That Desert is Our Country: Tuareg Rebellions and Competing Nationalisms in Contemporary Mali (1946-1996)
Lecocq, J.S.
I

Creating an antagonistic state
Politics and stereotypes in late colonial French Sudan
(1946-1960)

Introduction

The aim of the first three chapters of this thesis, is to explain why rebellion broke out against the Malian state in the Adagh in 1963. I will argue that this rebellion was mainly the result of attitudes and actions on both sides – Malian Government and Kel Adagh alike – based on preconceived negative stereotypes of ‘the other’, which were centred on race and social (in)equality. These issues will be central throughout this thesis. It will be impossible to fully discover the origins of mutual feelings of contempt expressed through the bias of complexion. However, I will make an effort to locate and sketch their background and their use throughout the period under study, that is, from the late 1940s to the late 1990s. I will do so within the main setting or paradigm of racism itself: stereotypes.

During the late colonial period, extended contacts between the Tamashiq communities of the northernmost part of Mali and their future leaders who were, with few exceptions, from the South, had been very limited. Thus, those involved in the political events could only base their thinking on pre-existing stereotypes of the other. Stereotypical images emerge most rapidly when knowledge of one another is lacking. These stereotyped images are so important in understanding the antagonistic relation between, on the one side, the Malian political elite and the inhabitants of Southern Mali, and on the other side the Kel Tamashiq, that they merit a book in themselves. In this thesis I will make a start with this analysis but, unfortunately, it will not be as thorough as I would like it to be.

The present chapter will focus on the late colonial period, a period characterised by processes leading to formal retreat by the colonial power, while simultaneously making efforts to have itself replaced by a local elite acting in ways favourably looked upon by the colonial power. However, it is also characteristic to the late colonial state that its servants of European origins knew their rule was to be short lived, which had its consequences for their individual and personal efforts in their work.44 Their success in helping to construct a new indigenous elite and to bring about developments seen as beneficial to the local population depended on the personal motivation of colonial officers.

In Northern French Sudan, the future Republic of Mali, the success in efforts to develop a future political elite varied. While in the Niger Bend and the Timbuktu area, local elites were quick to grasp the new opportunities, their colleagues in the northernmost parts of colony had less

interest in politics. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of the Adagh n Ifoghas and parts of the Azawad now look upon the late colonial period as a golden age. Economic circumstances were at their best, due to affluent rainy seasons. Efforts made by the colonial administrators in ‘development’ such as education, gardening and the drilling of new wells were not always understood or appreciated at the time, but are now seen as having been meant to their benefit. I will not try to refute or defend the idea that the late colonial period can be justifiably gilded. In later chapters, I hope to make clear why it is nevertheless seen as such in hindsight by some Kel Tamasheq, notably the Kel Adagh.

The focus of this chapter lies first on the political processes in French Sudan which ultimately led to the creation of the Malian state. More importantly, we will look at the players in the local political field, their attitude towards imminent national independence, their expectations of the new state and their relations with each other. We will see how the French introduced party politics and elections in French Sudan, how a modern political elite and political parties were created, and how the Tamasheq political elite was involved in these new-style politics. Most Tamasheq leaders with an active interest in the processes of party politics and elections, ignited by the French, were the colonial ‘traditional chiefs’ or tribal chiefs. From the beginning, they had sided with the French-backed ‘chiefs’ party’ – the PSP. This party was decisively defeated in the 1956 elections, but most chiefs were slow to adhere to the winning USRDA, a party profiling itself as socialist and against the power of the traditional chiefs.

Finally, we will look at the international context and the struggle over the Sahara during the late 1950s. The discovery of mineral riches in the Algerian Sahara in 1956, together with the gradual accordance of autonomy and independence to the colonies of the Maghreb and French West Africa (AOF – Afrique occidentale française), provoked a political and military battle over Saharan territory involving France, Morocco and the political elites of the AOF. Between 1956 and 1960, various Tamasheq and Moorish leaders in French Sudan actively supported either the French or the Moroccan claims, or both. Their support for these ‘foreign’ claims made them highly suspect in the eyes of the Malian nationalists after independence, who would come to regard them as enemies of the Malian state and ‘vassals’ to the ‘French neo-imperialist cause’. The Malian nationalists then extrapolated their suspicion towards the Tamasheq elite to the society they represented. After independence the Malian Government was in constant fear of a Tamasheq revolt, supported by French forces which were still present in neighbouring Algeria. This will be covered in chapters II and III.

From French Sudan to the Malian Republic
An overview of decolonisation

Decolonisation in French Africa was a direct consequence of World War II. While French West Africa (AOF) at first sided with Vichy France, French
Central Africa rallied to de Gaulle. Brazzaville became the capital of Free France. Most Free French Forces were African conscripts who eventually participated in the liberation of metropolitan France. As in World War I, massive African conscription was obtained on the quid pro quo 'blood for rights'. In his Brazzaville declaration of 1944, de Gaulle promised the colonial subjects a voice in the French and colonial political arena after the war.45

The first steps in this arena were taken with the election of the Constitutional Assembly, which drafted the constitution of the Fourth Republic in 1946.46 French Sudan elected Fily Dabo Sissoko as its Territorial representative, a French-educated chief from Bafoulabé. Simultaneous with the creation of the Fourth Republic, the French Empire was restyled to become the Union française, which meant that the Overseas Territories could create their own assemblies – first called Conseils générales and later Assemblées territoriales – of which half the members could be elected. The task of these assemblies was merely advisory.

In addition to the assemblies, political parties could now also be created, and in October 1946, the first parties saw the light of day in French Sudan: the PSP, created by Fily Dabo Sissoko; the Bloc Soudanais, created by Mamadou Konaté; and the PDS, created by Pierre Molet. The latter two parties fused almost immediately to form the Sudanese branch of the Pan-African RDA, the USRDA. PSP and USRDA would dominate the late colonial political arena in French Sudan in strongly antagonistic relations.

In 1956, the Overseas Territories entered a new phase towards independence with the adoption of the Loi-Cadre or Loi Gaston Deferre, which provided internal autonomy to the Overseas Territories and ensured their transformation into Republics within the Union française, a French Common Wealth. Meanwhile, colonial subjects would have many of the rights of metropolitan citizens. The Assemblées territoriales were now entirely elected by an expanded electorate. Whereas in 1946, suffrage was severely limited, it had now become universal. The Assemblées territoriales had voting power over the territorial budget, economic policies, in fact all matters excluding defence and the international domain.

But, while the demand for it grew stronger, independence was still not reached. During his African tour in August 1958, de Gaulle proposed to reform the Union française, together with the French Republic which was nearing its fifth incarnation. The new Communauté française would hold the same powers as the Union française, but the former territories would formally become independent Republics. Referenda to be held in the new

45 Based on Ageron, Ch. (Ed.), Les chemins de la décolonisation de l'empire colonial français (Paris 1986). I here follow a more or less standard interpretation on the effects of WWII on French decolonisation. For a more elaborate and partly contesting view, see Mann, G., The Tiraillleurs Elsewhere: Military veterans in colonial and post-colonial Mali, 1918-1968 (Phd thesis History Northwester University 2000).

Republics would be decisive on their membership. Voting in favour of the Communauté française would mean a vote for the status quo. A vote in decline of the Communauté would mean direct independence without French assistance. In September 1958, the referendum took place and its outcome was largely in favour of the Communauté française. In November 1958, the French Sudan was transformed into the République Soudanaise, the Sudanese Republic, member Republic of the Communauté française, with its own Assembly and a Ministerial Cabinet presided over by the Governor, but manned by USRDA members of Sudanese origins.

The creation of the Communauté française and its adhering Republics meant a dissolution of the supra-territorial organisation of AOF. But Pan-Africanism was a strong ideological current within the French West African political elite and the dissolution of AOF was a disappointment for most leaders who had hoped that their territories would remain united. The Rassemblement Démocratique Africaine – RDA had been a supra-territorial political party with branches in each territory. The USRDA formed its Sudanese branch. Therefore, a new form of regional integration was looked for; a Francophone West African Federation. The USRDA took a leading role in its shaping.

Within the RDA there were two different opinions on the form federalism should take. The first faction, headed by the USRDA under Modibo Keita and the Senegalese PDS under Leopold Sedar Senghor, advocated a West African Federation of states, independent from France. The second faction, headed by the Ivoirien PDCI-RDA, under Houphouët-Boigny, opted for a West African Federation associated to and in close collaboration with metropolitan France. In December 1958, a Federal Council was held in Bamako. Delegations from French Sudan, Senegal, Dahomey (Benin) and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) voted in favour of the independent federalist option. But victory was heralded too quickly. The Ivoirien president Houphouët-Boigny had effectively lobbied for his own form of federation with France. Shortly after the Bamako conference, Dahomey and Upper Volta opted out to join Houphouët’s Entente Africaine, leaving French Sudan and Senegal alone on the road to federal independence.

In February 1959, French Sudan and Senegal formed the Mali federation. Both Republics would preserve their legal existence, but a federal Government and Assembly were to be created in Dakar, holding power over supra-territorial affairs. In June 1960, the federation leaders reached agreement with France over its existence. The Mali Federation declared its independence, but it proved to be short-lived, due to conflicts which arose over the political course of the Federation. Whereas the USRDA under Modibo Keita adopted a rigid standpoint on Marxist Socialism as the basis of economic policy, Senghor’s African Socialism was far more moderate. Where the USRDA took a stance against French foreign policy, notably on the Algerian war, Senghor’s PDS was more reconciliatory.

