

ECOLOGY AND POWER IN THE PERIPHERY OF
MAASINA: THE CASE OF THE HAYRE IN THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY*

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ABSTRACT: This article explores political tensions between successive nineteenth-century rulers of the inland delta of the Niger in central Mali (the Fulbe Diina of Hamdullahi and the Futanke successors of al-Hajj Umar) and the pastoral interests of the Fulbe chiefdoms on their eastern periphery, in a region known as the Hayre. A close study of changing forms of local governance and natural resource management demonstrates that although different strategies were employed by the Fulbe and Futanke states to control the Hayre, the internal dynamics of the region can only partly be explained by the influence of these central powers.

KEY WORDS: Mali, kingdoms and states, pastoralism, environment.

THE Maasina area in Mali is a central region in the historical writings on West Africa. This vast inland delta is regarded as the core area of the pastoral states of the Fulbe Barri (1818–64) and the Futanke (1864–1893).¹ The abundance in natural resources, that makes Maasina one of the richest areas of dry-season pasture in the Sahel, made it a prized object for state building and surplus extraction. It is therefore not surprising that pastoralists were the only group before the colonial period to unify the area into one administrative region.² The Maasina state created in the beginning of the nineteenth century by Seeku Aamadu, an Islamic scholar of Fulbe origin, was the most successful in this sense. Under the inspiring leadership of Seeku Aamadu an elaborate framework for the organization of natural resource management was developed in order to regulate the variety of resources and conflicts of interests between various users of the delta. This state and its organization of natural resource management have attracted the attention of many scholars.³ Its Islamic name, Diina, became a synonym for

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¹ The Futanke or Toucouleur are Fulbe who originated in Senegal (Fuuta Tooro).

² Richard M. Moorehead, 'Structural chaos: community and state management of common property in Mali' (PhD thesis, University of Sussex, 1991).

³ For descriptions of the Maasina state, see Jean Gallais, *Le delta intérieur du Niger: Étude de géographie régionale*, 2 vols. (Mémoires de l'IFAN, 78, Dakar, 1967); Jean Gallais, *Hommes du Sahel, espaces-temps et pouvoir: Le delta intérieur du Niger 1960–1980* (Paris, 1984); Salmana Cissé, 'Le delta intérieur du Niger: organization spatiale', in A. M. Adamu and A. H. M. Kirk-Greene (eds.), *Pastoralists of the West African Savanna* (Manchester, 1986), 283–97; Jean Schmitz, 'L'État géomètre: Les leydi des Peul du Fuuta Tooro (Sénégal) et du Maasina (Mali)', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 26 (1986), 349–94;

a strict political and economic organization, including a set of rules regarding natural resource management.⁴

However, the literature about the Maasina state mainly concentrates on the core area, the inland delta of the Niger, and mentions its peripheries only in passing. The later Futanke rule no longer concentrated its powerbase only in the inland delta of the Niger, but created several foci of power in Segou, Kaarta and Bandiagara, which was never really an 'empire' with a single centre of power. Literature on the Futanke hegemony again concentrates on these centres of power and is not concerned with their peripheries.⁵

Apart from the chiefdom of Barani in the Boobola, and geographical studies of the Boobola and the Gourma, little is known about the historical developments in the periphery of the Maasina area during the nineteenth century.⁶ The dry lands north, east and west have been treated as provinces subject to Maasina and the Futanke, without any internal dynamics of their own. This is surprising since these dry lands were of the utmost importance for nomadic livestock keeping, and therefore formed an important economic resource. Given the rhythm of the floods, the livestock of the delta had to be evacuated for part of the year, making control of the dryland periphery essential for the efficient exploitation of the delta's resources. These areas also formed a buffer zone against attacks by other hostile groups like the Maures, the Tuareg and the Bambara.

Moorehead, 'Structural chaos'; Michael D. Turner, 'Life on the margin: Fulbe herding practices and the relationship between economy and ecology in the inland Niger delta in Mali' (PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1992); Trond Vedeld, 'Village politics: Heterogeneity, leadership, and collective action among Fulani of Mali' (PhD thesis, Agricultural University of Norway, Ås, 1997).

⁴ William A. Brown, 'The growth of Islam among the Fulbe of Masina' (MA thesis University of Wisconsin, 1964); William A. Brown, 'The caliphate of Hamdullahi ca. 1818-1864: a study in African history and tradition' (PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1969); Marion Johnson, 'The economic foundations of an Islamic theocracy: the case of Masina', *Journal of African History*, 17 (1976), 481-95; Victor Azarya, 'State and economic enterprise in Massina', *Asian and African Studies (Israel)*, 13 (1979), 157-90; Victor Azarya, 'Jihads and Dyula states in West Africa', in S. N. Eisenstadt, M. Abitbol and N. Chazan (eds.), *The Early State in African Perspective: Culture, Power and Division of Labour* (Leiden, 1988), 109-33; Amadou Hampaté Ba and Jean Daget, *L'empire peul du Macina (1818-1853)* (Abidjan, 1955); Bintou Sanankoua, *Un empire peul au XIXe siècle: La Diina du Maasina* (Paris, 1990).

⁵ Ibrahim Barry, 'Le royaume de Bandiagara, 1864-1893: Le pouvoir, le commerce, et le Coran dans le Soudan Nigérien au XIXe siècle' (Thèse de troisième cycle, EHESS, Paris, 1993); Ibrahim Barry, 'L'occupation Toucouleur du Macina' (Mémoire de DEA, EHESS, Paris, 1988); Y. J. Saint-Martin, *L'empire toucouleur, 1848-1897* (Paris, 1970); R. L. Roberts, *Warriors, Merchants, and Slaves: The State and the Economy in the Middle Niger Valley, 1700-1914* (Berkeley, 1987); B. O. Oloruntimehin, *The Segu Tukulor Empire* (London, 1977; first ed. 1972); D. Robinson, *The Holy War of Umar Tal: The Western Sudan in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, 1985); John Hanson, *Migration, Jihad and Muslim Authority in West Africa: The Futanke Colonies in Karta* (Bloomington, 1996).

⁶ Youssouf Diallo, 'Barani: Une chefferie satellite des grands États du XIXe siècle', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 34 (1994), 359-84; Youssouf Diallo, *Les Fulbe du Booboola genèse et évolution de l'Etat de Barani, Burkina Faso* (Köln, 1997); Michel Benoit, *Le chemin des Peul du Boboola: Contribution à l'écologie du pastoralisme en Afrique des savannes* (Paris, 1979); Jean Gallais, *Pasteurs et paysans du Gourma: La condition sahélienne* (Paris 1975).

This article describes an area in the Maasina periphery, the Hayre, in the context of nineteenth-century central Mali (Map 1), which was dominated by Fulbe. Dalla was the main authority of the Fulbe in this area, which in the second half of the century was divided into two Fulbe chiefdoms: Booni and Dalla. Although the Hayre is often presented as a province that willingly submitted to the Diina,⁷ the accounts by the people of the Hayre reveal another picture. The history of Dalla and Booni helps us to understand the dynamics of the dry zones outside the Maasina area in the nineteenth century.

The reconstruction of the history of this peripheral area of Maasina is based on various sources. Our main oral informant was the praise singer/griot of Dalla, Aamadu Ba Digi, who made our project his own.⁸ The *moodibaabe* (Islamic scholars in Fulfulde) in Dalla and Booni also provided us with oral traditions as well as with written Arabic documents. The chief's family also held many documents.⁹ Furthermore, various accounts of local history were collected from ordinary people, some of whom provided us with their own ideas and interpretations of daily life as lived in the past. This valuable information was assessed in relation to observations of the present land tenure situation, the spatial allocation of various forms of land use, and the social landscape, which together represent the past in the present.¹⁰

The article first describes contemporary natural resource use and distribution in the Hayre and the present role of the region in relation to the exploitation of the inland delta. This analysis forms a baseline for understanding the ecology of the Hayre in the nineteenth century. Then, following

⁷ Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 59.

