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Radicalization, violence and (in) security

What 800 Sahelians have to say

International Research Report

Reda Benkirane, Scientific Director,

Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue

Perception study on the drivers of insecurity and violent extremism in the border regions of the Sahel

This research project has been carried out by the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.

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Translation

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« This survey has fostered a greater understanding of cross border areas and their populations»

A focus group participant in Dakar,
7 July 2015

"Be the voice of the voiceless.

It is a gaping wound for present and future generations."

Statement by a community leader in a focus group in Yaoundé
2-3 July 2015

"*There are no under-developed countries, there are only under-analysed,, underestimated and unloved (sous-aimées) countries"*

Jacques Berque (1910-1995)

"I am waging a war (Jihad) against you. Indeed ye are right because I am really combating for the Countenance of the Lord. But I am waging my Jihad through Knowledge (ulum) and Fearing the Lord (taqwa)"

Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba (1853-1927)

"1.The hunters declare:
Every life is a life.
It is true that a life comes into existence before another life
But no life is more 'ancient', more respectable than any other.
In the same way no one life is superior to any other.

2. The hunters declare:
As each life is a life, any wrong done unto a life requires reparation.
Consequently, no one should freely attack his neighbour,
no one should do wrong to his neighbour, no one should torment his fellow-man.

3. The hunters declare:
That each person should watch over their neighbour,
that each person should venerate their genitors,
that each person should educate their children as it should be done,
that each person should provide to the needs of their family."

The Mandé Charter, *Manden Kaliken*, *1222*

"Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely."

Qur'an (5, 32), 7th century

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Perception Study – Contents

The Perception Study has resulted in 9 reports as follows:

1. **International Research Report.**
   Radicalization, violence et (in)security. What 800 Sahelians have to say.
2. **Burkina Faso**: the rise of cross-border insecurity.
3. **Cameroon:** the political economy of violence in the Far North.
4. **Chad**: balancing needs and insecurity.
5. **Mali**: local conflict and the call for justice.
6. **Mauritania**: radicalization and citizenship.
7. **Niger**: instrumentalizing religion: the economy of insecurity.
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INTRODUCTION: AN 'EPIC, UNUSUAL AND STRATEGIC STUDY'

The research project on perceptions of insecurity and violent extremism drivers in the cross-border regions of the Sahel offered a unique opportunity to embark on a major and innovative study. At a regional level, it encompasses global issues such as armed violence, radicalization, jihadism and security and the scope of eight countries through their border areas. The project was designed and conducted without preconceptions as reflected in the generous and ambitious decision to listen to and take account of the views, perceptions and ideas of the region's own people. This complex exercise was difficult to plan and its implementation even more challenging. While this socio-anthropological research – undertaken in a humanitarian spirit – has been demanding and difficult throughout, its success has been dependent, above all, on the scientific team's commitment and determination. Furthermore, the helpful and co-operative spirit of the respondents, those who have been the principal objects of this research has been an invaluable asset. This study should enlighten, for a decade to come, debates on the challenges the Sahel will face.

In addition to the difficulty and danger involved, readers of this report should be aware of the experimental nature of this enquiry, which was undertaken simultaneously in eight Sahelian countries. This wide area of research, studied in depth over a short period of time, has opened up ideas for action and reflection which have hitherto been disregarded or insufficiently considered, thus assisting the promotion and reinforcement of security in the Sahel in its various expressions and aspects. It has also given access to fruitful lines of research (for the comprehension of the sociological origins of radicalization and ways to avoid a drift towards the economy of violence), and it has identified latent solidarity networks which may be mobilised for the improvement of the situation of populations suffering the destructive effects of conflict in the cross-border regions.

1. Perceptions: the challenges

In general, very little is known about how the populations most affected by armed violence, extremism and insecurity perceive and react to it. In fact, a dominant paradigm exists regarding these questions, which are generally seen from 'top-down' perspective by national and international institutions. These institutions opt for political, security, police and military responses to violent radicalism based on religion. Little or no consideration is given to the societies exposed to these phenomena, who are, however, able to offer the basis for an approach which relies instead on social cohesion and the reinforcement of the resilience of the countries of the Sahel in the face of such threats.

While perceptions and representations do not necessarily precisely reflect reality, they contribute towards conveying some idea of its depth, intensity and texture: its sound, its tonality and its contrasts. Most often what is 'perceived' is a distortion, an exaggerated vision of what is, in fact, 'lived'. However, the characteristic distance between what is lived and what is perceived may also take an inverted form, with the latter offering an attenuated and filtered reconstruction of reality. Thus, in Europe and in North America, terrorist acts affect very few victims but are exaggerated in terms of how they are perceived and represented. What is striking from the outset in the Sahel, however, is that for the respondents in the study, especially the women, who have directly experienced terror and violence. Their narrative account involves a kind of distancing from the frightful events which are associated with the inexpressible suffering that is represented by the murder of a person close to them, such as a father, brother, husband or neighbour. The respondents express themselves, for the most part, in a sober manner in describing the misfortunes and the mortal dangers they have suffered. In other words, what is perceived is not necessarily blurred by emotion. While some of the respondents, in fact most of them, live in a state of utter deprivation, the dignity and decency which emerges from what they have felt puts into perspective their lived experience, to some extent, serving to shut off their very real

fear, as if this were a way of taming it, circumscribing and finally defeating it. The responses of the 800 Sahelians who have been interviewed during this study reveal a practical rationality in the face of the challenges of radicalization, violence and insecurity, which is evinced by vulnerable individual actors whose circumstances are precarious and painful. There is much to be learned from them in terms of resistance and resilience. From the primary material represented by the perceptions of the respondents, this study has derived a number of operational concepts relating to "radicalization", "jihad" and "security".

Before making the attempt to understand how the Sahelians of the cross-border regions describe and conceive the phenomena linked to what is generally known in the international community as "violent extremism" and insecurity, the study needed to define the terms of the enquiry in simple expressions which were easily translatable into the local languages required during the interviews [1]. These terms do not necessarily make sense to a person living in sparsely populated regions where the presence of the state and its institutions remains, in the end, more symbolic than truly operational and systematic.

KEY RESEARCH TERMS

Insecurity

- A ***feeling*** or ***cause*** of danger, threat, fear, anxiety, unease.
- *An* ***Impression*** or ***observation*** of being unprotected in relation to dangers that might occur which could damage the vital interests of the individual or the social group.

Security

- A ***feeling*** or ***reason*** for calm, peace of mind, a lack of unease in relation to a present or future threat or danger. An ***Impression***, ***observation*** or ***certainty*** of being protected or defended if threatened; the existence of protectors.

Violent Extremism

- A ***propensity*** *or* ***inclination*** towards violence, whether verbal or through actions, increasing intolerance towards difference and the rejection or refusal of the Other.
- ***Rejection, refusal*** to coexist with those who live, think or believe differently, to accept the possibility of coexisting with those who are different, of accepting their presence, or of respecting them or having any relationship with them.
- ***Symbolic*** *or* ***verbal violence:*** may change quickly into real violence.

In an era where the image serves as symbol and primal fetish, in which the omnipresence of communication outweighs all other modes of existence and production, issues relating to perceptions and representations are of the highest importance, particularly those concerning conflict and new forms of warfare. In addition, whatever perspective may be adopted (sociological, political, religious, psychological, or that of the media), the manner in which violence and insecurity are described has much to say about their outward appearance. While political science is well acquainted with the phenomena of radicalization, especially in relation to Islamism, it struggles to describe this process from within, from the vantage point of those who are exposed to it at the forefront, whether as actors or targets. If everything is a matter of point of view, studies of perceptions at least offer a vision from this perspective of disparity, conflict and war. Such studies thus bring into play the multiplicity and relativity of points of view as a means of apprehending a complex reality which is often beyond the reach of analytic investigations framed within the classic disciplinary fields. This enables observers and policy-makers to operate on the differential between perceptions, such as those of the denizens of border zones as opposed to the inhabitants of the interior or the capital; those of the administrators as opposed to the administered; those of civilians as opposed to the military; those, in terms of development, between those who produce as opposed to those who demand; those of the young or women as opposed to the male "elders" of society; or those of the deprived as opposed to the upper class.

2. Methodology

Over a period of between five and eight days, 59 researchers made round trips totalling some 24,000 kilometres, covering the frontier zones linking Senegal to Mauritania and Mali, the zones linking Mali,

[1] The principal languages involved were: Hassaniya-Arabic, Peul/Pulaar/Fulfudé/Fulani, Wolof, Soninké, Tamasheq, Sonraï, Hausa, Kanouri, Mandara, Matakam, Awoussa, Toubou, Djerma, English, French.

Burkina Faso and Niger, and those of the countries bordering on Lake Chad, namely Chad, Nigeria and Cameroon. A questionnaire was used to collect responses from 698 individuals in all, spread throughout these eight countries of the Sahel including, in decreasing order, 147 respondents in Mali (21 per cent of the regional sample); 120 in Nigeria (17 per cent); 100 in Niger (14 per cent); 88 in Mauritania (12 per cent); 74 in Senegal (10 per cent); 71 in Chad (10 per cent); 60 in Burkina Faso (8 per cent); and 38 in Cameroon (5 per cent). Supplementary in-depth interviews were carried out with more than 50 people during additional consultations. Through these two stages of the inquiry process, the teams identified a pool of 80 key contacts who were subsequently invited to come to Abuja, Bamako, Dakar, N'Djamena, Niamey, Nouakchott, Ouagadougou and Yaoundé to compare and exchange their perceptions of the reasons for insecurity and violent extremism in their respective frontier zones. This pool of contacts, consisting of people who were well known and/or activists in their respective localities, informed the thinking on the study regarding the existing capacity for a 'bottom-up' dynamic of resilience. Interviews were also set up, to the extent this was possible, with those who sympathised with armed groups or with reformed group members. Lastly, national and international consultants were approached to produce case studies and conceptual analyses which were complementary to the empirical work of gathering and processing the data.

In Mauritania, the frontier zones where the research was carried out were the Prefectures of Hodh El Gharbi, Hodh Ech Chargui (in the far south-west), and Assaba (in the east), all three of which border on Mali, as well as the wilaya of Brakna (in the south-central area) which borders, in part, on the Senegal River. In Senegal, the areas where the research was undertaken were the northern regions of Podor and Rosso, as well as the east of the country (Kidira); while, in Mali, the three regions researched were Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu. In Burkina Faso, research was undertaken in six places on the frontiers with Mali and Niger (Markoye, Tin-Akoff, Oursi, Mamassi, Deou and Goudebou). In Niger, it was concentrated in the regions of Tchintabaraden and Zinder, and the research was supplemented by information gathered in the northern band of Tillabéri. In Nigeria the research took place in the States of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa, where – according to official representatives – it was the first time sociological research had been attempted in areas susceptible to Boko Haram violence (normally people from these regions would be interviewed in the capital, Abuja). In Cameroon, the research work was undertaken in the far north, in the three departments close to Lake Chad (Mayo-Tsanaga, Mayo-Sava, and Logone-et-Chari). In Chad, the research was centred on four crucial regions, the Lake, Kanem, Bahr el Gazel and the capital, N'Djamena, which is, itself, on the frontier.

The organisation of the research itself represented a substantial challenge. Problems arose from the recruitment of teams to administer the questionnaire (these were composed of teams of researchers and university personnel made up entirely of nationals from the countries concerned) as well as from the simultaneous initiation of research on the ground in all eight countries. Other issues were associated with the necessity to follow a protocol in relation to security; communication covering the entire group of researchers dispersed throughout the cross-border conflict zones; and the organisation of the transfer of the contact group of key respondents to the various capitals. Plans needed to be constantly revised to react to circumstances and to various constraints. These included administrative considerations (permits and co-ordination with the authorities); political concerns (the post-election situation in Nigeria and the transition in Burkina Faso); security scares (Boko Haram attacks in the region of Lake Chad); financial difficulties (failed transfers, budget overruns); technical problems (electricity and internet failures); and even climatic and cultural obstructions (the rainy season and the onset of the month of Ramadan). The methodology used in the study was entirely focused on the difficulties involved in communicating with local inhabitants who were somewhat inclined to mistrust anything touching on sensitive political issues. In the majority of the areas covered, however, the populations received the researchers favourably and opened up to them without any major problems throughout the entire critical phase: the research on the ground. In Mali, the locals were particularly appreciative of the courage of the researchers who had come to see them where they lived and had posed direct questions, going straight to the essential issues. In Nigeria, the teams were all the more favourably received because their respondents were conscious that no-one representing the authorities had ever seen fit to concern themselves with what the population had been suffering for years, since the beginning of the Boko Haram insurrection.

STATEMENTS FROM THE RESEARCHERS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE STUDY

"One participant in the group interview told us he was surprised by the subjects on our agenda. Normally, we don't talk so openly about such things." (Niger)

"There was a lot of to-ing and fro-ing with our researchers to get everything translated into local languages." (Burkina Faso).

"People were very happy to welcome us into their homes and work-places once they trusted us: it was easier because our researchers came from the region." (Senegal)

"We had to be sure that women were properly represented among the informants. One woman said "normally our husbands speak for us" and another was surprised we wanted to hear what she had to say, since she'd never been to school." (Niger)

"In some places, the older people outnumbered the young and most of them refused to talk about violent extremism." (Mauritania).

"In the Tombouctou area, the researchers had to abandon plans to go to Léré because there was too much danger from anti-personnel mines and from vehicle attacks." (Mali)

"We had to exclude the islands in Lake Chad from our circuit because of the active presence of Boko Haram. In other places it was important to be able to rely on local help." (Tchad)

"One group of our researchers found themselves stuck in Geidam, in Yobe State, after bombings in the nearby towns of Busari and Tarmuda. At that point we lost touch with them because our communications broke down." (Nigeria)

"We had to be cautious when travelling about and stay in contact with the local authorities because of the presence of Boko Haram and military operations that were going on. Our route also took in areas close to N'Jamena at a time when the town was being attacked by Boko Haram. We had to change our itinerary. And another thing: fuel prices shot up fast." (Cameroon)

The researchers and interviewers involved in the study had to be courageous, since the research took place in regions which were often politically dangerous. Those co-ordinating the study were apprehensive that they were exposing their own personnel to a major risk in relation to insecurity and violent extremism in most of the places in which the research was conducted. However, the level of training undertaken by the teams, the solid but flexible logistical support afforded to them which

facilitated the efficient, and above all swift, deployment of the researchers, together with – it must be admitted – a fair amount of good luck, meant that no major problems were encountered either during the research phase or during the finalisation of the reports[2]. It should be noted that, in certain sensitive cross-border areas, unusually, none of the teams were escorted by security forces or police during their work on the ground, despite the fact that the study had laid down no procedure on this issue. However, the teams were, themselves, supposed to announce their arrival and make contact with the public authorities and with the military command in the districts they proposed to visit. Both of these elements formed an important part of the approach since, in the view of those involved in the study it had an impact on the way the neutrality of the study was perceived by local inhabitants. In some cross-border regions where tensions are high in relation to security, international agencies customarily work and move around entirely under military protection. This, as far as the population is concerned, is sufficient in some extreme cases (when the local people have complained of abuses and extortion on the part of the police and security forces) to confuse the issue regarding their legitimacy and to generate an impression of 'collusion'.

The present UNDP project, "Perceptions of insecurity and violent extremism in the cross-border regions of the Sahel", has proved to be an exemplary exercise in international co-operation which has enabled the production of a comprehensive, socio-anthropological survey of perceptions regarding radicalization, violence and insecurity. The empirical observations which have been made, and the analysis of the results which has been produced, have been innovative steps which have facilitated an analytical breakthrough in relation to the human and sociological dimension of religious radicalism. The decision to work with university researchers and interviewers of local nationality rather than with external consultants was a risk, but one which has paid off. The goal was to construct a team which had the most appropriate profile for a method of enquiry which was adapted to local realities; was able to suggest the best places to go; was able to select the most able interviewers; and, finally, was able to bring insight to the analysis of the results. The common methodology across the survey was the outcome of interactions with the eight national teams and thus emerged from a collective effort. The quality of the data and the analysis which has come out of the responses of the 800 Sahelian respondents is opening up a range of options for mitigating their vulnerability to violent extremism and enhancing the resilience of the populations concerned. The study has deliberately ignored the conventional taxonomy of the armed groups and the interpretation of religious motivation which is typical of political science approaches in order to concentrate on a conceptual framework which stays closer to the perceptions of the inhabitants of the cross-border regions themselves.

Amidst the observations, the results and the avenues for reflection there are facts which might seem, at first sight, to be embarrassing, since it is evident that the perceptions of the individuals interviewed prioritise some striking truths which demand to be considered. However, within what the responders have to say and their ideas for change there is, above all, a demand for the reinforcement of the state, and a desire for normality and security indissociable from a citizenship which is in the course of formation. The stories of the respondents, though sometimes tragic, also have the merit of not permitting the future to be previewed in a too deeply apocalyptic a manner. Those involved in this study have refused to analyse the situation using fear as an explanatory principle (the heuristic of fear), although by the end of this research it had become clear that radicalization is a durable phenomenon

[2] While there were no security problems during the research phase, two researchers in two different countries were, however, detained by the security forces and held for some days of interrogation on the subject of their research activities in the context of the UNDP-HD project and outside it. In the case of one of the two, the case was made public. It is, therefore, possible to say that the operational head in Cameroon – Claude Linjuom Mbowou – a researcher at the University of Paris, Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, was held by military security from the 6th to the 14th September 2015. Reports of this appeared in the press and an international effort was rapidly instituted. These detentions, in the course of which neither of the two colleagues were shown to have committed any contraventions, disrupted work on the study to some extent so that a delay arose in the preparation of two national reports.

to which people will have to adapt and respond. At the very moment when the international community finds itself embarked in a second “war against terror” in the Middle East, the questions dealt with here are not merely of local concern. What the 800 Sahelian respondents have told this study – as well as the study’s efforts to explain, interpret and contextualise what has been discovered – should lead to a renewed understanding of the social motivations associated with radicalism and jihadism.

The analysis of this unprecedented collection of perceptions from the population in the frontier zones of the Sahel who are most vulnerable to, and most concerned with, security is structured around four considerations which are indicative of the complexity of the subject of the study. In this report, the perceptions are first placed in the context of the state and citizenship, religion and identity (Section I), before being examined in relation to inter-communal relations and cross-border issues (Section II). These two initial stages contribute to the understanding of the process of radicalization and its measurement (Section III), before the report puts into perspective the part played by women and young people (Section IV). The report concludes with avenues for reflection. While this report is based on the results and observations in the eight national reports within the international study, it is not to be regarded as a substitute for them.

I. THE STATE AND CITIZENSHIP, RELIGION AND IDENTITY

Points to remember:

- The Sahel is not a void or a historical *terra incognita*. Empires, kingdoms and city-states have flourished there, communicating with other parts of the world. There is, therefore, a gap between a well-established civic tradition and a post-colonial state which has been distanced from its long and rich history. Similarly, Islamization in the region began as early as the 11th century and proceeded in three historic phases, each with its specific characteristics: namely the 11th – 18th centuries; the 19th-20th and finally the 20th century onward. As a region, the Sahel is characterized by both an extensive system of economic production and states with fluctuating frontiers, as well as by highly structured social structures within which the individual is very firmly placed according to their origins or achievements. The issue of slavery has, for centuries, been the principal cause of insecurity. Servitude and slavery are the hidden variables within the social developments of the last two centuries.
- A number of states have explicitly included laicity in their constitutions but, even in such cases, religion remains a force in the political sphere. The Muslim religious brotherhoods provide a context of the most fraternal and egalitarian relations but the prejudices of class and age groups persist because of the resilience of traditional structures. To the young (who make up the vast majority of the population) new religious movements appear to enhance their sense of citizenship and have an impact on their ideologies which propel society towards a modernity that is no longer seen as exclusively western.

1. The State: geographical extent and historical depth

> *"The tragedy of Africa is that the African has not fully entered into history. (…) In this imaginary world where everything starts over and over again there is no place for human adventure or for the idea of progress. (…) In this universe where nature commands all, man escapes from the anguish of history that torments modern man, but he rests immobile in the centre of a static order where everything seems to have been written beforehand."*[3]

> *"While Europe was going through the Dark Ages and Middle Ages and then entering its Renaissance, West Africa was in its 'Bright Age.'"*[4]

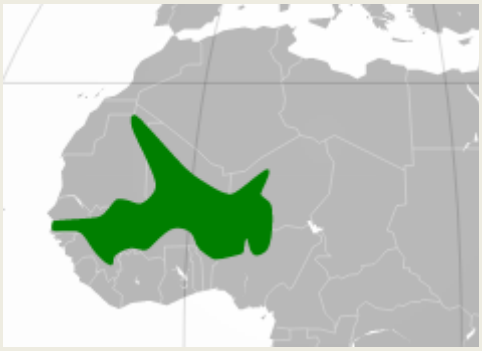
The first misapprehension regarding the cross-border populations is that the recurrence of their complaint about the 'weakness of the state' implies they are not informed about the state, experience of which is not an intrinsic part of their history. Nothing could be further from the truth. In the Sahel – a region characterized by encounters between cultures, a kaleidoscope of peoples, ethnic groups and languages – empires, kingdoms, principalities, emirates and city-states have flourished. These have permanently shaped the ways of life of the people in the area, with their varying customs, manners and occupations. The Sahel, though it could be taken for a desert and desolate void, enjoys the richness of a past where states were ever present. Sadly, virtually nothing of this persists in the nation states of

[3] Excerpt from a speech made on the 26th July 2007 at the University Cheikh Anta Diop by the President of the Republic of France, Nicolas Sarkozy (unofficial translation of his speech).

4 "The thriving kingdom of Ghana, founded near the Senegal and Niger Rivers, reached its peak in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Like the later West African empires of Mali and Songhai, Ghana had all the elements of a strong civilization, including a formal government, industry, urbanism, religion, arts, and commerce. These advanced civilizations south of the Sahara Desert were founded by indigenous peoples, not by Muslims from the north or by people from the Mediterranean region". *West African Kingdoms, 500–1590*, edited by Pierre-Damien Mvuyekure, *World Eras*, Volume 10, Detroit, Thomson & Gale, 2004, p. 131.

today, though past history must not be disregarded if the issues which beset the contemporary states and their social transformations are to be understood.

SONGHAI EMPIRE (1464-1591)



Source: Wikipedia

There is no 'deep' State in the Sahel except in terms of the expansive nature of its territory. There are no boundaries other than those which are natural: the natural frontiers beyond which the State cannot go. The Sahelian state which demonstrated this historical depth par excellence was the Songhai Empire – with Gao as its capital, it extended over present day Mali, Niger and part of Nigeria. Its roots were to be found in a kingdom which originated in the 8th century on the Niger River with a mixture of Songhai and Berber cultures. The Songhai Empire expanded, with the adoption of a learned Islam of the Maliki school[5], and it was its holy cities (such as Chinguetti and Timbuktu, the city of the 333 Sufi saints) in which the culture of libraries developed and to which religious scholars travelled from Andalusia, Morocco, Arabia and the Horn of Africa. The era even saw the opening of formal embassies. Reliable historical chronicles describe the life of the empire: it was visited in 1508 by Leo Africanus. In 1591, it was to be defeated by a Moroccan army made up, in part, of Berber and Andalusian mercenaries hired by the Saadian Moroccan sovereign Ahmed Mansour[6].

Closer to current times, another empire lasted until the dawn of the 20th century – that of Kanem Bornu. This had originated some eleven centuries earlier in the same Sahel region which had also been home to adjacent and independent entities such as the kingdom of Mossi in Burkina Faso or the Hausa states in the territories of modern Niger and Nigeria.

In this region, which had always been accessible, there existed a system of production based on an extensive use of the land (with transhumance, the practice of leaving land to lie fallow, and with rain-fed agriculture, though without complex irrigation systems), although few livestock were raised and little produce could be saved from year to year. Economic activity was organised around the trans-Saharan trade (in gold, salt, horses, Moroccan and European manufactured goods and slaves), largely to the profit of the rulers and the aristocracy. It was also through this trans-Saharan trade that ideas were exchanged, and it was thus that Islam was introduced in the 9th century. From the 7th to the 9th century, the Arabs and Berbers were virtually the sole external groups who travelled to the interior of the Soudan (as the interior of the Sahel was known: other terms used for it translate as the "fluid" or "floating" territory). Their purpose was to trade, to teach, to settle and to mingle with the local population through marriage. Islam was spread through the earliest cultural and commercial exchanges, and it is noteworthy that the names Sudan, Senegal and Ghana are all words of Arab/Berber origin. The first phase of the process of islamisation took place for over twelve centuries but, until as

[5] The Maliki school is one of the four juridical schools of Islam (the *madhab*) within the world. The others are the Shafi'i, Hanafi and Hanbali schools. The Malikis take their name from the Imam Malik Ibn Anas (715-795), who lived in Medina and wrote the treatise *Al Muwatta'*. The school is characterised by basing its rulings on the customs and practices of Medina, since the inhabitants of Medina had been direct witnesses of the deeds and acts of the Prophet after his flight from Mecca. The Maliki school is dominant in North Africa, West Africa and modern day Sudan.

[6] Ahmed Mansour, nicknamed "the golden" (*al-dhahabi*) was noted for having destroyed the Songhai Empire, having taken part in the battle known as the "battle of the three kings" in the north of Morocco in 1578, where his brother and his father died. He succeeded to his father on the battlefield. His capture of Timbuktu was condemned by the Ulema of Fes, who refused to condone the deportation and imprisonment of the religious scholar Ahmed Baba of Timbuktu, or the enslavement of Sahelian Muslims. Cf. Younès Nekrouf, *La Bataille des trois rois*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1983 and Vincent Monteil, *L'islam noir. Une religion à la conquête de l'Afrique*, Paris, Seuil, 1980.

late as the 19th century; it failed to spread beyond the élites at the head of various Sahelian states: principally the empires of Ghana, Mali and Songhai, and then the Peul[7] and Toucouleur states. In the 19th century, a second phase of Islamization was accomplished by the religious brotherhoods who were flourishing by this time, who set up their own states on the basis of the call to jihad.

The Sahel has been home to a wide variety of political institutions, whose designations and geographical authority have never ceased to fluctuate: these have included trading states, warrior states, and others which have practised the capture of slaves. Over the course of history, the endemic insecurity of Sahelian states has been linked, in part, to their inability to protect their citizens from enslavement (at times of clashes between ethnic groups) and at other times to the profit they were able to make from slavery (the exchange of slaves for horses, for example). This phenomenon of insecurity grew incessantly from the 17th century after the arrival of the Portuguese on the coast of Africa, followed by the Dutch, the English and the French, all of whom threw themselves into the transatlantic slave trade. Sahelian aristocrats, themselves, also took part. Rather than protect their populations they, themselves, often reduced their people to slavery in order to sell them.

1.1 Slavery and servitude: the hidden variables of radicalization?

In contrast to the expansive aspect of the original Sahelian states, to the fluctuation of their designations and the fluidity of the frontiers they occupied, there were rigid social structures. These, to a certain extent, persist to the present day and mean that each individual is restricted to their original status and profession, though they are also part of a complicated fabric of rules, customs and relations of dependence and interdependence. This social world is stratified according to castes. At the head of the state stand the nobility and aristocracy, then come the free men and women, the servile and the slaves. The slavery of concern here is endogenous, and is to be distinguished from the Arab slave trade and the transatlantic slave trade as practised by the Europeans. Such a situation is characteristic of hierarchical caste societies, where the individual is defined by their social position. The slaves, themselves, make distinctions between those born in the house where they served and those who had been enslaved or bought, who were available to be sold or given away.

CASTE STRUCTURE IN MAURITANIA

[…] The social orders are arranged according to four broad categories:

- Nobles: people of the sword or pen (warriors and marabouts among the Moors; "*gueer*" among the Wolof; "*hooro*" among the Soninkés; "*rimbe*" among the Haalpulaar);
- Free men/women: the "*diounkorounko*" (intermediate group between nobles and slaves, among the Soninkés) are the archetype of this category; in other ethnic groups, they are mainly artisans such as griots and smiths in the Moor community, and in the black African communities, woodworkers (*lawbé*), weavers and shoemakers;
- Dependents: the *Haratines* and dependent *Z'naga*, under the domination of more powerful groups (tribes, clans);
- Servants: the *maccube* among the Haalpulaar; the *jaam*, among the Wolof; the *kommo* among the Soninké; the *abeid*, among the Moors.

The result is a relatively rigid social structure, a complex tangle of relationships, behaviour and custom, and very limited social mobility (endogamy is the rule; exogamy, the exception).

Extract from the Mauritania national report

Such social structures may be observed through the activities and professions of those involved in it. There are religious dignitaries and scholars, warriors, fishermen, those who tend flocks and till the fields, those who sing songs and those who work as blacksmiths. The lower castes (jewellers, weavers, singers and smiths) cannot intermarry with other groups. In brief, Sahelian societies are not egalitarian

[7] The French term for Fulani.

but are marked by distinctions between social groups - for instance men and women do not have the same social status.

The state depends on slavery as a local form of the organisation of labour. The state not only depends on slaves as the workforce and the facilitators of commerce, but on their service as state functionaries[8]. This rigid idea of the individual – a person lives and remains a slave, a dependent (*hartani*), or a smith (*haddad*) – is a historical legacy: though it must be said that contemporary states have spared no effort, especially at the level of the constitution, to remove the distinctions between castes. Even though societies are undergoing rapid change, the psychological attitudes of the past persist and the radicalization which is currently under way is an indicator that reveals this unprecedented societal crisis[9]. Every tradition carries its own lasting characteristics, its own riches and potentialities, but it also carries within it elements of archaism and anachronism. Both the new ideas of citizenship, and the impact of the armed insurrection movements, have brought to the surface what has hitherto been left unsaid and unthought regarding the ethical distinction between individuals on the basis of their social standing.

We believe that the issue of slavery and servitude are, in reality, hidden variables within the social movements and insurrections which have unfurled in the 21st century in the various countries of the region. Certainly, the question is more vivid in a country such as Mauritania where the abolition of slavery was as recent as 1981, but, in fact, discrimination based on caste and servile social status is always implicitly also a factor in other countries of the Sahel. In Chad, for example, in the areas where research for this study was carried out, the groups known as "haddad" are ostracised and compelled to marry only among themselves, when nothing in terms of their physical appearance, their culture or their language distinguishes them from other social groups. According to the author of the national report on Chad, the cruelty and the level of violence of the armed groups can be explained in terms of revenge against a society which has ostracised and discriminated against people seen as "impure" and of a lower caste.

People have been too quick to come to the conclusion that the issue of slavery, for humanity as a whole, is a question which is amenable to being resolved by moral pressure, penal sanction, or constitutional change. It has not been discussed in its historical perspective or reflected upon introspectively by the international community in the way in which, for example, the destruction of the Jews during the Second World War has been examined in Europe and North America. With the growing demand that the past be remembered, the need to inform humanity as a whole about the history of slavery in all its manifestations should be accompanied by the opening of a true social interrogation of the concept of slavery, not only in Europe but also in Africa[10].

[8] The laws governing and the conditions for, the slaves were not necessarily too appalling. "In 1825, out of 16,000 inhabitants, there were 12,000 domestic slaves in Saint-Louis and Gorée, who were generally well treated: 'one often saw in Senegal a slave, who was richer than his master, eating and drinking with him.'" Vincent Monteil, *op. cit*, p. 332.

[9] "Attachment to a social class or caste no longer bears the weight it had in former times. In theory, slavery no longer exists, but the traditional hierarchies and the prejudice linked to caste, and the complex network of relations that links families one to the other are still alive in people's minds and play their role in daily life. Everyone knows who is descended from slaves and who from free men, and this is not without influence as regards behaviour." Jacques Giri, *Le Sahel au XXIe siècle. Un essai de réflexion prospective sur les sociétés sahéliennes*, Paris, Karthala, 1989, p. 77.

[10] An African thinker as significant as Achille Mbembe, in his *Critique de la raison nègre* (Paris, La Découverte, 2013) devotes the bulk of his book to the issue of slavery as an industrial process, but it would have been just as illuminating if he had examined its endogenous nature and its function as a local economic phenomenon in the context of the social structures of the peoples of the Sahel and West Africa.

1.2 Some key issues related to the state

The modern state, as it is seen in the eight countries in this research project, is therefore an 'orphan', with no historical dimension. It owes its architecture, its constitution, even its 'soul', to the colonial heritage which has separated the state from a past which has subsequently been mythologised and whose full depth and historicity is only now, though to an increasing extent, being discovered. These are societies which have maintained, it should be repeated, not only the basis of the historical past but also the burden of its psychological structures.

In the 21st century we still have the tendency to conceive of the structure of the state as the most concrete and stable form taken by institutions. The state – organised into its executive, legislative and juridical aspects and whose relation to its territory takes the form of land ownership and taxation – has hitherto been a structural form which has enjoyed control of information and communication. Today, with the revolution in information technology, the state has lost its administrative prerogative, while new actors which have emerged from civil society have come to play an increasingly important role. In the 21st century, the state has become simply one agent among others within a multiple system. What has been played out, however, over the two decades of the digital revolution and the process of globalisation, has been the metamorphosis of the "Westphalian" nation-state, faced with the challenge of the great political and economic groupings, but also by regional secessionist processes. The state is the last of the existing institutions to undergo transformation as the result of information technology. Across the world, however, the state is set to undergo a total transformation. In the Middle East, some states are even in the process of disappearance and reconstitution.

In relation to the Sahel, questions which must be asked include what might be the appropriate shape of a state which has adapted to the historical, cultural, geographical and geopolitical circumstances? To what extent are the various nation-states of the region the heirs of the states, empires and principalities of immemorial history within the greater areas of the Sahel? To what extent do they perpetuate into the post-colonial era the model of the centralised and formal bureaucratic state which owes virtually everything to its former French or British preceptor? Is there a 'strong' and a 'weak' manifestation of the state, according to whether the citizen is situated in its centre or in its peripheral cross-border zone? Is the cohesion between the state and the nation – brought into existence by citizenship and its relationship to the territory – still as meaningful and effective in the cross-border zones of the Sahel? Why is the confederal institutional pattern virtually non-existent in countries where ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity could make it appropriate? Are insecurity and armed violence simply irritations or are they threats to the state? Could it be that armed dissidence and violence are an expression of deficiencies, disfunctionality or the inadequacy of the post-colonial state? Is it even possible, within the geographical immensity of the Saharan Sahel, to think in terms of states, or would it be preferable to begin to think of larger geopolitical and economic entities – such as the Maghreb or the Sahel as a whole – which could more effectively reflect the perceptions and representations of the inhabitants of the region themselves and the way they, themselves, use the space at their disposal? Is the notion of the state doomed to fail or is there some particular form of statehood which is at fault? Finally, how can a security policy, a presence and interventions be defined for a post-colonial state which fosters the creation of national wealth and regional success on the basis of the activities and movement of its people as well as their trade?

2. The state: norms and forms

2.1 The states of the Sahel: three common denominators

The only factor which is common to all eight countries in this study is a highly significant date: namely their political independence in 1960. The era of post-colonial state construction is therefore precisely the same for all the countries, namely 55 years. A second factor most common to a group of countries as different as Mauritania, with 4 million inhabitants, and Nigeria, with a population 45 times as large, relates to the military nature of the current political regimes. With the notable exception of Senegal, the history of the countries in the region has been marked by military intervention in politics and government, as well as by more or less recurrent coups d'état and what followed them. In recent years this has included the 'civilianization' of presidential regimes anxious to give the appearance of being good students of 'governance'. For the most part, therefore, hybrid regimes prevail, where the influence of the military remains preponderant in the conduct of political affairs. For more than half a century, it has been evident that the principal political threat faced by the region is from military coups, not from Islamist theocracy. The fact is that, in the Sahel, no government has ever been overthrown by an armed jihadist group, nor has any such group ever taken power, though the number of coups in Africa since the dates of national independence has probably reached three figures. The temptation is always on offer: soldiers come to the capital, depose the head of state, occupy the radio and TV station, dismiss and reconstruct the government, and declare the inauguration of a new order. Meanwhile, the armed groups are peripheral: dissident insurgents who occupy a region and, at most, impose a local and temporary regime.

Thus, in the words of officials of the High Authority for the Consolidation of Peace in Niger (La Haute Autorité à la Consolidation de la Paix du Niger – HACP), the country has fallen prey to coups d'état that have harmed its development over a period of at least twenty years.

> *"During the 1990s and 2000s, Niger was shaken by a series of rebellions and coups that have had a significant impact on the country's security, stability and development as well as on national cohesion and the wellbeing of its peoples"* (Strategy document, High Authority for Peacebuilding (HACP), 2013).

Constitutionally, Mauritania is an Islamic Republic, that is to say that it recognises, as a point of principle, that Islam is an element which brings its population together (though, in practice, as recently as 1978 – the date of the country's first coup d'état – it was a state which had fallen under army rule). At this time, there was a distance between what was avowed to be the country's principle and what took place in practice.

> *"We cannot believe in a state that puts all its energy into channelling, maintaining, and containing the army. Security measures are primarily designed to protect power, not the people (...) The state itself is afraid of its own army, its own generals"* (Comment by a 32-year-old teacher from Aleg, Mauritania).
> *"The state is really the tribe of those in power"* (Comment by a respondent, M'Bagne, Brakna).

Meanwhile, to take the example of Burkina Faso, which is regarded as one of the region's stable states: in forty years it has undergone two wars with Mali (in 1973 and 1985) and a number of coups d'état between 1979 and 1983, with the accession to power of Captain Thomas Sankara in 1983 and his assassination in 1987, followed by the reign of his military colleague Blaise Compaoré. After the assassination of Norbert Zongo in 1998 there was social unrest, followed in 2011 by a period of social and military crisis, and finally the popular uprising of 2014, when Compaoré was deposed, and the

inauguration of the transition towards democracy in 2015. All this was accompanied by the permanent fear of another coup d'état.

The third most common denominator between the group of states in the Sahel is that their origins were characterized by the rise to power of a single political party. The departure of colonialism tended to promote an appeal to national unity and legitimised 'unanimism' as an ideology for resistance and development. In opposition to the colonial ideology, where the principle of 'divide and rule' was applied, the nationalist African élites made a vibrant appeal for unity. The single party, which sometimes resulted from the fusion of existing political parties, was a symptom of the desire for unification in the construction of the state. For decades, the management of political and cultural diversity within society was the business of the party in power. In addition, though the 'single party' manifested itself differently from one state to another, the central concept which legitimised it in the 1960s was that it was the institution most able to be in control of the nation's destiny. In the words of the Guinean leader Sekou Touré, "We could say that the Party is the brain of our society, while the state is the part that takes action, working according to the Party's ideas and intentions"; while the Malian leader Modibo Keita spoke of the "primacy of the Party in all the nation's institutions". During the first Malian Republic, Modibo Keita led a single party whose philosophy was progressive and socialist, while during the second republic under the rule of Moussa Traoré, there was a single party inspired by military rule. Only in 1990 was pluralism introduced into the political system in Mali. The single party answered the needs of a historical era which prioritised unification, cohesion and the stabilisation of a new state. Moussa Traoré's armed opponents were able to mobilise the forces of ethnic, cultural and religious opinion, though these were never really more than channels for the expression of discontent at the opponent's exclusion from the management of public affairs. From the 1980s onwards, single party rule was challenged increasingly explicitly and, in the 1990s, national conferences were held which took it upon themselves to reinvent the notion of political pluralism, outside the confines of the single party. Senegal also had a single party under the leadership of Leopold Sendar Senghor. In 1974, Senghor authorised the formation of three political parties and, in 1980, his successor, Abdou Diouf, approved full multiparty democracy. It was not, however, until the Presidential election of 2000 that real democratic alternation began.

2.2 Radicalism in an era of globalisation

From independence to the present day, there has been a two-stage evolution in political life in the Sahel which follows a model common to many African countries. During the period from 1960 to 1980, the single party was the absolute master of the state. The single party was essentially a phenomenon of the Cold War era, with the United States and the Soviet Union as the two opposing forces. Radicalization in this period was essentially expressed in political terms through Marxism-Leninism and its armed movements: armed groups opposed each other or took up positions in relation to communist ideology and its socialist variants. In this era, which was characterized by a 'progressive' creed, religion was seen as a cause that was socially outmoded and politically reactionary in the armed combat which set insurgents against central powers. From the beginning of the 1980s, and especially with the collapse of the communist bloc, multiparty democracy finally penetrated into parliament and government. In the early 1990s, particularly in Mali, Niger and Chad, questions of identity and religion gradually made their way into the national debate thanks to the series of national conferences which were inaugurated as a mechanism of political transition to pluralism and democracy.

It is important to understand that the reality experienced by the states in the region is in no way separate from the great currents of international affairs. The ideological discrediting of communism, which until 1989 ruled half the world, was succeeded by an ideological void that accompanied the 'acceleration of history' and the economic internationalisation of global financial and trading exchanges to a level, and at a speed, which was previously unknown. In terms of geopolitics, the 'new

world order' promises globalisation, trade unhindered by frontiers and the circulation of goods and ideas, but depends for its success on the existence of structural antagonism which is not communism anymore. The demise of communism opened the door to Islam which, henceforth, was to occupy the position of ideological antagonist and philosophical bogeyman. Samuel Huntington's theory of the "Clash of Civilisations" formalised the structure of geopolitical confrontation which had been in force since the fall of communism and the death of the Soviet Union.

The great currents of globalisation have also had their impact on criminal networks and the international contraband which passes through the region. These are issues over which nation-states can have very little influence: however, it is the responsibility of the international community to address the issues surrounding the free circulation of individuals, restrictions on drug use and arms production and trade in arms. Indecision and inaction at the global level in relation to these issues generates a turnover of 1500 billion euros, according to figures produced by the United Nations itself. The links between criminal and mafia activities and guerrilla action is, in any case, not an African speciality. Latin America has experienced, and continues to experience, the effect of these links. It is alarming to look in detail at the war economy behind a movement such as Boko Haram in Nigeria, but there are lessons to be learned from a comparison with the Maoist narco-guerrilla "Luminous Path" in Peru and the FARC in Colombia, which professes Marxism.

In terms of ideological confrontations, up to the 1980s religion was never involved in insurrectional movements and armed dissidence in the Sahel. The appearance of armed violence inspired or legitimised by religion is a recent phenomenon in the region dating only from the 2000s. Of course, in the Sahel, Islam as an ideological point of reference has a history which is as much local as global, stretching many centuries into the past. Long before radical Islamism made its appearance in the Sahel, it had found expression in Central Asia, in the Mashreq and the Maghreb, and, to a lesser extent, in Europe and the United States themselves. The appearance of this guerrilla is indicative of the connection between the vast stretch of the Sahel and the other regions in the world and international developments which has followed in the aftermath of 11 September 2001 as well as the, no less globalised, issues which have ensued. These include the "war on terror", the "axis of evil", the proliferation of al-Qaida franchises, the American occupation of Iraq, the Arab Spring, the international onslaught on Gaddafiin Libya, the war in Syria, and the emergence of DAESH, a would-be state entity which is yet to prove either durable or ephemeral.