47 Based on Gam, P., Les causes de l’éclatement de la Fédération du Mali (Paris CHEAM no 4022 1965).
Personal enmity between Keita and Senghor and a conflict over the presidency over the Federation did the rest. In August 1960, two months after its creation, the Mali Federation was dissolved. Sudanese politicians in Dakar, including Keita, were arrested and put on the train to Bamako. In reaction, the Sudanese Government closed the borders and halted all transport to Senegal. On 22 September 1960, an extraordinary congress of the USRDA declared the independence of the Sudanese Republic under the name Malian Republic. Mali as we know it came into existence.

The construction of a modern political elite in French Sudan

It is sometimes observed that the political elite in West Africa consists of three groups – chiefs, teachers and soldiers. This simplified view helps to see clearly what happened in the political field in colonial French Sudan and post-colonial Mali. Before World War II, politics, if any, were informal and dominated by the chiefs. During the interbellum, the teachers and other intelligentsia organised cultural associations and literary clubs which were the breeding ground for the Post-War parties. The soldiers, or rather, officers, did not yet exist. In the Post-War period, chiefs and teachers struggled for political supremacy via the newly-installed democratic institutions, a battle won by the teachers. The soldiers were absent, fighting colonial wars for France elsewhere. They took over political power after independence. We will here concentrate on the formation of the political elites of chiefs and teachers in French Sudan and their struggle over power during the last decades of colonial rule.

Teachers, chiefs and parties in French Sudan, PSP and USRDA

The PSP dominated political life in French Sudan from its creation in 1946 to elections for the Territorial Assembly in 1956. The PSP was seen as the ‘chiefs’ party’, and had the support of the French colonial administration. Indeed, its uncontested leader Filly Dabo Sissoko was a chief. In 1946 he was the most prominent Sudanese politician and became elected to the Constituent Assembly in Paris. Sissoko was in good contact with the French Governor in French Sudan. This connection, next to the PSP’s affiliation to the French SFIO, gained him the active support of the colonial administration. The PSP’s second asset was the support of the Sudanese chiefs, who largely controlled the votes of their following. In return, the PSP strongly advocated the interests and political role of the chiefs in the administrative organisation of French Sudan. Initially, support

48 Schachter-Morgenthau, R., Political parties in French speaking West Africa (Oxford 1964). Schachter-Morgenthau explicitly refers to the theme of teachers and chiefs in her dealing with political parties in Mali. The antagonism between both social categories in colonial French Sudan and Mali is so obvious and explicit that almost no narrative on this subject escapes its logic and setting, including this one.

49 Campmas (n.d.), op. cit.
of the colonial administration and the chiefs was enough to ensure the PSP's primacy in Sudanese politics against its only rival, the USRDA.

The USRDA can be seen as the 'teachers' or 'intellectuals' party'. Some of its main leaders, like Mamadou Konaté and Modibo Keita, were indeed school teachers. Others, such as Madeira Keita, were civil servants in the colonial administration. Their political education took place in the 1930s when, under the rule of the Front Populaire in France, African intellectuals were encouraged to organise cultural associations. After the War, so called G.E.C's – Groupes d'Études Communistes – were created under the guidance of French communist volunteers, which started the strongly pronounced Marxist orientation in the ranks of the USRDA. Although most of its active members were intellectuals and most of its early following came from the urban population, the USRDA profiled itself as a 'people's party' or a 'party for the masses', whose rights they advocated. These characteristics made the party highly suspect in the eyes of the colonial administration.

The USRDA was faced with a multiple task. It had to enlarge its following in the countryside. To do so, it had to oppose the chiefs who controlled the votes of their subjects. This could be done by opposing the 'chiefs' party', the PSP. Besides this struggle for internal political support, it had to deal with the colonial administration which backed the chiefs and their party. According to Snyder, the answer to all these problems was threefold. Through tight organisation and by adhering to strict party discipline, high-ranking members were allowed to tour the countryside, where they spoke to the people in a language they understood, listened to their complaints and actually managed to do something to relieve their needs, thus increasing USRDA support. In turn, this meant the USRDA gained more votes when suffrage was extended, this to the anguish of the colonial administration which feared the USRDA's radical Marxist stances.

Many of the USRDA main members were engaged in the colonial system as teachers or civil servants in the urban centres. The colonial administration could thus try to obstruct the USRDA by sending its activists to the countryside. Often, this meant 'the North' as most USRDA activists, if not all, came from the Sudanese Bambara and Mande heartlands. Thus, in 1951 Modibo Keita was sent as a teacher to Kabara, the harbour of Timbuktu. Awa Keita, Minister of Social Affairs after independence, was sent as a midwife to Goundam town. However, the 'banishments' worked in the party's favour by spreading its message in the country, as well as by dedicating the exiled to their cause of uplifting the Malian masses. 'Being bannished' and serving in the remote backwaters of the country came to be seen as an emblem of martyrdom and sacrifice to the party. The city-dwelling elite was not used to living in huts in the

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50 Snyder, F., One-party government in Mali - Transition toward control (New Haven 1965).
51 Ibidem.
remote hamlets in the country, and saw doing so as a sign of personal strength and political persistence. As Modibo Keita put it –

'We speak always of the masses. But have we penetrated the masses so as to know their way of life, so as to have wiped away the hostility with which they look at those who went to the schools of the French, and finally so as to have sensed their vital needs and measured the extent of their ability to resist oppression? How many comrades agree to enter a dark and smoky hut, to sit on a mat which in colour and crust resemble the earth, to dip by hand, without the slightest repugnance, into the doubtful platter of tô or of rice, to carry to lip and drink without fear the milk on which swims a thin layer of dust? '53

Overcoming their repugnance for tô and milk reaped its rewards for the USRDA. In 1946, the USRDA lost the elections in all Cercles except in Kita, San, and Sikasso. In 1951 it lost Kita but it won both Gao and Bamako – the largest cities in French Sudan – from the PSP. Then, by 1956, the PSP had lost everywhere except Bafoulabé; Nioro; Macina, home of PSP’s second man Mamadoun Dicko; Koutiala; Bougouni; and Goundam, home of the influential Tamasheq chief and PSP delegate Mohamed Ali ag Attaher Insar. In 1957 only Fily Dabo Sissoko’s home Canton Bafoulabé, together with Koutiala and Macina, remained faithful to the PSP. By 1958, the PSP played no role whatsoever in Sudanese politics and after their final defeat in the March 1959 elections, the party was simply dissolved.54

**Tribal chiefs, party politics and elections**

It has often been observed that the Tamasheq community was not actively involved in the political games of the Post-War period, that they did not participate in elections due to lack of understanding and interest, and that none of their leaders, also through lack of interest or understanding, presented themselves for elections.55 This picture is basically true, but it does no justice to the complexities of the political arena in French Sudan and to the differences within the Kel Tamasheq world during that period. First of all, interest in elections and politics was low throughout the Sudanese countryside, which had long regarded politics as a city game. In 1955, only 26% of the total Sudanese population was registered as enfranchised.56 Universal suffrage was not introduced until 1956. But even then, voting percentages in French Sudan were generally

53 Modibo Keita in, USRDA political report 1955, quoted in; Schachter-Morgenthau (1964), op. cit., 291.

54 Schachter-Morgenthau (1964), op. cit., 279.


among the lowest in AOF.\textsuperscript{57} That the colonial administration often organised the elections at the start of the rainy season, the busiest time of year for farmers and nomads alike, did nothing to improve their interest.

In order to have some idea of nomad participation in elections, let us look at some comparative figures between nomad voters and sedentary voters.\textsuperscript{58} The first elections were the elections for the Constitutional Assembly in 1946. In the Cercle Kidal a total of 243 people, or 1.7\% of the total population of the area, were registered as voters. Of these 243 people, 158 or 65\% of the registered voters used their vote. Of these, 73 were Kel Tamasheq, a slight majority over the 69 voters who were sedentary inhabitants of Kidal city (French and African colonial servants). Also among the voters was the \textit{amenokal} or paramount chief of the Adagh, Attaher ag Illi himself.\textsuperscript{59} Therefore, it cannot be said that those Kel Adagh who had the right to vote, did not make use of this right when they could.

Ten years later the elections for the National Assembly in Paris were held in January 1956. Throughout AOF, the number of expressed votes did not reach 50\%. In the Cercle Timbuktu, the number of nomads using their vote was 20\%, as opposed to 49\% among the sedentary population in the same Cercle.\textsuperscript{60} In the \textit{Subdivision} of Kidal, the number of used votes reached an all time low at 0.6\% of the registered nomad voters.\textsuperscript{61} Nevertheless, the figures from Timbuktu show that Tamasheq participation was not negligible in other areas. The Tamasheq population of the Cercle Timbuktu had their own political representatives and voted for them. The majority of votes in both elections were casted in favour of the chiefs’ party, the PSP.

In these elections, the Tamasheq were certainly under-represented, but their interest, compared to the general interest for elections in French Sudan, was not as bad as could be expected. Pierre Boilley analyses the elections held in Kidal between 1946 and 1956 in full.\textsuperscript{62} From the number of Kel Tamasheq who cast their vote at each election, he concludes that the Kel Adagh had no interest whatsoever in elections. Yet, looking at the material he presents, one comes to the conclusion that numbers drop whenever elections for the National Assembly in Paris are held, but rise with elections for the Territorial Assembly in Bamako. In other words, the Kel Adagh, indeed probably the least interested of all the Kel Tamasheq in

\textsuperscript{57} Synthèse politique concernant les territoires d’Outre-Mer et les territoires sous tutelle, Janvier 1956. ANSOM - 1affpol/2238/1. This report notes that turn-out in the 1956 elections for the territorial assemblies did not exceed 50\% in any territory.