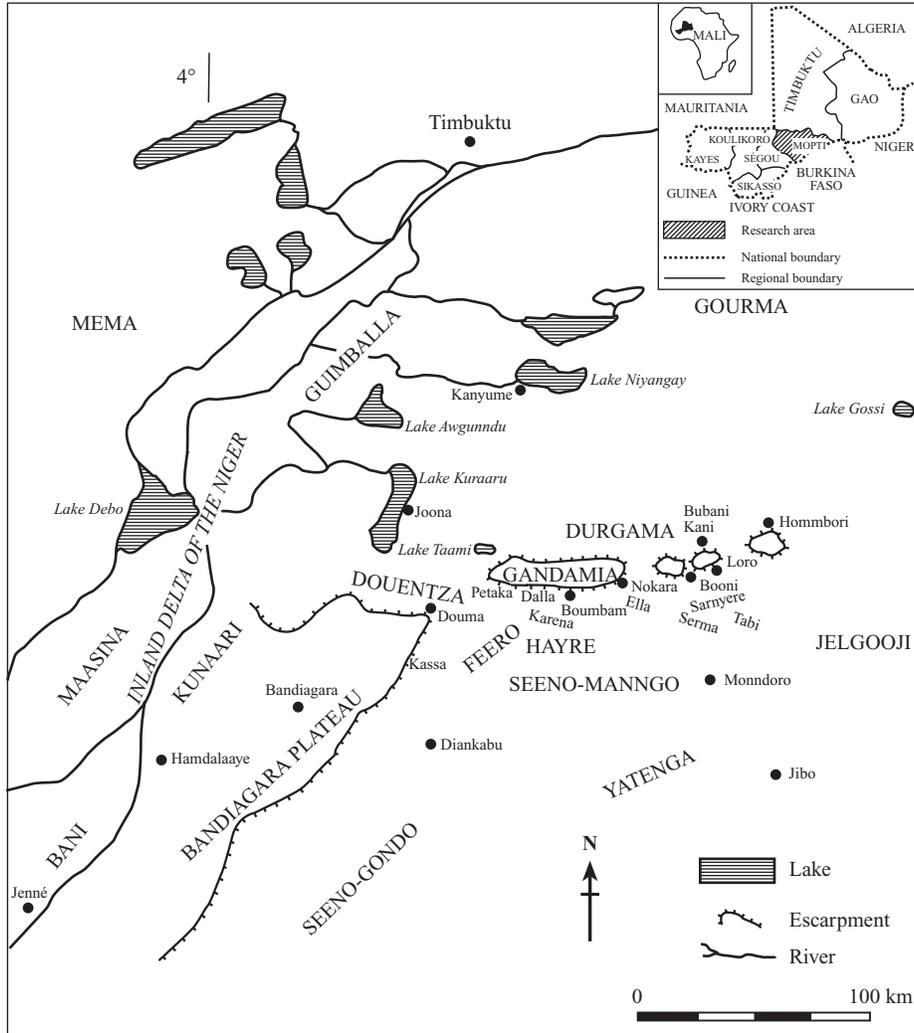
⁸ Aamadu Ba Digi pursued his own oral history research in the context of our project. Using accounts he had heard from his father, information gathered from elderly men and women, and from the local Islamic scholars, who read him their documents, he created his own version of the history of Dalla, which we recorded and transcribed. Excerpts of this history have been published in a Dutch translation of the original Fulfulde text: C. Angenent, A. Breedveld, M. De Bruijn, H. Van Dijk (eds.), *Haayre, een vertelling van een nomadisch koninkrijk* (Rijswijk, 1998).

The methodological difficulties that arise from using these kinds of historical sources are well known; see J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (London, 1985). As Vansina indicated, oral traditions are also interpretations of the present-day situation in which the people live, and often reflect the discourse of the dominant group in a given society. We attempted to overcome these difficulties by comparing conflicting traditions from neighbouring chiefdoms, and also by collecting testimonies from various social categories.

The death of Aamadu in 1993 meant an important loss for the Hayre. We lost a good friend. This article is dedicated to him.

⁹ The documents were first translated by a *moodibo* from Douentza and later by Professor John Hunwick (Northwestern University). Interpretations of the texts were also provided by several local *moodibaabe*. Tape recordings of Aamadu Ba Digi's and other accounts are held by the authors. Copies are also held at the Institut des Sciences Humaines, Bamako, and by the eldest son of Aamadu Ba Digi, who lives in Dalla.

¹⁰ One of the prerogatives of the Maasina empire was precisely the orchestration of land use. Past organizational formats are often still recognizable in names and functions of land, and people often orient themselves on these age-old coordinates. Changes in these matters are often well remembered because they were often contested, concerning as they did the resources people needed for their survival. So, the contemporary use of an area may tell us quite a bit about its use in the nineteenth century. A similar method can be followed for examining the social landscape. Contemporary social hierarchies and ideas about social organization can provide insight into the social realities of the past.



Map 1. Maasina and the Hayre.

a brief overview of the political history of the Diina and of Futanke over-rule in the nineteenth century, we reconstruct the history of the Hayre in this period.

ECOLOGY OF THE MAASINA AREA AND THE DRYLANDS IN THE
PERIPHERY: THE PAST IN THE PRESENT

The inland delta of the Niger

The inland delta, the vast flood plain of the Middle Niger¹¹ located between 14° and 15°30' northern latitude, forms an unusually rich ecosystem for this part of Africa. It provides ample opportunities for fishing, grazing and cultivation. At present these activities take place in an amazing variety of management systems that are all adapted to the rhythm of the floods that affect the area each year in the rainy season and leave behind fertile land and good grazing when they start to recede in November. In February (dry season) more than 1.5 million head of cattle and numerous sheep and goats may be found on the pastures of *bourgou* (*Echinochloa stagnina*). Other areas are used for the cultivation of flood rice (*Oryza glaberrima*), and more recently modern rice varieties, in areas where water levels can be controlled.¹²

The movements of herds around and in the delta concern the whole of central Mali. Because of the seasonal character of the floods, the inland delta as a pastoral grazing system cannot exist on its own. When the area is flooded the livestock of mainly Fulbe and Tuareg have to leave the delta to seek refuge in the surrounding dry lands of the Mema to the west and the Gourma to the east. Any state in this part of Africa that was dependent on the pastures of the delta for livestock keeping had to cope with this fact and to find a solution to control and exploit the dry lands. At present herds originating from the inland delta may be found as far away as Hommbori and Monndoro in the east, where they seek rainy season pastures. Other pastoralists direct their herds towards the Bandiagara plateau and the areas north of the plateau and the mountain range east of the plateau. When the water resources in these dry lands are exhausted shortly after the wet season, the herdsmen direct their herds back to the delta. Notably the Seeno-Manngo, the Gourma and the Mema cannot be exploited after the wet season due to the absence of watering points for the animals.¹³ Before entering the delta in November and December the herdsmen await permission to drive their herds over the Niger or its tributaries, such as the Bani, in the areas at the borders of the delta.

Alongside these pastoral movements, a large sedentary agricultural population practises the cultivation of cereals in the dryland areas. Within the delta, Marka, *riimaybe* (former slaves of the Fulbe) and Sonrai practice rice cultivation. Nomadizing groups of fishermen, Bozo and Somono, exploit the

¹¹ The surface of the flood plain varies considerably. The inundated area may range from 5,000–40,000 km² depending on rainfall and the flow rate of the Niger and Bani: see Raymond Laë, Mohamed Maïga, Jean Raffray and Jean-Jacques Troubat, 'Evolution de la pêche', in Jean Quesnière (éd.), *La pêche dans le delta central du Niger: Approche pluridisciplinaire d'un système de production halieutique* (Paris/Bamako, 1994), 143–64.

¹² The best introductions to the geography of the inland delta are Gallais, *Le delta* and *Hommes*. The information in this section is derived from these sources.

¹³ Gallais, *Pasteurs*; Mirjam De Bruijn and Han Van Dijk, *Arid Ways: Cultural Understandings of Insecurity in Fulbe Society, Central Mali*, (Amsterdam, 1995).

fish that breed in the waters of the delta. In the drier areas, Bambara farmers cultivate millet. The Dogon inhabit the Bandiagara plateau and the Seeno-Gondo plain, working their vast fields of millet, *nyebbe* (beans) and fonio. Wherever possible they also practise the cultivation of onions, tomatoes, peppers etcetera during the dry season in small gardens near natural water reservoirs and small dams on the plateau. In the Gourma, Bella (or Iklan, former slaves of the Tuareg) herd small ruminants and gather wild grains such as wild fonio (*Panicum laetum*) and 'cram-cram' (*Cenchrus biflorus*).

