this manager still kept complaining about the 'troubles' he had in Kerinci, because of the system of *gilir-ganti*. Apparently, even when production targets are reached, there is the implicit expectation that agrarian production would be still better in a system of individual ownership. However, the question is whether a system of individual ownership of rice fields could also bring about the same food security as at present the 'members only' system of production and allocation in Kerinci is capable of generating. There is enough historical evidence to doubt this.

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Livestock transfers and social security in Fulbe society in the Hayre, central Mali*

Han van Dijk

Domesticated animals are the basis of existence for pastoralists. The accumulation of livestock and the adaptation of herd management to the harsh environments they inhabit, are seen as central elements in the pastoral pursuit (see for example Dyson-Hudson & Dyson-Hudson 1980, Salzman 1980, Khazanov 1984, Horowitz 1986). Pastoral animals are 'engaged' by the structure of relations of the human community. "What is essential to pastoralism (...) is the *social appropriation* by persons or groups of successive generations of living animals" (Ingold 1980: 133). Tenure is not confined to "things fixed in the terrain" like land and watering points only, but also to "movable property" in the form of animals. "The pastoral animal is a vehicle in a dual sense: not only does it transport its owner's effects, it carries around his social relations as well" (Ingold 1986: 168).

It follows that property relations and the transfer of property rights over livestock are important constituents of social relations, just as kinship and residence, and may form the basis of networks that contribute to the social security of the individuals and the families involved. The transfer of property- or use-rights over animals itself may also act as a social security mechanism, just as the (re)distribution of other goods and services may help to overcome the insecurities associated with a pastoral way of life (cf. Von Benda-Beckmann et al 1988). When the transfer of livestock is practised, pastoralists may create networks of mutual debts and obligations that may be cashed in times of hardship (cf. Platteau 1991: 119). Given the fact that most of the pastoral populations in Africa, from Somalia to Mauritania, are either involved in civil wars or are deeply affected by adverse climatic circumstances (Hogg 1985, Starr 1987, Markakis 1993), the issue of the redistribution of livestock as the central resource in pastoral societies in relation to social security is an urgent one.

It will be shown that in Fulbe society in central Mali the redistribution of livestock has hardly any practical importance for the alleviation of poverty in the present ecological and economic crisis. This is due to the specific form and content of social relations in this society, and the manipulation of rules and norms with respect to livestock transfers. It will also be argued that in an uncertain ecological environment, where the risk of herd depletion is highly correlated from one individual to another, the scope for the pooling of risks via the transfer of livestock is indeed limited. First, I will give an overview of literature dealing with the redistribution of livestock in pastoral societies. Then social relations and cattle transfer mechanisms in Fulbe society in the Hayre will be discussed, before entering into an evaluation of the contribution of these transfers to the alleviation of poverty.

Equality, livestock transfers and social security

A recurrent theme in studies on African pastoral societies is the notion of equality. Livestock transfers are seen as institutions that level differences in wealth resulting from the effects of droughts and diseases on an individual's herd. Among the

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Wodaabe, for example, large differences in wealth are considered undesirable and therefore animals are redistributed through the *habanae* system (White 1990).[1] Under this institution Wodaabe lend each other animals, the receiver having the property rights on three calves from the *habanae* cow, the giver being entitled to the return of the animal after it has given birth three times (Scott & Gormley 1980, White 1990). According to Maliki (1988: 179) *habanae* animals may constitute up to one-third of a family's total herd. This institution was even used in a development context, as a means to reconstitute the herds of destitute Wodaabe after the Sahelian drought of 1973 (Scott & Gormley 1980). Likewise, among the Jie, Turkana, and Nuer, livestock from wealthy relatives is mobilized by young males wishing to marry (Evans-Pritchard 1940, Gulliver 1955). In Turkana pastoralists who lost their cattle may choose to live with their bond-friendship partners and were given animals to herd by these partners (Sobania 1991). These cattle transfer mechanisms consist in most cases of reciprocal gift relations between agnatic kin, but also between non-kin and even different ethnic groups (cf. Gulliver 1955, Sobania 1991). In other cases marriage ties created by the transfer of livestock act as a refuge in times of crisis (Johnson 1991). It seems that transfer of livestock contributes to the survival of individuals and families (Johnson & Anderson 1988, Johnson 1991).

Iliffe (1987) on the other hand stresses the role of inequality and poverty in the history of pastoral societies. In the Eastern Lake Turkana region in Kenya "the notion of equality and redistribution in these 'egalitarian' societies was ideological. Individual holdings varied enormously, from those with a few head of cattle or camels to those with hundreds of head" (Sobania 1990: 2). East African pastoralists incorporated only certain poor people and obliged the remainder to seek their livelihood outside the pastoral economy (Iliffe 1987: 68). The social security function of livestock transfers may also be lost in the process of political change. An example of this is the so-called 'living-milk' herds in Tuareg society. These herds are set aside for the female descendants of the sisters of a man, and act as a safety device in times of crisis. This institution is now disappearing, because of conflicts between the rightful heir, a man's sisters' children and his own children. Colonial courts consulting Muslim clerics often ruled in favour of the latter, because this institution does not conform to orthodox Muslim practice (Oxby 1990: 224).

But there is not only a difference between ideology and practice with respect to equality and livestock transfers. Inequality may also be part of the ideology of a pastoral society in the form of a political hierarchy and rules with respect to the circulation of specific categories of property. In West African pastoral societies non-stock owning people formed a reservoir of cheap labour and clients (Iliffe 1987: 65-8). The Kel Geres Tuareg, as described by Bernus, will serve to illustrate this point.

"Almost all the livestock belong to the *imajeghen* (aristocratic warriors) whose slaves (*iklan*) care for them. In a country adapted to rain-fed agriculture, the Kel Geres society has created a true dichotomy between animal husbandry, with herds owned by an aristocratic minority and maintained by servile manpower, and an extensive rain-fed agriculture (millet, sorghum) in the hand of dependants, who must give away part of their crops to the *imajeghen*, the landowners" (Bernus 1990: 154).

