts about Islam in Mali and the Netherlands will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Most Malian migrants travelling to Europe by plane, go to France first. The visa to France is easy to get. There are big Malian communities in France, and that's exactly the thing most Malian migrants living in the Netherlands wanted to avoid. The account of Cheick illustrates this:

> 'When I arrived in France, I ended up automatically in the big Malian community. It was different than Mali, but not different enough. I wanted to build a new life. I am Malian, felt Malian, but I didn't want to associate with Malians anymore. I was in a culture crisis. Then I made my decision and took a train from Paris to Amsterdam.'

The situation Cheick was in triggered a very big reflection on his identity. Once he made his decision to migrate, he expected to arrive in this totally new world, which would not resemble anything he had known so far. But by being welcomed by a big Malian community he got confronted with his Malian identity which he tried to shake off from himself during his journey. With a big shock he realised he was still Malian and by entering their community in Paris, he didn't enter a new world, but just a similar world in a different country. It was not what he had expected. Migration seemed to be such a big step and he imagined it to be very different from what he experienced when he arrived in France. In order to live up to his own expectations, he had a strong desire to go on alone, go away from the Malian community which reminded him so much of home. He wanted to experience what he expected: being dropped off in a different world and struggle to find a new life. He might have felt like a betrayer to think like that and thus felt like being in a culture crisis: he felt Malian, he knew he was Malian, but he didn't want to feel Malian. The community life confronted him too much with what he had just left behind.

Also Oumou had a strong urge to make his own plan, his drive was to show his family that he could do it on his own.

> 'The social control in France was just too big. I wanted to prove to my family that I could do it alone. After I arrived in the Netherlands I didn't see Malian people for four years.'

The stories of these two man show that they deliberately choose for another life. And when it turned out to be quite the same as in Mali, they moved on, until they found this other life they were looking for. This deliberate way of searching for a new live and wanting to be independent of a Malian community 'attracts' different Malian migrants. This is being explained by one of my informants more specifically: Awa noticed a difference in education level between Malian migrants in France and the Netherlands. Since Malians do speak French already and they're not obliged to do an integration course in France, the education level of Malians in France is lower than in the Netherlands. She, however had a high education level and was therefore more used to study, to be eager to learn. She experienced this as being an advantage during the integration course and learning the Dutch language. She wouldn't want to live in a Malian community. Nevertheless it was a shock for her to arrive in the Netherlands.

> 'Everything was different in comparison with Mali. Nothing was the same. I tried to find things that were similar, but I couldn't find them. Now I keep the good things from my country. I've got two cultures now and I combine the good things from both cultures. I really like the Netherlands. It's clean and quiet.'

She was immediately aware of the differences. At first it was a shock, after that she could start to be reflexive, compare and give and take from two cultures.

Cheick even adapted some Dutch mentality. Sometimes he misses the social street live, drinking tea, the parties. But then, when he's talking to a friend who's living in Mali and Cheick asks what he's doing at the moment, the answer is: 'drinking tea'. Cheick: 'Still drinking tea!' And then he's happy he lives and works in the Netherlands. He wants to do 'something' all the time, even when he's back in Mali, visiting his family. That's what he adapted from Dutch culture and his Dutch girlfriend. He is very aware of the differences between Dutch and Malian people and in particular very reflexive on behaviour. Cheick and one of his close Malian friends are able to reflect upon each other's behaviour when they are discussing to what extend they are Malian or Dutch.
Karim about Cheick:

> 'He's Dutch regarding things: two bikes, his house. But he still thinks a bit in the Malian way and speaks still with many Malians. He's able to understand the different dialects and new words in Bamako.'

Cheick about Karim:

> 'Karim has got a Dutch mentality: he's shopping very fast, wants to buy stuff quick. He's talking a lot, but not saying anything really, he doesn't know all the Bamana words and dialects anymore and thinks in a Dutch way.'

They both have a Dutch girlfriend with whom they live together. This might be influencing their ability to be reflexive about what is typical Dutch. It's not totally clear how and why they differ in their extent of 'Dutchness', but it might go too far here to be able to say that. In any case, they have been through several periods of crisis: migrating was the first big one, but also smaller times of crisis would have produced a good understanding of typical Dutch practices, like having Dutch colleagues and Dutch friends with whom they have a different friendship or understanding in comparison with their Malian friends.

Daouda is comparing Mali and the Netherlands a lot. It's like he feels able to see what could be improved in Mali, because now he knows how things are arranged in the Netherlands. He has got many opinions about what is not good in Mali. He's going to Mali regularly and thus he's being confronted with the two different worlds more often than the other Malian migrants in the Netherlands I met. Daouda confides me in with the thought he has sometimes:

> 'Why am I here in the Netherlands? All my friends in Mali have got a good job. I should better have stayed there. I am doing quite well here, but it is different. In the Netherlands I feel like an exception sometimes.'

Daouda is reflexive about his life in the Netherlands compared with Mali. It's probably not in a nostalgic way, like described in the previous chapter, because Daouda is regularly visiting Mali and thus has a more realistic image of how it would be living there again. In the Netherlands he's being confronted with how he is living in a 'western' culture. By being in touch with his home country regularly he is considering the advantages and disadvantages all the time. Every time when he has contact with his family and friends in Mali, with his mind he has to return to his life in the Netherlands, it might be seen as a time of crisis in which his habitus and field are temporarily disconnected every time he makes this switch.

Next to contact with family, the Malian migrants in the Netherlands get a lot of support from each other. It seems that Malian migrants in the Netherlands share a particular mentality. This is most likely caused by the fact that they arrived in the Netherlands around the same time, approximately eleven years ago, meaning that they have lived in Mali in the same period too. And even though they prefer not to live a Malian community, their common background draws them together, although different than would be the case in Mali. Oumou is explaining this new bond:

> 'I feel like being brothers with the other Malians in the Netherlands, we've got the same mind-set. In Mali you cannot trust your problems to someone, it will be passed on to anybody. Here, in the Netherlands I can speak with one of my (Malian) friends about a problem I have and he doesn't tell it to other people. It will stay between him and me. We trust each other.'