3. Religion: dormancy and new trends

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE STUDY

Religious affiliations as a percentage of the population

Country	Islam	Christianity	African Religions	Bahai
Burkina Faso	48	19	32	
Cameroon	20	57	23	0.4
Mali	81	2.7	16	
Mauritania	99	0.24	0.52	
Niger	90	0.45	9.2	
Nigeria	42	47	10	
Senegal	87	6	6.3	0.19
Chad	57	24	19	0.8

Another similarity between a number of countries in the Sahel between is the presence of Islam in what appears to be a majority position, even in Burkina Faso (excluding only Nigeria and Cameroon). However, despite this majority, this strong representation varies sharply from one country to another and its relation to other spiritual tendencies and religious traditions differs equally widely. Some countries – such as Mauritania, Senegal, Mali and Niger – are at least 80 per cent Muslim. The ratio to other faiths is quite different in other

countries – such as Burkina Faso, Chad, Cameroon and Nigeria – where Christianity is strongly represented. A further religious phenomenon which is a factor in all the countries of the region is that of African religions, broadly classed as "animism": comprising ancestor worship and the belief in supernatural spirits. From the vantage point of the great monotheistic faiths, this might be regarded as an archaic and outmoded faith, especially in view of the statistics which link it to less than ten per cent of the population[11]. On the other hand, one could interpret the influence of animism in Islam and Christianity, by way of a wide range of heterodox rituals and practices, as a triumph of African spirituality.

The antiquity and depth of African Islam, and its adaption to, and coexistence with, animism, have prompted the Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe to say that there has been, what he describes as, a "creative assimilation". What is immediately striking about the contemporary religious landscape in the countries of the Sahel is not the pervasiveness of Islam but the persistence of the so-called traditional, ethnic or African religions. These have not only survived into the 21st century but interact as a vital force with the great African monotheisms. For the social scientist, the immediate conclusion from observation is that religious intolerance in Africa arises most frequently within the three principal monotheistic faiths (Protestant Christianity, Catholic Christianity and Islam), and in particular within Protestantism, with the clash between Protestantism and Wahhabi Islam (in spite, or perhaps because, of what they have in common)[12]. Meanwhile, the cultures and spiritual systems of belief most able to deal with the complexity of life, and the least intolerant of diversity, are those which are based on polytheist and animist conceptions of the world.

3.1 The three stages of Islamization

With regard to the presence and influence of Islam, an initial historical phase can be distinguished which took place in the Sahel between the 9th and the 18th centuries. During this long period – which corresponded to the initial process of Islamization of the continent – a number of distinct influences were at work (including those of Andalusia, the Maghreb, Egypt, and the Hijaz) and the scholarly tradition of ancestral libraries took firm root in the holy cities (such as Timbuktu) which were scattered from the south of Morocco across to Niger. Inside this area (within which states were taking shape and beginning to prosper), people and ideas spread towards the Maghreb but also to the Mashreq – where the pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the five pillars of the Islamic faith, enabled a religious élite to gain information and knowledge close to the core of orthodox Islam. At this first stage, Islamization affected only a small part of the population, the ruling élite, while the great mass of the people remained animist. Theological works show the mix of ideas and the key Sahelian personalities which emerged from this founding phase of Islam: a Sunni faith[13] of the Maliki school, with a scholarly inclination, which preceded the Islam of the Sufi religious brotherhoods by several centuries.

[11] Wolfram Alpha Knowledgebase, 2015 (World Bank, CIA World Factbook)

[12] For elucidation on the geopolitics of the great religious trends in Africa, see Zidane Mériboute, *Islamisme, Soufisme, Évangélisme. La guerre ou la paix*, Geneva, Labor et Fides, 2010.

[13] Islam contains two major traditions, Sunni Islam and Shi'ism, which may be compared in terms of socio-politics with the divisions within Christianity (Catholicism and Protestantism), or with Ashkenazi and Sephardi Judaism. The Sunni faith is in the majority. Its designation refers to the practice of following the "sunna" – the traditions, practices and teachings of the Prophet as recorded in the collections of "hadith", which are regarded as canonical. In the Sunni world, there are four principal schools of jursiprudence (Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanafi and Hanbali). The theological and political split between Sunnis and Shi'a, dates back to the murder, in 661, of the fourth legitimate Caliph, Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet. The vast majority of Muslims followed the new claimant to the Caliphate, Mu'awiya (who effectively installed a hereditary monarchy with the foundation of the Ummayad dynasty). The Shi'a however were literally, the party of Ali (*shi'at Ali*), and took the view that the Imamate (the leadership of the Muslim community) should remain within the family of the Prophet (*ahl al bayt*) through descent from his grandsons: Ali's sons, Hassan and Hussayn. The Shi'ites today make up between 10 and 15 per cent of Muslims.

WAHHABISM: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Wahhabism is a religious movement which originated in the Arabian Peninsula and it is the official doctrine of Saudi Arabia. The religious ideology of Saudi Arabia is more precisely Hanbali Wahhabism, referring to the juridical school practised by the Hanbalis which shapes the Wahhabi faith and vision of the world.

Wahhabism takes its name from that of a theologian, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who came into contact with a tribal Chieftain, Muhammad Ibn Saud, in the Arabian region of Nejd. Following a pact between the two made in 1744, a religious movement took shape which had a major impact on Saudi Arabia and neighbouring lands. The Shi'a holy city of Karbala was sacked in 1801, and Mecca and Medina were taken between 1801 and 1806. The movement took total control of Arabia in the 1920s.

When the movement of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab first appeared in the late 18th century, the entire Sunni world rejected it as a heresy. It was condemned and fought against on the level of religious doctrine. In 1803, for example, at the request of the King of Morocco (Moulay Slimane) the Moroccan theologian Taïeb Benkirane published an assessment of the question under the title *A refutation of the Wahhabi obedience*. There was also military action against Wahhabism, mainly by the Ottomans, who sent Mohammed Ali's Egyptian troops to fight against the Wahhabis from 1811 to 1818, thus temporarily putting an end to the Saudi ambitions to retain Mecca and Medina.

The historical success of Wahhabism was achieved primarily as the result of the pact made in February 1945 between the American President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Abdelaziz Ibn Saud establishing a strategic alliance between the two countries concerning the exploiting of hydrocarbons and American military protection. Wahhabism was well entrenched before petrodollars brought it to global attention, since it was able to find parallels with Salafism which was prevalent throughout the Muslim world. Though seen as a heresy two centuries ago, Wahhabism expanded and now enjoys a status and a determining role within the orthodox Sunni faith.

From the close of the 18th century, the second stage of Islamization was that of the Sufi religious brotherhoods, which extended their influence by stages over Mauritania and Cameroon and beyond (somewhat in the manner of Wahhabism in the present day) extending the range of Islam and marking its territory with their influence. The brotherhoods represented a social manifestation of Islam which was more popular and mystical than academic and esoteric. In principle, it was an expression of a Sufi vision of the religious life – more internalised, ascetic and meditative. Chants, prayers and spiritual exercises accompanied the classic prayers with their fixed rituals. This inclination towards the "heart" and the "spirit" of religion did not, however, prevent adepts from following Islam's practices and law to the letter[14]. The largest brotherhood was that of the Tijaniya[15]. Its founder, Ahmed al-Tijani (1735–1815), was born in Algeria and lived in the Moroccan city of Fes, where he became the object of an annual pilgrimage. The Tijaniya spread through West Africa and the Sahel, probably due to the virtues of fraternity and solidarity which it particularly prioritised. It should be said that the brotherhoods are religious orders which, according to their individual characteristics, have attracted their members from particular cultural communities and professional groups. They provide a framework for the spiritual life of the educated classes, merchants, landowners and craftspeople, among others. Naturally, therefore, they also played a role in economic life. In addition, they played a political role, notably in

[14] For an idea of the Sunni orthodoxy (Maliki and Ashari) and the magisterial intellectual production in Arabic of Ahmadou Bamba, the founder of the Senegalese Mouridiya, see Ahmadou Khadim Sylla, *La doctrine de Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba. Origines et enseignements*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2015.

[15] According to the Malian writer and anthropologist Amadou Hampâté Bâ, the Tijaniya brotherhood "… [which] originated in Algeria within the purest Sufi tradition, penetrated the African world via three routes: one came directly from the north, descending from Algeria to Sudan and Timbuktu, another from the west, along the Senegal river, and the third from the east, thanks to the intervention of El Hadj Omar, who brought it back from Mecca." Amadou Hampâté Bâ, *Vie et enseignement de Tierno Bokar, Le sage de Bandiagara*, Paris, Seuil, 1980, p. 55, quoted by Zidane Meriboute in *Islamisme, Soufisme, Évangélisme. La guerre ou la paix*, *op.cit.*, p. 158.

the resistance to colonialism which was headed by their leaders, as in the case of the Emir Abdelkader in Algeria, who was an adept and a Sheikh of the Qadiriya brotherhood[16].

There is an academic orthodoxy which maintains that the Sufi orders are non-political, or that they adopt a purely spiritual attitude, keeping their distance from government and armed violence. The entire history of the 19th century in the Maghreb and the Sahel totally contradicts this biased notion. It cannot fail to be noted, however, that in the 19th and 20th centuries the jihad was conducted by the brotherhoods, in order to convert the masses and resist the initial onslaughts of the colonialists. The role of the Sufi brotherhoods, in relation to their popular base, was, all in all, very similar to that played in the 20th century by the Islamist movements which, like the Muslim Brotherhood, borrowed their organisational structure from the brotherhoods. As they confronted colonialism, the brotherhoods disregarded any suggestion that religion should not interfere in politics. The leaders of the brotherhoods and the Marabouts, as well as those who were not engaged in open struggle with the administration, were often sent into exile out of concern about their influence over the population at large. This was what took place, for example, in the case of the Senegalese Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba (1853-1927), the founder of the Mouridiya, and the case of the Malian leader Sheikh Hamallah (1883-1943), who was deported to France where he died. Sheikh Hamallah was the originator of Hamalism[17], a branch of the Tijaniya known as the "eleven beads". The 19th century brotherhoods were responsible for the creation of certain genuinely Islamic states. This phase is all very fully documented[18]. What emerges is not the aspect of pacifism and Sufi tolerance, but the revolutionary inclination of these organisations which operated at the popular level during the second phase of Islamization in the Sahel.

For instance, Osman Dan Fodio (1754-1817) – a Qadiri adept and the author of dozens of theological works in Arabic composed in the purest tradition of Sunni orthodoxy of the Maliki school – declared jihad in 1809 against a Hausa King, before he went on to conquer the Hausa kingdoms one after another and finally to proclaim the Caliphate of Sokoto. This was adjacent to the Empire of Bornou, which had stood out against him. This so-called Caliphate was, in reality, a Fulani empire which, in a certain sense, enshrined the nomad way of life as opposed to the ostentation and tyranny of the Hausa leadership. It was notable that Osman Dan Fodio had very progressive ideas in relation to women and promoted women's education. His Caliphate extended from Niger to Adamawa, in Cameroon, and was to last until 1903, the year Great Britain occupied its territory. The idea of the Caliphate has persisted in the political framework of jihadists across West Africa until the present day. Another Qadiri adept, Sékou Amadou (1776-1845), launched a jihad in 1818 to found the Fulani empire of Macina (Mali), a theocracy (a "Diina") led by a council of forty Marabouts[19] whose capital was at Hamdallahi (signifying "thanks be to God") not far from Mopti. This theocratic Marabout-run regime – which installed an administrative and financial system run by scholars – was to be destroyed by another Marabout from Senegal, El Hadj Omar (1794-1862), a Tijaniya disciple, who founded the Toucouleur Empire with Ségou as its capital. Having fought the Malinké, the Fulanis and the French, El Hadj Omar died in a cave where he had come under attack (in the act of reprisal his Tijani followers later put to death some three

[16] Cf. Réda Benkirane, « Éclair et fulgurance. L'Émir Abdelkader, un humaniste pour notre siècle », Actes du colloque *L'Émir Abdelkader et le droit humanitaire international*, CICR – Fondation Émir Abdelkader, Algiers, 27-30 May 2013, (http://iqbal.hypotheses.org/1231).

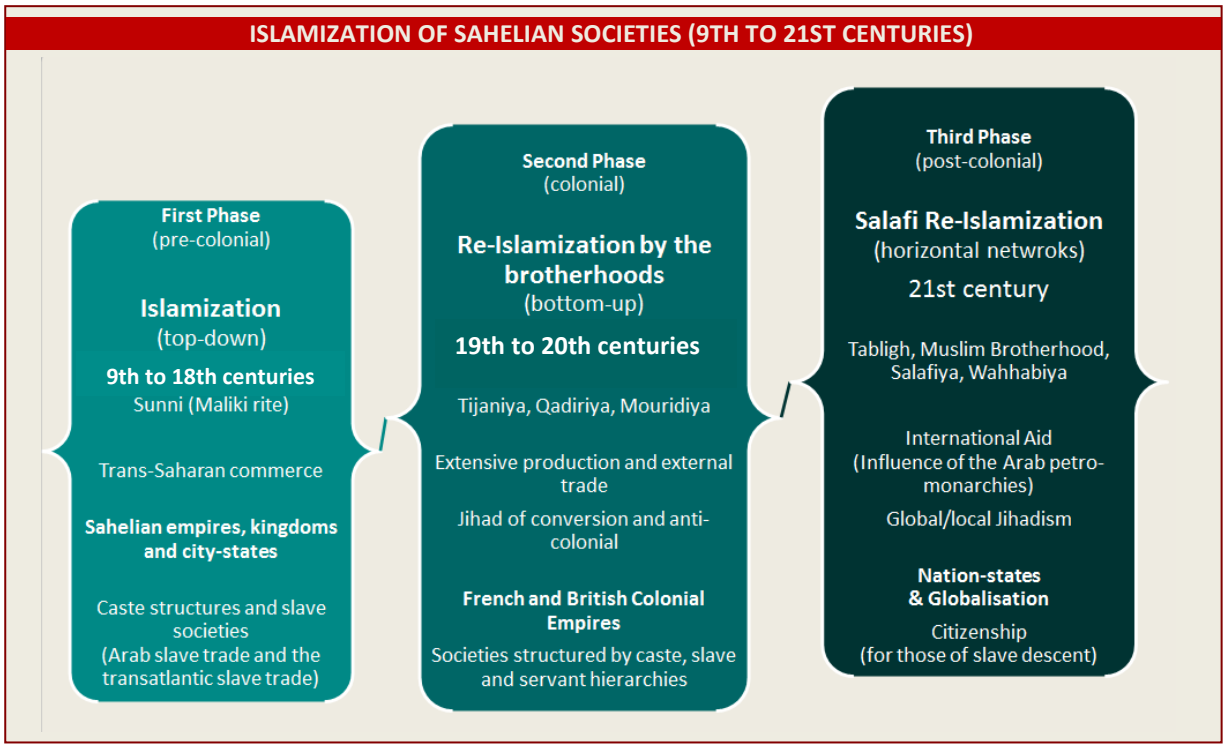
[17] The book by Zidane Meriboute mentioned earlier – *Islamisme, Soufisme, Évangélisme. La guerre ou la paix* – provides a detailed account of the history of the Tijaniya and its Hamalist offshoot. The author also provides hitherto unpublished documents relating to the internment of Sheikh Hamalla in Montluçon.

[18] "In politics too, the period was one of change. Many attempts were made to recreate the great empires: the Fulani empire of Sokoto; the empire of Macina, the Toucouleur empire of Omar Tall, the successive empires of Samori; the empire of Rabah in the Central African Sahel. These attempts brought in their wake frequent wars: insecurity continued and slave-raiding was a constant threat". Jacques Giri, *Le Sahel au XXI^e siècle. Un essai de réflexion prospective sur les sociétés sahéliennes*, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

[19] "Marabouts" are the traditional heads of Sufi religious brotherhoods. Furthermore, the word "marabout" is sometimes used to designate religious authority and can sometimes refer to a healer, using the Quran as a therapy.

hundred Marabouts). When French troops entered Ségou in 1890, El Hadj Omar's son and successor fled to the Sokoto Caliphate with ten thousand of his Toucouleur soldiers.

In the 18th century, the brotherhoods prospered in Africa, and it was they who controlled the future of Islam in the Sahel. The reason for their success (which was rapid and complete, as, for example, in the case of the Mouridiya in Senegal[20]) was due to their ability to generate, among the ordinary people, a sense of fraternity, this also had revolutionary overtones in the context of societies which still carried



the burden of caste and age group. In the 20th century, the brotherhoods were faced by a crisis, when dynasties and hierarchies took over in a framework that had hitherto promised an egalitarian society for all "brothers and sisters in Islam".

In the 21st century, the new trends are Islamism, political Islam (i.e. the Muslim Brotherhood), and Salafism[21]. These prosecute the third phase of Islamization according to a horizontal (rhizomatic) model which spreads out in a way calculated to attract young people, who currently represent the vast majority of the populations of the Sahel, and are more and more frustrated – in spite (or because) of their extensive education – by the formalism and rigidity of inter-generational relationships and by the social, political and economic discrimination which flows from them. Just as in the first phase of Islamization, trade and the economy play a part in the spread of ideas and the Muslim faith, especially through development aid with the provision of schools, canteens, cultural centres and mosques provided by the oil kingdoms of the Gulf and the Wahhabi theocracy of Saudi Arabia. This also serves as a kind of 'Arabian America', with its unconcerned alliance, in a kind of 'oriental modernity', between puritanism and religious rigour on the one hand, and the capitalism of commerce and finance on the

[20] In 1895, Sheikh Ahmadou Bamba had 500 followers (*talibé*); in 1912, there were 68,000 members of the Mouridiya; in 1952, there were 300 000. It is estimated today that there are close to three million Mouridiya members in Senegal.

[21] In an article published thirty years ago, Jean-Louis Triaud gives a portrait of the figure to whom he refers as "Abd Al-Rahman the African (1908-1957), the precursor and pioneer of Wahhabism in Mali", in which he shows how this doctrinal movement appeared in West Africa as "a direct consequence of the development of the pilgrimage to the Holy Places in Saudi Arabia after the Second World War." Cf. Olivier Carré and Paul Dumont (Editors), *Radicalismes islamiques*, *vol. 2, Maroc, Pakistan, Inde, Yougoslavie, Mali*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1986, p. 162.

other. Those in the Sahel are still in the Weberian universe of "elective affinities"[22] between particular expressions of religion and the market-oriented work ethic. This is all the more influential since the original profession of the Prophet, that of a merchant, is highly esteemed.

4. Religion: political expression and the demand for citizenship

Since the era of political independence, given the influence and diversity of the various religions, the states of the region, in contrast to their North African neighbours, took steps to ensure that within their constitutions there was nothing which attached the state to any particular faith. In contrast to countries where Muslims were in the large majority, the states of the region did not establish Islam within their constitution as the religion of the state. The exception was Mauritania, which was affiliated to the largely chimerical Arab Maghreb Union and a member of the Arab League. The other countries in the Sahel went further, in fact, than the liberal democracies were in a position to recommend in constitutional terms, since Senegal, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Chad (a country where Islam was also in a majority) apparently had no problem in laying down secularism as an organising principle of the state. The influence of France was clearly evident in the choice of language employed in the specification of the neutrality of the state in relation to religion, since in these countries the term 'secularism' was not used, but rather the expression favoured in France: laicity. This was a big difference with many Muslim countries where even the idea of laicity (or secularism) was strongly deprecated, as a concept of exogenous and alien origin[23]. The constitutional position accorded to "laicity" demonstrates that political Islam and Salafism were phenomena which appeared at a later date. The external origin of these ideas, however, was not sufficient to delay their rise in power, their electoral preponderance, and their influence in the language of politics and the media.

In the realm of 'perceptions', this study is concerned with a different way of looking at the state (in contrast to the traditional conception of the state, which has nothing to do with the post-colonial state). Given the influence of religion in social and political life, it could be supposed that the state would take no cognizance of the principle of secularisation. On the other hand, "laicity" as a republican solution to the political management of religion was put into practice as soon as the Sahelian states became independent. The adaptation of associations, parties and actors of religious affiliation to the institutional reality of the state and their absorption into the area of "impartiality" enabled them to exercise influence on the basis of the depth of their history, their respect of identity, and their opposition to cultural alienation. The resentment they feel is based on the lack of access of the Muslim

[22] The classic work of Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, was first published in German in 1905. Translated by Talcott Parsons, it was published in English by Routledge in 1930. The full text, with an introduction by Anthony Giddens, is available online. The book develops the central thesis that the Christian dogma of predestination and the attitude towards this of the believer (especially in ascetic Protestantism) facilitate the process and the practical ethos at the heart of capitalism. According to Weber, this religiously based capitalist ethos holds in check the "profit motive" by way of the transposition of the monastic spirit into a profession (*beruf*) that forms part of economic life. This key work illuminates many phenomena in contemporary Islam, especially in relation to the "imam", who greatly resembles the picture Weber paints of "the entrepreneur of salvation goods".

[23] According to the researcher Zidane Meriboute, "the expression "laicity" translates as '*almâniyya* in Arabic. It is advocated by liberal Muslims. Ali Abderraziq, the former head of Al-Azhar University in Cairo, promoted the concept of '*almâniyya* in his celebrated book, *L'islam et les fondements du pouvoir* (Paris, La Découverte, 1994), which he originally wrote in around 1924. As other Arab intellectuals see it, "both the idea and the political advocacy of '*almâniyya* originated in Lebanon as part of the Lebanese movement towards independence from the Ottoman Caliphate. Cf. Abderrezak Dourari, "De la laïcité en Islam selon Mohammad Abid Al-Jâbirî", *Insaniyat /* إنسانيات, 11, (2000], pp. 75-97. On the other hand, the Muslim Salafists reject the idea of "laicity". As they see it, Islam has no other option than to be "both faith and state" (*dîn wa dawla*). In Salafist circles, the word '*almâniyya* is deliberately replaced by *ilhad*, which signifies "atheism", as a way of discrediting the secularists. This has been emulated by other Muslim groups. In Urdu, for example, "laicity" is translated as "*la deniat*", which literally means "no religion", as another way of disparaging laicity and secularism." This is from Dr Meriboute's personal evidence to the commission on laicity which took part in the modification of the constitution of the canton of Geneva (the city was a Protestant republic from the time of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and has only subscribed to "laicity" since 2012).

élite, educated in the modern framework of Arab and Muslim culture, to the same positions and privileges as the Francophone or Anglophone élites. This socio-professional 'colonisation complex' (or 'Caliban complex') has been a divisive factor among the national élites of the countries of the Sahel.

> *"Burkina Faso has a majority of Muslims, yet their degrees are not recognised. Religious cohabitation requires equal treatment of different religious denominations, particularly in terms of socio-professional integration"* (Comment by a resident, Ouagadougou, 18 June 2015).

Laicity, while it was incorporated into the constitution of Sahelian countries from the outset, was to be implemented in a biased fashion, giving rise to resentment at exclusion and a hierarchical structure. In Mali, for example, given the Islamic majority, the perceived issue was that "laicity must be adapted to the Muslim culture of the country" (cf. Mali national report).

> *"Mali is considered to be a secular state. In practice, the reality is quite different. Mali is a Muslim-majority country, but all the laws are designed for the benefit of the Christian minority. For example, if Muslims want to perform jumu'ah*[24] *in their mosque, they can be dragged before the courts for at least three years. On the other hand, for building a church, the state promptly grants permission. Secularism is not real in Mali because the laws adopted by Mali have imposed it and they all go against Islam. These laws come to us from the West, which imposes its culture, while Islam comes to us from Arabia. The most striking example is the Family Code, which, in all its parts, is against Islam and its principles. Seven laws out of 10 dictated by the West to Mali contradict the precepts of Islam. The RFI*[25] *and other media have inflamed the situation by speaking of Islam as an obstacle to the development of women and children in Mali. France makes and unmakes our political system while it is the enemy of the High Islamic Council. The latter, according to the RFI, has taken Mali hostage because of the protests against the Family Code"* (Interview with a respondent in Mopti, Mali, June 2015).

In the view of Zidane Meriboute, family law is a key issue for Mali. He looks at the question of the relationship between the Shari'a and contemporary civil law. In other words, the issue is how to modernise the matrimonial and family law, and the law on inheritance, while taking account of Muslim values and Sahelian tradition. This question brings to the fore the problem of equality between men and women over inheritance issues, as well as the recognition of the legal status of civil marriage and religious unions. The question of the relationship between the Shari'a and the family law has been raised by the President of Mali's High Islamic Council, Mahmoud Dicko.

These issues are seen completely differently by the élites, depending on whether they have been educated in the French or Arabic system, and whether the cultural universe to which they refer is centred on Paris or Mecca. For the Senegalese researcher, Bakary Sambe, there is a "duality of educational systems" in a number of countries, with a duality of social structures, in which "religion is merely an excuse" to express "under the banner of Islam" what he refers to as "the rejection of a system that rejects me". The extreme case of this polarisation of élites is found in Nigeria, and in his study of the publications of Boko Haram, Bakary Sambe reports having observed a "conceptual split" that has distanced the British-originated project of the federal state in favour of drawing inspiration from the Kanuri Empire of Kanem Bornou. The rejection of the western educational system is implied in the name that this insurrectional movement has taken for itself (this report will return to the adoption and significance of the name "Boko Haram" later). The national university has, thus, become a prize at stake in the struggle in the "search for meaning" and "authenticity".

[24] *Jumu'ah,* the Friday congregational prayer. In Mali, not all mosques have permission to celebrate *jumu'ah*.
[25] Radio France Internationale.

This resentment reinforces the expression of affiliation to a community, a nation and a religion, within a complex national framework. This is based on indisputable, and sometimes alarming, acts and observations, but also on a conceptual framework of history which has achieved the status of myth. This framework is presented as an alternative to cultural alienation and to the tendency of the élites to look abroad for their inspiration. Though they nod towards Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the Emirates, individuals in Africa do not feel they have become the representatives of a mercantile élite. In Mauritania, where Islam is at the heart of the state system, the end result is a situation where religion is such a part of public life – like secularism elsewhere – that it is indistinguishable from it, since it "safeguards our lives here below and in the after-life" (Comment by a 29-year old woman in a group interview in Nouakchott, 14 juillet 2015).

> *"Religion cannot do evil, it is men who do evil"* (Comment by a 64-year old man in a group interview in Niabina, Brakna, Mauritania, June 2015).

The stabilising and pacificatory effect of religion is also in evidence in Senegal where, despite the non-religious nature of the state, the political power of the Tijaniya and Mouridiya brotherhoods is substantial.

> *"Senegal is big, if you will, but one could say that it is really composed of only a few families. For every issue, it is enough for just a few brotherhoods to come together, uniting their voices, and, then, no cloud can continue to persist"* (Comment by a respondent).

Nevertheless, there is research which has found that within Senegal there is an unsettling change of emphasis, with religiosity becoming a way of measuring the standards in political affairs.

> *"In our country, religion has become a slippery slope. According to the use one makes of it, religion participates in the construction or destruction of the social and political image of the people at the top of the state"* (Comment by a participant in the group interview in Niamey, 2 July 2015).

> *"Islam is used in political campaigns. There is a proliferation of mosques with the appointment of Imams, whereas normally the management of mosques must be under the control of authority"* (Comment by a respondent from Zinder, 19 June 2015).

The fading away of certain challenging ideas, together with new directions in pan-African and pan-Arab sentiment, has not halted transformations in societies which feel the weight of tradition, caste and the history of slavery. At the same time, new energising ideologies which are finding expression within, and through, religion are the vectors of unrest, serving simultaneously as indicators of real changes in the social order and of the rise of citizenship. For example, in Mauritania, where concern with religion is universal, it is currently still socially hard to accept, according to the prevailing traditional mentality, that a person of slave descent can become a dignitary or religious leader. Similarly, it has proved hard to suppress slavery which, though forbidden since the 1980s, has, in the past, been justified on social and religious grounds, with scholars of *fiqh* colluding to stretch Shari'a rules to legalise it. A respondent from the Alpular linguistic community stated that it would not be easy to excise the problem of slavery from Mauritanian society, "since it is written in the Quran". There is a clear division within the field of Islam on this issue, in fact, for the majority of Muslims, the Quran, if it mentions slavery – which it didn't forbid in the 7th century-Bedouin society is clearly disapproving it. If this report emphasises the discussion of these issues, which are so closely linked to the challenges of citizenship in the countries of the region, it is in order to demonstrate that new movements of religious expression follow the teachings of Islam in taking no account of distinctions of race and caste. The Muslim Brotherhood and

the Salafis work towards this goal within civil society, in effect as ‘accelerators of citizenship‘ and it is for this reason that they are well regarded by urban young people who, despite their education, are often unemployed. Such young people see no distinction, for example, between a religious scholar of noble and slave descent. As a result, this study concludes that the third phase of Islamization is under way. Its objective is the citizenship and the equality of the greatest number of people. This new phase has got under way at a time when young people have, from this point on, entirely committed themselves, body and soul, to the global era of mass consumption and social norms which have come out of the new technologies of information and communication.

II. INTER-COMMUNAL AND CROSS-BORDER DYNAMICS

Points to remember:

- The cross-border dynamics proposed here designate a relationship to space and time which is specific to the Sahel region and existed long before the formation of contemporary states. As a way of life and economic production, it pre-dates the establishment of formal borders.
- Cross-border areas all over the world share certain characteristics: a multicultural and multilingual space; the interface between formal and informal economies; a 'grey' zone of exchange stimulated by the quest to maximize comparative advantages in terms of potential employment, food, equipment, and access to education and healthcare.
- The Sahel's unique cross-border dynamics are a legacy of colonialism: its national boundaries are recent and artificial and many different peoples, rich in historical affiliation and ethnic, tribal, linguistic and religious identity live across them. The Sahelian cross-border region produces many different goods and enables a range of activities which are accessible to the majority, but also social ties determined by kinship and generalized mutual acquaintance: *"Here, everybody knows everybody"*.
- Inter-ethnic tensions tend to develop because of the weakness of basic public services, the degradation of natural resources, the increasing difficulties associated with living from agriculture and pastoralism, and the declining nomadic lifestyle. Armed conflict is now endemic in the border region, aggravated by the crises in North Africa and local insurgency.
- While local people see a difference between parallel economy and clandestine trafficking linked to international crime, they experience insecurity as a serious hindrance to their way of life and armed insurrection as an aggravating factor likely to make the borders increasingly arbitrary and their communities increasingly lawless and plagued by war.
- According to this study, the majority of the respondents consider difficult living conditions (poverty, unemployment, job insecurity, lack of education and healthcare) as the main sources of insecurity.

"The border is like a tree. When you're under it, you enjoy its shade, its leaves, its bark, its dry branches and its fruit. But when it dies, one becomes an orphan, sad" (Comment by a citizen of Tchintabaraden in a group interview in Niamey, 19 June 2015).

1. The border as creative frame, generator of personal ties and wealth

Any consideration of the eight countries in this study, and the Sahel periphery, in terms of physical and human geography, will result in the realization that (in the words of Pierre Hazan[26]) "Sahelistan does not exist". The eight countries are very different in terms of area, population and density (see table below). If the geographical characteristics of the eight countries are added together, the total national territory covers an area of 6,687,000km^2 with a total population of 294,385 million (and an average density of 52.32 inhabitants/km^2). The borders, themselves, represent a line which is 13,151km long.

[26] Cf. Pierre Hazan, "Transitional justice in the Sahel: towards a new logic", in Part II of this report.

CROSS-BORDER DYNAMICS: UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Countries	Common borders (km)	Area (Thousand km²)	Population 2015 (Thousands)	Density (Inhabitants/km²)
Burkina Faso	Mali 1000 Niger 628	274	18 106	67.8
Cameroon	Chad 1094 Nigeria 1690	475	23 344	45.2
Mali	Mauritania 2237 Burkina Faso 1000 Niger 821 Senegal 419	1 240	17 600	14.2
Mauritania	Mali 2237 Senegal 813	1 026	4 068	3.67
Niger	Nigeria 1497 Chad 1175 Mali 821 Burkina Faso 628	1 267	19 899	14.1
Nigeria	Niger 1497 Chad 87 Cameroon 1690	924	182 202	192
Senegal	Mauritania 813 Mali 419	197	15 129	71.7
Chad	Nigeria 87 Niger 1175 Cameroon 1094	1 284	14 037	9.89

Source: Wolfram Alpha Knowledgebase, 2015.

Across the global system, border areas offer certain economic attractions. Being able to circulate on both sides of the border offers comparative advantages related to work and production, trade, living standards and access to education and medical treatment. All people who live on the borders of contemporary states attempt to optimize this comparative advantage, searching for better living conditions, playing on the administrative informality that the opening of borders (e.g., the Schengen Area) allows. Naturally, the people who live in the unique Sahel region make comparisons across borders concerning tax and customs duties as well as the price of land, fuel, water, electricity, basic foodstuffs, equipment, schooling and healthcare, etc. – and choose accordingly. There is nothing new about making such comparisons and the Sahel area is not unique in doing so.

However, what is special about the Sahelian region in the eight countries surveyed is that these border areas are privileged in terms of the expression of great cultural diversity and complex social interaction which is marked by customs of conflict management (such as, the *joking relationship*[27]), human mobility and economic exchange.

1.1 Cultural richness and social diversity: the border as mixing place

The extraordinary richness of the Sahel border regions – which is completely ignored or overshadowed in the cultural, social, economic and human development statistics compiled by major international agencies – is evident in the cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity of the people who live there and all the knowledge capital that this diversity provides.

[27] The *joking relationship* is a traditional mechanism of relationship management between individuals of various ethnic groups, castes and professions. These joking relationships are supposed to perpetuate an agreement of non-aggression made between the ancestors of two rival groups; they are a way to establish communication and friendly terms. The joking relationship is a means of social integration, a way to avoid or limit conflicts. The custom is based on a fictional or metaphorical kinship favouring jokes, bantering or invective as a way to build relationships between private individuals according to their surnames or community. The joking relationship, widely studied by anthropology, is now promoted as an endogenous mechanism for regulating contemporary conflict. On this particular aspect, cf. Mark Davidheiser, "Special Affinities and Conflict Resolution: West African Social Institutions and Mediation", *Beyond Intractability*. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess (Eds.), Boulder, Conflict Information Consortium, University of Colorado, 2005 (http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/joking-kinship).

"There's a cultural melting-pot; you can speak different languages. In Africa, if you speak a language you can understand the customs (the "adats" as we call them) that come with that language. When you speak a language and you can understand the people who speak it, you can live with them" (Comment by an official at the hospital of Nema, Mauritania, 15 July 2015).

"Living between two cultures of different countries, we are able to benefit from both at the same time"; "Linguistically, we are rich because we speak at least two languages"; "The benefits are reflected in our relationship with the Malians so we regard Mali as our second country"; "(...) We are also more open to other cultures, with the Mauritanians" (Comments by respondents from Senegal).

"The benefits of living here are the easy access to moving goods and the constant contact with our brothers on the other side. It facilitates the mix" (Comment by a respondent, Chad, 12 June 2015).

MUTUAL KNOWLEDGE IN CROSS-BORDER DYNAMICS

"The Sahel-Saharan zone is a space where human societies are societies of *mutual knowledge* (i.e. where everyone knows everyone else, on both sides of the border). For any issue arising in the area, then, there are three viewpoints: that of the 'people of the Sahel', who know every detail which unites, or causes conflict between, them; that of governments, who feign ignorance of such knowledge; and that of local government officials, themselves 'people of the Sahel', who can adopt either position. Mutual knowledge is both the source of informal, even illegal, practices, but also the best way to understand and resolve conflicts. However, it must be understood that management of such networks of mutual knowledge is often quite localized and largely beyond state control. Consequently, in the present circumstances, it is in the relevant government's interest not to interfere, in order to avoid poisoning relationships which manage themselves and are not easily reconciled with international law. Non-interference, however, should not prevent governments from trying to analyse these situations and it should not prevent them from giving instructions for flexibility to the officials who must deal with them."

Extract from Pierre-Michel Joana's study, *The intractable problems of the Sahel's border regions: a deeper approach to the security issue.*

In the context of the post-colonial nation-states, the border areas are like long rows of stitches between distant governments (which are not only geographically distant). All sorts of anecdotes illustrate the administrative aberrations of cross-border dynamics – but are they really particular to the Sahel region? For example, between Nigeria and its neighbours, it is not uncommon for people to live in houses in the middle of the line (e.g., with the bathroom in Cameroon and the rest of the house in Nigeria). Or, a resident may get their household electricity from a meter which is read in a neighbouring state. Or, a Nigerian married woman may also have husbands in Cameroon and Chad. The artificial nature of the border is visible; for example, between Niger and Nigeria there are villages with exactly the same name (Adare, Datchi, Kokotoko, Gazabi) on both sides of the border.

"Villages with the same name on both sides of the border indicate kinship ties between their inhabitants. Generally, one of the villages was created by an inhabitant of the other" (Comment by a merchant from Zinder, Niger, 20 June 2015).

"I am proud to be Burkinabé but part of me is also Malian like my half-brothers" (Comment by a 45-year-old man, Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso, 8 June 2015).

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BORDERS

The borders of the Sahel region have two main features: their topography and their colonial geo-politics. Some of these borders were established along a geographical feature that is less a barrier than a natural advantage, and which concentrates human activities. This is the case, for example, of the border between Mauritania and Senegal where people have long shared the use of the Senegal River (for fishing and agriculture). It also applies to the Mali-Niger border between Ansongo and Tillaberi, where people's livelihoods depend on the Niger River. A further example is the Lake Chad region where four nations (Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon) exploit the same fish stocks, the same pastoral and agricultural potential, and whose people live on both sides of the rivers emptying into Lake Chad (the Yobe River between Niger and Nigeria, the Chari and the Logone between Chad and Cameroon).

In most cases, however, the Sahel's borders are 'unnatural' and virtual: long straight lines drawn across maps of the Sahara. The General Act of the Berlin Conference, signed on 26 February 1885, allowed Britain, France and Germany to divide up their zones of influence. This led, after 1900, to the borders of French West Africa (AOF, north of the 14th parallel) and French Equatorial Africa (AEF), as well as the borders of Nigeria and Cameroon which exist today. The present boundaries of the States considered in this report were drawn up in the late 1950s and created from the two major French colonies (AOF and AEF). On the eve of independence, thousands of kilometers of new borders were consequently added to the region to partition the AOF into the eight French colonies within it.

These colonial borders were subsequently legitimized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Cairo in July 1964, with the resolution "to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence". Respect for these colonial borders, however, partitioned some ethnic groups into different states. Members of a Tuareg family, for example, may have ended up with no less than six different nationalities. The situation is the same for the Peul/Fulani and other ethnic groups who frequently find themselves as minorities in the States which administer them, often not without mistreatment and, of course, a people mistreated by several States can have no sense of security.

Extract from Pierre-Michel Joana's study, *The intractable problems of the Sahel's border regions: a deeper approach to the security issue*

The national report on Burkina Faso mentions the case of Kel-Tafadès, a village located in the Markoye region. Kel-Tafadès is the object of a constant battle between the Governments of Burkina Faso and Niger concerning the drilling of wells as well as NGO investment and projects. The people in the village have learned to take advantage of their double nationality. The national report on Niger also notes the artificiality of the border, the dual nationality of the inhabitants and their dual dealings with government officials. But the artificiality of the border is particularly highlighted by the deep kinship relationships among people who consider themselves occupants of the same land. Kinship provides a special complement to the concept of citizenship, for which new laws and territorial administration must be conceived. This situation of dual citizenship is reflected in the other countries of the regional survey.

> *"I'm from Wandala, so from a Mandara family. To me, the Mandara of Cameroon and Nigeria are the same people... For now, I am comfortable in Cameroon. It seems that even the Chief of the Kerawa has left Cameroon to go to Nigeria. I am Cameroonian, Nigerian and Mandara. I have Nigerian papers. If things go wrong, then I will get Cameroonian papers for my children"* (Comment by a traditional Chief of Kérawa, Far North, Cameroon).

In Senegal, this reality is also noticeable among the people of the north and east of the country.

> *"On the border, around Kenyéba, near Diniogobou, people wonder if they are Senegalese or not..."* (Comment by a respondent in the East of Senegal).

> *"(...) and this border is the work of Senghor and Ould Daddah, without which Mauritania would still be part of Senegal. Hassan II said that the border of Morocco is Senegal"* (Comment by a man in the north of Senegal).

From an ethical and legal perspective, the border is inviolable (according to the principle adopted by the OAU), despite the fact that it is an artificial legacy of colonialism. In the history and collective mentality of the peoples who live there, the border is a connecting line whose original function – in the mathematical sense of the term – is to organize *change* and *fluctuation*. All that counts are natural limits (desert fringes, river basins, islands and deltas, the Senegal and Niger Rivers, Lake Chad, the mountains); the seasonal thresholds and cycles which define their possible use; and the fluctuating resources of water, land and pasture (all increasingly affected by global warming).

The border area works as a *percolation area* – particularly, in the Lake Chad region – marked by the incessant inward and outward flow of people, goods and cash, sometimes accelerated, sometimes slow, depending on the tortuosity of the transport routes, the danger of the areas crossed, the prices of basic commodities and fuel, the current relations between neighbouring states and any outbreak of political or territorial conflict, as well as the power play between the military and armed insurgent groups. Thus, a citizen of Nema (Mauritania) reports that Malians, fleeing the fighting in their own country, flock to Nema, living 20 to 30 per house (paying 800 Ouguiyas in rent per person), doing odd jobs (cleaning, transporting goods on carts etc.) at half the rate expected by a Mauritanian or a Senegalese, and returning home as soon as the situation calms down on the other side of the border. Sometimes these people go back-and-forth, in response to flare ups and lulls in the fighting. Despite their extreme poverty and the difference in their living standards with the people of Nema, no inter-ethnic problems have been reported.

1.2 Beyond subsistence: the border as a zone of relative abundance

The economic and commercial aspect of the cross border dynamics is decisive. It is the true barometer of life on the margin of two or three states and the respondents have much to say about these socio-economic activities.

> *"(...) It is food, various goods, that trucks transport from southern Algeria to Tahoua in Niger, with Tchintabaraden as the transit city. These are goods affordable to most people. On their return, the truckers load animals (large and small herding animals), cereals (millet) that they take to Tamanrasset"* (Comment by a Tuareg Chief, Tchintabaraden, Niger, 17 July 2015).