Another way of creating inequality in West African pastoral societies is the exaction of tribute from dependants and passing pastoralists alike. In the nineteenth-century *jihad* state Maasina tribute was levied from pastoral groups and vassal chiefdoms in the form of *zakat* on animals (Diop 1971: 32; Johnson 1976: 487). Within the core area of this state, the Inner Delta of the Niger, the territorial chiefs (*dioro*) levied tribute from passing pastoralists in return for the right to graze their livestock (Bâ & Daget 1984, Gallais 1967). At present this has become a heavy burden because this contribution has to be paid in cattle (Gallais 1984). In colonial times Fulbe chiefs in Adamawa (Cameroon) exacted taxes from passing Wodaabe for passing their realm, the use of pastures and water resources, above the taxes imposed by the colonial government. To escape these taxes the Wodaabe fled to neighbouring regions (Boutrais 1990: 71, 78).

Some literature, indeed, suggests that livestock transfers are important means in numerous pastoral societies for the alleviation of poverty in times of crisis. However, most studies fail to pinpoint the precise redistribution of livestock over society, and the position of women is seldom taken into account. Livestock does not necessarily circulate over all members of a pastoral society. People may be excluded because of poverty and be pushed out of the pastoral economy. In other pastoral societies specific categories of people are denied access to livestock and end up at the bottom of the political hierarchy. In these societies the circulation of livestock was closely associated with the political elite, being in the centre of vertical redistribution networks. Livestock circulated and contributed to social security, but only for certain categories of people.

Fulbe society in the Hayre

The Fulbe are the most numerous and widespread pastoral group in West Africa. They can be found from the coast in Mauritania and Senegal to as far as Sudan and the Central African Republic. Most of them live in the Sahel as pastoralists, but many have taken up an existence as cultivator or town dweller in the course of history. In the recent past a large number of Fulbe have migrated to more humid southern areas in West Africa.

The Hayre is located in the centre of the Niger Bend, *cercle* Douentza, central Mali, and is part of the Sahel. Annual rainfall is about 400 mm and falls in the short wet season from July to September. The Hayre derives its name from the block mountains that stretch from the Bandiagara plateau in the west to Mount Hombori in the east. During the nineteenth century the Hayre formed a province of the Islamic Maasina empire (1818-1862) and the Toucouleur empire (1862-1893) (Bâ & Daget 1984). The Fulbe pastoralists I will discuss in this article, belonged to the Fulbe chiefdoms Dalla and Boni, that reigned over the mountains (Hayre) and the adjacent dune area (Seeno-Manngo) to the south. In the second half of the nineteenth century Serma, the village in which the data for this article were gathered, became the temporary basis for a warlord named Maamudu Nduuldi, who plundered neighbouring chiefdoms. When the Toucouleur took over power in central Mali in 1864, they divided the chiefdom of Dalla in two, giving the better part to Maamudu Nduuldi who choose Boni, 30 kilometres north of Serma, as his capital.

Maamudu Nduuldi was a successful warrior in all his undertakings.[2] People from very different origins, pastoral herdsmen (*egga hodaabe*) of the clan Jalloube, slaves (Riimaybe) and free cultivators united under his banner. This raiding band gradually developed into a distinct political entity, modelled upon other Fulbe chiefdoms like Dalla, the former dominant power in the Hayre, with the warrior elite (Weheebe) at the apex, the pastoral herdsmen (Jalloube) as the vassals to the warrior elite, traders (Jaawambe), caste groups (artisans), Muslim clerics (Moodibaabe) and the Riimaybe.[3] The free cultivators settled in their own villages under the protection of the chiefdom of Boni. Within this constellation the chief was at the centre of redistribution networks of livestock, with cattle as its most prestigious category, and slaves. Maamudu Nduuldi is remembered by the Jalloube pastoralists as the source of all the wealth in livestock in the Boni chiefdom. Cereals were produced by the slave labour of the Riimaybe, who probably formed the real economic basis of the chiefdom. The Riimaybe provided all the other social groups and the warriors with cereals. They were not allowed to own livestock nor any other asset, until they were gradually liberated under French colonial rule. Even if they participated in wars, they were not given any productive cattle, only bulls to slaughter for the meat.

The vertical (re)distribution of livestock, slaves and other commodities in the political hierarchy was very important. Livestock was associated with political prestige and success in warfare. Values and ideologies associated with a pastoral way of life and a certain level of wealth, became closely connected to the concept of *ndimu* (what it takes to be noble), which was used to separate stock-owning from non-stock-owning groups in society.

This situation has changed fundamentally since the area came under French administration (1902-1960). The Weheebe were recognized as the chiefs of the region and were turned into *chefs de canton*. They were allowed to continue exploiting their Riimaybe as slaves, in spite of the abolition of slavery by the same French administration, and to keep part (5%) of the taxes they

levied for the French, to make them loyal.[4] Raiding was suppressed because this interfered with French policies of peace and order and the maximisation of tax proceeds. Further, they were left free to arrange the affairs within their chiefdom as they saw fit. The French also reacted hesitantly or not at all, when complaints against the Weheebe were made concerning the abuse of tax money or the illegal appropriation of *zakat* (Islamic taxes).

For Jalloube and Riimaybe the situation was different. The Jalloube soon lost power over their Riimaybe and had to take up cereal cultivation themselves. On the other hand, the French did nothing to hinder the pastoral activities of the Jalloube, because of the taxes levied on livestock. The pastoralists for their part preferred to have as little contact with the administration as possible, which they considered as a threat to their pastoral way of life. They let the Weheebe chiefs handle administrative affairs for them, such as the evasion of enlistment for schooling and the army, and the settlement of court cases. They gave the Weheebe cattle in return for these services. Redistribution from the Weheebe to the Jalloube became less frequent as the source of bounty, the raids, dried up. The Riimaybe became free cultivators and started to build up their own herds. The areas where the herdsmen used to graze their animals were partly occupied by cultivators, Dogon and Humbebe, who also started to accumulate livestock as an investment fund.[5]

These developments during the colonial period, indicate a political marginalization of the Jalloube pastoralists. Instead of being vassals and warriors on which the Weheebe depended for the raids, they became the clients of the chief, who intervened on their behalf with the French and later on with the Malian administration. This political marginalization was, however, hardly noticeable, because the colonial regime left them in peace. Moreover the climatic circumstances, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, were favourable for livestock keeping. In this era of prosperity this political marginalization was not an immediate problem.

Economic decline in Serma

Serma is located on the border area between the foot slopes of the block mountains and the area of fixed dunes (Seeno-Manngo). The village consists of one hamlet of Riimaybe surrounded by 8 temporary settlements of Jalloube. Depending on the occasion, people organize themselves on the basis of the settlement, patrilineages cross-cutting the settlements, or even the village as a whole. Affiliation via one's mother has some importance in family affairs, but not in the political sphere. On the whole social organization is extremely flexible and loosely defined. In the wet season from July to September both Jalloube and Riimaybe cultivate millet around the hamlet of the Riimaybe and around a well, which was dug by the inhabitants of the village in the 1950s. After the rainy season the Jalloube either settle on their fields with their livestock to manure these, or go on transhumance to other Riimaybe and Humbebe villages in the west and the south, where they are contracted to manure the fields of these cultivators with their livestock and barter the milk for millet.