While realising there is a difference between being friends in Mali and in the Netherlands, they make use of this new situation. In Mali they would probably have prayed to God, which would feel safe to do. But in the Netherlands they prefer telling it to friends. Thus they are flexible to recognize and then adapt to new situations. In the conclusion of this chapter I further investigate how the comparisons might influence their religious practices.

3.6 Taking care of the family – 'Mali is not one country, it is one family'

Many people in Mali talk about migrating, to Europe or America, but also other countries in West Africa. As long as there is more chance on getting a (good) job. In the end, only a few actually do migrate. According to Oumou it is because Malians love Mali. Everyone is each other's brother and sister. The social life in Mali is very different from the rest of Africa. He can explain this in one little sentence:

> *'Mali n'est pas une pays, mais une famille.'*

The love for the family (among other things, like finance means) holds Malians back from migration. Malians feel obliged and honoured to take care of their family, because that very same family let you grow up, took care of you. So after that, you must take care of your parents in turn. And beyond their own extended family, Malians feel related to neighbours, friends and their friends families too. The importance of family names causes a great deal of solidarity, and since there are only a few different names, everyone is being assured of having a big family. Oumou is realising this and in that sense showing reflexive behaviour. But the fact that this system of family relations, and the social security evolving from it, is being sustained already for many hundreds of years means that it is enabled by reproduction and repetition. The stability that is being experienced by Malian families supports the continuation of such a 'family based society'. That makes the observation of Oumou very striking, Mali as one big family, instead of one nation. In spite of his love for his family, Oumou decided to leave. But, as a migrant in the Netherlands, he doesn't forget his family and he helps them from the Netherlands.

> 'When you are Malian and Muslim, you need to think about your parents, not only about yourself. You want to be proud of yourself, so when you earned some money in the Netherlands, you should send some to your parents.'

This again shows that taking care of the family is part of the habitus of Malian people. Many Malians are brought up in extended families where different generations live and take care for each other. These stable social conditions allow pre-reflexive practice. For the migrated

Malians, who are many kilometres away, it is still obvious that you should take care of your parents and family. It is, like Oumou says, his duty because he is Malian and Muslim. It confirms the findings about views on good Muslimhood: one important value is taking care of the family. This value is incorporated in being Malian and in being Muslim.

At the end of my interview with Awa she is asking questions to me as well. It's clear that one question is in her mind for a while already, because in a slight indignant and curious way as if she really wants to have an answer on this for a long time, she asks me:

> 'Why do your parents not live with their children once they are old? That is something I do not understand. People here do have the money and the space, but still they put their parents in an old people's home!'

I have to think about this for a moment. In Mali it's indeed obvious that your parents will live with one or more of their children. I explain things about independence, retirement pension, affordable medical facilities and stubbornness. It is a generational, repetitive, reproductive process: a couple of generations ago it started and people are used to it by now.

Awa however, is showing reflexive practice here. She was really shocked when she discovered the way of parental care in the Netherlands. The relatively stable social conditions where she grew up and where it was normal to care for your old parents defined her habitus. When she migrated to the Netherlands her shock (time of crisis) could be described as a disjunction between habitus and field. She is trying to find a way to deal with it. After my explanation she is still not convinced how it can possibly happen that we put our parents in houses with other old people and that they often would prefer it themselves as well. She considers taking your old parents in house as a universal value, assuming that across boundaries like borders or religions, this would be the same.

3.7 Being Muslim in the Netherlands – 'Being Muslim from the inside or outside'

In the first part of the chapter I described pre-reflexive norms and values the Malian migrants have when they talk about the Islam. In this part however, I show that the migrants think about being Muslim in a reflexive way as well. Actually it seems that they speak about it more in a reflexive way than a pre-reflexive way. Probably because they compare their own religious practice to the religious practice of others in order to justify their own behaviour. Based on my interviews I show the reflexive way in which they justify their religious practice. I start with their accounts of which rituals they still do or don't. Then I illustrate what they think makes someone a good Muslim and whether they bother what other people think about Islam.

Rituals:
Ever since Cheick lives in the Netherlands, he did do the Ramadan every year, except this year. He really didn't feel like doing it and in combination with his early working times it would be very tough for him. When his Moroccan colleagues found out he was not doing the Ramadan, they were very disappointed and told him he was not being a good Muslim. Cheick defends himself:

> 'But I am doing the Ramadan for myself only. I know that many people do it just because the rest of their community does. Even if they actually don't feel like doing it.'

The practice of doing Ramadan can be described as a pre-reflexive practice, because it is a product of being in a social field which is being reproduced without questioning. However, certain circumstances make Cheick think about it in a reflexive way: only a small number of people at his work do it (since not all of colleagues are Muslim) and it's not taken for granted in the company where he works. But the major time of crisis that made him to think in a reflexive way were his colleagues who judge him on his religious practice. That makes him realising the reason for doing the Ramadan is personal for him, but communal for others.