> *"Without Nigeria, I wonder what would happen to our markets. Our main sources of supply are the border towns of Nigeria. We depend on them because they are our product suppliers and we, their consumers.(...) So, we are interdependent"* (Comment by district Chief in Zinder, Niger, 18 June 2015).

> *"The other advantage of the cross-border region is that you can get hold of foodstuffs from two or three countries around the area. And you can find things that you won't get in Nouakchott, or in Bamako or in Algeria. It's because of the smuggling: you can get things at low prices and the people get the benefit. As far as the state is concerned, it's obvious the customs don't get anything out of it, because I've never seen the customs try to stop any goods."* (Comment by the director of a hospital, Nema, Mauritania, 15 July 2015)

The great droughts of the 1970s and 1980s made these areas more attractive, as resources from trade grew in importance compared to local subsistence economies based on agriculture, livestock and fishing.

Clearly the border strip is an area which generates wealth (of course, this wealth is relative, compared to living standards in the capital), greater accessibility to goods, and lower prices, all of which help increase the basic consumption of residents and decrease the gap between income and cost of living, thereby reducing the social divide[28]. Countless testimonials from the 800 respondents in the study attest to this general finding.

> *"Life here is cheaper, you just take the boat to go shopping". "The traffic is dense, we trade with Mauritania, where sugar is 450 francs compared to 700 francs in Dakar or even 600 francs here".*

[28] The socio-economic divide takes a fractal dimension as soon as one deploys the centre-periphery relationship on a scale ranging from local (region, nation) to global (intercontinental, international).

"We buy all our goods over there. It is less expensive" (Comments by respondents living on the banks of the Senegal River).

"The products that come from these borders are cheaper because the transport cost is not high and very often the carriers go around the customs checkpoints" (Comment by the President of a youth association in Zinder, 20 June 2015).

"The Lake region borders three countries. So, in economic terms, I think it offers great advantages in terms of export and import of products, especially with Nigeria" (Comment by a respondent in Chad).

"Even the fighters from the front come to buy; you see men in turbans buy what they need at the market and then go off again" (Comment by an official at the hospital of Nema, Mauritania, 15 July 2015).

In their comments, the respondents are clear about what they want and value in 'illegal' trafficking – with no bad conscience. Indeed, in terms of informal trade, they distinguish between, on the one hand, exchanges taking place in full view of everyone (even if this trade contravenes regulations, including government customs) and, secondly, trade that is secret and more or less invisible. The first concerns the parallel economy and the smuggling of common products or food staples (fuel, tea, tobacco, dates, oil, sugar, rice, salt, flour, clothes, cattle etc.), making them accessible at competitive rates.

"Yes, I know there is trafficking, but it is normal trafficking. I've known the traffickers all my life and they are harmless" (Comment by a man in the village of Tambao, Burkina Faso, June 2015).

"Borders? Which borders? It is true that there is a border post here, but people take advantage of the porous border for trade, to visit friends or even go to the hospital on the other side. Smugglers use motorcycles as a means of transportation to bring in banned goods, especially rice, vegetable oil, spaghetti and drugs, into the state from neighbouring Niger Republic" (Comment by a respondent in Banki, Borno State, June 2015).

However, the local people see secret trafficking – mainly related to drugs and weapons – as among the disadvantages and dangers of the cross-border region.

"This trafficking can cause many problems in our cities. We see them with their closed vehicles and have no idea what is inside. We often see them unloading boxes and they say it's cigarettes. They come with cargo trucks, with military vehicles" (Comment by a man in Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso, 10 June 2015).

"The Boko Haram has been able to take advantage of the porous border to smuggle arms into Nigeria using various methods such as the use of specially crafted skin or thatched bags attached to camels, donkeys and cows where arms are concealed and moved across the borders with the aid of nomadic pastoralists or herders. Its members are known to connive with merchants involved in cross-border trade to help stuff their arms and weapons in goods that are transported via heavy trucks, trailers, and lorries" (Comment by a respondent in Geidam, Yobe State, Nigeria June 2015).

Regional migration is very important to the economy of these societies. A classic path for 'success' is to work across the border in Algeria or Libya (both wealthy from natural gas and oil revenues) or even further, make a little money, come home and start a business. With even longer stays, a person may, within a few years, build a house and permanently improve their situation so it is no longer precarious.

"Before the crisis, all the young people were leaving for Libya. In every family, there was at least one person who went there. That was where the money was. There was always work and it was well

> *paid. Within a few months, one could achieve a lot. You could come home and start a business or buy a transport vehicle. Almost all the houses you see were built through migration"* (Comment by a woman interviewed in the town of Tchintabaraden, Niger, 19 June 2015).

In terms of perceptions, it is worth noting that regional migration, trade and religious studies are fully integrated with Islamic norms and values – in a similar way to the Weberian model while also including ethical values and the aesthetic dimension of migration (*hijra*)[29]. Leaving Chad or Niger to pursue religious education in northern Nigeria is a very common form of migration, inscribed in the historical tradition of an individual's "pursuit of science" (*talab al 'ilm*). Thus, there can be no separation between mobility, Quranic studies and trade to earn one's living honestly and with dignity.

> *"The major cities of Nigeria (Sokoto, Kano, Katsina, Kaduna, etc.) are invaded by Nigerien youth who go to study the Quran and to trade. Most of the marabouts in this city went to Nigeria in their Islamic learning cycle"* (Comment by a village religious leader, Zinder, Niger, interview 20 June 2015).

Border areas not only reinforce the largely informal sector, but also – and this is something which should not be ignored – the niches of the formal economy. The border regions both join and form the crossroads of states in a double sense; firstly, they do so locally in terms of the countries in the region, their production and their national activities; but they also do so in a greater sense, in terms of other continents, with all kinds of flows and traffic, arriving and departing, at the global level. Cross-border dynamics in the Sahel are directly connected to today's major global flows, just as trans-Saharan trade in the Middle Ages was connected to the major global trade flows of that time (i.e., the Sahelian empires were the main producers and exporters of gold which they traded as part of tri-continental trade [North Africa-Europe-Asia]). Today, the globalization of trade is somewhat degraded and degrading for the Sahel states, now recipients of aid and counted among the poorest of nations. In the 21st century, world trade passing through the area involves arms trafficking and cocaine from Latin America, organised networks of human trafficking to Europe, not to mention the networks of jihadist groups.

2. Ethnic tensions and the collapse of the nomadic way of life

Despite the comparative advantages of the border area, this geographical area can also function as a place where inter-communal conflicts crystallize (around natural resources such as water and agricultural/pastoral land), leading to the rejection and stigmatization of certain communities which are blamed for every ill (e.g., the nomadic Fulani moving between Niger and Mali or the Kanuri in Chad, Nigeria and Cameroon). This will be considered in more detail in the later section in this report on radicalization as a generator of the clearest cases of stigmatization. In the intricate space of the border areas, causes of conflict are linked to access to natural and agricultural resources, illegal and criminal activities, and political-military confrontation. These three aspects (access to resources, mafia trafficking, armed struggle) often overlap and intertwine, but it is useful to try to distinguish between them as much as possible.

[29] The Prophet himself incarnated this prototype: a young trader, he chose to migrate (*hegira or hijra*) to Medina when it was necessary, while continuing to receive and deepen the divine teachings.

Thus, the national report on Mali insists on *internal* causes of insecurity and violence in the border region. In Mali, inter-ethnic conflicts continue to influence and degrade the overall situation and added to the cross border dynamics is another aggravating factor: the probably irreversible decline of the nomadic lifestyle. An important unspoken element of this survey in the eight countries is the question of nomadism: no one mentioned it directly, but everyone feels its effects when evoking the conflicts which are multiplying, particularly on the border. As a way of life and a way to fill space and time (through physical movement), nomadism is being irreversibly affected by the nation-building which is underway (rural exodus, mass literacy, urbanization) and by climate change and its effects on natural resources, both agricultural and pastoral. Indeed, nomadic culture, as described and defined by the Maghrebian historian Ibn Khaldun (14th century) with the Arabic term "*umran*" (literally defining civilization as a "way to fill" space and time), once characterized the essence of Sahelian socio-politics and territoriality. In 1977, nomads in Mauritania represented 33% of the population; today, they represent no more than 5%. In this sense, the nomad is not so much characterized by mobility – for other groups and communities, too, are constantly on the move, waging war [30], seeking refuge, emigrating, studying or trading – as by their lifestyle and stable, constant orientation around water and grass. But this way of life and functioning defines a different relationship to territoriality which the state, sometimes in spite of all its good intentions, is not always able to grasp. For example, the Government of Mauritania has built sophisticated facilities in the border area of Beyt Al Ahwach – one of the cross-roads for nomadic communities – which is replete with water and grass. A school and a hospital have been built there, but the nomadic communities stay for two or three days and then leave. Clearly, the authorities made a mistake in choosing the site to locate such expensive infrastructure. It should also be noted that the crisis in relation to nomadism concerns not just conflict between nomads and sedentary communities, but also between different nomadic groups involved in inter-communal divisions.

AN APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF NOMADISM

One of the major shortcomings of strategic and geopolitical studies is to have completely omitted the fact that, for millennia, the structural antagonism behind conflicts and wars was the confrontation between nomads and sedentary people. The term nomad usually refers to an individual, group, structure or even activities that move through a space. It is a common mistake to confuse nomadism and migration. In the Sahara-Sahel area, it would be wise to distinguish migrants from nomads and semi-nomads. The migrant is someone who moves from point A to point B, the move itself is part of a strategy and a family/social network which creates a chain of solidarity and transmission overflowing several areas. But the nomad's relationship to a space is marked by something other than movement, and it is this relationship that should be more deeply explored in the cross-border region of the Sahel.

From Ibn Khaldun to Arnold Toynbee, it has been established that the nomad is absolutely not someone who moves in space, but one who is 'territorialized' in a certain quality of space. The nomad individual, group, structure and even its war machine seek some form of spatiality, if only to be able to deploy within it a number of activities and exchange. In this sense, the question to ask is if cross-border areas do not have a certain quality - extraterritoriality? - and a certain economy of space which make them a favourable location and link to all kinds of activities and movement which cannot be deployed otherwise.

As we approach the question of the relationship to space of the nomads of the Sahara-Sahel, as distinct from the issue of migration to the north, the work of the 14th century North African historian Ibn Khaldun must be considered. He addresses the emergence and consolidation of the state, the cycles of origin, the apogee and decline of urban and Bedouin civilization, as well as sedentary and nomadic lifestyles, through the cohesive force or unifying spirit applied to tribal sociology.

[30] In the 14th century, Ibn Khaldun wrote: "The nomads live in isolation; no walls contain them. To protect themselves, they count on one another. Always armed and on the alert, they are attentive to the slightest sign of danger, with full confidence in their own courage and force. Courage has become one of their major qualities and boldness their second nature." Cited by Gérard Chaliand in *Anthologie mondiale de la stratégie*, Robert Laffont, 2009, p. XLI. The same passage appears in a slightly different form in Vincent Monteil's translation of Ibn Khaldun, *Discours sur l'Histoire universelle, Al-Muqaddima*, 3rd edition, Sindbad-Actes Sud, 1997, p. 194.

"When 10 Fulani herders are killed, nobody talks about it (...) but let one sedentary person be killed and all the televisions and radios are mobilized, the interior minister makes an appearance, steps are taken. What is this state we live in where people's lives are not equal?" (Comment by a man interviewed in Zinder, Niger).

"Inter-ethnic relations are determined by the problem of access to pastoral resources. Water projects invest in the sedentary villages. When the Fulani want to water their animals, the Dogon set hard conditions. They ask them to wait until night to water. When the Fulani wanted to dig their own wells, they were prevented by the Dogon, under the pretext that the Fulani have no land nearby" (Comment by a village Chief, Boulekessi, Mali).

"The Malian Tuareg operate in a network. Some in the bush steal the animals of the Fulani of Niger and butcher them, while others come to get the meat to sell in the settled villages. Other animals are taken to be sold in the rural markets of Mali. It was after this that the Fulani decided to defend themselves by establishing a militia made up of young people, 20-25 years" (Comment by a participant in the group interview, Niamey, Niger, 2 July 2015).

"The Mauritanians came here and stole our livestock. The people rebelled and this caused a civil war, and all this because the state refused to intervene and help us stop this thieving" (Comment by a man in the north of Senegal).

"Here, our major problem is livestock theft, and most of the thieves are Malians. They come here, take our animals and cross the border" (Comment by a man in the east of Senegal).

Violence born of conflict over resources or cattle theft is not trivial. It can result in death, as well as thefts which go unpunished even when the thief is identified and the authorities are notified. However, successful attempts have been made to mitigate conflict, for example in Burkina Faso where herding is the main activity in its Sahel Region and, given the vital issue of water supply, a source of conflict. The national report on Burkina Faso emphasizes the drilling of the Christine well, begun in 1972 in Oudalan province, which draws livestock farmers from Mali and Niger. The well's flow (5000 m^3/hr) and the large area it supplies (30'0000 ha) allows the continuous watering of hundreds of head of livestock, as well as supplying the surrounding population. This well demonstrates the importance of public commitment to water management, as much to sustain the benefits of development as to sustain peaceful inter-ethnic coexistence. The well's recent breakdown and the resulting conflicts were a reminder of the delicacy of this balance and the ongoing commitment which water management in the Sahel demands.

3. Daily life subject to conflict, harmful flows and corruption

3.1 The cross-border region as a focal point of imbalance

The conflicts which undermine border areas are not without their impact on local trading activities. In the sample in this study (698 people), 90.8% consider that insecurity in the region – regardless of its cause – weakens the local economy. Insecurity and tension as a result of fluctuating commodity prices is common in the border areas; sometimes even a rumour can introduce very significant changes which have an immediate impact on the living standards of inhabitants.

"The smuggling of food products is stagnant while that of weapons, tobacco and drugs is rising. Traffickers are responsible for insecurity on certain routes and areas of the region" (Comment by an inhabitant of Rharous, Mali).

> *"The price of everything goes up when a convoy is attacked. Even a rumour about a possible attack can raise prices! For example, the rumour last month increased the price of a mattress from 18,000 to 35,000 CFA francs and, then, a few days later to 40,000 CFA francs"* (Comment by a merchant in Tchintabaraden, 20 June 2015).

War has deeply disturbed the cross-border ecosystem, particularly in northern Africa between Algeria and Libya. The international military operation which destroyed the Gaddafi regime and its state system has been a major regional disaster – one more fracture between North Africa and the Sahel – whose final consequences cannot yet be judged, either in geopolitical terms (with the destabilization of Mali and the delivery of arms and mercenaries to various Sahel sub-regions), or in economic and human terms with the return of refugees as well as Chadian and Nigerian immigrants. An official at the hospital of Nema in Mauritania told those involved in the study that the groups from Azawad (including fighters) have an interest in maintaining insecurity and its political causes. Indeed, many NGOs have set up there, digging wells, treating the wounded (including the fighters, sometimes taking them as far as the capital, paying their escorts and transportation) and providing food aid to all.

As noted in the national report on Cameroon, "the fictional aspect of the border" highlights the serious difficulties associated with maintaining security and protecting civilians. The war, which involves the supply of arms as well as light and heavy equipment, may be an opportunity for extraordinary enrichment for a minority, but it generates a general rise in prices and makes the exchange rate in local markets erratic. People's lives are affected in various ways.

> *"Before the war, one could do so many things, but the war came and ended our activities. The majority of people traded rice, goods, since things came here first before leaving for Nigeria. The border was nothing. It was enough to cross a fence to be in Nigeria. This was not even a border, just two posts lined up like this. There is no river here, as in Kerawa"* (Comment by a man in the north of Cameroon).

> *"When you border with another country, if there is peace in that country, it is an advantage because trade will be very fluid. But when things are not going well in that country, it automatically affects you. Trade will be limited. Whatever is rare at home, they will come and get it from you, the neighbour. Those who feel threatened will seek refuge with you. And you are obliged to take them in and share the little you possess with them"* (Comment by a man in Tin Akoff, Burkina Faso, 9 June 2015).

At the interface of states, on the edge of various government administrations, the darker side of the border emerges and concerns anything which can alter, and threaten, the lives of those in the communities which live on it.

> *"Even in the village [in Mauritania] that's closest to Mali, you sometimes hear shooting; people are uneasy because they are afraid of attacks. In 2010, there was even a suicide attack in the military camp at Nema … A man blew himself up with his car. Fortunately the soldiers spotted it really quickly; they opened fire and it was their shooting that made him blow his car up…"* (Comment by an official at the hospital of Nema, Mauritania, 15 July 2015).

When making cost/benefit comparisons for why people migrate, concerns about healthcare must be considered. According to the head of nursing at the hospital in Nema, Mauritania, Tuaregs frequently return from Mali with injuries from fighting or accidents incurred while fleeing war zones, cross the border for treatment in Nema, and then immediately return. The fighters who come for medical treatment do everything to hide their identity: *"a man whose hand has a bullet hole denies it and says he hit a wall"*. Many people also cross the Niger or Chad border to benefit from better-equipped (and sometimes almost free) medical centres in Nigeria and Cameroon. Again, on the issue of healthcare in

the border areas, the respondents in Niger and Chad named the spread of epidemics as a factor in insecurity, a risk against which they feel powerless. Another factor in spreading sexually transmitted diseases is the migration of Nigerian women for prostitution. These sex workers come in numbers to Niger where they stay long enough to make money to continue their migration to the Schengen area. The phenomenon of prostitution concerns local people less for moral reasons than for the health risks it generates.

In addition to these health problems, many young Chadians are addicted to the drug Tramol (an opium-based anti-inflammatory) which is widely sold for its hallucinogenic effects. Addiction to this narcotic and to others (such as, *bongo*, a local variety of cannabis) is not unrelated to the ease with which young people – the majority between 17 and 24 years – are recruited into the armed, insurrectionary movement in north-eastern Niger.

> *"(...) Yes, here, when we look at the facts aggravating the Boko Haram phenomenon, it is also the drug phenomenon, specifically tramol [a medically prescribed pain-killer]! Frankly, in this locality, I wonder if the tramol problem will ever go away, because those who are supposed to fight tramol are the real providers!"* (Comment by a respondent, Chad).

Another feature of daily life in the border areas is the easy access to these drugs (an important local market) is directly attributed to the inaction of law enforcement and security officials, designated either as lax or as accomplices in the trade.

> *"A rich criminal gets more respect from the security forces than an honest peasant"* (Comment by a respondent, Chad).

> *"Drug trafficking here (...) is highly developed and the authorities do not seem on top of the situation. Perhaps some customs officials are even accomplices..."* (Comment by a respondent, Chad).

In relation to these pernicious activities and the social ills they generate, the respondents in the study – who otherwise praise the border's cultural and social mixing and its fluidity and informality in terms of economic exchange – overwhelmingly believe that controls are needed to stop such dangerous trafficking.

Trafficking of all kinds is on such a scale that it is not possible to conceive that it is done without the support of regional and national officials. The trafficking of weapons is part of this process and directly linked to the rise of armed insurgent groups.

> *"Drug trafficking networks and weapons are quite powerful networks, often stronger than our states. They are managed by powerful people or international firms, conducted with the help of a set of actors wherein everyone gets his share"* (Comment by a participant in a group interview in Niamey, Niger, 2 July 2015).

> *"What made the bandits strong is weapons. As you know, we do not manufacture them..."* (Comment by a man interviewed in Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso).

While some denounce the weak/absent law enforcement and security, others criticize the abuse they suffer daily when these same forces are active in the field, especially in Chad and Cameroon. The national report on Nigeria confirms this abuse: respondents in that report perceive police patrols on the Cameroonian border as predators, racketeering and taxing people who want to go from one side or the other, considerably hindering economic activity and the development of the border regions.

Despite the possession of an identity card which, in principle, allows freedom of movement, checkpoints are multiplying to extort money from citizens by the National Security Agency, the Territorial Surveillance, the National Police, the Gendarmerie, Customs, etc." (Comment by a teacher, Bagassola, Chad, 13 June 2015).

"Truly, since the closure of the borders, work is not like before. Now, even if you are transporting a commodity, they suspect you of going to re-supply Boko Haram... The police, our police, even if you are taking a bag of millet home to your family, they stop you. Yes, there is a blockade, and even if you are taking millet home to your family, it is impossible. Since then, because of Boko Haram, we can no longer work. Round-ups are organised in the city, not to identify people, but for their [the police] own profit. They [the police] enter a house, if you have two motorbikes, you must pay. You give them something. We ask for a receipt. We are no longer safe. A round-up should be to identify people, but for the police, it is to make money" (Comment by a motorcycle taxi driver, Kousséri, Cameroon).

Night curfews and fruitless searches are a pretext for paying the police.

"The police scam pedestrians for their national identity cards and they are forced to pay 3,000 CFA francs or end up in jail (…) this is never going to stop. They are too used to it. Now, if they come and don't find Boko Haram, they find your motorbike and they ask, 'Whose motorcycle is this?' They say, 'Finish with us'. And you 'finish', they leave, even if they have not found anyone" (Comment by a motorcycle taxidriver, Kousséri, Cameroon).

*"They go to the market, they collect money, and, if you do not give, then... They collect 100 francs, sometimes 500 francs ... You have no more power here. They say 'If we do not collect 100 francs, what will we eat with? What will we drink with?'" (*Comment by a young man, Kouza, Cameroon).

Finally, in Niger, denouncing criminal acts can be risky due to the lack of follow-up protection.

"How can you expect people to turn others in when they can be the target of these bandits the following night? The security forces, arresting the suspect, reveal to them the source of their information. And as a person can be charged only when there is evidence against him, well, he makes the whistleblower his primary enemy" (Comment by a participant in the group interview, Niamey, 2 July 2015).

3.2 Rethinking the periphery, restoring the relationship with the governed

On the negative side, areas where the informal sector is largely dominant can also become, depending on the circumstances, areas where arbitrariness, lawlessness and insecurity prevail. The vast majority of the respondents from the eight countries in the study ask for protection to be guaranteed by the police and military. The actions of the latter can be judged by the strong demand expressed in dozens of testimonies. Statistical analysis of the questionnaire completed by the 698 respondents (in all eight countries) shows that 84.7% are reassured by the presence of the armed forces while 10% find it disturbing (20% in Mali and Mauritania). Furthermore, 70.5% believe that the state is capable of ensuring security, although this confidence tends to decrease with the level of education of the respondents. Finally, 87.9% think that the state is able to confront the armed groups.

This confidence contrasts with the negative perception of social services, equipment, roads and public transport, and the supply of electricity (in general, electricity is infrequently or poorly supplied in the areas in the survey), a problem which it is difficult for the comparative advantages of cross-border dynamics to offset. 'Difficult living conditions' (poverty, unemployment, lack of employment, education and healthcare) are, for the majority of respondents (50.3%), the main source of local insecurity ('religious radicalism' is the cause cited by the lowest number of respondents [1.9%]).

> *"Theoretically, government should be closer to the citizen, but this is rarely the case. The people of the border feel abandoned to poverty, lack of education and health facilities"* (Comment by a man in Chad).

> *"Our village doesn't have electricity, so we cannot keep up with the news to better understand what we should do. Often, we cannot get the Cameroonian stations, only those in Nigeria and that information is in Hausa"* (Comment by a displaced man, Mozogo, Cameroon).

> *"You drink bottled water because you cannot drink the water that we drink here. This is outrageous. Problems can arise from this"* (Comment by a young man, 25, living in Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso, speaking to a researcher, 9 June 2015).

Avenue for reflection 1: Africa's intellectuals must play their part in the state and contribute to its redefinition, in conjunction with the machinery of technocratic, and neoliberal, 'good governance'.

The multilateral machinery of the 'construction of the state' and of 'good governance' has revealed its limitations, particularly in Mali. (…) *Africa may have greater need of political philosophy, jurisprudence and even ideology than of the science of economics.* Only African thinkers have the ability to formulate the questions relating to the necessary restructuring of the state, on the intersection of its Western origins and its Sahelian resources. This will include its approach to the religious sphere – bearing in mind that the concept of secularism is, historically, inextricable from that of subjection to a dominant class – and to institutions that have emerged from colonization which are broadly seen as socially undesirable.

Avenue for reflection 2: The idea of territory, (including frontiers and ownership) should be reconsidered, in both its political and juridical aspects, to enable the state to accommodate the social and geographical mobility of the citizens of the region.

This exercise in reinvention should primarily focus on the definition of frontiers, in the sense of frontiers as both a *margin* and a *limit*. Sahelian societies are mobile societies, societies of movement, even pioneer societies. This is vouched for by the scale of the migratory movements within, and between, states (greater than the scale of emigration to destinations beyond the continent); by the existence of subcontinental, continental and intercontinental diasporas; and by the commercial dynamism of bodies of water bounded by different states, such as Lake Chad. The state should learn to deterritorialize itself, adapting its territorial laws to take account of demographic dynamics – for instance, by according special status to frontier inhabitants and through the formalisation of the law concerning the use of common resources to prevent their being acquired by national elites or by foreign investors (…).

Extract from Jean-FrançoisBayart's study, *Security regime in the Sahel: the role of the State*

In Nigeria, where Boko Haram is responsible for a severe deterioration in security conditions, the respondents in the study, in contrast to external analysis, cite poverty and idleness as the main sources of insecurity.

> *"As you can see most of us are poor. It is so bad that we can barely feed our children. The inability of government to provide a secure and safe environment for us, and to provide good roads and bridges for us to take our farm produce and fish to sell in the markets leaves us with very few opportunities to make money. The government has also failed to protect our lives and properties and to provide security for the conduct of business and economic activities. This has led to resentment and disaffection among ethnic groups. The situation has seriously worsened by the activities of the Boko Haram"* (Comment by a respondent in Geidam town, Yobe State, June 2015).

State administration is generally very centralized, with authorities poorly represented, if at all, in the peripheral regions of the country. The lack of government service to the border area results in an understaffing of personnel (state officials, police officers) or by corruption, which is widespread and highly predatory. The outcome of this situation is a lack of infrastructure and basic social services and a security vacuum, as well as all kinds of activities which would be even more intolerable in other regions of the national territory.

FROM INSECURITY/INJUSTICE TO JIHADISM

"The Tuareg of Niger come to steal the cattle of the Fulani of Mali. An owner out looking for his herd recognised his cattle and alerted Mali's security forces but they did nothing to restore his livestock. In 2011, a Tuareg took away four of my oxen. I took him to the commander of the gendarmerie brigade in Hombori. Arriving at the brigade, the thief began to insult the Brigadier for having convened him and the Brigadier didn't even react. Faced with a thief who is stronger than the police, I have not been successful. My oxen were never returned to me. The real problem we have with the people from Niger is livestock theft. I think the Malian government does not do its job. There is no justice. This is why rustling is common.

One day I was threatened by a Tuareg MNLA activist. This man killed my uncle and his son. Then he came to tell me not to cultivate the field that we have always cultivated. I went to Bamako to see a highly-placed Fulani who introduced me to the Minister of Defence. I presented three proposals to the Minister for the security of my village against Tuareg attacks: send a military battalion; authorize the establishment of a self-defence militia; or enable everyone in the village to arm himself. The Minister said that he could not accept any of these three security proposals. I left Bamako and went to San (Segou region) and, from there, I went home to my village. When I arrived, my nephew came to me crying. He said that the Tuaregs had come on motorcycles, tied him up and raped his wife in front of him. The next day, I went to Gossi, a town controlled by MUJAO. I called the leading Fulani in Bamako to tell him that I was joining the MUJAO in order to have the means to defend my village against Tuareg attacks. I went to see a representative of MUJAO, based in Gao, to ask him to protect my village and he sent me to their representative in Hombori. This man asked for 500,000 CFA francs. I immediately gave him the money. He went to my village with only four armed men. In total, he spent only 48 hours in my village. The day of his departure, I received threats. I called the head of MUJAO to inform him of what his men did, despite the amount paid by me. Following my complaint, the head of MUJAO recruited young people from my village. They were taken to Gao. They were to receive training and then come home to protect my village. They were six young men. While they did the training, I went to buy weapons from the people of the MNLA. Unfortunately, the Serval operation ended our campaign. My nephew was killed in Gao during the Serval bombin. Three of his comrades were able to return to the village."

Testimony of a village chief from Boulekessi, Mali.
Extract from the *National Report on Mali*

It is in Senegal and Burkina Faso, the two most stable of the eight countries, that the respondents express the most favourable opinions of government services. In Senegal, citizens clearly do not perceive government administrators as enemies or predators. Collaboration with the police and armed forces is not only sought, but valued, because it strengthens the relatively peaceful state of the country (apart from the conflict in Casamance, a persistent but low intensity conflict). However, the respondents remain vigilant despite their pluralistic and democratic political system: *"Who would have thought ten years ago that Mali would be invaded?"* (Comment by a source in the group interview in Dakar, 7 July 2015). The responses of respondents in Senegal and Burkina Faso often indicate that conflicts on the border originate in external communities, migrants who benefit from the ease of passage of citizens from the area of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which does not include Mauritania, Chad and Cameroon.

Finally, the situation in Mali should be considered, a country which has been thoroughly analysed and over-invested geopolitically, where insecurity in the cross-border region (and especially the resulting impunity for cattle theft or disputes concerning water or land resources have brought in the jihadists as vigilantes). If the people were once attracted by the promises of the jihadists, it was mainly people seeking justice who believed they had found in them a credible answer; that the imposition of Sharia law would prohibit, and severely punish, theft and the violation of goods, properties and people. Thus, insecurity, violence and the inability to administer justice at the regional – or even national – level, have led some people into

radicalization, in rejection of the helpless state system and in search of alternatives to violence and injustice. The Mali national report illuminates a situation which was previously thought to be shaped by external – primarily geopolitical – determinants: the inhabitants perceive only what affects them directly, internal conflicts of a domestic and non-political nature. It is through this view that jihadism has been able to find a hold and meet with acceptance – at least temporarily – from the people. Men invited in from the outside appeared as vigilantes and possible mediators in these domestic disputes.

The fact remains that, in cases of violence or crime, statistical analysis of the surveys in the eight countries shows that 47.1% of respondents prefer to turn to national justice instead of customary (18.9%), religious (15.3%) or international (9.5%) justice. This result once again demonstrates the strong expectations of the state and indicates that the state should reconsider its presence in the border areas.

III. RADICALIZATION: CLUES AND PROCESS

Points to remember:

- The target of radicalization, in the most literal sense of the term, is to "start again from the beginning in relation to all issues, from a blank slate". Radicalization does not imply there are no roots: it is, on the other hand, a new way of 'putting down roots', especially for the young. It is a form of horizontal expansion, operating on the surface; and one of the effective modalities of globalization in the 21st century.
- Radicalization is a phenomenon observed in conjunction with demographic growth, like the extremely critical expansion of population presently being experienced by the majority of the countries of the Sahel. The vigorous growth in population, the elevated fertility rate, the overwhelming percentage of young people in the population, and the extent of their education (coupled with a lack of career opportunities): all these are facts facing societies which are, in any case, all the more susceptible to radicalization due to the age-old distinctions of caste and age built into their social structures (having been structured from time immemorial on the basis of caste and seniority). The demographic indicators alone suggest radicalization should be expected in these circumstances.
- Radicalization is not, in itself, destructive. It is a drug that may either kill or cure: an accelerator or destroyer of citizenship. It is at the origin of peaceful social movements such as those of the Arab Spring, the maple-leaf Spring in Quebec ("le printemps érable"), the "indignados" in Spain or the US movement, "Occupy New York", as well as expressing itself in a violent form in jihadism. Radical ideas are legitimate and crucial to the restructuring of the global system: in previous decades they have been expressed through different ideologies of a non-religious nature.
- Armed violence is the most extreme result of radicalization, verging on the pathological. In relation to its expression in religious terms, the way radicalization is expressed through words and symbols determines whether or not it is a source of conflict. Religion is a material that is radioactive, inflammable and explosive: its symbolic and semantic aspects exacerbate its effects but also offer opportunities for discussions and the neutralization of violence. Thus the idea of jihad (indissociable from Islamic faith and dogma), whose meaning and usage have been reduced to an ideology which should be amenable to political de-demonisation and demilitarisation, can be endowed with its wider signification and to a full range of constructive uses, productive of social structures and of spiritual orientations, for the benefit of more than a billion Muslims.
- When there is extreme violence, like that confronting the populations of the cross-border zones, there is the risk of a "dirty war": should civilian populations be protected from attacks by the jihadist sect, or are these armed groups in fact engaged in an eradication exercise? Clearly, these two objectives should not be mixed up. Respondents condemned the abuses committed by these groups against the population.

"So, in short, when we want to make war, we open the Book and when we want to make peace, we also open the Book. In reality, it is Islam that suffers; it is not Islam that dictates" (Statement by Ehel Sidi Mahmoud, a major tribal confederation head in Bassikounou, Mauritania).

"It's something that will go on" (Statement by participant in the group interview in Abuja, Nigeria, 3 July 2015).

This is the heart of this study of perceptions. What can be discerned, from the convergence of information from the eight countries where the research has been carried out, is that radicalization – which still demands its own definition – may be incited by a range of factors linked to poverty: to the sparsity of public infrastructure and social structures, as well as a depressed standard of living and the lack of work prospects, among other issues. These are, in any case, the factors which most of the respondents in the study mention as the principal determinants of insecurity and armed violence. In the sphere of cultural change, it would seem that the standard world view is no longer the only major substrate upon which change can germinate: an alternative tradition is in the course of being formed within, what might be called, "modernity, oriental-style", (cf. the national report on Mauritania), which is steeped in a version of globalization where the West is no longer the sole point of reference. This 're-traditionalisation' (the refurbishment of tradition) is associated with a 'search for meaning' and it is tugged one way and another by the urge to embrace and shrink from various versions of identity, as well as finding expression through the instrument of a religious discourse that is, itself, increasingly politicised.

1. Tentative definition and the demographic influence

1.1 Radicalization as a drug: healing remedy and/or deadly toxin

The conceptual illumination which is being strived for in this report here is rooted in an idea of wisdom, in the practical good sense that comes from the respondents – ordinary people who are, for the most part, poor. But the clarity of their perceptions may be contrasted with the perceptions of the Sahel which circulate in the international media and political spheres, where the main issues are violence and Islam. What is at stake in these studies of perceptions is the opportunity to cease to be fearful, and to cease frightening ourselves, and to reach an understanding of what radicalization means in concrete terms – when it also flows from promises of change – for the individual and for society.

The Arab Spring was a form of radicalization where angry but unarmed citizens were able, without recourse to violence, to overthrow dictatorships. It should be recalled that, in the years after 2010, a new form of radical action was to be seen almost everywhere in the world, one that came out of citizen's movements. These involved, for the most part, the young and the unemployed, who stood up in uncompromising but non-violent opposition to the tyranny of the world of finance and to the defeatism of national élites struggling to cope with unemployment, the constantly rising cost of living, and the moral and political crisis of the liberal democracies: in short, to the iniquity of the current world order. In Tel Aviv, Madrid, Barcelona, London, New York, Quebec, Istanbul, Sao Paolo, Hong Kong – almost everywhere – the young expressed their desire for the advent of a new world run on radically different economic and political principles. The revelations of figures such as Julian Assange, with Wikileaks, and Edward Snowden in the field of espionage and the digital surveillance of each and every individual by the American NSA security service, reinforce the sensation that the present world order must be overthrown, though by non-violent means and with a new version of democracy which is, for the moment, still being created. At the same time, other groups (numerically miniscule) employing the same methods of growth, mobilization and communication, were developing a radicalism based on armed violence and claiming to act in the tradition of the Guevarist revolutionary guerrilla movements which flourished in the 1960s and 1970s.

In clear contrast to the views of many other specialists, those involved in this study do not regard radicalization as a phenomenon which is, in itself, a cause for concern; in this report it is not necessarily seen as a danger and an evil for our times. The expression of radicalism is not merely necessary but an essential aspect of a world which is evolving ever more quickly, which is the scene of growing injustice, and of ever-proliferating inequality, under the influence of the financial markets, of free trade, and of a model of mass consumption which is threatening to the biosphere and the climate. It is equally possible that radicalization expresses a frugal ethic which is characteristic of the poorest societies in terms of economic production and GDP. It could be said provisionally that radicalization – whether non-violent or violent – works on the principle of a drug: the classical Greek idea of the *pharmakon*, which can be simultaneously the remedy that heals and the poison that kills (an idea to which Derrida has drawn attention).[31] It is important not to leap to apocalyptic conclusions that may flow too often from the habit of the 'heuristic of fear' which is generated by security policies and the dominant discourse of geopolitical analysis, at a time when market economics and the media continue to mould public opinion.

RADICALITY OR THE POWER OF THE RHIZOME

Thirty years ago, French philosopher Gilles Deleuze envisioned the concept of rhizome, which expands with adventitious roots. He introduced this biological figure to illustrate the resistance and resilience of a plant root that grows on a large surface and generates couch grass and weed. French philosopher Gilles Deleuze and psychoanalyst Felix Guattari are the first thinkers who ever focused their reflection on a horizontal fractal form of growth and power that may be an alternative to the supremacy of the vertical and hierarchical order prevailing in socio-political constructions. In *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980), they propose the concept of the rhizome as an alternative to the dominant paradigm of the tree:

> "We should stop believing in trees, roots, and radicles. They've made us suffer too much. All of arborescent culture is founded on them, from biology to linguistics. Nothing is beautiful or loving or political aside from underground stems and aerial roots, adventitious growths and rhizomes".

Their prophecy on the similarity between rhizomes and neurons was established well before the World Wide Web and its cognitive implication in the emergence of a virtual "global brain" (hypercortex):

> "Many people have a tree growing in their heads, but the brain itself is much more a grass than a tree".

Deleuze-Guattari's prediction of an immanent form of power and growth is now triumphing not only in the digital universe and its artefacts but also within contemporary societies:

> "Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order (…). A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things... The tree is filiation, but the rhizome is alliance, uniquely alliance. The tree imposes the verb 'to be' but the fabric of the rhizome is the conjunction, 'and... and... and...' This conjunction carries enough force to shake and uproot the verb 'to be'".

From Réda Benkirane, « La première révolution du XXIe siècle ? » [The first revolution of the 21st century], *Astérion*, 14, 2016.

According to the Oxford English dictionary, "radicalism" is a word of late Latin origin, deriving from *radicalis*, which in turn comes from the word *radix*, which means "root", and is defined as "a politically radical attitude", while "radical" signifies "going to the root or origin, pertaining to what is fundamental, far-reaching, or thorough". It may be that this is the key notion for describing the various processes which affect the area of the Sahel, including violent armed movements. In a word, radicalism is, etymologically, an immediate, brutal and violent link with what lies 'at the roots'.

[31] The use of the Greek expression *pharmakon* derives from an early paper on Plato by Derrida, "La Pharmacie de Platon".

1.2 The pattern of growth

Radicalization is, therefore, a way of coping with a break with the historical, political and cultural past. It is also, however, a way of making a new start: putting down roots to form an individual of a new kind. Radicalization cuts off certain roots, while extending others which propagate in a horizontal network. Radicalization does not signify the absence of roots: it is rather an alternative way of 'taking root'. This is especially the case with the younger generations, who are in the majority and who, increasingly, are no longer socially subordinate to rigid traditions. Such roots are not put down deeply, but run horizontally over space. A sense of tradition is intensive, and is nourished by depth, while radicalism is extensive and runs on the surface. This is one of the ways in which modernity and globalization function.

Traditional Islam is based on the model of the tree root, on the concept of genealogy, descent, chains of transmission: the link of master to disciple, and the progression from 'father of' to 'son of'. Radical Islam, or indeed radical Islamism, is, on the other hand, based on the idea of closely related brothers, on a horizontal reticular model and the pattern of the rhizome: the mechanisms here are those of diffusion and dissemination. In the traditional model, fathers are not truly brothers. In the radical conception, fathers are symbolically decapitated, so that they are able to recover the status of brothers.

Radicalization is, therefore, 'taking root' while, at the same time, heading in a very different direction: if the true architectural principle of radicalism is understood, it is clear that it cannot be 'rooted out'[32]. Rhizomes, like couch grass and weeds, are, by their nature, impossible to root out (unless by total destruction and incineration). Still less can radicalism be defeated by coercive violence, which only the state has the legitimate right to exercise. The military conception of armed radicalism is of little use against its flexible, labile, adaptive and pragmatic structure and its unpredictable spread. If the nature of radicalism is understood – in terms of how it grows and expands, the zones where it exists and on whom it exercises its attractions – there is an increased possibility to more effectively interact in order to, forestall and prevent its appearance and detrimental effects. If it is handled as a phenomenon which spreads as a network, virally, it is possible to develop an appropriate approach aimed at reducing its capacity to do damage and, perhaps, even progressively to extinguish the principal manifestations of its violence.

1.3 Demographics

> *"I have 10 children ... I am 50 years old. And I'm monogamous"* (Statement by a respondent in Kolofata, Cameroon).

The realities of the demographic statistics of the countries of the region, lead to an understanding that their societies have lived through a transformation of rare proportions over a very short historical period. Between 1950 and 2015, the population for the most part quadrupled, although in some cases it went up five-fold or six-fold. The entire group of eight countries in this study had a population of 59 million in 1950. Today their total population is 294 million, a figure which is expected to grow to 436 million in 15 years. It is anticipated that the population will continue to rise, to 686 million in 2050 and

[32] The observation is based on events in a key region – Syria-Iraq – where the emergence of DAESH, the so-called Islamic State, has ensured the failure of America's military policy in the Middle East and Central Asia in recent decades, without taking into account the international community's relative failure to manage Iraq after 25 years of war and embargo which, together, have taken a toll of more than a million lives. For a historical study of a century of failed states in the Middle East, from the Sykes-Picot Accords to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, see Réda Benkirane, "Daech, le monstre que l'Occident a rendu possible", *Le Temps*, Geneva, 28 April 2015 (http://www.letemps.ch/opinions/2015/04/27/daech-un-monstre-occident-rendu-possible).

1.3 billion by the end of the century. In other words, although this area of more than six million square kilometres has, in the past, always been very thinly populated, it is at the present time on the brink of the most critical demographic development that exists: the phase at the onset of the process of modern population change. This has the truly explosive capacity to alter the relationships between staggering social changes on the one hand (such as the spread of literacy, the growth of urbanisation, and a high rate of increase in the population) and, on the other hand, modes of economic production and mental attitudes which continue to be stuck within the traditional framework.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS FOR 150 YEARS (1950-2100)

Country	1950	2015	2030	2050	2100
Burkina Faso	4 284	**18 106**	27 244	**42 789**	80 990
Cameroon	4 466	**23 344**	32 947	**48 362**	82 382
Mali	4 708	**17 600**	27 370	**45 404**	92 981
Mauritania	660	**4 068**	5 666	**8 049**	13 059
Niger	2 560	**19 899**	35 966	**72 238**	209 334
Nigeria	37 860	**182 202**	262 599	**398 508**	752 247
Senegal	2 477	**15 129**	22 802	**36 223**	75 042
Chad	2 502	**14 037**	21 946	**35 131**	68 927
Eight countries	59 517	**294 385**	436 540	**686 704**	1374 902

Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division, 21 World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, Key Findings and Advance Tables. UNESCO.