\textsuperscript{58} The following paragraphs are largely based on ANM 7D - Elections, series 18,24,41,57,58,81 and 90.

\textsuperscript{59} Elections générales de 10 Novembre 1946, Cercle de Kidal. ANM - FR 7D-67.

\textsuperscript{60} Sahara, Soudan, Mauritanie, administration et maintien de l’ordre - les confins sahariens - rapports politiques 1955-1956. ANSOM - 1affpol/2173/1.

\textsuperscript{61} Boilley (1999), op. cit., 274.

\textsuperscript{62} Ibidem, 272-80.
party politics, show an increase in interest when territorial affairs are concerned.

The difference in the number of used votes can also be explained by the fact that the Kel Adagh had no political representative of their own, and had grown weary of the enormous amount of elections organised by the French, with nothing actually changing. As the amenokal Attaher ag Illi summed it up in that year - 'there are too many elections, he said, and too many taxes'. Yet, as Boilley remarks as well, in those elections where nomad candidates from other tribes presented themselves, the Kel Adagh interest rose.

Unlike the Kel Adagh, other Kel Tamasheq, such as those inhabiting the Timbuktu region or the Niger Bend, did express an interest in elections and party politics which was not far below that of their sedentary neighbours. As has been said, interest in elections throughout the Malian countryside was among the lowest in AOF. Additional handicaps to nomad voters were the lack of information on upcoming elections, of ballot boxes and the amount of time needed to arrive at existing ballot boxes. The passive interest in and knowledge of political developments of the Kel Tamasheq is perhaps underestimated so far. In general it can be said that the Kel Tamasheq inhabiting the Niger Bend were more integrated and more active in party politics than those inhabiting the extreme north.

When it comes to the active participation of Tamasheq and Moorish leaders in the new-style politics of the Post-War period, the number of players was low. But those who did play did so at high levels and for high stakes. The main reasons for the low number of active Tamasheq politicians were threefold. First, they were removed from the political centre. Party politics was an urban phenomenon in late colonial French Sudan. Second, they did lack interest. Most Tamasheq leaders were tribal chiefs. As their power was directly dependent on French dominance they did not feel the need to invest in this new political opportunity. When they did take an interest, they adhered to the PSP, which promoted their interests. Third, an argument often raised by some Kel Tamasheq and scholars alike, they lacked French education. Only a very small part of the Tamasheq world had access to French education, and this only at the lowest levels. In the Adagh and Azawad areas, the first French schools were created as late as 1947. This was largely due to Tamasheq resistance against French education, but also, to a lesser degree, due to French reluctance. The French believed that education was unnecessary for a nomadic existence and that it would cause estrangement from the much-loved and orientalised Tamasheq 'traditional culture'. In this way the Tamasheq missed one of the most vital links to party politics - education and administrative jobs.

Again, this vision on the lack of educational opportunities for the Kel Tamasheq is only partly correct. Indeed, levels of French education were low among them, but this was true for all of French Sudan. According to

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Schachter-Morgenthau, in 1947 less than 5 per cent of school-age children were actually attending school. Not until the 1950s were there Sudanese studying abroad and not until the 1950s did the first lycée classes open in Bamako, when the former École primaire supérieure Terrasson de Fougères expanded. In 1961, only 10 per cent of school-age children could find places in class-rooms, and at least 98 per cent of the total population remained illiterate in French. Literacy levels will not have been much different among the Kel Tamasheq by that time.

One specific Tamasheq group, the Kel Intessar, managed to escape these obstacles to political participation. First of all, their living area, the Goundam, was less removed from the political arenas. Second, in the Goundam area and in Timbuktu, elementary schools had been available from an earlier date. Third, from the start of his reign in 1935, their amenokal Mohamed Ali ag Attahe Insaar was interested in modernising the living conditions of his people. In this respect he was even ahead of the colonial administration. His requests for an école nomade had been honoured and the Kel Intessar were seen as an example of the adequacy of the French mission civilicatrice. However, Mohamed Ali found nothing but administrative resistance to his plans for higher education. In 1942 he requested that his younger brother Mohamed Elmehdi be admitted to the William Ponty boarding school in Dakar. His request was denied, like all his other requests for higher education. Mohamed Ali then started what he would later term a 'crusade' for education abroad. He managed to enlist some of his pupils in educational institutions in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Libya and Morocco. The few educated Kel Intessar from the école nomade in Goundam would at least rise to administrative posts on lower levels and would join in party politics. We will hear more of these pupils in chapter III and VI.

Despite all these obstacles, Tamasheq leaders did participate in party politics from the start. In the first elections for the Territorial Assembly in 1946, we find two Tamasheq candidates. Mohamed Ali ag Attahe Insaar presented himself as a PSP candidate. Sidi Mohamed ag Zocka, chief to the Shouakan wan Ataram tribe in Gourma Rharous presented himself as an independent candidate. Sidi Mohamed ag Zocka did not gain enough votes outside his own Cercle to be elected, and he is not heard of again in later elections. Mohamed Ali became elected, securing the Goundam and Timbuktu Cercles for the PSP for the years to come. In 1948, he withdrew

64 Schachter-Morgenthau (1964), op. cit., 269.
65 Dossier Mohamed Ali ag Attahe Insar. ANSOM - 14 MIOM 2276.
66 For a full account of Mohamed Ali's education troubles, see Ag Attahe Insar, M.A., 'La scolarisation moderne comme stratégie de résistance', H. Claudot-Hawad (ed.), Touaregs, exil et résistance REMMM 57 (1990), 91-97.
himself both as a PSP politician and as chief of the Kel Intessar in favour of his younger brother Mohamed Elmehdi. The latter remained active in politics until well after independence, first within the PSP and later within the USRDA.

In the 1951 partial elections for the Conseil général, we find a new PSP candidate from Kel Intessar origins – Hacko ag Ibrahim, a veterinary from Goundam.68 Hacko won these elections, but did not survive the political downfall of the PSP in the late 1950s. He remained active in the party in his home region of Goundam. In 1956 he seriously opposed Mohamed Elmehdi’s candidacy for the PSP list in Goundam, who was nevertheless elected.69 Thus, two Tamasheq leaders competed in one constituency over parliamentary seats.

Despite the PSP’s downfall from 1956 onwards, the chiefs’ party remained strong in Goundam and the Niger Bend, where Tamasheq chiefs remained supportive of the party. The support for the PSP only faltered as late as 1958, 1959. By 1958 the PSP had no representatives left in the Assemblée territoriale. Some Tamasheq and Moorish chiefs then went over to the USRDA. Some did so on their own initiative and political insight, such as Intalla ag Attaher, the youngest son of the amenokal of the Adagh. Some only did so under strong pressure from the USRDA itself.

Despite formal opposition against the chiefs, the USRDA very well knew their power and influence in the North to be insufficient to do without them. Such was the case with Badi ould Hammoodi, chief of the Moorish Kounta confederation. Badi rallied to the USRDA in 1959, without ever being active in the PSP, after the new Sudanese administration had threatened to dismember his confederation. In his dealings with the USRDA, Badi had long been advised by the Moorish merchant Habib Wafi who had been elected to the Assemblée territoriale for the USRDA in 1956.

The continued support of the chiefs for the PSP would not help their cause against a USRDA bent on their abolition. In the first government installed after the implementation of the Loi-cadre, Madeira Keita, the Interior Minister (Ministère de l’Intérieur et de l’Information, later Ministère de l’Administration Territoriale et de Sûreté) and USRDA left-winger started to curtail the chiefs’ power. In 1957 he wrote a first circular about the modernisation or the possible abolition of the traditional chiefs. On 10 April 1958, the ordinance on the chiefs of March 1935 was withdrawn.70 The nomad tribal chiefs were kept in place, however, because of their influence over their subjects and their knowledge of the country. At the time, the USRDA was not yet strongly implanted in the extreme North and the political events of the moment were not in favour of losing grip on a

group suspected to be politically active to the disadvantage of the new regime. But the Tamasheq chiefs were certainly not well-regarded. Soon after independence in 1960 the new regime started to curtail their power as we shall see in chapter II.

**White lords and black slaves**

*Politics and stereotypes in French Sudan*

Tamasheq participation in elections did not guarantee their full inclusion in the political world of French Sudan. Despite late attempts to win them to their side, the USRDA kept distrusting both the chiefs and Tamasheq society in general. With few exceptions, all USRDA leaders came from Southern Mali. Their first-hand knowledge and experience of the Tamasheq world was highly limited. *Mutatis mutandis*, the Kel Tamasheq had little understanding of the urban USRDA elite. The further north, the less contact Tamasheq communities had with people from the south in general. Only those Kel Tamasheq who inhabited the Niger Bend had day-to-day experience of the lives of their sedentary neighbours, but their relations had not always been good. In short, attitudes and policies towards each other were not based on mutual knowledge and contact. When these are lacking, rumour, stereotypes and preconceived images take over.

In this part and in the next chapter, we will examine the origins and basis of the USRDA attitude towards the Kel Tamasheq and, vice versa, the attitude of the Kel Tamasheq towards the (future) Malian Government. These were based on preconceived images and values prevalent within the societies both groups came from. The image the Malian leaders projected on the Kel Tamasheq was partly inherited from their colonial masters, and was complemented with already existing local stereotypes of those people who were in contact with the Tamasheq community in the Niger Bend.