Ramadan is not integrated in most Dutch working culture and holds Muslims back from practicing it, like Cheick. Work and lack of facilities seem to hold more Malian migrants back from practicing Islam. Like Awa, who says that the Mosque is too far away. But, she adds, God is everywhere, you don't have to go to the mosque for being close to God. Daouda has been to a mosque in the Netherlands once. When he is in Mali, he goes. Then it's easy, he says. But in the Netherlands it's difficult to go. Cheick has been to the mosque only a few times since he arrived in the Netherlands. The Turkish and Moroccan man at the entrance asked him whether he was Muslim. They don't take into account that there are African Muslims, according to Cheick. This incident didn't motivate him to go again. Probably this attitude is different in each city. Bintou and Ali go to the Mosque at religious celebration days, preferably a Turkish mosque, because there they speak, besides Turkish, Dutch. In the Moroccan mosque Arabic is used which they cannot understand. Another informant, Karim, argues that praying five times a day takes a lot of time and at work he cannot find time and facilities. But, he admits, he got a bit lazy. Others found a compromise, like Awa:

> 'I don't pray five times a day. After work you can make up for that by doing all prayers at one time. Some people say that isn't the way you should do it. But they are not God. God knows, sees that you don't have time for it. People living in Mali have got a lot of time, *they* can pray five times a day.'

When the Malian migrants lived in Mali, going to the mosque was easy: there are good facilities, they could go together with friends or family. When the migrants came to the Netherlands, they experienced a time of crisis in the sense of trying to go to the mosque, to keep up with their traditions at home. But soon they found out that the mosques were not like the ones at home. This triggered them to reflect upon the use of a mosque and find ways in order to still feel like a good Muslim without going to the mosque frequently. Everyone found their own way and time of thinking of and praying to God.

Attitudes towards eating habits and rituals are also being reflected. Awa's family still does not eat pork, because of religious reasons. But, she's got a very outspoken opinion about halal meat now she knows the Dutch way of butchering.

> 'Butchering an animal in the halal way the animal has pain for fifteen minutes. The other way (like they do in the Netherlands) is better, softer for the animal. For me halal is not logical. In Mali they just don't have the machines that kill the animals fast. Here in the Netherlands – what is halal? Here they've got the possibility to kill the animal in a softer way, so why wouldn't they.'

Apparently she doesn't link halal with Islam. For her, animal welfare is more important. My other informants didn't mention it, they seemingly took it for granted, but she's thinking about it in a very reflexive way; replacing her Islam norms with norms about animal welfare. Knowing how animals are butchered in Mali and then getting to know how they butcher

animals here could be stated as being the time of crisis after which she changed her perception of eating halal meat.

Besides confrontations in food differences, reflections on drinking alcohol are also triggered after migration to a country were drinking alcohol in public is accepted. Still, at the Tabaski party I joined organised by Malian migrants in the Netherlands, there was no alcohol. We drank juice and cola. But at one point they played a song in Bamana which is about everyone drinking alcohol sometimes. The Malian people dance, sing it out loud, and tease each other with it. This might be called a reflexive song, because it makes people reflexive about their own or other's behaviour. Everyone in Mali knows that there are quite some Muslim people who drink alcohol. Still people in Mali are not eager to be seen while drinking alcohol, like Karim is telling me:

> 'In Mali, people quickly hide their beer bottles if somebody is passing, it will be passed on immediately. But in the Netherlands there is no need to do that. The social pressure is gone.'

In the case of the song and the gossiping in Mali: at the point it is being spoken out loud and confirmed, it becomes reflexive, a time of crisis, in which Muslims are forced to think and consider their religious practices. At the other hand, it is a very happy and casual song, it doesn't sound like there is a strict didactic lesson in it.

Good Muslim

Malian migrants in the Netherlands did not just quote the five pillars of Islam when we talked about Islam. In contrast with the Muslims I spoke with in Mali, they've got a very own description of good Muslimhood and are very well able to describe how they interpret their religion.

Oumou says he is a 'modern' Muslim. Still, he is the one who described good Muslimhood in a way close to listing the five pillars of Islam. Oumou lists four directions you should follow in order to be a good Muslim. The first and most important is that you belief there is one God and (he speaks grateful words for the prophet Muhammad) one prophet. The second is that you have respect for your parents. Always. You shouldn't have to force that, but you should do that with pleasure, until the very last moment. And you should respect all the other people around you: man/woman, young/old, whatever religion. If you do that, you will get respect as well. Third, you should be honest. And fourth: pray, if that's possible. According to Oumou there are a lot of people in Mali who always pray and do everything according the five pillars of Islam.

> 'But I am more Muslim than they are. Many of them do not truly belief or think about the first four thoughts. These four thoughts you should have in your mind all the time and truly belief in them.'

He is being reflexive about his religious practice and compares it with Malian Muslims living in Mali. Another informant thinks he might know why Muslims in Mali are not really thinking about their religious practices. He thinks Malians are not so open to ask things and learn how they can better understand the Islam. He has got a similar understanding of Islam as Oumou:

> 'Before you go praying, you should believe first.'

Then he thinks about what he just said once more and concludes that 'the norms and values of the Islam are actually very similar to other religions.' He is as well very reflexive on really understanding Islam compared to the Muslims living in Mali of whom he seems to think that they are not making an effort to understand Islam.

Also Daouda attaches more importance to understanding Islam, rather than simply doing the rituals. He doesn't pray a lot anymore, he doesn't go to the mosque and he doesn't do Ramadan. Nevertheless he feels like he's a good Muslim.

> 'I read a lot. The Qur'an, other books. When you read a lot, then you are a good Muslim. Then you can read for yourself and understand what is written and said. In Mali many young people drink alcohol, you've seen it yourself in Cafe BlaBla (popular and fancy cafe in Bamako). They do pray and go to the mosque. They are Muslim from the outside, but not from the inside. The most important thing of good Muslimhood, is being Muslim from the inside.'

Awa also feels Muslim from the inside and that's why she is not afraid to be confronted with Christianity. She is very open to other religions.

> 'Recently someone rang the doorbell and handed out Christian booklets. I just accepted it and looked and read in it. God will not get angry about that. Because the most important is that you know you believe in God and you know who God is.'