The inhabitants of Serma keep different kinds of livestock: cattle, sheep and goats. Cattle are still the highest esteemed among the Jalloube. Important ideological values are attached to cattle and their produce. A meal without milk is considered unnourishing. Jalloube women consider the consumption of milk important for the maintenance of their beauty (cf. De Bruijn 1992). Cattle herding is seen as the only worthy occupation for a man. Further, livestock is an important source of cash to cover household expenses. Herds of goats and sheep are mainly kept to cover expenses for clothes, food and household utensils. Cattle are kept for the milk and are only sold in an emergency, or to cover big expenses. In times of food scarcity the sale of livestock and milk is the principal strategy of acquiring (cash to buy) food grains.

Given the economic and ideological importance of cattle, rules and practices with respect to the (re)distribution of livestock over the members of society are particularly important for the social security of individuals and families. Currently however, these practices have been seriously undermined by the droughts of the 1970s and 1980s. Due to these droughts, declining soil fertility, and government regulations with respect to land tenure, there has been a downward trend in the productivity of cereal cultivation and frequent crop failure. The Jalloube lost most of their cattle during the droughts and are not able to rebuild their herds, because they have to sell many productive animals to compensate for the cereal deficits (Van Dijk 1992). Some Riimaybe have been able to maintain the productivity of cultivation to some extent. Others, men and women, enter new economic opportunities, which are either closed to the Jalloube or in which they are less successful (cf. De Bruijn 1992, De Bruijn & Van Dijk 1994).[6] Especially after the drought of 1983-85 many people migrated to other parts of Mali and Burkina Faso.

Through a wealth ranking exercise (see Grandin 1988) which we did with a number of people in Serma, this difficult economic situation became clear. Only two families were classified as rich (*jom jawdi sanne*). They each possessed more than 200 head of cattle. After them followed a group with 10-30 head of cattle per family, containing about 20% of all the families in the sample.[7] The rest, more than 77%, owned 5-6 head of cattle per family or fewer, or only some sheep and goats or no livestock at all. Given the minimum subsistence requirements in livestock as developed by Dahl and Hjort (1976), and the family size of those owning less than 30 head of cattle, it can be concluded that 97% of the families cannot survive on their present herd. In a study of inequality in herd-size among Fulbe in Senegal, the members of the poorest subgroup were still able to buy tea. These families spent one- to two-thirds of their budget on tea (Sutter 1987: 205). Most Fulbe in Serma cannot afford to drink tea at all.

Redistribution of cattle in Serma

In the following I will discuss three sets of rules and social relations by which people get access to livestock, how they operate in practice and their consequences for the distribution of livestock over society. The perspective taken here will be somewhat broader than in most literature on livestock transfers in pastoral societies. Not only the redistributive institutions will be discussed, but also other institutions like livestock transfers at marriage, inheritance and the herding of livestock on contract. These ways of acquiring livestock may all contribute to social security in some way. The three sets of rules are: (1) inheritance and pre-inheritance rules of livestock between close kin, (2) cattle transfers and social relations within the herding community, and (3) herding contracts with non-pastoralists.

Livestock transfers between close kin

1. Rules of pre-inheritance

Most livestock in Fulbe society in the Hayre is transferred over the generations by anticipated inheritance. Ideally, every child is given livestock at several occasions in its life-cycle, beginning with the baptismal ceremony, seven days after the child is born. At the baptismal ceremony the father and mother of the child let the guests know which animal(s) they give to the child. The people present are thus witnesses that from then on the child has property rights over these specific animals and their future offspring. At other occasions, circumcision for boys and marriage for girls, they may also be given livestock. At present this rarely occurs, because the parents do not have sufficient livestock anymore. Livestock gifts at baptismal ceremonies have been reduced drastically as well.

As the child is not able to take decisions concerning its animals, daily management decisions are taken by the father to whose patrilineage the child belongs. The father has also the authority to sell the child's livestock for the survival of the family. This occurs for example, when food grains have to be bought. The father does not have the right to sell his children's livestock for his personal benefit, for example to marry another woman or to pay for medical care of a member of his family. For this he has to sell his own livestock or that of the sick person. Infraction of this rule occurs regularly. The only sanction, however, is gossip. During our fieldwork, a man sold cows of his sons that were given to them by their mother to marry a second wife. This was disapproved of, but the only thing that happened afterwards was that one of the sons attempted to sell a sheep of his father to buy tea and other luxuries.

In theory, every member of society is able to build up a herd in his/her youth, a resource base of one's own. This is, however, not the case. Girls are often given less livestock than boys. If the father and mother possess a lot of livestock, they will strive to give each new-born child a heifer

from the stock they possess. Women are expected to give an animal from the stock, the so-called *fute*, they received from their husbands at marriage.[8] When the father or mother are poor, they will give more to a boy than a girl, or they will give a bull to the girl, this being only a token gift, because the bull will not reproduce on his own and will eventually be sold for the benefit of the family. In case of a girl, mothers are more inclined to give cattle than a father, but they also prefer to give cattle to sons, because they will care for their mothers when grown old. In case no cattle can be given a child is given sheep or goats, or nothing.

According to pastoral ideology, livestock gifts to girls are considered a loss, because they will eventually marry into another patrilineage and the livestock is lost to her own patrilineage. At marriage a girl is often pressured to leave her livestock with her father or her brothers, so that they will have the milk of these animals. Dupire (1960) notes that among the Wodaabe of Niger, a group of Fulbe which is less influenced by Islam, the transfer of livestock to a girl is regarded as a gift, reflecting the benevolence of the patrilineage toward its members. At marriage she will be 'glad' to hand over her livestock to her full brothers. The in-laws will often try to persuade the male kin of an in-marrying woman to let her livestock enter their herd, as the produce of these animals "will benefit her and her children" (Dupire 1960). In the Hayre this is also the case. Some women take their livestock with them when marrying, others leave it with their male kin.