The Hayre

The area with which we will concern ourselves is located in the central part of the district of Douentza, the largest and sparsest populated district in the fifth region of Mali. 'Hayre' (rock in Fulfulde) is the local name of the territory in which two former Fulbe chiefdoms were located, Dalla and Booni, which dominated the local political scene in the nineteenth century. The name Hayre refers to the mountain range that connects the Bandiagara plateau with Mount Hommbori and its adjacent plains. In and around these mountains a very diverse population of Sonrai, Dogon, Hummbeebe, Kourminkoore, Fulbe and *riimaybe*, settled in the course of the centuries, reflecting a tumultuous past.¹⁴ The variety of ecological niches and the relative safety that the mountains provided against outside invaders made it an important point of attraction for all these groups.¹⁵

However, the most crucial resource in the mountains is the presence of permanent water resources that allow permanent settlement, making them into an important refuge area, people there being protected against the invasions of warrior groups. Pastoralists also took (temporary) refuge in the mountains, and even today one can find Fulbe pastoralists who hardly ever descend to the plains.

At present, most villages of sedentary Fulbe and some villages of Dogon¹⁶ can be found at the foot of the mountains and on the adjacent plains. Over the past forty years the semi-nomadic Fulbe pastoralists have moved most temporary settlements south to the prairies of the Seeno-Manngo. The inhabitants of a number of Dogon and Sonrai villages have also relocated their villages on the flatlands at the foot of the mountains.¹⁷

The flatlands south of the mountains also provided some protection against invaders. The clayey soils of the flats south of the mountains are overgrown with a very dense bush (tiger bush, *brousse tigrée*) with a sparse herbaceous vegetation of annuals, wild fonio (*Panicum laetum*), and sometimes perennial grasses. There is hardly any permanent water resource, so that possibilities for exploitation as a grazing area are limited to the wet

¹⁴ Cf. Gallais, *Pasteurs*, 143.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 134-5.

¹⁶ Dogon who speak the Jamsay dialect are called Hummbeebe by the Fulbe. They regard themselves as Dogon nowadays, and regard the name Hummbeebe as insulting (Aline Brandts, pers. comm.).

¹⁷ Further to the east, four groups of Dogon villages can be found in the block mountains of Sarnyere, Tabi, Ella and Loro. These villages have always been very isolated because their inhabitants chose to retreat as far into the mountains as possible for fear of attacks by the cavalry of Fulbe and Mossi from Yatenga. See Marie-Hélène Cazes (dir.), *Les Dogon de Boni: Approche démo-génétique d'un isolat du Mali* (Travaux et Documents de l'INED, no. 132) (Paris, 1993).

season and one or two months afterwards. Most soils are not fit for the cultivation of millet and sorghum because of impenetrable layers in the subsoil. As a consequence there are hardly any permanent villages and/or settlements in this area as compared to the areas near the mountains.

South of this area of tiger bush there is an area of fixed dunes overgrown with grasses and herbs, Seeno-Manngo,¹⁸ which extends into the district of Koro. Population density is low in this area owing to the scarcity of water resources. Groups of sedentary cultivators of Hummbeebe, Fulbe and Dogon have settled only around deep wells of 70–80 metres depth. The Seeno-Manngo is also used as pasture area in the rainy season by the Fulbe pastoralists, who may also cultivate millet fields near their wet season settlements. In contrast to the tiger bush on the Feero, the Seeno-Manngo offers a very open rolling steppe-like landscape. The vegetation is dominated by annual grasses and herbs. Trees are scarce. The pastures of the Seeno-Manngo, consisting of annual grasses and patches of perennial grasses, are of excellent quality.¹⁹

Before the twentieth century human occupation was limited. There were only temporary settlements of Hummbeebe, Fulbe cultivators and pastoralists, who were exploiting their fields on the Seeno-Manngo and the intermediate soils between the Feero and the Seeno-Manngo. When the ponds ran dry after the wet season, they all returned to the mountain range or to the Hummbeebe villages south of the Seeno-Manngo. This remained so until drinking water became available by the drilling of boreholes and digging of deep wells in the twentieth century.

The present Fulbe population of the Hayre, who are mostly of the Jallube clan, are divided into social groups that seem to reflect a distinct political hierarchy of the past. There was a political elite (*wehebe*) that exercised power over their pastoralist vassals (*egga-hodaabe*), tradesmen/counsellors (*jawaambe*) and craftsmen/praise-singers (*nyeeybe*); there was also an Islamic elite (*moodibaabe*) and finally slaves (*maccube* or *riimaybe*) who worked the fields.²⁰ At present the major distinction is between the nobles (free in the past), and the non-nobles (non-free in the past), with the caste groups and

¹⁸ There is considerable confusion over the use of the toponym 'Seeno-Manngo'. According to Michel Benoit, *Le Seno-Mango ne doit pas mourir : Pastoralisme, vie sauvage et protection au Sahel* (Paris, 1984), an area in Burkina Faso in the province of Sum is also called by this name. On the IGN topographic maps, the area north of the mountain range is also called Seeno-Manngo. In this article Seeno-Manngo is used for the dune area south of the Hommbori mountains, and Seeno-Gonndo for the dune area stretching along the Bandiagara plateau towards the south.

¹⁹ Gallais, *Pasteurs*, 136.

²⁰ Of course, the boundaries between these social categories are not so neat as presented here. The status of various groups, of which the *riimaybe* are the best example, has varied considerably in time. Although they still consider themselves as part of Fulbe society, there is also a tendency for them to develop their own ethnic discourse and distinguish themselves from the 'noble' Fulbe, by claiming they have a different but equally valuable occupation (millet cultivation), and a different attitude towards work and life in general that makes them at times more successful economically than their former masters. See Mirjam De Bruijn and Han Van Dijk, 'Drought and coping strategies in Fulbe society in the Hayre: A historical perspective', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 24 (1994), 85–108; cf. Roger Botte, 'Riimaybe, Haratin, Iklan: Les damnés de la terre, le développement et la démocratie', in André Bourgeot (éd.), *Horizons nomades en Afrique sahélienne, sociétés, développement et démocratie* (Paris, 1999), 55–78.

the tradesmen/counsellors in between. All these people are nowadays more or less agro-pastoralists. Nevertheless the old labour division related to this social hierarchy still partially defines local identities.²¹

Relations with other ethnic groups in the Hayre are also heavily influenced by this historical relationship. An important distinction is made between the people who possess a *tarikh*, i.e. their own written history, and those who do not.²² The Sonrai and some groups of the Dogon (Hummbeebe) possess their own *tarikh*. The Sonrai had their own chiefdoms in the past and were never subjected to the Fulbe (except for some individuals who were captured during warfare or raids). The Hummbeebe's villages are situated at the border of the territory of the former Fulbe chiefdoms in the area and they remain proud of their independence of the Fulbe today. The Dogon were (and are) considered pagans and they constituted a reservoir of slaves in the past. Their social status today is still linked to their past social position.²³

NINETEENTH-CENTURY HEGEMONY IN THE INLAND DELTA OF THE NIGER

Diina (1818–64)

Until 1818, the Fulbe were in a weak position in the inland delta because of their numerous internal conflicts.²⁴ As a result they were dominated by the Gao-empire, the Tuareg, the Moroccans and the Bambara of the Segou empire, who were not interested in the pastoral wealth of the delta and its surroundings. Instead, they tried to suppress pastoralism and the Fulbe as much as possible, as is testified by the *Tarikh-el-Fettach* and the *Tarikh-es-Soudan*.²⁵

The establishment of the Diina in Maasina is commonly regarded as a victory for the Fulbe, enabling them to control the delta and its rich *burgu* pastures and to levy the tribute of their *riimaybe* rice cultivators. Although the founding of this pastoralist state did not mean an end to warfare, the political centre managed to establish centralized authority over the delta.²⁶

²¹ De Bruijn and Van Dijk, 'Drought', 102–3.

²² A *tarikh* is a 'written' document about the history of a people, containing also a genealogy of the kings.

²³ Slavery also existed among the Dogon and the Hummbeebe, among whom separate groups of warriors can be found, such as the clan of the Kansaye who live in the neighbourhood of Kassa at the Bandiagara escarpment. These groups, however, claim a different identity again.

²⁴ See Claude Fay, 'Les derniers seront les premiers: Peuplements et pouvoirs mandingues et peuls au Maasina (Mali)', in Mirjam de Bruijn and Han van Dijk (eds.), *Peuls et Mandingues, dialectiques des constructions identitaires* (Paris, 1997), 165–91; Gallais, *Le delta*, 34.

²⁵ See e.g. *Tarikh el-Fettach ou chronique du chercheur pour servir à l'histoire des villes, des armées et des principaux personnages du Tekroun*, édité et traduit par O. Houdas et M. Delafosse, (Paris, 1964), 83 and 337; *Tarikh es-Soudan*, par Abderhahman ben Abdallah ben 'Imran ben Amir Es-Sa'di, texte Arabe édité et traduit par O. Houdas (Paris, 1964), 182, 430–1.