She reflects on her Muslim practices by justifying her behaviour towards Christianity. She is confronted with Christianity quite a lot since she came to live in the Netherlands and especially since her oldest son is going to a Christian primary school.

> 'We bring him there because it's a good school with good teachers. When he comes home from school and tells me that he learned that Jesus is the son of God, then I neither reject that, nor do I confirm it. It's okay. Christians believe that and since there are many different believes, there are also different views and habits. I do still think about Islam as I was doing in Mali. Believing comes from your heart, it's hard to change that.'

Overall, the descriptions of good Muslim hood that these Malian migrants gave me, can be summarized in three 'conditions' of good Muslim hood:

1. *Be good for your family and other people around you.* This one is the most pre-reflexive of the three. Family is very important in Mali, as was also shown in the previous chapter: Mali is not one country, it's one family. This thought is very incorporated in Malian life and in a sense also in religious practice being a key value in Mali.
2. *You should really belief and be Muslim from the inside.* This being said by a couple of my informants, it points out that they have a common judgement about general religious practice in Mali. They judge religious practice in Mali as being not matters of faith, but as a daily ritual people don't really think about. Like one of my informant says: 'In Mali religion and rituals are a habit. Here in the Netherlands you really have to think about it.' This indicates that arriving and living in the Netherlands has been a time of crisis for them. They made this switch from pre-reflexive to reflexive religious practice, from not really thinking about religious practice to actually thinking about what their religion means to them. This is probably triggered by a lack of social pressure and a lack of facilities – they were forced (also by other Muslims who judged them) to think about how they wanted to continue practicing religion in this new environment and then discovered that their belief is

still very strong, but that the strict rituals and rules (being Muslim 'from the outside') are of less importance to them than the actual faith and belief in God that 'comes from your heart' (being Muslim 'from the inside').

3. *Read. Be able to understand the Qur'an and prayers yourself.* This is probably also triggered after not going to the mosque anymore where the prayers are being told and the Qur'an cited. Malian migrants have to organise their religious practices themselves and during that process start thinking of the reason for doing that.

3.8 Opinions about Haidara & marabout – 'Mon premier marabout est ma mère.'

Haidara

The most famous imam in Mali is called Haidara. Also outside Mali he's very well-known. Saying his name triggers quite some reactions from the Malian migrants. Cheick knows who Haidara is, but he has never seen him.

> 'Haidara knows very well how to communicate his message. In that way he is brainwashing the people.'

Also Daouda is not very enthusiastic about the imam and is looking agitated.

> 'People follow him blindly, that is so stupid! They don't think themselves. I saw him and I noticed that he doesn't do what he says he does. He is telling the people that you shouldn't have a big house in the middle of a poor quarter while giving nothing to the people around you. But that's exactly what he does! The problem is illiteracy. People cannot read, so they follow somebody's words.'

Oumou and Ali explain why they are not fond of Haidara:

> Oumou: 'Yes, I know Haidara and I respect him. But I don't need an imam. I can distinguish good and bad myself.'
>
> Ali: 'I am not the kind of person who listens to such things. My father taught me what is good or bad.'

Awa thinks he's a bit extreme, but still good.

> 'Haidara criticizes all the other imams and marabouts and says he's the best. I don't like that, you shouldn't say things like that. I know that some people go to his preaches just to have a laugh.'

They're all critical about Haidara. I cannot be sure whether they had the same thought about the imam already when they were still living in Mali. So the time of crisis that made them reflexive about it might be the knowledge about Muslims in Mali following and believing one imam, while the Malian Muslims in the Netherlands put a great value on thinking for themselves and trusting on their own belief and religious practices. The judgement of Malian Muslims who do not think for themselves is very prevalent again. The reactions illustrate what's important in religion for them. Family plays a big role in the ability to define what is good and bad.

Marabout
Ali is comparing the marabout with a priest in a Christian church: somebody who can pray for you. This person has got particular prayers for particular requests. He is not enthusiastic about marabouts. He says that everyone can become a marabout. When I speak with Awa, she clarifies this statement for me. There are two different marabouts: the ones who studied for it and know the Qur'an very well, like scientists knowing their chemistry books. He stands closer to God than normal people. He will never ask a contribution for his services, but he will take it if you give to him freely. He never claims that something is going to happen or that you certainly will be helped. After his prayer, the decision is up to God. Then you've got the other kind of marabout. They are swindlers. They will assure you that something is going to succeed and he will ask many cows or other goods for his services. But yes, sometimes people have so many troubles that they will pay for what they want to hear.

Cheick shows the ring on his ring finger. I can see signs: small lines and dots. They are Arabic numbers, Cheick explains. The ring brings luck. His sister gave it to him. I ask him whether he has been to a marabout.

> 'To be honest, yes I have. Just before my journey to Europe I visited a marabout and I asked for advice and approval. He told me that stability awaited me there, but a very difficult time as well.'

At first, he is not eager to admit that he visited a marabout. Malians in general do not like to admit they go to a marabout. Women are more open about it and push their male family members to go and ask for advice. Cheick tells that since the time he is in the Netherlands, his sister still goes to the marabout sometimes to ask for luck and prayer for him. On the one hand, going to the marabout is a pre-reflexive practice, since it is part of Islam and Malian culture, and especially the combination of them. Malians are used to the marabout and/or imam to be someone they can go to for help and advice. On the other hand, most Malians I met were very reluctant to talk about it or even admit that they were going there sometimes. Should it be called a reflexive practice then? Probably not, because going there might be pre-reflexive still, while the consideration whether to tell me (as a Dutch, non-Muslim girl) or not is being reflexive. This puts me in the position of being a 'time of crisis' again and disturb their pre-reflexive practice by making them think about it.

Oumou tells me that he doesn't need a marabout to pray for him. When has a problem, he is going to his mother first. He says:

> 'Mon premier marabout est ma mère.'

