



**PASTORAL NOMADIC TUAREG IN TRANSITION:
THE CASE OF IGORAREINE TUAREG IN ECHAGH,
NORTHERN MALI**

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Thesis Submitted for the partial fulfillment of
the Degree of Master of Philosophy in Visual
Culture Studies
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF TROMSØ, NORWAY
SPRING 2008

Dedication

This work is dedicated to you, Mme Diallo Mariam Sidibé, my mother for all your supports.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As it has been argued that all has a beginning also has an end, here, I am at the end of the writing of my thesis. At the end of process of generating this thesis, I would like to thank all the lectures of Visual Culture Studies who, during these two years shared their experiences with us. My most deeply felt gratitude goes to Peter Ian Crawford for his comments and advises all along this writing process. Again, my gratitude to you, Peter.

Concerning the financial support that I got all along my stay in Tromsø, I would like to thank the staff of Visual Culture Studies and also thank Sami Center for supporting financially my project.

This page gives me the opportunity to thank professor Drissa Diakité ; Salif Berthé for all their advises during these last seven years of my life. Here, I would to add you, Mahamoudou Traoré for your continuous care about me all along these semesters in Tromsø.

To my friends: Rachel Balé, Ganava André, Kristin, Sturla , Ronnie, Jallila; Marie –Eve, Kjerstie Hana, Babette, Dieudonné Ndanga, Adamou Amadou, Adam Ahmat, Ahmoudou Mouazamou, SidyLamine Bagayoko, Kodji Kapsiki, Hiriene Gougoureh and all the rest, I say thank you. This work is yours as well. You have been all along these semesters a source of motivation. You will be always in my souvenirs: Tusen takk and Merci infinement.

I would finally like to express my sincere appreciation to Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane and his wife Agaichetou , as well as all the teachers and pupils of Echagh primary school.

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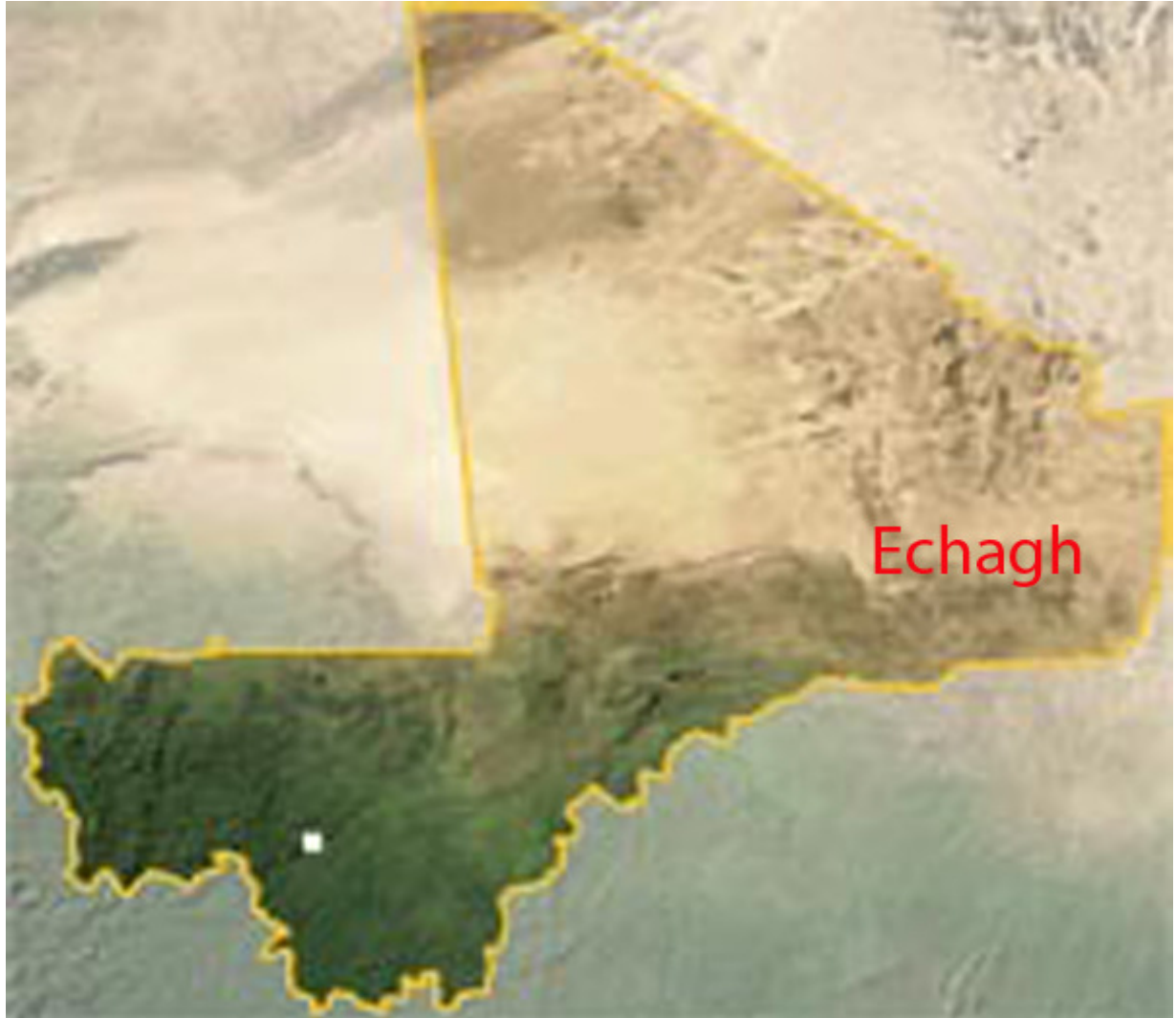
The new generation's ability to move into the world and vice versa

GLOSSARY :

Igorareine: name of a Tuareg herding unit in northern Mali.



Map1: Map of Mali (accessed and adapted 25 May 2008 on www.google.com) indicating the different regions in black and Echagh in red, northeast of Gao region. Moreover, this map pictures Mali within West Africa.



Map 2: Map of Mali ((accessed and adapted 25 May 2008 on www.google.com) indicating the climatic contrast of Mali. The smallest green part belongs Sudanese and Sahelian climate and the biggest part where Echagh is visible belongs to Saharan climate type.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is about how the Igorareine Tuareg are coping within transition in northern Mali. They are in a process to cease their nomadic way of life without having yet become fully sedentary. My focus is mainly on the strategies used within this transition, how they can transform their current situation into a better life and how the whole process affects the social relationships between kinsmen. The strategies identified are both the formal education and local knowledge. In my fieldwork I focus on the school, the setting for the introduction of formal knowledge, and on one family using traditional knowledge as their main coping strategy. Using participant observation and an observational film style as data collection methods enabled me to collect both text and non-text based data. An interdisciplinary approach is used to interpret my empirical material in this thesis. The main theoretical sources are: relationship between power and knowledge (Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu), Modernity and identity (Anthony Giddens), the nation-state (Pierre Bourdieu, Ernest Gellner); Identity and belonging (Anthony Cohen), De-tribalization and re-tribalization (Abner Cohen).

The film *Echagh* (the well) forms an integral part of this thesis.

Key words: Mali, Tuareg, Echagh, Igorareine Tuareg, transition, pastoral nomadism, knowledge, identity, nation-state.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the current societal changes among pastoralist nomadic Tuareg people in northern Mali. It focuses on different types of knowledge, looking at what kinds of knowledge may enable the Tuareg to cope with the changing situation. I will be discussing the everyday life of a group of nomadic Tuareg, called Igorareine Tuareg, in a zone situated 40 km northeast of GAO in northern Mali (cf. map 1). This will enable me to analyse their different perceptions of knowledge and how these influence the choices they make while facing the challenges of profound change to their existence.

In Mali today, like in many other post-colonial nation-states, knowledge is the basis of power because it gives access to the political, judicial, economical and bureaucratic positions in contrast to the pre-colonial order with dynasties and kingdoms. Knowledge thus gives access to the decision-making sphere. The kind of knowledge I am referring to here is the one stemming from school, setting for formal education. The weakest point of the Tuareg is that they did not attend formal education in the past, which can partly explain the fact they are outside the national corridors of power. They moved freely over the central Sahara with their cattle for centuries and did not consider school as an option. Their knowledge was developed and reproduced in relation to pastoral nomadic practices, a kind of knowledge ill-fitted to their current situation, characterised by an increased participation in political and state structures.

My hypothesis is thus that the Tuareg marginalization in Mali is due partly to their lack of formal knowledge. De Bruin and Van Djik define marginalisation as “a process in which under influence of different factors certain groups move into a lower socio-political and economic position. This lower socio-political and economical position lead to a greater insecurity of existence” (quoted in Abdoullahi 2004, 8). This definition seems to fit the current situation of the Igorareine Tuareg. The fact that most of them have ceased to be nomadic people without becoming fully sedentary is in itself an insecurity of existence. They are undergoing a transition defined as a process or period of changing from one state or condition to another.

Giddens argues that: " Transitions in individual' lives have always demanded psychic reorganisation, something which was often ritualised in traditional cultures in the shape of *rites de passage*. But in such cultures, where things stayed more or less the same from generation to generation on the level of the collectivity, the changed identity was clearly staked out – as when an individual moved from adolescence into the adulthood. In the settings of modernity, by contrast, the altered self has to be explored and constructed as part of a reflexive process of connecting personal and social change" (1991, 33). Elsewhere, he put "... sociologists have often discussed the transition from the traditional to the modern as a process of progressive inner diversification" (1990, 21)

Ahmadou Mouadjamou (2005) describes a similar diversification process taking place among the Kapsiki of Mogodé, in northern Cameroon. Formerly small subsistence farmers, the Kapsiki people are currently traders of groundnuts and millet, among other activities. They are also adapting themselves to the multi-language setting in which they now live. According to Mouadjamou, many Kapsiki became Muslim and adopted Fulani customs and languages, as well as English and French. Giddens called this process "... the disembedding of social systems". By disembedding, he means "the lifting out" of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space" (1990, 21).

Similar to what is going on in Echagha, some scenes of transitions, in which people are involved in reorganisation process, can be viewed in Azarya (1996), studying the relationship between states and the societies within they operate in a comparative perspective, more specifically devoting his work to pastoral nomads in Africa. As an illustrative example of changes in identity, pointed out by Giddens above, Azarya writes that: "... in Hausaland, pagan groups continued to adopt Hausa identity as they sought respectability and upward mobility through Islam" (1996, 71).

Moreover, Adamou Amadou (2007) and Abdoullahi (2004) describe similar scenes of transition among pastoral Mbororo people, northern Cameroon. These people are reorganising themselves, adapting themselves to a sedentary way of living through which they expect a better life. Abdoullahi stresses that:" to be settled, is not enough to have enough a plot and to live

continuously on it. There is a whole behaviour, a huge cultural repertoire to adopt. Sedentarisation has its own skills and realities and culture. Shifting from nomadic life to sedimentary one is more than only changing relations to space. It is also a period of role changes within families'' (2004, 70). Here, the author seems to be predicting the identity change stressed by Giddens above and lived with Kapsiki of Mogodé in Ahmadou (2005) and pagan group adopting Hausa identity pointed out by Azarya.

1. Pastoral Tuareg in transition

Norris (1952), Mortimore (1972), Azarya (1996), and Rasmussen (1992; 1998) all argue that the establishment of new African nation-states and the series of the ecological disasters, such as drought, have brought social changes among many Tuareg groups. New borders have restricted Tuareg mobility and they lost their livestock in the droughts. However, sedentarisation in a nation-state context may in itself cause some loss of animals because if you do not move with animals they cannot survive (cf. Bjørklund, 1997). Groups undergoing such transitions, individually or collectively, adopt various strategies. Some become gardeners in the oases, which is the case with many Kel Ewey of Agadez in Niger, and others travel to Nigeria or simply move to the nearest cities (Rasmussen 1992). Similar to Rasmussen, Yattara (2000) reports that most of the Kel Tamasheq who moved from the northern regions¹ of Mali to Bamako in the 1990s become guards or traders. In the line, Seely (2001, 506) wrote as it follows: ''the droughts of the 1970s hit the Tuareg populations hard. Again, Tuareg were forced to move outward from the desert, to the south of Mali, and north to Algeria and Libya''.

Another strategy used has been to seek access to the state structure, which requires access to a certain type of knowledge, as mentioned above. In the recent past, the Tuareg chose rebellious movements to achieve their goals but are realising that access to knowledge may be superior to the use of guns. This seems to be understood among the Tuareg today, where many are eager to

¹ See the map 2 which pictures the geographical contrast dividing into two zones. The colour above the green one represents the regions inhabited by the Tuareg. Yattara (2000) argued that it represents two thirds of Mali territory with 878.613 km square.

acquire knowledge. In other terms, they have started to go to school, and in the case of Mali, many Tuareg groups are using school attendance as the main strategy to change their lives.

In 1992 a national pact was signed in Mali. This pact recommended (see Lode 1996) that the Malian government should increase its development policy in the areas inhabited by the Tuareg. The creation of schools was a dominant point in this pact in order to fill the educational gap between the Tuareg and other groups in Mali. In some cases, the local people built schools by themselves, which is what happened in Echagh, the location of my fieldwork. They built a primary school in 1998 and two years later the state started to recognize it.

2. People of Echagh in transition.

In Echagh, most of the people are settled because they have no animals to move around with, while others have become so rich that they leave their animals in other people's care. Although some of them are involved in the tourism business or animal trade, the main coping strategy for the majority of local people is anchored in education. When I arrived in Echagh, I asked my contact person about their local motivation for creating the school. He said: "We created this school because we realized that after the dark years of rebellion, we did not have any educated who could get a good position in the state administration. We did not go to school how it should be done since colonization period. For us, going to western school was interpreting as becoming non believer. We thought that our animals were sufficient to assure our life. But the series of desertification of 1973-1974 and 1983-84 have shown us they can disappear. But we now think that sending our children to school will avoid them to live these bad experiences like us."

It should be remembered that the national pact opened up some opportunities for the Tuareg but unfortunately, they were not prepared to assume them. In other words, they could potentially get some good positions in state structures but they were not educated and therefore lacked the required skills and for that matter qualifications.

Currently, in Igorareine Tuareg 'daily conversations, it appears that they are aware of how useful the knowledge and skills obtained at school are. One can hear them continuously arguing that it gives job opportunities and mobility possibilities to people who access it. That is why they predict the futures of their children as better, because they go to school. This is also the main reason why I chose the school as the setting for my research.

The school I am referring to in this work is a public primary school built in 1998. It functions with 4 teachers for 6 classes and a total of 128 of which only 8 are not Igorareine Tuareg. Unlike most parts of the country, where the schooling is advanced, the Echagh School is supported by the World Food Programme, which provides food for the pupils during the whole academic year. Other support is provided by an NGO, 'Croq'nature', by giving 300 kg of rice every quarter

The daily routine starts by hoisting the flag while singing the national anthem around 6.30 am. Then pupils go to the kitchen for breakfast and the classes start at 7.30 am and continue until 11.30 with a 15-minute break in between. Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays, they come back for lessons in the afternoon from 3.00 pm until 5.00 pm. At the end of classes, they water trees in the school garden or do other chores. The language of instruction is French, the official language of Mali. . In the school, my interest was to study the children' learning process and their interaction within school setting and how these are constructing the change among Igorareine Tuareg.

The children are between their traditional ways of life and where they intend to go; who they want to be and what they want to achieve. At the same time some of them see schooling as a threat to their lifestyle, and reject school as well as the knowledge it produces. They argue that they must keep their ancestral way of life, remaining in the desert with animals. I will try to grasp these two contradictory positions or attitudes within the same community: back to root on the one hand and forward to changes on the other hand.

Some of the questions that have arisen during my project have been: What is knowledge according to the Igorareine Tuareg? How does knowledge influence life choice, lifestyle and identity? What are the implications of the newly introduced school system? Will they succeed? Are they prepared for eventual failure? Can they return to their roots?

3. Description of the characters, others participants and ethnographic documentary:

I carried out field research for about four months, from April to July 2007, within the Echagh community. I used participant observation, direct interviewing and filming to collect my data. The participant observation and filming were directed at my main characters, covering their everyday lives.

I have three main characters that I chose due to their 'Tuareg' status as common fact or connector facts on the one side and the diversity within the reality of the transition in Echagh on the other side. That is to say, two of them are involved in schooling process for a better future but with different arguments on the one hand and one is claiming to conserve the root despite the changes. Thus, this diversity is a divider fact when referring to the position of their families. Moreover, I should make the readers aware of the fact they are so young with little experiences on what is going on in Echagh and for that matter, their parents do strongly appear in this writing process as the second characters in each case and this can be also noticed when watching the film I made from this research.

For those attending, school I chose them considering the direct link their families have with school on the one side and also the difference in their reason of settlement. That is how I chose Alher Ag Mohamed. He is Tuareg boy about 12 years old. He is a pupil of level three at Echagh primary school. He is rather tall and always wears the same multicoloured clothes sewed in line with Tuareg customs. Every morning, he wakes up around 5 am, prays and gives water to the lambs at home. Sometimes, he leads their sheep to the well before going to school. When he does not have classes, he leads them far away into the desert. After classes, he often fetches water. When he comes back home late, he helps Aicha (his mother) to crush the millet. He does not speak much. He likes joking, especially with his friend Doula. When he is at home, he is constantly close to Aicha. He lost his father during the rebel movements of 1990s. A few years later, his mother got married to Almahady Ag Alassane (who is the oldest brother of Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane, my contact person in Echagh).

He is about 52 years and manages a tourism agency in Gao called “Echagh Travel and local development”. He is also the first counsellor of the headman (chief of their fraction) and the leader of a local association called “*Echagill*” in Tamasheq and working in English”. He is also involved in the school management board, and representative of the parents’ association. I found him an interested social person connected to the school and his perspective on the schooling process was relevant for my work. Besides, I was living with them in the same household, which made my observation of Alher’s daily routine easier. His family possesses but they decided to send their children to school due to the fact animals are reliable each year to term his mother (this is visible in my film Echagh).

Halimatou Walet Idwal is a Tuareg girl about 12 years old .She is a level 4 pupil at Echagh primary school. Each afternoon, after class, she is occupied with crushing millet, looking after lambs, making tea for Ibrahim, her uncle, and some times she takes care of kid . She takes their animals to the well every morning before going to school and every weekend she takes them into the desert. She lives with her grandmother, Djeneba, who is a cook at the school, and her uncle, Ibrahim, who is one of the guards at school.

Elhette, her mother, lives with her husband somewhere else but from time to time she comes to visit her daughter. I found it interesting to get her relatives’ perspectives on school due to the fact that they are somehow already involved in school activities. Unlike Alher ‘family, her family has few animals that is why they cannot go ahead in keeping nomadic way of life, their ancestral lifestyle. They are forced to remain in one place and look for another alternative way of life over the school in their contention.

Both of them, Alher Ag Mohamed and Halimoutou Wallet Idwal’ can be considered as examples of the modernity process in Echagh. Unlike their parents or relatives, they had this clear idea to become someone else rather than remaining pastoralist nomadic people. Alher said ‘I want to become a doctor’ and Halimoutou said “I want to be become a teacher”.

OusmaneBillal is about 27 years old and hails from Gao. He is a Sonrhai² and teaches both Alher and Halimoutou .As for Mohamed Ag Younoussa, he is an *Ikefelen*³ Tuareg and is the school's headmaster. He is about 52 years old. Both of them were important for my research due to their status as civil servants. They interpreted my material on state perspectives on the schooling process as well as translated to me some of those of the local people.