In summary, uncontrolled demographic expansion and burgeoning urbanisation are the first factors which reflect the radicalization process, including its violent manifestations: humanity continues to think expansively, but the Sahel will, henceforth, be the victim of the finiteness of its resources natural, pastoral and agricultural. Societies are changing swiftly, but systems of production have failed to follow the lead of societal change. The attitude to procreation adopted and observed by women prescribes that a family should have four or more children, in order to more effectively prepare for the future. Women still think in the old ways, where the head of the family's secure place in society is ensured by having multiple offspring. Demographic indicators do not lie: they demonstrate that this social security scheme is still in operation. However, the principal providers of security for the family (young people under 25), are on the verge of transforming society into a new world which was never predicted. It is on the objective basis of the demographic facts that radicalization will be able to spread within the societies of the Sahel, horizontally, and across the surface.

The entire range of phenomena related to the troubled social order and armed violence in the Sahel can be examined, if they are simply compared to a number of key demographic indicators relating to national statistics. These include the fertility rate (4.7 to 7.6 children per woman), the proportion of young people (40 to 52 per cent of the population is under 15 years old), and the literacy of the mass of the population (with the exception of Niger), which puts current society out of step with older generations, whose life expectancy also remains low (between 50 and 65 years).

Radicalization is primarily a generational phenomenon, since it is the young who are, at the same time, its principal targets as well as its agents: this point specifically relates to the age group between 17 and 24 which, in fifteen years' time, is likely to take political and economic power in the region's nation-states. This study has only partially covered this important section of the population, since only 13.6 per cent of the entire group of people questioned in the eight countries during the study were under 26. It would in fact be useful to carry out a survey of perceptions exclusively targeted at the young in order to get a better idea of the generational split which those involved in the study observed during the qualitative interviews.

DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS CORRELATED TO RADICALIZATION

Country	Fertility Rate (%) 2010-2015	Population under 15 (%)	Literacy rate of young people aged 15-24 (%) 2015	Literacy among adults (%) 2015	Life expectancy 2010-2015 (years)	GDP per head (in USD)
Burkina Faso	**5.65**	**45**	**45.4**	36	58.1	1660
Cameroon	**4.81**	**43**	**83.8**	75	54.9	2 940
Mali	**6.35**	**47**	**54.1**	38.7	57.2	1660
Mauritania	**4.69**	**40**	**62.6**	52.1	62.8	3 700
Niger	**7.63**	**52**	**26.6**	19.1	60.7	950
Nigeria	**5.74**	**43**	**72.8**	59.6	52.3	5 680
Senegal	**5.18**	**42**	**69.8**	55.7	65.8	2 290
Chad	**6.31**	**48**	**52.7**	40.2	51.1	2 130

Sources: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division 21 World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, Key Findings and Advance Tables. UNESCO.

There was a very elevated fertility rate in the sample of 698 people in this study. Parents with more than three children were in the majority (72.9 per cent of all parents) and 71 per cent of the mothers questioned had at least four children. Eleven per cent of the mothers had ten children or more.

As mentioned in the national report on Cameroon, radicalization arises from "a deep social crisis" in which the model of the family no longer functions in the context of a "gender and generational split", on the basis of "gerontocratic absolutism" and the absence of discussion. In what country would it still be possible to keep a massive population of young people under parental control without any exchange of views and without involving them in social policies and decisions? This question of inclusiveness also arises in relation to women. Added to this is "the breakdown of unifying frameworks and institutions of socialisation", including Quranic schools and mosques, and a lack of resilience and mutual aid (of which the family has been a source). While those who are unmarried continue to be unfavourably regarded and discriminated against, and while marriage continues to attract social approval, parents are no longer able to look after their burgeoning progeny (and this affects polygamists even more acutely).

The violent expression of radicalization can only be accounted for in terms of demography and on the basis of the nature of the younger generation: what they are and what they do. It should be remembered that war always puts the youngest age group in the front line. A soldier, aged eighteen on average, who is forced into an army of conscripts, follows orders and obeys as if blind[33], without thought, putting their life at risk to carry out the missions they are ordered to accomplish, all at the service of an abstract entity called the 'Motherland', the 'Nation' or even the 'International Community'. Meanwhile, in combat they are increasingly often pitted against, another young fighter who has been recruited and indoctrinated in the framework of the non-state armed forces. This new phenomenon – once known as guerrilla warfare and found in a variety of regions across central Asia, the Middle East, the Maghreb and the Sahel – is marked by the appearance of non-state actors who mobilize and arm young people in order to press them into service in a battle against some of the most powerful states on earth.

[33] The vital force of young people who are coerced into combat is comprised of not only daring and bravery but also a gregarious spirit which is conducive to blind obedience to military orders, so that those involved neither think about or challenge the often unacceptable tasks they are asked to perform: for example, in situations of military occupation and the administration of civilian populations (for instance, Israeli troops in Palestine, US soldiers in Iraq).

2. The religious expression of radicalization

"So, in short, when we want to make war, we open the Book and when we want to make peace, we also open the Book. In reality, it is Islam that suffers; it is not Islam that dictates" (Statement by the chief of a large tribal federation (Ehel Sidi Mahmoud) in Bassikounou, Mauritania).

2.1 Religious fundamentalism and violence: the perils of shortcuts

MOBILIZING THE COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS

« By focusing his propaganda on religion, Mohamed Yusuf [ideologue of Boko Haram] was able to choose what is most deeply rooted in the people's unconscious; his counter-offer points to all the inadequacies of social, political, economic and cultural governance of so-called modern states – built according to the original Western model – on the poor quality of life of the people. This is what justifies the attractiveness of the teaching and the influence it has exercised and continues to exert on young people in the region affected by its action ».

Moulaye Hassane
Extract from *Niger National Report*, October 2015.

Among the respondents in this study, across all the eight countries concerned, only 1.9 per cent regarded religious radicalization as a cause of insecurity. At first sight, this outcome seemed contradictory, as what is blatantly clear to the observer is the presence of radicalization in its religious form. The perceptions of the respondents, however (for example: *religious radicalism is not the cause but the expression of conflictuality and insecurity*) tend to concur with the results of the intensive sociological analysis in this field. Certainly, there is a change in the religious landscape, with the intensification of fundamentalist practice: women wearing full face veils and a Saudi style of dress; men with beards and, in general, an ostentatious style of dress; men and women kept apart; unequal treatment of the sexes, and so forth. On the other hand, there is still nothing which leads to the conclusion that this neo-conservative conception of the individual and of society is, in itself, dangerous. The sociologist Farhad Khosrokhavar has shown that "unequivocally … [and] in the vast majority of cases", religious fundamentalism is actually a "barrier" to violence and extremism[34]. In the view of those involved in this study, the use of symbolic, armed and physical violence is the sign of danger: as long as radicalism forms part of a coherent political conception, distinct from any kind of nihilist and violent project, it may be brought into play and can even contribute to the reinforcement of the values of citizenship and the emergence of informed, aware and responsible individuals.

The national report on Mauritania describes the various degrees of, what is perceived to be, radicalization, using the colloquial expressions the respondents use to designate social attitudes characterised by the influence of religion. The anthropologist Mariem Baba Ahmed refers to these as "boxes to be ticked". It should be said that the influence of religion in Mauritania continues to be not merely substantial but the sole unifying principle of society: "Islam is the cement of the nation; it is what remains when all else has disappeared," declared the Vice President of a political party in Nouakchott. Although this is true, it is also through Islam that social changes are initially expressed, since the norms and interpretations which flow from it are the product of an old-style education which is common to all. It is in the context of a common religious culture[35] and a shared religious literature

[34] Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Radicalisation*, Paris, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2014, p. 151.

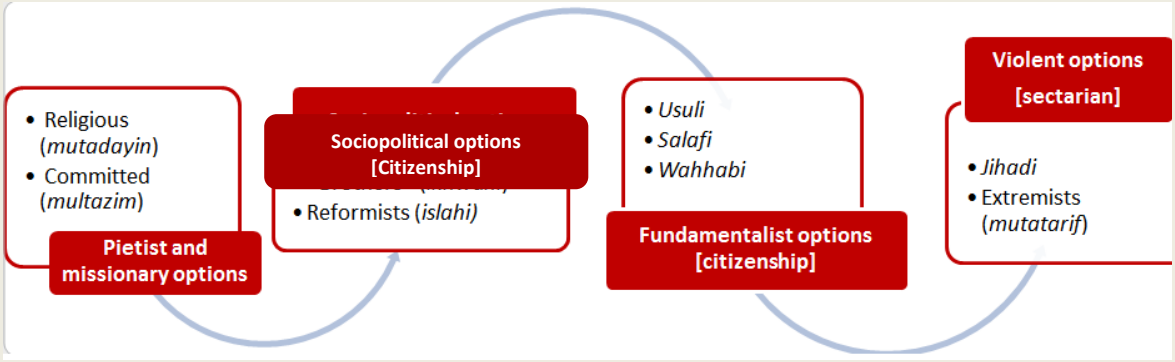
[35] At this stage it is difficult to avoid this question: although Mauritania offers an example of a society which has inculcated in every individual, to an exceptional degree, a level of Islamic culture that is at once learned and popular, it might legitimately be asked why this intellectual capital and knowledge have not resulted in a conducive environment in the field of economics and politics for a move towards the construction of a coherent society and a national collective effort? Why, in the sixty years of its history, with a population of only four million, and given the presence of a cultural and technocratic élite, has the state not developed further? Despite access to Western and pan-Arab aid, why has there been relatively little development in the

that the national report on Mauritania has been able to illustrate a kind of continuum within the process of religiously expressed radicalization, and outline the colloquial terms which describe various types of contemporary individuals (see box below). This process has been influenced by three broad contemporary religious movements, namely the *Jama'at Da'wa wa Tabligh* ("Association for Preaching and the Message", a pietist and revivalist movement of Pakistani origin); the *Ikhwan Al Muslimin* (The Muslim Brotherhood, whose goals are more concerned with citizenship and politics); and, thirdly, the Salafists (who are more "fundamentalist" in their relationships, behaviours and dress code).

The diagram in the box below illustrates the way the Mauritanian respondents define their perceptions of the various varieties of radicalization they see in the everyday vocabulary they use. This is intended

RELIGIOUS RADICALIZATION: THE OPTIONS

Some individuals are inclined towards religious piety (this study's suggested translation of *mutadayin*); while others feel under a religious compulsion (*multazim*).There are also those inclined towards the "brothers" (*ikhwani*), as well as reformists (*islahi*), who are both involved in the social sphere and citizen action; as well as fundamentalists (*usuli*) and the *salafi* (an expression which includes the *Wahhabi*, who are of a more particularly Saudi doctrinal inclination). Only at the extremity of this continuum comes the increasingly intense expression of religious faith that leads to those who are jihadists and extremists (*mutatarif*).



This is not a simple graduated scale: each individual is aware of a 'violent option', which is not activated but is imaginable and explicable (in the context of Shari'a) in sufficiently grave circumstances. Mauritanian respondents, in this respect, refer to events in Palestine, Iraq and Syria, and the Egyptian coup of 2013, with the savage repression of the Islamists. For the most part, Mauritanian respondents condemn violent actions in the name of religion, but in relation to armed groups active in Mali, they are justifiable by the right to self-defence against foreign forces from the West. Where their own state is concerned, one respondent implied there was a limit that must not be overstepped, or violent confrontation would ensue.

> "*The state has already much to do about the ethnic splits if it wants to propose a real plan to combat insecurity. For that, it would need foreign help, and that we would never put up with*." (tribal Chief, Mauritania).

to assist in the differentiation of the various groups which are customarily bundled together under the general concept of religious radicalism.

It must be clarified that this typology, as set out above, also reflects a generational conflict. Those who have recently chosen religious activism are primarily young people, who are the instruments of social change.

direction of civic and public life, infrastructure and the basic necessities including roads, transport, telecommunications, and urban projects, as well as essential social services, especially in comparison with its close neighbours, Morocco and Senegal? In the context of development, what is it within society or the state that holds Mauritania back?

> *"When I make ziyarat [holy visits], three of my four sons refuse to accompany me. They say they do not recognize themselves in the Tariqa [fraternities], and that many things need to change in our way of worshiping God. They refuse Sufism and prohibit certain things we have been doing here since the dawn of time, for example they have started creating separate spaces for men and women, although we know very well what is haram [forbidden]; we know that there is no harm in assemblies being mixed if everyone shows respect through his clothing, his attitude, his words... But, now, everything is haram with the young Muslim Brothers, they no longer listen to music, they disobey the elders... everything is being lost, we do not know whether to rejoice in their renewed interest in pious works or to worry"* (Comment by a family head in Kiffa, Mauritania).

This study considers a wide range of attitudes to religion which uniquely reflect the new actors involved in a range of movements – referred to, by some, as re-Islamization – which appeared in the 1980s in parallel with the decline of Marxist-Leninist radicalism and left-wing political movements across the African continent (Nelson Mandela and the ANC leaders' communist orientation is to be borne in mind).

> *"I have a neighbour who refuses to pray with us. He travels almost a kilometre to pray in a Wahhabi mosque, going past two mosques on his way. He thinks that the traditionalists have no mastery of Arabic, and so misinterpret the texts of the Quran"* (Comment by a religious leader in Zinder, Niger, 20 June 2015).

2.2 The potentiality of violence

Seeking to explain religion-based violence, many of the respondents in the study put the blame on ignorance and a lack of religious instruction. The questionnaire supported this view through a short series of questions based on a research project on secularisation and religious values carried out in Morocco[36]. As Farhad Khosrokhavar has noted, credulity, misunderstanding and lack of religious knowledge are, without doubt, elements which lead to religious extremism[37]. It might be said that a little religious knowledge exacerbates the possibility of intolerance and extremism, while deeper religious knowledge is a safeguard against it. In relation to this theory, this study's research in Mauritania tended to illustrate the 'kill or cure' theory of religious knowledge as a 'drug' which can act either to impede or to encourage extremism, particularly in the context of the class/caste' structure. In Mali, however, Farhad Khosrokhavar's analysis was tested in the city of Timbuktu – an ancient city renowned as a centre of theological learning and an important point of cultural focus, where different intellectual movements come together. Its cultural depth has, in fact, provided it with resilience, in contrast to the city of Gao.

> *"Gao is the most radicalized border region because it shelters the dormant Wahhabi cells. This is the opposite of Timbuktu, the cradle of a racial and cultural mix. Here, the great Islamic scholars are listened to. Therefore, the young people of Timbuktu have not developed jihadist culture"* (Comment by the Mayor of Gossi).

[36] Cf. Mohammed El Ayadi, Hassan Rachik and Mohamed Tozy, *L'islam au quotidien. Enquête sur les valeurs et les pratiques religieuses au Maroc*, Fès, Casablanca, Edition Prologues, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, La Croisée des Chemins, 2013.

[37] "As I have observed on the ground, it is not a developed and pre-existing knowledge of Islam that induces religious radicalization in France's sensitive urban areas and prisons. Quite to the contrary, it is a profound lack of culture, which produces a state of exaggerated credulity, a form of naivety that results from misunderstanding and ignorance of Islam which promotes religious extremism", Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Radicalisation*, *op. cit*., p. 91.

The idea that credulity, aggravated by religious misunderstanding makes people susceptible to becoming adherents of jihadism, may be inferred from the influence exercised by those who have returned from the centres for Quranic education in northern Nigeria, who operate as entrepreneurs selling salvation goods for the benefit of the Salafist or jihadist cause. The 'violent' option, which is posited to be latent in everyone's mind and which is able to be activated, is not found only in Mauritania.

IN REALITY, IT IS ISLAM THAT SUFFERS; IT IS NOT ISLAM THAT DICTATES.

"In fact, you need look no further: if you look closely, violence has always been present in our relationship to religion. The Almoravids came with a book in one hand and a sword in the other. This is our reference to ourselves, the Moors. But, throughout our history, we have always been able to manage this violence, never abuse it. The desert requires mistrust, at all times, and violence when necessary. I am against religious violence, my whole family was educated in tolerance and appeasement, but I cannot deny that, in Mauritania, our society was based on a highly visible background of religious violence. In all ethnic groups, black or Arab-Berber, there has been war between marabouts and the Hassani swordsmen. Everywhere. The men of the sword won, everywhere, but the others continued to hold and possess knowledge, for knowledge never perishes. And we have all returned to the Book, in spite of ourselves. We are Muslims. We need texts and marabouts. So, in short, when we want to make war, we open the Book and when we want to make peace, we also open the Book. In reality, it is Islam that suffers; it is not Islam that dictates. Religion as interpreted by our scholars has always served a thousand causes at once. At the end of the 17th century, the final battle between warriors and marabouts was religious violence (if one takes the warriors' side) and holy war (if one takes the side of the marabouts). In between, Islam is not to blame. It was about two historical groups fighting for their own interests. This is still happening today. Except, in times of peace, violence is managed and everyone goes back to being passive and unarmed..."

The head of a major tribal confederation (Ehel Sidi Mahmoud) in Bassikounou, Mauritania.

"It is the people who left for Quranic schools in Nigeria, those people who left to study outside the country, who return and infect others here, who are the cause of violent extremism. They copy the others" (Comment by a respondent, Moussoro, Chad, 11 June 2015).

"Extremist behaviour comes to us from outside, with the talibés who leave to study in Nigeria. When they return, they usually stay together and use their time to spread the religion they adopted in Nigeria" (Comment by a health worker, 20 June 2015 in Zinder, Niger).

"Many of our relatives here are extremists, but they do not find the opportunity to show it" (Comment by a respondent, Mao, Chad, 12 June 2015).

Not only is the violent option available to be activated in certain conditions, but it may be seen as justified by the circumstances. Some respondents, especially younger people, see joining an armed group as an entirely normal and legitimate reaction.

"Personally, when I have no solution to my problems, I throw myself into the arms of the enemy. These people who are called extremists, whether Boko Haram, AQIM or Al Qaeda, are sometimes right... When nobody is willing to help me find a solution to my problem, I must defend myself in my own way. So, we return to the idea that the oppressed finally crack" (A youth leader in the town of Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso).

"You have to accept that in Mauritania there are communities that are outsiders because of slavery. Sure, it's true that slavery has been abolished in Mauritania, but it's in our religion; it's mentioned in the Quran. Mauritania is an Islamic Republic and whatever efforts the state makes to abolish slavery there will still be elements of it in our religion, because we practise Islam. There are other groups we look down on, like the blacksmiths. Everyone tries their best, but in a traditional old-style Mauritanian family, if they meet a blacksmith they won't accept him…. Myself, if I was a blacksmith and I came to you, and you pushed me away, I wouldn't come any more. There will come a moment when I will be radicalised; I'll turn in on myself and I'll do something to get back at you. The children of blacksmiths could become radicalised so they can do harm to those who have turned them away" (An official at the hospital of Nema, Mauritania).

These statements illustrate two essential factors linked to radicalization. One is that the concept of religion can be deployed in any way desired (for example, to either justify or outlaw slavery) and is open to any interpretation. The other is that the 'violent option' may be very liable to be chosen in the context of social deprivation. Extremism is promoted both by religious ignorance and by the choice of violence.

> *"We find the two factors at the same time because intolerance has always existed everywhere with us but did not create so many problems. I think violent extremism, as we know it today, came from somewhere else, because those going to Quranic school and who study in the Middle East, once they come home, find that the Islam we practice here is archaic. And there are the religious people from Pakistan and Afghanistan who preach the word of God and use the opportunity to raise awareness in favour of violent extremism"* (Interview with a member of the public in Bol, Chad, 11 June 2015).

The problem of radicalization[38], and its expression through violence, especially in connection with some contemporary expressions of Islam, is a key issue of our time. With the sudden disappearance of communism, a structural opposition within the global system ceased to exist. In the 1960s and 1970s, radicalism, including its armed and violent manifestation, found its expression in ideologies of the left and the extreme left. At the time, the world was divided by an ideological conflict between liberal democracies and those who aspired to a different world which would be reached at the cost of armed struggle in the names of such 'prophets' as Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Ho Chi Minh and Che Guevara. In this respect, Europe's memory is short, since it is scarcely forty years ago that armed groups such as Baader-Meinhof, the Red Brigades, Action Directe, ETA and the IRA did quite an effective job of destabilising governments. Once defeated and dissolved, most of these movements saw their leaders imprisoned or, in some cases, rehabilitated (some of them became highly placed public servants; others captains of industry). Today, which ideology or system of thought is capable of setting itself up against the global system? Many believe that radical Islam, or Islamism, is in direct opposition to it (and may even be taking part in a clash of civilisations, according to a notorious American theory). But can Islamism alternatively be seen as a an ideology which initiates change, consonant with the demographic transition, which has given rise to an overexcited political response, with an element of metaphysical anxiety?

2.3 The collapse of the traditional system of religious teaching: the breeding ground for violence

The state, meanwhile, is sometimes not merely seen as failed, but is also the object of hatred: for its nepotism and for its practice of patronage, as well as all the other ways in which it neglects its obligations. The 'hated state' is particularly seen as responsible for the division between different élites and the educational systems which support them, especially in light of the contempt in which administrations hold the traditional educational system that trains Islamic clerics. In Nigeria, the name that has been attached to the sect known as "Boko Haram" ("Western Education Forbidden": which is not the official name of the organisation) clearly indicates the symbolic issue in question. Education is a symbolic, contentious territory which is the subject of acrimony and entrenched rancour. The emergence of the so-called "Black Taliban" at the start of the 2000s cannot be understood if the collapse of the old system of religious education, which still exists in the background, is not considered. (It should not be forgotten that the word "Taliban", in Central Asia, or *talibé* in West Africa, means simply "students")

[38] "If citizenship is defined as economic and social integration into a society, then radicalization, and its tangible expression in terrorism, is an expression of the discontent of a section of the population in a world in which real citizenship is absent". Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Radicalisation*, *op. cit*., pp. 185-186.

A CHILDRENS' SONG FROM NORTHERN NIGERIA

Children in the Western schools,	*Yan makarantan boko,*
You do not study, you do not pray	*Ba karatu, ba sallah*
You do not follow in God's Way	*Ba bin hanyar Allah*
You only cheat your teachers.	*Sai yawan zagin Mallam*

In this context, the national report on Nigeria describes, in practical terms, how the decommissioning of the traditional Almajiri system of education has given rise to a prevalent phenomenon of alienation from society. This, in turn, has led to the criminalisation and radicalisation of the children and young adults who have been educated through this system. In view of the atrocities of Boko Haram and its reign of terror over the populations of north-eastern Nigeria, many observers and specialists have, too quickly, jumped to the conclusion that Boko Haram has no roots in society or popular support. What the researchers involved in this study have incontrovertibly shown is that young people who have been through the Almajiri system are Boko Haram's foot soldiers and its popular base. The figures speak for themselves: it is estimated that, in 2012, 9.5 million young people were educated in the Almajiri system. Half of these were in the north-east of the country: Boko Haram's home base. Even before Boko Haram's existence, these children often fell into delinquency and criminality. In this context, it can be seen that joining Boko Haram might seem to offer new hope of achieving reasonable living conditions, together with a feeling of liberation and revenge on society, all of which would be presented by the group's ideologues as a metaphysical position that makes "holy sense". Violent extremism, on the face of it, has everything it needs to appeal to the rejects of the school system and those who have fallen out of the knowledge society of the 21st century.

ALMAJIRI EDUCATION: BOKO HARAM'S POPULAR BASE

The origins of this educational system are said to go back to the 9th century. It enabled the entire northern part of Nigeria to achieve literacy over the centuries up to the start of the 20th century, when it began to be undermined by the intrusion of British colonialism. The Almajiri system taught basic religious studies (including Quran memorisation and study of the hadith with a basic introduction to exegesis) under the regime of a teacher (*maalem*), who took in a crowd of pupils who generally lived with him away from their families and the community.

This Quranic education had the character of a travelling school. The word Almajiri derives from the Arabic *muhajir*, which means migrant (and is redolent of the notion of the *hijra*, when the Prophet left Mecca to go to Medina). To live, the children had to beg for their food, which they shared with the master.

Since this system of traditional teaching was totally unconnected to the state system, children educated in it knew nothing of the subjects of modern education (mathematics, languages, history, geography) and thus found themselves completely cut off from the job market.

The observations made by the Nigerian researchers involved in this study in relation to the religious education system were confirmed by work done on the other side of the Nigeria-Cameroon border. The national report on Cameroon offers a complementary analysis of Quranic schools and the pedagogical system which prevails in the Far North region of the country. This anachronistic system, with its master/pupil relationship, and the economic system by which it is sustained, are a relic from a past era. As they leave these schools, young people are already branded with the mark of humiliation and condemned to poverty. In these circumstances, joining Boko Haram takes on the character of a social choice, and the violence legitimized by the sect becomes a kind of asceticism. In this way, countless young people have become the sociological bedrock which is vital for Boko Haram's success.

Any action to drive back violent extremism must first defuse the time bomb represented by these young people's social deprivation and their educational and professional exclusion. In Mauritania, the traditional system of education offered in the *mahadras*, or "universities of the desert", is at a high level – offering, for example, exegesis of religious texts – and involves virtually all rural young people between the ages of 15 and 23. However, it has virtually no links with the public education system. The national report on Mauritania observes that the "bipolarity of the educational system" is a serious obstacle to the entry of young people into the job market. The first step to be taken in relation to the

institutions in charge of education and the young is to rehabilitate and reform the entire system of traditional religious education – from that of infants up to the adult level – on the one hand to bring it in line with modern scholarship and, on the other hand, to keep it in sympathy with the words of the Prophet, who spoke of "pursuing knowledge even as far as China" and declared that "the ink of scholars is as precious as the blood of martyrs". An Islamic concept as important as that of the *jihad* is one which is etymologically related: this is *ijtihad,* which signifies the "effort of interpretation" and is the supreme quality which religious scholars, the *ulema*, should possess and pursue in order to discover intellectual solutions to the problems confronting society as social change goes on. The primary *ijtihad* is that which places the accent on knowledge and science. It was through this effort of interpretation, founded on education and on acceptance of the knowledge of other cultures, that Islamic civilisation was able to germinate and flourish over many centuries. Therefore, there is a need in the 21st century to pay the greatest attention to Islamic religious education in order to modernise its theological content by reconnecting it, as in the past, to the branches of human, life and physical sciences, thus reaffirming the intrinsic legitimacy of knowledge and science: in other words not Boko Haram but *boko halal* (knowledge permitted).

3. Semantic warfare: the consequence of "floating signifiers"

> *"All delirium possesses a world-historical, political, and racial content, mixing and sweeping along races, cultures, continents, and kingdoms (…) There is no signifying chain without a Chinaman, an Arab, and a black who drop in to trouble the night of a white paranoiac"* Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *The Anti-Oedipus* (1972).

3.1 Vocabulary: its impact on conflict and the comprehension of the adversary

The studies of perceptions have brought to the fore the issue of the terminology associated with radicalization, the confusion it may generate, and, above all, its role as an aggravator of conflict in an era of communication where everything is a signifier and where all communicate with all others. If there is an area where perceptions are likely to confront each other, it is that of the language and symbols which are used in connection with conflicts. In general, in a globalized world, semantic and semiotic wars (relating to significance and symbols)[39] precede conventional wars. Since 11 September 2001, it has been clear that terrorism has a total need to present itself in the sphere of the media. There can be no terror without forms of communication to show it, put it before the eyes of an audience, transmit it and amplify it.

The taxonomy which has developed in order to be able to distinguish between Islamic groups (as moderates, radicals or extremists) and to identify their affiliations and ramifications is also a source of much confusion. The urge to classify Islamic movements and branches – in the same way animals and plants are classified – is intended, at the same time, to 'make sense' of a situation and to 'be scientific'. This approach aims to impress by giving the illusion of mastery and comprehension. In the end, however, through the misuse of the classifying impulse, there is a failure to understand religious radicalism[40].

[39] Semantics and semiotics are significant in political and asymmetric conflicts as well as those among the media and in cyberspace. The dictionary definition of semantic (according to the Oxford English Dictionary) is "relating to meaning in language". "Semantics" is etymologically related to "semiotics", which is the study of signs and symbols.

[40] A recent instance is a 2015 report: *Cameroun: la menace du radicalisme religieux* (International Crisis Group N°229, 3 September 2015), where grave misunderstandings are to be found: first of Sufism ("Sufism is an esoteric, spiritualist and

The origins of the name: "Boko Haram"

Such classifications, with the imposition of names that lead, in the end, to a failure to understand the phenomena themselves, are precisely exemplified by the application of the name "Boko Haram", a designation which the members themselves do not use. What emerges from numerous statements made during the group interview in Abuja is that people are not mistaken merely with regard to the name itself but also in how this Nigerian sect, founded in the early 2000s by Muhammad Yusuf, is categorised. The members of the group emphatically do not call themselves Boko Haram. The organisation's original name was *Jama'at Ahl al-Sunnah li Da'wa wa-l-Jihad*, which, in Arabic, literally means "Association of the People of the Sunna for Preaching and Jihad". This name places the organisation in the Salafi-jihadist spectrum (*salafiya jihadiya*). "Boko Haram", the name under which their fame has spread far beyond the frontiers of Nigeria, is a nickname attached to them by the local media after hearing speeches made by the group's leaders. From this, they have deduced that the organisation's particular concern is that it regards western education (the word *boko* means book) as illicit (*haram*). However, this is not precisely what is reported by the respondents from the northern states of Nigeria. In reality, Boko Haram began to expand in the town of Maiduguri (in the north-east of the country) after it started to address itself to the young unemployed of Maiduguri and other towns of the region, asking them why their school qualifications and their training had led to practically no result: "What have your certificates and your Western education brought you? Nothing! What does the state offer you, after you have followed its educational programme? Nothing! Join us and follow the teaching of Islam and the Quran instead. Western education is *haram*!" After listening to such sermonising and inflammatory rhetoric, the young unemployed solemnly undertook to tear up and burn their diplomas and certificates, and it was, therefore, from that point that the name "Boko Haram" began to circulate. The interpretation put on it by the respondents in this study is significant. The declaration that Western education was *haram* was not used without reason by the insurrectional movement[41]. It was, in fact,

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE SEMANTICS

International observers may have their doubts regarding the importance and seriousness of the semantic aspect: the outbreak of violent clashes over words, concepts and symbols. It is only too easy, however, to persuade sceptics that the observation has a sound basis, by referring them to the fear aroused in Europe by the presence of Muslims and of Islam, from the standpoint of perceptions they are indissolubly linked to violence and terrorism. At the same time, Europol statistics totally contradict these perceptions, since the great majority of terrorist acts in Europe have no connection with radical Islamism.

"Public distress is nonetheless directed above all at the radical Islamists", writes Farhad Khosrokhavar, since the "symbolic dimension of jihadist terrorism is basic" (Farhad Khosrokhavar, *op. cit*., p. 13). Semantic and semiotic wars are low intensity conflicts constantly fed by the mass media (with fear as the explanatory principal and anxiety as the structural theme). Veils and beards, the niqab, the hijab, the affair of the cartoons of Mohammed, the debate on laicity: these are the dismal tropes of European perceptions of these obsessions, seen as existential threats to "national identity", etc.

The Charlie Hebdo affair of 7 January 2015, when a group of journalists from the French satirical journal were murdered, illustrates the wide difference in perceptions between Europe and Africa. While in Paris world leaders demonstrated under the slogan "We are all Charlie", in Bamako, people call themselves "Coulibaly" (a common name which is also the name of a French killer), while, in Niger, a violent attack was mounted against the President to protest against his participation in the Paris ceremony. The issues of meaning and symbolism, it is clear, cannot be avoided in any convincing analysis of 21st century conflict.

poetic movement within Islam which is not linked to the Sunni faith"); and also of Sunni Islam which is presented as a new entrant into the religious landscape in Cameroon (http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/central-africa/229-cameroun-la-menace-du-radicalisme-religieux.pdf). A critical review of this report has been published in *Le Monde* (Kodjo Tchioffo, "Le rapport d'ICG sur le Cameroun: un coup de machette dans l'eau", 18 September 2015, http://j.mp/1KvwdD3).

[41] The semantic/semiotic confusion is all the more marked not only because Arabic has a vast vocabulary but also because it tends towards the multiplication of meanings (a phenomenon also evident in the Quran, whence came the need for diversity in interpretation). Consequently the word *haram* has "floating" meanings. In addition to its relationship to the notorious word "harem", referring to the space reserved for the wives of a Sultan, or simply "women" (in Arabic, *harim*: from the same root as *haram*), the word *haram* itself simultaneously signifies "forbidden" and "sacred" (as, for example, in *al masjed al haram*, the Holy Mosque in Mecca).

the objective phenomenon of the failure of western education to lead to any success in life that led Mohammed Yusuf's movement to focus on the question of education as a central concern and to offer a credible alternative to the problem of a state which appeared corrupt and ineffectual. In 2015, the jihadist sect changed its name after it had given its allegiance to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS-DAESH, calling itself, henceforth, the "Islamic State in West Africa".

A TERRORIST PAR EXCELLENCE

The most emblematic example of an "antochtonous citizen of the republic" who became an "Algerian terrorist" was that of Ahmed Ben Bella (1916-2012), one of the prominent pan-Arab leaders of the last century. Having fought for the French in WWII, he was decorated in 1940 for shooting down a German Stuka during an air attack on Marseille. In 1944, he was decorated a second time by General de Gaulle himself for exceptional service during the battle of Monte Cassino, while serving as an adjutant with Moroccan and Senegalese forces. The day after 8 May 1945, however, the date of the armistice, Ahmed Ben Bella heard the news of the massacres at Sétif and Guelma in Algeria, carried out by the French forces to halt a popular insurrection. Decades later, he said that this was the moment when he realised that only armed violence would be effective against colonialism. In 1948, he joined the OS (Special Organisation), which later became the FLN (National Liberation Front), of which he was one of the nine historic leaders. In 1950, he was arrested for the first time as an OS leader but succeeded in escaping two years later. After November 1954, when the FLN was set up, he became the Algerian "terrorist" most sought by France. In 1956, when he and his associates – including Aït Ahmed, Khider, Boudiaf and Lacheraf – were engaged in setting up the external command of the FLN, they took a Moroccan civil flight from Rabat to Tunis but their plane's French crew landed it in Algiers. This was one of the first acts of aerial piracy in the history of civil aviation and one for which the French state was responsible. Imprisoned in France from 1956 until 1962, Ben Bella became the first President of independent Algeria and in that capacity he was received by President de Gaulle. In 1962, he welcomed Nelson Mandela to Algeria together with Mandela's fellow leaders in the South African ANC, (who were themselves regarded as terrorists up to the end of the 1980s), offering them military training in the Algerian village of Maghnia where he had been born.

Extract from Jean-François Bayart's study, *Security regime in the Sahel: the role of the State*.

It would be unproductive to refuse to accept the Islamic affiliation of these armed groups or to cast doubt on the religious commitment which they claim. Any denial that DAESH has set up what is virtually and in effect an "Islamic State" would probably be even more illusory than the likelihood that the "Islamic State" will consolidate itself and endure (though it has issued a currency and taken control of a territory, while so far standing firm in the face of a broad international coalition against it). Similarly, to refuse the status of Muslims to these African militia members, though they kill innocent civilian non-combatants and commit all kinds of atrocities, would be just as much of an error as equally committed by many responsible religious figures, who are undoubtedly well-intentioned and are engaged in a wide variety of peace initiatives and inter-religious dialogues. Just as the Ku Klux Klan gives a voice to an extremist version of Christianity in the current American climate, so DAESH AQMI (Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb), MUJAO (Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa), Ansar Dine (Ansar al-Din: a Tuareg group), in addition to Boko Haram, represent the extremist part of a minuscule segment of radical Islam, which in the Nigerian case is also sectarian in nature. Their 'Islamicity' cannot be denied, nor can their jihad be condemned on the grounds that it is a sin principally to target innocent civilians. On the other hand it may be possible not to accord them the exclusive right to the label of jihad which legitimizes them in the eyes of their members and adepts, and gives them credibility in relation to international public opinion.

Terrorists of today; politicians of tomorrow

Similarly, in describing these new actors – and the newly invented "Unidentified Fighting Objects"[42] installed to combat them – the use of the expression "terrorist" is not appropriate since, from the sociological point of view, it simply obscures the view of the phenomena it is intended to explain. A

[42] The progressive dehumanisation of military conflicts continues, with the use of the military drone, which parallels the suicide bomber, a technique which depends on the remote control of the human-bomb. See Réda Benkirane, "Le drone, objet violent non identifié", *Le Temps*, Geneva, 28 June 2013 (a review of Grégoire Chamayou, *Théorie du drone*, Paris, Éditions La Fabrique, 2013).

major finding from the interviews carried out with almost 800 respondents in this study has been that they make infrequent use of the words "terrorism" and "terrorist". Although in a 'closed' (i.e. multiple choice) question put to respondents on how to describe the armed groups, a majority opted to call them "terrorists", it appears that the word was not intended in a political sense. The concept of "terrorism" fails to describe either the perceptions of the population or their accounts of violent incidents and war in the regions where they live. The outcome of this research, in relation to the jihadist sect Boko Haram, is that the word "terror" – designating its ability to massacre, its crimes and its exactions on the population – has none of the political implications customarily attached to it: the prime concern of the inhabitants is the money they extort. What is mentioned is *"the business of terrorism,* together with *"money-making ventures"* which attract a cohort of the young unemployed with no prospect of future work. As regards the designation "terrorist", the word is not used by Nigerian respondents despite all the atrocities they have suffered (unimaginably cruel as these may have been). The terms which are most often used are "insurrection" and "insurgents". In this connection, perceptions can assist in understanding that the reason the movement has taken a definitive turn towards armed dissidence is its entrenched hatred of the Nigerian federal state.

From the political standpoint, it has been known for decades that the use of the word "terrorist" tends towards the denigration of armed struggle on the part of any force that is not attached to the state (or not yet). "When you want to drown your dog, first you call him a terrorist" as the political scientist Jean-François Bayart points out in his study on security regimes[43]. "Terrorist" is, in practice, a term used to refer to a category of armed combatant who is denied political or historical legitimacy. People are aware, however, that the tacit historical rule is that "yesterday's terrorists are today's responsible politicians". This has, in practice, been what has happened in the case of the Israeli Irgun, the Algerian FLN, the PLO, the South African ANC, the IRA, Hizbollah and the Palestinian Hamas movement. It remains invalid, however, (and this is a basic issue with which the international community should be concerned) in relation to the Algerian GIA, the Afghan Taliban, the international Al-Qa'ida groups, and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. If the issue is considered from the standpoint of mediation and conflict resolution, non-state actors could attempt to negotiate with leading figures within armed extremist movements who seem most inclined to participate.

3.2 Jihad and (in)security: who says what?

Jihad as believers see it

In the course of the research for this study, the issue of semantics has emerged as a source of confusion and difficulty. Islamism, Salafism, Wahhabism, jihadists, takfiris: all these recurrent expressions trouble people's minds – an experience shared even by Muslims.

[43] Jean-François Bayart, "Security regime in the Sahel: the role of the State" (a section of this report).

In the Nigerian capital Abuja, during a group interview on 2-3 July 2015 which focused on jihadism seen from an inter-religious angle, those involved in the study observed an Imam who appeared to be struggling with his conscience and his convictions as a man of religion. He seemed to have difficulty when attempting to condemn jihad as such, when pressed by an official of an organisation for inter-religious dialogue to do so. Emotionally moved, and with tears in his eyes, he declared that jihad is a concept found in the Quran and in the Hadith which, for that reason alone, is hard for Muslims to renounce. In support, he quoted a famous Hadith where the Prophet, speaking to his Companions, who had returned from a battle against their Qurayshi enemies, told them that they were returning from the "little jihad" (the defence of the community) in order to undertake the major jihad, the struggle against oneself (*jihad al-nafs*). Later, in Abuja, Dakar, and Nouakchott, those involved in the study heard numerous respondents stating that everyone in the world is in some sense "jihadist". The implication was that every person is obliged to accomplish their personal jihad in order to better themselves, to enhance their ability to work and to earn a living for their family. How, in these circumstances, can an explanation be found for what is being said by people who, on the one hand, have been exposed to jihadism but, on the other hand, proclaim it and declare their attachment to it? How can one 'subtitle' such a 'perception-representation', which continues to extend approval to jihad under a "floating" definition, despite all the violence at present committed in its name?

A young Mauritanian student at the Islamic University in El-Aioun (from the Alpular community), laid out the issues implicit in a strictly Islamic point of view of the semantic problems that lead to confusion and disorientation in a few well-chosen words. "*The fact of being part of armed groups, and of having committed crimes does not in itself exclude such individuals from the Islamic community, since ... they are Muslims.*" This remains the case, though they may be in the grip of ignorance, because, "*people no longer follow the Sunna*". The student continued: "*For a jihad to take*

JIHAD & SHAHID: QURANIC SIGNS AND SIGNIFICATIONS

Jihad derives from the Arabic triliteral root j,h.d, (جهد), a nexus of meaning which relates to "effort" and "struggle", and may be interpreted as "inner force" or "pressure" acting against egotistical inclinations. This idea is Quranic, to the extent that, in the context of piety, the Muslim holy text refers to the necessity to master the self. A strong principle – the greater jihad – which relates to the struggle to master the ego, is to be distinguished from a weaker principle – the lesser jihad – which relates to the right to resistance, including armed resistance, against any enemy of the faith and of the Islamic community. Since 11 September 2001, the concepts of *jihad* (جهاد) and of *shahid* (شهيد) have taken on global significance. Today, these concepts have passed into common culture, with their meaning rendered as "holy war" and "martyr". In the spirit as well as the letter of the Quran, however, these ideas relate to mystical states and to social conjunctures which have no relation to the understanding and usage made of the concepts in our time and, in particular, to the theological justification of violence. For example, in the Quran, a verse of the Sura known as "The Pilgrimage" (*Al-Hajj*) twice refers to *jihad*, linking it directly to God with no connotation of violence or combat other than in the metaphysical sphere. In the same verse, there are also two mentions of the concept of *shahid*, with no reference to martyrdom.