He asks her to pray for him. She is his best friend and understands him more than a marabout does. This shows the importance of family again and while this may be a pre-reflexive practice, the fact that they are not shy to talk about it is in contrast with the Muslims I spoke in Mali who were very reluctant to talk about their own experiences and opinion about marabouts.

3.9 Conclusion: religion without group pressure

To come back at the comparisons Malian migrants make: in what way did the Malian migrants I spoke compare their situation in the Netherlands with Mali? How might that influence their religious practices? For most migrants, one of the first comparisons was life in France versus life in the Netherlands. Since most of them didn't want to live in a Malian

community, it has some implications for religious practice. Without group pressure, migrants often need to find a new balance. Several practices are possible: more reflexive about their faith in God but less attention for rituals, or stronger attention for rituals but less or the same faith, or in general (rituals and faith) less religious because he/she cannot keep doing it without group pressure. Being with a big group also helps in feeling like part of the group and less like being an exception. While entering a mosque in the Netherlands might be awkward an even discouraging, I can imagine that a big group of Malian migrants in Paris can get easy access to certain mosques in Paris.

The reflexive religious practices of Malian migrants in the Netherlands were more prevalent than the pre-reflexive practices. While comparing the Netherlands with Mali and France, it seemed that the act of migration was a very big 'time of crisis' which helped them to see certain things, which are discussed in this chapter, in a reflexive way (like their view on good Muslimhood, view on Haidara and marabouts, importance of the family). Also having contact with or visiting Mali triggered quite some reflexive observations and practices. The opinion of others about their own religious practices and the lack of religious facilities made them very aware of their current religious practices and it triggered them all to think about what Islam and being Muslim means to them. They also describe their view on good Muslimhood in a different way than they might have done in Mali: they didn't list the five pillars of Islam, but defined it with inspiration of their parents. With their reflexive views they also criticize Muslims in Mali for not truly believing. That makes them doubt the messages of Haidara and marabouts as well. They attach more value to the lessons and remarks of their parents. So it seemed that Malian migrants in the Netherlands developed more reflexivity about their faith, they find themselves good Muslims because they 'really' believe, at the same time they have less attention for rituals.

4. Religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands: a comparison

In the last two chapters the pre-reflexive and reflexive religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands were described and illustrated. This chapter compares these practices with each other. The possible causes of the similarities and differences are explored. The chapter is divided in two parts in which there are two questions answered: What are the similarities and differences of pre-reflexive and reflexive religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands? To what extent can changing reflexivity be used as an explanation for the similarities and differences between Mali and the Netherlands?

4.1 Similarities and differences

In the previous four chapters the events and conversations were divided in particular themes and kinds of religious practice: pre-reflexive or reflexive. But what are the similarities and differences between these religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands? By comparing these religious practices of Malian people living in Mali and Malian migrants living in the Netherlands, I set aside the distinction of pre-reflexive and reflexive. After making the lists of similarities and differences I again added the notion of pre-reflexive and reflexive per country. Then I saw something that seems to be a striking outcome, most of the similarities (Table 1) turned out to be pre-reflexive religious practices in both Mali and the Netherlands, while most differences (Table 2) seem to be pre-reflexive practices in Mali and reflexive religious practices in the Netherlands. I will shortly describe the similarities and differences before I move to the possible explanations.

Table 1. Similarities of religious practices

Similarities:	**Mali**	**The Netherlands**
Showing a certain resignation	Pre-reflexive	Pre-reflexive
Religion as heritage	Pre-reflexive	Pre-reflexive
Not living up to guidelines of Islam, like drinking alcohol	Reflexive	Reflexive

Showing a certain resignation

The Malian migrants in the Netherlands showed a certain resignation about their situation. As long as they had a job and house they were quite satisfied. They were living with the day and trusted on God that everything would be fine: 'ça va venir', it will come. Also in Mali a similar feeling was being expressed. They had the faith that God would decide what would happen, something also recognizable in the words Insha'Allah. And yes, many people, especially the young ones, are dreaming about migration, but next to some very important draw back reasons like money, family, education, some people find it very easy to just stay in

Mali. Migrant Cheick judges this kind of behaviour when he calls with his friends and finds out they are drinking tea, *still* drinking tea.

Religion as heritage

In Mali someone literally told me that religion is a heritage. People practice Islam because their parents do, because they are raised practicing it without questioning. In the Netherlands the Malian migrants were also suggesting this. One informant said that he was 'Muslim in name', implying that he inherited it from his family, like his family name. Other informants in the Netherlands defined good Muslimhood by quoting their father, this indicates that they 'learned' to be Muslim from their parents, they want to do it like their parents do.

Not living up to guidelines of Islam

When talking about drinking alcohol or not praying five times a day, this caused reflexive responses in both Mali and the Netherlands. The people who heard about these kind of practices in Mali were very indignant, while the ones who actually did break 'the rules' in this way were justifying their practice by saying that they did it because they were young. In the Netherlands, Malian migrants who didn't do the rituals often anymore, were more relaxed in admitting this and justified that they were still a good Muslim because they really believed in God and the Prophet Muhammad. They took this opportunity to accuse Muslims in Mali for not being Muslims 'from the inside'.

Table 2. Differences of religious practices

Differences:	**Mali**	**The Netherlands**
Practice of religious rituals: praying, mosque, Ramadan (practicing or not practicing frequently)	Pre-reflexive	Reflexive
Descriptions of good Muslimhood (five pillars versus norms and values, faith in God)	Pre-reflexive	Reflexive
Religious practice: having faith (be Muslim from inside or outside)	Pre-reflexive	Reflexive
Dealing with own problems (consult imam/God versus friends/family)	Pre-reflexive	Reflexive
Taking care of the family	Pre-reflexive	Pre-reflexive & reflexive

Practice of religious rituals

In Mali, most Muslims practice the rituals like praying, going to the mosque, doing Ramadan according to the five pillars of Islam. When I asked them if they could tell me something about the Islam, they would list these rituals and say that they practiced them. Malian Muslims in the Netherlands were more reflexive about religious rituals, they failed to keep up with it and were confronted with judgements from other Muslims. They also thought of reasons for justifying this behaviour and stating why they were still good Muslims.