Conversely, the image the Kel Tamasheq had of the USRDA leaders was based on their previous experiences with people from the south. In the case of the inhabitants of the Niger Bend, these were their direct neighbours. In the case of the Kel Adagh, these were based on their few experiences with Southerners present in the north: the convicts sent to Kidal prison, the Southern administrative personnel and a few USRDA activists.

Although this is perhaps not the most obvious choice available, both sides quickly resorted to an image of the other based on racial prejudice. To the USRDA elite, the Kel Tamasheq were primarily white, despite the fact that most Kel Tamasheq in Mali had a dark complexion. Conversely, to the Kel Tamasheq, especially the Kel Adagh, the USRDA elite was primarily black, and the only other blacks known to them were their former captives and the inmates of Kidal prison.

The perception of the USRDA elite on the Tamasheq has been eloquently put down by novelist, Malian civil servant and historian Amadou Hampâté Bâ. In *Oui mon commandant!*, Bâ gives an account of a meeting in 1916 between the French *Commandant du Cercle* at Dori and the chief of the Logomaten tribe, Bokar wan Zeidou. The commandant had asked
the chief to pay his taxes in French francs, instead of in kind. Bâ lets Bokaran Zeidou respond to this demand in the following words—

'If the Commandant wants me to pay the taxes I owe to France in camels, ostriches, cattle, sheep, goats, millet, rice, butter, or even in captives, I can comply. But if he insists that I give him these cookies he has shown me and which are baked in France, well, it means he wants to fight. I accept! But I warn him: the Tuareg, of which I am one, are in a fight like fish in water! ... Interpreter! Tell the Commandant to look at my arm. It is not less white and not less well-shaped than his. Let him look at my nose: it is not less well-set than his. I am as white as he is ... the only advantage the Commandant has over me, and which allows him to pester me with his "I want this" and "I don't want that", is that his country is stronger than mine'. 71

Here we find all the main elements together— the white, warrior chief, ready to sell his slaves to pay his taxes, ready to confront the French Commandant in a duel of honour, and realizing that if it wasn't for French military superiority, he would have ruled the country. This image of the Tamasheq can be found in many novels, but this quote comes from a Malian former colonial and post-colonial civil servant and distinguished member of the Keita regime. It is an example of the Malian regime's perception of the Kel Tamasheq. To paint the image at its most colourful and with the broadest of strokes – the Kel Tamasheq were thought of as a bunch of white, feudal, racist, pro-slavery, bellicose and lazy savage nomads, who were used as the vanguard of French neo-colonialist and neo-imperialist projects in the mineral-rich Sahara. As for the local non-Tamasheq population, until the 1940s it lived in fear that the departure of the French would almost certainly be followed by a renewed period of Tamasheq dominance. This fear reemerged with the outbreak of the second rebellion in 1990 as we shall see in chapter VIII.

As for the perception of and consequent dealings with the USRDA political elite from the Tamasheq side, it was not much better and, in a warped way, complementary to the images held by the former. Consider the following quote, taken by a French officer in Algeria from a few Kel Adagh travellers in 1960 –

'What can blacks rule over when they are only good to be slaves?'72

To paint the picture at its crudest – the Tamasheq political elite saw the politicians and inhabitants of the South as an overwhelming mass of religiously ignorant and uncivilised blacks with whom they had nothing in

71 Bâ, A., Oui mon commandant! (Paris 1994), 172. As Bâ explains, cookies was the name for French silver 5 franc coins.

common and with whom they either had nothing to do or who they had previously dominated. Certainly, such people were unfit to command the Kel Tamasheq, especially since prior to the French conquest the Kel Tamasheq had commanded them. Furthermore, the Kel Tamasheq leaders feared that the small cultural and economic minority of nomads would be left out of politics and power if they were included in the same state as this vast majority of sedentary Southerners. Again, this image was due to a lack of real contact, except for the populations of the Gounda and Gourma areas, and partly transmitted by the French. However, like the USRDA image of the Kel Tamasheq, Tamasheq fears about the USRDA’s intentions contained some truth.

Colonial images

The colonial period in AOF can be divided into three phases: a first phase of conquest and pacification, followed by a phase of functional administration and exploitation and a last phase of ‘development’ of the colonised. During the phases of colonial conquest and pacification, the Kel Tamasheq put up heavy military resistance with some major successes. This led to a stereotype of noble and fierce warriors once conquest and pacification was complete. The memories of their defeats and troubles in pacifying the Sahara were at the basis of French policy towards the Kel Tamasheq until well in the 1940s, which consisted solely of keeping ‘la paix française’ at all costs.

During the second phase of colonial rule, which can be called the phase of functional administration and exploitation, the Kel Tamasheq showed great deference and reticence towards the colonial system. Their attitude was considered as ‘reserved’ at its mildest or ‘deceitful’ and ‘medieval’ at its worst. On the other hand, there existed a great French interest in Tamasheq culture during and after this period. Certain cultural peculiarities, real or imagined, such as the matrilineal transfer of power; a certain amount of liberty in gender relations described as a ‘courting culture’; men veiling their faces for women and not the other way around in contrast to other Muslim societies; and the hierarchical structure of society, often (wrongly) compared to the European feudal system, with ‘white’ nobles on top and ‘black’ slaves at the bottom. It all helped to transform the Kel Tamasheq from real people into the quasi-mythical ‘lords of the desert’.

The myth of the ‘lords of the desert’, defiant and proud of their culture and traditions, had a tremendous impact on colonial policy towards the Kel Tamasheq during the third phase of colonial rule, that of ‘development’ during the 1940s and 1950s. The colonial administration saw no problem in transforming and modernizing society in the heartlands of the French Sudan – the Mande and Bambara areas – but its policy was ‘protective’, in Donald Horowitz’ meaning of the term, towards the culture and traditions of Tamasheq society. Hence, the Kel Tamasheq were exempted from forced military conscription, forced labour, and French education, which would destroy their traditional way of life.
This protective attitude was developed by local French administrators. Service in the Sahara attracted a certain kind of men. Their attitude towards the Kel Tamasheq has been nicely evaluated by former Commandant du Cercle Jean Clauzel as 'a double state of mind with partly contradictory orientations – a preoccupation with surveillance, attraction and sympathy'. In some cases this attraction and sympathy resulted in civil or military officers 'going native'. In general it led to a resistance to any change in the Tamasheq way of life. It also meant the adoption of what the French thought to be the Tamasheq perception of their neighbours. This perception cannot be described other than at least 'racial'. The Kel Tamasheq of the Hamito-Semitic race, living their harsh nomadic life in the Sahara, were naturally of a higher order than the black inhabitants of the French Sudan, and saw themselves as their natural lords and masters. This supposedly indigenous view of social and racial relations can be sensed in colonial reports and was then internalised by both the Kel Tamasheq and the Malian administration, as is clearly illustrated in the quotes at the beginning of this chapter.

The process of colonial image-making was completed, and in some cases images were reinforced by events in the formalised political arena of the late colonial period, both in French Sudan and in the wider Saharan area.

**Black slaves, the bellah question**

One of the main prejudices that were held against the Kel Tamasheq, is that they were pro-slavers and slave holders. This prejudice held some truth in the late colonial period, during which the new Sudanese elite formed its opinion of the Kel Tamasheq. Besides being a basis for prejudice, the emancipation of the former Tamasheq and Moorish slaves, the bellah and haratin, became one of the USRDA’s major campaign themes in the North during the 1950s. In addressing their emancipation, the USRDA hoped to gain the votes of the former slaves and to profile itself as the champion of social equality and liberty. It also served to attack the main reason for prolonged French colonial dominancy – the mission civilisatrice française. This subject became known as 'the bellah question'.

Formally denying the existence of slavery in Arab and Tamasheq society after its abolition in 1905, the French had never done much to change the social or economic situation of former slaves, thus perpetuating their servitude. This changed with the first election of the Conseil général in 1946. Since they were officially free people, slaves had the right to be enfranchised and cast their vote. This was first brought to their attention in the Menaka area by both PSP and USRDA campaigners. They told the bellah population that they could elect an African who would certainly advocate their rights to the administration and their former masters. Many slaves managed to reach the ballot box. They interpreted their vote as an

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act of liberation, calling the voting bulletins 'freedom papers'. The effect of these elections in the Menaka area was that many slaves left their masters, taking part of their masters' herds with them. The end result was twofold. First the colonial administration finally took the issue of prolonged servitude of the former slaves seriously and took measures to promote their social and economic emancipation. Second, the USRDA took 'la question bellah' as its battle horse in the North and did not dismount until the fall of their regime in 1968.

The persistence of slavery in French Sudan gave the USRDA an argument to put French presence to discussion. After all, continuing French governance over Africans was publicly based on the idea of the 'mission civilicatrice française'. The abolition of slavery was part of that mission. The open failure to put this practice to an end undermined the colonial raison d'être. Sure enough, servile conditions persisted (and persist) in all Sudanese societies. But continued servitude was (and is) literally most visible among the Moors and the Kel Tamasheq. First, the difference in physical appearance between former slaves and former masters was clear to see. Second, in the Sahara, the colonial administration had not created the infrastructure or social devices which had helped to emancipate the slaves in other parts of AOF. There were few villages de liberté, liberty villages, and no labour or army recruitment which had offered slaves the means to leave their masters elsewhere. Pastoral existence and ownership of herds made it difficult for former slaves to leave their masters while remaining in their region of origin. This is particularly true in the extreme north, where agriculture is virtually impossible. However, it was less valid in the Niger Bend where agriculture is possible and where many former slaves lived in villages and practised agriculture. Finally, colonial policy towards slavery in Tamasheq society was based on political interests. Collaborative groups, such as the Kel Hoggar and the Kel Adagh, had been allowed to keep their slaves and even acquire some more, while resistant groups, such as the Ouillimiden Kel Ataram and Kel Denneg saw their former slaves being dislocated from their influence.