Apart from gender, other factors may contribute to the inequality of individuals with respect to livestock. In the course of years, diseases or droughts may reduce the number of animals from the stock one has pre-inherited. If one is lucky, the pre-inherited animals will give birth to female calves which will reproduce in the future. Another factor influencing an individual's stock is the decision concerning the sale of livestock by the head of the family. In principle he has to consult the owner of the animal involved. In practice, however, he has almost unlimited authority over his children's livestock. Consequently a girl's livestock is managed differently than a boy's livestock. It has also to be noted that, at the occasion of giving the animal, it is not shown to the guests present at the ceremony, which leaves room for manipulation of livestock ownership afterwards. In one family 'only the animals of its female members' died during the droughts.

In principle every individual born in Fulbe society in the Hayre is entitled to a herd of his own, ensuring a base of existence. In practice, however, inequalities (and even dispossession) may occur depending on mere chance, the management decisions of the herd manager and the manipulation of ownership categories.

2. Inheritance

Inheritance at death is not a very important means of transferring cattle and other livestock, as most livestock is pre-inherited. It is quite normal that old people die without leaving a single animal. Inheritance, however, occurs when young people die. Normally animals are inherited according to Islamic law, which prescribes that daughters receive half the share that sons receive, after the spouse has taken his/her share. All our informants were positive about the fact that *shari'a* law was applied in inheritance matters. Practice, however, indicates quite the reverse, and shows that there is a tendency to deny widows and daughters their share.

If a young man dies and leaves a woman with sons, the *shari'a* is adhered to reasonably well. The widow is allowed to take her animals from the herd that will later be inherited by her children, and the rest is divided among her sons. If her husband dies without leaving male children, she is far worse off. In that case no-one will protect her interests, for there are no sons of the patrilineage to reserve the animals for. In one case the patrilineage of the deceased husband took all the cattle belonging to the widow and her daughters, leaving them with no animals at all. She was not even allowed to take the animals of her *fute* (dowry). Then she tried to get her share from the fields and other assets her husband possessed. This was also turned down. Being a wife or a daughter of a man does not necessarily entail a claim on his livestock, only on the animals of the *fute*, but that also is not certain. For a woman the loss of her husband means a loss of social security, as she may lose the rights to the milk of her husband's livestock. She is allowed to inherit livestock only because of her sons, if she has them.

Cattle transfers within the herding community

As was noted at the beginning of the article, cattle transfers between bride-givers and bride-takers and on other occasions (bond partnerships, lending of cattle) may contribute to social security, though these transactions are mostly restricted to men. With both men and women owning cattle in Fulbe society, cattle transfers at marriage could have the capacity to create even more complex networks for the redistribution of cattle and social security. This is not the case. Though there are several ways for circulating cattle within the herding community, they are only of minor importance for social security. The first way of circulating cattle has already been discussed. The cattle owned by women might be an object of transfer between kin-groups as they may or may not enter the herd of her husband. As we have seen women own relatively few cattle, and at present the transfers are of little importance.

1. The *fute* and obligations derived from marriage

One of the preferred marriages in Fulbe society is marriage between patrilateral parallel-cousins. The reason for this preference is the fact that the livestock given to a daughter at birth and at marriage will remain in the patrilineage. Especially men prefer these marriages. Other marriages between kin are also considered valuable, such as between cross-cousins and even between matrilateral parallel-cousins. Women prefer these marriages, because, as they say, the patrilineage of the mother has more 'pity' (*yurmeende*) toward its children than the patrilineage of the father.

Contrary to most African pastoral societies, there is no transfer of cattle from bride-taker to bride-giver. Rather it is often the reverse as we have seen above, when the bride puts her herd into the herd of her husband's family. The marriage payment from the bridegroom to the bride consists of a relatively small amount of money (FCFA 10-30,000) and some clothes.[9] The mother of the bride gives her daughter a bed (FCFA 20,000), mats (FCFA 10,000), some jewellery (silver bracelets, golden earrings totalling FCFA 40,000) and kitchen utensils. Often this necessary equipment is not given at all, as mothers do not dispose of the means to buy this outfit. Consequently the girls married off in this way have a very low status among their in-laws. At marriage the bride is given a number of cows by her husband (1-5) as a kind of 'dowry', which, according to Islamic law, will be her property even if she is divorced, and from which she will receive the milk, to allow her a living in her husband's family. These cows are called *fute*. When she gives birth to children, she may give either an animal of her own stock or an animal of her *fute* to the new-born baby, or from both if she is rich. As she grows old, she is always entitled to the milk of these animals, unless her son transfers these animals to the *fute* of his wife, or to the children of his wife. Then her son's wife will receive the milk, but she is obliged to give a portion to her mother-in-law if the latter has no animals left (cf. De Bruijn 1992).

Although formally there is no transfer of livestock at marriage from bride-takers to bride-givers, there is a mutual obligation on both sides to support the in-laws in times of need. This may be done by lending each other livestock, or by gifts of milk via the daughter who has married into the family. At present this is rarely done. In some cases the family of the woman lent cattle to the family of the man, because they were not able to provide food for the woman, or they demanded the divorce if her husband was away. If a woman's family is not able to sustain her husband's family she may even be sent back to her own family with her children.

In case of divorce, Islamic law requires that the woman may take her *fute* with her in case the man wants to divorce her. In practice this never occurs. Either she has given her animals to her children who will remain with the father, or her husband will refuse to hand over the *fute*, which is an accepted practice. The reason for this may be the great instability of marriage, but one wonders whether this instability is enhanced by the fact that both partners have nothing at stake in the marriage.

2. The principle of charity (*zakat*)

Another way in which cattle may be circulated within the herding community is via an Islamic institution, the so-called *zakat* (see De Bruijn, this volume). *Zakat* is one of the five pillars of

Islam and forms the basis of the Islamic principle of charity. According to Islamic custom, someone owning a herd of at least 30 head of cattle is required to give a bull of two years old to the poor of the community, if he owns 60 head of cattle or more the *zakat* is a heifer of two years old. Due to the mechanism of anticipated inheritance, by which the formal ownership of cattle is spread over all family members, and the general decline in cattle numbers, almost no one disposes of 30 head of cattle, let alone 60 head. So this mode of cattle transfer is of no importance.[10] The payment of *zakat* was also centralized by the political elite, and as such had no role in the alleviation of poverty. In the past it was paid to the chief, who in turn paid the ruler of Maasina and later the king of the Toucouleur empire in Bandiagara (Johnson 1976: 487; Bâ & Daget 1984). Under the French colonial regime this tax was transformed into a 2.5 per cent tax on the value of livestock.