Descriptions of good Muslimhood

The differences of religious practice directly link with their different descriptions of good Muslimhood. Whereas Malian migrants in Mali state that good Muslimhood is when you live up to the five pillars of Islam, Malian Muslims in the Netherlands define good Muslimhood in terms of norms and values of which some of them repeated their parents' lessons of what is good and bad.

Having faith in God
In Mali, the Muslims I spoke with believed in God in a pre-reflexive way. They didn't really talk about it, but took it for granted, which certainly doesn't imply that they didn't have faith and only practiced the rituals. This was however suggested by some of the Malian migrants who were my informants in the Netherlands, they stated that in Mali people were being Muslim from the outside (practicing but not 'really' believing), while they reflected on their religious practices as being Muslim from the inside (not practicing regularly, but 'really' believing).

Dealing with problems
Another difference seems to be the way Malians deal with their problems: to whom they go to ask for advice or support. In Mali the group discussion and some other conversations revealed that people go to the imam or marabout and via them ask for support from God, although people were not very open about it. In the Netherlands, Malians preferred to ask advice from their parents or friends. They say this wasn't possible in Mali because their problems would be discussed with anyone within the environment of their family or friends.

Taking care of the family
Taking care of the family is quite obvious for a large part of society in Mali. A tendency of individualism can be distinguished but is of lesser relevance to describe here. Most Malians I met took care of their family and also took it for granted as it being an important value of Islam. In the Netherlands, the Malian migrants seemed to hold on to this important value as being straightforward. They would send money when needed and most of them kept in touch and spoke to their family often. A different and more reflexive approach was the discussion about parental care and the indignant way one Malian migrant was reacting on the Dutch parental care system.

4.2 Explanation of similarities and differences

In order to explain the similarities and differences we could look at whether the practices were pre-reflexive or reflexive. As can be seen in Table 1 and 2, all similarities, except one, were pre-reflexive practices. All differences were pre-reflexive practices in Mali compared to reflexive practices in the Netherlands. When we get back to the meaning of pre-reflexive practice which is discussed in the theoretical chapter it is stated that pre-reflexive practice depends on relatively stable social conditions and on lasting experience of social position. According to Bourdieu habitus is predominantly pre-reflexive. The possibility of a temporary disconnection between habitus and field is for the most part caused by a period of crisis.

Similarities
In this theory we should find the possible explanation for the similarities and differences. At most pre-reflexive religious practices I found in Mali, there was no time of crisis and thus no reason for people to alter their practices. Take for example the Friday prayer and the practice of other religious rituals; there is no intervening from 'people like me' who confront them with different practices. Also interior of their houses undergoes no time of crisis. Religion as a heritage is something that is taken for granted, there is no time of crisis that bothers this idea.

The only exception in 'similarities' is that both Malians in Mali and the Netherlands reacted in a similar way on offending the guidelines of Islam, specifically when we were talking about drinking alcohol. Here, a time of crisis seemed to be involved, which could be me, suggesting there were Muslims who were drinking alcohol, but it could also be them, knowing and seeing people drinking alcohol around them (sometimes themselves). So, if

there is no time of crisis, the nature of pre-reflexive practice should explain the similarities, which is habitus. Our predisposed way of thinking, acting and moving through the social environment is a product of our being in a social field. By reproduction and repetition people in the same social fields have similar habits and this 'produces' pre-reflexive practices.

The possible explanation of the similar pre-reflexive practices is that they are a predisposed way of thinking that is not being disturbed by a time of crisis. The similarity of being satisfied with their lives can be seen as the pre-reflexive survival mechanism which applies in Mali as well as in the Netherlands. Religion as heritage is also something that is apparently not being questioned once the Malian migrants settled in the Netherlands. Despite their change of practicing rituals, they didn't leave their religion but hold on to it. It seems likely that religion is habitus for Malians.

Differences

In order to explain the differences of reflexivity in Mali and the Netherlands the notion of 'time of crisis' is important. The differences in at least the first four practices in Table 2 could be explained by the occurrence of a time of crisis. As is being described, it seems that the reflexivity about religious practices by Malians change from pre-reflexive to reflexive. This point of change should lie somewhere between migration from one country to the other and the present, generally about eleven years after migration. The different kinds of 'time of crisis' I encountered in the Netherlands were:

Times of crisis in the Netherlands:

- Talking with a Dutch non-religious person about Mali and religious practices
- Migration process
- Having contact with or visiting Mali
- Lack of religious facilities
- The opinion of others about their religious practice

I should mention that the first one: 'time of crisis by talking with a Dutch non-religious person', was present in all my interviews with Malian migrants in the Netherlands. Since I didn't stay with them for a longer period of time, I was not able to observe whether they showed pre-reflexive religious practices when I was not there. So all the information I got from them was by talking with them.

The change in reflexivity could be explained by the lack of religious facilities. Because of, for example, lack of a mosque and praying times during working hours, Malian migrants were confronted with a different environment than in Mali. This triggered them to think about what Islam really means to them and if they then found it necessary to still practice all rituals.

The different description of good Muslimhood and having faith could be explained by the opinion of others and the lack of religious facilities. This is also triggered by the previous difference of practicing rituals. Because there is a lack of religious facilities, Malian Muslims are forced to think about the meaning of Islam to them. They discover their faith in God is very strong and they find there is less need for practicing all rituals like they used to do when they still lived in Mali.