Thus, the efforts of the USRDA to abolish servitude, the most prominent of all social inequalities, became focused on Tamasheq and Moorish society. Another reason the USRDA concentrated its efforts in the north was that it hoped to gain the electoral support of the liberated slaves. After all, the bellah constituted the majority of the nomadic population in the Niger Bend.


75 For their present persistence, see Mann (2000), op. cit., 220-275.


The reaction of the colonial government to the ‘bellah question’ was the gradual development of a policy of social and economic emancipation. Most of this policy was based on the practical measures taken by the Commandant de Cercle Menaka to resolve the problems after the 1946 elections. These were – the administrative fissure between former slaves and former masters by giving the slaves their own identity cards, the redistribution of cattle between former slaves and masters, and the creation of separate bellah fractions. These measures were copied by the Gouverneur Générale in Dakar and dispatched as a basis for the emancipation policy of all bellah in 1949.

In the Kidal area, USRDA activists and schoolteachers Amadou Bâ and Cheick Bathily tried to use the ‘bellah question’ to promote the USRDA cause in the late 1950s. Both Amadou Bâ and Cheick Bathily were teachers at the nomad school of the Adagh. As an active USRDA member, Bâ quickly clashed with the French administrators and with the local population which was reluctant to send their children to school in the first place. The same held for Bathily, who was of slave origins himself. The local administration finally managed to get Bâ and Bathily replaced. The USRDA and Bâ did not give up their efforts to win Kidal for the USRDA through the ‘bellah question’ but –

‘The small number of servants diminishes their propaganda opportunities. They try nevertheless. Mr Bâ Amadou, who is no longer in service in Kidal, nevertheless returns each year by airplane to Tessalit, from where he travels on camel to the centres of Aguelhoc, Kidal, Menaka and perhaps Ansongo. He also visits the camps where he tries to bring up the “servant question”.

In the Niger Bend, the campaigns of the USRDA had more impact, since the number of slaves who could be emancipated lay much higher. In 1955, at the advent of the 1956 elections for the Assemblée Territoriale, the USRDA made the bellah question one of its main campaign themes in the Cercle Gao.

‘Even before the start of the electoral campaign [the USRDA] seems to orient its actions on two issues in the central Subdivision: [...] A strong
interest in the nomadic tribes in general and in the bellah question in particular. The current policy of the administration in this matter is closely scrutinised.  

An illustrative example of the bellah question was the ‘Norben affair’ of 1955 in the Cercle Gourma Rharou. The Norben are a community of so called iklan n eguef – ‘slaves of the dunes’ – communities of sedentary Tamasheq slaves who practice agriculture and tend the herds of their masters, but who do not live in their masters’ camps. Under the influence of the USRDA campaign, the Norben had claimed that the herds under their custody actually belonged to them and consequently appropriated them. Their former masters, the Kel Gheris fraction, did not accept this behaviour and raided the Norben to reclaim their animals. It came to a trial at the traditional court of Gourma Rharou which ruled in favour of the Kel Gheris. However, the Commandant du Cercle overruled its judgement. He decided that the Norben would no longer be part of their former masters’ fraction, but would form an independent Norben fraction from now on. Furthermore he apportioned them more than half of the herds they had appropriated from the Kel Gheris. Thus, the Norben were emancipated, the bellah question in Gourma Rharou was solved.

**The slave trade to Mecca**

The USRDA’s interest and the actuality of the problem were accentuated by notorious scandals over slave trade in the 1950s, some of which involved Kel Tamasheq. In 1948 Mohamed Ali ag Attaher Insar, former chief of the Kel Intessar and former PSP senator in the Assemblée Territoriale, left to perform the Hajj and to travel extensively throughout the Middle East and the Maghreb. With him travelled some of his family members, who he wished to enrol in educational institutions in the Middle East, and also some of his servants. In 1954 one of these servants, called Awad el Djouh, appeared in Niamey, where he posed a formal complaint to the Niamey Chief of Police against his former master. Awad el Djouh accused Mohamed Ali of having sold him in Saudi Arabia as a slave to a Saudi. The case was brought to trial in Bamako, where it was diverted from its original focus as a slave trade case to a case over working conditions and salary. Obviously, no French politician or administrator wanted this case to become too important or publicly known. The case was judged at the Bamako Tribunal de Travail, which in its judgement of 10

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83 Based on Winter (1984), op. cit.

84 Ag Attaher Insar (1990), op. cit.

November 1954 declared itself incompetent to deal with the matter "ratione loci". Awad el Djouh went in appeal at the Tribunal de Première Instance, which validated the judgement of the Tribunal de Travail and returned the case to this court. In its second judgement of 30 November 1955, the Tribunal de Travail restated its incompetence. In a letter to the Gouverneur of French Sudan, the Gouverneur Général in Dakar decided that –

'The competent Tribunal in this Territory is the Juge de Paix of extended competence in Gao to which the Procureur général will direct himself confidentially, to draw his attention on the social (and political) effects of the judgement he will be called to make.'

Despite these precautions, the affair became known. In 1956 the Commission on Social Affairs of the Assemblée of the Union française (the case did not make it to the French Senate) held an inquiry into the existence of slave trade in the territories of the Union. The results of the inquiry were published in the Journal Officiel de la République Française, 15 February 1956, and that was the end of it.

The case of Mohamed Ali did not stand alone. In 1957 the Commandant du Subdivision nomade of Tahoua suspected members of the Izawiten tribe who went on Hajj had taken their slaves with them to sell in Mecca. However –

'Abarad, chief of the 1st group, who is in Tahoua these days and who benefitted from a free journey to Mecca last year, which allowed him to visit his subjects [there], freely admits that the white Izawitens have taken their servants with them to Mecca, but contests information according to which the latter are sold. According to him, his people rent out the services of their Iklans to subsist.'

It should be said directly that the Kel Tamasheq were not the only ones in AOF who engaged in a blossoming slave trade to the Arabian Peninsula in the 1950s. Hergé’s famous Tin Tin comic Cokes in Stock was based on these scandals and made them further known among a larger public. The sale of slaves in the 1950s also sparked the interest of the English travel-writer Robin Maugham, who suggested to the British Anti-Slavery Society to investigate the matter. In 1958, Maugham set out to Timbuktu to ‘discover the truth about slavery’. In order to prove his point – that slavery still existed in the Timbuktu area – Maugham was determined to buy and redeem a slave himself. He managed to do so under questionable

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circumstances. Whatever might have been the case, his account of his travels and acquisition made the press in England. He was received by politicians and generally given quite some attention.

Stories about these cases of slave trade are not unknown in Tamashaq society. One informant said Mohamed Ali has never denied that he sold some of his slaves in Mecca, but that he acted to their benefit. They would have a much better life in Mecca than he could give them in French Sudan. Whatever might have been the intentions of the sellers, it goes without saying that these affairs did no good whatsoever to the reputation of the Kel Tamashaq.

**White lords, racism**

Another influential stereotypical idea of the Kel Tamashaq is that they are racism, who see themselves as both white and superior to the black population. This stereotype is strongly connected to the stereotype of them as slave holders outlined above. How far this stereotype is valid will be discussed below and in the next Chapter. The point is that both the French and the new African elite held this stereotype and appreciated it in different ways.

The French obsession with racial difference linked to social inequality at the beginning of the colonial period can be easily explained. The conquerors of the Sahara found a society close to what they had in mind themselves for Africa's future – whites dominating blacks. However, the persistence of this obsession in the late colonial period is less easy to explain, but is very likely to have still been based on ideas of white superiority, and linked to an idea of white physical inaptitude to labour in Africa. Thus, a circular of the Governor General in Dakar on the *bellah* question in 1949 still included observations such as –

'It is a striking observation that populations living in servile conditions are to be found in the Saharan and Sahelian zones of West Africa, where all attempts at liberation are blocked by particular difficulties: the existence of a nomad population of the white race which, for historical and physical reasons, [...] can hardly be forced to perform manual labour.'

Whatever its reasons, the image of the 'white' Kel Tamashaq and Moors dominating 'black' servants persevered. The social and economic emancipation of the slaves was postponed partly for this reason, and only dealt with at the instigation of Sudanese politicians. The stereotype of

88 Reading his account of the affair, one is left with the impression that the slightly naive Maugham, who made no secret of his interests to the local population, has been made to believe that he had actually bought a slave. The people who proposed the auction might well have set him up, with the consent of all actors involved, except for Maugham of course. Maugham, R., *The slaves of Timbuktu- A horrifying investigation of the vicious slave-trade in present-day West Africa* (2nd. ed. London 1967).

89 Haut Conseiller, Directoraat General Interieur no. 730 INT/ AP2 aux Gouverneurs Mauritanie, Soudan, Niger, 17/08/1949. ACK.
Tamasheq society as racially divided between ‘white’ lords and ‘black’ slaves had by then been absorbed by the Malian political elite, often colonial civil servants themselves.