²⁶ This authority was administratively well structured: the *battu mawbe*, a group of male elders, formed the '*assemblée générale*'; each province had its own political and military leaders. The political leaders were often (collaborating) chiefs who (or whose family) had been in power before the empire was established: the *jom tube*. Military

The political authority of the Diina was legitimised with reference to the prescriptions of Islam, as were the regulations that could be effected for the management of land and natural resources.²⁷ In short these rules consisted of sedentarization of the nomadic populations, a strict organization of the transhumance and a strict division of land between pastoral groups and sedentary cultivators. In a number of places these rules were initially rejected by the pastoralists,²⁸ but in due course all were subjugated to this regime leading to the marginalization of Fulbe pastoralists in an empire of their own making, even before the colonial conquest.²⁹ The division between noble people and non-nobles, the legitimization of slavery as an important asset of state formation, and the control of markets were also instituted by the Diina.³⁰

The implementation of these rules and the smooth functioning of the pastoral economy required the co-operation of the people who controlled the dry lands east and west of the delta.³¹ The dry areas were indispensable for the reconciliation of the diverging interests of the various groups and their respective production systems in the inland delta. Furthermore they also had a dynamic of their own, as becomes clear from the ecological description and the social landscape that can be found today.

Notwithstanding the control over the delta that the Fulbe wrestled from the other occupants, their command over the dryland regions bordering on the delta was much less and was constantly endangered by attacks from other warrior-like groups. Numerous are the stories of punitive expeditions undertaken by the armies of Maasina against these threats.³² The herds were also vulnerable to these attacks on their trekking routes because herdsmen alone accompanied them. In some cases the trekking routes of livestock to and from the delta were replaced because safety could not be guaranteed. In one instance a treaty with the Bambara of Kaarta was signed that allowed

leaders were appointed by Seeku Aamadu. Another organizational structure that came into being was the system of Islamic schools (*dudal*) and a well elaborated network of *moodibaabe*, who spread Islamic ideas throughout the country.

²⁷ These patterns indicate the close relationship between political authority and control over natural resource management in the Diina. The ecology and sociology of the area cannot be separated from its political history. As Gallais says: 'Il est exceptionnel de rencontrer un épisode historique de portée géographique aussi évidente: le modelage régional actuel doit ses lignes extérieures à la Dina' (Gallais, *Le delta*, 94). In this article we refer to this pattern of authority as 'the rules of the Diina' or briefly the 'Diina'.

²⁸ Y. Vincent, 'Pasteurs, paysans et pêcheurs du Guimballa, partie centrale de l'erg du Bara', in P. Galloy, Y. Vincent and Ch. Forget (éds), *Nomades et paysans d'Afrique noire occidentale* (Nancy, 1963), 35–156, especially 53: 'Les combats des chefs Peuls contre Cheikou Ahamadou sont la source de toutes les légendes que les griots racontent encore'. See also Han Van Dijk, 'Ecological insecurity and Fulbe pastoral society in the Niger Bend', in Victor Azarya, Anneke Breedveld, Mirjam De Bruijn and Han Van Dijk (eds.), *Pastoralists under pressure? Fulbe societies confronting change in West Africa* (Leiden, 1999), 237–65.

²⁹ Mirjam De Bruijn and Han Van Dijk, 'State formation and the decline of pastoralism: The case of Central Mali', in John Markakis (ed.), *Conflict and the Decline of Pastoralism in the Horn of Africa* (London, 1993), 122–42; cf. Y. Vincent, 'Pasteurs'; Van Dijk, 'Ecological'.

³⁰ Cf. Gallais, *Le delta*, 94–5.

³¹ For a more detailed discussion of the Diina and the Maasina empire, see Ba and Daget, *L'empire*; Gallais, *Le delta* and *Hommes*; Brown, 'The caliphate'; Johnson, 'The economic'.

³² Ba and Daget, *L'empire*; Sanankoua, *Un empire*.

their livestock access to the delta in return for safety of the Fulbe herds on transhumance.³³ In other cases the cavalry had to escort the herds to protect them against invaders, for which plans were made indicating the places to be occupied by the cavalry and the itineraries to be followed by the herds.³⁴

The organization of the transhumance was less well developed on the dry lands of the eastern border than on the western side of the delta:

The Fulbe of the eastern part of the delta, Feeroobe of the Kunari, Ouroube of Sindigue, some groups settled in the interior of the Burgu, like the Sébéra, the Jallube-Jenneri, make the seasonal migration with their animals to the Gourma... [Here] the organization of Seeku Aamadu was less precise: the danger was less and the herds of the Fulbe not so numerous. A concentrated transhumance... took place only on certain occasions. A slack organization prevailed on most routes.³⁵

It is highly probable that this area was safer because of the presence of Fulbe chiefdoms like Kanyume, Jooná and Dalla between the Maasina empire and its enemies in the Gourma, the Tuareg. The cavalry supplied by or stationed in these chiefdoms may have been crucial for the defence of the Maasina herds. These chiefdoms, however, are hardly ever mentioned in the historical literature concerning Maasina. They are regarded as parts of the provinces Hayre-Seeno and Guimballa.³⁶ Gallais labels Dalla and Booni 'postes de surveillance' to keep the Dogon and Tuareg in check.³⁷ Hommbori is described as the last outpost of the Maasina-empire against the Tuareg.³⁸ The herds of the Fulbe of Maasina used the areas north of the mountains, as far as the permanent lake near Gossi and the salt licks at Durgama.³⁹

The Futanke (1862–1893)

Under the regime of the grandson of Seeku Aamadu, Aamadu Aamadu, internal problems in the Maasina state started to undermine its unity and the power base of its ruler. These problems were related to ethnic and vocational

³³ Gallais, *Le delta*, 364

³⁴ Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 97–101.

³⁵ 'Les Peul [Fulbe] de la bordure orientale du delta, Ferobe du Kounari, Ouroube de Sindigue certains groupes installés à l'intérieur du Bourgou, tels ceux du Sébéra, les Dialloubé-Djenneri font transhumer leurs animaux vers le Gourma... [Ici] l'organisation de Cheikou Ahmadou fut moins minutieuse: le danger était moindre et les troupeaux Peuls moins nombreux. [L]es equirgol... ne se concentrent qu'en certaines occasions précises. Un ordre lâche règne sur la plus grande partie des itinéraires.', Gallais, *Le delta*, 365 and 370 (translation authors).

³⁶ Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 59; Sanankoua, *Un Empire*, does not even mention Hayre-Seeno as a province of the Diina, nor the fact that there were dissidents in the Maasina Empire; cf. Vincent, 'Pasteurs', 53, on the province Guimballa.

³⁷ Gallais, *Le delta*, 156.

³⁸ Jocelyne and Jérôme Marie, 'La région de Hommbori: Essai de géographie régional en zone sahélienne' (Mémoire de DEA, Université de Rouen, 1974), 16–7, report that the Sonrai chief of Hommbori was replaced with a Fulbe chief when Seeku Aamadu came to power in Maasina, so that we have in fact two Fulbe chiefdoms, Dalla and Hommbori, during this period. The oral traditions we collected in Dalla and Booni do not mention this change. It seems both the *weheebe* of Dalla and Booni regard the present chiefly family of Hommbori, which is of Sonrai origin, as the lawful tenant of the chiefly office. The chiefly families of these three chiefdoms intermarry across ethnic boundaries.

³⁹ Gallais *Le delta*, 366; Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 100.

cleavages and to dynastic problems: the choice between generational versus dynastic inheritance of power. Ideological and religious differences also deepened between Tijaniyya and Kunta.⁴⁰ With the internal coherence of the state weakened, it was easily conquered by El Hadj Umar, a Futanke Muslim leader from Fuuta Tooro. Umar himself died in 1864, and his nephew Tijani took power in Maasina.