The difference in dealing with problems could be explained by the lack of religious facilities and contact with Mali. In Mali people do not discuss their problems so much with their family, but once living in the Netherlands it seems that Malians would go to their parents to

ask for advice preferably. A possible explanation could be that there is a lack of Malian imams and marabouts in the Netherlands. But also the small community of Malian friends and the mutual trust encourages them to go to their parents and friends for advice and support.

The different reflexivity about parental care can be explained by migration and talking with me as a Dutch person. Furthermore caring for parents seemed to be a rather pre-reflexive practice, however the act of migration would confront the migrants with their absence in Mali and big distance to their parents. It seems that they try to make up for this by sending money.

So there are all kind of explanations for the differences between religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands. Changing reflexivity, caused by times of crisis indicate the differences. But an interesting question remains: Why became certain practices reflexive, while other practices in the Netherlands remained pre-reflexive? The explanation of this should be looked for in the definition of reflexive practice: reflexive practice is a temporary disjunction between habitus and field. It is the cause and symptom of the failure of immediate adaptation to the situation, for the most part limited to periods of crisis. The interesting part here lies in the notion of 'temporary disjunction'. The practices which are reflexive in the Netherlands, while pre-reflexive in Mali, might be gone beyond the temporary disjunction and turned into a change of practice. The 'immediate' adaptation should then be read as 'slow' adaptation.

5. Conclusion

The last chapter of this thesis brings together the most important conclusions and answers on the research question. It reflects on the used theory and gives hints for future research.

This thesis described religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands and I analysed to what extent they were pre-reflexive or reflexive. In the Netherlands I captured comparisons and judgements about Mali, descriptions of good Muslimhood and justifications of their current religious practices. This answered the first two sub-research questions: What are the indications of pre-reflexive and reflexive religious practices in Mali (1) and the Netherlands (2)? I already linked this with the theoretical concepts which were introduced in the theoretical framework. In the previous chapter I compared the religious practices in the two countries which dealt with the third sub-research question. Now it is time to answer the main question, which was formulated in the introduction. The question is: 'How are habitus and reflexivity reflected in the religious practices of people in Mali and Malian migrants in the Netherlands?'

5.1 Habitus reflected in religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands

In Mali I could see that religious practices were driven by the habitus of people. This was implied by the way they talked about being Muslim: 'it is a heritage', and 'as a good Muslim you should try to live up to the five pillars of Islam'. The great majority of the Malian population is Muslim. Many people grow up in a big (extended) family, which to a certain extent answers to a stable social condition, which is, according to Bourdieu, a prerequisite of pre-reflexive practice. Practices, in this case religious practices are produced by the habitus. And they allow people to live in the various social fields that we are part of (Sweetman, 2003). It depends on the habitus of a certain person, in which fields he or she will feel at ease. So, if a person grew up in a Malian Muslim family, he or she is used to the religious practices and will be reproducing them. Then, the person feels at ease in Malian society, or at least in the religious field of Malian society. Without disturbance (time of crisis) he or she practices religion in a pre-reflexive way.

In the Netherlands I encountered that the Malians migrants I interviewed had become reflexive about a part of their religious practices. However, there were a few indicators that made clear that their habitus was still producing a certain pre-reflexive way of thinking and acting. They were showing a certain resignation about their lives. They trusted on God that everything would work out fine for them, as long as they kept their faith. The words 'ça va venir' and 'Insha'Allah' illustrated this resignation. Their parents were also an important source for good behaviour and good Muslimhood. Malian migrants were often referring to what their parents had told them. This indicates a certain reproduction of their habitus. These very important lessons of how to be a good Muslim are very valuable for them in the

Netherlands as well as in Mali. It implies that there is a common social field (in Mali and the Netherlands) were Malian migrants can apply the same kind of practices.

5.2 Reflexivity reflected in religious practices in Mali and the Netherlands

In Mali, reflexivity was mainly triggered by my presence as a Dutch non-Muslim woman. In that case I was the 'time of crisis'. This could be called a temporary disconnection between their habitus and their religious field. They became reflexive about their practices for a short while. However, this probably didn't impact their reflexivity on religious practices in the long run. This time of crisis was only short and as soon as I was gone, the disjunction would probably be gone as well. However, there were other times of crisis as well, like the television show and justifications of other Malian about the alcohol consumption of some young Malian men. It is unclear for me how long these disjunctions stay.

In the Netherlands, Malian migrants were confronted with a new (social) environment every day. Migration can be seen as a big time of crisis. Regarding religious practices, this triggered them to think about what being Muslim really means to them. All my informants in the Netherlands still feel Muslim and identify themselves with Islam. But they practice religion in a different way while they have an increased feeling of really believing, really having faith in God - what they call 'being Muslim from the inside', instead of practicing the rituals but not really believing – 'being Muslim from the outside'. This change in reflexivity, from pre-reflexive to reflexive, might be caused by a long term disjunction leads for some Malian migrants to a change in practice.