3. Gifts

Gifts of livestock to dispossessed members of society do not occur. When questioned about the possibility to help other people in this way, men said they did not know of such gifts. They even disapproved of this practice "because someone who has lost everything should leave the village, and try his luck elsewhere and not form a burden on his kin or other people". A woman said in private that such a gift had occurred between her husband and his brothers. One of them had lost all his cattle in 1974 and her husband had given him a heifer to reconstitute his herd. At the time these brothers were pooling all their resources, land, cereals and money, except cattle. They had two options at the time: either give their dispossessed brother milk each day, and sustain him for an unlimited period of time, or get him to his feet again, so that he would not draw on his brothers' livestock.

This is, however, the only case of a livestock gift we know of. What does happen more regularly is the giving of livestock products, that is milk. It frequently occurs that a relatively well-off family helps a poor family, or a family which is temporarily lacking milch cows, with a small amount of milk each day, to supplement their food. Daughters may bring small amounts of curdled (sour) milk to their mothers when they are in needy circumstances.

An intermediate form between a gift of livestock and a gift of milk is the lending of livestock to be milked by the receiver. This institution is called *diilude na'i*. At the beginning of our stay, for example, we were given a cow by our host to provide us with milk. Later on, when we had bought our own cows, and were able to provide for ourselves, the cow returned to the milch herd of its owner. According to informants, this is becoming more and more rare, because there are only few families who can afford to lend animals. Moreover, the lending of an animal means that less milk and less income is available for the women in the family. When *diilude na'i* occurs nowadays, the animal often remains in the owner's herd while milk is fetched each day, so as to prevent the borrower from taking too much milk and thus endangering the survival of the calf. Cattle are lent from time to time, but this is more a matter of convenience. A cattle owner may, for example, leave some of his livestock behind when going on transhumance to a village with deep wells. Leaving cattle behind saves labour for watering the livestock in this case. In another case a man gave his brother his only cow to milk, in return for his brother's flock of milking goats. This swapping of animals saved both brothers considerable effort when herding the animals. Institutions like *habanae* among the Wodaabe (see above), who are also considered as Fulbe, are unknown in the Hayre.

Herding contracts

In the whole of West Africa, the livestock of sedentary agriculturalists and urban people is often herded by the Fulbe. Even in the past Fulbe, who were exploiting regions dominated by sedentary agriculturalists, herded livestock on contract. In central Mali the Dogon entrusted their cattle to Fulbe herdsmen (Bouju 1984). Specifically the herding of livestock for noble livestock owners such as the Tuareg (Bernus 1990: 153-4), Bambara kings in Segou (Grayzel 1990: 38), the emirs of Kano, Sokoto and Katsina in northern Nigeria (Dupire 1962), and the Maasina empire (Johnson 1976: 486), has been a known practice for centuries and consequently a source of social security. It enabled Fulbe herdsmen to reconstitute their depleted stock in case disaster struck them. Cattle were so precious that they were entitled to the milk of these cattle and a bull each half year for herding 40 stock. If they did their work well they were also given clothes, food grains and tobacco.

According to informants, the Jalloube in the Hayre rarely herded cattle owned by non-Fulbe. If they were dispossessed, they would take up cultivation or migrate elsewhere, or they would be given cattle by the chief. Nowadays the herding of cattle belonging to non-Jalloube is an important means of obtaining a livelihood. This is not an isolated phenomenon. There are numerous reports that ownership relations of cattle have changed fundamentally during the droughts in the Sahel. Urban people, traders, civil servants and cultivators have been able to buy many cheap cattle, when the Fulbe needed cash to buy cereals (Röell 1989: 19). The market for cereals and livestock products discriminates in two ways against pastoralists in case of droughts. The price of cereals rises because of scarcity. The prices of more luxurious products like milk and meat drop, causing a temporary decline in the terms of trade for pastoralists (Swift 1986). This decline is often very severe. In the Hayre a full-grown bull is normally worth 10 sacks of millet of 100 kilos. During a drought its price may drop to the value of 1 sack or even half a sack of millet of 100 kilos. The disadvantage for the pastoralist is even larger if we consider the fact that milk production in a drought year is much less than normal and that marketed animals are in poor condition.

The practice of herding on contract is very much resented by the Jalloube themselves. They become dependent on a patron. They are not allowed to stay in their home villages, unless the cattle owner lives in the neighbourhood. Often they are obliged to manure the fields of their patron, instead of their own fields, which results in a decline of soil fertility on their own croplands. Moreover, the terms of contract have been eroded by an oversupply of dispossessed herding families. At present the only gain for a herdsman in herding a patron's livestock is the milk. Often, however, the proportion of milking cows is small compared to normal herds. There is always the threat of conflict over animals that have died or are lost. If the patron suspects neglect or theft by the herdsman, he obliges him to pay for the animals that are lost, and the animals may be withdrawn without notice.

There are three important social spheres where Jalloube from Serma obtain livestock to herd on contract. These social spheres have different terms of contract and are geographically separated. The first social sphere is within their own society, among the Riimaybe of Serma and the townsmen of Boni. Often these herding contracts are long-lasting arrangements between people who have known each other for a long time. The few cows of a Diimaajo (singular of Riimaybe) may be herded by a herdsman in Serma. Civil servants from Boni also have some animals herded in Serma. These contracts are not necessarily better than others. Riimaybe from Serma often milk a number of animals for themselves. One man told that he was asked by a civil servant from Boni to take care of a gestating heifer. He gladly accepted with the prospect of having milk as soon as the heifer gave birth. He did his best to keep the animal in good condition and gave salt, which he paid for himself. A week before the heifer gave birth it was taken back by the owner, without payment for the grazing, care or salt. However, a few weeks after giving birth, the herdsman said with some satisfaction that the animal died.

A second social sphere where people seek refuge to obtain a herding contract, is the Inner Delta of the Niger. People who own a lot of livestock send their herd to this area in the dry season. Young men take care of these herds for a wage. Quite a number of young men from Serma take up such a position in the dry season. Their wage is low, so that they are not able to save any money for their family. They are not allowed to take the herd to their region of origin. The only gain is that they do not have to be fed during the dry season. If their family is lucky they return in the wet season to work on the family's field. Often, however, they stay away for years and some even for good, thereby seriously reducing the capacity of their family to survive.