The Sudanese political elite could not help but regard certain other exceptions on colonial practice made for Tamasheq society, as being based on a racist preference for the ‘white’ nomads over other, ‘black’, colonial subjects. For example, the ‘white’ Kel Tamasheq and Moors have always been exempted from conscription in the colonial army. That armed service gave some advantages to the conscripts after their service – exemption from forced labour, a small pension and some status at a local level, was forgotten. However, their ‘black’ slaves were enlisted in the colonial armies, which seems to indicate that the exemption of the Kel Tamasheq from conscription was based on racial rather than ethnic characteristics. A second privilege was the exemption of the nomads from forced labour. Indeed, forced labour took a heavy toll in Southern Sudanese societies, and it must have soured the conscripted labourers in the Niger Bend to see their nomadic neighbours exempted.

All these exceptions led many other Sudanese to believe the Kel Tamasheq were the French colonial ‘darlings’. In terms more appropriate to the USRDA, they were the ‘vanguard of French neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism’. This belief was further confirmed by Tamasheq involvement in French and Moroccan attempts to keep or enlarge the latters’ Saharan possessions, to the detriment of the Malian state-to-be.

International complications

The fear of USRDA leaders for Tamasheq political opposition to their rule would come to a pre-colonial height between 1956 and 1959, when the territorial integrity of the French Sudan came under attack from three sides. First, the French attempted to keep the Sahara French through the OCRS. Second, the Moroccan Istiqlal party claimed a part of the Sudanese north on historical grounds, supported by claims on a greater Mauritania from a small political party, the third side in the conflict, in French Sudan – the Nahda al-Wattaniyya al-Mauritaniyya, or Mauritanian Renaissance Party.

The OCRS

The OCRS was an attempt to keep the Sahara French when it became clear that the Sahara would be lost for France after the coming independence of the African territories. French politicians saw this as a great loss since in the late 1950s petrol, natural gas and other mineral riches had been discovered in the Sahara. The idea to unify the Sahara into one territory dates from 1952, when the Senators Pierre Cornet and Pierre July had already proposed to regroup the Sahara into one

autonomous Région or a Département. Their propositions were voted down in the National Assembly.\textsuperscript{91}

In 1956, the idea resurfaced with more urgency for three main reasons. First, in February 1956, oil was struck in Algeria near the Libyan border and in the northernmost part of the Tamashq world.\textsuperscript{92} Five months later, the largest oil well in Algeria until present started spouting its riches at Hassi Messaoud, while natural gaz was pumped up simultaneously at Hassi R'mel. At Colomb-Béchar, coal was already mined. Throughout the 1950s, in the Hoggar mountains, various metals were found and in Mauritania, fosfor and iron ore were located. The discovery of natural gas, petroleum and other minerals transformed the Sahara from a worthless stretch of sand and rocks into a potential goldmine. Second, the ongoing war in Algeria was threatening to spread into the Sahara, which would endanger the effective exploitation of this mineral potential. It was believed that unifying the Sahara into one territorial and administrative unit would facilitate countering military and propaganda actions from the Forces de Libération Nationale – FLN – the Algerian Liberation Army. Third, the imminent independence of the sub-Saharan territories and the independence of the Maghreb could mean a loss of Saharan riches for France. This was made clear by the Moroccan claims on Mauritania, South Western Algeria and Northern Mali, and the subsequent Moroccan invasion of Mauritania in 1956.

The parliamentary debates, bills and amendments on the Sahara between 1956 and 1957 show the ambiguity of the plan to unify the Sahara and the resistance to these plans from African politicians. In March 1956, several different proposals were made in the National Assembly for Saharan unification. Proposition 1131 proposed to 'erect the total Saharan zone in a group of three French Départements with special status called Afrique saharienne française. Proposition 1198 simply proposed to 'proclaim the French Sahara a “National Territory”', as did propositions 1068 and 1627.\textsuperscript{93} What all these plans had in common, was the idea that the Sahara should be put under direct French metropolitan rule. The Sahara was seen as 'French property', a mineral rich no-mans-land, to be efficiently exploited and administered.

However, none of these projects had included Mauritania or the Sudanese, Nigerien, or Chadian parts of the Sahara. When the members of the Political Bureau of the Ministry of Overseas Territories discovered that these Saharan territories were not included, they brought this to the

\textsuperscript{91} Annexe au proces-verbal de la séance de l’Assemblée Nationale du 9 mars 1956. ANSOM - 1affpol/2321/3.


attention of their superiors. Overseas Territories was of the opinion that non-inclusion of the Saharan zones of AOF within a new Saharan territory would only enhance the administrative chaos. However, since all projects spoke of ‘nationalizing the Sahara’, their idea to include the Saharan parts of these territories within the new ‘national Sahara’ met fierce resistance from African politicians.

One problem in the debates about administrative unification was how to delimit the French Sahara. To the west, north and east, this problem was easily solved. The French Sahara started in the west at the border of the Spanish Sahara. It ended to the north at the Moroccan border and the non-Saharan Algerian Départements and in the east at the border between Chad and the Sudanese Republic. Problems arose in the south. First, the leaders of Chad, Niger and French Sudan did not relish the prospect of losing part of their national territory and the potential mineral riches it might conceal. The Sudanese leaders in particular fiercely opposed any territorial and political reorganisation which could be detrimental to their ‘national territory’.

A second problem was on what criteria the border between Sahara and Sahel should be drawn. On one side of the argument, the supporters of the Saharan unification believed the Sahara ended where the Sudan started. Here Sudan meant the original Arabic bilād es-sudān – the ‘land of the blacks’. Both the Moors and the Kel Tamasheq were seen as racially white. Accordingly, it was felt that those areas inhabited by the Moors and the Kel Tamasheq were Saharan, and areas inhabited by the black population were not. This argument was countered by the French opposition to territorial restructuring. They stated that many Moors and Kel Tamasheq were black, that the majority of the Kel Tamasheq lived as far south as the Niger Bend and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso), which could hardly be called Saharan, and that these populations were socially and economically interwoven with the populations surrounding them. Therefore, the idea of creating a new administratively unified Saharan territory including the AOF parts of the Sahara would not end chaos.

Eventually, the project of unifying the Sahara was put in the trusted hands of the Ivoirien RDA leader and French Minister of State Félix Houphouët-Boigny who managed to remove all the political angles. His focus was on the creation of an Organisation Commune des Régions Sahariennes – OCRS, in which no mention was made of any political or territorial reorganisation, or of the delimiting of Saharan borders. All Boigny proposed to do, was to create an umbrella structure to coordinate economic and social developments in the Sahara, regardless of territory or state. Nevertheless, he had to defend his project against the Sudanese

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95 Based on Affaires politiques, Sahara, administration générale 1947-1958. ANSOM - 1affpol/2207/1; Affaires politiques, Sahara, administration générale, 1951-1958. OCRS, correspondance, débats, études (militaire, sociale linguistique etc...). ANSOM - 1affpol/2208/1. Under embargo until 2019.
leaders who still looked suspiciously on the OCRS as a French plan to annex their Saharan territory. Even in the final debates on Boigny’s project, the Sudanese Senator Amadou Bà proposed to amend the law that —

‘The organisation of the Saharan regions should in no case lead to the creation of an autonomous territory’.  

After further debate Boigny managed to convince the Sudanese of the good intentions of the OCRS. His legal proposition was accepted and the OCRS was created on 10 January 1957. For the French Sudan this meant the inclusion of the Saharan parts of the Cercles Goundam, Timbuktu and Gao in the new structure.

Suspicions were revived however, by the ensuing creation of a Ministry of Saharan Affairs, headed by Max Lejeune, former secretary of state at the Ministry of Defence. From that point onwards, the political leaders of the AOF were no longer the only ones to oppose the OCRS. The Ministry of Saharan Affairs had been created to the detriment of the competence of the Ministry of Overseas Territories. Thus, the African politicians were now backed by some colonial administrators in AOF, who did not want to lose a part of their job or influence, and the Ministry of Overseas Territories, which felt likewise.

**Marcel Cardaire and the Cadi of Timbuktu**

Fierce defenders of the OCRS existed within the French administration and military services, and also among the Moorish and Kel Tamasheq elite. Of these, two figures in particular stand out – the French intelligence officer in French Sudan Marcel Cardaire, and the influential Moorish notable Mohamed Mahmoud oul Cheick, better known as 'the Cadi of Timbuktu'.

Of all the officers who served in French Sudan and in the Sahara in the late 1950s Marcel Cardaire was probably the most influential and certainly the best known. An officer in the Colonial Infantry, in 1954 Cardaire was posted in French Sudan where he was integrated in the military intelligence service. Cardaire’s involvement in Saharan affairs took off in October 1956, when he was asked by the Ministry of Defence to study the Spanish Sahara, the Saharan areas of Algeria and the connections of its inhabitants with the AOF in political and religious matters. This request was connected to the conflict between Morocco and France over Mauritania, and the ongoing Algerian war of independence.

Cardaire took Mohamed Mahmoud oul Cheick as his travel companion and interpreter, because of his connections with the communities he

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wanted to visit. They visited Tindouf, Atar, Colomb-Béchar, Ouargla, Ghardaïa, and Algiers. Cardaire was rightly convinced that to the inhabitants of the Sahara, the French administrative frontiers played no role whatsoever when it came to information, affiliation and travel. Such peoples like the Arab Rgeibat, Tajakant and Berabish tribes, and the Kel Tamasheq thought and acted in interlinking networks of commerce, clan, and family affiliation extending from Colomb-Béchar, through Tindouf to Timbuktu and Agadez. In these networks Cardaire saw a possible danger for continued French control over the Sahara, should local leaders decide to side with Morocco or the FLN. In his report Cardaire recommended that the borders between Algeria and AOF should be considered non-existent when it came to intelligence and military operations. Preferably the borders should be officially abolished. Furthermore, France should take actions among the Saharan population to ensure their continued loyalty to France, if existing, or to win their loyalty to the detriment of pan-Arab and Moroccan or Algerian nationalist sentiments. His ideas and recommendations would return later that year in the debates surrounding the OCRS.