The Futanke rulers took a completely different course in organizing the management of natural resources. Unlike the Maasina leadership, who attempted to systematize and regulate management and tenure relations, the Futanke sought to extract the resources necessary for their rule by plundering and sacking the countryside from their stronghold on the Bandiagara plateau.⁴¹ Opposition to their rule was firm and they were constantly occupied with the suppression of Fulbe rebellions in the northern delta and by the forces that remained loyal to Ba Lobbo, who led the Maasina party after the death of Aamadu Aamadu in 1862. Ba Lobbo roamed the countryside living off plunder and looting; during the years 1864–7 his forces seriously threatened the kingdom of Yatenga in north-west Burkina Faso.⁴² The Futanke also met with resistance from Jelgooji, Yatenga, the Seeno-Gonndo, Barani and Joono.⁴³ These rebellions were a constant threat to Futanke hegemony, and many areas of the region remained outside or only partially under their control.⁴⁴

THE DIINA AND THE FULBE CHIEFDOM OF DALLA

Incorporation

According to accounts related by Aamadu Ba Digi, the Hayre was inhabited before the nineteenth century by various groups, such as the Kourminkoore, Sonrai who settled as outposts of the Gao-empire, and Dogon and nomadizing Fulbe pastoralists who had come from the delta. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these bands of pastoralists began to form more cen-

⁴⁰ See Robinson, *The Holy War*, 284–5; Sanankoua, *Un empire*, 116–8, explains the dynastic problem as a conflict between proponents of an Islamic ideology and those who favoured a pastoral ideology. The pastoralists were in favour of a generational inheritance of power, which would have meant that not Aamadu, but his uncle, Ba Lobbo, who was the oldest living man of his generation, should rightfully inherit the throne.

⁴¹ Gallais, *Le delta*, 96–8; Saint-Martin, *L'empire toucouleur*, 87; Oloruntimehin, *The Segu*; cf. Roberts, *Warriors*. Colonial reports often mention the difficulties the Futanke experienced in establishing their reign and their extreme exploitation of the local population. See Archives Nationales du Sénégal, Dakar (microfilm copies consulted in the National Archives, Paris) [hereafter ANS], Fonds ancien, 15G-75 (microfilm 20/1 mi 1015): *Correspondance avec Aguibou, 1888–1900*; 15G-179 (microfilm 1/1 mi 1045): *Rapports politique, résidence de Bandiagara 1894–1896*; 1D-137 (microfilm 1/1 mi 272): *deuxième partie situation militaire du Soudan française avant le départ de Kayes du commandant supérieure; extrait d'un rapport daté de Kayes, 22 décembre, 1892*.

⁴² Michel Izard, *Gens du pouvoir; gens de la terre. Les institutions politiques de l'ancien royaume de Yatenga (Haute Volta)* (Cambridge, 1985), 541.

⁴³ For Joono and Jelgooji: Barry, 'Le royaume'; for Yatenga, see Izard, *Gens du pouvoir*, 541; for the Seeno-Gonndo, see Barry, 'L'occupation'; for Barani, see Diallo, *Les Fulbe*.

⁴⁴ Oloruntimehin, *The Segu*, 62.

tralized political institutions under the banner of a lineage of warlords, *wehebe*, who were endowed with the praise name Dikko'en. They migrated into the area in the wake of the political unrest that followed the collapse of the Gao empire.⁴⁵ This tendency toward political centralization resulted in the formation of three chiefdoms, Kanyume and Joona, between the Bandiagara plateau and Lake Niangay, and Dalla in the Hayre, founded by three brothers, Hama Maane, Gallo Maane and Alu Maane.⁴⁶ The courts of these chiefdoms were nomadizing, and were supposedly familiar with the teachings of Islam. The economy was probably based on a combination of livestock keeping, some cultivation and sacking the countryside, as was common in this period.

The existence of the Fulbe chiefdoms, just as the Sonrai chiefdom of Hommbori in the eastern part of the mountain range, may be regarded as a geographical anomaly because the rest of the Gourma was dominated by the Tuareg after the collapse of the Gao empire.⁴⁷ Indeed the oral history collected in Dalla and Booni is characterized by raids and counter-raids against and by the Tuareg.

The first chief of Dalla was Alu Maane, and the Hayre is still known as 'Hayre Alu Maane'. He must have reigned during the seventeenth century.⁴⁸ By the beginning of the nineteenth century Ba Bulkaasum Tayru was the leading figure. According to the imperial version of local history, Ba Bulkaasum supported the Diina.⁴⁹ In the Hayre quite another version circulates: namely that Ba Bulkaasum opposed the Diina fervently. According to the version of Aamadu Ba Digi, Alu Maana had been responsible for bringing Islam to the Hayre,⁵⁰ and Ba Bulkaasum was not prepared to submit to Seeku Aamadu on the basis of the latter's Islamic claims, especially since he was young enough to be Ba Bulkaasum's son. In the end, because of the intrigues against him by his own family, Ba Bulkaasum decided to abandon the Hayre, and his brother Seyoma Tayru became chief, appointed by Seeku Aamadu as a reward for his support in the battle of Noukouma in 1818.

After the death of Seyoma Tayru, internal strife in Dalla made it difficult to find an acceptable successor. Eventually Seeku Aamadu appointed a complete outsider as chief, Muulaay Hammadi Barke, a pious Muslim, whose effectiveness was continuously undermined by rivals. Finally, in-

⁴⁵ Cf. Brown, 'The caliphate', 2. Dikko'en (sg. Dikko) are also named *arbe* (sg. *ardo*).

⁴⁶ According to Aamadu Ba Digi, the first *arbe* to enter the region came from the inland delta.

⁴⁷ Marie and Marie, 'La région'; Gallais, *Pasteurs*.

⁴⁸ The seventeenth century is suggested by the number of kings who held office after Alu Maane. Furthermore, the seventeenth century coincides with an outflow of Fulbe from the inner delta after the collapse of Moroccan hegemony (cf. Brown, *The caliphate*).

⁴⁹ Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 39, fn., state: 'L'armée de Babel Kassoum [Ba Bulkaasum], composée de 231 fantassins et 9 cavaliers, semait la terreur dans les falaises de la région de Hombori, Douentza et Bandiagara. Elle était réputée pour n'avoir jamais reculé au cours d'un combat, d'où le nom qui lui était donné, nanna (= avance) nannga (= prends).'

⁵⁰ According to the oral traditions, Alu Maane invited a *moodibo* who was on his way to Sokoto, Moodi Tawhiidi, to settle in the Hayre in order to teach his people about Islam. This was the beginning of a close relationship between the *moodibaabe* family of Moodi Tawhiidi and the chiefly family of Alu Maane that continues until today. The present Imam of Dalla is a descendant of Moodi Tawhiidi.

trigüers used a minor infraction of Muslim rules concerning female seclusion as a pretext to have Barke deposed, but instead of giving power to one of the intriguing brothers, Seeku Aamadu sent his own son to Dalla to decide who might be an effective chief. All those who thought themselves the right candidate did their best to make a good impression. Therefore Seeku's son concluded that the chiefs of the Hayre were very good Muslims and that they were willing to co-operate with the Diina. Moodi Mboolaaye, son of a brother of Seyoma Tayru, was appointed as chief and he reigned until the defeat of the Diina, when he was arrested and killed by the Futanke.⁵¹

Moodi Mboolaaye was obedient to the Diina. Under his reign attempts were made to copy the administrative and social structure of the Diina. Slavery became an important base for the economy. The pastoralists were 'settled'. Rules of natural resource management were introduced. Contact between the Hayre and Seeku Aamadu and his successors is documented in several letters in the possession of the chief's family.⁵²

Natural resource management

From the way transhumance routes are described in the relevant literature⁵³ it might be concluded that the herds of the delta did not enter the grazing territory of the chiefdom of Dalla, located south of the mountains. The strategic importance and function of Dalla as an outpost against the Tuareg may have been the reason for this policy. Another possibility was that, before the establishment of the Diina, Dalla was already a chiefdom with considerable power. There are some indications of this in the literature, where the warlords from the Hayre are described.⁵⁴ There is also a curious passage in Ba and Daget in which the importance of Dalla as an Islamic centre is compared to that of Jenné.⁵⁵ Moreover, in the oral traditions of Dalla it is

⁵¹ Angenent *et al.*, *Haayre*, p. 42–56.

⁵² One letter from Aamadu Seeku to Moodi Mboolaaye reads as follows: 'In the Name of God, the Merciful. Praise be to him who ordered *jihad* with persons and possessions, who said: "Lie in wait for them in every lair" ... We have decided to despatch our son Abd Allah b. Ghuru to Douentza for the same purpose. You are ordered to strive to do likewise and to go forth to the enemies surrounding you, either in person, or through your agent, and to make camp at the closest possible place to them such as Jamweli or the like. You should raise forces among all sections of your population who do not fear the enemy, with all possible attacking with cavalry and [unreadable] and coming together to move to any place you see fit to undertake battle, to destroy crops, to prevent tilling and planting and ... [unreadable manuscript]'. On another occasion Moodi Mboolaaye is urged to send fresh soldiers. The letter reads as follows: 'In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful ... from Aamadu Seeku to Moodi Mboolaaye "Leave aside those of your subjects who are now in a state of fear and send us an army of others than them as we ordered you to do previously. Peace"'. (Translations by Professor John Hunwick, Northwestern University). ⁵³ Ba and Daget, *L'empire*; Gallais, *Le delta*.