Mariam Walet Assalat is a girl about 14 years old. She does not attend school. Her main activity is cooking, fetching water from the well, milking goats, as well as taking care of them. In contrast to others she does not regard herself as being in between two systems of knowledge. She wants keep her father 'beliefs. Her father does not like schooling, as can be seen in my film Echagh. He is the head of all the herders in Echagh, indicating perhaps why he defends their traditional views.

My film shows Echagh people living in transition. It shows the juxtaposition between their ancestral past, their present situation, and their feelings about a better future, in which many expect education to play the major role. The film thus serves as an integral part of my thesis. I have called it ethnographic documentary because the filming process has been made with respect to the conventions stated in Crawford ' *experiential model* as following:

"With regards to the images he notes that '... strong emphasis is given to visual images as the bearers of meaning 'long takes are used (no jump –cut). Striving to accommodate the rhythm of the event', the camera is used for' primary editing ';' the wide angle lens is used and close-ups are avoided 'and "the camera is used exploratory, or intuitive (no scripts)

With regards to the added explanation of what is happening, he notes that,... 'there is a limited use of narration ';' ' cultural neutral techniques are employed; and indigenous dialogues are subtitled'. There is 'no or very little use of non- synchronous inauthentic sound, and,

As regards the public...' there is a reflexivity underling that 'this is film 'by revealing the presence of the camera and film crew'' (Postma 1999,4-5).

² An ethnic group

³ A Tuareg fraction in the north of Echagh.

4. Towards a workable use of the concept knowledge

According to Barth (2002:1) 'knowledge' can be understood as: "... what a person employs to interpret and act on the world (...) under this caption I wish to include feelings (attitudes) as well as information, embodied skills as well as verbal, taxonomies and concepts: all the ways of understanding that we use to make our experienced, grasped reality." Moreover he pursued " we all live lives full of raw and unexpected events and we can grasp them only if we can interpret them- cast them in terms of our knowledge so that we can focus on them and meet them to some degree prepared and with appropriate measures. Thus a person's stock of knowledge structures that person's understood world and purposive ways of coping in it." (Ibid) Based on his materials on Bali- Hindou⁴ and Baktaman⁵ Barth, argued that this stock of knowledge, is produced in persons and populations in the context of the social relations that they sustain and varies greatly between persons"(ibid).

Thus, in Echagh people, Igorariene Tuareg do possess knowledge on their social and natural environment which will be depicted in chapter three of this thesis. But the point is that this knowledge provides them with skills to only act at local scale. Whereas many of them want to interact within a more expanded social world i.e participate in politic and states structures in Mali. Such an ambition required a shared knowledge as argued by Barth when stating" differences in knowledge provide much of the momentum for our social interaction, from gossip to the division of labour. We must share some knowledge to be able communicate and usually must differ in some knowledge to give focus to our interaction" (2002, 1). Thus, the knowledge enabling them to do so (to interact within an expanded world) is given by formal education. That is why they sent their children to school. They argue that this knowledge will enable their children to cope in today' Mali.

To sum up, one can understand the current context of Echagh in the following way: people who want to remain within local sphere with no need to expand the sphere of interaction do not go to school. Such people act with their local knowledge. In contrast those who hope for Tuareg increasing participation in politic and state structures go to school for the required knowledge.

⁴ Barth, Frederik. 1975. *Ritual and Knowledge among the Baktaman of New Guinea*. Oslo.

⁵ Barth, Frederik, 1993. *Balinese Worlds*. University of Chicago Press.

5. Structure of the thesis

To conduct my work, I built this thesis around four chapters, in addition to the introductory part and conclusion.

Chapter one: Methodology. This chapter sets up scenes of how I established relation to get access to the field and the development of these relations during my staying among my informants. It gives me the opportunity to dig more into the concepts ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ by trying to grasp the advantages and disadvantages of this ambivalent position that one might be in when conducting anthropological research in one’s own country but out of his own ethnic group. Moreover, I will be presenting my filming method and data.

Chapter two: Theoretical frameworks. In this chapter I will be presenting theories with which I interpret efficiently my empirical material. Those theories are the relationship between power and knowledge (Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu), Modernity and identity (Anthony Giddens), the nation-state (Pierre Bourdieu, Ernest Gellner), Identity and belonging (Anthony Cohen) and De-tribalization and re-tribalization model of Abner Cohen will be used. At the end I will present some conception on national Identity.

Chapter three: Ethnographic Context. This chapter conceived to give more information on the ethnographic context of this work. As a setting scene, it will give some basic knowledge on the Tuareg historical evolution in Africa and in Mali in general since pre-colonial period to nowadays. At the end, I will present the people that I am dealing with in this work, Igarareine Tuareg in their geographical and social environment settings.

Chapter four: Return to the roots and social change: coping strategies within transition. This chapter deals with the coping strategies of different tendencies in transition in Echagh and analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER ONE: METHODOLOGY

“Anthropology distinguishes itself from the other social sciences through the great emphasis placed on ethnographic fieldwork as the most important source of new knowledge about society and culture” (Eriksen 2001, 21). With this statement Hylland Eriksen emphasises fieldwork as a crucial step in anthropological knowledge production. In the same spirit, Malinowski argued, that in order to learn about some societies and about the world, to develop and generate knowledge, it is crucial to perform fieldwork, to live among informants using participant observation (Abdoullahi 2004, 10).

Spradley (1980, 58-62) describes the different types of participation (non-, passive-, moderate-, active-, and complete participation) among which the “ moderate participation” seems to fit what I did in Echagh. Because at school I only observed the pupils learning process, I did not participate in school activities. But within the community I was bit involved in some activities with local people like digging puddle among others. The author, Spradley argues that “ moderate participation occurs when the ethnographer seeks to maintain a balance between being an insider and outsider, between participation and observation. ” (1980, 60).

At the end, he concludes that all participation observation is done in settings that fall somewhere along a continuum from the simplest social situation to the most complex clusters and networks of social situations (Spradley, 1980, 46). It has also been argued that during fieldwork, the researchers and informants are both involved in creating some kind of exchange.

Thus, in this chapter, I would like to use empirical example from my field work to emphasize how I got in touch person with my contact person Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane and others participants as well as the development of our relations during my staying among them. My own background is that I am a Malian citizen and a former student from the Malian educational system, as well as being Muslim and belonging to one of the majority ethnic groups in the country. I will discuss how these factors have influenced the course of my research, whether my access to some settings and to some people was more difficult or easier and whether created distrust.

I. My access, data collecting methods and data.

1. My Discovering of Echagh and contact with Mohmad Ahmed Ag Alassane.

I had never heard of Echagh when I came to Tromsø to study. During my second semester, spring 2007, I and some classmates were looking for field work sites for our master degree. One day I was searching some information on the internet and saw the name Echagh, in northern Mali, described as a ‘‘nice play to visit as tourist’’. I started to search information and found something which interested me: that tourism was used as a means of local development. It appeared that 6 % of the spending of every tourist is devoted to local development. As concrete elements of this local development, the primary school was mentioned in addition to the renovation of the colonial well.

I found the name of a local agency in Gao, called ‘‘*Echagill*’’ in Tamasheq, meaning ‘‘*work*’’ in English. Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane was mentioned as the director of the agency. I called him to check whether they would allow me to come there for field work. He was quite happy with that and I wrote a research project before I left for Echagh. My main objective was to grasp how tourism activities help the local communities.

When I arrived, in April 2007, Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane came to meet me in Gao. After the greetings, we took tea and ate. He asked me what we could do together. I started to explain the outline of my research objective. He informed me that the tourism season was closed until December 2007 but suggested that we could do a kind of artificial job because he thought I was filming for a Europe company. This was when I realised that it would not be feasible to study the tourism issue, simply because there would be no more tourists until December. We nevertheless decided to go to Echagh the day after in order to get some background information about the area and see whether there were other options.

On arrival in Echagh, he started to introduce me to people and we visited the well and the primary school. After two days there, we returned to Gao because I wanted to get in touch with

my supervisor and explain my difficulties. That was when I chose the school as the setting and education as the topic. To study the school was not a problem because my contact person had already introduced me to teachers and pupils. Following all these efforts I therefore went to the regional office in charge of education in Gao, to acquire a letter of authorisation for doing research in a school and then started my research.

2. Approach of observational cinema as my filming strategy:

“ The purpose behind this curiously lonely approach observational cinema is arguably to film things that would have occurred if one had not been there” (MacDougall, 1998, 129). With this statement David MacDougall explains the approach of observational cinema when using camera in anthropological research or ethnographic documentary filmmaking process. It is an approach with which ethnographer shots the people doing what precisely they would have been doing even if the researcher and his camera were not there. This is similar to what Bromhead argues that: ” it informs a specific use of the camera and a way of shooting scenes whereby the subject is not asked to perform for the camera, but the camera spontaneously records what is going on .This does not prevent the subjects deciding how to represent themselves for the camera, so creating an *auto-mise en scene*” (1996, 122). This is the typical style I adopted when carrying out this research in Echagh. I was oscillating between three main settings with my characters: school, families and herding setting.

First at school, as one can deduce, there is a fix schedule for everything and everyday plan. I used to sit with pupils in front of Ousmane , teaching them.. Sometime, I used to fix the microphone fly on Ousmane talking but I did not ask question when he was talking because I did not want to disturb the learning process. Outside the classroom, I used to follow up Halimoutou and Alher interacting with pupils with less involvement in their interactions because I could not understand all what they were saying especially in *Tamacheq*.

Second I followed them up into their families. There, I filmed them interacting with their family members and in doing their normal tasks, pounding millet among others especially, Mariam

who does not go to school. Third and last is the herding setting. As one can notice in my film these children do care of the animals.

When watching my film, one can notice that Echagh children daily lives fall into these settings. My use of the camera was to grasp the processes of the children interactions and behaviours within all these settings. Besides this method used strictly in the filming process, I had the informal discussions with both local people and state representatives in charge of education in the Gao region.

3. Film material as main data:

Although , I took some field notes when following up my characters in an observational style, I became more aware of the local perceptions on their current situations with both the translation of the film material and editing process of my film.

- Translation

I did twice the translation of my film material. Firstly I got someone from the local area, familiar with the dialect. Secondly, I got another translator from Timbuktu region in order to check out everything once more. I chose to do so because there is no electricity in Echagh and my camera ran very faster, I opine that to the high temperature. The temperature was oscillating between 46 and 48 degrees. It is in these translation processes that I started to grasp the content the interview I had with local people and also the content of children interactions.

- Editing process and emergence of the cultural themes.

According to Bromhead (1996) “ all narratives must give sense and meaning to the material, in hand” (p. 118). Thus, in order to give meaning and sense to my material from Echagh I have been intercutting different shots and sequences. Among the four narratives forms identified by Toni de Bromhead (linear-; discursive-; episodic-; and poetic), I chose the second one. Bromhead has argues that this form is influenced by the editing process in which the film-maker seeks to deliberately construct scenes so that the images themselves express the film-maker’s idea on what is being filmed without use of a commentary (Bromhead 1996, 120).

In so doing, I had come to notice two main cultural themes which are: Options for the nation-state and back to the root. The cultural theme has been defined by Morris Opler as ‘‘ a postulate or position, declared or implied, and usually controlling behaviour or stimulating activity, which is tacitly approved or openly promoted in a society’’ (quoted in MCCurdy. Spradley. Shandy (1972, 78). Opler saw themes as something like core values that a cultural group might or not be consciously aware of and that are expressed in many, but not necessarily all, parts of the culture (Ibid).

Back to Echagh, the cultural themes mentioned above picture the diversity of opinions and coping strategies within the transition. One common feature of those contradictory views is that they all rely on the knowledge as means to socially construct their ways. It is in way that the topic of knowledge has emerged from my film material as the main cultural theme. That is also how it has come to be the leading topic of this thesis.

In sum, in watching this film, viewers are led along two routes according to the structures. They get to know the two tendencies in Echagh. Following this line we don't obey Hastrup (in Crawford and Turton 1992) when referring to text and film as different modes in communicating ethnographic knowledge, she states that ‘‘one image follows another, we are led along one route among many possible’’.

II. My position in the field: both ‘‘insider’’and ‘‘outsider’’:

‘‘Insider’’ and ‘‘outsider’’ are evoked here with reference to the position that one has in a qualitative research context. Holliday (2002, 156) describes the concept ‘‘insider’’ to define the position of a researcher who is doing fieldwork in his own culture. The concept ‘‘outsider’’ is to define the position of a researcher who is on unknown terrain. In my case, I was considered as an ‘‘insider’’ in school setting due to my own background described above. But beyond the school, I was considered as an ‘‘outsider’’ because I was completely on unknown ground. In this section I will discuss my relation with other participants.

1- School setting: What do you want to learn! While you already know what it is about?

I was looked at as Malian when I brought the letter of authorisation to Echagh's primary school headmaster from the provincial office in charge of education in Gao due to the fact it was indicated in the letter that I came from Bamako. When the headmaster opened it, he told me that 'you are at home your own'. I explained my project to him and he replied: 'this school is common to us, you are Malian like me and you have been studying in the same educational system for years before you left for abroad'. When discussing with the headmaster on my educational trajectory couple days latter, I revealed that one of the headmaster youngest brother called Ali Ag Younoussa was my classmate at university of Bamako.

I was on familiar terrain in the school setting and spoke the language used, French. This is what Strathern tried to argue in following so- common assumption on anthropology at home when stated 'anthropologists on familiar terrain are supposed to reach a greater understanding than elsewhere because they do not have to face language problems or cultural barriers' (1987, 16-17). When listening to their lessons like 'the market day,' it reminded me of some of the exercises we did. But my concern as a researcher brought me to ask questions about some routines that I certainly practised without knowing exactly what they are about. Because I agree with this pertinent statement of Narayan that 'even the most experienced of native anthropologist can't know everything about his own society' (Ndangatare 2007, 19).

It is this way that, I wanted to look at, with scientific eyes, something I was supposed to know by myself. In other words, I wanted to make a new sense in an academic context which implies an ongoing transformation from experience to knowledge. In this process, I asked one of the teachers about the meaning of the flag in this school yard and his lesson on the national flag and anthem. He was really surprised, because I am Malian like him. He therefore treated me as a literate Malian. He obviously thought that I wanted to test his level due also to my status of 'high educated', to quote him. Later on, I overheard him asking his colleague, 'what is it Souleymane wants to learn? He already knows what the national flag and moral education are all about.'

My point here is that of course, I had some advantages due to the language, being from Mali with some previous experiences on educational system. But at the time I was limited in asking some questions. Because I was supposed to know them due to the reasons evoked above. From my experience, I would argue that of course, the researcher on familiar terrain can have some advantage as I had but these can also reduce his /her room for manoeuvre'. Because I can estimate that someone else, a foreigner could have asked the same question and get some answers without any conflict as it happened between me and this teacher but he would probably be facing cultural barriers. In short there are advantages as well as disadvantage in doing anthropological on familiar terrain.

2. – Within local community: Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane friend of mine in Echagh

“A status is socially defined aspect of person which defines a social relationship and entails certain rights and duties in relation to others. Each person may have a great number of statuses. Such as uncle, dentist, neighbour, customer, friend, and soon. The social person is composed of, and defined by, the sum of these statuses” (Eriksen 2001, 49-50). Based on this definition, I considered Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane as a social person in Echagh.

Around the school people called me a Bambara stranger. Shamin (in Holliday 2002, chapter 7) puts that “the role of the research was suspect in most cases. In contrast, the role of a friend is not only recognized socially but there is a general tradition of doing favours for friends without expecting anything in return”. Friendship does imply a social role. Thus, some local people were open to me and accepted me due to the fact that I am friend of Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane. But his influence has also affected my research course. People came to eat in his place all the time. Many times when I was discussing with people about the change in their lifestyle, he told them what they had to say. I could not get the ‘real ‘point of view of these people.

During our editing process, I had been asked to show my film to some visitor scholars within our department. And one of the strong reaction from the viewers was that, “there is someone telling the woman what she is saying”. This someone is Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane. Phrasing this in an epistemological debate context, one is well founded to question the ‘authenticity’ of any scientific analysis built up on what Aicha says (see my film ‘Echagh, the

well’’) if she has been instructed to do so by someone else. I am somehow aware of the fact that ‘‘authenticity has been a key concept in discussions concerning the representational crisis of anthropology⁶.

3-Being Muslim in Echagh: What does it imply?

Likewise Herrera (Holliday 2002, chapter7) was accepted in Arabic school in Egypt, when her informants began to see her as a mother and wife of a Muslim, American of Arab ancestry more than researcher. As for my case, I was easily accepted as a brother Muslim, fellow Malian and friend of Mohamed Ahmed Ag alassane. All these statuses have played roles at different levels during my stay among Igorareine Tuareg of Echagh. But here in this section I am dealing with my being Muslim. How it did help me.

When I arrived in Echagh , the first day I asked my friend Mohamed Ag Ahmed about the prayer direction. He was so surprised with that due to the fact that I am from ‘Europe’ to quote him. ‘There, people don’t have much time for prayers,’ he added. After that, when time came to have my first lunch with them. Even if I could not understand what he said to his wife, I suspected him to have told her to put our food together and he concluded ‘‘ he is like us’’ meaning that I am muslim like them. During my stay, I was praying with people all the time. Later on, my contact person told me they considered me like themselves due to the fact that we are all Muslim. He pursued that this is the only reason for people to eat and discuss a lot with me. Listening to him I had come to believe that if I was not Muslim or I did not do that, my social integration could face to this as a cultural barrier between us.

This is what Holliday (2002, 162) about the same issue said: ‘‘ during the research process, researchers are also objects of their informant ‘observations’’. In my case, I gained credibility and legitimacy from being a believer of Islam. I was always with adults. But, this fact of being so close to adults people had some consequences .Children (my characters) distanced themselves

⁶ See Crawford and Turton 1992 for further discussions).

from me. They did not interact with me as I wanted it). I had earlier noticed that children avoided getting closer to adults. In other terms, they looked me at as their parents' colleague especially I had veil like them. This seems to be a typical example of what Crawford (1992,68) labels as the process of 'Becoming' the other when referring to anthropologist in ethnographic research setting. Hence, the diagram below pictures this relationship between "Becoming" and "othering" see as the anthropological process.

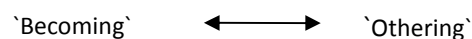


Figure 1. (see Ibid)

Referring to my personal experience, I was more oscillating between myself as researcher and Tuareg cultural milieu. I sometime directed the prayer sessions among adults. Moreover some of them came to where I was living because they wanted to discuss with me. In sum, this experience leads me to agree with Hastrup when she argues that identities are always relational and inventive (1995, 143). Similar to Crawford diagram, Hastrup defends that "I" versus "others" as a dichotomy held by the traditional categories is that of no relevance. She states "there is no essence of 'self' except as an invention made to meet particular tactical ends" (Ibid). I was losing my status as researcher, to say my identity as researcher.

4- Can I say a failure?

Within Echagh community, the desire to get another way of life is almost common. Thus, those among them, about four in Echagh, who have been forced attend to school in the 1950s, even if they did not get further with their studies, are becoming the local leaders due to their ability to communicate in French.