A third accepted way of acquiring livestock on contract is migrating to the Humbebe and Dogon villages south of the Seeno-Manngo and on the Seeno-Gondo. People who have migrated to the south, to the Humbebe villages, have almost all taken up herding of Humbebe animals. They are under close supervision of the livestock owners and even have to ask permission to visit family

in other villages. For getting access to land to cultivate they are dependent on their patron. Being a herdsman of a Kumbeejo (singular of Humbebe) or Dogon, a pagan (*kado*), is considered shameful. It is difficult to discuss these matters with the people involved. In those cases where a discussion developed one would get the impression that the man made a big deal, acquired a large herd and was having a better life than in Serma. When it came to determining the size of the herd or surveying it, it turned out to be a flock of small ruminants of 15-20 animals, not sufficient to subsist on for a family.

Intermediate forms of herding on contract are also possible. A number of poor families, with their few heads of livestock, leave every year for villages of cultivators to look for herds of goats and cattle to herd on contract. Often they find a herd of goats which they herd for three to five months, living off the milk and the exchange with millet. The profit for the cultivator is that the animals are helped through the difficult dry season. After the dry season these families return to their home village to cultivate their own fields during the rainy season, hoping for a good harvest, so that they do not have to leave again next year.

In short, the herding of a stranger's animals causes a lot of trouble and offers little in return. One is not in command over one's own existence anymore. Our host in Serma took care of the herd of an urban trader attached to a Fulbe chief. The trader provided an extra herdsman for his animals. But the man was mentally backward, and often lost his way in the bush, or let part of the herd wander off when he took his afternoon nap. Our host's son regularly spent a couple of days and walked hundreds of kilometres looking for the animals. In one of the poorer hamlets of Serma most families now have animals of the Riimaybe of Serma and civil servants in Boni. Not surprisingly they do not leave in the dry season. One Diimaajo (singular of Riimaybe) even milks his own cows every morning and night, so that the benefits for the herdsman are almost zero.

Yet people take livestock on contract, because it is the only way to survive. With the revenues from the milk they survive the dry season. The other options are to leave the area or to split up the family, and these are frequently taken. People leave both as families and as individuals.

Livestock transfers and social security: an evaluation

The situation in the Hayre does not seem to conform to a generally held picture of social security arrangements and livestock transfers in pastoral societies. Very few livestock transfers are taking place outside the circle of close kin. The pastoralist (male and female) really "has to carry the burden on his own shoulders" (Ingold 1980: 134). Women have less chance of being secure in an existence based on livestock than men. The more so, if one considers that women are dependent on the sale of milk for managing their household, child care and personal spending. The dispossessed have very little chance to return to the pastoral economy, and leave, to try their luck elsewhere. Theirs is an uncertain future as clients of urban people, cultivators of different ethnic origin and members of Fulbe society. The old, infirm and the female-headed families have to look for other ways to survive (cf. De Bruijn, this volume).

It is justified to conclude that the rules specified in Fulbe society do not allow for large-scale redistribution of livestock. The transfer of livestock from parents to children can hardly be called redistributive, because children take care of their parents at old age anyway. The chance that parents will be able to support their children, if they lose all their cattle, is almost nil, because they have given all their cattle to their children already. Inheritance, the institution of *zakat* and gifts have very little importance as redistributive channels for livestock. Someone owning a large herd is certainly not obliged to give cattle to others, even his brothers, nor to have his herd taken care of by his kinsmen, if he is not able to manage it by himself. In fact the owner of the largest herd in Serma has half of his cattle herded by a hired Bella herdsman,[11] while he has sufficient brothers and nephews.

This state of affairs is the result of three related factors: the way in which the rules with respect to livestock transfers have developed within the framework of the political hierarchy of a Fulbe chiefdom; the structure and operation of these rules at the present; and the structural constraints on the sharing of productive assets, such as livestock in the risk-prone ecology of the Sahel, which we shall label the co-variance of risk (Platteau 1991: 140).

Political hierarchy

The contrast between the situation in Fulbe society in the Hayre and the information we have from literature on East African pastoral societies, and the Wodaabe in West Africa, is quite striking. However, others have rightly pointed at political hierarchies as a source of inequality in pastoral societies. Elsewhere it has been observed that, in the process of political centralization among the Wodaabe (Jaafun) in Cameroon and the Central African Republic, the institutions with respect to livestock transfers lose importance (Boutrais 1990: 83). The absence of livestock transfer mechanisms that contribute to social security, may be explained by the history and political organization of the Hayre, and the central role the chief played in warfare and the redistribution of livestock. The chief alone had the right to distribute the booty among his followers. In this way the Jalloube obtained reproductive cows, where they had almost no livestock before, and the Riimaybe were given animals to slaughter for the meat. Jalloube and Riimaybe became attached to the chief and still have the obligation to supply the chief with anything he wants, as informants state, he is the 'owner' of all the livestock in his realm (cf. Bernus 1990: 153-5). At the same time the chief distributed livestock to allies or needy people, creating patron-client relations with the population. Clearly these practices were tolerated by the French colonial government, who gave the Weheebe in the research area almost complete control over their subjects.

It is almost impossible to obtain precise data about the magnitude of these transfers in the past and present. Data about the past should be considered with caution. At present the practice of collecting tribute, as this custom may be considered, is clearly illegal under Malian law.[12] Allegedly it happens all the time. When the chief visits a camp or a village they have to present a gift (a bull, a heifer, goats, sheep, a load of millet) to honour him.[13] The chiefs of Dalla and Boni make a tour in their former realm every year after the harvest, to collect tribute. A Riimaybe village gave, for example, 100 loads of millet to the chief of Boni in 1990, after a bad harvest. When a son of the chief of Boni married he collected, to our knowledge, five bulls as contributions to the marriage feast. Not only the chiefs make these tours. The other Weheebe, brothers and nephews of the chiefs, also collect their 'gifts'. Taken together, this tribute forms a considerable burden for the population. Unfortunately the chiefs, who are the best informed on this topic, did not allow us an interview. The difference with the past is that everything that is given to the chief is lost, nothing is given back to the poor. There is no loot to be divided, because raiding has stopped.