⁵⁴ See e.g. Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 39.

⁵⁵ According to Ba and Daget, when a *moodibo* (Islamic cleric) from Jenné named Alqadri killed a Tuareg warrior on an expedition in the Gourma, he was reputed to have said 'Il [The Tuareg warrior] servira d'avertissement aux Tuareg ..., et il montrera aux fils de marabouts de Dalla comment se battent ceux de Dienné'. Ba and Daget explain in a footnote, 'Dalla localité situé à 38 kilomètres est-nord-est de Douentza. Bien que partisans de Cheickou Amadou, les marabouts de Dalla étaient les rivaux de ceux de Dienné, pays d'origine d'Alqadri'. See Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 261.

very much stressed that the Maasina state never took over power in the Hayre by force, but by way of intrigues against the chief in power.

One of the reasons for accepting the leadership of Maasina was of course the prestige its rulers gained when they wrested control over the delta from the pagans into the hands of the Muslims and Fulbe. A more important reason may have been that the organizational and ideological model proposed by the Maasina wielded a greater chance for the holders of power, the political elite of Dalla (*weheebe*), to stay in office and to accumulate resources.

After the departure of Ba Bulkaasum, the court was forced to sedentarize at its present location, after a nomadizing existence of more than one and a half centuries according to local accounts.⁵⁶ The pastoralists of Dalla had never been involved in transhumance movements in the delta.⁵⁷ Rather, the patterns of transhumance in the Hayre proper consisted of movements between the Seeno-Manngo, or the pastures north of the mountain range in the Gourma, where they visited the salt licks at Durgama during the growing season for the annual salt cure. As long as water resources lasted they used these pastures. In the dry season they returned to the mountain range, watering their animals from the permanent sources and wells.⁵⁸

As a strategic choice, the place for sedentarizing the court of Dalla was very well chosen. The locale, at the foot of the Gandamia massif, is at the end of a valley that cuts deep into the mountain block and enjoyed permanent water sources.⁵⁹ The valley bottom north of the village could sustain a fairly large population needed for the defence of the village. The fields were fertilized every year by the run-off water from the mountains. In case of attack cattle, horses, supplies and the human population could be withdrawn into the mountains. There were numerous villages of cultivators in the mountains so that in the case of a siege cereals could be obtained from the hinterland. The pastures south of Dalla on the Feero and the Seeno-Manngo were close enough to provide protection from Dalla to the herds in the rainy season. At the time, there were few other permanent settlements outside the immediate surroundings of the mountains and the Bandiagara plateau; only at Boumbam, Petaka and Kerana were there permanent water resources where Hummbeebe and Fulbe lived.

The exploitation of human and natural resources around Dalla was modelled on the organization of natural resource management in the delta.⁶⁰ Around the village there was a *haarima*, land that was not cultivated but destined for the calves, young goats and sheep (and later on donkeys) that were the offspring of the herd (*dounti*) that remained all year round in the village to provide milk for those who stayed at home in the rainy season. The milking cows and goats were led in the morning to the pastures through three cattle routes (*burti*) in the northern, eastern and western direction. These pastures were located at some distance from the village to prevent damage to

⁵⁶ See Angenent *et al.*, *Haayre*.

⁵⁷ Contemporary Fulbe inhabitants of the Hayre deny that local Fulbe ever pastured their animals in the inland delta. Also, Fulbe who trek to the delta at present, such as the Fittoobe of Douma near Douentza, did not do so in the past.

⁵⁸ Interview with Nu Saidu Haidu from Hoggo Loro, in Dalla, Jan. 1991.

⁵⁹ Though these have dried up, the water situation is still good, with the water table at only five metres in the dry season.

⁶⁰ See Vincent 'Pasteurs'; Gallais, *Le delta*; Cissé, 'Le delta'; Schmitz, 'L'état'.

the millet fields. In the evening the herds returned to be milked. For the horses that formed the cavalry of Dalla there were separate pasture areas east and west in the mountains within an hour's walk from the village. These areas could be closed off so that the animals did not go astray and were nearby in case calamities occurred.⁶¹

According to oral accounts, the care and ownership of livestock had been assigned to *egge-hodaabe* pastoralists long before the Diina. The livestock had been given to them by the *weheebe*, following raids on the Tuareg, so that formally the *weheebe* owned no livestock at all. In practice, however, the pastoralists were obliged to render services to the *weheebe* in the form of gifts of milk and slaughtered animals.⁶² In this sense the *weheebe* in fact 'owned' all livestock of the *egge-hodaabe*. Slaves had no rights to livestock. If, by chance, they were able to build a small herd, it became the property of their master upon their death.⁶³

The millet fields located between the *haarima*, pastures and *burti*, were worked by *riimaybe* or war captives, *maccube*, who were owned by the freemen. There were also *riimaybe* in separate villages, who were made captive after the sedentarization of Dalla. These villages supplied Dalla with cereals, and the land worked by these *riimaybe* became their property. Land around Dalla was assigned to groups of nobles and semi-nobles at the moment of settlement and from then on became inheritable and transferable property, according to *shari'a* law. Next to the stream running east of the village, fed by run-off water from the mountains, there were gardens worked by the *riimaybe* that supplied the village with cotton for clothing. The spinning and weaving of cloth was done in the village itself by the *riimaybe* and the weavers (*maabube*), who belonged to the *nyeeybe* castes.⁶⁴

After the rainy season, when the harvest was done, the herds of the *egge-hodaabe* that were not kept near the village returned from the rainy season pastures and were admitted to the millet fields to graze on the crop residues. Later on in the dry season the animals were corralled in the fields at night and watered at the village wells so that the fields were supplied with manure for the next rainy-season millet crop. When pastures around Dalla were exhausted, the animals were taken to other villages along the mountain range where abundant grazing was possible and permanent water sources were available. During the transhumance in the rainy season and in the dry season, the herds were in principle only accompanied by the herdsmen, their families staying at home and their wives in theory secluded, although it is not clear if the pastoral inhabitants of Dalla kept strictly to this practice. The herdsmen were also assisted by *riimaybe* when on transhumance to draw

⁶¹ Interviews with Muusa Dicko, brother of the chief of Dalla, retired director of the elementary school in Douentza, and Al Hasan Tambura, guide on a trip through the Gandamia mountains, Jan. 1991.

⁶² This practice continues until today. After the harvest the chief and members of his family make a tour to collect 'gifts'.

⁶³ Interview with Allay Jangina, former chief slave of the chief of Dalla, Jan. 1991.

⁶⁴ Interviews with: Allay Jangina, Jan. 1991; Inna Muusa, the old mother of the current mayor of Dalla, who was herself a slave but was freed because she married the 'king', as his fourth wife, July/Aug. 1990; Muusa Dicko and Alu Booyi Cissé, Koranic scholar, July 1991; Aamadu Ba Digi, Jan. 1991; Hamma Baama, herdsman from Serma, various dates.

water from the village wells. They also probably cultivated temporary bush fields on the Seeno-Manngo when transhuming there.⁶⁵

As a general rule control of natural resource management became weaker the further one moved from the political centre. Pastures were only managed in the sense that decisions were taken concerning the transfer of livestock from one region to another. This was done on the basis of considerations concerning the quality of range, the necessity of going to the salt licks for the health of the livestock, the protection of millet fields and the safety of the herds from outside raiders. Fulbe herding groups from outside the chiefdom, e.g. from the inner delta, were temporarily incorporated into this structure when transhuming in the area north of the mountains in the rainy season. Near the centre of power, herds were managed more strictly in order to protect the millet and sorghum fields that formed the backbone of production for the elite, as well as its military capital, the horses for the cavalry.