Interested in discussing with others besides my contact person and his relatives, I thus went to the camp of one of the leaders called Ahmed Ag Moussa. He told me that I had already got all the possible answers to what I was looking for from my contact person. Because my contact is the 'big man', he added. Then he told me that he could not talk to me alone without his partner called 'Moussa Ag Albachar. Together, we agreed upon another appointment in coming days and he was supposed to bring his partner in order to discuss with me. When I came there, his partner

was not there because he would not take part in a discussion directed by Mohamed Ahmed Ag Mohamed. A few weeks later, I went to Gao to recharge my camera batteries, I met him without his partner, and we agreed to discuss the same day in his place in Gao. When I went there, he was not there.

Later on, I got some talk with him when he came to Bamako for a trip to Paris. We discussed a little bit and he told me that this could not take place in Echagha because people are dangerous due to their poverty. 'As you noticed yourself, most of them go to eat in Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane 's household,' he added. Hence he would not discuss in their presence. I finally realized that I ran into the difficulties because of my relationship with my contact person. In fact, I was involved in their local conflict. Here, there is also an aspect of "becoming the other" of Crawford and loss of my distinct identity. Ahmed Ag Moussa and Moussa Albachar did not consider my status as a researcher but rather they stoked on the fact that I was a partner of Mohamed Ag Alassane, so similar to him and against them.

5. Failures came from distrust.

Based on Holliday (2003, 167) above statement on how researcher and other participants observe each other within a qualitative research setting, I had come to suspect these two men to think that my research was directed in my contact person's interest as stated by someone I met who said, "your tutor is able to bring some one here to film in order to find out some partners in Europe, that's why I would not take part in this research".

Another person kept distance to me maybe due to the fact that people called me the 'Bambara stranger of Mohamed Ahmed Ag Mohamed.' He lost confidence in my project without seeing or discussing it with me. When, my contact person realized that I was in touch with those against him, he got angry too. He then started not to sincerely cooperate with me.

Later on, I noticed that when I asked him about something, he told me brief or wrong information. Because by the time I could understand certain actions by myself as argued by Hastrup (1992 quoted in Postma 1999, 6) when she says " ... the ethnographer shared time and

experience with her people in a process during which she gradually became her own informant'' I had shared time (three months) among them meaning that I really was able by myself to distinguish Igorareine Tuareg' animals by looking at the sign (+) on their bodies from those of the *Ikefene* Tuareg (their northern neighbours) which have this sign (/) on them . These signs do have some cultural meanings that he and others had already explained to me. In practice, when they are at the well, they do not allow animals with the latter sign to drink water and do not tell you the number of their animals, which is considered as secret.

When it comes to people, I noticed some basic notions on joking relationship is structured. Moreover I got to know who has right to use the veil or not. Before the age of eighteen, youth (boys) don't use the veil. It is equal to death if one takes off the veil of a Tuareg. On a general level the fact they do not eat with you if are not a Muslim. On the basis of these considerations, I agree with Hastrup above statement even if it remains to a certain extend, one of the conundrums of anthropological epistemology.

Another aspect, referring my relationship with local people was that fact that they constantly wondered about their particular interest in my project. Because they thought that I would write my thesis and present my exam film from this work I was doing but as for them what are their local interests?

In addition to above concern, people were also considering my ethnic background.

6. Bambara with Camera in Echagh: source of mistrust.

Whenever I got to talk to my informants, I emphasized that I wanted to know how they perceived their current situation and what they see as relevant strategies for a better future. Some of them were more open than others. Up these divergences that I mentioned, some thought that they found out a mean to express their poverty to people, who will watch this film. They hope that they will get some help from these viewers. Here, it becomes arguable that the camera's presence has influenced people to have such a hope. Because, I assume that they completely do not know the purpose of my using the camera. I think this can be an issue with using camera

among non-literate people especially the localities like Echagh, where, many people visit with camera.

Some of them argued that I should pay money before filming them since tourists do pay them money. It is this sense; I would say that Moussa Ag Albachar (mentioned above) lost interest in my project because he was thinking that the film was in Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane 'interested, especially to find some partners in Europe. He could not believe that my camera-use was for an academic purpose. Similar to Moussa Albachar, my contact person himself lost interest in my project due to its academic purpose, which he does surely not know what anthropological research is about. He even could not believe that the camera was for the university.

When I showed him all the papers of the camera, he asked me about what can be their local benefit from my project. Later on, I overheard him telling someone else that, "for sure Diallo does not say what he is really looking for. He is a Bambara from Bamako but he came here despite life hard condition, no water, no delicious food. He has other interest behind exam. His thesis is only his personal interest." When giving him all the information, I was following what Goffman stated :'' Information about the individual helps to define the situation, enabling others to know in advance what he will expect of them and what they may expect of him.'' (quoted in Dipesh 2006, 28). In my thinking, this information could have helped him to know what I came to do and my camera's purpose .But it did not work out.

In addition to the camera' presence, I had come to suspect that my ethnic background was influencing Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane, not to trust my project as an only academic one and he started to become more passive in participating in my project. In such context the following Ruby's argument that "women should make about women and gays about gays and so on" (quoted in Ndangatare 2007, 19) could be interesting here. That means in my context here that Igorareine should make film about Igorareine and Bambara should make film about Bambara..

With regards to these entire situations I lived in the field which affected in a way or another, the course of my research, I was constantly wondering if I can show something. But it is argued that

relations between researcher and other participants are part of the field research, to say anthropological knowledge itself. It is in this line that Holliday (2002, 169) gives Herrera's example. Because she included her descriptions of relations with teachers in the body of the data analysis part of her study. Let see her comment about it: "all the reactions to me definitely constituted research data. They raised issue having to do with religion, culture, politics, sex and gender. In other words, they helped me to understand the social sensibilities, sensitivities, cultural practices and political perceptions of people in the school community " (Holliday 2002, 169). This seems to be similar to my case because one could see from above development how complex are the local relationships. My main argument here is that this picture of the local relations may contribute to a further ethnographic understanding of the community under study.

Summing up

"In terms of methodology, it is an elementary requirement that as researchers, we outline for our readers the circumstances in which the knowledge we are presenting was produced" (Altern & Høltedahl 2000, 35). With this sentence that Altern and Lisbet holtedahll evoked the relationships in the management of knowledge. In my case, the above development makes clear how we (me and other participants) related to each other within research setting. In this chapter I have tried to present my data collection method and my relations in the field. Thus, at first glance, I had this status of being literate Malian in school setting who had some knowledge on formal education process in general and a Malian system in particular. From this point of view I had less 'room for manoeuvre' in school setting. Beyond school setting, I was involved in the local conflicts between Mohamed, Moussa Ag Albachar and Ahmed Ag Moussa. Moreover my ethnic background was subjected of suspicion.

To some extent, my positions in the field can help to answer can somehow help to answer Mahmadou (quoted in Abdoullahi, 2004), a Cameroonian anthropologist who wonders if "a researcher who is working in his home country, but out of his own ethnic group should or not be considered as working at home"? From experience, I would argue that both positions are relevant here. The research in such a context might be considered as both "insider" and "outsider".

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The main concern of this study is social change among the Igorareine Tuareg of Echagh. Schooling can be understood as an important step in their national integration process. Through school attendance they hope to transform their marginal situation. Looking at this process of transformation. I have identified a number of relevant aspects related to the theoretical work of various scholars:

The relationship between power and knowledge (Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu)

Modernity and identity (Anthony Giddens)

The nation-state (Pierre Bourdieu, Ernest Gellner)

Identity and belonging (Anthony Cohen)

De-tribalization and re-tribalization (Abner Cohen)

In the following, I shall attempt to outline how these theoretical spheres relate to the empirical reality of my field work.

1. Michel Foucault: Power/knowledge relations.

Foucault's work on power/knowledge has remained one of the most quoted and influential over decades, despite the fact that he did not create a general theory of power but tried to outline an analysis of it. In his view, power produces knowledge and knowledge always constitutes a form of a power. Foucault claims that there is no power relation without a correlative field of neither knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations (Hall 1997, 49).

Referring to modern nation-state, he stresses that power enables the constitution of knowledge of the body dispensed in the military and school institutions. Arguing in the view, Swain considers education as the primary source of knowledge (2005). I would argue that knowledge in this sense is applicable in the case of Echagh Primary School. Foucault seems to be giving a dimension of subjectivation to the circulation of power in knowledge. That means power in knowledge makes one aware of his belongingness. Foucault has otherwise outlined this through the art of governmentality. He argues ‘ ‘ through the art of governmentality, the subject is related

to the others. It is the capacity simultaneously to govern and to be governed. It concerns those practices that are frequently linked to the techniques for the direction of others as, e.g., in educational institutions” (Popkewitz and Brennan 1998, 67) . This subjectivation takes place over what he called the “deployment of power”. Swain expresses it as follows, ”Education plays various roles; it helps us become aware of individual identity and at the same time, builds group identity. In this logic it is an important tool in the construction of national identity.” (Swain, 2005,2)

Another aspect of Foucault’s analysis is that he broke with this previous perception of seeing power only as repressive, negative, and violent when stating that it needs to be thought as a productive network which runs through the social body (in Gordon 1980, 49). Power induces pleasure, and produces a form of knowledge. Foucault also admits that power is never monopolised by one centre, it circulates, it does not function in the form of a chain. In addition, Foucault broke with the perception that power is always radiating in a single direction; from top to bottom, coming from a specific source like the state or the ruling class. I would argue that he admits a dialectical capacity in power, in other words, it does imply a deployment of power at same time from the ruling class to dominated one and from dominated class to ruling. In this sense, the application of knowledge implies power.

Foucault himself recognizes this fact when stating that “Knowledge doesn’t operate in a void. It is put to work, through certain technologies and strategies of application, in specific situations, historical contexts and institutional regimes” (Hall 1997, 49). Here Foucault establishes a relationship between regulations, and constraints within society in relation to power, i.e. the relationship between discourse and power. For him, the content of the discourses vary from one situation or context to another but they contain power. He says, “... our speech is ordered through principles of classification that are socially formed through a myriad of past practices” (Popkewitz and Brennan 1998,9). He offers an example of a teacher talking about school as management, teaching as producing learning, or children at risk, these terms are not merely words of the teacher, but are part of historically constructed ways of reasoning that are effects of power (Ibid). Power relations are seen not as external to the field of knowledge but immanent to it: “ Indeed, it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together” (Popkewitz and

Brennan 1998, 66). This led him into what he called the "regime of truth". Each society has its regime of truth to defined as its, "... general politics: that is, the type of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true" (in Gordon 1980, 131).

Foucault's analysis seems appropriate in the context of the school setting in Echagha, where the two senses of power deployment are taking place. The first sense is that the school displays knowledge on the nation-state which itself a subjectivation process of local people within the nation state frame. The second sense is that local people think that this knowledge provided by school will enable them to transform their situation, marginalization. This fits the dialectical implication of power/knowledge evoked above. It is apparent in some scenes in my film, for example where Halimoutou is sitting with friends and one of them is telling her lesson in front of the camera. The title of this lesson is: *the administrative organisation of Mali*. An example of the latter sense is when they talk about schooling enabling them to transform their current situation (cf. Alher's mother and Halimoutou's grandmother in my film)

2. The nobility of the state: elite school in the field of power.

Power in Bourdieu's view does not run through the whole social body as suggested by Foucault. He maintains that power is concentrated in definite institutional sectors and in given zones of social space (in Wacquant 2005, 145). He also does presuppose the mediation of "discourse" referring to formalized bodies of knowledge implying claims to truth, as Foucault did it. By contrast to Foucault Bourdieu's view on power seems to be defending a historical determinism.

In this view, the school as social institution reproduces the same image of the society. Here, one can't shift from a low class to elite field through education. It is in this view that Bourdieu, writes "the social world is not a game of chance, a discontinuous series of perfectly independent events, like the spins of a roulette wheel (whose attraction, as Dostoevsky suggests in *the Gambler*, is explained by the fact it can enable a person to move in an instant from lowest to the highest rung of the social ladder). Those who talk of equality forget that social games- the economic game, but also the cultural games (the religious field, the juridical field, the philosophical field, etc.) are not 'fair games'. (Bourdieu 1997, 214-15).

Back to Echagh , one might argue in light of Bourdieu that there is no clear-cut in Igorareine Tuareg 'expectation to get access into decision making sphere. Because he, Bourdieu argues that the social world has a history incorporated in what he called "habitus" (1977, 85) and mechanisms the world social game in which every player has the positive or negative score of all those who have preceded him, that is, the cumulated scores of all his ancestors (Bourdieu 1997, 215).

Referring to Habitus, Bourdieu, mentions that: "social agents are endowed with habitus, inscribed in their bodies by past experiences. These systems of schemes of perception, appreciation and action enable them to perform acts of practical knowledge, based on the identification and recognition of conditional, conventional stimuli to which they are predisposed to react; and, without any explicit definition of ends or rational calculation of means, to generate and endlessly renewed strategies, but within the limits of the structural constraints of which they are the product and which define" (Bourdieu 1997, 138).

To some extent, one can see an interrelation between history of social world and Habitus. I would argue that the latter is the deployment of the former. Because, it is in the activities of the social agents that one might see the weight of the past experiences. Here, I believe Bourdieu, seems to be putting the social order between two limits: one the one hand , the radical determinism, logicist or physicalist, leaving no room for the 'uncertain', and total indetermination, a credo- denounced by Hegel (in his the Philosophy of Right.) as the "atheism of the moral world".

Because, as one could notice, Bourdieu 'understanding of' social game" follows up Hegel' *histoire philosophique* which seeks to understand the world in its necessary or logical deployment because history is not a succession of hazardous events. But there is no necessity and less contingency in the world. Thus, he puts " one ne peut pas réaliser quoi n'importe quand, c'est histoire qui commande; son déroulement est la nécessité rationnelle par excellence. La raison pour nous, c'est de comprendre la raison de l'histoire (quoted in Diallo 2005, 17).

That is how Bourdieu rejects the transformative power that Foucault analysis of power/knowledge has devoted to knowledge. Knowledge in Bourdieu –Hegelian analysis permits us to understand the necessity in the social order as it appears to us but they don't have any power to transform it. In short, the biggest difference here is that knowledge is identified by both sides as relevant to our live in a social world but Foucault thinks it does imply action, power while Bourdieu- Hegelian view argues that it only allows us to understand the normal deployment of events with no possibility to change its courses.

In “*La noblesse d'état*” (1989), known as his most ambitious work, Bourdieu analyzes the training of students in the preparatory classes that leads to elite schools - what he labels “the production of a nobility”. Preparatory classes are special two to four-year programs, which, as their name indicate, train the top graduates of the French secondary education system for the entrance examinations to various *grandes écoles* (Wacquant; 2005, 139). This training functioned in a sense to transform the mind, body, and self of students in accordance with the anticipate

Bourdieu sees in this process a co-optation, oriented by a tacit sense of elective affinities based on class upbringing and ethos, through which the students from fractions of the bourgeoisie are recognized by their peers and their teachers as the most 'gifted' and deserving of academic pre-eminence Here he points out the unidirectional source of state nobility: because they are mostly from the ruling class. During their training they are separated from the rest of the population which gives birth to the *esprit de corps* in the ruling class' interest (Ibid, 138). Bourdieu has called this an ideological integration. Here, Bourdieu's most important findings are that there is correlation between elite school and that of the power.

Bourdieu's significance here is to discuss the Igorareine Tuareg aspiration to get access into the elite sphere in Mali. Since the 1960s those in power have been struggling to maintain their children in the field of power. In addition, there are some recent structural constraints in the Malian education policy. To get into high school you must be 17 years old or less for the boys and 18 years old for the girls. This state of affair might challenge most of the Igorareine pupils.

Thus, the children at Echagh Primary school are, of course, subject to structural constraints, which both the work of Foucault and Bourdieu may shed light on.

3. Anthony Giddens: Modernity and Self –Identity

In his book 'Modernity and Self – Identity, Self and Society in the Late Modern Age' (1991), Anthony Giddens tried to analyse the relationship between self and society. By self, he means the individual self and by society he is referring to the modern industrial world. Giddens seems to be following up Durkheim, who considers the individual as only relevant to the modern era. Durkheim 'main argument is to point out that the modern social settings turns out the member of tradition society in which people were fairly closely connected with each other, into individual away his initial alliances living within more diverse and segmented society.'⁷

Throughout this book, Giddens uses the term "modernity" in a very general sense, to refer to the institutions and modes of behaviours first of all in post-feudal Europe but which in the twentieth century increasingly have become world-historical in their impact. (Giddens 1991, 15). He is referring to the institutional forms brought about with the emergence of the nation-state. In this new form of social life, in which members of former small communities have become individuals, Giddens states that some ontological questions (such as: How shall I live? What to do? Who to be? How to act?) should be answered in day-to day decisions. In relation to those questions, he recognizes both the necessity and the capacity for the individual to think ahead, to anticipate future counterfactually in relation to present action (Ibid, 47) To me, this seems to match the Echagh community today where people are plunged into a transition within which they seek to rethink their lives in accordance with the modern nation-state context. That is how and why they have started to go to school.

⁷ See also Hecter, Michael 1975.

Giddens's main concern is to look at the 'self' in the context of the social change brought about by modernity, how modernity makes and remakes one's identity. Giddens recognizes that modern society confronts the individual with a complex diversity of choices. Individuals have the possibilities to choose whatever they want to be. He believes this involves decisions not only about how to act but also who to be. Individuals may oscillate between different options, between what he calls lifestyle concerns, the very core of self-identity, its making and remaking (Ibid, 81). He defines lifestyle as routinised practices, the routines incorporated into habits of dress, eating, modes of acting and favoured milieus for encountering others; but the routines followed are reflexively opened to change in the light of the mobile nature of self-identity. In short, in a modern context, self-identity is not stable, it changes constantly.

Referring to Giddens, the Igoarereine Tuareg's current transitional situation demands a psychic re-organisation. It is one of the reasons why they go to school. My film shows how the children express their choices for a future, Alher wanting to become a doctor and Halimoutu a teacher. I asked all the pupils in the classroom one day to put up what they intend to be in their futures and all answers were similar to Alher's and Halimoutu's. My concern here is how this may affect their self-identity.

4. Ernest Gellner: The Cultural chasm model

To Ernest Gellner, education plays a crucial role in shaping identities. In a sense how it establishes a horizontal comradeship between people in modern context which in the long run seeks to realize a homogenous culture within nation – state context. That is how I associated myself with him through this work to investigate the schooling process in Echagh as an 'ex-socialization' one taking place among Igoarereine Tuareg due to the fact, it will, I believe in the long run enable them to interact within a more expanded world.

Referring to term "ex-socialization," Gellner states, "ex-socialization, education proper, is now the virtually universal norm, men acquire the skills and sensibilities which make them acceptable to their fellows, which fit them to assume places in society, and which make them 'what they are' by being handed over by their kin groups (normally nowadays, of course,

their nuclear family) to an educational machine which alone is capable of providing for wide range of training required for the generic cultural base.” (1983, 36).

This is similar to Foucault’s work on knowledge/power. Gellner’s main argument is to stress out that such a social achievement in modern context is guaranteed by the formal education through the same shared and standardized linguistic medium (1983, 34). Here one can see a transformation of knowledge into power. In Echagh, those who are currently involved in the schooling process will acquire these new skills, knowledge supporting the notion that, “... in a modernizing society, where personal achievement tends to replace hereditary status and kinship bonds, only education can open the door to political control and economic advancement” (Gowan et al. 1965, 3). This seems to contradict Bourdieu ‘historical deterministic’ view argued above which rules the social game (1997).