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ ۚ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ ۚ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۚ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِن قَبْلُ وَفِي هَٰذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ ۚ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ ۖ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۖ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

(الحج, 22, 78)

And **strive** for God as you ought to **strive**. He elected you and did not impose upon you any hardship in religion, the faith of your father Abraham. He called you Muslims before and in this [Quran], so that the messenger may bear **witness** against you and you may be **witnesses** against mankind. So, perform the prayer, give the alms and hold fast to God. He is your Master, and what a blessed Master and a Blessed Supporter. (Quran; *The Pilgrimage*, 22, 78, trans. Majid Fakhry, Garnet Publishing, 2000)

In the text of the Quran, out of the 40 occurrences of words relating to this root, *j,h,d*, only ten are to do with war or physical combat. Research in the Quran for the word *shahid*, which today means martyr, yields a dozen occurrences of which almost all refer to God, as the witness of all things, of all actions and of all that is said in the universe ("God is the witness of all things", Q. 58, 6, وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ, "Say: God is the witness between me and you", Q. 6, 19, قُلِ اللَّهُ ۖ شَهِيدٌ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۚ, "God is the witness of what they do", Q. 10, 46, اللَّهُ شَهِيدٌ عَلَىٰ مَا يَفْعَلُونَ). The meanings which proliferate in the Quran prioritise the idea of a divine witness, or of a human witness, with senses, who may give an account of physical or metaphysical reality. What the Quran literally says is that to be a competent *shahid*, a person must be alive (*hay*) and awake.

place, precise criteria must be satisfied"[44]. These prescribe that "*innocents, children and women may not be killed, and there must be no theft or destruction of the property of non-Muslims*". Regarding the actions of the armed groups, "*The acts must be condemned, not the actors".* This young student in Islamic Sciences drew attention to the emergence of, what he called, a *"new religiosity"* (*tadayun jadidan*) which has the effect that "*one ends up without the spirit of religion*". Here, the young scholar is making a distinction between *"religion as a concept"* (with the Quran, the mosques and so on: *din ka mafhum*), and "*religiosity as a social practice*" (*tadayun ka mu'amal ijtima'i*).

The respondents do not evade the issue of violence since they are able to excuse the dimension of armed combat, sometimes described as holy war, if it is in defence of a person's community. In this report it is interpreted, however, only in its martial and therefore violent sense, as it is employed by those insurgents who adhere to it in Central Asia, the Middle East and the Sahel, as well as by those who fight against it in the name of the International Community, or "Coalition"[45].

The young Mauritanian student resumed his exposition talking about the jihadists who take it upon themselves to excommunicate those who do not follow their ideological credo, and on the excommunications of jihadists themselves, often through the "lust for money" (*raghba fil mal*):

> *"The question of apostasy (takfir) is a very dangerous one. There are people who call themselves Tijanis, or Sufis …. These distinctions didn't exist when Islam began. How can you excommunicate (tukafiru) anyone who prays, who fasts, who gives alms tax?"* ("*Qadiya al-takfir, qadiya khatira jiddan. Hunaka ma yusamma tijani, soufi,... Hadhihi taqsimat ma kanat mawjuda fi bidayat al-islam. Kaif tukafiru shakhs yusali, yasum, ya'ti al-zakat?*")

There is a significant feature of what has been said by those who took part in the survey (and they said it unequivocally and without ambiguity) that must not be forgotten. This is the reiteration, by the respondents, that the concept of jihad possesses a highly important symbolic value for believers; that it is both valued and bestows value; and that it is based on a faith that reaches a higher level with the effort of the mastery and transcendence of the self. It is therefore unthinkable to ask any Muslim to condemn the concept of jihad, or to declare it to be outdated or to rid him or herself of the idea. Within Islam, to renounce jihad would be tantamount to abandoning the basis of the faith, since everyone at their own level, to the extent of their own capabilities, should cultivate the ethic of jihad. Every

[44] The jihad was radically redefined during the Afghan war against the Soviet Union by the leading ideologist of the contemporary jihad, the Palestinian scholar, Abdallah Azzam (who died in Peshawar in 1989 and had been Osama Ben Laden's Professor of Theology). In his book, *The Defence of the Muslim Lands* (the title refers to an expression used by the 14th century theologian Ibn Taymiyya, who saw this as "the primary duty, after the faith"), he laid down a distinction between individual and defensive jihad (*fard 'ayn*) and collective jihad (*fard kifaya*). Jihad *fard 'ayn* (individual) is an obligation for every Muslim, as a response to any attack made by infidels (*kufars*) on Islamic countries. This jihad applies if a Muslim country is invaded, or if Muslims are captured or imprisoned by non-Muslims. It should be declared by a recognised Imam and, while it is in force, certain *shari'a* rules are suspended: women may wage jihad without the permission of their husband, or a minor child may fight without its parents' agreement. The jihad *fard kifaya* (collective) is a collective religious obligation, though it is rarely asked for by the umma (the community of believers). It has a preventive character and does not necessitate an exterior threat from the infidels to be activated. Finally, from the standpoint of such armed jihadist groups as Al-Qa'ida, DAESH, or "*Takfir wa al-Hijra*" violent jihad is a "hidden obligation". It is holistic and indivisible and must be implemented against all infidels (including secular Muslims). These details are provided by Zidane Meriboute in his book, *Islamisme, Soufisme, Évangélisme. La guerre ou la paix*, *op. cit.,* pp. 22, 61-63, 243-244.

[45] It is important to remember that this international coalition was led by the United States in its "War against Terrorism" and the theatre of its operations was no longer limited to the Taliban in Afghanistan. In response to the attacks of 11 September 2001, the US administration of George W. Bush, ideologically led by neo-conservatives, prioritised the need for a "War on the Axis of Evil", which began in 2003 with the invasion of Iraq. The fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, together with the collapse of his army and of his security system, seemed, at first, to signal a victory against the "Axis of Evil". Astute observers, however, attribute the origins of DAESH to the sudden disappearance of the entirety of the Baath regime's military and security personnel and the consequent rise in support for DAESH among the Sunni population.

undertaking, especially military enterprises, which seek to demonise jihad (such as the "Axis of Evil"), or to eradicate it, is to be morally condemned by believers and even in military terms is probably destined to failure.

Jihad(ism): an ideological concept loosely defined

In reality, the concept is so rich in possible senses and may be put into action in so many ways that it has the capability of signifying virtually anything, as well as its direct opposite. The idea of jihad has so many possible meanings that it has become a signifier whose value depends on its context: it is in effect a 'wild card'. To arrive at an interpretation that can account for statements by the respondents about jihad which may at first sight seem ambivalent and/or contradictory, it is important to consider a concept originated by the anthropologist Claude-Lévi Strauss of "floating signifiers"[46], which allow "the representation of an indeterminate value of signification, in itself empty of meaning and therefore able to accommodate any meaning". He explains, in a note, that "the function of concepts such as *mana* is to stand in opposition to the absence of meaning without themselves holding any particular significance". This is the only way (at least the only scholarly way) to explain the recurrent statement made by the respondents that "*we are all jihadists; everyone is a jihadist"*. The researcher Abdurahmane Seck took up the issue during the Dakar interview on 7 July 2015, when he said, "Sure, jihad, we know it and we know what it means. But it's when we come to jihadism that there is a problem".

Jihad is not merely a "floating signifier", it is also a concept to which a lot of ideological meaning has become attached, and this can be seen in the language which has been used in relation to it in the past and today. In the traditional Islamic conception, a person who wages jihad is properly known as a *mujahid*. In the 19th century, the Emir Abdelkader in Algeria, the Imam Chamyl in the Caucasus and the Sudanese Mahdi were thus known as *mujahidin*. In the 20th century, the Algerian nationalists who fought against France were *mujahidin*, and it was the same in the 1980s for the Afghans who struggled against the Soviet presence in their country. It should not be forgotten that the Afghan war began the movement of many combatants from Arab-Muslim countries. It was only at the close of the Afghan war that a new term emerged to designate those who took part in the jihad. With one word, the way it was used changed from those who waged jihad to those who made jihad. All the non-Afghans who had waged jihad against the Soviet "communist atheists" were henceforth to be known as "Afghans", and were no longer known as *mujahidin* but as *jihadiyyin*, (jihadists). The Algerian "Afghans" constituted the first armed Islamic groups, following the example of Mokhtar Belmokhtar, who fought in Afghanistan, then in Algeria in the 1990s, and finally in the Sahel as part of Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb. The truly ideological turn taken by jihad, with its internationalisation and 'professionalisation', therefore dates from the Afghanistan war against that country's Soviet occupiers.

PERCEPTIONS REGARDING THE JIHADISTS

In your view, the "jihadists"about whom one speaks today are:	**698 respondents**
Bandits	42,8%
Fanatics or madmen	23,8%
Desperate individuals	5,0%
Resistant fighters or defenders	6,0%
Saviours or liberators	0,7%
Other	1,1%
Does not want to answer	2,3%
No answer	18,2%

Source: Rachid Id Yassine, *Statistical Study of the perceptions of people living on the border regions of the Sahel, October 2015.*

Added precision is therefore brought to bear when the suffix "-ism" is added to the word Islam or to the word "jihad", which takes the words in an ideological direction

[46] As a student of the Polynesian religious conception of *mana*, the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss grasped that this exercised an operational function in expressing a broad range of significations. See Marcel Mauss, *Sociologie et anthropologie*, Paris, PUF, 1950, XLIII-L.

and indicates that vigilance must be exercised towards them. However, it must be accepted that the respondents do not burden themselves with such terminological subtleties. Their perceptions are based on the meaning of words in relation to their origin in the Quran and the Sunna.

The body of quantitative and qualitative information gathered in this research indicates the indeterminate value of jihad(ism). At the level of the mass of people questioned during the research, a general view can be gained of the opinions expressed about jihadist groups. A majority (42.8%) regard them as "bandits". This majority opinion is expressed in all the countries involved except Mauritania, where 50 per cent of those questioned regard them as "fanatics" or "madmen"; and in Chad where the two perceptions are supported equally.

A result which is not insignificant is that in other countries – such as Mali, Senegal and Niger – around ten per cent of the respondents saw the jihadists favourably, as "resistant fighters", "defenders", "saviours" or "liberators".

In the course of the group interview in Dakar, a schoolteacher from the north of Senegal declared that *"a jihadist is a citizen like any other",* and that such a person's personal opinions should not become the object of enquiries or be suppressed by the police or the security forces. On the contrary, he continued, if a jihadist had committed violent acts, he should be apprehended and his actions subjected to the rule of law. When our study team summarised the discussion, they confirmed that, "there was a need to take ownership of the expression jihadist", and to reflect on the issue of "how to win the terminological battle". This issue is not related solely to Islam in the Sahel, but in the entire Arab-Muslim world. At the international level, the issue is to put an end to the demonization of the term, and the way in which it results in resorting to a military response and penalization.

On the ground in Mali, the question presents itself in a very direct way. According to the respondents, there could be a jihad waged by individuals who were religiously sincere and authentic, and a jihad carried out by individuals motivated by villainy: a kind of "banditry of Islam", to use the expression employed by an inhabitant of the eastern region of Senegal.

> *"The jihadists did not force the people of our community. They left us without hurting anyone. It was bandits who took advantage of their presence to cause harm to innocents. These jihadists are of different nationalities: Pakistani, Algerian, Saharawi, etc. We didn't notice any difference between them and the other Muslim leaders. They took care of people in danger, came to the aid of needy and preached Islam as it should be. Everything in their behaviour showed that they were good Muslims"* (Statement by a respondent in Mopti, Mali).
>
> *When we say 'jihadist' in Islam, we mean Muslims who protect their religion but do not kill innocent people*." (Statement by a respondent in Chad).

Some have viewed the jihadists of MUJAO/MUJWA as "law enforcers", come to settle the disputes generated by the extortion of the Tuareg armed rebel movement, the MNLA. Such "law enforcers", in the view of the inhabitant of Gao cited below, are not even the most extreme, since even before the advent of the armed groups, Wahhabi groups formed themselves into militias to carry out a campaign of enforcement of their extremist ideology.

> *"In 2012, the rebellion and jihadism came to us. Long before that, there were Wahhabi sleeper cells, there were preachers of all stripes that roamed the villages. They asked young people to spend 30 or 40 days to follow them preaching (Dawa). They set up militias. They asked people to contribute to the maintenance of these fanatical militias. When the MNLA occupied the area, its fighters destroyed everything that symbolized the state. They then attacked the property of families by removing everything: cars, bikes, silver, doors, windows. We formed a crisis committee to go see*

> *the leaders of the MNLA in Gao so that they would stop plundering the population. When MUJAO chased the MNLA from the main cities of the region, people welcomed them with joy and gladness. I know a village that gave 40 youth to MUJAO. MUJAO immediately established an Islamic court to try criminals and those who did not comply with Islamic law. It was at Ansongo that the first hand was amputated by MUJAO. Some thieves joined MUJAO to avoid the Islamic court. The Saharawis were the leaders of MUJAO. They are married to Arabs from Gao and Timbuktu, and the children born of such unions were extremely violent. They lay mines everywhere. Everywhere, you see car wrecks. Women have been abused and raped"* (Statement by a respondent in Gao, Mali).

In other countries in this study, even though the majority of the respondents refused to condemn the jihad as such, they were, for the most part, convinced that groups that were avowed jihadists were connected to armed criminality.

> *"These people are bandits, adventurers, smugglers and killers to be fought. They bring violence into the region; they kill people for nothing, even children. These are people who have hijacked Islam for their own interests. I think religion forbids everything they're doing"* (Statement by a respondent, Bagassola, Chad, 14 June 2015).

> *"(...) bandits, highway robbers. What they do is bad because they kill, they rob innocent people. They are harmful to society. They are not for the development of religion nor for the fulfillment of the people"* (Statement by a respondent, Bagassola, Chad, 14 June 2015).

In the light of these empirical observations, jihad, which belongs to everyone and for which all are responsible ("*the jihad can be personal: peaceful or violent"* according to a Senegalese respondent) can also contribute to a solution in which extremism can be controlled, from the logical point of view (*mantiq*). From this perspective, if the religious perceptions and convictions of those questioned is taken into account, the first thing to be done would be to desist from the criminalization of all those who use the word jihad in relation to themselves. Constructive and modified usages of jihad should be promoted so those who reduce it to its militaristic sense do not have a monopoly on its meaning and use. This would apply to both sides: on the one hand, its use by armed groups and, on the other hand, its employment in the vocabulary of international strategy and politics as well as in the Western media. In regard to the martial dimension of jihad, ideology and the kind of viral propaganda disseminated by YouTube and other social media can also easily be challenged and refuted by contradictory audio-visual content online which could provide illumination from a theological/political point of view of the true nature of jihad and war[47].

The need to broaden the definition of security

The great advantage of having established security as a major (geo)political question, on both the national and the international scale, is that it has led to the development of an entire 'industry' with no other concern than to improve the effectiveness of security measures and offer insightful analyses of them. In reality, however, this 'industry' invariably offers explanations couched in terms of the "heuristic of fear" which excludes the exploration of a truly critical approach. Just as on the issue of jihad, a real understanding of security and insecurity can exist only in the context of a plurality of meanings and implications linked to the social and economic life of a nation. Security is, therefore, another "floating signifier": the word has a variety of significations and presents a range of perspectives that are all equally important (concerning health, food, energy, climate, transport,

[47] The most remarkable initiative in this direction, which ought to be an inspiration for journalists and the for new media producers, is the filmed lecture series by Makram Abbès, Professor of Political Philosophy at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Lyon: *Guerre et Paix en Islam*, thirteen master's lectures by Makram Abbès, produced by Francis Ouedraogo, Ensmédie/ENS, Lyon, 18 July 2012 (http://iqbal.hypotheses.org/925).

information technology and other fields). Before even embarking on the research on the ground for this study, those involved established equivalent terms which would reflect the principle meanings of terms like 'security' (for example, the maintenance of security) to be used during the research process. The more insecurity grows, the more security is reinforced, and the contrary is also true! Here once more, terminology is a source of confusion and empirical blindness. By communicating the points of view of individuals who are confronted with the problems of security and insecurity every day, however, it is possible to escape the semantic traps upon which security policies may be based. Whenever the issues of security and violence are raised, the inhabitants of the cross-border regions point to poverty, to unemployment, and to the absence of economic prospects for young people as aggravating factors. Statistical enquiry has confirmed that, for 50.3 per cent of the respondents, the main determinants of insecurity are poverty, deprivation and precariousness[48]. This result is also confirmed by the significant fact that only 1.9 per cent of individuals identified religious radicalism as a source of insecurity. Like the word "jihad", the word "security" has a multiplicity of meanings, and its significance in relation to the police, the military and the "maintenance of security" is only one among many others. Those active in the field of politics as well as ministry functionaries, intelligence agents and specialists in counter-terrorism should all take into account the statements gathered during this study.

Initially, those involved in the study were reluctant and uneasy with this, only too obvious, conclusion ('poverty is at the root of all ills', 'deprivation renders some individuals harmful to the group'), which seemed easy to arrive at, as a subliminal message to be presented to international development agencies. We felt that poverty and unemployment are universal and eternal features of the social landscape, without always necessarily generating insecurity and violence. However, the researchers on this study are now obliged to accept that we, ourselves, were locked into empirical blindness.

> *"Yes, we hear talk of insecurity. Because of the Malian rebellion, the Sahel zone is classified as an insecure 'red zone', but that is not what concerns us. Our insecurity is that of the man who has no food, who is unhealthy. Even our brothers working in the gold mines are not safe"* (Statement by the Prefect of the commune of Markoye, Burkina Faso, 9 June 2015).

When it came to the point where the results had to be interpreted, with an insightful context for "what 800 Sahelians have to say", the benefits of studying perceptions became evident. Those involved in the study soon became aware of the semantic battlefield, and of the existence of "floating signifiers", especially concerning the concepts of security and insecurity. It is for this reason that international organisations – whose jargon is renewed every decade around a new set of key words (governance, capability-building, empowerment and so on) – are currently increasingly bringing forward the concept of "human security"[49] to express the holistic nature of security. From the many points of view, which emerge from the simple words of the respondents, the qualitative and quantitative data converges and leads to a broadened concept of security. This is the only way the convergence of perceptions and positions around the deprivation and disempowerment of the young can be expressed. The key issues are the circumstances in which people have to work, the stability they enjoy, and their education and health care, all of which provide the basics of human and social security. This is explicitly mentioned in one of the verses of the Quran most quoted in daily prayer: "He [God] has fed them when they were hungry and secured them against fear" (Quran, 106, 4, trans. Majid Fakhry, Garnet Publishing, 2000.).

[48] Within the study sample of 698 individuals, 77.8% of those questioned had a job, while only 11.3% described themselves as unemployed (of whom 31.6% were women and 46.8% were aged under 26). Just over half (50.7%) of the unemployed were in Mauritania and in Senegal.

[49] Cf. the principle of human security laid down by the United Nations (http://www.un.org/humansecurity/fr)

Confirmation can be found in the perception of clandestine migration, for example, which is regarded by Europeans as a major problem, in terms of security as well as in other ways. From the African point of view, however, migration appears, on the contrary, to be a "quest for security", as the sociologist Ibrahima Guissé reports in his case study[50]. The Prophet's own example of migration, the Hijra, offers spiritual inspiration to the would-be clandestine voyager in a quest for security and material wellbeing that has nothing at all to do with violence and the desire for ill-gotten gains.

> *"We do not take all these crazy paths, the forest, the bush, the ocean, the desert, endure hunger and thirst, fall ill and recover with no medical treatment ... in order to pose a bomb to kill innocents. No, the migrant may change course, he may con, become homosexual - I have seen this - but never become a bomber"* (Statement by a clandestine Ivoirian worker, Nouakchott, 14 July 2015).

This comes together with the analysis offered by the military specialist Pierre-Michel Joana[51] who observes that the populations of the cross-border regions are able to live with a certain level of insecurity as long as they enjoy a minimum that guarantees their activities, their food supplies, their health and their education. Finally, the notion of broadening the understanding of security to the conditions that permit employment is taken up in the study of "security regimes"[52] by the political scientist Jean-François Bayart. He shows that the dimension of security which relates to the "maintenance of security" is too narrow to permit a description of society's expectations.

4. (In)secure and (in)humane practices: coping with extreme violence

As shown earlier, the respondents evince a strong desire to be protected by the state and its forces, even though abuses, conspiracies and sometimes even actual crimes on their part are reported. There is a demand for the state to enjoy improved and wider powers.

The self-defence committees which are organised in civilian circles appear, in practice, to be a very short term solution. The notion that *"everyone is a security agent"* (statement by a participant in the group interview in Dakar) could, on occasion, be effective in the field of information and communication, and as part of a system of vigilance. In the longer term, however, such a move towards self-sufficiency could tend to create autonomous militias which might clash with, or even challenge, the state and its forces. This is also without taking into account possible abuses (the settling of private scores, which could go as far as lynchings[53]) and the increasing recourse to summary (in)justice. Such vigilante committees must be placed within an official framework and cannot replace the forces of order, particularly since they are unarmed auxiliaries. A member of a vigilante committee in northern Cameroon told a researcher on this study: *"they have always exploited us: they put us where the shooting is. They have never given us weapons"*. As far as the use of force is concerned, the arrival on the scene of the vigilante committees adds one more complication to problem of the war between the armed groups and the forces of order. In the Far North region of Cameroon, a combination of former bandits and prisoners – often of Christian faith– use the vigilante committees to lay down the law, refusing to accept people from the Kanouri community – a community which has been ostracised and accused of colluding with Boko Haram.

[50] See Ibrahima Guissé, "The clash of perceptions: illegal migration as a quest for security" (a section of this report).
[51] Cf. Pierre-Michel Joana, "The intractable problems of the Sahel's border regions: a deeper approach to the security issue" (a section of this report).
[52] Cf. Jean-François Bayart, "Security regime in the Sahel: the role of the State" (a section of this report).
[53] During the group interview in Abuja (Nigeria, 2-3 July 2015), an interviewee from Maiduguri showed those involved in the study mobile phone videos which are in circulation containing footage of lynchings by members of vigilante committees and young men suspected of being members of Boko Haram.

BOKO HARAM: VIOLENCE AND SECTARIAN MADNESS. GLIMPSES OF THE TRUTH

"(…) Be the voice of the voiceless. It is a gaping wound for present and future generations."

"All our families have children who have left to join Boko Haram or who will, sooner or later, be willing to do so (...) In every attack, they die like flies but that doesn't put them off (...) The wealthy, well-known people and government officials are systematically the first to be killed (...) When they set up vigilante committees, as the government wants, it only ends with reprisals from Boko Haram. The members of the committees just disappear (...) The Imams dare not speak of Boko Haram in sermons because they know that all the border villages have BH cells and that if they denounce the action of BH, they will be killed (...) Children who leave, come back to kill their parents and their marabout, as an offering to God (...) These young people have just swapped the begging bowl they have had all their lives for a Kalashnikov. They hate us; they hate all that we stand for (...) When you have too many children you might be able to pay for proper schooling for one of them; the others go to the Quran school or end up in the street (...) The Quranic school is training where the children become nomads and undergo a very tough training accustomed to violence, which dehumanizes them and cuts them off from everything (...) When they leave Quranic school there are no career prospects for them; even after formal schooling, parents do not believe it is possible for their children to find a job (…) In every attack, only through looting alone, a BH [Boko Haram] can make 200.000 FCFA which is a huge amount for them. Most of what they take goes to the leaders (...)

When you have drunk human blood, you can't live among human beings anymore (...)

These people have no intention of coming back into society: in fact it is they who are asking us to join with them. No-one can speak to them; you can't do anything, they don't want to listen (...) Rather than focus on reintegration, we must stop the recruitment tsunami, caused by the repression of the military (...) When the BH are captured or taken prisoners, they just disappear, they are systematically wiped out. It's just a matter of time. There isn't anyone who has quit BH who is still alive (...) The Prefect, the presidential party organized meetings between the forces of localities but people do not talk, they are afraid that among them there are BH supporters (...) The soldiers think we [i.e parliament members, traditional chiefs, mayors] are involved. They harass us, shoot at us, and beat us up when there's an attack (...) The soldiers, for some the priority is to protect themselves, while others want to kill. Raids, beatings, mass killings (...)

Right now, the people are more tormented by security forces than by Boko Haram. Some people have told me they definitely prefer Boko Haram (...) "There are Kanuri women who come every day to the gates of the prison at Maroua to bring food to their son or their husband without even knowing whether they are still alive or if they are there at all… nobody tells them anything."

Statements by various participants in the Yaoundé group interview, collected by Hervé Gonsolin, Cameroon, 2-3 July 2015.

The national report on Nigeria includes a number of statements from respondents who report that the forces of order and security often take flight from Boko Haram attacks along with the civilians, and that civilians have been known to conceal and protect members of the police and the armed forces in their own houses. As regards the level of violence, there are a number of armed groups which prey on the cross-border regions but Boko Haram exceeds all that is imaginable in terms of ferocity and cruelty to the civilian population.

"Boko Haram kills, even more, their own brothers, fathers and mothers, so we are all caught" (Statement by a respondent, Bagassola, Chad, 10 June 2015).

"We told them to kill their parents because they say we're kaffir. And those who kill their parents, it seems they even become emirs of Boko Haram" (Statement by a respondent, Bagassola, Chad, 10 June 2015).

The discovery that young people had begun to murder members of their own families was a particularly harsh blow for the population. In Chad, the head of the Tchoukoutelia canton was reported to have been killed by his brother, who was a member of the Boko Haram.

"They don't call themselves Boko Haram: they just see themselves as Muslims. But really, it's a sect [a cult]!" (Statement by an interviewee from Maiduguri in Abuja, Nigeria, 3 July 2015).

4.1 Stunning violence; appalling cruelty

The power of Boko Haram, and the fear it induces, is greatly boosted through recourse to magic. All kinds of stories circulate about the ability of its leaders, even during the lifetime of Mohammed Yusuf, to transform themselves into animals in order to be able to flee or pass unseen. To explain the apparent passivity of the young, who calmly kill and mutilate their victims, drug addiction and the consumption of magic potions is often suggested. Recruitment is tailored according to who is being targeted: young people are attracted with enticements of all kinds mingling material benefits with the promise of salvation in the beyond. Of course, there is indoctrination through religious teaching, but the conscription of basic recruits – most of Boko Haram's members – is effected with techniques of persuasion that include hypnotic manipulation, magical rituals and the consumption of concoctions intended to distort the senses. According to statements made by respondents from Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon, the fanatical

frenzy for killing and terrorisation can only be explained if the young are bewitched in some way and subjected to powerful supernatural influences. Drinking human blood, according to some respondents, is a preventive measure that preserves the perpetrators from being haunted by their victims in their dreams. In addition to its magic, Boko Haram seeks to terrify by promulgating propaganda videos showing the details of their butchery, with acts of mutilation and magical invocations.

> *"It's as if the people of BH, there, came with their remedies, see. Something like powder, and when they come like that, they pour the powder on you, and you inhale it and that's it. And they even have these dibouna [dates], they had those and, even if you are a Christian, you become BH. One day we took a BH, we beat him until he told the truth. He said that they collect the saliva of corpses, they put it in a barrel, they accumulate it, they mix with their other stuff. And when they give you that, then, your head, it's still out there"* (Statement of a respondent, northern Cameroon).

> *"I do not know. Maybe they gave them the Quran or a fetish so that they cannot get out of it... People say that the dibouna* [dates]*, there, they write something on them, some say they are mixed with human blood, and when you eat one, then, even if they cut your head off, you cannot go back. That's what they give them"* (Interview with a traditional Chief, northern Cameroon).

> *"They have these dates, then, and if you eat one, it's over. They have already changed your brain. Since then, no one eats dates in Kousséri, especially guys who come from Nigeria, where no one eats dates... They put them in water. They say there is a cask, that they mix all that in a cask, leave it for two or three days, then they dry them, you know how?"* (Statement by a motorcycle-taxi driver in Kousséri, Far North, Cameroon).

> *"They use magic and put charms around the Quran to indoctrinate the young men (…) They get them hooked on drugs, and 'medicine' and make them drink blood …. If they want to get on, to become an 'Emir' and get better pay, they make them kill their own father and mother …. Before fighting the army, they cut their own wives' throats and tell them they are going on ahead to the garden of heaven and that they'll meet again there…. They have animals and livestock to carry their guns and bombs … Unemployment, injustice, lack of food, deforestation, the lack of infrastructure make banditry and crime look very attractive …. Terrorism is a 'money-making venture'. Violence is an attractive sector of the economy…. Illiteracy has made some people vulnerable to strange ideas"* (Statement by an interviewee from Maiduguri, group interview in Abuja, Nigeria, 3 July 2015).

4.2 The possibility of a "dirty war"

Who would have imagined that a small group of Muslim intellectuals, who began by wishing to live for a time in a self-governing community in the Sambisa forest in order to realise their dream of a life guided by divine teachings and commandments, would end up becoming a bloody organisation, made up of several thousand fighters, who would have been responsible for the deaths of more than 15,000 victims?

As observers in north-east Nigeria saw it, the massive clampdown by the Nigerian federal state played a considerable part in the ultra-violent direction taken in the confrontation with the insurgents. Throughout the 2000s, Boko Haram had turned towards violent action with attacks on symbols of the state, murdering police officers and burning public buildings with Molotov cocktails. The decisive moment, however, came in 2009 with the arrest and murder of the organisation's founding leader, Mohammed Yusuf. After their leader's death, Boko Haram unleashed a continuous escalation of violence against the state and its representatives. Over a period of six years, the situation went from bad to worse, with the number of victims constantly growing. The respondents in this study explained that, at first, the Boko Haram targeted representatives of the state but then turned on Christians and finally began killing victims of all religions and ethnic backgrounds.

The Presidential elections in the spring of 2015 were, perhaps, a major turning point. It was publicly notorious that Boko Haram had attracted support from Nigerian politicians. This support had become part of political campaigning and was used to settle scores between different factions of the federal government. With the election, as President, of a man from the northern region of Nigeria who was renowned for his firmness and rectitude, the Nigerian electorate seemed, to some extent, to be seeking retribution for the collusion and the six years of ineffectual struggle against terrorism which had, in the end, created an opening for violent extremism. At the time when the research for this study was carried out, despite the continuation of attacks (some more bloody than others), the prevailing atmosphere in debates among citizens was one of hope for a new relationship between the state and the public.

Today, in opposition to the jihadist threat, no less than four armies are waging war in Nigeria after Niger, Chad and Cameroon halted their long-standing reluctance to become involved in an internal Nigerian problem. In addition, the conflict has been endowed with a truly regional dimension by its cross-border character; the problem of the refugees and internally displaced people; and the incessant, murderous incursions across frontiers by Boko Haram. It appears to be the Chadian army that is, at present, most determined to eliminate the Islamic State in West Africa (Boko Haram's new name), which has suffered losses and serious defeats. For the inhabitants of the cross-border regions, military protection is invaluable and many seem not merely content but actively grateful to have this commitment. Incidentally, as an institution, the army may also stand to gain a level of legitimacy as a result which could, in the end, give it major significance (or perhaps too much?) in relation to the civil institutions of the state.

The armed forces, however, which had hitherto been welcomed with open arms, are, alas, beginning to carry out their own extortions against the public, a development which is denounced by the respondents with the same fervour as they condemn Boko Haram. The point is being reached where the objectives of the war are no longer clear: is the aim to protect the civil population from attacks by Boko Haram? Or have the four armies now embarked on a programme of eradication? It is clear that the two objectives are not identical and the position appears to be drifting towards an armed coalition whose purpose is the eradication of the Islamic State in West Africa, despite awareness that civilians are, as a result, being subjected to extreme violence. The imminence of total war against the insurgents is in the process of changing the conflict's scale, its tone, and its potential for imposing a final solution. There is, therefore, a fear that a change could lead to worse ordeals and more deaths among the civilian population. Under the cover of a "War against Terrorism", a "dirty war" could take place and, in the end, the possibility of a return to power by the military cannot be discounted.

Participants in this research study have described grave violations of human rights, committed in the course of actions by the security forces against the jihadist groups in the Sahel, some of which are tantamount to war crimes. Respondents speak of mass graves, sometimes even within their own villages, where the bodies of those killed in the War against Terrorism are discarded. They describe summary executions of villagers including old people, women and children. The current reality includes arbitrary arrests, made on the basis of anonymous denunciations or because of perceived sympathy to a jihadist group, as well as torture and disappearances. Those accused have not benefited from any of the minimal protections laid down in Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions or by the Charter of Human Rights.

At the moment there is an absurd situation where the policy of the suppression of violent extremism is driving the population into the arms of the very groups that state are seeking to fight against: a phenomenon that is, alas, present in the War against Terrorism. The struggle against impunity within the security forces thus appears to be a key element in the prevention of violent extremism.

MILITARY (IN)SECURITY AND ERADICATION
THE ALGERIAN SCHOOL (1992-2001)

Over more than a decade, Algeria was riven by an undeclared civil war which caused more than 200,000 deaths. The conflict began with a "dirty war" between the government and the Islamists which followed the annulment of the legislative elections of December 1991 in which the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) took the majority of the parliamentary seats. The FIS was dissolved and its leaders were assassinated or arrested; its members and sympathisers were arrested in the tens of thousands and interned in camps in the Sahara. In January 1992, a new Head of State was appointed, Mohamed Boudiaf, who was assassinated while making a public speech (by a member of a military special forces group, according to the official story). After this, a clash between armed groups and the security forces rapidly broke out. Equally quickly, matters became even more confused when the all-powerful military security forces – the Department of Information and Security – apparently began to put on the pressure: paramilitary forces and death squads were carrying out assassinations with impunity in the villages and in suburban areas of Algiers. This was in addition to the security forces themselves – the notorious "Ninja" – so that who was responsible for abductions, killings and massacres became even more difficult to identify. Who was killing whom? That the question needs to be asked certainly does not excuse the FIS Islamists (and especially its jihadist faction) of responsibility for planned and systematic executions directed against journalists, trade unionists, university teachers and artists: the list of eminent personalities who were murdered is too long to give here. This sparked off an exodus of the Algerian intelligentsia, mainly to Canada. It is for this reason that the bloody decade of the 1990s can be seen as a civil war: anyone who declared themselves publicly to be either a secularist or an Islamist was putting their life at risk.

From 1996 on, the Islamists were indubitably in retreat, but massacres of civilians continued unabated and even took place on a larger scale. Insecurity grew in proportion to the presence of the national security forces. In 1997, entire villages were massacred. What happened in Bentalha left no further room for doubt: there was collusion between the armed Islamic Groups and the security forces. Many analysts, such as Lahouari Addi, have seen these events as struggles between different factions of the Algerian government attempting to influence the course of events. Algeria finally emerged from its bloody conflict thanks to its revenue from oil and gas and the sudden rise in hydrocarbon prices in the early 2000s. Since then the Armed Islamic Groups have been virtually extinguished by the DRS (Department for Information and Security) and were effectively exported to Mali in the 2010s. According to Lahouari Addi, the DRS is the real (and hidden) government of the country. It reflects a division of responsibilities that goes back to the war of national liberation and to the existence within the FLN of an exterior delegation (whose responsibility was more 'diplomatic') and an interior operational front. In September 2015, the international press reported the retirement of General Mohamed Liamine Médiene, who had headed the DRS for 25 years. According to the historian Pierre Vermeren, the former Head of Security was "the most powerful man in the Maghreb".

Based on: Salima Mellah, *Les massacres en Algérie, 1992-2004*, Comité Justice pour l'Algérie, Dossier 2, May 2004; Lecture by Lahouari Addi at the École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, December 2012; Nesroulah Yous, *Qui a tué à Bentalha. Chronique d'un massacre annoncé* (Paris, La Découverte, 2000); Interview with Pierre Vemeren in "Libération", 15 September 2015; Malek Aoudia, Séverine Labat, *Algérie 1988-2000: autopsie d'une tragédie*, [DVD-ROM], Ed. Compagnie des phares et balises, 2003.

IV. THE ROLE OF WOMEN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Points to remember:

- Women and young people are the groups of people most affected by insecurity and violence and their role is two-sided: on the one hand, they are the primary targets and victims of extremism; on the other, its main instigators. Therefore, governments and international observers should consider women and young people as the very *territories* of radicalization and extremism.
- Young people turn to extremism primarily because of the economic reasons which underlie it and which improve their own social status and standard of living. Women, considered to be "social juniors" or "eternal minors", find themselves in tragic and exceptional situations which upset the hierarchy associated with social values and related to age groups: they have had to face situations in which, having been protected, they have become the protectors of the community.
- Until now, women and young people represented the overwhelming majority of the population, but a majority which was silent and more or less submissive. War and violent extremism have definitely changed the traditional order of social values: the roles of women and young people have been turned upside down. Although, for now, nothing is really in their hands, they must take ownership of their national destiny. In any case, it may be assumed that the future belongs to them.

"Here, women are under-informed, uneducated, made to stay home and, thus, become the ideal victims (…) We are the key victims of this phenomena [of insecurity and violence]" (Comment by the President of a women's group, Bol, Tchad, 11 June 2015).

"After the armed groups left, we created an association of Muslim women in the town of Timbuktu (…) to convey the message of tolerant Islam to women. We also mediate between women who left their husbands during the crisis to take refuge in other countries out of fear" (Comment by woman preacher, Timbuktu, Mali).

"They hand out lots of money. They let you spend the night with them; you stay there to think about it. Like that, it's easy to get in [to be recruited by Boko Haram]" (Comment by a motorcycle taxi driver, Kousséri, Far North, Cameroon).

"Elders must involve youth in all areas of decision-making and engage them in community activities" (Comment by a participant during a group interview with young people, Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso, 9 June 2015).

1. Demographic weight vs. social subordination

Women generally find themselves in a position where they are underepresented – both in terms of numbers and in terms of consideration for issues which relate to them. The research for this study has not escaped this underrepresentation[54] given the difficult, even dangerous, political circumstances. In the preparatory phase of the field study, those involved anticipated the difficulty of conducting

[54] The movement for equal rights, opportunities and treatment for women is an ongoing struggle: by way of comparison, it is edifying to note that even in a country as advanced as France, the number of women among university Professors barely reaches 22% and reaches a ceiling of 26% for seats in the French Parliament (2015 data).

qualitative interviews in a mixed context (men refusing to speak to a female interviewer, or vice versa). But, overall, no relationship or mixed gender issues were faced during the fieldwork. Nevertheless, women represent only a quarter of the respondents. With regard to the regional sample, it is important to note that 79% of the women involved in the study are mothers. The box shows that the sample reflects national demographics in the Sahel region, in particular, a fertility rate that ranges between 4.7 and 7.6 children per woman.

From a qualitative point of view, however, the interviews which were conducted are rich in details about what women face in everyday life in terms of the education of their children; the problems of insecurity they observe or experience; and the violence which affects them primarily and which, sometimes, affects them for the rest of their days. These interviews also reflect the impact of traditional perceptions of the status of women (and young people) and how this affects them.

BREAKDOWN OF WOMEN INTERVIEWED BY COUNTRY

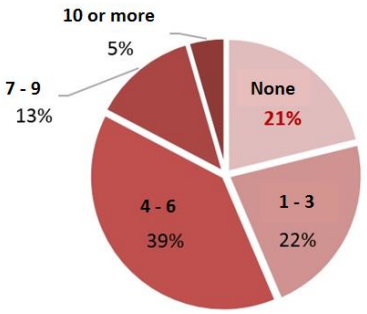
	Number	Rate	Female	Male
TOTAL	**698**	**100%**	**25,1%**	**74,9%**
Mali	147	21,1%	17,0%	83,0%
Nigeria	120	17,2%	27,5%	72,5%
Niger	100	14,3%	11,0%	89,0%
Mauritania	88	12,6%	43,2%	56,8%
Senegal	74	10,6%	35,1%	64,9%
Chad	71	10,2%	28,2%	71,8%
Burkina-Faso	60	8,6%	28,3%	71,7%
Cameroon	38	5,4%	13,2%	86,8%

Analysis: Of the 698 people interviewed, 25.1% are women. 147 are from Mali, representing 21.1% of the total, among whom 17% are women.

Source: Rachid Id Yassine, *Statistical Study of the perceptions of people living on the border regions of the Sahel, October 2015*

The national report on Cameroon defines the status of women and young people in that country as "social subordination". It also refers to the concept of "social juniors", as defined by Jean-François Bayart in *L'Etat en Afrique. La politique du ventre* (Paris, Fayard, 1989), whereby domination by "social seniors" is justified by age and possession of material and social resources. The social subordination of women (as for young people) is, therefore, not due primarily to pervasive attitudes, but to objective economic and material conditions. Until the balance of power shifts significantly, empowerment of women and young people will remain at the virtual stage. It is important not to dissociate – at least at this point – the social status of women and young people in trying to understand why they play secondary roles despite their presence and dynamism. As the national report on Niger explains, women and young people in Sahelian communities have no access to "significant financial and symbolic resources" and various factors are given as explanation for this de facto "position of dependence": the "physical nature" of women, the "immaturity" of the young, the poor access to inheritance under local customs or religious law (in Islam, a woman receives half the share of a man). However, the report notes that, in Niger, the demographic weight of women and young people does give them electoral power: both the Islamists and other political parties court them for their votes.

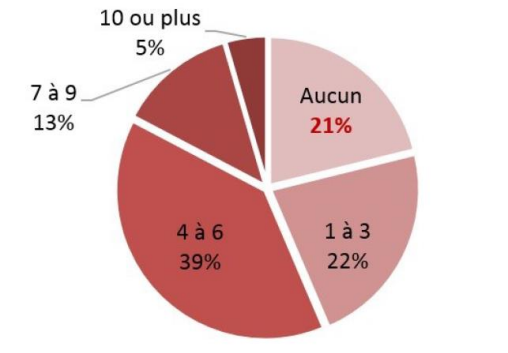
In 2015, we are witnessing an extremely sensitive transition phase. On the one hand, young people and women virtually 'seized power' as the demographic majority. Yet, traditional mentality remains intact: neither demographic modernization (an almost automatic process given the drop in fertility, the decline in the age of people getting married and e
transformation of modes of economic production which c t
been able to break down the old ways of thinking.



[55] For more on the status of women in the Arab-Muslim world as a det
'Slowly but Surely. Gender issue and "cultural rights"', *Al-Ahram* I
(http://www.archipress.org/reda/?page_id=533).

Women and young people are the main issue in the socialization and geographic spread of extremist groups. They are the prioritized targets for radicalization and are also symbolically at the heart of the confrontation between rebels and central government. Most of the surveys carried out in the eight countries mention the dual and ambivalent aspect of the role of women and young people. They suffer the effects of extremism and violence, but they are also, sometimes against their will, the main instigators.

DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF CHILDREN



Analysis: 21% of the women interviewed have no children.