The same applied to control over land. Land around Dalla was the property of families belonging to the various groups that composed the class of nobles. The *riimaybe* worked on the nobles' fields within a preordained schedule dictated by the rains and the movements of herds. The bush fields cultivated by the pastoralists and their accompanying *riimaybe* were also family property and inheritable. However, they could not be cultivated permanently because of the absence of manuring. Consequently, rules concerning time and spatial distribution of millet cultivation were less exact and depended predominantly on the co-ordination achieved by groups of herdsmen. The *riimaybe* that were living in villages in the mountains and along the mountain range also enjoyed more freedom. Though their belongings (livestock, cereals, jewellery, clothes) became the property of their *weheebe* masters when they were subjected to Dalla, tenure of the fields remained theirs, as they were the first occupants of these fields. This situation contrasted with that of the court slaves in Dalla who were put to work on fields that were appropriated by their masters.⁶⁶

The gathering of bush products was also the domain of the *riimaybe*. Household work, including the fetching of water and wood, was done by *riimaybe* women, the *weheebe* women remaining secluded in their compounds. Other bush products, some of which were important foodstuffs in case famine struck the region, were gathered by *riimaybe* men as well as women, depending on the type of product and the season. Among these bush products were wild fonio, wild rice, fruits and the leaves of trees. It seems likely that these gathering activities supplied important quantities of food to the *riimaybe* in times of shortage because their masters enjoyed preferential access to milk, meat and millet in their households. To our knowledge there were no rules governing access to bush products other than status.

Until today, people from the noble status groups do not gather bush products out of status considerations. The *riimaybe* claim these survival resources as theirs on the grounds that the rich (the nobles) should not 'steal' from the poor, whereas in reality 'noble' herding families often find themselves in a worse position than the *riimaybe*.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Interview with Guril and Belco Salmaane, two *riimaybe* elders from Dalla, Jan. 1991.

⁶⁷ De Bruijn and Van Dijk, 'Drought', 99–103.

The sedentarization of the court of Dalla under the Diina thus gave rise to fundamental changes in virtually every aspect of natural resource management near the political centre. At the periphery, however, things remained much the same as far as the tenure of resources was concerned. Changes occurred in the organization of labour and the household and the distribution of production surpluses. It is easy to see that the elite with all its subdivisions imposed a heavy burden on the productive capacity of the population, *riimaybe* and *egge-hodaabe*. Moreover, the military organization in the form of cavalry required that the horses be fed with cereals for most of the dry season when the quality of range diminished, thus increasing the burden on the cultivating *riimaybe* population. The urge to subjugate more cultivators to the Fulbe during the rule of the Diina may have stemmed from this development.

Social landscape

This reorganization of natural resource management had differential effects on the various status groups in Fulbe society in the Hayre. It is clear that the power of the *weheebe* and the Islamic clergy grew stronger. With the military support of the Diina, they were able to impose their will upon the cultivating population and reduce them to the status of virtual slaves. It was therefore possible to intensify the production of cereals and to centralize the accumulation of surpluses. Productive resources in the form of cereals, milk and labour were concentrated at Dalla, the political centre. Not only was labour power and produce transposed to the centre, but soil fertility was also ensured for the fields of the *weheebe* and the *moodibaabe* by the animals of the *egge-hodaabe*. This manure was essential for the centralization of production necessary at Dalla and the maintenance of the military machine.

In this process, the pastoralists lost part of their flexibility. They became part of a land management scheme that was not of their own design. Moreover, this land management scheme enabled the *weheebe* to become less dependent on the *egge-hodaabe*. The pastoralists provided not only the milk for the *weheebe*, but also contributed the manpower necessary successfully to undertake raids and hoard booty. With the power of the Diina behind the *weheebe*, the labour of the *riimaybe* and the soil fertility from the bush on their land all at their disposal, the contributions of the pastoralists to warfare and the economy became less important for the *weheebe* to remain in power. Milk and meat were only the luxuries of life. It was the production of cereals that mattered, for this was the staple food of the army that also kept the horses in good condition so that military power could be maintained.

THE CHIEFDOM OF BOONI: PASTORAL POWER REINTRODUCED IN THE HAYRE (1860–93)

Around 1860, the Hayre entered a new period of turmoil with the rise to power of the Futanke in Bandiagara, but the Futanke were not able to control the dry lands outside the delta as the Diina had done. Although the Futanke were relatively safe on the Bandiagara plateau, the Fulbe from the Gourma, Jelgooji, the Hayre and the Seeno-Gondo formed a considerable force that if combined with the Maasina Fulbe was a major threat to Futanke hegemony.

Moodi Mboolaye, chief of Dalla at the time of the Futanke conquest, was executed by them. After his death various chiefs followed each other in quick succession, reflecting the internal chaos that the Hayre experienced.⁶⁸ This internal trouble also resulted in the establishment of a new Fulbe chiefdom in Booni.⁶⁹

There was already growing discontent among the population of the eastern part of the chiefdom of Dalla before the arrival of the Futanke. While the *wehebe* in Dalla were immersed in their own internal power struggles, the *egge-hodaabe*, *riimaybe* and others in the peripheral villages of the chiefdom were suffering from the heavy taxes imposed on them and the consequences of increased raiding. The *wehebe* of Dalla became more oppressive and the number of Tuareg raids from the Gourma on camps and villages increased.⁷⁰

In the eastern part of the chiefdom, where the authority of the *wehebe* was less, a young *beweejo*, Maamudu Nduuldi, a nephew of Moodi Mboolaaye and a grandson of Ba Bulkaasum who had fled from the Dalla court, built up a power base of his own. He headed a band of discontented *egge-hodaabe*, *riimaybe*, Hummbeebe and Bella, which was very successful in fighting off the Tuareg.⁷¹ According to Ba and Daget,⁷² Maamudu was so victorious that he was asked by Ba Lobbo, the military commander of the Diina, to help his forces raid the Tuareg.⁷³ His power increased to the extent that he began to constitute a threat for the chiefdom of Dalla, and the ensuing rivalry brought the Hayre to the brink of internal war. However, so long as the raids on the Tuareg of the Gourma remained successful he would not attack his kinsmen.

The Futanke may have feared a united Hayre under Maamudu Nduuldi at their backs, as well as the raiding bands of the Tuareg in what they

⁶⁸ The various chief lists we gathered reveal the chaos of this time. Both the number of chiefs and the names varied considerably. Many people remember this period as one of disarray.

⁶⁹ The following account is compiled from various sources: Aamadu Ba Digi; the *moodibo* of the court of Booni, Bura Moodi; accounts of a few people from Serma namely, Hama Bama, a herdsman, and Yeeraajo, a *diimaajo*. We also obtained a document about this period from an NGO (Near East Foundation) working in the area. These accounts were also compared with the published literature on the Futanke.

⁷⁰ ANS, Fonds ancien, 1D-137, microfilm 20/1 mi 272, 'Deuxième partie situation politique et militaire au Soudan français avant le départ du commandant supérieur,' extrait d'un rapport de Kayes, 22 décembre, 1892; see also Angenent *et al.*, *Haayre*.

⁷¹ Manuscript on the biography of Maamudu Nduuldi kept by Bura Moodi, an Islamic cleric in Booni, which he read out for us on various occasions. Tapes are held by the authors and the Institut des Sciences Humaines in Bamako.

⁷² Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 160.

⁷³ Ba and Daget's informants state that the invasions in the Gourma were so successful that every warrior received five head of cattle, two slaves and other commodities after the taxes to the Diina (one-fifth of the booty) had been deducted (Ba and Daget, *L'empire*, 262). Though we do not doubt that Maamudu Nduuldi fought the Tuareg with great success, and returned more than once with considerable booty, the accuracy of this passage in Ba and Daget is questionable. They mention, for example, that Maamudu Nduuldi was chief of Booni, while in both Dalla and Booni the court officials, griots and marabouts agree that Booni only became a chiefdom under the reign of the Futanke (see below). In Booni any further connection with the Diina is denied with fervour (i.e. people got angry when we suggested repeatedly that Booni once belonged to the Diina). Moreover his involvement in the Diina is at odds with the chronology provided by the biographical document. So it is highly improbable that Maamudu Nduuldi led the forces of the Diina against the Tuareg.

considered as their backyard. They therefore recognized Maamudu Nduuldi as chief of Booni and endowed him with his own war drum or *tubal*,⁷⁴ thus neutralizing the danger of Dalla by dividing it in two and at the same time creating a strong chiefdom on the fringe of their territory to ward off the Tuareg. As far as we know, the Futanke rarely interfered in the chiefdom of Booni until 1893, when following the collapse of Futanke hegemony, Bandiagara became a French protectorate. Conflicts then developed between the French-appointed Futanke ruler, Aguibou, and his French overlords over the payment of taxes. These disputes ultimately led to the execution of the chief of Booni (then a son of Maamudu Nduuldi) in Bandiagara at the end of the nineteenth century.⁷⁵

The social hierarchy that developed in Booni during this period was of a different nature from that in Dalla, and may be described as a hierarchy based on despotic leadership with complex sets of rules concerning the levying of taxes and the organization of land use. This regime imposed limitations on the flexibility necessary for the pastoralists and placed heavy burdens on the shoulders of the non-free population. Maamudu Nduuldi's leadership in Booni may be labelled charismatic and oriented towards expansion. People in the chiefdom still talk with veneration about his capacities. According to an Arabic document held by the Islamic scholars of Booni, he never lost a battle. He is remembered by the population as a courageous warrior of enormous height and strength, with long arms, heavy eyebrows and big ears, almost superhuman. His lance was twice the size of a normal one. Even his former enemies, the Tuareg from Gossi, still talk with respect about Maamudu Nduuldi.⁷⁶ Everybody, including *riimaybe*, Bella that escaped their Tuareg masters, even the Dogon of Sarnyere, Loro and Tabi, and Hummbeebe from the Monndoro area, united under his banner to fight off the intruders.