Gellner’s anthropological view on modernity is informed by the view that ideas were function of social organization. “Chasms are, he argues which existed previously but less important. It is in not until industrial society develops that these chasms result in political frictions. The chasms are related to cultural differences in heterogeneous societies. However, when it comes to chasms based on differences which are not easily erased, the problems arise. Thus, when referring to differences based on generic traits, he states

“You can change the cultural differences but not pigmentation and this prevents ‘passing’and in turn pushes the cultural differences back into place and reinforces them. But generic traits like these are not the only ones which can have this effect. Very profound and deep cultural differences, notably religious ones, can be virtually as irrevocable as physical ones. It is at these boundaries that new nationalisms are born. A chasm which is accompanied by differences which, for one reason or other, cannot become blurred, becomes a sceptic sore in a modern society.”(in Crawford, 1990: 8). Gellner describes this relation as a principle of barriers to communication which is important in the early stages of industrial development. Further on, he argues that ethnic groups which resist to assimilation can undoubtedly perpetuate conflicts.

On Gellner 'view about education, my main characters appear to be involved in what he describes as an ex-socialization process. They are filling out the gap between them and modern societies. If not, there will be a cultural chasm, which can lead to conflicts. It may be of interest to compare Gellner and the perspectives of local people on schooling and discuss it in relation to Bourdieu 's historical determinism view. This is by questioning whether being literate automatically gives access to great positions in society. Because one thing might be being educated and another thing might be getting great positions. Bourdieu 'view on education discussed above seems, I assume to be challenging Gellner 'view as well as local people one. In addition, I will discuss some possible consequence of this ex-socialization for the local culture in relation to Gidden's concern regarding self-identity, its making and remaking in modern social settings.

5. Abner Cohen: De-tribalization /re-tribalization

In Africa, the colonial situation has cut across the ethnic boundaries, making them less relevant to new context. In addition, the establishment of the new nation-states in late 1950s and early 1960s has considerably increased this situation due to its need to establish a homogeneous national society. It is in this light that in both colonial and post-colonial societies most ethnic groups were forced to relinquish their customary lifestyle by adopting new customs. This has been described as "de-tribalization"(Cohen 1969,1). At the same time, there has been a struggle to reorganise and revitalise customs in order to maintain their distinctness, a trend described as're-tribalization'(Ibid.).

The de-tribalization and re-tribalization model has been developed by Abner Cohen based on 15 months' field work in the Western Region of the Federation of Nigeria. During this period, he carried out a contextual analysis of Hausa informal organization in Yoruba town called Ibadan. One of his main finding of this fieldwork suggests that, ethnicity is greater political matter than for cultural conservatism purpose

To some extent, this was applicable to other ethnic groups which were involved in re-tribalization processes, while the majority of ethnic groups were co-operating to build up a unitary nation, characterised by de-tribalization. This is similar to what has happened in Mali.

The Tuareg in the northern regions were involved in a re-tribalization process, which caused many problems in the national integration process in Mali.

This theory is useful for my work due to the fact that both of the processes in Cohen's model are visible in Echagh. Those involved in the schooling process may be described as engaging in a "detrribalization trend" and those who don't like it may be described as still engaged in "re-tribalisation trend"

6. Anthony P. Cohen: Belonging and symbolic construction of community

Generally speaking, we all have a family, friends, neighbours, neighbourhoods, and belong to an ethnic group. In these relationships, we share idioms and common values. All of these relationships imply different statuses and roles. Cohen (1982) based on his Walsay' material has tried to grasp how through those above relationships a Walsayman, individual comes to identify himself as member of the Walsay community called a "Walsa". He puts: "when people thus identify themselves as belonging to Walsay they merge the primacy of their immediate kinship and neighbouring associations with community as whole". (Cohen, 1982, 21). His main finding sustains both that the statuses and roles associate the individual with the community and the community is constituted through the social relationships between its different members who constitutes it (Cohen 1982, 22). What one can understand here is that, the social relationships within Walsay mediate one's Walsayness, to say the identity as a "Walsay".

It is in this study of social relationships within Walsay that, Cohen became aware of the fact that one cannot study the community without studying the relationships of the individual member statuses and roles. In addition to this, Cohen had come to argue that in order to study the nation-state as whole, one needs to study the relationships within the parts like Walsay, their daily everyday experiences of it. Similar to what we noticed with the individual statuses in Walsay, the experiences of national belonging are lived within the parts. To term Cohen, the locality mediates nationality (1982, 14).

His main argument is that one can achieve a sense of cultural whole through knowledge of its parts but also that to properly understand the part it must be located in its wider context. The contrary may lead to a partial understanding only and, at worst; it can imply a total misunderstanding (1982). The author argues that there is neither isolated local nor isolated central. In sum, the localities relate to the centre through the economic system, education, political life, language, rules and laws.

Through this part-whole duality model, Cohen aims at solving one of the problems of social anthropology, that of associating the particular with the whole. That is how I want to follow Cohen to see schooling as a field which puts Echagha people into its surrounding, the nation-state of Mali' channels. One is well founded to illustrate this through the fact that Echagha' primary school functions according to the same norms, programme, schedule, and curriculum as any other primary school in Mali.

Cohen approaches people belonging to community through their everyday experiences of it and concludes that community exists in the minds of its members through the use of the national symbols like standardized linguistic medium, rules, rituals are symbolically constructed (1985) . He argues that " the reality of community in people experiences is acquired in their attachment or commitment to a body of symbols .etc (1985, 12). This is relevant in Echagha context for example through using the official language of the nation, French, as the medium of instruction at school. In addition to this, their everyday practices to take up and down the national flag by singing the national anthem also imply their sense of selves as Malian. It is this context that I want to use Cohen to interpret children interaction through the use national language and flag as they are symbolically stepping into the national community of Mali.

7. National Identity.

Gellner stresses that having a nation is not an attribute of humanity, but it has now come to appear as such. In this sense, it is also arguable that this has been variously experienced through world history. In earlier historical eras, individual's thoughts of themselves as members of solidarity groups like families, clans, or communities but nowadays, almost everyone has a

nationality. This puts accent on the social changes brought by the modernity as stressed by Hechter that, ‘... in modern era, nationality is the concept which best expresses that sense of relatedness which holds between individuals in society (Hechter 1975, 15). It seems pertinent to look into what exactly constitutes a sentiment of nationality.

One could answer to this question by referring to the classical sociological perspective of Emile Durkheim⁸, who argued that there is at the basis of every social order, set of commonly held values and orientations to social action, or norms, which together make up the *conscience collective*. It is through the action of this *conscience collective* that separate individuals become, in effect, socialized, or made fit for collective life. The sense of nationality entails a feeling of belonging to corporate group.

Anthony. P. Cohen above description of how a Walsayman experiences his belongingness to Walsay through his statuses and roles and sharing mediums like language can enable one to interpret that these same statuses and roles as well as language imply Whalsayman consciousness or feeling of being ‘ a Whalsa’.

In his most known book ‘ ‘ imagined communities’’, Anderson tried to show how the shared language implied the feeling of nationality among fellow readers of a same language. He posits ‘the unified field of exchange and communication in standardized linguistic medium does imply visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community, i.e.national consciousness. (1983, 44).

In practical terms, almost in all countries, citizens are connected through a unified field of national language in which all the papers are printed nowadays. It is in this sense, Anthony Cohen approached the belonging to national community by paying greater attention to the use of symbols like rules, languages, and rituals and he therefore argues that they are an important means through which people community express the sense of belonging and their commonality, so to say their common identity.

8. Durkheim, Emile. 1912. Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse.: le système totémique en Australie, Paris, F. Alcan

This seems to fit into Gellner 'theory of nationalism. He argues that nationalism is not a sentiment expressed by pre-existing nations; rather it creates nations where they did not previously exist (1983, xxv). In this respect, I would argue that the sentiment of national identity implies the nationalism as defined by Gellner which is the case nowadays among Echagh people and at a certain extent the Tuareg in general in Mali who were engaged in re-tribalisation process while other ethnic groups were engaged in de-tribalisation one. But they have now started to use a shared language, French and symbols like national flag. My point is to point out that the use of these symbols do imply in a sense a national consciousness, belongingness to the national community which fits, I believe Gellner' s sentiment of nationalism.

Summing up.

All along this chapter, I have been trying to outline the theoretical framework within which, I will be operating to discuss in the chapter four of this thesis some processes and scenes of Igorareine Tuareg coping strategies in this transitional situation. The cultural themes already mentioned in the first chapter will be the leading themes of these discussions

CHAPTER THREE: ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXT.

This chapter has three main foci. Firstly it will give a brief historical outline of 'Mali' formerly 'French Sudan' as part of French West Africa, which preceded the establishment of the new nation-states. By doing so, I intend to present the colonial situation in West Africa. I will here give a general presentation of the people that I am dealing with, the Tuareg. Secondly, I will describe the nation-building process in Mali from the 1960s till today, and the role of the Tuareg in this. Finally, I will present the Igharaine Tuareg and their context of social change.

I- West Africa in the colonial situation.

“By the term colonial situation, we simply mean that someone imposes in a given area a new institution, the colonial administration, governed by the outsiders who establish new rules which they enforce with reasonable degree of success. It means that all those who act in the colony must take some account of these rules, and that indeed an increasing amount of each individual's action is oriented to this set of rules rather than to any other set, for example, the tribal set, to which he formerly paid full heed” (Wallerstein, quoted in Stoller 1995, 62).

During the 19th century, this part of Africa in general was subject to these colonial realities with arrival of British and French people, among others, as new rulers. It led to social changes which affected the longstanding social institutions in the occupied territories. It introduced what Naffet Keita (2005, 92) has described as *frontière lignes* (line borders) depending on the interests of different colonial powers. The colonial powers which I am dealing with are both French and British but my focus is on the former. They had different systems but “... the impact of European administration led to changes in all spheres of African life” (Stoller 1995, 62).

1. French West Africa.

In France, a decree approved on the 16 June 1895 (Keita 2005, 91), concerning the colonies, gave birth to French West Africa, covering most parts of the current French-speaking countries in West Africa. What is now Mali used to cover several empires, kingdoms and dynasties, but was reduced to Sénégal-Niger, Haut Sénégal-Niger and French Sudan. Later changes have taken place concerning the borders due to the work of, for instance, Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes (OCRS) in 1957 (Ibid.)

The social and political organizations under French ‘direct rule’ are featured in most of the cases by the presence of the French administration representatives, who had replaced the traditional chiefs. In this context, the elections, as well as other aspects of social life, were ruled by the occupation forces. It is in this context that the longstanding slavery which featured the most formerly African societies shifted from slavery in the free families, in kingdom courtyard, to the forced labour, and the taxation introduced through the colonial situation.

During the colonial period, formal education and a schooling system were introduced in most colonies, including French West Africa. The new school system was designed to educate the elite in order to staff the lower posts in the colonial administrative structures. Their training took place at William Pointy School in Dakar and French was used as the instruction language, ‘‘There, they received a rigorous French education and became colonial officials whose responsibilities and importance expanded with time’’ (Stoller 1995, 70). With regard to the number, they were few but this elite became nationalist, and were later at the core of the creation of the independent nations of so-called French West Africa, which included Senegal, Mali, and Niger.

Referring to Ernest Gellner’s (1973, 11) definition, nationalism can be understood as basically a movement which conceives the natural object of human loyalty to be a fairly large anonymous unit defined by a shared language or culture. In this sense, the nationalist movements of the elite

trained in Dakar in the 1950s and 1960s aimed towards the independency for their countries with the idea to create new nation-states.

2- The Tuareg: Who are they?

The Tuareg are often called the 'lords of the desert', due to the indigo pigment on their traditional robes and turbans, which in addition to their cultural values, protects them against the harsh desert sands. The Tuareg are Berber –speaking, nomadic stock-breeders who live in an extensive area of Western Sahara and the northern parts of Western Sudan. The territory dominated by the Tuareg lies between latitude 14° and 30° N and between longitude 5° W and 10° E (Nicolaisen & Nicolaisen 1997, 41). Ibn Kaldun⁹, said that the Tuareg derive from Arab people (quoted in Nicolaisen&INicolaisen, 540). Still following Nicolaisen & Nicolaisen, who performed long-term fieldwork among the Tuareg, they fall into several main groups which reflected their political units among which one can mention Kel Ahhagar , Kel Adrar, Kel Ajjer, Kel Ayr, Kel Geres, Iwelemenden Kel Ataram and Kel Tademarket. This distinction becomes more visible when it comes to different dialects.

Traditionally they were pastoralists, living as cattle herders, occupied with breeding and its products. They use tents for dwellings and move continuously from place to another in search of pastures for their cattle. Furthermore, some of them practiced the caravan trade.

Over many centuries, they have adapted this way of living to the rigours of the desert context and have permanently been confronted with problems such as lack of water, illness, insufficient food and other problems related to the climatic conditions of the Sahara.

Socially, Tuareg societies were highly hierarchised in which there were the *Imochar* or *Imajeren*¹⁰ on top of the social hierarchy, followed by *Ineslemen* ,or *Imrad*¹¹ in middle, and finally, the *Enaden* or *Blacksmith* and *Iklan*¹² at bottom(Keita 2005,101).

⁹ Ibn was famous historian , scholar , theologian and statesman born in North Africa in present –day Tunisia.

¹⁰ Imochar or Imajeren constitute the noble and warriors class..Cf Nicolaisen and Nicolaisen 1997.p.45

¹¹ Ineslemen are marabouts. (Ibid, 46)

¹² Enaden, or Blacksmith and Iklan are 'slaves' dark negroid type. (ibid, 52-60).

They used to live within a close kinship mostly practiced the endogamous. It should be remembered endogamous was practiced only between people from the class. For instance there was no inter-marriage between *Blacksmith* and *Imajeren*. But all these things had almost changed with the colonial contact. Even if Tuareg regions were not potentially providers of many primary products, they had contributed to the two world wars' efforts with the draining of cattle.¹³

3 .The Tuareg during the colonial situation: Creation of ‘Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes’ (O CRS)

Anonyme (quoted in Keita; 2005, 95) wrote that the Saharan regions of French Sudan and Niger have been occupied and controlled by the French colonial powers, regions inhabited by the nomadic Tuareg and Arab Moors. According to Bonnier (Ibid) the first contact between colonial powers and Tuareg goes back up to 1881 due to lifestyle: nomadic people. In addition some mentioned their warrior's tradition. Rasmussen (2004, 321) reports as it follows: “at first, many Tuareg resisted colonial (...) secular schools, regarding them as strategies to force them to sedentarise and abandon their language and culture”.

Due to these features of the area, as well as an economical ambitions pointed out by M. Lejeuene (Ibid, 96) that it has decided under impulsion of government led by G. Mollet (in France) , to vote for the creation of O CRS' s in 10 January 1957. Later on, by 13 June 1957, a department in charge of Sahara had been created”. This measure concerned the Saharan region which covers some part of today's Mali, Niger, Algeria, Chad, and Libya. Its major goals were economic, politic, social and diplomatic. Put it another way the O CRS was created as a colonial power strategy in its logic of exploitation of the primary products than a territorialism of Tuareg O CRS as a means to escape from political domination and administration of the African territories (e.g. French Sudan). Hence, the Senator Fillon (Ibid. 2005, 97) expressed this feature when he argues:

“ Il y a chez eux un double courant d'aspirations populaires provenant de différence de races, auquel on n'a pas pris assez garde, me semble-t-il. Leurs populations du Nord, sahariennes, verraient sans déplaisir un rattachement à une organisation saharienne qui, dans

¹³ see Keita 2005 for a further discussion

leur esprit, les soustrairait en partie à une domination politique et administrative du Territoire africain dont elles relèvent à l'heure actuelle. Inversement, les populations africaines du sud de ces Territoires veulent garder dans leur orbite leurs régions sahariennes, craignant de perdre leur apport fiscal dans le budget général et surtout les richesses de leur sous-sol, que pourraient révéler bientôt les travaux des techniciens de l'OCRS".¹⁴

The African leaders of these territories thought that the creation aimed at reinforcing secessionist movements among their nomadic populations. (Ibid, 104). This being so, when time came for independences, the Tuareg became a minority in Mali and everywhere they were. This can enable one to understand further the early difficulties connected to their resistance to the new authorities in Mali and Niger. In this new context, the Tuareg could not henceforth were restricted to move freely around due to the frontiers barriers that came up with these independences.

II. Building up a nation-state: independent Mali. From 1960 to 2007.

The break up of the so-called "Fédération du Mali", led the French Sudan people to an extraordinary congress of USRDA (a political party of the first president of Mali) held the 22nd September 1960 (Diarrah 1986; 33-34), which gave birth to the Mali we know today, limited to the west by Senegal, to the north-west by Mauritania, Algeria to the north, Niger and Burkina Faso to the east, Ivory Coast in the south and Guinea Conakry to the south-west. This nation-state, which Badie (quoted in Keita 2005) called "L'Etat importé" is multi-ethnic, i.e. a nation-state consisting of several ethnic groups, many of which were divided between two or more countries. The Senufo or Senefou, an ethnic group living in southern Mali as well as in northern Ivory Coast, are an example of this. The same is the case when it comes to the Tuareg, who are in northern Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Algeria, Mauritania, and Chad, with smaller groups even in other countries of the region..

¹⁴ There is among double popular aspiration stemming from the different races, which, we did not take care of, I believe The population of the north, Saharan would like to take part of without any displeasure to an Saharan organisation which, in their minds will somehow subtract from a political and administrative domination of African territory that they currently belong to. Inversely these African populations of the south of the these territories want to keep their Saharan regions, afraid to lose their fiscal contribution within the general budget and especially the wealth of their basement that the technicians of OCRS could discover soon. (this translation is mine).

1. External features of nation-building in Mali:

“ The country feels beset, too, by African neighbours with a potential stranglehold on its trade routes. Four years of independence is not long enough to learn live with nightmare geography; a shape that, until 1956, few people imagined would one day be put forward as a viable republic. Mali has four thousand miles of land frontiers, enclosed by seven independent countries. About 200, 000 square miles of it is in full Sahara. This is a territory tenable by a roving cavalry, perhaps, but, a difficult one in which to build a modern state, dependent for most of its government revenue on licensed imports and exports. (Rivkin 1960, 27)

Such a description draws the picture of Mali throughout the 1960s, featured by regional isolationism. The reasons of that were both geographical and political. The former can be explained by the break-up of the short-lived federation of Mali, which made Mali an interior location in West Africa. This fact has also implied some political tensions with several of its neighbour countries.

With Senegal, its erstwhile partner, these complications led to cut off Mali from its only outlet to the sea. As for, Mauritania and Algeria, which share with it its Saharan regions, a growing suspicion took place about the internal relationship between the state and its northern' citizens, the Tuareg. Furthermore, the relationships between Mali and its southern neighbours were far from intimate. That is why Mali remained out of the union of African State and Malagasy States. In sum, the most dominant political circumstances are that very early in the 1960s, Mali had opted for socialism, which was contrary to the former colonial power' policy, a position also different from some of its neighbours. Thus, there was collaboration between France and those above neighbouring countries against Mali. This state of affair was increased by the withdrawal of French military bases, and personnel from the country.

Nowadays, the relationships between Mali and these are quite normal due to its affiliations to many regional organisations such as the West African Monetary Union, among others. Beyond this regional atmosphere of friendship, Mali is currently affiliated to many other organizations

worldwide, such as the United Nations. The World Health Organization, African Union, and the organization of the states which have French in common, called "Francophonie". All these memberships have their specific roles, but all of them aim at consolidating both external relationships and internal social cohesion in order to promote economic growth within a peaceful atmosphere.