This brings me back to the previous consideration of choosing for the theory of Bourdieu or the assimilation theories. It appears that, after the time of crisis of migration, Malian migrants in the Netherlands end up in a process of assimilation. They adapt their religious practices according to their new environment. So it might be possible to speak of a 'decline of an ethnic distinction', however not yet the total disappearance, which would be the endpoint of assimilation according to Alba and Nee (1997). But after doing my research this theory still seems to be too strong for the purpose of this thesis. I wanted to describe the religious practices and the possible changing reflexivity about their religion. I encountered changes in reflexivity about religious practices, but I think I wouldn't want to call it assimilation. The reason is that the change in reflexivity is happening inside the minds of the migrants, they attach a different value to religion which is caused by times of crisis. They are being confronted with different social fields and thus the strong difference of religious practices between Mali and the Netherlands. To say that the change in reflexivity on religious practices is assimilation, I regard as too strong. It is true that the Malian migrants I spoke are quite well integrated, they speak Dutch, have Dutch partners, live among Dutch people, but in the case of religious practices, I could not speak of a decline of ethnic and cultural distinctions. It is more complex. The Malian migrants I spoke practice and perceive religion in a different way than Malians living in Mali, but this doesn't mean it is a decline or disappearance. Another very important advantage of Bourdieu's theory with regard to assimilation theory is the applicability of the theory in both countries, Mali and the Netherlands. In that way two contexts could be integrated 'into one social field' like Mazzucato is stating (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007) and thus the background of the migrants was not seen apart from their current life in the Netherlands. The influence of their habitus and the social field where they grew up provided me with an important theoretical framework which enabled me to take the background of Malian migrants into account.

This thesis is based on individual Malian persons. The research groups in Mali and the Netherlands were too small to make any general conclusions about religious practices. The difficulty I had with getting information on religious practices should be kept in mind. The information on the practices of my informants is not complete, as far as it is possible to get data of pre-reflexivity and reflexivity of religious practices complete, it isn't something which can be measured. Religion is incorporated in the habitus of the Malian people I met and interviewing an observing in such a short time span is not enough to answer my research question completely. I attempted to answer the question at least with regard to my informants and my own observations. So the empirical data and conclusion of this thesis are based on the individuals I met and interviewed and I do not mean to state that what I wrote is applicable for all Malian people in Mali or all Malian migrants in the Netherlands. This reflects the social relevance of the thesis, which was to avoid generalisation of Muslims and Muslim migrants and focus on individual stories and views on Islam.

5.3 Recommendations

I experienced that it takes a long time to get into the complicated subject of religion and especially the practice of religion is not easy to grasp. Not in Mali, not in the Netherlands. Therefore this research could have a variety of different continuations. In order to do so, it would be very important to design a good methodology in order to get the information you want. This is however a technical recommendation. Regarding the content I have got two suggestions for future research.

One would be to go to Paris or another city with a big community of Malian migrants and study how they practice religion. Would it be different since they live in a Malian community? What was the influence of the migration on their reflexivity on religious practices? To what extent does migration influence reflexivity and to what extent was this reflexivity a personal characteristic already? This would dive deeper into Bourdieu's theory and especially into the field which he is not paying attention to very much: reflexivity. Then also attention should be paid to other events in the surrounding of people, in that way it challenged the static concept of habitus. Specifically, in the case of Mali, the consequences of the coup d'état in March 2012 could have influence on people's habitus.

Also more time would be needed to link this thesis with the study on the increasing individualism in Mali, which Janneke Barten wrote about. It is very likely that there are important links between these two aspects of Malian live.

References

Alba, R. & Nee, V. (1997), Rethinking assimilation theory for a new era of immigration. *International Migration Review* 31(4): 826-874

Barten, J. (2008), *Families in movement. Transformation of the family in urban Mali, with a focus on intercontinental mobility.* Leiden: African Studies Centre

Bourdieu, P. (1977), *Outline of a theory of practice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Bourdieu, P. & Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992), *Argumenten : voor een reflexieve maatschappijwetenschap.* Amsterdam: SUA

CARIM Project (2010), *CARIM – Migration profile: Mali.* European University Institute

van Dijk, R. A. (1997), From camp to encompassment: discourses of transsubjectivity in the Ghanaian Pentecostal diaspora. *Journal of Religion in Africa* 27(2): 135-159

Findley, S.E. (2004), *Mali: Seeking opportunity abroad,* Originally published on the Migration Information Source, the online journal of the Migration Policy Institute, www.migrationinformation.org

Gans, H. J. (1997), Toward a reconciliation of "assimilation" and "pluralism": the interplay of acculturation and ethnic retention. *International Migration Review* 31(4): 875-892

Gilbert, E., Reynolds, J.T. (2004), *Africa in world history. From prehistory to present.* Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education

Grillo, R. (2004), Islam and Transnationalism. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30(5): 861-878

Hagan, J. & Ebaugh, H. R. (2003), Calling upon the sacred: migrants' use of religion in the migration process. *International Migration Review* 37(4): 1145-1162

Hirsch, A. (2012, March 22), Mali rebels claim to have ousted regime in coup. *The Guardian.* Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/

Levitt, P. (2003), "You know, Abraham was really the first immigrant": Religion and transnational migration. *International Migration Review* 37(3): 847-873

Levitt, P. and Jaworski, N. B. (2007), Transnational migration studies: Past developments and future trends. *Annual Review of Sociology* 33: 129-156

Peek, L. (2005), Becoming Muslim: The development of a religious identity. *Sociology of Religion* 66(3): 215-242

Schulz, D. E. (2006), Promises of (im)mediate salvation: Islam, broadcast media, and the remaking of religious experience in Mali. *American Ethnologist* 33(2): 210-229

Stepick, A. (2005), God is apparently not dead: The obvious, the emergent, and the still unknown in immigration and religion. In: Karen I. Leonard, ed., *Immigrant faiths. Transforming religious life in America.* Lanham: AltaMira Press

Soares, B.F. (1999), *Muslim proselytization as purification: religious pluralism and conflict in contemporary Mali.* Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books: p. 228-245

Sweetman, P. (2003), Twenty-first century dis-ease ? Habitual reflexivity or the reflexive habitus. *The Sociological Review* 51(4): 528-549

van der Vaart, J. (2010, October 2), Wilders haalt weer uit naar Merkel en Islam. *NRC Handelsblad.* Retrieved from http://vorige.nrc.nl/

van der Veer, P. (2002), Transnational religion: Hindu and Muslim movements. *American Ethnologist* 33(2): 210-229