Manipulation of the rules

We have seen that even in the sphere of immediate kin the way in which the rules concerning the circulation and redistribution of livestock are put into practice leads to the concentration of livestock in an even smaller group, the males. Although in our research area most of the rules concerning cattle transfers between kin and among the herding community are based on Islamic *shari'a* law, the operation of the rules differs clearly from this ideal. Within the system of inheritance and pre-inheritance women have less chance than men of getting a sufficiently large herd to allow a living, or even the share they are entitled to. At marriage women are given token ownership of the *fute*, which is withdrawn at divorce, often on the initiative of the husband. Marriage thus entails only a symbolic transfer of cattle between husband and wife, as the woman will not be able to claim any of these animals for herself. She is expected to give them back in pre-inheritance to her children. In this way livestock remains in the patrilineage of her husband. Mutual obligations of support that are created by marriages cannot be fulfilled anymore, and this may lead, eventually, to practical dissolution of the marriage. It is worth noting that the animals of the *fute* are never shown to the bride nor to her male kinsmen, who are present at the ceremony on her behalf, and who should protect her interests. There seems to be a tacit agreement between men to ward off the demands of women. This would be unthinkable among neighbouring groups such as the Tuareg, Bella, Moors and the Fulbe in the Inner Delta of the Niger and Jelgoji

in Burkina Faso. Jalloube men are perfectly aware that Islamic law is manipulated, but they say their custom is different.

The present mixture of Islamic rules and local practice is in fact a combination of two conflicting principles. The first principle is composed by Islamic rules stressing the rights of individuals in relation to the group. The opposing principle consists of the loyalty to the patrilineage or the community of men (a father and his sons, a group of full brothers) as the central unit of ownership of resources. This becomes even more clear when one considers the fact that other assets, such as land and water reservoirs, are only inherited by men. The men explain this practice by stating that women are not allowed to cultivate land or to water animals, and in general to do hard work, so there is no need for them to possess these assets. According to Islamic law however, women are entitled to claim compensation in livestock or other assets, but in practice this never occurs.

Important in this respect is the ambiguous role of Koranic scholars. In the past they were the judges of the Fulbe chiefdoms and administered justice in pre-colonial times, and during colonial times in indigenous courts set up by the French colonial government. After independence Mali became a secular state, and no appeal can now be made to Islamic law. At present no use is made of State courts in conflicts concerning cattle transfers and the transfer of other goods.[14] Koranic scholars are fully aware that Islamic custom is not followed. Some of them regret this, but are not able to do anything about it. Others defend the breaches of Islamic law on the ground that this aspect of Islam is not possible to apply for Fulbe, because it 'goes against their character', and that things have always been this way. After all they are also male and member of a patrilineage. The explanations of men referring to rules, norms and Jalloube custom, may well be a recent invention inspired by the crisis situation and the droughts and Islam. Elder women regularly referred to the power they had in the past, because of their (own) wealth in cattle, so that they had a say in economic affairs and were powerful in the household. In the past, when a man mismanaged the livestock of his wife, the woman was able to get a divorce. Though several such cases of mismanagement occurred during our fieldwork, the women had no choice but to remain with their husband and to accept the situation.

The co-variance of risk

Another explanation for the absence of redistribution mechanisms for livestock among these pastoralists is what Platteau (1991: 140) calls the co-variance of risks. This means that, if disaster strikes one individual, the chances that the other individuals in society are also struck are very high. In this case risk-pooling mechanisms are only viable by the spreading of risk over a wide geographical area in order to cover geographically heterogeneous zones, to diminish the chance of a disaster that strikes the majority of the people (ibid.:140). The orbit for nomadic movements of the Jalloube in the Hayre was and is small, so that the risk of society-wide herd depletion is high. This is precisely what happened in the drought of 1983-85. The only herdsman in Serma that managed to save its herd moved out of this orbit towards the south. Most cattle (60 per cent) that stayed behind in the Hayre perished, resulting in a wave of emigration from the area of dispossessed families and individuals.[15]

It follows that risks with respect to livestock are highly co-varied. In this situation self-insurance by livestock accumulation and engaging in complementary activities, such as cereal cropping and livestock keeping, is a better insurance against disaster than redistribution of livestock. According to Platteau (1991: 141) these strategies are typical for highly integrated social groups of limited size such as households or families. Consequently, transfer by (anticipated) inheritance might be the most rational way of risk aversion for the individual and from a general perspective. This is indeed the case in the Hayre. The circle in which livestock circulates is limited to immediate kin.

Conclusion

The situation in the Hayre warns us not to overestimate the importance of livestock as a basis for social security for everyone in pastoral societies. It was shown that in Fulbe society in central Mali for various reasons redistribution of livestock hardly occurs. Historically the concentration on vertical redistribution networks embedded in a political hierarchy prevented the development of internal livestock transfer mechanisms at the level of the pastoral community. The vertical networks are no longer functioning and the Jalloube are politically marginalized. The general annihilation of the herds in the droughts of the last two decades limits other possibilities for redistribution. The high co-variance of risk, with respect to livestock holdings in an ecologically homogenous zone like the Sahel, leads to the accumulation of livestock and the pursuit of complementary activities by highly integrated groups of limited size. However, the circle of people belonging to these groups becomes increasingly narrow to the extent that these groups are breaking down at present.

As a result redistribution of livestock within Fulbe society and within the family is defunct. Livestock transfer occurs predominantly at family level in the form of inheritance and anticipated inheritance. The presence of rules and norms with respect to (pre-)inheritance does not necessarily mean that they are put into practice. Iliffe (1987) warns us, that the application of such rules may be limited to specific categories of people. Indeed, in Fulbe society in the Hayre rules are manipulated and in the present situation of the plurality of rules and norms some may take precedence over the others. The result is that what is considered an ideal way of living is not attainable for everyone. Consequently, the provision of social security is unevenly distributed over society. In the Hayre women and older people have less access to livestock and its products, and are therefore more vulnerable from a social security point of view. Other status groups, however, such as men and Weheebe, have been able to maintain their claims. The dispossessed have to turn to outsiders, non-Fulbe, to obtain livestock to herd on contract. This is not a very profitable affair, nor providing a lot of social security, nor enabling people to accumulate a new herd for themselves. It is, however, the only way to remain in the pastoral economy. Only the poor will resort to this strategy, because it is considered a shame to take animals on contract. The fact that most people who have no animal left leave the area, is a sign that people without livestock cannot function as proper social persons, nor even survive.

The opening remarks of this paper, which drew attention to the fact that "the pastoral animal carries around the pastoralist's social relations" (Ingold 1986: 168) are all too true. Social relations with respect to property in livestock determine to a large extent if people are able to remain in the pastoral economy in a situation of crisis. One is left with the impression that the pastoral part of Fulbe society is breaking up. Social relations, marriages, kin relations are all breaking down as there are no animals left to keep people together.