2. Internal features of nation building in Mali: national unity versus ethnic group's separatisms

"The first commitment of these new states was to nation-building internally..." (Worsley quoted in Featherstone 1990,89).. The main argument of this commitment was based on colonial memory. Referring to Mali, " Au Mali (...) en effet vivent ensemble différentes races: les Touareg, les Arabes de race blanche, les Sonrhai et les Bellah de race noire qui parlent presque tous Sonrhai , le Tamacheq et L'Arabe. (...) grâce à l'action du parti de l'US RDA, tous ces gens que le colonialisme avait tenté de séparer, ont compris qu'il n'y avait rien de tel que l'unité sans considération de la couleur de la peau pour construire une patrie heureuse, le Mali" (Keita 2005,95).¹⁵

In Mali, there was great suspicion of a separatist feeling among the Tuareg noticed in the late 1950s. In his article " *De l'identitaire au problème de la territorialité*", Naffet Keita (2005) wrote that the newspapers and political discourses in the early 1960s in Mali were about two main concerns: the national unity and the economic and social growths in the socialist frame. National unity has to be realized over the fight against ethnic separatism movements, adhesion to the one-party state and the decimation of the Tuareg social structures as well as their settlements.

This situation shows that the early leaders aspired to forge a communal sense of nation in a multiethnic setting within which there are Arab populations, nomads in the north, and black ethnic groups in the south. Such an ambition implies a change from heterogeneity to homogeneity. Sory Camara (in Maruyama & Harkins 1978,) shows how Mandinka society (some

¹⁵ In fact, in Mali different races live together: the Tuareg , Arabs with white colour, the Sonrhai and Bellah are dark but speak all sonrhai language, the tamasheq and Arabic.(..) due to the one party state US RDA, all these people that the colonialism had tried to separate, have understood that in order to build up a unitary fortunate homeland, Mali, nothing is above unity without consideration of skin (this translation is mine).

Mandinka live in the Kayes' region of Mali) is sceptical about it. He states that, "If people are forced to be homogeneous, they will inevitably try to find ways to be different and there is only one way open to them: they become competitive, attempt to eliminate or separate from one another" (Camara in Maruyama & Harkins 1978, 146). Along the same line, Verdery, Vermeulen & Govers (1994, 6) point out that the nation-state, by trying to enforce "commonality" renders ethnic difference visible. Barth (1969) stresses that ethnic groups and their features are produced under particular interactional, historical, economic and political circumstances.

Barth's main point here is to point out that ethnicity should be seen as an aspect of relationship between ethnic groups and not as a property of a person or a group (Eriksen 2001, 263). Thus, one could say that ethnicity is highly situational and relational but it is not primordial. This what Anthony P. Cohen has sustained when stating " It is has been cogently argued that it is at the boundaries of groups that ethnicity becomes meaningful; that is, groups become aware of their ethnic identity when they engage with others...(1982,3) This seems fit to what happened in Mali. That is the ambition of forging a national identity within a heterogeneous Mali made Mali unavoidably run into the first social confrontations in 1963-64.¹⁶

In such a context, Mali dealt both with internal unity issue as well as the confluence of internal geographic features (lack of potential resources) and external geographic features (siege neurosis). The combination of all these factors, *ipso facto* led the country to the economic and social crises in the late 1960s, ultimately ending with a *coup d'état* in 1968.

The period from 1968 to 1990 has somehow contributed to solve some political tensions when referring to the relationships between Mali and its neighbours. As for the internal situation, the economic crises persisted, but became more complicated with the repetitive droughts during the course of the 1970s and 1980s, and eventually led to the adoption of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) (Øivind 2007, 2).

In the 1990s, another military *coup d'état* occurred in 1991 and rebel movements operated in the northern part of the country. Naffet regards them as rebellious more than ethnic secessionist, due

¹⁶ The first Tuareg ' armed conflicts in Mali took place from 1963 to 1964.

to the fact that they were based on the claims to increase their participation in political and state structures. Naffet keita argues Tuareg want to transform the ‘être ensemble’ in ‘faire ensemble’¹⁷ (2005, 93). Elmouloud Yattara (2000) cites the droughts of 1972-73, 1983-84, 1986 as the reason of these claims due to the fact they contributed to deteriorate the living condition of the Tuareg. He puts ‘‘ Ces nombreuses sécheresses ont décimé le bétail et entraîné un déséquilibre de la population Kel Tamasheque qui pratiquaient majoritairement l’élevage et minoritairement l’élevage lié à l’agriculture dans certains cas’’ (Yattara 2000, 12).¹⁸

This, ‘will of Tuareg to do things together has somehow¹⁹ been solved to some extent over the process of decentralization in the late 1990s. Smoff (quoted in Øivind 2007, 1) stresses that decentralisation represented a new turn in the development thinking in the 1990s. It was regarded as a means for administrative reprisals and control (Lode, 1996). Similar to Kåre Lode, Seely (2001, 499) reports as it follows: ‘‘ the decentralisation effort began as an attempt to placate separatist Tuareg groups in the north of Mali’’.

The national pact earlier mentioned signed between the Malian government and rebel movements, has also recommended decentralisation in order to allow the northern populations to manage their own affairs in relation to their customs. Since decentralisation coincided with the new development thinking, the parliament approved some laws to be applied in the whole territory. Through this policy, Mali got 703 municipalities instead of formerly 19. It is in this context that the different Tuareg groups became part of municipalities. Those groups are mostly constituted with people from the same families, called *iriwan* or herding unit. Nowadays herding units are called fractions which are composed by the kinsmen and their former domestic slaves.

III. The Igorareine Tuareg: a Tuareg fraction in Echagh in northern Mali.

Who are they? What they do? Are they different from other Tuareg? The answers to these questions will enable me to introduce the people I am dealing with in my study.

¹⁷ Tuareg want to transform the being together into doing together . (This english translation is mine).

¹⁸ These droughts have destroyed the herds and implied the lack of stability of the Tuareg who practiced in great number pastoralism and few were involed in agriculture in some case.

¹⁹ Rasmussen (2004, 321) reports that the problem is totally solved due to the following reasons: low national budgets, lack of control over militia in peripheral zones, unemployment, social banditry ...etc.

1. People:

Tuareg people are present in many African countries. Many works (Nicalaisen& Ida 1997; Mariko 1984; Rasmussen 1992, 1998; 1993; Murphy 1967; Keenan 1977...etc) have been devoted to them and these remind us that it would be wrong to think they are all same. Murphy stresses that, ‘... there is no single, unified Tuareg tribe, and when we speak of them as an entity it is only to signify a people having common characteristics of race, language, and custom, as distinguished from their neighbors. There are deep and lasting enmities between different political federations of Tuareg, and, as should be expected, there are significant differences in dialect and culture throughout their vast territory. The circumstances in which they are living differ widely from one place to another and realities are far from being experienced in the same way by various clans’ (1964).’ However, all of them, wherever they are, claim Tuareg identity. In such a context, it becomes imperative for us to understand the components of Tuareg identity. What is being Tuareg?

One of the most quoted elements when referring to Tuareg identity has been the use of the veil, which is why they are often called the ‘people of the veil.’ Rodd says, ‘... the most striking outward peculiarity of the Tuareg, which distinguishes them from all others races in the world, is that the men go about veiled, in such a manner that nothing is visible of their faces but eyes, which peer through a narrow slit between the upper and slower folds of the long bandage-like veil. Their women never veiled themselves at all’ (1926, 31). The use of veil is subject to many interpretations. According to Murphy, ‘ the Tuareg veil functions to maintain a diffuse and generalized kind of distance between the actor and those who surround socially and physically’ (1964, 66). The social aspect is here when following the author is that Tuareg in most of the case practice an endogamous or inter-marriage within the kin. In such a context, everyone lives with his parent-in law to whom one should not show his mouth and *vice versa*. That is why they use the veil.

They also use the veil in order to protect themselves from the harsh desert sands. Hence, the place or site where they live is also an important aspect of their identity. Besides the use of the veil, Rodd argues that activities play an important role in Tuareg identity. He say, ‘Tuareg are

nomads. They live principally by means of, and on, camels.” He also reminds us that the word “Tuareg”, which is a plural form of *targi* or *tarki*, is the name given by the Arabs to the Tuareg and adopted from them by Europeans (1926, 32).

When I first arrived in Echagh, I noticed that local people did not use the word “Tuareg” to refer to themselves. Instead they used *kel tamasheq*, which means Tamasheq speakers. Some of them, who had travelled a lot or studied, did however use the word Tuareg.

As to the term *Igorareine*, my contact person explained that it is the name of the first leader of their *iriwan*, meaning house or herding unit. In the past, political federations among Tuareg were constituted of several *iriwan*. Each herding unit constitutes of about fifty to several hundreds of people, who reside near a well, to which they hold rights, and whose herds graze in the surrounding land. In Echagh, an unofficial source estimated the group living there to be around 515 people. They define themselves as part of the *Cherifen* tribe, meaning they are nobles. They mostly refer to it meaning their tribe when talking about political mobilization and marriage. They argue that they should always stay together similar to what Murphy suggests when arguing that, “... these federations are still in use even if they are not mentioned in the state hierarchy” (1964, 1261).

Like all other Tuareg, they use the veil but they insist that all people living there are not true Tuareg. They argue that their former domestic slaves are now free and own their own animals but are not considered as Igoarerine kin. One man said that one cannot decide to become Igoareine, because it is biologically given through genealogy. He argued that, “... here, in Echagh, one finds, nobles called *Imajeren* and *Iklan*, former slaves”. Following his argument, being Igorareine means being true Tuareg. His main point is to point out that their former domestic, slaves can’t become Igorareine due to the fact their ancestors were not true Tuareg.

2. Social categorisation among the Igorareine Tuareg.

In Echagh, the Igorareine Tuareg live within close kinship relationships. People’s knowledge of each other is very much complete. They eat in each other’s households. But the noble/slave

distinction still exists. They look at each other as belonging to fixed categories akin to Stuart Hall's description of stereotyping: "... stereotyping reduces people to a few, simple, essential characteristics, which are represented as fixed by nature, (...) It symbolically fixes boundaries, and excludes everything which does not belong." (1997, 257). I observed a similar pattern in Echagh between *Imajeren* and *Iklan*.

Imajeren: They are nobles (are brights) and claim to be the true descendants of the prophet Mohamed. In the contemporary nation-state, they have no right to own slaves but they do distinguish themselves from them through marriage and at elections. There is no inter-marriage between nobles and slaves. They also disagree that all animal owners are Tuareg as stressed by Rodd above when considering herding to be a key aspect of Tuareg identity. They still have their notoriety on their former slaves who sometime take care of their animals but they get from like food, animals as compensation. I so often observed a dark man, whose name is Mbwa, in Mariam's house. Mariam told me that the father was his family domestic slave. Mbwa himself came to take care of Mariam's family's animals. His feeling of being inferior was almost visible. Even small children would send him to do things, which he would do with no objection. He received food from them.

Iklan (are dark). Much literature on Tuareg argues that these are of Sudanese Negroid origin but most of them cannot trace their ancestry beyond their slave status among the Tuareg. I earlier noticed that they avoided all discussion on their origins; so to say it is subjected of shame for them. They, *Iklan* and *Imajeren* all speak *Tamasheq* and practice Islam as religion, but the former is not considered as true Tuareg. But it should be noticed that the distinction between *Iklan* and *Imajeren* is highly embedded in their daily lives. When reading the translation of my material, I realized that children distinguish themselves from each other. Alher always called one of his friends '*fil d'esclave*', meaning son of a slave. This aspect permeated the whole social life in Echagh. In Mali, there is a management committee in each school in which each grade is represented. Another example is that the pupil who represented Alher and Halimoutou's grade is called Mohamed Ag Oussey. He also takes the responsibilities of Ousmane, their teacher, when he is away. I observed he asked Alher to clean the black board, and Alher replied, "No, son of slave, how can you send me to do things?".

3. Social categorisation and power among Igorareine Tuareg.

Hall (1997, 259) puts ‘within stereotyping, then, we have established a connection between representation, difference and power’. Further on, the author also reminds us that power should not be understood only in terms of economic exploitation and physical coercion, but also in cultural or symbolic terms including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way- within a certain regime of representation. It includes the exercise of symbolic power through representational practices. In this exercise of symbolic violence, Stuart Hall, argues: stereotyping is a key element (1997, 259).

In Echagh, stereotyping rules the representational practices. *Imajeren* people have a great disdain for *Iklan*. They do not allow the latter to lead anything public in Echagh. When the presidential election took place, local people of Echagh were highly involved. I observed that *Iklan* were divided between tendencies (parties) headed by *Imajeren*. But neither of them was led by an *Iklan*, because a noble would never follow a slave. By talking with local people I also noticed that this consideration goes beyond Echagh. It affected even the municipality level and parliamentary elections. All the leaders of their municipality and members of parliament elected from this area are nobles. The notion of being noble, a true Tuareg, is a shared one, highly embedded in the social system.

Here, one could argue that there is marginalization within marginalization. Because in Echagh people argue that they are marginalised. But within their community there is marginalisation of the former slaves.

4. Setting:

As to their physical surrounding, it is featured by the charm of the unlimited expanse of sand and the mountain chains of the desert. There is very little rain that falls from July to August. It is succeeded by a cold season, which lasts from October to February. However, there is a regular spring of annual vegetation, and then the hot period comes up around March until June. During this period, temperatures may exceed 48° C. Due to the shortage of rain; they dig pools before it rains to store some water for the cold season.

5. Settlement pattern

As mentioned earlier, it is difficult to define a common pattern when referring to pastoralist Tuareg settlements. But there are common factors (like droughts and the establishment of the nation-states in Africa) that have influenced the Igorareine Tuareg as well as all other pastoral Tuareg.

In the late 1980s, Igoareine started to set up in Echagh around a so-called colonial well. In the following years, there was war (rebellion), and due to their settlement's location, Echagh is close to Gao town, and the consequences of the droughts over the same period, they were obliged to disperse in the desert. Many of them left the country and some of them lost their animals. After the national pact and national reconciliations, they met again in Echagh in the late 1990s.

At that time, there was a peaceful climate in the northern parts of the country. With this, many European tourists started to visit the desert. In this context, those who went to school in colonial time became the potential partners of these tourists. During the same period they built a primary school. Through this tourism activity, they have started a project which aimed at reconstituting their livestock. Today, according to an unofficial source, about two hundred people have benefitted from this programme granted by their local tourism agency and partners in France.

6. Local knowledge and its distributions among Igorareine Tuareg .

Based on their experiences of the droughts, I constantly heard many people met in Echagh, saying: "our way does not pay off in today-world". It was their way of saying that what they learn is not relevant in the current world. The adults complain about the fact that they did not learn to do anything else beyond herding animals, an activity that has not been stable for several decades. My contact person, Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane always argued that they also need education to become like all other Malians. He constantly told me that if each can get a position in the state structure will be the best for them. Commenting on education, he argues that it is a knowledge that leads to a job, which is different from their local knowledge.

When talking with my contact person, he argued that local knowledge is basically based on knowing the different categories in society and how to behave according to age, gender, and class. He gave me some examples that I also observed during my stay. The first thing is that you never confound noble and slaves. When you call a noble a slave, it is perceived as equivalent to death. Because this is to indirectly remind him/her that one of the parents had a sexual relationship with a slave. The second thing is that children should not talk or sit in the same place as adult people. There is no room for them to talk or to give their viewpoints if they are not asked. Even if they have information to give, they must wait until adults ask them. It is disrespectful that children below eighteen talk while looking at adults in their faces. This case is visible in my film, when my research assistant, Ahmoudou, asks Alher and Halimoutou what they want to become in the future. They answered him while looking down.

The common explanation given is that children must start wearing “veil” before they sit with adults. The required age is eighteen. The strictest rule is that one must always be veiled when meeting a father-in-law or mother-in-law. At the age of eighteen, boys start to have some friendship relationships with the girls but all sexual relations are forbidden. In course of this friendship, they constantly meet the parents of the girls, who are considered as mother or father-in-law. That is why they have to use the veil. Murphy describes similar patterns when referring to the Air Tuareg, “It is, then all the more interesting to observe that the Tuareg men are most strict with their veils when in the presence of the father-in-law or the mother-in-law, for, in addition to other signs of respect and avoidance, the son-in-law is careful to adjust the veil so that only a very narrow aperture is left open, and the eyes are hooded and left in shadow” (Murphy 1964, 1268). Similar to Murphy, Rasmussen puts “ It is Tuareg men who wear face-veil, a sign of modesty, reserve, and respect” (2004, 325).

In Echagh, children get to know quite early who is noble and slave because parents tell them their genealogy. The nobles say that they have an Arab origin, as suggested by Ibn Kaldoun in Nicolaisen and Nicolaisen (1997, 540). In comparison with the slave class, members of which are dark, members of the noble class have a fair complexion. Slaves are also unable to tell anything about their genealogy more than two or three generation back or since their ancestries became domesticated by the Tuareg.

There are also gender aspects to the local knowledge. The mother, for example, has to tell and show to her daughter what being a woman is in this community. She also explains other issues, related to how a woman must protect her body, especially in the desert setting with very little water. Girls or women in general do not wear the veil but they do cover their heads with the same cloth as their body. This becomes a requirement for girls when they reach the age of fourteen, the minimum age for marriage. Referring to the endogamous marriage system, this is the strictest point since every adult (noble if the girls is noble or slave if she is a slave) becomes a potential father or mother-in-law.

Local knowledge also has something to do with religion. Every morning I observed Almahady telling Alher to get up and pray. This is a duty as a father, to make sure his children practise Islam. This will help them to pay attention to their religious life when they grow up. I noticed that Alher and other children do pray by themselves without any pressure. That means that the routine is working.

I did, however, not see how they learn what to say when praying. Mohamed told me that before children pray by themselves, they pray with adults and they get different words from these sessions. Beyond that, if one wants to become a knowledgeable, he must leave for another fraction called "Cloussoun"²⁰. Being knowledgeable means possessing mystic power to predict things and help people to avoid dangers. Rasmussen (2004, 318) reports that "Tuareg invoke these powers in order to make sense of and cope with recent ecological and economic crises"

People of Echagh fully believe in this mystic power. All the children wear the amulets given to them by their parents (referring to my film again, one sees Alher wearing an amulet). When someone from the above "clousson" fraction arrives in Echagh, people run towards him and sit down when greeting him. Ahamoudou, my research assistant explained concerning this, that he blesses you, and you get saved from all dangers.

²⁰ It is the name of a Tuareg fraction, inhabited in the east of Echagh.

Another aspect of this knowledge concerns the way they relate to their surrounding environment and animals. This operates within the following triangle: Tuareg – animals - pastures. Mohamed Ahmed explained that animals and pastures represent the natural dimension and the Tuareg have mediated between them for centuries. This is what Paine (1994) indicates when referring to pastoralist people. This mediation implies skills and knowledge.

Ivar Bjørklund (1990; 1997; and 2003) focuses on the knowledge about the environment of Sami reindeer herders. He offers the example of their yearly cycle, the fact that herders move around with the herd in a cycle between inland (winter) to coast (summer) following seasonal conditions of pastures (Bjørklund, 1990, 76-77). Paine describes this as herding strategies, which are based on local knowledge (1964, 1972 quoted in Bjørklund, 1990).