If there has been one advocate of the OCRS and the loyalty of the Saharan population to France, it is undoubtedly Mohamed Mahmoud ould Cheick, the ‘Cadi of Timbuktu’ and principal informant to Cardaire on Saharan matters. Mohamed Mahmoud ould Cheick was the chief of the Ahel Arouan tribe of the Berabish federation living north of Timbuktu. He was installed as Cadi in Timbuktu in 1932, but had to resign his post in 1935, due to resistance from the local religious elite. Although he was reinstalled in his function, he resigned definitely in 1939. Nevertheless he kept using his title of Cadi, and remained involved in the social and political games of the Tamasheq chiefs’ milieu. His main advantage over other Moorish and Tamasheq chiefs was that he could speak, read and write French. Although he did support their policy and was befriended by its leaders (except for Mohamed Ali ag Attaher Insar, who was a bitter enemy), the Cadi never joined the PSP. The Cadi’s finest hour came with the creation of the OCRS.

In 1957, the Cadi started a campaign to promote the OCRS among the Saharan chiefs and notables, and to make their support for the OCRS and France known to the outside world. His campaign was based on the following arguments 1) The inhabitants of the Sahara are full citizens of


100 Affaires politiques, Soudan, administration générale, évolution politique (rapports, télégrammes officielles, presse), 1947-1957. ANSOM - 1affpol/2198/11.

101 After the PSP's dissolution, the Cadi formed a new party - the parti du Rassemblement du Soudan - together with PSP's second man Mamadoun Dicko. This party was short lived. Schachter-Morgenthau (1964), op. cit., 298.
France according to the *Loi-cadre* of 1956. 2) They have become French subjects by signing treaties with France, and not with the leaders of the independence movements of the South with whom they feel no affiliation. 3) They are white and do not want to be incorporated into a territory or state dominated by blacks. 4) They have their own specific culture and society and do not want to be incorporated into a North African state or territory.

The Cadi maintained therefore that the inhabitants of the Sahara should either be given their own territory within the *Union française*, or should remain French citizens like they were at that moment. In January 1957, shortly after the creation of the OCRS, the Cadi gave an interview to the Parisian monthly *Le Télégramme de Paris*, in which he explained this point of view. On 30 October 1957 he wrote a letter of petition addressed to President de Gaulle, signed by 'the notables and merchants of Timbuktu'. This letter was published in *Le Télégramme de Paris* in December 1957.

'If there exists a right to self determination for a people, we would like to believe that we are allowed to make our aspirations known. We declare without restrictions that we already are and want to remain French Muslims and an integral part of the French Republic. We manifest our formal opposition to being integrated in an autonomous or federalist Black Africa or North Africa. [...] We demand the incorporation of our country in the French Sahara of which we are part, historically, emotionally and ethnically. [...] France has not found us under Sudanese domination. We have the strongest confidence that glorious France will not give us away freely to anyone'.

This would not be his last letter of petition. From December 1957 to February 1958 the Cadi travelled extensively through the Sahara by military transport supplied by his army and intelligence connections. He first travelled to Ouargla, where a similar petition to de Gaulle was written and signed in the name of the traditional chiefs, the Aghas, Caidis, Chioukhs, the religious leaders, the notables and merchants of Ouargla. In Tindouf, he wrote a third letter of petition, which was signed by the Caidis, Kebar, merchants, the Cadi, the Imam, the notables of the Tajakant and Rgeibat. The letter was written in French and Arabic and signed and sealed first by Abdallah oul Sidi Senhour, Caid of Tindouf, followed by 152 other notables. The Cadi also visited the Hoggar and Ajjer areas in Southern Algeria, but apparently the chiefs and notables in these regions saw

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103 Les Caidis, Kebar, Commerçants; le Cadi, l'Imam, les Notables Tajakant et Rgeibat; et tout ceux qui ont soussigné à Monsieur le Président de la République Française, Tindouf 05/02/1958. Fonds privées, Papiers Lesourd, Carton 2. SHAT - 1K297. The letter in French is typewritten as are the names of the signatories. The Arabic version is handwritten, the names of the signatories are in the same handwriting.
nothing of worth in his project and refused to sign a petition. Back in Timbuktu, he wrote a fourth letter, in the name of the traditional chiefs, notables and merchants of the Niger Bend, Timbuktu, Gao and Goundam, in which he restated the demands of his letter of 30 October 1957. This last letter, the longest, was signed by 276 persons.

Clearly, Mohamed Mahmoud was not acting alone. First, he had the help of French officers, who hoped to use the Cadi as the spokesman in a military strategy to unite what was referred to as the ‘Saharan block’ – the Kel Tamashiq and Moors – against both the nationalist forces of Algeria and the African political resistance against the OCRS as a political territory. Second, the Ministry of Saharan Affairs, which was still contested internally by the Ministry of Overseas Territories and externally by the African politicians, welcomed the Cadi’s actions too. Apparently all signatories of the Cadi’s petition received a letter of receipt from the Minister of Saharan Affairs. Finally, the propositions of the Cadi must have struck a cord among the Kel Tamashiq notables, as they did decide to sign the petition.

**The effects of the Cadi’s campaign**

The Cadi’s actions were regarded with more than suspicion by the Sudanese political elite, who still strongly disapproved of the OCRS. In October 1957 the Sudanese Interior Minister Madeira Keita toured the North in order to see what was happening in the Sudanese part of the OCRS, the Cercles Goundam, Timbuktu and Gao. His reports were alarming to the USRDA. In Gourma Rharous, Kel Tamasheq raided the herds of their former bellah. In Rhergo, a tribal Chief had publicly offended the Conseiller Territorial for the USRDA Abdoulaye Nock, forbidding him to speak in public and finally challenging him to a sword duel. In the Cercle Goundam, free Tamashiq pillaged the bellah, and Mauritanian Moors entered the territory to campaign for a greater Mauritania (infra). In the cercle Gao, the Kounta Cheick Badi ould Hamooudi campaigned in favour of the OCRS and ‘the separation of whites and blacks’. The Kounta Cheick had already campaigned for more political awareness among the

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104 Ibidem.

105 Claudot-Hawad, H. (ed.), *Le politique dans l’histoire touarègue. Les Cahiers de l’IREMAM* 4 (1993), 133-151. Of all letters I have seen, this is the only one carrying signatures, most in Arabic, a few in French and many thumb prints. All signatories were inhabitants of the Niger Bend, none of the signatories was originating from the Azawad or Adagh. Strangely enough, some of them were Songhay.


Tamasheq and Moors in 1955 but to no avail. Inspired by the Cadi, he restarted his crusade. French reports about his activities and those of other Tamasheq chiefs confirmed USRDA anxieties. It seemed the chiefs believed they could ‘affirm in no discreet terms, their wish to be integrated into a still badly defined OCRS which is not favoured by the African leaders of Sudan’. The Sudanese representatives in France accused the Ministry of Saharan affairs and the OCRS of engaging in racist policies, putting the Saharans against the Southern Sudanese population in order to make the OCRS a political territory after all. The OCRS was directed by a Haute Conseil (High Commission) which acted as a means of control over the Ministry of Saharan affairs and as highest executive organ of the OCRS. At its inaugural session, Allassane Haidara, mayor of Timbuktu and prominent USRDA member, made clear that the Haute Conseil or the Ministry of Saharan Affairs should avoid to make the following ‘mistakes’: trying to transfer power from the Territorial Assemblies to the OCRS; trying to create a territory; and –

‘creating animosity between nomads and sedentary peoples and between the different ethnic groups of Sudan, Niger and Chad. Certain campaigns of agitation in Sudan lead to believe that this mistake is risked to be made’.

In French Sudan itself the USRDA leaders were well aware of the potential danger of the OCRS and the Cadi’s campaigns in favour of a Saharan Territory. The USRDA leaders therefore counteracted all attempts to put the OCRS into effect on Sudanese territory until the September 1958 referendum on the new French constitution and the creation of autonomous Republics out of the former Overseas Territories. Modibo Keita would later admit that one of the reasons the USRDA had campaigned for a ‘Yes’ on the acceptance of the new constitution and the Communauté française in the September 1958 referendum, was their fear that a ‘No’ would lead to French incursion on the Sudanese Sahara through the OCRS.

‘In fact, certain Commandants de Cercle in the Northern regions have created the myth of the nomad and the myth of the sedentary, the myth of the white and the myth of the black. They have created an embryo of opposition between white nomadic and sedentary African elements. If, by

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consequence, we had to adopt a standpoint which risked putting us in opposition to the solidly implanted colonial element under these conditions; well, then, surely, the Sudan would have had its northern part amputated.\footnote{113}

But even after the establishment of the Sudanese Republic in November 1958, the USRDA remained reluctant to OCRS projects on Sudanese territory and afraid of nomadic agitation in the North in favour of France. After Malian independence in 1960, the OCRS remained existent in Niger, Chad and Algeria until its independence in 1962. Mali, despite the visible financial and material advantages of the OCRS in Niger and Algeria, formally retreated from the organisation.