Source: Rachid Id Yassine, *Statistical Study of the perceptions of people living on the border regions of the Sahel, October 2015.*

2. Women as victims/actors on the front line: towards change in the social order

2.1 Perceptions of vulnerability

The comments collected during the study indicate that the situation of women leaves much to be desired, in spite of their significant presence in society and their real, although not necessarily visible, influence.

> *"Here, women are under-informed, uneducated, made to stay home and, thus, become the ideal victims (...)The word of women is not heard by people here. We are the primary victims of these phenomena because we do not have the strength to defend ourselves and must take care of the children, too"* (Comment by the President of a women's group, Bol, Chad, 11 June 2015).

In the perceptions of the inhabitants, such terms as "weakness" and "fragility" attest to woman's greater vulnerability.

> *"Women are the first victims of insecurity because they are most exposed. (...) The example of the girls abducted in Nigeria by members of Boko Haram is illustrative. They had done nothing wrong but were victims simply because they are women. They were reduced to sexual, moral and physical slavery"* (Comment by a male civil servant in the town of Tchintabaraden, 17 June 2015).

The plight of women who fall into the hands of the rebels of Islamic State's West Africa Province (formerly known as Boko Haram) is particularly tragic and illustrates their vulnerability. The "fragility" described by the respondents in the study refers especially to the innumerable cases of women widowed or kidnapped, married by force, raped or infected with HIV/Aids. Of the 300 young girls liberated from Nigerian jihadists in the Sambisa forest in 2015, some 200 of them were pregnant and/or infected by HIV/Aids. Women are more likely to stay alive than men because Boko Haram captures them to marry off to its members.

> *"They kill the children and take the women to make them their wives"* (Village Chief of Katikimé, Far North, Cameroon).

> *"That's why they do not want to kill them. Currently, near their camp in Sambisa, the army recovered nearly 6,000 women, who are now in Nigeria. If you have a family, you go see if your wife is there,*

you take her to the hospital. But it seems that the 200 high school girls are still in captivity. We did not wait for Boko Haram to come find us. As soon as the army fled, we, too, fled with our women, that same evening" (Comment by a Nigerian Chief, now a refugee in Cameroon).

Behind the general statements about the "weakness" and "fragility " of women exposed to insecurity and violence, the respondents in Niger and Chad show that (as for young people) women often face economic conditions of dependence.

"Women are vulnerable in times of conflict because they have no means of defense and, most often, stay with their children, which is also an obstacle to mobility. Then, they are not financially independent and do not have the means to flee" (Comment by a primary school teacher in the town of Tchintabaraden, 18 June 2015).

"They are very sensitive, very fragile, yet they are the ones who leave to work in the fields, go to the markets…" (Comment by a female respondent, leader of women's group, Bol, Chad, 11 June 2015).

When it comes to accomplishing their many tasks, the weakness and fragility of women is not mentioned. But the fact remains that women have little protection against violence. In Mali, the study shows that women must sometimes take the initiative when men are exposed to mortal danger.

"During the occupation, the men were no longer working. It is we, the women, who take care of our families with the little we find" (Comment by a woman from Mopti, Mali).

2.2 The role of women as protectors

War has also revealed the physical courage of these women who dare to protest and resist in order to protect their own.

"During the crisis, at the market in Boni, the rebels stopped my child and wanted to take him. I opposed asking them to kill me instead of my child. The population of Boni came running and they released him" (Comment by a woman in the village of Boni, Mali).

The study made in the north of Cameroon collected testimony from women who have endured the most tragic aspects of wartime. Society there knows a "frenzy to go to one's death", growing out of the Almajiri system of religious instruction of "socialization through humiliation at a young age" (i.e., pre-school children become "begging brothers") and the scapegoating of the Kanuri ethnic group as "internal enemies". "The loss of the desire to live makes death open another horizon and the desire to die expresses the will to destroy others". It is in this context of generalized fear, where the respondents "hesitate between confiding their fears and the fear to confide", that the woman's role can be seen: she is the only one able to protect those still alive in the community. Against the atrocities of war, the murder of the husband, father and brother, women remain the ultimate protectors of children (who are usually numerous). Stoical, with everything collapsing around her and most of the men killed, she takes on the journey of the internally displaced person. As shown in the many testimonies from Nigeria to Cameroon, women alone keep the spark of life alive.

The problem of insecurity has caused us many problems. The Boko Haram came to us, they killed my husband, they took all our sheep, our goats and cattle. They took everything we had (...) Many Boko Haram came and they aimed to kill the fathers of families, to seize their assets [livestock]. They then kill all the Christians and pagans and leave for the Nigerian side with the goods, the small boys and older girls. After killing the husband, they leave his body to his wife. They still do not kill women" (Testimony by a displaced woman, Koza, Far North, Cameroon).

Other internally displaced people describe the collective exodus of women leading their many young children on long journeys to the commune of Koza in Cameroon.

> *"I arrived here, it's been a year, already. Because I was with the children, at each place where I arrived, I slept under the trees. I had 8 children. The scene I experienced is this: the Boko Haram came around 17:00, took my husband because he worked for the Chief of Bama, he was an official in the court of the Lamidat... I was at home, receiving the condolences of neighbours who had found out that my husband was arrested. Then, three cars came in front of our house and my husband was in one of the cars. They took him out of the car, made him lie down and told me to come lie on my husband. As I had a child on my back, I asked if I could put him down. They told me to put down the child and then come and lie on my husband. And then they told me to get up, and then they killed him in front of me and my children in our home in Bama ... And that's when I took my 8 children and I started walking until we arrived in Koza with my 8 children, 5 boys and 3 girls. The largest is 13 and the youngest 3 (...) and, in addition, I was not alone, for we were many who had lost our husbands"* (Testimony by a displaced woman, Koza, Far North, Cameroon).

Faced with such humanitarian tragedies (notable not only for the degree of violence and suffering, but also for the mass scale of humans directly affected), the full extent of the 'inter-war' disaster and its consequences on the social level will only be able to be assessed over the long term. But it should be remembered that these extreme situations of violence reveal an *earlier crisis* in traditional mentality and social structure. It is unlikely that the model of "social subordination" and of "gerontocratic absolutism" (cf. the national report on Cameroon) is, or will be, truly operational after such dramatic societal changes. The role of women has necessarily changed during these singular events, and will change even more in the future among survivors. It is as if the social values usually assigned to "social seniors" – the great absent ones? – were passing into the hands of women (and young people).

The thematic survey in Mali[56] revealed this element. The jihadist occupation revealed the hollowness of traditional structures which confine women to roles where they are not allowed to make decisions. The role of men and "social seniors" was hardly glorious during the jihadist occupation. Indeed, roles were sometimes reversed, with women protecting the men (husbands, brothers, fathers). During this tragic phase in Mali's history, the men fell silent, went into hiding to save their lives and/or not to be press-ganged, and did not want to see the disturbing reality created by the presence of Tuareg rebels and jihadist groups. Women, on the other hand, saw it all and sometimes suffered it all as well. They have had to take initiative, to show what they are capable of in terms of endurance, courage and the ability to negotiate. The study in Mali shows that, even when the armed groups have gone, women continue to take the initiative in countering jihadism.

> *"After the armed groups left, we created an association of Muslim women in the town of Timbuktu. We conduct sermons from neighbourhood to neighbourhood to convey the message of tolerant Islam to women. We also mediate between women who left their husbands during the crisis to take refuge in other countries out of fear"* (Comment by a female preacher in Timbuktu, Mali).
> *"Woman is the beginning and end of every social process in the north. In our society, women enjoy much respect. The only handicap women have in the social process is that they are slow in action and reaction"* (Comment by a female respondent in Timbuktu, Mali).
>
> *"These are teachers, so they can lead the change in mentality"* (Comment by a 45-year-old leader of a women's association living in Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso, 10 June 2015).

[56] In the eight countries of the study, the same questionnaire was given to 698 people. In addition, some 34 people, including 24 women, were interviewed in Gao, Timbuktu and Bamako as part of the study on the relations between women and the jihadists, directed by Gwenola Possémé-Rageau, with Cheick Traoré and Mohamed Mahmoud. Cf. Gwenola Possémé-Rageau, "Strategic alliance: the role of women in the implantation of jihadists in Mali" (a section of this report).

> *"Women have a great role to play. This is a key element in violence and peace, but it is underestimated in Africa. Here, among the Tuaregs, the woman is a basic unit of society; there are women who give good advice, women who are listened to, women who could bring a lot to the peace process. If women are brought into the peace process, I think it would bear fruit"* (Comment by a female refugee in Burkina Faso).

The growing role of women can also be seen in the religious sphere, particularly in the production of new Islamic knowledge. The Niger national report mentions the popularity of religious schools (*makaranta*) which bring new female activists into the Islamic sphere. These places of learning and socializing, mainly located in urban areas and affecting primarily – but not only – civil servants and teachers, build new community ties where solidarity is manifested at births, marriages and deaths. *Makaranta* women become agents of the new religiosity expressed through the humanitarian NGOs (funded by the Gulf States) or in municipal and national elections. If some see radicalization by gender at work in the *makaranta*, others, on the contrary, note a wider, more 'democratic' access to religious content (compared to the brotherhood system).

JIHADIST IMPLANTATION THROUGH MARIAGE

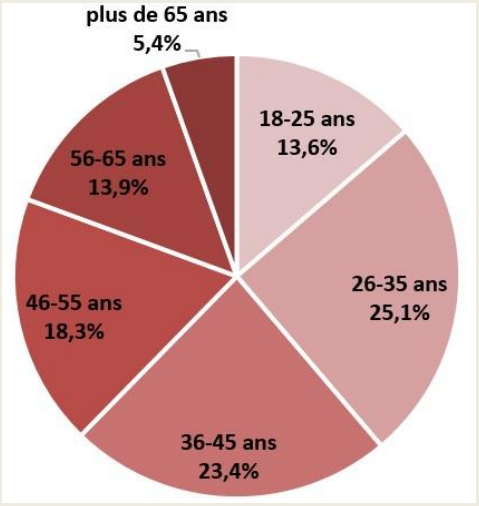
The abrupt and unexpected arrival of the jihadists took people by surprise. They had no time to develop avoidance strategies, in particular, how to cope with marriage proposals – this was particularly the case because the forms of alliance proposed by the jihadists were sometimes far from the tenets of Islam. The forced marriage of girls 14 or 15 years old, or of women already married, or collective marriage or forced polyandry (i.e., several men – four or five men – combining their financial resources to marry the same woman) are practices foreign to Islam and Sharia. Such practices remained marginal but they had a significant enough impact on people for the sources interviewed in the study to mention them.
These various forms of alliance show that the jihadist groups, as well as their practices and customs, were not homogeneous. Those interviewed confirm this, speaking of men from Africa, Europe and Asia (i.e., Pakistan, Afghanistan etc.). These practices also reveal a certain degree of autonomy among the troops and the weakness of MUJAO command which allowed men to behave in violation and contradiction of the very principles they sought to impose on the people through Sharia.

(...) Out of fear of reprisals, local society put up little resistance to the violation of these principles. The violent abuse committed by the MNLA before the arrival of MUJAO certainly explains the torpor of local people; this passivity, in turn, helped legitimize the practices of certain jihadists. That the victims of forced marriage, rape or sexual exploitation had remained silent after occupation may be surprising. Civil society organisations in Gao report less than ten complaints. However, this silence can be explained by social pressure on all subjects of an intimate, family nature. (...) The tradition that keeps girls under the control of their father, women under that of their husbands, persists – although neither fathers nor spouses are now able to protect them. One can draw a parallel between the state's lack of protection of its citizens and the lack of protection of women by fathers and husbands. It was not, then, jihadist occupation that upset the customary rules for the protection of vulnerable people. Rather, these rules of protection underwent a transformation before the jihadists' arrival. The occupation only revealed the weaknesses in the social fabric, the community and the state to provide protection to the most vulnerable, including women and children.
(...) Malian society has emerged weakened by this crisis, for it revealed the inability of society to protect its most vulnerable members. The upheavals within local society caused by the occupation could have consequences on the relations between men and women. The women have learned that they cannot count on their men to protect them. Hence, the traditional relationship of submission in return for protection is now obsolete. New forms of relationship between the sexes must now emerge. (...) Occupation will also have an impact on inter-generational relationships: the young jihadist fighters demonstrated that it is enough to be armed to rule over the adult world. It will, consequently, be necessary to think about the relationship between young and old in Mali.

Extract from Gwenola Possémé-Rageau's study, *Strategic alliance: the role of women in the implantation of jihadists in Mali*

3. Young people: the weak – but essential – link in the 'terror economy"'

BREAKDOWN OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE



Source: Rachid Id Yassine, *Statistical Study of the perceptions of people living on the border regions of the Sahel, October 2015.*

26-35

If women and young people make up the two largest categories of the Sahel population, it is an error to think of them separately. A great number of women fall into the "Youth" category and, from the point of view of social issues, these two categories overlap. There is also clearly an overlap in relation to ambivalence around their active and passive roles in radicalization and extremism.

As for the issue of representation and the theme of gender, this study did not specifically focus on young people (18-25), the age category most directly related to the sociology of extremism and armed violence and representing 13.6% of the respondents.

Other research, quantitative and qualitative, would be useful to deepen understanding of their evolving position within society and sketch psychological profiles of young people involved in radicalization and extremism. Nevertheless, the survey conducted in the border regions of the eight countries in this study has revealed some relevant data.

3.1 "What does a 20-year-old dream of?"

In answering this question, most respondents mentioned having a job and the opportunity to start a family. The facts reported by those surveyed tend to mythologize this willingly trans-generational and consensual response. Besides the increasing difficulties young people have in terms of entering the traditional economy (which is extremely precarious due to all sorts of factors, not least climate change), the options for the future are very limited.

> *"When we go to the village, outside modern life, the first concern is to get married and have an activity, like being a farmer or a shepherd. If one leaves the village for the city, you need school diplomas, if you have them. If not, you need to find work and then found a family";*
> *"Besides marriage, we must look for a job, as a livestock-breeder or farmer. Otherwise, you must leave home to seek employment elsewhere and this can mean exodus or emigration. People generally leave for Côte d'Ivoire or Mali to pan for gold";*
> *"Although it is a livestock-raising area, everything is expensive and nature is not as generous as before. So, we must try to support our parents to preserve the herd that is our heritage. Here, having livestock is our identity and allows us to have a place in society"* (Comments by three young men in Burkina Faso).

In fact, most young people cannot even dream of succeeding through work, training or education. The semi-structured interviews in this study (especially those conducted in Niger and Chad) show that the conditions of the labour market put this goal, even as a dream, out of reach. On the basis of these observations, the phenomenon of the "palace" gangs in Niger can be understood.

> *"The young people of the palaces are the main cause of the current insecurity in Zinder. There are several youth groups who clash, sometimes with loss of life; they may attack a family and plunder with no real cause; they may threaten or attack the relative of one of their own members, if he is opposed to what they do; they rape girls (often, as a gang) and attack government departments,*

especially the police station. They work as 'outlaws' and position themselves as masters of the city" (Comment by a man living in the town of Zinder, interviewed 19 June 2015).

"They [the young of the palace] *have territories, distinctive signs, passwords, speeches"* (Comment by a participant in the group interview in Niamey, 2 July 2015).

So, the opportunity to join a jihadist group can appear as an unhoped for 'offer', given the lack of employment.

"Young people join the jihadist movements and other violent groups because they cannot join the Malian army nor pass the civil service entrance examination" (Comment by a respondent in the town of Ansongo, Mali).

For the sake of methodology and consistency, this study has banned, as far as possible, the use of the terms "terrorist/ism", as have the respondents. However, they do mention "terror" as a means of pressure, not political but economic, to generate material gains and money in a villainous and criminal way. In this sense, young people are very vulnerable to insecurity and violence because they are, virtually, its main agents.

The comments by young people reveal two factors which affect perceptions of radicalization. The first is social: according to, still dominant, traditional ideas, young people have no right to speak; they are here to listen to seniors who do not seek to listen to them.

"Nowadays, children do not respect customs. Social values are trampled by many young people. In general, young people today do not respect their elders. Those born after independence do not respect anyone. These are children of the new generation. Western education has taken over from traditions" (Comment by a woman, Douentza, Mopti, Mali).

"Elders must involve youth in all areas of decision-making and engage them in community activities" (Comment by a participant in a group interview with young people, Gorom-Gorom, Burkina Faso, 9 June 2015).

The overwhelming majority of young people, especially in urban areas, have no dreams for they know that there is no legal alternative to family dependency and the social subordination which results from it. Even those who do get professional training or apprenticeships see poverty and unemployment as the reality for over half of the population and an insurmountable economic challenge It should not be forgotten that these countries are classified as the poorest in the world.

The second factor which affects the way radicalization is perceived is political: the potential and resources are there, at the national level, but they are poorly distributed; while, at the international level, the country, the region, the African continent as a whole, are exploited by the great international powers.

3.2 When socio-economic normality is impossible to access: the potential attraction of extremism

It is here that armed groups enter into the equation, activating the 'urge' for the 'terror economy'. In the general opinion of the respondents in the study, material incentives – "owning a motorcycle, a woman" – are among the most immediate and instinctual ways to lure young people into the net of Islamic State's West Africa Province. The leaders of the extremist armed groups have proven themselves savvy sociologists. To attract young people, they have played on the impulses for material desires, coupled with religious ethics which legitimize violent and/or criminal acts to fully satisfy these

desires. Apart from the results of the statistical survey which show that 51.2% of respondents consider the factors surrounding involvement with religious extremism to be essentially socio-economic, the statements and testimonies converge overwhelmingly in this direction.

> *"(...) People are poor, they have nothing to do! They [members of Boko Haram] come with flattering speeches and obtain the support of these young people. People believe that the young are convinced by the ideology of Boko Haram - no, no, this is not true! It is because people have nothing to do, they have a family to feed, their dignity to defend, but they do not even have the opportunity to work and, above all, to earn a crust! And so, the men of Boko Haram come and offer them money, a lot!"* (Comment collected during the group interview with students in Bol, Chad, 11 June 2015).
>
> *"It's money that persuades the young men to join extremist groups"* (Comment collected during a group interview with young people in Liwa, Chad, 13 June 2015).
>
> *"They come and flaunt their money at you. They say they are going to be jihadists. They are going to fight for God and go to paradise. They hand out lots of money. They might give you 500.000 CFA. They let you spend the night with them; you stay there to think about it. Like that, it's easy to get in"* (Comment by a motorcycle taxi driver in Kousséri, Far North, Cameroon)
>
> *"(...) Boko Haram pays 340,000 Naira for young people, around 1 million CFA"* (Comment collected during a group interview of men in Bol, Chad, 11 June 2015).
>
> *"BH has a system that, whatever you love, then that is what they will do for you. If you like a motorcycle, we'll buy you a motorcycle. If you need a woman, we will give you a woman. They will find you a woman by force: their marriages, they're not complicated. They seduced our boys, who never had any money. Imagine, you're here, and the money you never imagined having, someone just gives it to you"* (Comment by a young man, Makary, Far North, Cameroon).
>
> *"We have learned just that they offered women and money to young men. Over time, they realized that this method did not allow them to recruit many new members, and that's why they started carrying out forced recruitment of young people. They also make the young people who are already recruited believe that they will go straight to heaven by cutting the throats of the largest number of people. The prizes vary, depending on the method used to kill one's victim. It is highest when the victim has his throat cut."* They add: *"according to what they say, when they have recruited you, they'll give you money, motorcycles and they'll take care of your needs. But it's false promises. They promise people things but never follow through…. Here, we've never seen anything like this, but we've heard that's what happens. They tell you that once you're with them, you will have women, money and motorcycles!"* (Comments by young men, Makary, Far North, Cameroon).

3.3 The impasse of de-radicalization

This materialistic dimension of jihadist phenomenology is obvious to the respondents: violence is a lucrative business and religious discourse forms an ideological cover for it. For the researcher, Kadidia Gazibo, who conducted the field survey in Niger, there is a real **"**difficulty in building a national consciousness" because denial continues through explanations looking for "scapegoats" such as "Westernization" and "Islamization" and that, in reality, "we do not take responsibility for what we do and what we become". Youth violence is the main agent of extremism due to population growth and the precarious economic conditions and education system mentioned earlier. As the leader of an interfaith group noted during the group interview in Abuja, Nigeria, the world committed itself massively to a "war on terror" over the last 15 years, a war that has not achieved its objectives. "Why not now, he asks, tackle the bed of violent extremism? Why not declare a war on poverty?"

To secure the border regions, young people must be made socio-economically *secure* so they do not remain eternal minors and dependents on their families, do not stagnate in the "culture of idleness" described in detail in the national report on Niger. In a prospective, 'optimistic' scenario, empowerment of young people and women – *accelerated by the traumatic process of violent extremism* – could, over the next 10 to 15 years feed back into the mode of production and accelerate a rise in living standards, modernization of the agricultural and pastoral economy, and diversification of the service economy. According to a 'pessimistic' scenario, it is feared that, in the large cities and suburbs of the Sahelian States, a dynamic link could be made between the 'terror economy' and young people who are already radicalized, idle and make up the majority. Another variant of the pessimistic scenario, which is more probable, concerns the return of North African and Sahelian fighters (in their thousands) from Libya and Syria-Iraq (from territory currently controlled by DAESH). According to international research organisations, since 2014 a growing number of individuals from a dozen countries have engaged on these two main fronts of Islamic State jihadism.

Among the young perpetrators of violence and extremism, there are more and more indications that women act as enablers, because they are mistrusted to a lesser degree. One important explanation is that women are also in solidarity, for better or for worse, with their husbands and share in their fate: *"Sometimes, they are obliged to follow their husbands to Nigeria"* (comment by a respondent in Chad). Everyday examples illustrate this solidarity: police searching for a man suspected of belonging to the jihadist sect go to his home and arrest his two wives who pass the man in the street and pretend not to know him, so that he can escape; a policeman in a market is intrigued by a child's casual remark that his mother has the same gun in her dresser (her husband's weapon which she was hiding); women sell all their belongings to provide financial support to a jihadist group, etc. According to the national report on Nigeria, Islamic State's West Africa Province has increasingly used female suicide bombers. In relation to this, Farhad Khosrokhavar states that suicide attacks by women represent 5% of all such attacks (125 acts of the 2,300 suicide bomb attacks recorded, 1981-2011)[57].

SECURITY NEWSPEAK: ERADICATE, DERADICALIZE, REHABILITATE, REPRESS...

In Africa, Armed Religious Movements, operating out of their historic strongholds in Nigeria, Somalia and Algeria – with violent, and sometimes spectacular, actions spreading over a widening area – have become a threat to the stability, and even the very existence, of certain states. Having previously largely underestimated and neglected this risk, regional governments are urgently organising their response to it, sometimes even giving the impression of a certain degree of exaggeration in proportion to the threat. Their response takes two forms: the reinforcement and redeployment of security and military resources, accompanied by an extension of the scope of measures available to the judiciary for the control of society as part of the 'War on Terror'. The immediate consequence of these measures has been, on the one hand, heightened violence against civil populations in conflict zones, and, on the other hand, a marked diminution of public liberties together with violation of international human rights conventions. On the excuse of preventing terrorism, journalists are swept aside, while activists within associations – as well as ordinary citizens – are subjected to harassment and repression in various forms. (…) This tendency is typified by the case of Cameroon, where "Law no. 2014/028 of 23 December 2014, concerning the suppression of acts of terrorism" prescribes the death penalty for any person found guilty of any terrorist act (very broadly defined).

Uganda, Egypt, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Cameroon, Nigeria and Chad have all been cited by NGOs for misuse of their anti-terrorism legislation and for abuses committed by their security forces. Individuals classed as 'terrorists' are systematically handed the death penalty at trials that are a travesty of justice, as has been seen recently in Chad (and in Egypt in early 2015). Sometimes the accused are simply executed without trial by the security forces, as has happened in Nigeria, which is suspected of having murdered 7000 supposed 'terrorists' out of 20,000 people arrested in the north of the country since 2011. Since 2003, several hundred confessed or suspected Islamists in Mauritania, including Imams and religious dignitaries in addition to those accused of links with Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), have been arrested as part of the 'War on Terror' and have been systematically tortured. Others have been summarily executed in detention or by "anti-terrorist brigades". Obviously, the precise scale of these extrajudicial executions in the area covered by this report is not known, but witness accounts give the impression that they are widely practised by the defence and security forces.

[57] Farhad Khosrokhavar, *Radicalisation*, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

> The longer term consequences of such practices by states, whether they are the result of taking easy options, the bungling of operations, or simply blind disregard, is to categorise whole sections of the population as enemies and to treat them as such.
>
> Extract from Hervé Gonsolin's study, "De-radicalization: panacea or protection ?"

While many actors mobilize and use a growing number of programmes to 'de-radicalize' and rehabilitate young people, it is feared that the huge human and financial investment involved, as in the "war on terror", does not deliver the expected results. The study by Hervé Gonsolin[58], a specialist in peace and security issues, gives a rather mixed picture of the quarantine programmes underway in the world today in relation to the "new international doctrine" of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). Behind all these attempts to counter non-state armed violence, there is the illusion that this threat can be treated on an industrial basis, when, in fact, violence actually gathers a massive number of young people on an individual basis, case by case and step by step.

3.4 The solution at the individual level

In reality, fundamental research is lacking on the means to counter violent extremism: either the political, military, ideological and religious causes are reduced, or the environment which generates these causes is changed. However, treating the problem in a holistic way (which would reduce it) is generally renounced – due to impotence or incompetence. The problem is that there is a lack of practical knowledge about how to act systemically to reduce this threat in contemporary societies. Those involved in this study believe it has shown a method of growth, an architecture in terms of the process of radicalization, which is the opposite of the industrial, outgoing approach taken in the fight against violent extremism. The investigation notebooks teem with evidence that the young person who becomes a radical does so on the basis of an individualized and tailored approach, through a relative, a neighbour, an acquaintance. Enrollment happens, first on an individual basis and only secondarily does the effect of networking and the influence of communities increase the recruiting power of the jihadist groups.

None of the programmes to 'fight violent extremism' and 'terrorism' have proceeded retroactively in the same way as the phenomena they fight. Strategists think in terms of eradication, whereas they should be thinking in terms of strengthening people's ability to resist: instead of cutting of communities, those countering radicalization should act on the vital points which maintain social cohesion. Everything must be done at the most basic, specific and everyday level of social life. *Everything happens at the individual, neighbourhood and village level.* Only at this scale, will it be possible to reverse-engineer violent extremism.

At the end of the national report on Chad, there is an avenue for further reflection that appears to be most important for treating – in a therapeutic sense – at the micro-social level, the evil of extremism based on religious ideology. As some village leaders are already doing, it is about working with the young who have returned from the camps of Islamic State's West Africa Province on raising awareness to prevent violent extremism at the village and neighbourhood level. The point is not to highlight the 'repentant's' ambivalent status, but to identify people who once were genuinely committed and attracted to extremist ideology, yet who came back: these people are the best antidotes to violent extremism. The example of African-American Malcolm X – which is well-known by young people all over the world – *offers the life story of a radical which deserves validation*: an uneducated thug who "finds himself" while in prison, who meditates, educates himself and *becomes radicalized* in order to become conscious of the citizenship he must demonstrate. After paying his debt to a dominant society

[58] Cf. Hervé Gonsolin, "De-radicalization: panacea or protection?", in part II of this report.

(marked by segregation and racism), he returns, transformed, to public life and embodies a social conscience working for the dignity of the descendants of slaves and for equal rights.

> *"I remember at home in Mali, where I was a student teacher, that we talked a lot about Martin Luther King and Gandhi who pacified their communities. We, too, can lead our revolution, change the mentality of people and defend our rights through peaceful means. I believe that we, the young, should take as an example the mentality of these extraordinary men. We really must educate ourselves in this sense. We must use every means, that is, we must involve everyone and religion too. Above all, we must speak a lot about Islam and educate the imams"* (Comment by a youth leader in a camp of Malian refugees, Burkina Faso).

But it remains necessary to identify the young people returning from the camps of Islamic State's West Africa Province. In this regard, the national report on Cameroon recommends the development of a confidential platform for ex-radicals, a kind of "Exit talk" allowing dialogue with radicals who want to return. In a complementary manner, the report advocates religious rehabilitation through respected clerics who are able to produce a doctrine of repentance. In a manner comparable to that of ex-offenders or drug addicts who act within neighbourhood associations against social ills, this approach would use the same methods and techniques employed by the extremists and, instead spread *pharmakon*, the antidote to fanaticism. As summarized in the national report on Chad, "in the same way that some have been exploited to recruit relation by relation, the returning extremists could raise awareness in reverse, also step by step".

V. AVENUES FOR REFLECTION

The present research – an "epic, original and strategic" study – has opened the way to an approach that is both empathetic (listening to people's own account of their perceptions of the situation) and pragmatic (opening the way for action on the ground). Based on the observations made and the results obtained, these seven avenues for further reflection are intended to supplement, and not summarise, those already laid out in the national reports on each of the eight countries covered in this study.

So far the study has analysed an initial cross section of the data across the eight national reports. Given the limited amount of time allotted to it, the present study is a preliminary glimpse of what the people think about their experiences of daily life. Those involved in the study have been able to bring a certain depth and breadth to the field, but it would require lengthy analysis of the data gathered to fully convey the subtleties, outstanding features and issues at play in these perceptions.

Some 1000 agents of social change have been involved, in one way or another, in this process of collective intelligence-gathering and interpretation. Interviewees were identified for in-depth interviews and networks of respondents were brought into being in order to realise, oversee and facilitate this experimental exercise, which was necessarily carried out in delicate geopolitical circumstances. The groups brought into being could be reconvened in the future, whether to continue the research or to delve into the issues more deeply through practical interventions, on particular topics, or in selected geographical areas; or to explore the views of particular population groups. In any future intervention, the required procedure would be to involve specific social groups in order to work on programmes linked to development, territorial administration, security, citizenship, education, mass communication, inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue, and mediation. It would be wise – after engaging in such a major effort to identify, meet, listen to and question 800 inhabitants of the cross-border regions – not to take the opportunity to return to the respondents to take the 'creative dialogue' further as well as to implement some of the propositions or ideas which have resulted from this study of their perceptions.

Avenue for reflection 1: For the attention of national and international government and military officials in charge of security matters

- **From the strategic point of view, it is crucial to abandon the unreasonable and illusory objective of the 'eradication of radicalism' or 'terrorism'.**
  The sociological and anthropological studies of which those involved in this study are aware show clearly that, as a process, radicalization cannot be 'defeated', 'annihilated' or 'destroyed'. It is impossible to 'root out' the horizontal root networks – which are both widely dispersed and opportunistic – through which it operates. The verbal expression "eradicate radicalism" is actually self-contradictory in its terms, in addition to being delusional in terms of its objectives. Only at the 'microsociological' scale – at the level of the individual, case by case – can the process by which violent extremism grows and individuals aggregate into groups be overcome.

- **Security solutions should be abandoned as the sole response to the problem of the 'maintenance of security'.**
  An examination of the factors which make up a sense of 'security' indicates they are multiple and touch on a range of social, economic, political, cultural and civic dimensions associated with a given population. This is predicated on assigning 'security' with a broader signification

than a concern with the maintenance of order in order to include the 'holistic' aspects of human, social and economic 'security'; such as issues related to food, health, transport, energy and climate, among others.

- **The 'maintenance of security' l, and military responses, should be targeted primarily at protecting populations and strategic areas of territory.** It is important to establish a clear difference between action on the part of the forces of order and security to protect populations and strategic sites, and action to suppress armed insurrections. The cross-border regions require constant vigilance, rapid action and response and these should primarily be to requests for assistance from non-combatant civilian populations. This objective should not be confused with that of the interminable pursuit of armed insurgent groups: inflicting setbacks with no complete defeat and destroying elements without ensuring complete destruction. When the international community and the superpowers have not been able to defeat Al-Qa'ida in an unprecedented fifteen year military and economic campaign, how can the armies of African countries be reasonably expected to pursue goals that are beyond their reach? Prioritising protection in military, police and security action would inevitably bring with it closer co-operation between security forces and the civilian population which would considerably increase public solidarity and reinforce a sense of citizenship in relation to the state (the nation) and the group of states (the cross-border region).

- **The behaviour of the forces of order and security must be subjected to the highest level of scrutiny since, in practice; this behaviour frequently aggravates people's sense of insecurity.** The action of the forces of order and security should be subjected to critical examination and be the object of international surveillance and evaluation by specialist institutions. Current practices in security circles – in the very name of 'eradication' and 'de-radicalization' – often include extra-legal action, extortion, pressure and intimidation, with the violation of human and citizen's rights and the improper treatment of prisoners and armed combatants. The forces of order and security must be reminded, through constant re-education, of their objectives, and the limitations of the options available to them and of the implications of democratic control of their duties and their remit. The image of the military as an impoverished rabble indulging in every sort of exaction and extortion of the unfortunate inhabitants is both powerful and repugnant. It must be modified if there is to be an improvement in the perceptions of the state among those affected by insecurity.

- **Vigilance must be exercised over the semantics and semiotics (relating to the significance of language and symbols) of the key terms in relation to 21st century conflict.** The issue is to neutralise the dangers inherent in the terminology relating to armed religious movements: to de-penalize and de-militarise the concept of jihad, which is a term which has numerous meanings and which is an inseparable part of the spiritual faith of more than a fifth of humanity. Jihad should be developed as a struggle related to the "self" - it is associated with the concept of *ijthad* which focuses on an intellectual struggle and a process of reflection oriented towards knowledge and science - in order to discover solutions to the social challenges facing the present century.

Avenue for reflection 2: For the attention of social and economic actors

- Reinvest in the systems of traditional education, bring them up to date and link them with the modern system of education: take advantage of these systems by matching them with the provision of professional training in accordance with local needs.

- Rethink, invest in, and take action in the cross-border zones to transform them into a focus of economic development through the creation of economic 'free zones' so as to capitalise on the specificity of their trade and activities within the nation-state.

- Institute a special cross-border status which would have the capacity to offer practical solutions to the issues of employment, taxation, public health, state education and transportation, with the intention of avoiding administrative duplication and harmonising existing legislation. Fill the judicial void and respond to the demand for legal authority in a way which is appropriate to the needs of those who frequent the cross-border area.

- Implement policies which are truly beneficial for young people through a multi-sector approach. This should focus principally on their education (furthering community awareness); on the adaptation of educational systems to the cross-border zones (taking into account agricultural and pastoral timetables); on access to employment (ensuring activities adapt to local needs); on health (via the establishment of dedicated centres); and finally on the attention accorded to young people in public decision-making.

- Put into practice systems for managing local resources which are calculated to defuse community tensions, especially between nomads and sedentary peoples.

- Rethink and reinvent the state around the two key principles of globalization: local autonomy and broad, regional collectivity. Anticipate the inexorable obsolescence of the Westphalian nation-state and be aware of the possibility of the reconstruction of states 'from below' which forms part of the historical depth and geographical territory of Sahelian political tradition. Potentially fruitful, this tradition underpins the potentiality of an unacknowledged decentralization whose existence is hardly admitted but is the potential vector of political modernity.

Avenue for reflection 3: For the attention of the religious establishment

- Develop new approaches and religious knowledge based on African cultures and traditions; elaborate a theology of peace and non-violence; encourage a clear and critical attitude to existing religious traditions; promote awareness in conjunction with leading civil society figures.

- Establish a workshop on African inter-religious studies; teach the history of the spiritual traditions of the continent; research, study and promote the pluralism which exists within each religious tradition; inculcate an awareness of the nature of all mankind's religions.

Specifically for the Islamic authorities:

- Undertake an overview of the basic traditional religious instruction of the believer; carry out a survey of the education of the religious élite; bring Muslim theologians to the level where they can engage with the growing state of knowledge in both the physical sciences and in human and social studies; establish a truly African theology, based on liberality and the acknowledgement of the Other.

- Create an African Council of Islamic organisations and associations. This would be an ecumenical platform including all the theological schools, sects and ideological tendencies, to deal with the societal challenges of the present century: questions relating to the resolution of conflicts, the defence of human rights, and the sharing of knowledge and the exchanging of views on the place of religion in Islamic Africa. Such an African Council could be the first step towards the creation of a World Council of Islamic organisations and associations (there is not currently an NGO of this type in existence), which would have the capacity to make a contribution to the work of the international community in the fields of education, development and the maintenance of peace.

Avenue for reflection 4: For the attention of the mass media

- Offer training through seminars to be held in various locations for journalists from the countries of the Sahel, the European Union and the Arab world on the coverage and treatment – on a local and global scale – of questions such as radicalization, jihadism, migration, religious and identity issues, secularisation and so forth. Train journalists to produce radio and television programmes in the Sahel and in Europe on the issues of citizenship, marginalization and radicalization. Such a programme of training should include a critical evaluation of the media's current role in the arousal of fear, and its responsibility for obsessional anxieties about religion and antagonism to communities which are ostracised and held collectively responsible for violence and terrorism; a test of the success of work with the media would be the media's acceptance of its responsibilities associated with, and influence on, moulding perceptions and public opinion on issues relating to insecurity and violent extremism.

- On the basis of the present research and its groups of respondents in the Sahel region, undertake the production of eight documentary programmes for national television in the eight countries concerned in addition to a further documentary for the international television networks on the topic of "radicalization, violence and (in)security: what the inhabitants of the cross-border regions of the Sahel have to say".

Avenue for reflection 5: For the attention of civil society

- Promote inter-generational dialogue at the community and national level to improve relations between younger and older age groups. The older generation have high expectations of young people while also not being able to comprehend young people's behaviour. Inter-generational understanding should be promoted so that the young can become an active part of communal life, an area they have aspirations to change. The objective must be to facilitate, as far as possible, the escape of young people from their state of economic dependence and social subordination which, in extreme cases, can prompt them to join violent groups and become involved in the economy of terror.

- Develop a dialogue between women calculated to facilitate open discussion both of the subjects which primarily concern women themselves and of wider community issues. Such a dialogue ought to be able to enhance the ability of women to intervene in the wider public dialogue on such topics.

- Be a dynamic force in the reconsideration of relationships between the centre and the periphery; make a plea for the recognition of the cross-border zones as regions in their own right.

Avenue for reflection 6: For the attention of the African intelligentsia

- Recover the territory that intellectuals, the 'cognitariat', and the continent's thinkers (hitherto, in Africa as elsewhere, blatantly absent from the debate on radicalism and new social movements) have ceded by default to the 'salvation merchants' and the 'media clerics', thus reclaiming the political and civic sphere. The responsibility of intellectuals today is to reconceptualise local and global citizenship, as well as radicalism and the sphere of religion, and to engage in social projects, re-imagining the future and developing exciting visions for humanity in Africa.

Avenue for reflection 7: For the attention of the international community

- Review the policy of international aid for communities of the cross-border regions and put in place a simpler and more direct system for the financing and oversight of development projects. It is important to combat the diversion and depletion of international aid which takes place only too often. Diversify development aid, namely towards regional and local authorities, and take cognizance of the alternative models of aid which are presently emerging, placing the emphasis on the simplification of bureaucracy and on proximity to the end users – like models of aid from various Arab and Asian countries. To this end, engage in partnerships with active NGOs that are well-regarded by the cross-border populations.

- Encourage the economies of poorer countries to take their lead from the cross-border practices of those of wealthy economies. Organise meetings, reports, and exchanges of experience between administrators, actors and users of the cross-border zones to assess their importance and their function within the interdependent state system.

- Face up to the responsibilities that arise from the mafia nature of economic activities and global cash flows linked to the trafficking of drugs, arms and human beings. The Sahel states cannot resolve the problems of controlling a global trade (which constitutes a market of more than 1500 billion euros) on their own. It is necessary, at least, to take notice of the failure of the repressive approach and initiate a debate on how to adapt this approach in ways that best fit the realities on the ground.

- Strengthen the overall acceptance of the concept of human security as a guideline for international support for the Sahel countries.

- Reinforce the system of control and regulation of policies for the maintenance of security to impose sanctions on practices which fail to offer protection to non-combatant civilians and have allowed the neglect of both human rights and civil rights as well as the disregard of international agreements relating to war and the treatment of prisoners.

ADDENDUM: STATISTICAL AND THEMATIC INSIGHTS

I. Statistical study of the perceptions of people living on the border regions of the Sahel

II. De-radicalisation: panacea or smoke screen?

III. Strategic alliance: the role of women in the implantation of jihadists in Mali

IV. The intractable problems of the Sahel's border regions: a deeper approach to the security issue

V. Security regimes in the Sahel: the role of the state

VI. Transitional justice in the Sahel: towards a new logic

VII. The clash of perceptions: illegal migration as a quest for security

I. STATISTICAL STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF PEOPLE LIVING ON THE BORDER REGIONS OF THE SAHEL

Rachid Id Yassine

INTRODUCTION

The study and the field

The present report reproduces the main quantitative data collected from community surveys which were part of a study of perceptions of the causes of insecurity and violent extremism in the border regions of the Sahel. Directed by the Study Co-ordinator, teams of researchers from each of the eight countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Chad) worked together to develop a semi-structured questionnaire. Although highly qualitative, this questionnaire contained a number of questions whose answers could be analysed statistically.

Several factors had a more or less significant impact on the data collection, processing and descriptive analysis. Apart from the particularly tight schedule allowed for this research, the heterogeneity of the field – seen in the diversity of languages from which the interviewers had to translate the questions and answers – was a significant obstacle.

From the beginning of the research process, it was not possible to develop the questionnaire, use it, and enter the data from it systematically, using a single software programme. Consequently, a certain amount of data was unusable and this problem blocked many correlations. However, the material collected and entered – with the assistance of Mauritania's Deputy Head of Research – is the most important, both quantitatively and qualitatively. In this report a selection of the best evidence has been reproduced as well as the statistical synthesis of this data.

Methodology and presentation of results

An examination of the data collected has enabled a descriptive analysis which selects the most significant variables and terms. Any questions not answered by at least half of the respondents (which means "Non-response" rather than "No opinion*/Don't know/Does not want to answer"*), was systematically eliminated from the analysis, with a few exceptions. Indeed, for some countries (usually, Chad and Cameroon), answers could not be recorded for many questions. This report signals, as often as necessary, the rates of "Non-response, to enable the reader to appreciate the weight of different data. Therefore, rates have been reported consistently across the regional sample and the comments specify these values relative to the responses of all the people interviewed.

Three levels of analysis have, therefore, helped to synthesize the quantitative and qualitative importance of the data collected. First, it was necessary to sort, select and reorder the questions which could be used statistically, stripping the answers question by question. Second, the variables of selected profiles were examined to determine the correlations with each variation in opinion and retain only those which could meet the needs of the socio-anthropological analysis. Finally, the significant correlations were put into tables and charts, since these ways of presenting statistical information were chosen as the ones able to concentrate the most information.