Mohamed Ahmed argues that the knowledge on this mediation is passed on from one generation to another and, from father to son. Every father has the responsibility to show his son the herding techniques, including the territorial dimension, of their *iriwan*. Because Tuareg 'fraction, herding unit is like *siida* among Sami reindeer herders which has a determined area along which they organized their yearly cycle. They, Igorareine Tuareg used to move towards the border between Mali and Niger during the raining season. Within this area they move according to the seasonal conditions of pastures. They came to Echagh when there was no more water and grass for the animals.

I often heard Almahady, the current husband of Aicha, telling Alher where he should go with the animals. Echagh is surrounded by seven dunes, which each have a name based on their practical use in herding. In my film, Alher's herding skills are apparent when he is helping a goat giving birth. When he saw what was happening, he rushed to the goat and helped it. He held the goat until it had cleaned the newborn kid. I noticed an intimacy between Alher and animals. I remember that while once in the company of Alher, he said in Tamasheq 'ecoal elhete hoy' to a sheep which was alone somewhere. Suddenly, that sheep started to move towards the others. He told me, 'I just call its name, which means Elhete's black sheep'.

Beyond the transmission from father to son, this knowledge is also shared among people from the same generation, learning from their experiences. I observed this pattern when following Alher and other children. Each child recognizes his own animals and one often hears them discussing how to deal with the animals. As an example, I once heard Alher tell Almouner, eleven-year-old cousin, that, ‘... animals are now weak, so it is good to get some gomme Arabic (a fruit) for them’. When herding they often climbed the trees to get ‘gomme arabic’ for the animals.

This transmission and sharing of knowledge is similar to what Abdoullahi describes among pastoral Mbororo in northern Cameroon. He states: ‘... people belong to the same generation (*waldeeru*), doing the same activities or having the social statuses have habit to discuss and exchange experiences. It contributes to reinforce their knowledge and, at the same times it implies that there is no age limit to acquire knowledge: no matter how old you are, from the moment you can find people from your generation, you learn from them’ (2004, 60).

Due to the repetitive droughts since the 1970s, which have killed many animals, Mohamed Ahmed Ag Alassane argues that there is no need to have these skills without animals. He states that the motivation to create a school is to protect the children from similar experiences as mentioned earlier in this work. Referring to their experiences with droughts, Alher’s mother, Aicha, argues that, ‘Animals are not reliable each year. The season may be good or bad.’ They believe that changing to another way of life is an imperative and identify education as a relevant pathway. That is why two thirds of the Echagh children are involved in schooling. By contrast, some people, like Mariam’s father, insists on keeping their ancestral way of living. Mariam’s father, in my film, says, ‘... our whole life is based on animals: sheep, goats and donkeys. Our entire lifestyle’.

The experiences of the droughts have made them pessimistic about their future. Most young people are seeking to leave the place because they feel nothing is guaranteed in their life. They argue that even if they stay, they would not be able to get married. In order to get married in Echagh, according to custom, one must provide 40 sheep and goats as down payment for a bride price. Currently, two thirds of the population do not have more than forty animals. Arguing about hopelessness of their situation one, 24 young men told that: ‘all the people you see here with something, they have been school at some points or they went to Mauritania, Niger, or Nigeria’. Young people say that

they really must leave Echagh, and do something else. One young man, called Moha Ag Assalher, told me to carry him in my camera back to Europe. He said'' I really don't know what to do if you refused to carry me with you, Souleymane''.

The story of Moha helps us understand the stressful situation. He lives with his parents and two younger siblings. The children attend school. Moha and his father, Assalher, help take care of Alher's family's animals because they do not have more 15 goats and sheep altogether. They are paid one hundred kg of millet a month. Moha wants to marry a girl called Mariam. But he has neither animals nor money to do this. He is hoping to go somewhere in order to earn money; otherwise he said he would lose the girl that he likes. He is aware of the fact that being illiterate can be an obstacle to his emigration. That is why he attends evening classes with one the teachers in order to learn, even if he does not get any certificate. Many other youth told me that they intended to leave Echagh in order to help their parents.

Summing up

In all along this chapter I hope to have presented the Tuareg historical evolution in three Phases: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. This presentation will, I assume enable us to grasp the social change undergoing in Echagh in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: RETURN TO THE ROOTS AND SOCIAL CHANGE: COPING STRATEGIES WITHIN TRANSITION.

The pattern of transition going on in Echagh defines two options. Some people argue that they must adapt themselves to new contexts within the framework of the nation-state. These use education as their main strategy to cope with change. Others argue that they must remain pastoral herders in the desert because this is what constitutes their identity. The main goal of this chapter is to analyse the current period of transition among the Igorareine Tuareg and assess whether social change has led to changes in the social relations.

I. A people in transition:

1. Opting for the nation-state

Many Tuareg see an increased participation in the political and state structures of the nation-state as the only future option for their survival. Some of the reasons are the undermining of traditional livelihood, due to ecological changes and desertification, and the persisting problem concerning armed conflicts.

1.1. Ecological break-down and armed conflicts

Some people support that there is no alternative to change because they do not have the animals which could ensure their survival as nomadic people. Djeneba, Halimoutou's grandmother, talking to the camera says:

“ We can't move around anymore, because, in order to move around, one needs donkeys that we don't have. The animals we have are not enough to ensure our survival. That is why we can't around again. It is sad but we don't have any choice. Our cattle are very few. That is what forced us to remain here, where there is school and water for us”.

There are several aspects of this excerpt which are of particular importance. Firstly it starts with decision to stop a previous habit: “... we can't move around anymore”. She emphasises how they were forced into their current situation by droughts and the instabilities linked to armed conflicts during which people left their animals, which were often killed and consumed by both soldiers of the Malian armed forces and Tuareg militias. Secondly, there is the emphasis on a way of life that depends on animals. This echoes Paine when he states that, “... pastoralism is a particular

intersection of two populations, better still, two societies: animals and human. Each is as much in and of the equilateral triangle as the other. The intersection is doubly made: men own the animals, but the animals, by their habits hold an important key to the social organisation of the pastoralists'' (quoted in Abdoullahi, 2004, 41). Finally, Djeneba stresses the dilemma they are caught in: "... it is sad but we don't have any choice''. They are in a sense caught between giving up their traditional way of life and trying to cope in the new context of the nation-state or retain their traditional identity, unable to sustain the living that shapes its identity.

1.2. The lack of future in pastoral nomadism

The experiences of droughts and similar events having caused the loss of the animals, even if many Tuareg still possess considerable herds, have nowadays persuaded them to send their children to school. They argue that there is no stable future in pastoral nomadism. As mentioned earlier this is what happened in Alher's family and I used to hear when staying among them that they have the largest herds. Nevertheless, they will be unable to sustain their livelihood in the future based on herding alone. Thus, they send their children to school with the hope to acquire some degree of stability. But will the school guarantee a stable future?

1.3 Time has come for change.

Other people I met in Echagh also claimed that time had come for them to change their way of life. Iba, a friend of Ibrahim (and the oldest brother of one of Alher's classmates, Mariam) and Ousmane, the teacher of Halimoutou and Alher, said:, when talking about Mariam's school performance:

'It is good that she is doing her studies because time has come to change this old way of life. Look at Ousmane; Tuareg are like animals how can people live like this, in a complete isolation from other parts of the country and the world. Many people died here from the small illness because they don't used to have medications, no hospital is close to us.'

Similarly, the headmaster (another Tuareg from *Ikefelene* fraction), when reacting to Mariam's (another Mariam) father (who is the one who does not send his children to school in my film), said:

‘‘I call the parents to send all the children of school-going age to school. Times have changed. All the people have understood the importance of schooling. All the people saw the beneficial facts of schooling’’.

There are three main aspects in these two excerpts. Firstly, they both show time as a factor, indicated by phrases such as ‘‘time has come to change this old way of life’’ and ‘‘times have changed’’. I had come to understand that that their notion of time is justifying the change itself, because time is succession and transformation of its components. It is in the same sense; I believe that the conception of French philosopher, Sartre has tried to understand what he calls ‘the ontological transformation of self within the succession of time in this chain of past, present and future. Sartre argues that my present is my past modified and the future will be the present modified. That is to explain how there a world –i.e, connected changes and permanences in time (Sartre 1943, 130-131). This seems fit I believe to what Iba is trying to argue.

Secondly, there is the reference to the surrounding world in relation to which Echagh people must change their way of life. Iba used to bring sheep and goats from Echagh to the markets in Gao and Bamako. He surely has seen many things during these trips which enable him to compare his people to others I remember once Iba and I were on our way to attend a wedding ceremony. There was another adult who wanted to accompany us. Iba told me, in broken French, that we could not go with that guy because ‘‘he was stupid like an animal’’ and ‘‘he never travelled since he was born’’.

Eythorsson tells us a similar pattern between youth and old people among coastal Sami in northern Norway after the Second World War when putting that, ‘‘... we were ashamed of our parents, who were so’’ foolish’ that they continued to speak Lappish. But sometimes I felt uneasy when people who surely knew Lappish suddenly insisted on answering in Norwegian. If you spoke to them in Lappish you were look upon as an ‘asshole’’ (2003, 155). There is something common here to consider in Echagh and the fjord community of Finnmark.

The youth who moved into the large Norwegian society during Germany occupation, were back to the fjord and what they did see elsewhere, in the rest of Norway, had started to influence their perception of life, indicating a divide between generations in the fjords. What the author points

out is that one needs to consider both the exogenous and endogenous factors when looking into the 'Norwagenization' process of this local coastal Sami community. There are several similarities with Echagh. In the 1990s, many left the country and have now returned with new perceptions, new ideas. Some, like Iba, remain involved in trading. They thus spend more time in e.g. Bamako and Gao than they do in Echagh.

Iba is referring to a kind of internal resistance²¹ to their old way of life. The headmaster, another Tamasheq-speaker and a descendant of slaves, went to school in the early 1960s and knows both contexts: the local and the national. He suggested that times have changed and people must change with it or in relation to it. To me, it shows how the Igorareine Tuareg are moving from tradition to the modern nation-state. Giddens labels this as the process of emptying time and space, which he identifies as a crucial step in the passage from pre-modern to modern society (1991, 15-16). Local people want to extend their interactional sphere in establishing a horizontal fellowship with their surrounding social world, which, according to Iba, starts with the national level and the rest of the world.

Finally, schooling is perceived in some cases as a means to become like others. Here again, it becomes interpretable that others are internalised as already ideal type of people in relation to whom Echagh must change as I have mentioned already. By extending this analysis we also get to know that they became aware of their backwardness through the mediation of the others towards whom they intend to change. Put it another word, the presence of others in their "minds" reveals them the necessity of this change. This is what Sartre argues when stating, "I need the other in order to realize fully all the structures of my being" (1943, 223). In the case of Echagh, their conception of the other, and ambition of changing in relation to the other, does not necessarily imply conflict. The way of others may be desirable and that is why they see schooling as relevant.

At school children in Echagh follow the national curriculum. I closely looked into the curriculum of Alher and Halimoutou's grade and noticed that the history of Mali taught is exactly like the

²¹ I am using the term 'resistance' here in sense borrowed from Abu-Lughod 1990. "*the Romance of the Resistance*".

national curriculum. There is very little on the Tuareg, it is more on Songhoi, the Mali Empire, and the Kenedougou dynasty.

When analysing this process in which they adopt the customs of others, I noticed how schooling played a central role. Referring to Foucault, knowledge through schooling is constituted as historical practices through which power relations can be understood. Moreover, he argues that, "... the statements and words of schooling are signs or signifiers that refer to and fix things, but social practices through generating principles that order action and participation" (quoted in Popkewitz and Brennan, 1998, 9).

Another implication is that becoming like others could imply the adoption of their customs. Norris' (1952) work on the Tuareg in Niger offers an eloquent example of that. He states that, "... the more settled a Tuareg becomes in Hausaland, the more he tends to adopt local customs or be absorbed racially and culturally in the dominant" (1952, 155). According to Foucault, power is only relevant in relation to 'others', in a social setting with no 'others' the concept is meaningless (Eythorsson 2003, 153). In Mali, of course, the Tuareg constitute only 6 % of the population. Eythorsson states that, "... there can be no power relations between the minority and the majority, since the minority has ceased to recognize its own existence as a relevant subject". This represents a shift, in his terms, from playing the role of a 'pariah-caste' in the relation to the majority, to becoming 'invisible' subjects with no opportunity to relate to the majority. In sum, one can argue that the Tuareg, through their wish to become like others, may subordinate themselves to the large majority or, as Foucault puts it, "... when members of a minority cease to acknowledge themselves as distinct, collective subject, they lose the opportunity to relate to the majority" (quoted in Eythorsson 2003, 157).

Barth (1969, 31) pointed out that the maintenance of ethnic boundaries is not necessarily a result of 'objective' cultural differences; the *ascription* of cultural features that signal the boundary may change over time, while the dichotomization between groups remains intact. I would argue that a Tuareg who has become like the 'other', integrated into the state, will be different from a Tuareg remaining within the herding setting. Referring to Barth, however, the status of being Tuareg may remain intact, conserving the dichotomisation between the groups.

Some anthropologists have argued that most of a minority's claims are tactical. Jhappan (1990) gives an eloquent example of this when referring to Canadian Indians, "Canadian Indians in the aggregate constitute a subordinated minority whose political demands and aspirations far exceed the formal political power at their disposal. However, using the politics of symbolism in general and a strategy of seeking publicity-seeking in particular, some Indian groups have won significant concessions from Government" (p.19). Jhappan concludes that most of the minorities are using the same strategy all over the world.

In Mali, many people claim Tuaregness although using majority surnames. Clare Oxby shows how other speaking of *Tamasheq* like Moore, would like to be included into Tuareg identity (1996, 21). This is simply due to the fact the state is now giving a careful attention to Tuareg. Some unofficial investigations shown an educated Tuareg unemployment length is below 2 years while for the majority is about 7 years.

2. The social construction of change in Echagh.

In this section I will be focusing on the way Echagh people are socially constructing their descent for change. I first look at how local people are acting, preparing this process, that of moving forward through sending their children to school and what the psychological preparation they are doing in their day-to day life in order to make children aware of what their children's future should look like. Secondly, I focus on children's school life and to what extent their process does contribute to change.

2.1 Local way of constructing social changes.

I used to hear many people arguing that the most important thing they did to cope with change was to create a school and send their children to it. The school was started in 1998 with 20 pupils, all from Echagh and this number had increased to 128 in 2007. The schooling rate thus increased with more than 80 % in nine years. They constantly referred to the fact that they had to settle in order to permit their children to attend school in a stable way. As Aicha said:

‘‘The son of someone who practices nomadism can’t study. That is why we remain here so that our children might study well, to read their books. We hope they might study and go somewhere else ... the wealth that education gives last forever’’.

The diagrams below map how this process of settlement is taking place among Igorareine in Echagh.

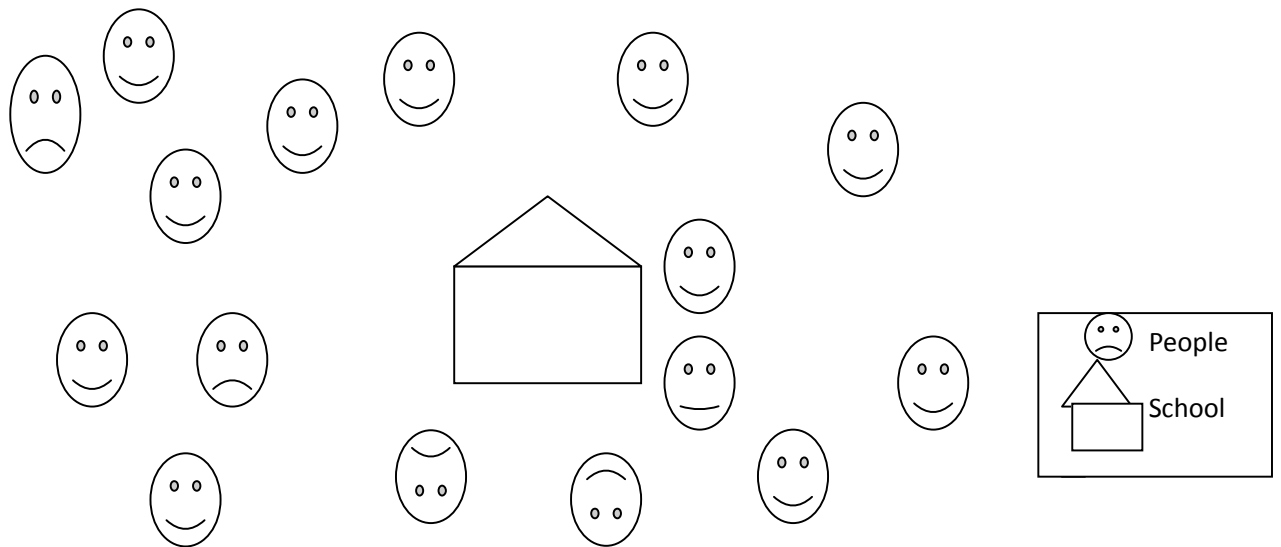


Figure: 2 Echagh people around school from October to May (1998-2000) (Adapted from Bjørklund 1990).