The economy of Booni was a war economy like that of the Futanke. The principal source of wealth was booty in cattle and slaves. As the warlord, Maamudu Nduuldi was entitled to divide this loot. He was at the centre of redistribution networks, with cattle as the most prestigious commodity to be circulated. According to our sources, no cattle were left in the Hayre when he came to power. Although the numbers of animals and slaves that he looted are almost certainly overestimated, Maamudu Nduuldi is remembered at least by the pastoralists as the source of all wealth in livestock in the Booni chiefdom.

From the history of land use in the Booni chiefdom it can clearly be seen that patterns of land management were quite different in the periphery of the chiefdom of Dalla. When we asked the chief of Booni in 1987 on an initial visit to Booni if they adopted the same rules for natural resource management as prescribed by the Diina, this was proudly denied. The chiefdom of Booni

⁷⁴ The war drum was a symbol that the chiefdom of Booni had become an independent unit.

⁷⁵ According to local people, this chief was extremely oppressive. According to archival sources he was executed because of misbehaviour and his refusal to hand over the taxes, ANS, Fonds ancien, 15G-179 (microfilm 1/1 mi 1045), 'Rapport politique, novembre 1895, résidence de Bandiagara, copie de registre, 1898, 1899'.

⁷⁶ Mike Winters, pers. comm..

was something of its own making, as it was a reconquest of power by pastoralists, *egge-hodaabe*, from the bush, who preferred to live off raiding and livestock keeping and not to pay taxes to a distant power in Dalla or elsewhere. The elite of the chiefdom of Booni, the chief and his *egge-hodaabe* warriors, did not centralize labour power, soil fertility and cereals geographically. Instead, Maamudu Nduuldi alternatively stayed in Serma, where he cultivated a field with his *riimaybe*,⁷⁷ Booni and Bubani Kani. Up to today, one of the wives of the chief of Booni lives in a concession in Nokara, a village of Islamic clerics at the eastern foot of the Gandamia bloc. He nomadized and never organized natural resource management in a way similar to the Diina and the *weheebe* in Dalla. Instead the elite of Booni accumulated livestock and slaves as booty from raids on neighbouring groups. The livestock was redistributed among the *egge-hodaabe*, who used this as the basis to build the herds they possessed before the recent droughts.

Most villages of Dogon and Hummbeebe were left in peace and not reduced to the status of *riimaybe* as in the chiefdom of Dalla. Instead Booni's army protected the Hummbeebe of Duwari and Dinangourou against raiding by Fulbe from the Gondo, in the extreme north-west of Burkina Faso.⁷⁸ In the rainy season the herds were on the Seeno-Manngo or were taken to the salt-licks at Durgama. In the dry season the *egge-hodaabe* took their herds to places near the mountains where water was available, e.g. at Booni, but also at Nokara, and other villages regardless of the status of the inhabitants. Quite a number of *egge-hodaabe* used to take their livestock to the Hummbeebe south of the Seeno-Manngo, where they were very welcome because they supplied manure for their fields. So, relations with cultivators were more co-operative than exploitative as was the case in Dalla.

However, as in Dalla, the movements of the herds were confined to the territory of the chiefdom. To be able to pursue a pastoral way of life, control over land was indeed essential. In this period such control was largely based on military power. The balance of power and the coalitions at the end of the nineteenth century changed constantly as documented in the colonial archives. The Jelgoobe and the Jallube of the Seeno-Manngo raided each other reciprocally.⁷⁹ The chief of Dalla when he came to celebrate Tabaski with Aguibou, was kept for some time in Bandiagara as punishment for raiding the Kunta in the Gourma.⁸⁰ A son of the chief of Diankabu in the Seeno-Gondo with a number of warriors and cavalry from Booni and Hommbori looted Oualam, a Tuareg camp.⁸¹ A similar raid was launched in October on Zakmoun, another settlement of the Tuareg.⁸² In their turn the Tuareg led raids against the Hayre regularly.⁸³ So, pillaging was a way of life and subsistence for the Fulbe of the Hayre even when they were subjugated

⁷⁷ Rather he had his fields cultivated by *riimaybe*. Oral traditions claim that he himself took up the hoe to lead his *riimaybe* in the cultivation work.

⁷⁸ Interview with Allay Yoobi, Kummbeejo of Duwari and host of the chief of Booni, Dec. 1990.

⁷⁹ ANS, Fonds ancien, 15G-179 (microfilm 1/1 mi 1045), 'Rapports politiques, résidence de Bandiagara; 1894-1896: Bulletin politique du mois de juillet 1895, résidence de Bandiagara'.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.* Bulletin politique, Poste de Bandiagara, février 1894.

⁸² *Ibid.* Bulletin politique, Poste de Bandiagara, octobre 1894.

⁸³ *Ibid.* various references in the political reports.

to larger empires. In this way they kept intruders at bay and wealth and resources concentrated in the hands of the *wehebe* and the *egge-hodaabe*.

CONCLUSION

The nineteenth-century Diina of Seeku Aamadu is often presented as a religious project, aiming at the establishment of an Islamic theocracy. However, when considering the peripheral areas, it may also be seen as a military, ecological and economic project in which an incessant power game was played over access to natural resources and the legitimacy of various claims to political power. This led to the political marginalization of certain groups. By contrast, the Futanke hegemony introduced chaos into the area as it lacked a strict organization, a legitimate power base and a network of power relations, as had been the case in the Maasina state. The changes set in motion under the Futanke were, however, interrupted by the intervention of the French, who reduced the Futanke centre of Bandiagara to a protectorate.

We have shown that the drylands east of the Maasina area, and more precisely the Hayre, have always known a dynamic of their own. In each historical period the pendulum swung between external control and the internal dynamics of the region. If the power controlling the delta was strong, external control was more prominent over the Hayre. When the pendulum swung back and political insecurity reigned over the area, the Hayre enjoyed increased autonomy. The area was never an integral part of an undivided empire that ruled its territory. Even in the period of the Diina of Seeku Aamadu, the Hayre maintained part of its territorial integrity.

Thus the Fulbe of the Hayre were neither automatically proponents of the Maasina state, nor a group with common interests. The rulers of areas like the Hayre had different interests from the common pastoralists, as well as from the agricultural population, who were reduced to servile status. Both the historical narratives and the contemporary allocation of land use among various social groups demonstrate that Islam and Islamic ideology were used by the Fulbe elites in the area to consolidate and expand their power over other groups. They contested the hegemony of the Maasina state, and the power struggles in which they were engaged were fought out in the domains of access to resources and the political and military organization of the Diina. Thus the project of the Diina was used by the political and religious elites to strengthen their own power base. The article also shows that the Diina did not necessarily promote pastoral interests.

Through this historical process patterns of land use developed in Dalla that were modelled upon the rules of the Diina, but they were also affected by local circumstances and regional struggles for hegemony. As long as these rules prevailed, a balance between agricultural and pastoral interests was maintained. The pastoralists were required to modify their way of life in order to contribute to the economic basis of the chiefdoms in the Hayre in the form of troops for warfare and manure to maintain soil fertility. Their freedom of movement was therefore curtailed and subjugated to sedentary agricultural interests, represented paradoxically by their Fulbe overlords.

The Futanke opted for another model of control. They used the Bandiagara plateau as their stronghold, and exploited the delta from there by sacking the

countryside. The decline of direct political control in this period released pressure on areas like the Hayre, which gained considerable autonomy in this period, and a pattern of predatory military expansion emerged that was ironically similar to the model of exploitation the Futanke had put into practice. A different model for resource management therefore evolved in Booni in which pastoral interests were most important.