Direct correlations were established on the basis of basic sociological variables which, with others, are presented in the first part of this report. These variables were selected for their explanatory or descriptive interest with regard to the research concerns. Some of them (country, gender, age) were used systematically; others (education or occupational status), much less so, because they yielded sociologically inconsistent matches.

The following four parts are themed according to the topics covered in the questionnaire and grouped according to the areas of interest in the study.
After a general assessment of the findings of the report, the data is presented for the entire sample, followed by the results of the correlations considered as part of this study. The results are also presented in a summary table which gathers the main variables considered relevant to the questions raised (47 statistical tables and charts, in total).
The terms relating to variations in opinion are ranked in descending order of the results of the entire regional sample (in the first line of each tables – except for some variables where the terms are already in order – "No opinion/Don't know/Does not want to answer" and "Non response" form the last columns). Each section of the analysis has a chart or table. In addition, the results from all the countries have been given by ranking the data in descending order.

Finally, other elements were brought in to facilitate the analysis in the report. To avoid a misreading of the statistics, a sentence expressing the key analysis associated with each set of statistical results (shown in bold and red) is placed at the end of each table or chart. The sign ⚠ and the red and bold sentences in the narrative and in the figures in the tables and charts indicate the most significant information. A table of contents for the statistical results has been included to allow readers to browse through this report at their convenience.

Precautions in relation to use

Almost all the data has been presented in values which are relative to the entire sample – that is, 698 people. The sums of the percentage rates do not always equal 100 because it has not always been considered useful to cite the results of certain categories, such as *"*No opinion*"*. Moreover, it is important to read the percentages with respect to the entire regional sample, and not to confuse them with the values relative to all the respondents which have sometimes been provided in the comments.
In descriptive statistics, the routine use of relative values is not a problem; but, in sociology, these must be carefully put into their empirical dimension. High or low percentages should be interpreted socio-anthropologically with caution, ensuring their relative representation in absolute value.
Moreover, while the sample is composed of 698 people, the researchers and surveyors have carefully focused it qualitatively to ensure that the results are relatively representative of the true perceptions of people in the Sahel border areas.

STATISTICAL STUDY: POINTS TO REMEMBER

In addition to some of this study's significant numbers, it is important to remember at least five points concerning the methodology and results, as well as the opportunities they offer for scientific study and the institutional costs of recent developments in religiously-inspired violence in the Sahel.

1. These statistical results come from a community survey conducted in each of the eight countries considered in this study, and only the most reliable sociological data have been retained to provide a descriptive analysis of the collected perceptions.

2. The perceptions of the people living in border areas vary widely by country. This variation can over determine the impact of the national context and must be relativized. Disparities also exist between different border areas in the same country, as the data from Senegal shows.

3. These results confirm the relevance of a heuristic approach and invite its renewal based on a larger sample and a more systematic analysis of geographic variables, in particular allowing for a comparison between the perceptions of people on both sides of the same border.

4. A feeling of insecurity is widely shared across the sample, indicating that all the people of the region have a collective concern and sense of vulnerability, despite their attitude of resilience to violent extremism from socio-economic factors. This applies when religion and violence are not perceived as interlinked.

5. Perceptions differ little according to gender, but they amply illustrate the generational divide. A more specific study of the young population is needed to track the evolution of social and religious values and to advise public policy, particularly in the fight against violent radicalism.

6. Some significant figures from the study:

- For **88.1%** of respondents, difficult living conditions are the main source of insecurity, while **1.9%** of them name religious radicalism.
- Among the key factors for the development of violent extremism, **51.2%** of answers relate to socio-economic factors, compared to **12.9%** for religious factors.
- Among the motivations causing recourse to violent extremism, **77.5%** name socio-economic or political interests, compared to **14.8%** for religious convictions.
- **63%** of respondents say they have seen the misuse of religion in their region.
- For **75.2%** of respondents, violent extremism originates outside the region.
- For **53.9%** of respondents, the jihadists are bandits, while **8.5%** consider them positively (rescuers, liberators, strong defenders).
- For **78.5%** of respondents, jihadist/other armed groups are terrorist organisations.
- For **70.5%** of respondents, the state is able to ensure their safety and **87.9%** believe that it is also capable of confronting the armed groups.
- For **84.7%** of respondents, the presence of conventional armed forces is reassuring.
- In cases of violence or crime, **47.1%** of respondents prefer to use the national court system instead of traditional **(18.9%),** religious **(15.3%)** and international **(9.5%)** courts.
- **66.8%** of respondents are not satisfied with the media coverage of their region and **56.1%** consider the media as having a strong influence on community social values.

1. GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE REGIONAL SAMPLE

1.1. Breakdown of interviews by country and gender

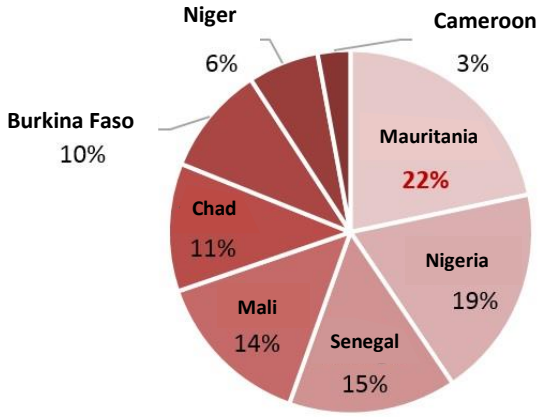
The study interviewed 698 people in eight countries of the Sahel. In decreasing order: 147 people in Mali, representing 21.1% of the regional sample; 120 in Nigeria (17.2%); 100 in Niger (14.3%); 88 in Mauritania (12.6%); 74 in Senegal (10.6%); 71 in Chad (10.2%); 60 in Burkina Faso (8.6%) and 38 in Cameroon (5.4%).
664 of these people claim to have official identification papers, that is, 95.1%. In each country in the survey, the people interviewed had the corresponding nationality, with only two cases of dual nationality.

	Number	Percentage	Female	Male
TOTAL	**698**	**100%**	**25.1%**	**74.9%**
Mali	**147**	**21.1%**	**17.0%**	83.0%
Nigeria	120	17.2%	27.5%	72.5%
Niger	100	14.3%	11.0%	89.0%
Mauritania	88	12.6%	43.2%	56.8%
Senegal	74	10.6%	35.1%	64.9%
Chad	71	10.2%	28.2%	71.8%
Burkina Faso	60	8.6%	28.3%	71.7%
Cameroon	38	5.4%	13.2%	86.8%

Analysis: Of the 698 people surveyed, 25.1% are women. Malians (147 of the total) represent 21.1%, of whom 17% are women.

1.2. Breakdown by country of the women who were interviewed

One-quarter of the people interviewed are women; so, three-quarters (minus one person, not identified by gender) are men. This over-representation of men varies by country: for Mauritania, the sample includes 43.2% women; for Niger, 11%.
Of the total number of women interviewed, the percentage varies according to country, ranging from 22% in Mauritania, compared to 3% in Cameroon.



Analysis: Of the total number of women surveyed, 22% are from Mauritania.

1.3. Breakdown of respondents by country and age

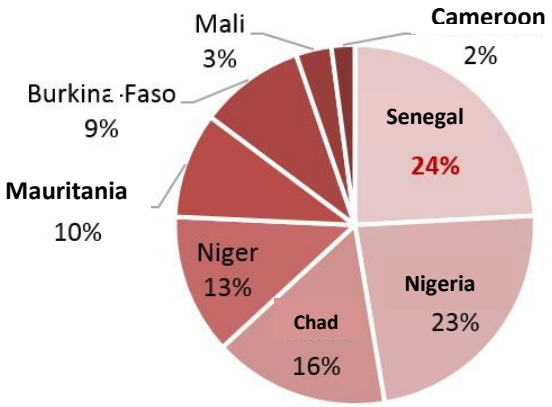
Of the total number of people surveyed, the majority (175) are aged 26-35, followed by 163 aged 36-45. Together, the 26-45 age group makes up nearly half of the sample (48.5%), compared to 13.6% for those under age 26 and 37.6% for those over 45.

	18-25 years	26+ years	*26-35 years*	*36-45 years*	*46-55 years*	*56-65 years*	*over 65*
TOTAL	**13.6%**	**86.1%**	***25.1%***	***23.4%***	***18.3%***	***13.9%***	***5.4%***
Number	**95**	601	*175*	*163*	*128*	*97*	*38*
Senegal	31.1%	68.9%	*21.6%*	*16.2%*	*18.9%*	*8.1%*	*4.1%*
Chad	21.1%	78.9%	*31.0%*	*32.4%*	*12.7%*	*0.0%*	*2.8%*
Nigeria	18.3%	80.8%	*24.2%*	*26.7%*	*15.8%*	*10.8%*	*3.3%*
Burkina Faso	15.0%	85.0%	*25.0%*	*30.0%*	*6.7%*	*16.7%*	*6.7%*
Niger	12.0%	88.0%	*26.0%*	*20.0%*	*19.0%*	*21.0%*	*2.0%*
Mauritania	10.2%	89.8%	*36.4%*	*23.9%*	*19.3%*	*9.1%*	*1.1%*
Cameroon	5.3%	92.1%	*15.8%*	*23.7%*	*28.9%*	*18.4%*	*5.3%*
Mali	2.0%	98.0%	*19.7%*	*19.0%*	*23.8%*	*21.8%*	*13.6%*

Analysis: Of the total number of people surveyed, 13.6% are under 26 years-old, that is, 95 individuals.

1.4. Breakdown by country of the young people who were interviewed

The breakdown by country is not balanced, as nearly half (47%) of the young people surveyed come from two of the eight countries: Senegal (24%) and Nigeria (23%).



Analysis: Of the total number of young people surveyed, 24% are from Senegal.

1.5. Breakdown by religious identity

The majority of the people interviewed are Muslim (84% of the sample). An additional 41 people identified themselves as Catholic (5.9% of the total) across half of the countries surveyed: Nigeria, 56.1%; Cameroon, 36.6%; Niger, 4.9%; and Burkina Faso, 2.4%. Among the 70 people who did not answer this question, 69 are from Chad, a country for whom only two answers (Islam) were registered.

With what religion do you most identify?	Number	Percentage
Islam	**585**	**84%**
Catholicism	**41**	**5.9%**
Protestantism	*0*	*0.0%*
Animism	*0*	*0.0%*
None	*1*	*0.1%*
Other	*1*	*0.1%*
Non-response	*70*	*10.0%*

Analysis: 585 people say they are Muslim (84%).

1.6. Breakdown by social affiliation

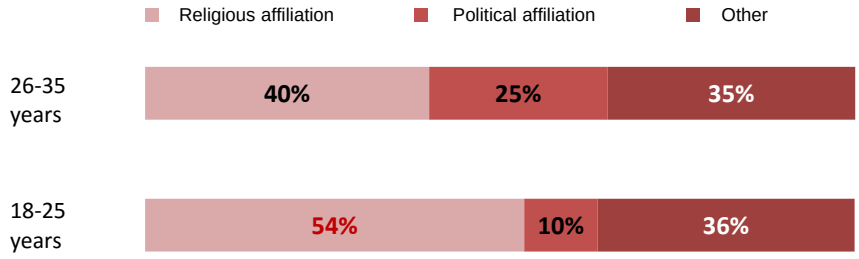
79.5% of the people who define themselves as religious come from Mauritania, Senegal and Mali; 64.2% of those who belong to a political party are from Mali and Niger. There is no data for 35.8% of those surveyed (250 individuals), including almost all of those interviewed from Burkina Faso, 81.7% from Nigeria and 76.3% from Cameroon.
Note: for some countries (notably, Senegal), the question proposed several possible answers, so individuals could be counted under several options.

What is your social affiliation?	Number	Percentage
Religious affiliation	**195**	**27.9%**
Political affiliation	109	**15.6%**
Other	169	23.6%
Non-response	*250*	*35.8%*

Analysis: 195 people say they have a religious affiliation (27.9% of the total).

1.7. Breakdown by age of those who have a social affiliation

Young people seem more invested in religion than in politics. On the whole, they represent only 5.5% of people belonging to a political party, while this percentage is nearly tripled in relation to membership of a religious brotherhood or association (15.9%). Moreover, over half (54%) of the young people who say they are committed to something, name religion, compared to 10% for politics.



Analysis: 54% of people under 26 who have a social affiliation say that it is to religion

1.8. Breakdown by marital status

More than half of the total sample is married (475 people, or 68.1%). One-fifth are single (140 people, or 20.1%), while 4.3% (30 people) are either separated, divorced or widowed. Note that 70% of the latter are women. Also, 59.4% of women are married, compared to 70.9% of men. Fifteen people are members of a polygynous household, of which seven are in Senegal and five are in Nigeria.

1.9. Breakdown by family relationships

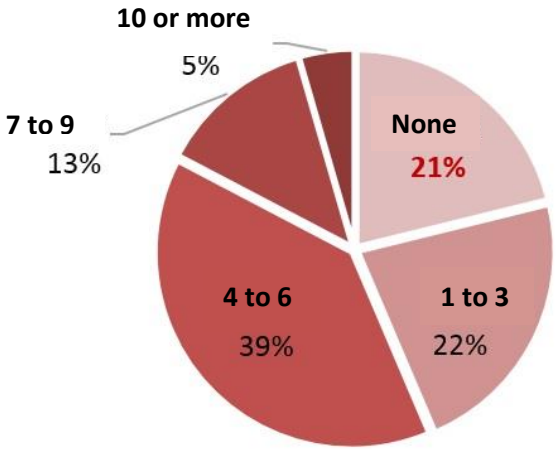
The majority of the respondents have one or more children (68.2% of the sample). 90.3% of those with children are married, 5.3% are divorced, separated or widowed, while 3.6% (17 people) are single. Most of the parents (72.9%) have more than three children, and most of the parents with more than three children are from Mali (32.5% of them) and Nigeria (20.5%). The 69 people who responded “Non-response” are all from Chad.

Do you have children? If yes, how many?		Number	Percentage
No		**153**	**21,9%**
Yes		476	**68,2%**
	1 - 3	***129***	***18,5%***
	4 - 6	*187*	*26,8%*
	7 -9	*83*	*11,9%*
	10 or more	*81*	*11,6%*
Non-response		*69*	*9,9%*

Analysis: 129 people have 1-3 children (18.5% of the sample).

1.10. Breakdown of women according to number of children

The majority of the women surveyed have at least one child (79% of the total women in the regional sample). 71% of all the mothers have at least four children.



Analysis: 21% of the women surveyed have no children.

1.11. Breakdown by socio-professional category

The breakdown by socio-professional category seems relatively balanced, ranging from 19.2% who are craftsmen, tradesmen or entrepreneurs, to 3% who are workers/farm workers.
Note that 77.8% of respondents have a professional activity, compared to 11.3% who say they have no profession. Of these, 31.6% are women and 46.8% are under 26 years. The most important occupational inactivity rates are in Mauritania and Senegal as, taken together, people from these countries make up 50.7% of those who say they have no profession.

To what socio-professional category do you belong?	Number	Percentage
Farm owners	**105**	**15,0%**
Craftsmen, tradesmen, entrepreneurs	134	19.2%
Managers and higher intellectual positions	89	12.8%
Intermediary professions	68	9.7%
Salaried	126	18.1%
Workers, farm workers	21	3.0%
No profession	79	**11.3%**
Non-response	*76*	*10.9%*

Analysis: 105 of the people surveyed (15%) are farm owners.

1.12. Breakdown by level of education

The respondents' answers indicate 'normally' unbalanced education levels, with 46.7% having less than secondary education, 33% having secondary education and 19.7% having a higher level.
A majority of women have a lower than secondary level of education (57.1%) compared to 43.2% of men. Some men (19.1%) have studied beyond secondary level, compared to 9.7% of women. Note that 30.8% of those who have reached the higher level of education are from Nigeria, as are 29% of those who have only studied in Quranic school (and this is 25% in the case of Mali).

What is your highest level of education?		Number	Percentage	
Lower	None	**102**	**14.6%**	**46,7%**
	Quranic school	124	17.8%	
	Primary	100	14.3%	
	Secondary	230	**33.0%**	
Higher	Technical	20	2.9%	**19,7%**
	Higher	117	**16.8%**	
	Non-response	*5*	*0.7%*	

Analysis: 102 of the people surveyed (14.6%) have no education.

2. PERCEPTIONS OF THE STATE, PUBLIC SERVICES AND (IN)SECURITY

2.1. Perceptions of access to basic social services

Just over half of respondents said they have basic social services (52.3%, that is, 61.7% of those who responded to the question). For all the countries for which there are responses (neither Chad nor Cameroon had a significant number of responses to this question), a large majority of respondents replied in the affirmative, except for the only English-speaking country in the sample, Nigeria, where respondents overwhelmingly (65%) say they do not have access to basic social services.
Perceptions vary greatly from country to country, raising the question of whether social representations are homogenized in the Sahel. In this case, responses in relation to "access to basic services" illustrate the differences of opinion among the surveyed population, as they relate to living conditions which are often relatively similar between these countries.
This perception of access to basic social services does not vary significantly by gender or age. Women and young people are, however, less likely than men/older people to answer yes.

Do you have access to basic social services?		Yes	No	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**52,3%**	**32,4%**	*15,3%*
Country	Burkina Faso	**93.3%** ⚠	6.7%	*0.0%*
	Niger	82.0%	18.0%	*0.0%*
	Mali	65.3%	34.7%	*0.0%*
	Senegal	60.8%	39.2%	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	50.0%	48.9%	*1.1%*
	Nigeria	33.3%	**65.0%** ⚠	*1.7%*
	Chad	*2.8%*	*0.0%*	*97.2%*
	Cameroon	*0.0%*	*7.9%*	*92.1%*
Gender	Female	50.9%	34.9%	*14.3%*
	Male	52.8%	31.5%	*15.7%*
Age	18-25 years	49.5%	32.6%	*17.9%*
	26 years+	52.9%	32.1%	*15.0%*

Analysis: 93.3% of people surveyed in Burkina Faso say they have access to basic social services.

2.2. Measuring insecurity

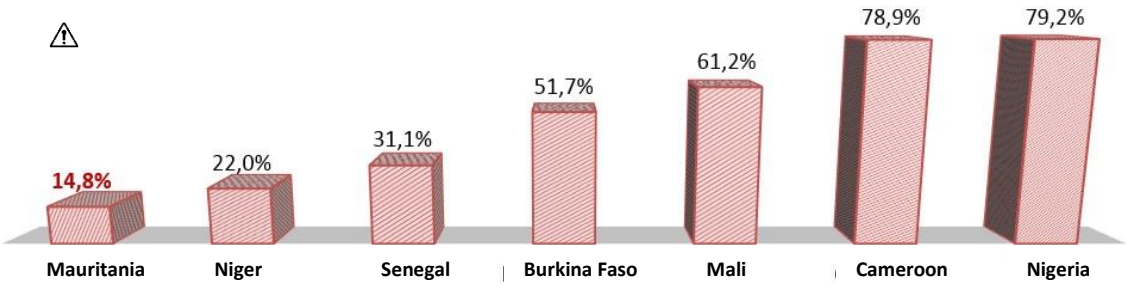
On the whole, there is a shared feeling of insecurity, with 45.8% saying they feel safe in their region and 43.6% saying the opposite (that is, 51.2% and 48.8%, respectively, of all the people surveyed). However, there is greater contrast depending on the country (see following point).
The feeling of insecurity varies by gender and age. It is stronger in people with children, while a majority of those without children say they feel safe in their region.

Do you feel secure in your region?		Yes	No	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**45.8%**	**43.6%**	***10.6%***
Country	Mauritania	**85.2%** ⚠	14.8%	*0.0%*
	Niger	78.0%	22.0%	*0.0%*
	Senegal	68.9%	31.1%	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	48.3%	51.7%	*0.0%*
	Mali	36.7%	61.2%	*2.0%*
	Cameroon	21.1%	78.9%	*0.0%*
	Nigeria	20.8%	**79.2%** ⚠	*0.0%*
	Chad	0.0%	0.0%	*100%*
Gender	Female	44.6%	43.4%	*12.0%*
	Male	46.3%	43.6%	*10.1%*
Age	18-25 years	48.4%	34.7%	*16.8%*
	26 years+	45.4%	44.9%	*9.7%*
Children	Have child(ren)	47.5%	**51.7%**	*0.8%*
	No child(ren)	**61.4%**	37.9%	*0.7%*

Analysis: In Mauritania. 85.2% of the people surveyed say they feel secure in their region.

2.3. Feelings of insecurity by country

People who feel safe form a majority in three countries: Mauritania (85.2%), Niger (78%) and Senegal (68.9%). For all the others (except Chad, for which there were no responses), the feeling is the opposite: the percentage of people who say they do not feel safe varies from 51.7% in Burkina Faso to 79.2% in Nigeria. The results correspond relatively to which countries in the region are in conflict.



Analysis: In Mauritania, only 14.8% of people surveyed say they do not feel secure in their region.

2.4. Measuring the personal experience of insecurity

Although the intensity and nature of insecurity and violence were not systematically identified, the study often alluded to situations which could put the lives of the respondents in danger. **While a majority said they had already experienced insecurity or violence (54.3% of the total sample who responded to the questions about security, 69% of the total respondents)**, the results varied between countries.

The majority of respondents in Nigeria (89.2%) and Mali (85%) said they had already experienced insecurity or violence. The response was the opposite in Burkina Faso (35%) and Mauritania (36.4%). In addition, quantitative evidence of these experiences of insecurity tends to reflect the regional context (i.e. those countries in armed conflict).

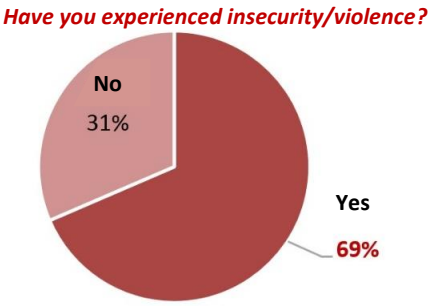
Men seem to be significantly more exposed to insecurity and violence: 71.6% of men answered the question about whether they had experienced insecurity/violence "Yes", compared to 58.3% of women. This difference tends to relativize somewhat the vulnerability of women.

The same difference exists between young people and their elders: 58.6% of young respondents said they have experienced insecurity or violence, compared to 69.5% among older people who answered the question. Finally, parents are more likely to answer "Yes" to this question (63.9%) than people without children (47.1%).

Have you experienced insecurity/violence?		Yes	No	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**54.3%**	**24.9%**	***20.8%***
Country	Nigeria	**89.2%** ⚠	8.3%	*2.5%*
	Mali	85.0%	15.0%	*0.0%*
	Niger	68.0%	32.0%	*0.0%*
	Cameroon	60.5%	39.5%	*0.0%*
	Senegal	58.1%	41.9%	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	36.4%	63.6%	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	35.0%	65.0%	*0.0%*
	Chad	4.2%	0.0%	*95.8%*
Gender	Female	42.3%	30.3%	*27.4%*
	Male	58.3%	23.1%	*18.5%*
Age	18-25 years	35.8%	25.3%	*38.9%*
	26 years+	57.1%	25.0%	*18.0%*
Child	Have child(ren)	**63.9%**	26.1%	*10.1%*
	No child(ren)	47.1%	32.7%	*20.3%*

Analysis: In Nigeria, 89.2% of respondents said they have already experienced insecurity/violence.

2.5. Measures of insecurity experienced



Analysis: 69% of respondents said that they have already experienced insecurity/violence.

2.6. Perceptions of the economic consequences of insecurity

Almost all the respondents (90.8%) feel that insecurity in the region weakens the local economy. This opinion is most widely held in Nigeria (97.5%) and Niger (96%), while it is relatively less common in Mauritania where 22.7% of respondents say that real or potential insecurity does not weaken local economic activity.

Do you think that real or potential insecurity weakens the local economy?	Yes	No	Don't know	*Non-response*
TOTAL	**90,8%**	**7.3%**	**0.7%**	***1.1%***
Nigeria	**97.5%**	0.8%	0.0%	*1.7%*
Niger	96.0%	3.0%	0.0%	*1.0%*
Cameroon	94.7%	0.0%	0.0%	*5.3%*
Mali	91.2%	6.1%	1.4%	*1,4%*
Chad	90.1%	9.9%	0.0%	*0.0%*
Senegal	89.2%	5.4%	4.1%	*1.4%*
Burkina Faso	88.3%	11.7%	0.0%	*0.0%*
Mauritania	77.3%	22.7%	0.0%	*0.0%*

Analysis: 97.5% of the people surveyed in Nigeria say that insecurity (real or potential) in the region weakens the local economy.

2.7. Perceptions of the sources of insecurity

For the majority of the respondents (50.3%), difficult living conditions (poverty, misery, precariousness) are the main source of local insecurity. In Nigeria, the respondents were only offered one possible answer, rather than several possible answers, to this question; therefore, 70.8% of respondents say that inactivity and unemployment are the main sources of insecurity.

In Senegal, over one-fifth of the respondents cite the absence of security forces as a source of (incentive for?) insecurity. Senegal and Mauritania are also the only countries to report the presence of radical religious groups as a fairly significant cause of insecurity in the region (around 5% in both cases). **Indeed, religious radicalism is the last source of insecurity cited by respondents (1.9%**, or only 13 people out of the 698 people in the survey).

Employment (that is, inactivity and unemployment) is the main cause of insecurity, in the opinion of all the young people surveyed (49.5%). Note that relatively few young people name the "marginalization of youth" as a cause of local insecurity (15.8%, compared to 33.9% among the older people).

In your opinion, what are the causes (real or potential) of insecurity in your region? (Several possible answers)		Poverty/precariousness	Inactivity/unemployment	Marginalized/abandoned youth	Delinquency/Criminality/ Robbery/Drugs	Lack of government interest	Absence of security services (police, army)	Presence/sermons/practices of radical religious groups	*Other*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**50.7%**	**37.4%**	**31.4%**	**7.6%**	**7.7%**	**3.0%**	**1.9%**	***3.2%***	***14.2%***
Country	Mali	**82.3%**	27.2%	61.2%	10.2%	10.2%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*1.4%*
	Burkina Faso	75.0%	71.7%	15.0%	3.3%	6.7%	0.0%	3.3%	*0.0%*	*3.3%*
	Niger	77.0%	49.0%	45.0%	10.0%	11.0%	1.0%	2.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	72.7%	18.2%	63.6%	18.2%	17.0%	0.0%	5.7%	*0.0%*	*1.1%*
	Cameroon	34.2%	5.3%	31.6%	5.3%	10.5%	10.5%	0.0%	*2.6%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	27.0%	33.8%	9.5%	10.8%	6.8%	21.6%	5.4%	*28.4%*	*4.1%*
	Nigeria	11.7%	**70.8%**	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*17.5%*
	Chad	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*98.6%*
Gender	Female	50.3%	36.6%	27.4%	8.0%	6.9%	1.1%	2.3%	*5.7%*	*16.0%*
	Male	50.9%	37.7%	32.7%	7.5%	8.0%	3.6%	1.7%	*2.3%*	*13.6%*
Age	18-25 years	40.0%	**49.5%**	**15.8%**	6.3%	0.0%	5.3%	1.1%	*7.4%*	*20.0%*
	26 years+	52.6%	35.4%	33.9%	7.8%	9.0%	2.5%	2.0%	*2.5%*	*13.3%*
Level of education	None	57.8%	34.3%	38.2%	6.9%	8.8%	3.9%	2.0%	*2.0%*	*9.8%*
	Quranic school	48.4%	45.2%	23.4%	3.2%	8.9%	2.4%	4.0%	*2.4%*	*12.9%*
	Primary	61.0%	38.0%	36.0%	10.0%	8.0%	3.0%	0.0%	*5.0%*	*6.0%*
	Secondary	53.9%	36.5%	33.9%	8.3%	4.3%	3.0%	1.3%	*3.9%*	*15.7%*
	Technical	35.0%	15.0%	35.0%	15.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*5.0%*	*30.0%*
	Higher education	35.9%	35.9%	25.6%	8.5%	11.1%	3.4%	2.6%	*1.7%*	*21.4%*

Analysis: 82.3% of the people surveyed in Mali say poverty/ precariousness are the causes (real or potential) of insecurity in their region.

2.8. Perceptions of the presence of armed forces

The majority of respondents (84.7%) consider the presence of armed forces as "reassuring", with only one-tenth considering it "disturbing".

This presence is even "very reassuring" for the majority of respondents in Chad (77.5%), Nigeria (70%), Burkina Faso (68.3%) and Senegal (59.5%). It is "somewhat reassuring" for the majority of respondents in Cameroon (44.7%), Mauritania (79.5%) and Mali (74.1%). In the latter two countries, the army is viewed more critically, with over 19% of respondents in both countries calling that presence "disturbing".

Women (89.7%) are more likely to describe the presence of the army as "reassuring" compared to men (83%). Similarly the young are more likely to describe the presence of the army as "reassuring" (92.6%, including a majority [52.6%] who perceive the army's presence as "very reassuring") compared to older people (83.3%, including a majority [47.4%] who call it "somewhat reassuring").

For you, the presence of the army is:		**Reassuring**	*Very Reassuring*	*Somewhat Reassuring*	**Disturbing**	*Somewhat Disturbing*	*Very disturbing*	*No opinion*
	TOTAL	**84.7%**	***38.1%***	***46.6%***	**10.1%**	***9.7%***	***0.4%***	***43%***
Country	Chad	**97.2%**	*77.5%*	*19.7%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Nigeria	95.0%	*70.0%*	*25.0%*	0,0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*5.0%*
	Burkina Faso	91.6%	*68.3%*	*23.3%*	6.7%	*6.7%*	*0.0%*	*1.7%*
	Senegal	85.2%	*59.5%*	*25.7%*	9.5%	*6.8%*	*2.7%*	*4.1%*
	Niger	82.0%	*30.0%*	*52.0%*	10.0%	*10.0%*	*0.0%*	*8.0%*
	Mauritania	80.6%	*1.1%*	*79.5%*	19.3%	*19.3%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	76.1%	*2.0%*	*74.1%*	19.7%	*19.0%*	*0.7%*	*2.0%*
	Cameroon	65.8%	*21.1%*	*44.7%*	10.5%	*10.5%*	*0.0%*	*23.7%*
Gender	Female	89.7%	*43.4%*	*46.3%*	6.3%	*6.3%*	*0.0%*	*2.9%*
	Male	83.0%	*36.3%*	*46.7%*	11.5%	*10.9%*	*0.6%*	*4.8%*
Age	18-25 years	92.6%	***52.6%***	*40.0%*	4.2%	*4.2%*	*0.0%*	*3.2%*
	26 years+	83.3%	*35.9%*	***47.4%***	11.1%	*10.6%*	*0.5%*	*4.5%*

Anaysis: 97.2% of the people surveyed in Chad consider the presence of the army as reassuring.

2.9. Opinions about the presence of different types of armed forces

Three types of conventional armed forces were identified in the study. Overall, there are more favourable opinions of African forces, with 72.4% of respondents in favour of the presence of these armed forces over Western forces (49.9%) and international forces (36.1%). In all cases, regardless of the nationality of the forces and including all respondents, there is a **favourable opinion of the presence of conventional armed forces.**

However, the results are very mixed across countries, ranging from almost unanimous to less than one-third in favour of the presence of one of these forces. This is most clear in the case of Mauritania, with a majority of respondents are unfavourable to the presence of armed forces whichever states comprise the forces. It is also notable that there is near unanimity among Nigerian respondents who are 96.7% favourable to the presence of armed forces from African countries alone.

The remaining variables do not indicate a strong correlation, except that a lower percentage of young people are in favour of the presence of armed forces from Western countries or international forces (UN) than their elders, who nonetheless still prefer African forces to Western or international ones.

Concerning the presence of armed forces,		**African**		**Western**		**International**	
	you are:	Favourable	Unfavourable	Favourable	Unfavourable	Favourable	Unfavourable
	TOTAL	**72.4%**	**24.2%**	**49.9%**	**30.3%**	**36.1%**	**28.3%**
Country	Chad	**98.6%**	1.4%	97.1%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	Nigeria	**96.7%** ⚠	1.7%	29.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Burkina Faso	86.7%	13.3%	78.3%	20.0%	78.3%	20.0%
	Mali	77.6%	20.4%	77.6%	21.1%	77.6%	21.1%
	Cameroon	76.3%	2.6%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%
	Niger	54.0%	46.0%	30.0%	**69.0%**	28.0%	**71.0%**
	Senegal	48.6%	36.5%	32.4%	**50.0%**	45.9%	32.4%
	Mauritania ⚠	38.6%	**61.4%**	33.0%	**67.0%**	33.0%	**67.0%**
Gender	Female	72.0%	25.1%	47.4%	30.9%	36.0%	27.4%
	Male	72.5%	23.9%	50.6%	30.0%	36.2%	28.5%
Age	18-25 years	75.8%	21.1%	45.3%	28.4%	26.3%	26.3%
	26 years+	71.9%	24.8%	50.6%	30.6%	37.8%	28.7%

Analysis: 98.6% of the people surveyed in Chad are favourable to the presence of armed forces **only** from African countries.

2.10. Perceptions of the ability of different actors to ensure security

Confidence in the ability of the "state" to ensure security is generally quite strong (70%) but it varies by country, from 98.3% in Burkina Faso to 43.3% in Nigeria, where the "international community" receives nearly a quarter of favourable responses (24.2%). That said, the state remains the first (and almost the only) player deemed capable of ensuring the safety of those interviewed.
Two general trends can be noted. First, young people are less likely than their elders to identify the state as the actor best able to ensure their safety; second, this confidence in the state's capacity tends to decrease with the respondent's level of education.

In your opinion, who is able to ensure your security?		State (police, army)	Coalition of several West African states	United Nations (international community)	Western powers	Local armed force (militia)	Traditional organisation (village, neighbourhood or other group)	*Other*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**70.5%**	**43%**	**5.6%**	**0.4%**	**1.9%**	**1.1%**	***2.6%***	***15.8%***
Country	Burkina Faso	**98.3%**	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Niger	98,0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%	*2.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	88.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	*10.2%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	87.8%	2.7%	4.1%	1.4%	2.7%	5.4%	*6.8%*	*1.4%*
	Mali	82.3%	3.4%	4.1%	1.4%	6.1%	2.0%	*0.7%*	*1.4%*
	Cameroon	50.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*2.6%*	*44.7%*
	Nigeria	43.3%	16.7%	24.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*15.8%*
	Chad	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*100%*
Age	18-25 years	**65.3%**	1.1%	5.3%	0.0%	1.1%	2.1%	*3.2%*	*25.3%*
	26 years+	71.4%	4.7%	5.7%	0.5%	2.0%	1.0%	*2.5%*	*14.3%*
Level of education	None	70.6%	6.9%	2.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	*2.9%*	*13.7%*
	Quranic school	72.6%	2.4%	7.3%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*16.9%*
	Primary	85.0%	1.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	*3.0%*	*9.0%*
	Secondary	69.6%	4.3%	3.9%	0.0%	3.0%	0.9%	*3.9%*	*16.1%*
	Technical	55.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%	*0.0%*	*35.0%*
	Higher education	59.8%	7.7%	12.8%	0.0%	2.6%	1.7%	*2.6%*	*17.9%*

Analysis: 98.3% of the people surveyed in Burkina Faso say that, among the different actors, the state is most capable of ensuring their security.

2.11. Perception of the state's autonomy in ensuring security

Over the whole of the region, **a majority of the respondents say their respective states are able to confront armed groups (87.9% of respondents**, but 54.5% for the entire region). Only Senegal is different, with over one-third of respondents (36.5%) saying that their government is unable to deal with armed groups, even if the majority remains favourable to the state. Indeed, the assessment of the state's ability to cope alone with armed groups does not vary much from one country to another: almost unanimous in Burkina Faso (98.3%); a majority in Senegal (59.4%), reinforced by the intensity of the judgment (81.8% of the 59.4% say that the state is quite able to cope).
This assessment is slightly lower among women than men, and among the young compared to their elders. Moreover, it decreases relatively with the increased level of education (the "No answer" figures slightly skew this trend).

In your opinion, is your state alone able to cope with armed groups?		**Able**	Quite Able	Somewhat able	**Incapable**	Somewhat incapable	Completely incapable	*No opinion*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**54.5%**	***8.7%***	***45.8%***	**6.5%**	***4.2%***	***2.3%***	***1.0%***	***38.0%***
Country	Burkina Faso	**98.3%**	*10.0%*	*88.3%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*1.7%*	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	94.3%	*1.1%*	*93.2%*	1.1%	*1.1%*	*0.0%*	*4.5%*	*0.0%*
	Niger	86.0%	*17.0%*	*69.0%*	14.0%	*14.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	74.2%	*0.7%*	*73.5%*	2.0%	*2.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*23.8%*
	Senegal	**59.4%**	*48.6%*	*10.8%*	**36.5%**	*14.9%*	*21.6%*	*2.7%*	*1.4%*
	Cameroon	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*
	Chad	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*
	Nigeria	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100.0%*
Gender	Female	**52.5%**	*7.4%*	*45.1%*	8.6%	*5.7%*	*2.9%*	*1.1%*	*37.7%*
	Male	55.3%	*9.2%*	*46.1%*	5.7%	*3.6%*	*2.1%*	*1.0%*	*38.0%*
Age	18-25 years	**48.4%**	*22.1%*	*26.3%*	8.4%	*6.3%*	*2.1%*	*1.1%*	*42.1%*
	26 years+	55.8%	*6.7%*	*49.1%*	6.1%	*3.8%*	*2.3%*	*1.0%*	*37.1%*
Level of education	None	**63.8%**	*6.9%*	*56.9%*	3.9%	*2.9%*	*1.0%*	*1.0%*	*31.4%*
	Quranic school	**50.8%**	*8.1%*	*42.7%*	3.2%	*1.6%*	*1.6%*	*0.8%*	*45.2%*
	Primary	**74.0%**	*11.0%*	*63.0%*	4.0%	*3.0%*	*1.0%*	*1.0%*	*21.0%*
	Secondary	**55.6%**	*11.7%*	*43.9%*	9.2%	*7.0%*	*2.2%*	*0.4%*	*34.8%*
	Technical	**35.0%**	*0.0%*	*35.0%*	15.0%	*0.0%*	*15.0%*	*5.0%*	*45.0%*
	Higher education	**37.6%**	*5.1%*	*32.5%*	7.7%	*4.3%*	*3.4%*	*1.7%*	*53,0%*

Analysis: 98.3% of the people surveyed in Burkina Faso say the state is able to cope with the armed groups.

2.12. Perceptions of conflict between state/international law and religious law

The majority of respondents (52.3%) think that state/international law and religious law do not prohibit the same activities, which could be interpreted as the weakness of any "secular conscience", such as in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania where 76.1% of people surveyed say that the state and religion prohibit the same crimes and offenses. Burkina Faso is another example with 80% of respondents sharing this opinion.

Women are more divided than men on the issue, while young people seem to be more "secular" than their elders. Moreover, this "secular conscience" asserts itself more with the increased level of study

In your opinion, is there a difference between activities forbidden by the state and international law and those forbidden by religion (haram)?		**Yes**	Yes, the state can forbid what religion permits	Yes, religion can forbid what the state permits	**No, there is no difference, the state and religion forbid the same offenses and crimes**	Don't know	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**52.3%**	***18.5%***	***33.8%***	**38.8%**	***2.4%***	***6.4%***
Country	Nigeria	**90.0%**	*63.3%*	*26.7%*	3.3%	*0.0%*	*6.7%*
	Niger	65.0%	*10.0%*	*55.0%*	32.0%	*3.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	55.1%	*4.1%*	*51.0%*	42.9%	*0.0%*	*2.0%*
	Chad	54.9%	*5.6%*	*49.3%*	42.3%	*2.8%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	51.4%	*31.1%*	*20.3%*	36.5%	*10.8%*	*1.4%*
	Mauritania	20.5%	*2.3%*	*18.2%*	76.1%	*3.4%*	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	18.3%	*5.0%*	*13.3%*	80.0%	*1.7%*	*0.0%*
	Cameroon	13.2%	*13.2%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*86.8%*
Gender	Female	**45.7%**	*17.7%*	*28.0%*	**45.1%**	*5.1%*	*4.0%*
	Male	54.5%	*18.7%*	*35.8%*	36.7%	*1.5%*	*7.3%*
Age	18-25 years	**60.0%**	*21.1%*	*38.9%*	29.5%	*7.4%*	*3.2%*
	26 years+	51.2%	*18.1%*	*33.1%*	40.4%	*1.7%*	*6.7%*
Level of education	None	**35.3%**	*8.8%*	*26.5%*	52.9%	*3.9%*	*7.8%*
	Quranic school	**58.9%**	*27.4%*	*31.5%*	36.3%	*0.8%*	*4.0%*
	Primary	**42.0%**	*16.0%*	*26.0%*	47.0%	*4.0%*	*7.0%*
	Secondary	**54.8%**	*16.5%*	*38.3%*	36.5%	*2.6%*	*6.1%*
	Technical	**65.0%**	*0.0%*	*65.0%*	30.0%	*0.0%*	*5.0%*
	Higher education	**60.7%**	*23.9%*	*36.8%*	29.9%	*1.7%*	*7.7%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	48.7%	*15.9%*	*32.8%*	47.2%	*2.6%*	*1.5%*
	Political affiliation	49.6%	*8.3%*	*41.3%*	43.1%	*1.8%*	*5.5%*
	Other	59.4%	*15.2%*	*44.2%*	35.8%	*1.8%*	*3.0%*

Analysis: 90% of the people surveyed in Nigeria say there is a difference between activities forbidden by the state/international law and those forbidden by Islam.

3. PERCEPTIONS OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

3.1. Perceptions of the origins of violent extremism

The majority of respondents think violent extremism is a phenomenon originating outside the region (75.2%). This remains the majority opinion across all the countries, but it is stronger or weaker depending on the country: for example, 87.3% of those interviewed in Chad agree with this position, while 36.7% of Nigerian respondents say violent extremism developed inside their country.
The results do not vary significantly by gender or age. On the other hand, the majority opinion decreases slightly with the level of education.
It is also less strong among people with a religious affiliation than those with a political affiliation. Finally, Catholics are slightly less likely to consider that violent extremism originates outside the region (72.7% of respondents).