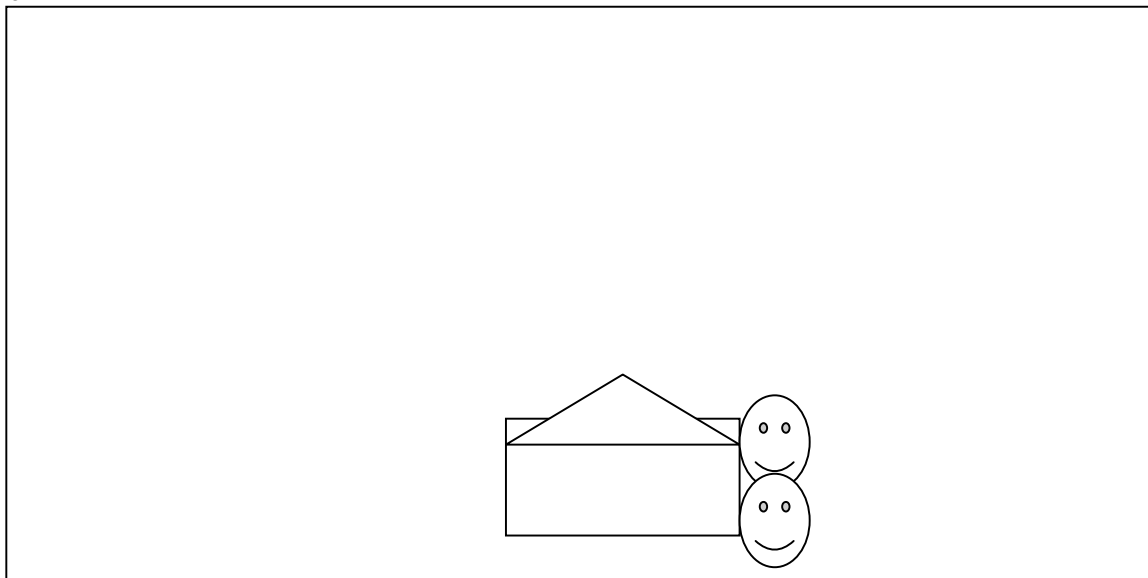


Figure 3: Feature of Echagh between June and October during the first two of the creation of school: 1998-2000 (Adapted from Bjørklund 1990)

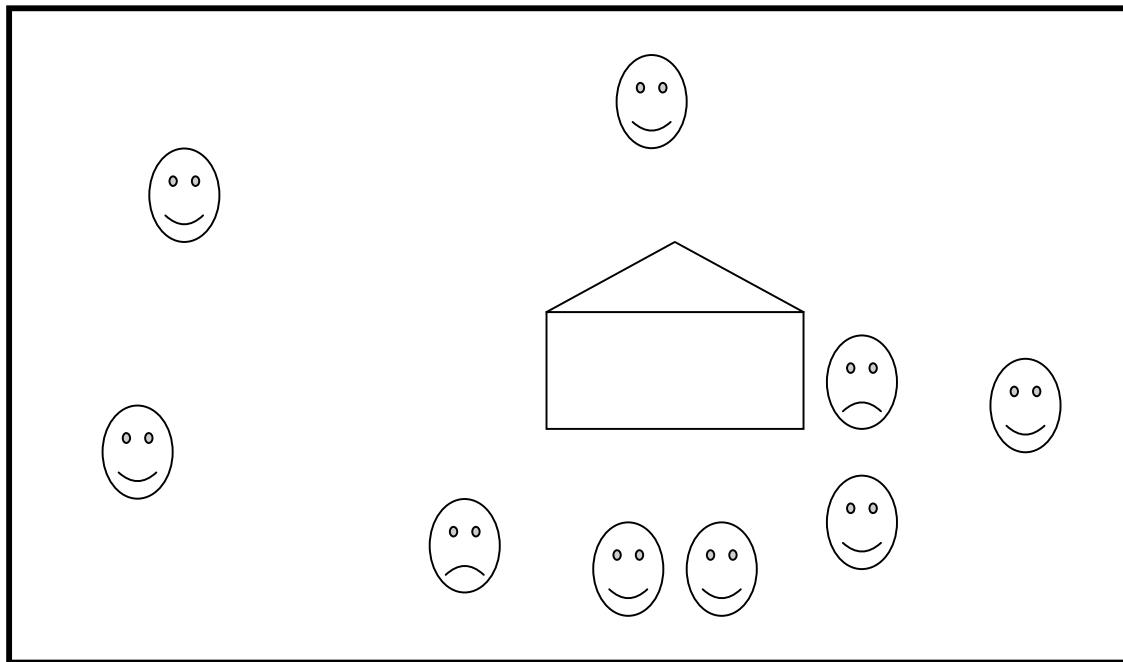


Figure 4: The feature of Echagh during the whole since 2001 to nowadays. (Adapted from Bjørklund 1990)

Figure 2 pictures people around from October to May in the first three years. It should be noticed that the normal academic year starts in Mali from October to June. But in the nomadic area, parents take their children from school by May, so most schools are closed by the end of May. Thus, viewing the beginning schooling process in Echagh, people came from their seasonal pasture area in order to permit their children to study by beginning of October and move away from May. Figure 3 shows Echagh, when people are back to their seasonal pasture area but with a few staying around the school. These are Halimoutou and Ahmoudu's families, which both have jobs at the school. Figure 4 shows people staying for the whole year, such as Alher's family.

Many parents constantly tell their children to do their best at school in order to avoid becoming herdsmen. They believe that only education will make this possible for them. Djeneba, talking to camera, said:

‘‘Attending school helps someone to get a great position in society. That is what I want for Halimoutou, she will get a good job and she might be able to achieve something. That is why we like schooling, it can pay off.’’

Echoing Djeneba, Aicha, Alher’s mother, said:

‘‘He is really on his way to knowing something. He will support me himself and may be I as well. The educated, people know how to go about things in work position and everything’’.

They are quite confident that education automatically gives access to jobs. Djeneba thus gives motivation and hope to Halimoutou, just as Aicha does to Alher

This emphasis on schooling is fairly recent. Moha did not have chance to go to school and there is thus a gap between people of the same generation, between Alher, who is 12, and Moha, who is 24 There is, of course, also a gap between parents and children.

But a non neglectable aspect is that some local people did not, I believe touch here; can be understood with Bourdieu in *Meditation Pascalian* when evoking subjective expectations and objectives chances (Nice 2000, 213) and Giddens when referring to the risk individuals may face up in transition (1990). Put it another way, one can read how confident some of the people under study are with this idea according to which their children will get a job.

Bourdieu -Hegelian conception of history evoked earlier, reminds us that things are not hazardous and do not happen according to our subjective expectations but they follow their logical deployment. This view gives less chance or no room to Igorareine people to transform the course of the history. Because those in power did not choose to be where they are but it is the deployment of history which brought them where they are.

Leaving aside this theoretical discussion for a moment, to see the process of decentralisation or the expansion of schooling to the Tuareg areas, one can begin to understand how difficult and precarious their situation is. Because they always seek some particular favours due to their minority status, but the state by giving these favours strictly to Tuareg expands them to the rest of the country and what leads to a situation where the majority already in power is always reinforced which makes history here difficult to be changed.

I have two possible interpretations to this. First, the more the state gives priorities to the Tuareg, the more the Tuareg will be rejected by the large majority. Seely (2001, 517) reports such tension among the majority as it follows: “ Anti-Tuareg has flared in the south, as evidenced by demonstrations in Bamako in July 1994. Organized by opposition political parties, the rally was intended to join a battle without mercy against the terrorists, enemies of national unity and of territorial integrity. The government, which broke up the rally, has worked to ease tensions. But it has clearly offered benefits to Tuareg groups as scarce government jobs...” In this context, Seely ‘s main argument is that if the government persists to give favours to Tuareg, it will loose legitimacy and support from the most heavily populated south (2001, 516).

Similar tension is also visible at the level of national army today. Tuareg who integrated the army without any certificate are not well accepted by their colleagues from the south. Occasioned by the fact that most of them became chiefs in short time. The direct consequence of this rejection is that most of these Tuareg soldiers went back to the north and restarted the armed conflict. For these ex-militaries, their fight is not about increasing political participation but it is for local autonomous due to the fact they are not accepted by the others from the south. Secondly, the country is ruled by the majority of the south, who wants to maintain this situation, affirming Bourdieu’s view that the social game is determined by the history of its players.

To give an example of this, the state, opting for decentralisation in order to obey its commitment to the peace agreement, created schools among the nomads and has then adopted a global programme for the whole country in 2000 (Ministry of Education 2000). It aims at creating a school in each village before 2010. It is this way that the number of primary school pupils increased from 1,199,628 in 2001/2002 to 1,294,672 in 2002/ 2003, i.e. a 7.9 % increase in one year (Ministry of Education, 2003). The number for the following years was 1,396,791 in 2003/2004 and 1.505.903 in 2004/2005 (Ministry of Education, 2005). These figures indicate how rapidly the number of potential job candidates is increasing.

The direct consequence of this is that it challenges Tuareg children to obtain even more advanced schooling. The state has not created more high schools in order to enable children to go ahead with their studies. For this matter, since July 2004, many students have not moved beyond

the ninth grade, i.e. have no education beyond general training without any specialisation for the jobs increasingly demanded by the job market. To move beyond this general cycle of the first nine years, students must not have reached the 17 years for boys and 18 for the girls. According to an unofficial source this number was 7000 in 2005 and 12000 in 2007 and will reach 14000 by July 2008.

In Echagh, most of those who have reached the age of 12 in 2007 in grade 4 (Alher and Halimoutou's grade), will be exactly 17 when passing this exam to get into high school, if they do not fail any exams. Looking at the first twenty pupils of Echagh primary school, they should normally pass the final exam to get into high school by summer 2007, but unfortunately only one of them was a candidate. Being over 18 he had no chance to continue his studies. The other pupils have failed some exams and will be too old to pass in 2008. The only alternative is to go to private schools, an option that is open only to very few, if any, parents in Echagh.

When discussing with these first pupils in Gao, where they are studying, I learned that they did not want go back to Echagh. The 120 pupils currently in Echagh will be all away by 2012. The state policy designed to assist the Tuareg may thus be creating conditions which are less beneficiary.

Giddens' notion of risk seems relevant here since, "... the notion of risk becomes central in a society which is taking leave of the past, of tradition ways of doing things, and which is opening itself up to problematic future" (1991, 111). This is exactly what seems to be happening in Echagh. People think that their local knowledge fails to provide a better or stable life to term them, so they have decided to follow another road which goes over formal education. It is not clear-cut whether they will succeed, facing the reality of Mali's job market, and are thus caught in this intrinsic dilemma.

Gellner's solution to such problem would be to re-school them for another job (1983, 35). He compares modern people to an army, which have some general basic training that enables them to attend other education depending on the needs of the time. People in Echagh do generally not envisage failure in education, with Mariam's father, as seen in my film, being one of the few

exceptions. Children spend more time at school than herding animals and the more they do this, the more they get disqualified in herding techniques. They move from local knowledge to unknown ground, which is not mastered by their parents.

The longer children attend school, the more likely it is, that they will get bored by herding. Ahmoudou Ag Assalat, one of the first pupils of Echagh School, studying in Gao, is an example of this. His father was complaining about his new behaviour, saying that his son refused to lead animals over the desert when on holidays.

Children seem unaware of such problems concerning their future. They are optimistic due to the fact they continuously hear their parents saying so. The following excerpt from my field notes covers conversations I had with pupils at the primary school:

This Monday, May 14th, 2007, I asked children to write on paper what they want to become their future. The diagram below shows what everyone has written

Pupil' names	Levels and sexes	Said	Ethnic status.
Alher Ag Mohamed	3 - boy	Doctor	I gorareine Tuareg
Mohamed AgHoussey	4 - boy	Teacher	Igorareine Tuareg
Halimatou W. Idwal	4 – girl	Nurse	Igorareine Tuareg
Hamza Mohamadoun	3- boy	Waiter in restaurant	Sonrhai
Zeneba W. Moussa	3- girl	Trader	Igorareine Tuareg
Youssouf Ag Hamadi	4- boy	Military	Igorareine Tuareg
Ibrahim Albacher	4- boy	President of Mali	Igorareine Tuareg
Issouffou Aguisa	4- boy	Doctor	Sonrhai
Mohamed Ag Ahmed	4- boy	Chief	Igorareine Tuareg
Almouhadou Ag Abdoul	3- boy	School headmaster	Igorareine Tuareg
Aminatou W. Assalher	3- girl	Teacher	Igorareine Tuareg
Almohamar Ag Afoni Hetalher W .Mohayetada	4 boy	Military	Igorareine Tuareg

Mariam W. Ahmoudou	3- girl	Teacher	Igorariene Tuareg
Zeneba W. Ahmoudou	3- girl	Teacher	Igorareine Tuareg
	3- girl	Nurse	Igorareine Tuareg

The evident observation here is that no one wants to become a herder. My point here is that their parents are mentally preparing them for whatever other future than being a herder. The children are stepping into a new context in which many options are possible; a state Giddens has called the process of emptying time and space. Gellner argues that modern man is 'universal' due to his ability provided by education, literacy, language, and communication skills. He is loyal neither to monarch, land nor faith, whatever he may say, but to a culture (Gellner 1983, 35), which, according to Durkheim (in Nisbet 1975, 264), has swept away all the older forms of organisation. One after another they have disappeared either through the slow erosion of time or through great disturbance, but without being replaced. I would argue that Alher or Halimoutou increasingly correspond to Giddens' 'self' or the 'individual' in Durkheimian sociology, and that the shift from herders pupils corresponds to modern culture entering the community.

These new developments in Tuareg life will undoubtedly affect their traditions and custom, akin to the making and remaking of self-identity according to the choices that individuals make for life between various options, to refer to Giddens (1991, 81). It also echoes Hastrup's contention that if different settings make one's identity unstable, identity becomes purely relational (1995, 143).

3. School as agent in the social construction of change in Echagh.

When I started my research in Echagh primary school, I noticed that great attention was given to the national flag at an early stage. I used to be in a hurry when walking with Alher in order to get school in time. The day at school starts by hoisting the national flag while singing the national anthem. I have also noticed that two weeks' moral education lessons were exclusively based on the national flag and national anthem. During these weeks, every pupil in the classroom was obliged to recite by heart a section from the national anthem. The following is the content of this section.

To your name Mali.

For your prosperity.

Faithful to your destiny.

We, all be united

One goal, one community, one faith.

The teacher, Ousmane, explained how they should relate to the national flag: "The national anthem always accompanies the national flag. Whenever and wherever you see people taking up or down the national, please move neither forward nor backward. Just stop everything until they get finished, otherwise one can shoot you because you are bad citizens".

The significance of the flag is also evident in this situation with Alher and his friends while they are herding the animals:

Alher and Doula were singing a section of national anthem (exactly the same above section) with a paper of three colours (Green, yellow, red, colour of national flag), while Soumaila with Tigata were coming toward them. Suddenly Soumaila stopped walking while Tigata continued to move closer to Alher and Doula. When they finished singing, Ahmed restarted walking towards them. On their arrival Soumaila took the paper with colours from Alher and all three sing one more time while Tigata was laughing.

The notion of power seems evident in the way Ousmane, the teacher, instructs the children. Following Foucault, these words are not merely words of the teacher, but are part of historically constructed ways that are the effects of powers. It professes the rule, truth, the modes of subjection which determines "... the way in which people are invited or incited to recognize their moral obligations" (Popkewitz and Brennan, 1998, 67), which is revealed in the manner

pupils must behave as subjects of the nation. This corresponds to what Foucault calls the ‘‘subjectivation dimension’’.

Another aspect is the commonality created among children through this intensive routine. To use the term of Durkheim, it aims at, ‘‘... plier les individus à leur nouvelle existence, à les assimiler à leur nouveau milieu’’ (quoted in Bourdieu 1989, 152). This is reflected in the situation with Soumaila, Alher and Doula with the song and a piece of paper symbolising the national body. The former is a Sonrhai and others are Tuareg although Doula is not from the Igorareine fraction. He is from the same as the school headmaster. The routine instituting this commonality between these three kids corresponds, I believe, to what Bourdieu has called ‘‘habitus’’. He argues that ‘‘... one of the fundamental effects of the orchestration of habitus is the production of a commonsense world endowed with the objectivity secured by consensus on the meaning (sens) of practices and the words, in other words the harmonization of ‘agents’ experiences and the continuous reinforcement that each of them receives from the expression, individual or collective (in festival, for example) improvised or programmed (commonplaces, sayings), of similar or identical experiences’’ (1977, 80).

Almost in agreement with Foucault he further says that, ‘‘School is the state school where young people are turned into state persons and thus into nothing other than henchmen of the state. Walking to school, I was walking into the state and, since the state destroys people, into the institution for the destruction of people... The state forced me, like everyone else, into myself, and made me compliant towards it, the state, and turned me into a state person, regulated and registered and trained and finished and perverted and dejected, like everyone else. When we see people, we only see state people, the state servants, as we quite rightly say, who serve the state all their lives and thus serve unnature all their lives’’. (1998, 36).

These children thus seem to be giving priority to the symbol of national unity, the national flag, beyond their diverse ethnic background. I interpret Tigata’s laughing as an expression of his ignorance in situation strange to him. He is Igorareine like Alher but does not attend school and does not speak French; he was therefore, in this sense, an outsider.

This leads to a final aspect, which is the gap between local people themselves. Tigata and Alher are both Igarareine Tuareg and about the same age, but Alher becomes more friendly with Soumaila, who is Sonrhai. My point is that the process of becoming the 'other' in Echagh may in the long run introduce gaps between people. 'Othering' seems to fit what Abner Cohen has called the "detrribalisation process" because local people who want to become like others, have to adopt their customs. This, as I have tried to discuss from Giddens 'perspective on the tribulation of self-identity, may cut across their ethnic identity in the name of national identity, in which schooling plays a pivotal role (Swain 2005, 2).

3.1 Can one language unify the diverse people?

Like in other schools in Mali, the language of instruction in Echagh is French. I noticed that the teachers forced the children to speak French at all times. The headmaster introduced this rule whereby if someone does not speak French, he or she will get "a small wood they called symbol". When you get this small wood, you must look for someone else speaking *tamasheq*. Otherwise if you sleep with, you will have to pay 25 F CFA, either less than 1, Norwegian kroner. In order to avoid paying that money, children were constantly looking for each other. Later on, I asked the school headmaster about why this symbol was that important?

He replied, "I introduced this system in order to enable children to be fluent in French but also to enable them to interact between themselves because they are not only Tuareg here. There are Sonrhai too and once they came we look them at as Malian and not Tuareg and Sonrhai. In one word l'unité dans la diversité"

After this response of the headmaster I started to observe the interaction between pupils and teachers and between pupils themselves. I noticed that as soon as Halimoutou enters the schoolyard, she talks Tamasheq when interacting with fellow Tuareg and often Sonrhai with others but as soon as I moved closer to them, they would switch to French. Similarly, when Alher was playing with Almouner or Doula, they spoke their local language but switched to French as soon as Soumaila appeared. Most of the interaction between children and teachers took place in French.

The French language was thus used as a lingua franca, a shared language that brought people together, giving them, as Anthony Cohen says, “The sense of belonging, of what it means to belong, [which] is constantly evoked by whatever means come to hand: the use of language, the shared knowledge of genealogy or ecology, joking, the solidarity of sect, the aesthetics of subsistence skills” (1982, 6). Thus, according to Cohen, symbols like language are an important means through which people experience community as it highlights the sense of belonging and commonality. I believe this is also the case in Echagh.

What is happening in Echagh may be regarded as transition as a process of inner diversification, of which we have a number of examples, one being Mouhazoumou Ahmadou’ (2005) work, in which Kapsiki people become English-speaking. Alher is, at the same time, Tuareg, pupil, fellow Malian of Soumaila and citizen of Mali. This is what I describe as inner diversification. By contrast, Mariam’s situation is different due to the fact that she is not attending school.

It has, however, been argued that the use of one language does not automatically produce ethnic unity or shared culture (Swain 2005, 3). At best, it facilitates communications between groups and gives the appearance of uniformity to the outside world as indicated by the interaction between Doula, Alher and Soumiala. Swain reminds us that this state of imposition of a one-language policy as part of a nation-building exercise was the cause for the break-up of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. It has also triggered violent civil wars in Sri Lanka and Turkey over the Armenian genocide. In sum, Swain’s argument is mainly to show the weakness of those usual academic discourses suggesting that the problems minorities can be solved through their successful and voluntary lingual integration into the group in power.

3.2 Does speaking in French indicate progress?

Parents in Echagh send their children to school but they do not always know if they are making progress because parents themselves did not attend school. At the school many parents said that, “we just came to ask the teachers if our children are good with their studies. Otherwise we really can’t know because we don’t know anything”.

But not all parents check, they make comparisons based on their children’s interaction with other children who are not Tuareg. The following dialogue between Halimoutou, Fatimata, one of her

classmates, her mother, Ehette Elher, and Assalat, a friend of mine in Echagh gives an example:

Soon after, Halimoutou: Fatimata we do have Geography this afternoon?

Assalat laughing at and says " Oh Halimoutou is good ", she speaks French quite well".

Ehette says: yes! She is making progress because I always saw talking to Bambara which is already a success.

French links up Halimoutou to Fatimata and to the wider community of French-speaking people outside Echagh. This is what satisfies Elhette, who often praised Halimoutou's communication skills. Alher's mother would say the same about him.

At a general level, I would argue that schooling is linking up Echagh to the rest of world through the use of the French language. The diagram below is an attempt to illustrate the context of what Gellner has called an ex-socialisation process and Abner Cohen would describe as a detribalisation process. To Giddens, it would frame the process of disembedding and diversification, while Anthony Cohen could see it as a framework for the symbolic construction of community through the use of language. Echagh is becoming a sphere for other possible interactions beyond the local one. At the same time educated people may move beyond Echagh, and other people may come to Echagh. The tourist business is a good example of this due to the interaction, in French, with the tourists.