Notes

* The fieldwork for this research was carried out with a grant from the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO, grant W 52-494). The project titled 'Fulani society in a changing world: central Mali' was carried out by the author together with Mirjam de Bruijn, PhD student at the Department of Cultural Anthropology, University of Utrecht. Fieldwork was carried out from March 1990 to March 1991 and May 1991 to January 1992 in two villages in the *cercle* Douentza in Mali. The data used for this paper were gathered by both researchers. The author would like to thank Franz von Benda-Beckmann, Jacqueline Vel and the participants of the advanced research seminar on 'Social security, socio-economic change and the law' held in 1992 in Wageningen and Rotterdam.

1. The Wodaabe are commonly regarded as a group of Fulbe, although they are in general more nomadic than ordinary Fulbe. There are important cultural differences. Their language, however, is remarkably similar to other Fulfulde (language of the Fulbe) dialects.
2. This information was collected locally. Among the informants were Muslim clerics, who kept historical records, the praise singers of the chief and ordinary people. It is difficult to assess the extent to which the chief did really distribute livestock or if the stories are just myths. In any case these 'myths' are strongly adhered to and pervade social life up to today.
3. The terms Weheebe, Jalloube, Moodibaabe, Jaawambe, Riimaybe refer to occupational groups, social categories. In some cases these groups coincide with lineages. The term Jalloube is not correct in the sense that it refers to a clan and not to an occupation. The alternative, *egga hodaabe*,

which is sometimes used locally, we consider less appropriate for use in a text.

4. National archives of the Malian Republic in Bamako, Koulouba: Fonds anciens File 2E-4: Politique indigène: correspondances cercle de Bandiagara: 1899-1907: letter dated January 9, 1903.
5. *Humbebe* (singular *Kumbeejo*) are free cultivators inhabiting the plains of the region. Although they converted to Islam, they are considered as a clan of the Dogon, the only remaining pagan population in the region, who live in the mountains.
6. This does not suggest that the Riimaybe are in general better off than the Jalloube. They are as poor as the Jalloube, but it seems they have a wider range of options largely for ideological and historical reasons (cf. De Bruijn & Van Dijk 1994).
7. Although we were living with a relatively wealthy family (30 head of cattle), we received only a small cup of milk each morning and evening (approximately half a litre a day). This was not exceptional. Our neighbours (6 head of cattle), for example, did not have any milk at all most of the year. Moreover the quality of pastures was bad during the most of our stay.
8. This institution will be discussed extensively in the section 'The *fute* and obligations derived from marriage'. The *fute* may be defined as a transfer of property and milk rights over cattle from husband to wife, that is a kind of 'dowry' given by the husband instead of the woman's family, to ensure her subsistence. As there is no correct English term for this institution I will label it with the indigenous term, *fute*.
9. FCFA 50 = FF 1 before the devaluation with 50% in January 1994.
10. On the other hand the *zakat*, which has to be paid on cereals, is distributed among the poor and the Moodibaabe (cf. De Bruijn, this volume).
11. Bella are the former slaves of the Tuareg. Often they lead a wandering existence, looking for work, or a herd. They also subsist on the herding of small ruminants and the gathering of wild grains.
12. Formally the chief is reduced to the status of village chief of his own village only. It is certainly not forbidden to give him a present as compensation for his services. Further, many people in Serma belong formally to Boni, as Serma itself, notwithstanding its size, is officially a quarter of Boni. On the other hand, the chief and the members of his family regularly go to all villages to collect 'gifts'. This gift giving is not completely voluntarily, as there is considerable pressure involved. The Weheebe consider everything that is owned by the villagers as their property. At the least the villagers have the 'obligation' to maintain them.
13. One load is a bundle of millet spikes, bound together with millet stalks, containing 12-20 kilo of grains when threshed.
14. Why this is so would require a lengthy discussion on the functioning of the administration of justice in State courts. For the sake of brevity we will skip this issue.
15. This is of course a rough estimate. In Serma losses were probably higher, because of the large-scale influx of herds from the north and the all-out depletion of pastures in the dry season of 1985 (ODEM 1985).

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The Javanese celebrations in Surinam: social security through an alliance of costs and culture

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In this article the Javanese celebrations, as observed in a small, more or less rural settlement in Surinam, are described in order to make an assessment of their role in the creation of social security.[1] Attention will be concentrated on marriage and circumcision celebrations: these are the most extensive in scale, with a large number of guests, and demand impressive investments of goods, money, energy and time, not only of the hosts, but also of neighbours and kin. The big celebrations centre around at least one, sometimes two evenings, in which a ritual communal meal (*gendhurèn*, also called *slametan*) is held and hundreds of guests are received. All of them are served a complete meal, snacks and drinks; they sit at long tables or walk about, chatting with the other guests. A big feast is not complete without a music- or theatre-performance, lasting until the early morning hours.[2]

In the first part of the paper information on the history of the Surinamese Javanese population is given, followed by an overview of opinions about the Javanese celebrations. Here the question rises why the much criticized feasts still play such an important part in the lives of the Javanese population, in spite of predictions made in the past that the Javanese in Surinam would gradually abandon their traditions and original culture.

In the second part of the paper the different celebrations and the occasions on which they are held are described, followed by a more detailed account of a big feast. This will lead to an analysis of the celebration, its preparations and its role in the lives of those concerned; in the analysis different time perspectives will be considered. The celebration, its organization and in particular the role of helpers and guests are discussed, as well as the immediate preparations in the days preceding it, focusing on the assistance given to the hosts by neighbours and kin. Attention shifts to the long-term preparations, starting about a year before the big event takes place, focusing on the household. Then the perspective of one lifetime is taken, followed by the presentation of the celebrations as a cycle in which several generations are linked together over time.

Introduction

The account given of the big celebrations is based on research data gathered in 1990, 1991 and the first months of 1992 in Tanahbaru, a community within a distance of thirty kilometres of the capital of Surinam. Ever since the first occupants built their houses here, in the 1920s, the settlement has been inhabited almost exclusively by Surinamese of Javanese origin. Until the beginning of the 1960s Tanahbaru's population led a rather poor and isolated life, depending mainly on subsistence agriculture on the *percelen* (plots of land) and on the unoccupied lands, on income from low-paid handicraft work, and on unskilled and often temporary wage labour in the woods or production of charcoal. During the sixties gradual change was brought into the community, first by the improvement of connections between Tanahbaru and other places, including the capital, as a consequence of the construction of roads and the increased use of mopeds and, later, cars.

Focaal no.22/23, 1994: pp. 113-138