Mohamed Mahmoud ould Cheick, the Cadi of Timbuktu (right), on a boat. Courtesy of Ghislaine Lydon, who received this picture from Mohamed Mahmoud’s family.
Morocco and greater Mauritania

The OCRS project was not the only danger menacing the territorial integrity of the French Sudan or currying favour with Tamasheq and Moorish leaders. Although the direct impact was smaller, troubles in and over Mauritania would to some extent affect the Northern parts of the French Sudan as well. Again, Moorish and Tamasheq leaders of Sudanese origins were involved.

On 2 March 1956 the Kingdom of Morocco became an independent state under the leadership of Sultan Mohamed V. The move to independence had been guided by the nationalist party Istiqlâl. However, many felt that large parts of the country were still under foreign domination. The leaders of the Istiqlâl were divided into two camps. The left wing concentrated on political reforms within Morocco, while the right wing under Allal al-Fassi strived for the liberation of what it called al-Maghreb al-Aksâ – literally the ‘far west’ and here meaning ‘Greater Morocco’. In July 1956, Allal al-Fassi presented a Map of ‘the Moroccan Sharifian Kingdom in her natural and historical borders’. The map showed what the Istiqlâl considered as the liberated parts of Morocco and those it considered to be under foreign tutelage, but part of Morocco. These ‘occupied areas’ included the Spanish Sahara, Mauritania, the Algerian Territoire des Oasis and the French Sudan from the Algerian border at Bordj Mokhtar south-eastwards, via Arouan to Néma at the Mauritanian border of French Sudan. Although these claims were vast, the actual dispute over territories in the 1950s would be concentrated on Mauritania.

Both sides to the conflict – France and Morocco – used diplomacy, press campaigns and military action to win the Mauritanian population and other Saharans to their side. Part of the Mauritanian population, politicians and other elite agreed with the Moroccan claims. They were headed by Horma ould Babana, a politician who had helped to found the Nahda al-Wattaniyya al-Mauritaniyya – the Mauritanian Renaissance Party, better known as ‘the Nahda’. Mokhtar ould Daddah, leader of the Parti du Regroupement Mauritanien (PRM) was the head of the pro-French part of the Mauritanian elite. Both sides tried to convince the chiefs and religious leaders in Mauritania to join their side. The struggle did not stay on the level of propaganda and diplomacy. On 13 January 1957, Mauritania was invaded by the Jaish li Takhir al-Maghrebiyya or Armée de Libération Marocaine (ALM) – the Moroccan Liberation Army. The ALM fighters had to cross the Spanish Seguie al-Hamra and Rio d’Oro to get to Mauritania. According to French sources, the Spanish authorities let the ALM pass for two reasons. First, they did not have the means to stop them. Second, the Spanish were said to have struck an accord with the Istiqlâl to let the ALM into

114 Obdeijn, H., P. De Mas, Ph. Hermans, Geschiedenis van Marokko (Amsterdam 1999), 150-157.
Mauritania unhindered in exchange for the dropping of Moroccan claims on Sidi Ifni, Ceuta and Mellila, three Spanish enclaves in Morocco. In September 1958, a second army of about 6000 ALM troops stood at the border between Morocco and the Spanish Sahara, ready to invade Mauritania. By that time, the Spanish and French had joined forces and drove the ALM troops out of the Spanish Sahara, back to Morocco. The Moroccans would not return before 1973.

The Moroccans did not pay much attention to their claims on Sudan and Algeria, concentrating all their efforts on Mauritania. The Moorish community in French Sudan, on the other hand, did focus much of their attention on these claims. Some of the Moorish political elite in French Sudan had joined the Mauritanian Nahda al-Wattaniyya al-Mauritaniyya. This party was originally presided by Honna ould Babana in opposition to Mokhtar ould Daddah’s PRM. The NWM originally stood for a greater Mauritania, comprising the Spanish Sahara and part of the French Sudan.

French Sudan had already lost the area around Nema and Timbedgha to Mauritania in 1944. This border change incorporated a large number of Moors in Mauritania who had formerly been under the administration of French Sudan. The Moors who stayed behind in French Sudan were not happy with this. They pleaded that their territory should be included in Mauritania as well. With the creation of the Nahda in Mauritania in 1958, a sub-branch of the party was created in French Sudan with sections around Kayes and Nara. Later, local sections were founded in Timbuktu and Gao as well. The ‘Sudanese part’ of greater Mauritania was claimed by this Sudanese branch, and not by its Mauritanian mother party.

The leader of the Sudanese branch of the Nahda was Bouyagi ould Abidine, a Moor born in 1919 around Timbedgha, the Cercle which French Sudan lost to Mauritania. After his education at the Ecole Primaire Supérieure in Bamako he worked for the Post Service. He was stationed first in Gao, then in Nema from where he was transferred to Saint Louis. In 1952 Bouyagi presented himself for the Territorial Assembly elections, but was not elected. He then joined the Nahda. From 1955 to 1958 he was stationed in Bamako. There, right in the den of the Sudanese nationalists, he focused most of his activity in favour of Greater Mauritania. By 1958, with the Franco-Moroccan war in Mauritania at its height, the Nahda under Bouyagi’s leadership had become pro-Moroccan, while maintaining the idea of a greater Mauritania. Thus in the eyes of the Nahda, greater Mauritania equalled greater Morocco and should in all cases include the Moorish inhabited parts of French Sudan.

The Moroccan claims were largely concentrated on Mauritania, but this did not prevent Sudanese politicians and French administrators from

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118 Based on; Affaires politiques, Mauritanie, administration générale 1957. Fiche concernant Bouyagi ould Abidine. ANSM - 1aFpol/2172/2. Under embargo.
worrying about the case for a large part of 1957 and 1958. The seriousness of the Moroccan threat was clear from the intensity of the armed conflict in Mauritania. Most ALM fighters, well-armed and well-equipped, were local Moors. Fear arose among the French and the Sudanese elite that the Moors or the Kel Tamasheq from French Sudan would come into contact with the ALM. After all, Bouyagi could Abidine’s Nahda strived for the same goal as the Moroccans and the pro-Moroccan or pro-greater Mauritania Mauritanians did. That is, unification of Morocco, Mauritania and parts of French Sudan. Furthermore, his party was only a branch of the Mauritanian Nahda. Therefore, these French and Sudanese anguishs for Nahda - ALM links were not without reason. Many observers, French Commandants, intelligence and army personnel, were apprehensive of a massive Moorish exodus from French Sudan to Mauritania. The Sudanese leaders do not seem to have worried much about the Moroccan claims as much as they did about the French OCRS project. But they will have been well aware of Moorish support for the Moroccan cause, propagated by Bouyagi’s Nahda. Bouyagi’s activities will certainly not have taken away Sudanese suspicion towards the Moorish community. In reaction to these threats the USRDA leaders did everything they could to persuade the most influential Moorish chiefs, such as Bad oul Hammoadi, to take their side. To what extent they really were successful cannot be estimated.

**Conclusion**

In 1946 a new and last phase in the colonial history of French West Africa began, which can be labelled as ‘late colonialism’. France prepared for its retreat from AOF by gradually extending more rights and liberties to its colonial subjects. The main rights and liberties discussed in this chapter were the creation of political parties, the right to vote and the right to participate in debates on the legal shape of the French empire. During this process, political elites were created or transformed. These elites consisted mainly of French colonial servants of two kinds – French-educated lower rank personnel and colonial chiefs. Another characteristic of the new political elite was that it consisted mostly of inhabitants of the Sudanese heartlands; the Mande and Bambara regions. The inhabitants of the northern part of French Sudan, the Moors and the Kel Tamasheq, were less well represented, but not absent. It is often argued by scholars and some Kel Tamasheq alike that the Moors and the Kel Tamasheq had no interest in or understanding of the new political game. I hope to have shown that this was not the case. The Kel Tamasheq political elite did play its part in the new politics, but they placed their bets on the wrong horses.

French Sudan consisted of a number of different cultural and political spheres on a north-south axis. One can safely say that the further apart geographically, the less contact these spheres had. When true interaction is lacking, ideas and attitudes towards each other are mostly informed by stereotyped images. The stereotyped image the USRDA leaders had of the Kel Tamasheq and Moors was that they were white, feudal, pro-slavers and
colonial “darlings”. The image the Kel Tamasheq and Moors had of the Southern USRDA elite was that they were black usurpers of a power they had no right to have and which would upset social structure and power balances within society. These mutual images, especially those of the USRDA elite towards the Kel Tamasheq, confirmed by contemporary events, were the basis of political actions on both sides.

The Kel Tamasheq involvement in the slave trade to Saudi Arabia in the 1950s and collaboration in attempts to incorporate Northern French Sudan in other territories or states, confirmed the stereotype of them as white pro-slavers and ‘vassals of French neo-imperialism’. The USRDA’s stress on the ‘bellah question’ during their election campaigns and their attempts to curb the power of the chiefs, confirmed their stereotyped image of black or ‘foreign’ usurpers of power and destroyers of Northern society. Of course, in the eyes of the former slave population – the majority of the Kel Tamasheq in French Sudan – this stereotype did not apply. But to the political elite and the ‘common’ Kel Tamasheq of free descent, these events were threatening and the stereotype was a valid one.

Of course, these mutual stereotypes were made up of more complex elements than those described in this chapter. This will be the focus of the following two chapters. We will see that, after independence, these other elements also influenced or even directly shaped political and administrative attitudes and actions towards each other. Thus, a spiral of negative images and actions which started in the late-colonial period described here, led to open revolt in the Adagh in 1963; the subject of chapter IV.