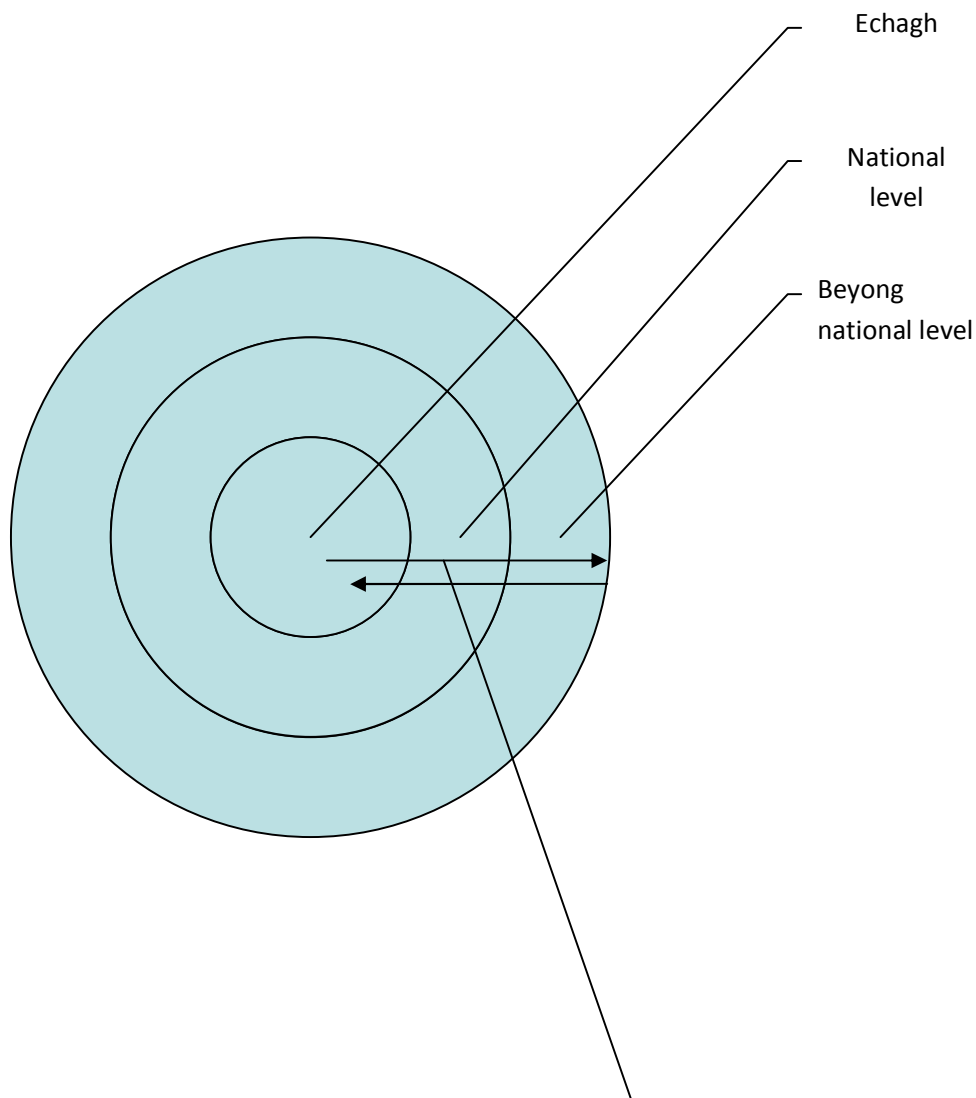


Figure 5. Adapted from Cohen (1982)

The new generation’s ability to move into the world and vice versa.

There is obviously a gap between the old generation and the new generation attending school. This change is visible over Halimoutou discussing Bambara, me and Fatimata, her classmate. For this analysis purpose, Fatimata and I can be considered as the others which, also fits to Ehelte’s way of seeing it when knowing we don’t speak their local language. We can say that Halimoutou communicating in French in front of her parents is an expression of progress.

II. Can they return to their roots?

Compare those who hope for schooling as better future, these are few in Echagh. My knowledge of people living in Echagh without distinguishing noble from *iklan* as they ask me to do can enable me to say that they are less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the population. Because, when staying among children at school, I noticed that only few of them come from the same family. Thus, this has led me to look into the number of children at school 120 in 2007. The cases in which two or three came from a same family represents the 20% either 24 out of the 120 Igorareine at school. Thus, the rest 80%, either 96 out of 120 are each from one family. The number of the households is estimated to be around 130. It should be mentioned that all the former slaves' households are sending their children to school.

1. Mariam's family and life choice.

Mariam is one of the few children who do not attend school. As mentioned in the introduction, she is Assalat Ag Moussa's daughter. Her mother was not there due to illness while I conducted fieldwork. Mariam has two older brothers, Ahmoud (20) and Ahmed (17). The tasks as earlier mentioned include pounding the millet, fetching water, taking care of the lambs, and milking of the goats. Ahmoud and Ahmed are in charge of providing water for the animals and also used to take them into the desert. Assalat sometimes helps Mariam in her tasks and also helps the boys from time to time.

I do not know the exact number of their animals as Tuareg do not tell the number of their animal to anyone. Talking with people I was told that they are second among four families with many animals in Echagh. In Mariam's family they follow the rhythm of traditional life, which means that they migrate between the grazing area during the raining reason and to the well when the rain ceases. The well is their reason to be in Echagh, not the school.

Talking to Assalat, I noted that he is aware of the current changes that are making their life increasingly difficult. He refers both to the climate and economic changes, using food as an example. They are involved in neither farming nor gardening. Formerly they used the "cram-

cram'', a natural herb, but the lack of rain has changed that. Milk production is also down due to desertification, which affects the grazing conditions. They must buy their millet and rice from the market in Gao and the prices are increasing on a global scale. To do so, they must sell an animal which diminishes the number of the animals, already diminished by the series of droughts. They eat once a day and this requires 50 kg of rice or millet each month to purchase that, as well as tea and sugar, important elements of Tuareg life, Assalat, says he needs to sell two sheep and goats. In one year, assuming that no member of the household is ill, as was the case with his wife, they would thus be forced to sell 24 animals. The fact that they currently are unable to produce 24 new lambs each year shows how serious and precarious their situation is.

Those who have their children at school sell only one animal per month because from October to May, children eat twice a day there under the support of Croq'nature and World Food Programme/ Mali. Halimoutou's family does not sell because both her grandmother and uncle work at the school; their salaries cover the monthly needs. Accordingly, parents who are sending children to school might in the long run gather more animals than Assalat. That is why it may seem surprising that he objects to schooling. He argues that problems have always existed and will always exist; that people must find the solutions. He stressed that although they do not have animals like they had in the 1960s, they must struggle to manage. Referring to the education of his children, he argues that must stick to their roots despite the changes on the way. He related to me how he had explained the children what to do: "I tell them that one can best face up the problem with the knowledge you have on the situation and this being so, what we knew so far is only local knowledge , so we can still struggle to conserve our root as the other great Tuareg did".

2. - Past as Future:

Mariam's father remembers the 'old' times in which they had lots of milk, animals and less droughts. Thus, in contrast to those in favour of 'progress', he is driving his family back to their past. What he wants to achieve, I believe, is to resist to the changes that they are facing nowadays in order to establish the same or similar life pattern in the future.

In the case of Mariam's, it will be difficult to re-establish the good old times because the experience of her father shows that in order to do so, they need more animals and their current

realities show that the number of animals they sell go beyond what new animals (lambs) they get. There are growing probabilities of risk and uncertainty, which might lead in the long run to the insecurity of an existence already insecure. This will ultimately create frustrations among Mariam and her brothers because their father is more likely going to die before them, leaving them in a situation in which others from their generation are somewhere else. By contrast, Mariam and her brothers will remain in Echagh forever but at least they will follow their ancestry and keep maybe their identity stable because of limited interaction and choices (Giddens 1991).

Giddens argues that each of the decisions a person makes every day – what to wear, what to eat, how to conduct himself at work, whom to meet with later in the evening – contributes to some routines, which, he has called lifestyle. People may shift from lifestyle to another one. This is what makes Self-identity relational in Giddens view (1991, 81). But he assumes that this is only relevant to modern to social settings. Because in tradition society there is no lifestyle to choose, which can be confirmed with Mariam . She does not say what she will be doing in her life.

3- Place as a component of identity

Mariam's father often spoke about 'Azawad', meaning 'the ancestral territory', which appears as relevant when referring to Tuareg identity. Assalat argues that although the situation is nowadays more precarious to live in, they can still manage to remain within it. It has been the same for the previous generations. In short, his main argument is that the desert forms an intrinsic part of Tuareg identity. This leads to the obvious question whether there is any reason to remain in the desert without animals? Assalat's point, of course, is that the more children move into school and go somewhere else, the more they run away from 'Tuaregness' and lose their identity. It triggers a discussion concerning loyalty to the ancestral land and ways of life between those who are attending school and those who are not.

The works of Mortimore (1972) and Rasmussen (1992) offer several examples of this probability of dispute on Tuareg identity. Both these works studied the same community, the tribes of Air in Niger, at around the same time. When using the time context here, I remind the reader that, the most remembered droughts among nowadays Tuareg communities have started in earlier 1970s

(Yattara 2000). In addition the post colonial social transformation (they become citizen of the nation-state) and adaptations of these people to new barriers frontiers become relevant to their survival as death is to the life.

In short, I want point that they took place within transition as what is going on in Echagh nowadays. Thus, they help us to see a picture of the sub tribes Kel Owi for the former and Kel Ewey in profound change context in which some nobles become sedentarised and practicing garden works in oasis and also sharing the others networks with Hausa neighbours, for the latter. These were more and more considered as less Tuareg by their kinsmen still practicing pastoralist way of life.

4 –Can local knowledge cope with the challenges of change?

Looking into what Mariam’s father said, it is obvious that he hopes local knowledge may preserve the roots of Tuareg identity and way of life. He is shaping the same ideas in Mariam and her brothers. When Mariam, in my film says ‘I will remain here for forever’, it seems that she really believes in the possibility to remain in Echagh forever, knowing that she is going to be married within Echagh community. This is undoubtedly a result of what she hears from her parents. Likewise, Alher and Halimoutou’s parents are socially preparing their future. What is the crucial question here is whether both options is feasible and, indeed, whether local knowledge is able to cope with the challenges of profound changes.

To my knowledge, these challenges do affect the local scale but they not have strictly a local solution that the local knowledge can solve. For example the current global fluctuation of food prices does affect Assalat family but the solution can be global even if small scales are struggling to attenuate the consequences. One of Assalat’s problems is that the animals are sold in market ruled by the world beyond Echagh. My point here is that local can’t empower Assalat to favourably cope within the change; even he is affected by it.

In Giddens ‘terms, the *symbolic tokens* referring to money as medium of exchange, is also a way of type of disembedding (1990, 22). If so, it is not only education that connects Echagh to others but the use of currency also does not play a less important role. This seems to fit with Cohen’s

(1982) position that there is no locality without any exchange system with the whole beyond it. This was the Norris' concern in the 1950s. He recognizes that the Tuareg have certain marked cultural differences as regards kinship, language and customs. But they are economically linked to the others, the modern world since the French forces defeated the nobility of the 'people of the veil' to use Norris' expression (1952, 152). Thus, he states his concern in these terms: how a society linked to animal can survive in the twentieth century?

According to Norris it is difficult to see how such a life-cycle, based as it is on the hazards of adequate rainfall, can do more than preserve a society in a state of equilibrium (1952, 154). In the case of Mariam's family, they fail to recognize that their life cycle involves others. Norris' conclusion is harsh but nonetheless probably realistic: "Looking into the future, it is difficult to see how this society with feudal system and hazardous economic life can survive amongst expanding, better-organized societies competing in the Sudan and in North Africa." (1952, 155). Almost similar to Norris' concern, Mortimore puts "pastoralism in the Sahara appears in the long run to lack a future, since it is to produce commodities that can command an assured market, at rising or stable prices, to sustain an increase living standard" (1972, 71).

III- Did something change so far in the local social relations?

The point of this section is to explore local interrelationships and assess whether they have undergone any significant changes. Giddens argued that, the lifting out of social relations from local contexts of interaction to across indefinite time –distances do affect the former social organization in those communities which are highly hierarchised (1994,21).

1. Between children:

My fieldwork in Echagh took place at a time when most people were there. When following Alher from April and Halimoutou from early April middle of July and Mariam from the same time to the early June, I came to notice that the polarity in the opinions at general level within Echagh is also visible when looking at children's interaction.

In Tuareg society, children of Alher's age normally meet each other in connection with herding activities. This was how I came to know many of them, especially those who did not go to school. Those who did, I met, of course, at the school as well. On Thursdays, children started to

ask their parents about where they would be herding over the weekend. The same pupils meeting everyday at school often were together herding over the weekends. They waited for each other at the dune before going further away. Some times, Soumaila, the Sonrhai boy, would go with Alher.

From my observations, I came to understand the alliances between children. Alher and Zey would often be together both at school and at times outside school setting, and the same applied to Halimoutou, who was always herding with Djeneba, the girl who sits next to her in the classroom. Djeneba is the daughter of the guard of school, which makes her close to Halimoutou. I have two possible explanations to this. First are the continuous and intensive contacts between them at school. Second they are all in each case, Alher or Halimoutou, are currently settled, to say they spend the whole year in contact even during the vacations. This aspect seems to be playing the same role on the other side, the children who don't go to school spend the whole year in interaction.

My point here is that, a new form of social categorisation is taking place between people already categorised into noble and slave on the one hand and between returning to the roots and opting for 'progress' on the other. This may in the long run affect the age-old forms of inter-marriage.

2. Is endogamy still relevant in Echagh?

The question whether endogamy is still relevant is discussed by many people in Echagh because the polarisation of people is rendering it difficult. Parents want their children to stay in the logic they want. Mariam's father said that his daughter would be married to a noble and preferably someone preserving their roots. This situation is making young men aware of the fact that there is another criterion in getting a girl. Even the friendship they used to have when girls reach the age of 14- years old might be difficult in the long run because most of them will be away from Echagh when reaching this age.

What I understood from the current situation is that, a new form of endogamy, endogamy within endogamy, is emerging. Mariam exemplifies it by saying that she will remain in Echagh forever, implicitly excluding others, who want to live somewhere else, as potential marriage partners. Similarly, it is highly likely that those who are attending school will eventually find partners in

the same situation. My point is that the social relations have started to be affected by the new practices and perceptions embedded in the current local social systems.

Summing up.

Throughout this chapter , I first tried to show ecological break down, armed conflicts and Echagh people awareness of the fact pastoralism does not any future guarantee in the world current situation have brought many people in Echagh to become nationalist. They think that opting for the nation-state will solve this situation of uncertainty. Second, by contrast to those, I have tried to grasp and discuss the arguments of Mariam 's family hoping for pastoral future. At the end, I have tried to show how the local social relationships are affected and will, I believe, continue to be affected by the different coping strategies used in Echagh.

CONCLUSION:

Throughout this thesis I have tried to find answers to the questions I raised in the introduction. I have found that schooling among the Igorareine Tuareg provides them with a sentiment of national or ethnic identity resembling that which, according to Gellner (1983, 56), essentially covers the general imposition of a high culture on society where previously low cultures had taken up the lives of the majority, and in some cases the totality, of the population. It implies a general diffusion of a school-mediated, academic idiom, codified for the requirements of reasonably precise bureaucratic and technological communication in the civil service of the country. It is the establishment of an anonymous, impersonal society, with mutually substitutable atomized individuals, held together above all by a shared culture of this kind, in place of a previous complex structure of local groups, sustained by the folk cultures locally and idiosyncratically by the micro-groups themselves.

That is really what is currently happening in Echagh. Schooling is providing literacy, communication, and mobility skills, enabling the population to interact with an extended social world. At school, with the pupils are introduced to basic symbols such as the national flag and the French language, which make them full citizens of the nation-state. That renders them potential to assume place and responsibilities within the society at large, the nation-state.

Another implication, however, is that it affects local social relations in Echagh. People are contemplating two different worlds influenced by their coping strategies within the transition from pastoral nomadism to that as sedentary citizens in the modern state system.

Potentially, the developments could help the Tuareg in general and people of Echagh in particular to escape from a circle of marginalization. One of my hypotheses was that the marginalisation of the Tuareg in Mali is partly due to their lack of formal knowledge. Nowadays they seem to be in a hurry to acquire it. If Alher and Halimoutou, my two main child informants, among other pupils, find some good positions in state structures, they might be able to defend the interest of their kinsmen remaining in the desert. For instance, they may be able to get NGOs and government authorities to promote decent living conditions at local level. This is what the first

Tuareg who got important positions in state structures after the peace agreement are doing. These are leading the state rural development policy in the northern regions where they come from.

This is the type example of what happened between Ruritanian peasants and kinsmen migrated to urban settings of Federal Republic of Megalomania that Gellner has hypothetically pointed out (1983, 59). The Ruritanians were a peasant population speaking a group of related and more or less mutually intelligible dialects, and inhabiting a series of discontinuous but not very but much separated pockets within the lands of the Empire of Megalomania (Gellner 1983, 59). In nineteenth century a population explosion occurred at the same time as certain other areas of the Empire of Megalomanian-but not Ruritania- rapidly industrialized (ibid, 58). In such context, Ruritanian peasants were drawn to seek work in the industrially more developed areas. Gellner argues that they had a rough deal in the towns to whose slums they moved.

At the same time some of them lads destined for the church, and educated in both the court and liturgical languages. These became influenced by the new liberal ideas in the course of their secondary schooling, and shifted to a secular training at the university, ending not as priests but as journalists, teachers and professors. Many of them did assimilate with the large majority. But “they deplored the Squalor and neglect of their home valleys, while yet also seeing the rustic virtues still to be found in them (...); they deplored the discrimination to which their co-nationals were subject, (...); they preached against these ills, and had the hearing of at least many of their fellows” (1983, 59). The author gives this fictitious example in order to describe the feature of the nationalist intellectuals who were in Ruritanian case full of warm ad generous ardours on behalf of the co-nationals. But I would argue that it is education which gives this power to these Ruritanian migrants. In sum, my point here is to argue that similar to Ruritanian migrants, schooling provides Echagh children with knowledge which could enable them to transform their current marginal situation.

Focusing on the topic of knowledge as a main cultural theme, arising during my project in the context of the current transitional situation of the Igorareine Tuareg, enabled me to understand that the life choices in Echagh are part and parcel of people’s coping strategies. In each tendency, people are trying to work out these strategies according to one form or another of knowledge.

Mariam's who does not attend school is conserving the local traditional knowledge due to the fact that she does not want to interact within an extended social sphere. Her family is struggling to cope with their traditional knowledge within this difficult stage of transition. In contrast, Alher and Halimoutou's families opted for the nation-state, setting for a more extended social interaction. That is why they are attending school.

The discussions on these different options have shown that there is no evident success in any case of these choices. The success is possible in both of them as the failure might also occur. This state of affair renders their situation, the most risky, uncertain and insecure one. In this situation, one may ask whether further inquiry is required to ascertain whether there are other options available to the Igorareine Tuareg in particular and pastoral Tuareg in general, or ways to make the existing coping strategies more efficient and sustainable. This crucial question, unfortunately, was not possible to address within the limited scope of my current project.

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