In your opinion, does violent extremism originate outside your country or has it developed inside?		Outside	Inside	*Don't know*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**75.2%**	**20.2%**	***1.7%***	***2.9%***
Country	Chad	**87.3%**	12.7%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Niger	86.0%	14.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	81.7%	18.3%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	79.5%	20.5%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	78.2%	19.7%	*0.0%*	*2.0%*
	Senegal	68.9%	20.3%	*10.8%*	*0.0%*
	Cameroon	63.2%	2.6%	*10.5%*	*23.7%*
	Nigeria	56.7%	**36.7%**	*0.0%*	*6.7%*
Gender	Female	73.1%	22.3%	*1.7%*	*2.9%*
	Male	75.9%	19.5%	*1.7%*	*2.9%*
Age	18-25 years	74.7%	22.1%	*2.1%*	*1.1%*
	26 years+	75.2%	20.0%	*1.7%*	*3.2%*
Level of education	Primary	**76.4%**	20.6%	*0.9%*	*2.1%*
	Secondary	**76.5%**	17.4%	*2.6%*	*3.5%*
	Higher education	**70.1%**	24.1%	*2.2%*	*3.6%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	**73.8%**	24.1%	*2.1%*	*0.0%*
	Political affiliation	**80.7%**	16.5%	*2.8%*	*0.0%*
	Other	80.0%	16.4%	*2.4%*	*1.2%*
Religion	Islam	**74.7%**	21.4%	*1.9%*	*2.1%*
	Catholicism	**58.5%**	19.5%	*2.4%*	*19.5%*

Analysis: 87.3% of the people surveyed in Chad say that violent extremism originates outside the country.

3.2. Perceptions of the causes of violent extremism

According to the responses from across the region, the causes of violent extremism are primarily economic (66.6%), political (34.4%), social (29.7%) and religious (23.9%). Other factors do not exceed one-sixth of respondents.

In Nigeria, where it looks almost as if the respondents were only given the choice of one possible answer, political factors are considered to be the main causes of the development of violent extremism (30%). In Chad, another country which differs from the regional trend, religious factors are considered to be the main causes according to 67.6% of respondents.

Men are more likely than women to subscribe to the dominant opinion (that economic factors are the main causes), while young people opt for political factors more readily than their elders.

Finally, people who have a political affiliation clearly lean towards economic factors (81.7%), while religious people give more credit to political factors (38.9%) compared to those with a political affiliation (25.7%).

In your opinion, what are the main causes of the development of violent extremism?		Economic Factors	Social factors	Political factors	International Factors	Religious Factors	Educational factors	Psychological factors	*Other*
	TOTAL	**66.6%**	**29.7%**	**34.4%**	**6.4%**	**23.9%**	**14.9%**	**5.6%**	***2.4%***
Country	Cameroon	**94.7%**	26.3%	34.2%	0.0%	13.2%	7.9%	0.0%	*7.9%*
	Mali	89.8%	2.7%	32.0%	11.6%	32.7%	17.0%	7.5%	*0.7%*
	Burkina Faso	86.7%	45.0%	30.0%	0.0%	11.7%	5.0%	8.3%	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	77.3%	61.4%	39.8%	8.0%	10.2%	3.4%	0.0%	*0.0%*
	Niger	72.0%	45.0%	42.0%	11.0%	19.0%	7.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*
	Chad	63.4%	60.6%	42.3%	8.5%	**67.6%** ⚠	25.4%	23.9%	*4.2%*
	Senegal	54.1%	18.9%	25.7%	0.0%	25.7%	18.9%	6.8%	*13,5%*
	Nigeria	16.7%	8.3%	**30.0%** ⚠	3.3%	10.0%	25.8%	0.8%	*0.0%*
Gender	Female	**60.6%**	30.3%	32.0%	6.3%	26.3%	14.3%	8.6%	*1.1%*
	Male	68.6%	29.4%	35.2%	6.5%	23.1%	15.1%	4.6%	*2.9%*
Age	18-25 years	63.2%	28.4%	**38.9%**	1.1%	22.1%	16.8%	5.3%	*2.1%*
	26 years+	67.2%	30.0%	33.6%	7.3%	24.3%	14.6%	5.7%	*2.5%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	66.2%	33.8%	**38.5%**	6.7%	25.6%	15.9%	3.1%	*3.6%*
	Political affiliation	**81.7%**	26.6%	25.7%	9.2%	26.6%	14.7%	11.9%	*2.8%*
	Other	71.5%	28.5%	44.8%	8.5%	27.3%	13.9%	6.1%	*2.4%*
Religion	Islam	68.2%	26.7%	34.5%	6.3%	19.3%	13.5%	3.4%	*2.2%*
	Catholicism	48.8%	22.0%	19.5%	0.0%	19.5%	17.1%	4.9%	*2.4%*

Analysis: 94.7% of people surveyed in Cameroon say the development of violent extremism is due to economic factors.

3.3. Perceptions of the motivations of those involved in violent extremism

According to the perceptions across all the respondents, the motivations of individuals or groups engaged in violent extremism are primarily related to economic and financial interests (44.6%). Although these perceptions of motivations are relatively homogeneous throughout the region, three countries stand out. This view is not held by the majority of the respondents in Mauritania, Chad and Nigeria. In these countries, status and social recognition are seen as the primary motivations for engaging in violent extremism. One-third of the respondents in Mali and 21.6% of those in Mauritania consider that religious affiliation is motivation for those involved in violent extremism.
Moreover, young people are twice as likely as their elders to think that political ambitions motivate the actors of violent extremism.
Although no Catholics questioned says that religious affiliation can push individuals into violent extremism, they are, proportionally, five times more likely than the Muslims surveyed to link such motivations to political ambitions.

In your opinion, what explains groups and individuals engaging in violent extremism?		Economic and financial interests	Social status and recognition	Religious affiliation	Political ambition	Ideological indoctrination	Psychological troubles	*Other*	*No opinion*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**44.6%**	**25.6%**	**14.8%**	**7.3%**	**1.0%**	**0.9%**	***2.0%***	***1.1%***	***2.7%***
Country	Cameroon	**94.7%**	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*2.6%*	*0.0%*	*2.6%*
	Niger	64.0%	19.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	*1.0%*	*4.0%*	*1.0%*
	Mali	60.5%	3.4%	**32.7%**	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*1.4%*	*2.0%*
	Burkina Faso	58.3%	30.0%	6.7%	0.0%	1.7%	1.7%	*0.0%*	*1.7%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	40.5%	5.4%	6.8%	8.1%	8.1%	5.4%	*16.2%*	*1.4%*	*8.1%*
	Mauritania	37.5%	**40.9%**	21.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Chad	18.3%	**52.1%**	4.2%	25.4%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Nigeria	9.2%	**50.0%**	11.7%	22.5%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*6.7%*
Gender	Female	43.4%	23.4%	13.7%	10.3%	1.7%	0.6%	*2.3%*	*0.6%*	*4.0%*
	Male	44.9%	26.4%	15.1%	6.3%	0.8%	1.0%	*1.9%*	*1.3%*	*2.3%*
Age	18-25 years	36.8%	30.5%	7.4%	**13.7%**	2.1%	3.2%	*4.2%*	*0.0%*	*2.1%*
	26 years+	45.6%	25.0%	16.0%	6.3%	0.8%	0.5%	*1.7%*	*1.3%*	*2.8%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	39.0%	21.5%	22.1%	7.2%	2.6%	1.0%	*3.1%*	*1.5%*	*2.1%*
	Political affiliation	54.1%	19.3%	14.7%	7.3%	0.0%	0.0%	*1.8%*	*2.8%*	*0.0%*
	Other	52.7%	20.6%	12.1%	8.5%	0.0%	0.6%	*3.0%*	*1.2%*	*1.2%*
Religion	Islam	47.2%	22.7%	17.1%	4.1%	1.2%	1.0%	*2.4%*	*1.4%*	*2.9%*
	Catholicism	46.3%	26.8%	**0.0%**	**22.0%**	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*4.9%*

Analysis: 94.7% of the people surveyed in Cameroon think economic and financial interests explain why groups and individuals engage in violent extremism.

3.4. Perceptions about the jihadists

For the majority of respondents (42.8%), the jihadists we speak of today are "bandits". This opinion prevails in all countries except Mauritania, where they are seen first as "fanatics or madmen" (50%). In Chad, the respondents are divided between these two opinions.

It should also be noted that roughly one-tenth of the respondents (10.9% in Mali and 9.5% in Senegal) have a positive opinion of jihadists, perceiving them as "resisters or defenders" and "saviours or liberators". This positive perception is higher among politically active people (11.9%) than among those with a religious affiliation (9.2%). Note that in Niger, 11% of the respondents did not want to answer this question.

In your opinion, the jihadists we are talking about today are:		Bandits	Fanatics or madmen	Desperate	Resistant fighters or defenders	Saviours or liberators	*Other*	*Does not want to answer*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**42.8%**	**23.8%**	**5.0%**	**6.0%**	**0.7%**	***1.1%***	***2.3%***	***18.2%***
Country	Mali	**64.6%**	17.0%	1.4%	**9.5%**	**1.4%**	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*6.1%*
	Burkina Faso	60.0%	15.0%	1.7%	6.7%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*8.3%*	*8.3%*
	Niger	56.0%	22.0%	3.0%	5.0%	2.0%	*0.0%*	*11.0%*	*1.0%*
	Chad	**47.9%**	**46.5%**	2.8%	1.4%	0.0%	*1.4%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	41.9%	8.1%	18.9%	**9.5%**	0.0%	*8.1%*	*0.0%*	*13.5%*
	Cameroon	39.5%	18.4%	10.5%	2.6%	0.0%	*2.6%*	*0.0%*	*26.3%*
	Mauritania	36.4%	**50.0%**	8.0%	5.7%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Nigeria	0.0%	16.7%	1.7%	4.2%	0.8%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*76.7%*
Gender	Female	40.0%	27.4%	8.6%	2.3%	0.6%	*2.9%*	*1.1%*	*17.1%*
	Male	43.8%	22.6%	3.8%	7.3%	0.8%	*0.6%*	*2.7%*	*18.5%*
Age	18-25 years	35.8%	25.3%	7.4%	2.1%	0.0%	*2.1%*	*6.3%*	*21.1%*
	26 years+	43.9%	23.6%	4.5%	6.7%	0.8%	*1.0%*	*1.7%*	*17.8%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	41.0%	34.9%	7.2%	8.7%	0.5%	*2.6%*	*0.0%*	*5.1%*
	Political affiliation	52.3%	26.6%	3.7%	**10.1%**	**1.8%**	*1.8%*	*2.8%*	*0.9%*
	Other	51.5%	27.3%	6.7%	4.8%	1.2%	*1.2%*	*4.8%*	*2.4%*
Religion	Islam	43.9%	22.1%	5.1%	6.8%	0.9%	*1.0%*	*2.6%*	*17.6%*
	Catholicism	17.1%	12.2%	7.3%	2.4%	0.0%	*2.4%*	*0.0%*	*58.5%*

Analysis: 64.6% of the people surveyed in Mali call today's jihadists "bandits".

3.5. Perceptions of the jihadist cause

The majority of the respondents (78.7%) believe that the jihadist cause exploits religion for violent purposes. This opinion prevails regardless of the country, yet 21.7% of respondents in Nigeria think the jihadists use violence for religious purposes.

The idea that, for the jihadists, violence is used to spread religion is accepted more as the level of education of the respondents rises. This is also a majority view among Catholics surveyed (41.5%).

For you, the jihadists use :		Religion to spread violence	Violence to spread religion	*Other*	*Does not want to answer*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**78.7%**	**12.6%**	***1.7%***	***1.6%***	***5.4%***
Country	Niger	**87.0%**	7.0%	*0.0%*	*6.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	86.4%	6.8%	*1.4%*	*0.0%*	*5.4%*
	Burkina Faso	83.3%	3,3%	*0,0%*	*5,0%*	*8,3%*
	Mauritania	83.0%	15,9%	*0,0%*	*1,1%*	*0,0%*
	Chad	80,3%	18,3%	*1,4%*	*0,0%*	*0,0%*
	Nigeria	72,5%	**21,7%**	*1,7%*	*0,0%*	*4,2%*
	Senegal	68,9%	14,9%	*9,5%*	*1,4%*	*5,4%*
	Cameroon	44,7%	13,2%	*0,0%*	*0,0%*	*42,1%*
Gender	Female	81,1%	12,0%	*1,7%*	*1,1%*	*4,0%*
	Male	77,8%	12,8%	*1,7%*	*1,7%*	*5,9%*
Age	18-25 years	77.9%	13.7%	*2.1%*	*2.1%*	*4.2%*
	26 years+	79.0%	12.3%	*1.7%*	*1.5%*	*5.5%*
	Primary	81.0%	**9.8%**	*1.8%*	*1.8%*	*5.5%*
	Secondary	80.4%	**11.7%**	*1.3%*	*1.3%*	*5.2%*
	Higher	70.1%	**21.2%**	*2.2%*	*1.5%*	*5.1%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	81.5%	12.3%	*3.1%*	*1.0%*	*2.1%*
	Political affiliation	79.8%	16.5%	*1.8%*	*1.8%*	*0.0%*
	Other	81.8%	10.3%	*3.6%*	*3.0%*	*1.2%*
Religion	Islam	81.7%	9.9%	*1.9%*	*1.9%*	*4.6%*
	Catholicism	31.7%	**41.5%**	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*26.8%*

Analysis: 87% of the respondents in Niger say the jihadists use religion to spread violence.

3.6. Perceptions of the use of religion

Overall, the majority of the respondents (56.9%) say they have observed the misuse of religion in their region. In Nigeria, this finding is unanimous among respondents who answered the question. However, only a minority said this in Mali, Mauritania and Senegal (where 78.4% of respondents say they have not observed misuse of religion).

Observation of a misuse of religion is especially common among people in work (59.3%), while the majority of those who do not undertake any professional activity have not observed the misuse of religion (54.4%). The correlation may seem inconclusive, but perceptions are particularly subject to economic socialization in a difficult social context where religious people also serve as an important social – even economic – resource.

Among people with a religious affiliation people, the majority have not observed the misuse of religion (50.3%), while this is the case in a minority of people with a political affiliation (31.2%). Finally, more Christian respondents have observed the misuse of religion (94.5%) than Muslim respondents (54.9%).

In your region, have you observed the misuse of religion ?		Yes	No	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**56.9%**	**33.4%**	***9.7%***
Country	Nigeria	**93.3%**	0.0%	*6.7%*
	Niger	78.0%	19.0%	*3.0%*
	Chad	64.8%	35.2%	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	58.3%	13.3%	*28.3%*
	Mali	45.6%	**51.0%**	*3.4%*
	Cameroon	39.5%	0.0%	*60.5%*
	Mauritania	34.1%	**54.5%**	*11.4%*
	Senegal	18.9%	**78.4%**	*2.7%*
Gender	Female	54.3%	37.7%	*8.0%*
	Male	57.7%	31.9%	*10.3%*
Age	18-25 years	53.7%	38.9%	*7.4%*
	26 years+	57.4%	32.6%	*10.0%*
Level of education	None	56.9%	30.4%	*12.7%*
	Quranic school	59.7%	31.5%	*8.9%*
	Primary	46.0%	41.0%	*13.0%*
	Secondary	53.5%	38.3%	*8.3%*
	Technical	50.0%	35.0%	*15.0%*
	Higher education	**70.9%**	23.1%	*6.0%*
Prof. activity	In work	**59.3%**	30.6%	*10.1%*
	No profession	30.4%	**54.4%**	*15.2%*
Socail affiliation	Religious affiliation	45.6%	**50.3%**	*4.1%*
	Political affiliation	**58.7%**	31.2%	*10.1%*
	Other	55.2%	43.0%	*1.8%*
Religion	Islam	54.9%	35.4%	*9.7%*
	Catholicism	**70.7%**	4.9%	*24.4%*

Analysis: 93.3% of the people surveyed in Nigeria say they have observed the misuse of religion in their region.

3.7. Perceptions of armed jihadist groups and associates

The majority of the respondents (57.7%) say the jihadist and related armed organisations are similar to each other. Note that respondents in Mauritania are almost unanimous in saying that these organisations are all the same, while Cameroon is the only country where a majority say that these organisations are different (44.7%, but 42.1 % gave "No answer" to the question).
Young people are more nuanced than older people, with 26.3% seeing the jihadists as different from the other groups.

Do you see a difference between these armed groups: Al Qaïda, AQMI, Boko Haram, DAESH, Ansar Dine, MUJAO?		*Yes, they are different*	*No, they are all the same*	*Don't know*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**18.3%**	**57.7%**	***13.2%***	***10.7%***
Country	Cameroon	**44.7%**	13.2%	*0.0%*	*42.1%*
	Chad	39.4%	57.7%	*0.0%*	*2.8%*
	Niger	30.0%	66.0%	*4.0%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	23.0%	45.9%	*2.7%*	*28.4%*
	Burkina Faso	13.3%	75.0%	*10.0%*	*1.7%*
	Mali	10.2%	86.4%	*0.7%*	*2.7%*
	Mauritania	9.1%	90.9%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Nigeria	4.2%	4.2%	*65.8%*	*25.8%*
Gender	Female	17.1%	57.7%	*12.6%*	*12.6%*
	Male	18.7%	57.7%	*13.4%*	*10.1%*
Age	18-25 years	**26.3%**	43.2%	*12.6%*	*17.9%*
	26 years+	17.1%	60.2%	*13.3%*	*9.3%*
Level of education	None	9.8%	70.6%	*7.8%*	*11.8%*
	Quranic school	20.2%	50.8%	*19.4%*	*9.7%*
	Primary	14.0%	67.0%	*7.0%*	*12.0%*
	Secondary	20.9%	60.4%	*9.1%*	*9.6%*
	Technical	20.0%	80.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Higher education	22.2%	39.3%	*24.8%*	*13.7%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	22.6%	68.2%	*5.6%*	*3.6%*
	Political affiliation	23.9%	67.9%	*5.5%*	*2.8%*
	Other	18.8%	68.5%	*5.5%*	*7.3%*
Religion	Islam	16.2%	60.5%	*12.6%*	*10.6%*
	Catholicism	12.2%	17.1%	*43.9%*	*26.8%*

Reading: 44.7% of the people surveyed in Cameroon see a difference between the different jihadist organisations.

3.8. Perceptions about the nature of the armed jihadist groups and related organisations

For the majority of the respondents (59%), the jihadist and related groups are terrorist organisations, regardless of the country surveyed. This opinion is most common in Mauritania (87.5%), but also, relative to the other choices, in all countries (except Nigeria, due to the lack of data). In Senegal, 13.5% of respondents regard them as religious groups; 9.5%, as political institutions.

As the remaining variables indicate no significant correlation, perceptions of the nature of these armed organisations are relatively homogeneous.

In your opinion, these organisatons are:		Terrorist organisations	Religious groups	Resistance movements	Political institutions	Heretical	*Other*	*No opinion*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**59.0%**	**4.7%**	**4.6%**	**1.0%**	**1.0%**	***4.9%***	***3.2%***	***21.6%***
Country	Mauritania	**87.5%**	5.7%	6.8%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Chad	81.7%	5.6%	1.4%	0.0%	4.2%	*7.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	81.7%	5.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*8.3%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	75.5%	4.8%	6.8%	0.0%	0.0%	*10.2%*	*0.0%*	*2.7%*
	Niger	74.0%	4.0%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*1.0%*	*14.0%*	*1.0%*
	Senegal	41.9%	13.5%	6.8%	9.5%	0.0%	*14.9%*	*1.4%*	*12.2%*
	Cameroon	31.6%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	10.5%	*5.3%*	*5.3%*	*44.7%*
	Nigeria	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100%*
Gender	Female	58.9%	5.7%	3.4%	1.1%	0.6%	*4.0%*	*3.4%*	*22.9%*
	Male	59.1%	4.4%	5.0%	1.0%	1.1%	*5.2%*	*3.1%*	*21.2%*
Age	18-25 years	49.5%	5.3%	3.2%	3.2%	2.1%	*5.3%*	*4.2%*	*27.4%*
	26 years+	60.7%	4.7%	4.8%	0.7%	0.8%	*4.8%*	*3.0%*	*20.5%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	70.3%	8.2%	5.1%	2.6%	0.0%	*6.7%*	*0.5%*	*6.7%*
	Political affiliation	71.6%	3.7%	5.5%	0.9%	0.9%	*6.4%*	*6.4%*	*4.6%*
	Other	64.8%	4.8%	5.5%	2.4%	1.2%	*7.9%*	*4.8%*	*8.5%*

Analysis: For 87.5% of the people surveyed in Mauritania, the "jihadist" groups are "terrorist organisations".

3.9. Perceptions of the attractiveness of radicalism

The majority of the respondents think radicalism attracts a particular category of the population (47.9%), but more than a quarter of them (26.5%) say they do not know. The perception of the attractiveness of radicalism varies in different countries, a majority in Senegal do not think radicalism attracts a particular category of the population (41.9%) and this was also the case for 28.4% in Mauritania (although 60.2% in Mauritania answered "Don't know").

Young people are divided into three categories: those who think radicalism attracts a particular category of the population, those who disagree, and those who "Don't know"; while the majority of older people (50.6%) do think radicalism attracts a particular category of the population.

Across the entire regional survey, Catholics are more likely than Muslims to think radicalism is more attractive to a particular category of the population.

Does radicalism attract a particular category of the population?		Yes	No	*Don't know*	*Doesn't want to answer*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**47.9%**	**22.9%**	***26.5%***	***0.4%***	***2.3%***
Country	Cameroon	**86.8%**	0.0%	*2.6%*	*0.0%*	*10.5%*
	Niger	68.0%	13.0%	*19.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	64.6%	17.0%	*15.6%*	*0.0%*	*2.7%*
	Nigeria	47.5%	28.3%	*22.5%*	*0.0%*	*1.7%*
	Chad	38.0%	22.5%	*39.4%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	36.7%	26.7%	*33.3%*	*3.3%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	29.7%	**41.9%**	*18.9%*	*1.4%*	*8.1%*
	Mauritania	11.4%	**28.4%**	***60.2%***	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
Gender	Female	34.3%	26.3%	*36.6%*	*0.0%*	*2.9%*
	Male	52.4%	21.8%	*23.1%*	*0.6%*	*2.1%*
Age	18-25 years	30.5%	**32.6%**	***33.7%***	*0.0%*	*3.2%*
	26 years+	**50.6%**	21.5%	*25.3%*	*0.5%*	*2.2%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	44.1%	24.6%	*28.2%*	*0.5%*	*2.6%*
	Political affiliation	55.0%	19.3%	*23.9%*	*0.9%*	*0.9%*
	Other	58.8%	18.8%	*21.8%*	*0.0%*	*0.6%*
Religion	Islam	47.9%	23.6%	*25.8%*	*0.5%*	*2.2%*
	Catholicism	**63.4%**	14.6%	*14.6%*	*0.0%*	*7.3%*

Analysis: 86.8% of people surveyed in Cameroon say radicalism attracts a particular category of the population.

3.10. Perceptions of resistance to violent extremism

If a majority of the respondents (43.4%) think there are communities which show more resilience in relation to violent extremism, almost one-third of respondents answer "Don't know". In countries where a majority of the respondents answered "Don't know", there is a higher proportion of respondents who think there are no communities with greater resilience in relation to violent extremism.

Young people and women are less positive than their elder/male counterparts. Given the high rate of "No answer" responses, the remaining variables did not show any significant correlations.

In your opinion, are some communities, by their culture, more resilient to violent extremism?		Yes	No	*Don't know*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**43.4%**	**20.3%**	***29.5%***	***6.7%***
Country	Nigeria	**75.0%**	15.0%	*8.3%*	*1.7%*
	Mali	60.5%	8.2%	*28.6%*	*2.7%*
	Niger	57.0%	22.0%	*21.0%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	35.1%	36.5%	*23.0%*	*5.4%*
	Chad	28.2%	**32.4%**	***38.0%***	*1.4%*
	Burkina Faso	16.7%	**38.3%**	***43.3%***	*1.7%*
	Mauritania	11.4%	**19.3%**	***69.3%***	*0.0%*
	Cameroon	2.6%	**0.0%**	***5.3%***	*92.1%*
Gender	Female	32.6%	24.6%	*38.9%*	*4.0%*
	Male	47.0%	18.9%	*26.4%*	*7.6%*
Age	18-25 years	34.7%	29.5%	*31.6%*	*4.2%*
	26 years+	44.9%	19.0%	*29.1%*	*7.0%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	48.7%	17.9%	*31.8%*	*1.5%*
	Political affiliation	39.4%	13.8%	*41.3%*	*5.5%*
	Other	44.8%	27.3%	*24.8%*	*3.0%*
Religion	Islam	44.4%	20.0%	*30.3%*	*5.3%*
	Catholicism	53.7%	7.3%	*4.9%*	*34.1%*

Analysis: 75% of the people surveyed in Nigeria think some communities are more resilient to violent extremism.

4. PERCEPTIONS OF REACTIONS, AND ALTERNATIVES, TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM

4.1. Perceptions of action taken by "moral" authorities against violent extremism

For a large majority of the respondents (73.8%), the authorities in their region carry out actions and take measures to fight against violent extremism. This observation is the majority opinion in each country.

However, it is notable that action by "moral" authorities is seen in a more nuanced way in Nigeria, where 40.8% of respondents consider local officials to be passive and helpless in relation to this phenomenon.

It is also in Nigeria (4.2%), in Mali (4.1%) and in Mauritania (3.4%) that a greater than average percentage (2.4%) of respondents feel that the authorities approve of, and support violent extremism. It should also be noted that 85.3% of those who think this are Catholics (12.2%).

What are religious leaders/local authorities/traditional leaders doing against violent extremism?		They carry out actions and take measures to fight against it	They are passive and helpless	They approve of, and support, them	*Don't know*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**73.8%**	**19.8%**	**2.4%**	***1.6%***	***2.4%***
Country	Burkina Faso	**93.3%**	3.3%	1.7%	*1.7%*	*0.0%*
	Chad	85.9%	14.1%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	80.7%	15.9%	3.4%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Niger	77.0%	20.0%	2.0%	*0.0%*	*1.0%*
	Senegal	75.7%	12.2%	0.0%	*8.1%*	*4.1%*
	Mali	71.4%	21.8%	4.1%	*0.0%*	*2.7%*
	Cameroon	68.4%	5.3%	0.0%	*10.5%*	*15.8%*
	Nigeria	52.5%	**40.8%**	4.2%	*0.0%*	*2.5%*
Gender	Female	70.3%	21.7%	1.1%	*2.3%*	*4.6%*
	Male	75.0%	19.1%	2.9%	*1.3%*	*1.7%*
Age	18-25 years	74.7%	17.9%	1.1%	*1.1%*	*5.3%*
	26 years+	73.9%	20.0%	2.7%	*1.7%*	*1.8%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	81.0%	14.4%	2.1%	*1.0%*	*1.5%*
	Political affiliation	73.4%	23.9%	0.9%	*1.8%*	*0.0%*
	Other	77.6%	17.6%	1.2%	*2.4%*	*1.2%*
Religion	Islam	73.5%	20.5%	2.1%	*1.5%*	*2.4%*
	Catholicism	58.5%	19.5%	**12.2%**	*2.4%*	*7.3%*

Analysis: For 93.3% of the people surveyed in Burkina Faso, the "moral" authorities of their region carry out actions and take measures to fight against violent extremism.

4.2. Choice of the method of justice in cases of criminal violence

In cases of violence or crime, most respondents (47.1%) prefer to turn to the national courts, followed by the traditional methods of justice (18.9%), religious justice (15.3%) and, lastly, the International courts (9.5%). The results, however, vary depending on the country.

Indeed, in all countries national justice is preferred with the exception of Nigeria where traditional justice methods are preferred by 40.8% of respondents. Also in Nigeria, almost one-third of respondents (30.8%) prefer international justice over national justice (21.7%). There are also important results in relation to religious justice which is preferred by roughly one-third of the respondents in Chad, Senegal and Mauritania.

More women (21.1%) than men (13.4%) prefer religious justice. Young people (23.2%) are more likely than older people (14%) to prefer religious justice in cases of violence or crime. And people who say they have a religious affiliation prefer religious justice (26.2%), compared to those who have a political affiliation (13.8%).

Finally, **the majority of Catholics surveyed prefer international law, (36.6%, constituting 82% of those who make this choice)**, while Muslims make up 86% of the respondents who prefer to seek religious justice.

When there is violence/crime, what type of justice do you prefer?		National courts	Traditional justice	Religious justice	International courts	*Other*	*No opinion*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**47.1%**	**18.9%**	**15.3%**	**9.5%**	***0.9%***	***0.9%***	***8.6%***
Country	Burkina Faso	**78.3%**	6.7%	8.3%	1.7%	*0.0%*	*3.3%*	*1.7%*
	Niger	67.0%	13.0%	16.0%	3.0%	*1.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	53.1%	17.7%	4.1%	1.4%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*23.8%*
	Chad	43.7%	15.5%	**28.2%**	5.6%	*5.6%*	*0.0%*	*1.4%*
	Cameroon	42.1%	13.2%	0.0%	7.9%	*2.6%*	*7.9%*	*47.4%*
	Mauritania	42.0%	14.8%	**36.4%**	6.8%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	36.5%	14.9%	**28.4%**	13.5%	*0.0%*	*1.4%*	*5.4%*
	Nigeria	21.7%	**40.8%**	5.8%	**30.8%** ⚠	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.8%*
Gender	Female	41.7%	18.9%	**21.1%**	9.1%	*0.0%*	*1.1%*	*8.0%*
	Male	48.9%	18.9%	13.4%	9.6%	*1.1%*	*0.8%*	*8.8%*
Age	18-25 years	42.1%	12.6%	**23.2%**	17.9%	*1.1%*	*0.0%*	*3.2%*
	26 years+	48.1%	20.0%	14.0%	8.2%	*0.8%*	*1.0%*	*9.3%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	46.2%	13.3%	**26.2%**	5.6%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*8.7%*
	Political affiliation	51.4%	22.0%	13.8%	6.4%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*9.2%*
	Other	58.8%	11.5%	12.1%	7.9%	*1.8%*	*0.6%*	*7.9%*
Religion	Islam	48.5%	19.7%	**14.7%**	8.0%	*0.3%*	*0.7%*	*8.9%*
	Catholicism	26.8%	17.1%	2.4%	**36.6%**	*2.4%*	*4.9%*	*17.1%*

Analysis: 78.3% of the people surveyed in Burkina Faso prefer to turn to the national court system in cases of violence or crime.

4.3. Perceptions of amnesty for the perpetrators of crime

Opinions are relatively divided on the whole, with 43.4% of the respondents in favour of amnesty for crimes committed during conflict, and 37.9% unfavourable to this idea. Depending on the country, opinions are more mixed, with two-thirds of people in Burkina Faso and Niger "favourable", while a majority are "unfavourable" in Nigeria (60%) and Senegal (52.7%, of whom 71.7% are even "very unfavourable").

Unlike their elders, young people are mostly "unfavourable" to amnesty; in fact, the young are three times more likely than older people to be against offering amnesties.

To achieve peace, are you favourable to amnesty for crimes committed during conflict?		**Favourable**	*Very favourable*	*Somehwat favourable*	**Unfavourable**	*Somewhat Unfavourable*	*Very unfavourable*	*No opinion*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**43.4%**	***8.0%***	***35.4%***	**37.9%**	***31.5%***	***6.4%***	***1.0%***	***17.6%***
Country	Burkina Faso	**66.7%**	***35.0%***	*31.7%*	33.4%	*16.7%*	*16.7%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Niger	65.0%	*22.0%*	*43.0%*	35.0%	*35.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	55.7%	*0.0%*	*55.7%*	42.0%	*42.0%*	*0.0%*	*2.3%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	46.3%	*0.0%*	*46.3%*	29.3%	*24.5%*	*4.8%*	*0.7%*	*23.8%*
	Senegal	39.2%	*14.9%*	*24.3%*	**52.7%**	*14.9%*	***37.8%***	*4.1%*	*4.1%*
	Nigeria	35.8%	*0.8%*	*35.0%*	**60.0%**	*60.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*4.2%*
	Cameroon	15.8%	*0.0%*	*15.8%*	39.5%	*39.5%*	*0.0%*	*2.6%*	*42.1%*
	Chad	4.2%	*1.4%*	*2.8%*	5.6%	*5.6%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*90.1%*
Gender	Female	43.4%	*9.1%*	*34.3%*	37.1%	*27.4%*	*9.7%*	*0.6%*	*18.9%*
	Male	43.4%	*7.6%*	*35.8%*	38.3%	*32.9%*	*5.4%*	*1.1%*	*17.2%*
Age	18-25 years	37.9%	*10.5%*	*27.4%*	**45.3%**	*29.5%*	***15.8%***	*1.1%*	*15.8%*
	26 years+	**44.1%**	*7.7%*	*36.4%*	36.9%	*31.9%*	*5.0%*	*1.0%*	*18.0%*
Level of education	Primary	49.4%	*8.3%*	*41.1%*	35.0%	*30.1%*	*4.9%*	*1.2%*	*14.4%*
	Secondary	40.9%	*11.3%*	*29.6%*	39.2%	*29.6%*	*9.6%*	*0.4%*	*19.6%*
	Higher education	34.3%	*2.2%*	*32.1%*	41.6%	*36.5%*	*5.1%*	*1.5%*	*22.6%*

Analysis: 66.7% of the people surveyed in Burkina Faso are "favourable" to amnesty for perpetrators of crime during conflict.

4.4. Perceptions of the usefulness of international aid

For 78.8% of the respondents, international assistance is "useful". The results vary according to country: in Niger (22%), Chad (18.3%) and Mauritania (18.2%), roughly one-fifth say it is "unnecessary"; while Senegal sets itself apart, with 62.2% of respondents saying that aid is "very useful", and 29.7% who call it "somewhat useful".
Women are less likely to think aid is "unnecessary" than men. Young people, however, are more likely than their elders to judge international aid as "useful".

Do you think international aid is:		**Useful**	*Very useful*	*Somewhat useful*	**Unnecessary**	*Somewhat unnecessary*	*Totally unnecessary*	*No opinion*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**78.8%**	***10.2%***	***68.6%***	**9.6%**	***9.0%***	***0.6%***	***2.1%***	***9.5%***
Country	Burkina Faso	**95.0%**	*20.0%*	*75.0%*	1.7%	*0.0%*	*1.7%*	*3.3%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	91.9%	*62.2%*	*29.7%*	2.8%	*1.4%*	*1.4%*	*1.4%*	*4.1%*
	Nigeria	91.7%	*0.0%*	*91.7%*	5.8%	*5.8%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*2.5%*
	Mauritania	77.3%	*0.0%*	*77.3%*	18.2%	*18.2%*	*0.0%*	*4.5%*	*0.0%*
	Niger	77.0%	*4.0%*	*73.0%*	**22.0%**	*22.0%*	*0.0%*	*1.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	71.4%	*3.4%*	*68.0%*	4.1%	*4.1%*	*0.0%*	*0.7%*	*23.8%*
	Chad	70.4%	*5.6%*	*64.8%*	18.3%	*15.5%*	*2.8%*	*8.5%*	*2.8%*
	Cameroon	39.5%	*0.0%*	*39.5%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*60.5%*
Gender	Female	79.5%	*12.6%*	*66.9%*	8.6%	*8.6%*	*0.0%*	*3.4%*	*8.6%*
	Male	78.6%	*9.4%*	*69.2%*	10.0%	*9.2%*	*0.8%*	*1.7%*	*9.8%*
Age	18-25 years	83.2%	*21.1%*	*62.1%*	9.5%	*7.4%*	*2.1%*	*3.2%*	*4.2%*
	26 years+	78.2%	*8.5%*	*69.7%*	9.6%	*9.3%*	*0.3%*	*2.0%*	*10.1%*

Analysis: 95% of the people surveyed in Burkina Faso say that international aid is "useful".

4.5. Perceptions of the effectiveness of international aid

Overall, the assessment of the effectiveness of international aid is relatively similar to that of its usefulness, with 75.9% of the respondents saying that it is "effective" and 12.2%, "ineffective". In Chad (28.2%), Niger (23%) and Mauritania (19.3%), a high percentage of the people surveyed call it "ineffective". Overall, young people (14.8%) are slightly more likely than older people (11.8%) to share this opinion.

Do you think international aid is:		**Effective**	*Very effective*	*Somewhat effective*	**Ineffective**	*Somewhat Ineffective*	*Totally ineffective*	*No opinion*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**75.9%**	***8.7%***	***67.2%***	**12.2%**	***11.5%***	***0.7%***	***2.3%***	***9.6%***
Country	Burkina Faso	**95.0%**	*20.0%*	*75.0%*	3.4%	*1.7%*	*1.7%*	*1.7%*	*0.0%*
	Nigeria	89.2%	*0.0%*	*89.2%*	5.8%	*5.8%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*5.0%*
	Senegal	81.1%	*51.4%*	*29.7%*	10.8%	*8.1%*	*2.7%*	*4.1%*	*4.1%*
	Mauritania	76.1%	*0.0%*	*76.1%*	19.3%	*19.3%*	*0.0%*	*4.5%*	*0.0%*
	Niger	76.0%	*3.0%*	*73.0%*	23.0%	*23.0%*	*0.0%*	*1.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	70.1%	*3.4%*	*66.7%*	5.4%	*5.4%*	*0.0%*	*0.7%*	*23.8%*
	Chad	60.5%	*4.2%*	*56.3%*	28.2%	*25.4%*	*2.8%*	*8.5%*	*2.8%*
	Cameroon	44.7%	*0.0%*	*44.7%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*55.3%*
Gender	Female	75.4%	*10.3%*	*65.1%*	12.0%	*12.0%*	*0.0%*	*4.6%*	*8.0%*
	Male	76.1%	*8.2%*	*67.9%*	12.3%	*11.3%*	*1.0%*	*1.5%*	*10.1%*
Age	18-25 years	76.8%	*16.8%*	*60.0%*	14.8%	*11.6%*	*3.2%*	*3.2%*	*5.3%*
	26 years+	75.9%	*7.5%*	*68.4%*	11.8%	*11.5%*	*0.3%*	*2.2%*	*10.1%*

Analysis: 95% of the people surveyed in Burkina Faso say international aid is "effective".

5. PERCEPTIONS OF INFORMATION AND THE MEDIA

5.1. Degree of satisfaction with local media coverage

Two-thirds of the respondents (66.8%) are not satisfied with the media coverage of their region. With the exception of Cameroon, where the majority say they are “satisfied”, the intensity of dissatisfaction varies by country: 52% in Niger, unanimous among people surveyed in Nigeria. Note, also, dissatisfaction is strongest in Senegal, with 63.3% of people calling themselves "totally unsatisfied ".

Young people are much less satisfied than their elders: 71.6% of young people say they are dissatisfied with media coverage compared to 66% of those over age 25.

It is also notable that people without a professional activity almost twice as likely (44.3%) as professionally active people (28.9%) to say they are satisfied with the media coverage of their region.

Concerning the media coverage of your region. you are:		**Satisfied**	*Totally satisfied*	*Somewhat satisfied*	**Unsatisfied**	*Somewhat unsatisfied*	*Totally unsatisfied*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**29.4%**	***3.9%***	***25.5%***	**66.8%**	***51.3%***	***15.5%***	***3.9%***
Country	Cameroon	52.%	*0.%*	*52.%*	31.6%	*26.3%*	*5.3%*	*15.8%*
	Niger	48.0%	*4.0%*	*44.0%*	52.0%	*34.0%*	*18.0%*	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	41.7%	*5.0%*	*36.7%*	56.6%	*48.3%*	*8.3%*	*1.7%*
	Mali	37.4%	*9.5%*	*27.9%*	55.8%	*49.0%*	*6.8%*	*6.8%*
	Senegal	28.4%	*8.1%*	*20.3%*	66.2%	*24.3%*	***41.9%***	*5.4%*
	Mauritania	27.3%	*0.0%*	*27.3%*	72.7%	*71.6%*	*1.1%*	*0.0%*
	Chad	16.9%	*0.0%*	*16.9%*	80.3%	*80.3%*	*0.0%*	*2.8%*
	Nigeria	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	**96.7%**	*62.5%*	*34.2%*	*3.3%*
Gender	Female	26.8%	*5.1%*	*21.7%*	68.0%	*52.6%*	*15.4%*	*5.1%*
	Male	30.2%	*3.4%*	*26.8%*	66.4%	*50.9%*	*15.5%*	*3.4%*
Age	18-25 years	26.3%	*4.2%*	*22.1%*	**71.6%**	*49.5%*	*22.1%*	*2.1%*
	26 years+	29.8%	*3.8%*	*26.0%*	66.0%	*51.7%*	*14.3%*	*4.2%*
Prof. activity	In work	28.9%	*4.4%*	*24.5%*	66.6%	*50.8%*	*15.8%*	*4.4%*
	No profession	**44.3%**	*3.8%*	*40.5%*	54.5%	*30.4%*	*24.1%*	*1.3%*

Analysis: 52.6% of the people surveyed in Cameroon say they are “satisfied” with the media coverage of their region.

5.2. Perceptions of the media/information about the risks of insecurity

The majority of respondents (57.6%) feel well-informed by the media about the risks of insecurity in their area, although more than a third (38.3%) do not. The results vary by country, with a majority in Mauritania, Nigeria and Burkina Faso who do not feel well-informed. A higher proportion of women and young people (compared to men/older people) feel they are not sufficiently informed by the media of the risks of insecurity in their area. A majority of Catholics (46.3%) do not feel sufficiently informed.

Do you feel sufficiently informed by the media about the risks of insecurity in your region?		**Yes**	*Very little**	**No**	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**55.7%**	***1.9%****	**38.3%**	***4.2%***
Country	Niger	**81.0%**		18.0%	*1.0%*
	Chad	69.0%		28.2%	*2.8%*
	Cameroon	34.2%	*34.2%**	7.9%	*23.7%*
	Mali	68.0%		24.5%	*7.5%*
	Senegal	55.4%		40.5%	*4.1%*
	Mauritania	40.9%		59.1%	*0.0%*
	Nigeria	40.0%		58.3%	*1.7%*
	Burkina Faso	35.0%		**63.3%**	*1.7%*
Gender	Female	52.6%	*0.0%*	**41.7%**	*5.7%*
	Male	56.8%	*2.5%*	37.1%	*3.6%*
Age	18-25 years	54.7%	*1.1%*	**42.1%**	*2.1%*
	26 years+	55.9%	*2.0%*	37.6%	*4.5%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	59.0%	*0.0%*	38.5%	*2.6%*
	Political affiliation	64.2%	*2.8%*	32.1%	*0.9%*
	Other	69.7%	*0.6%*	27.3%	*2.4%*
Religion	Islam	56.2%	*1.4%*	39.0%	*3.4%*
	Catholicism	26.8%	*9.8%*	**46.3%**	*17.1%*

*Modality uniquely proposed in this country that is, 68,4% "Yes" in this country, and 57,6% all together.

Analysis: 81% of the people surveyed in Niger say they are sufficiently informed by the media about the risks of insecurity in their region.

5.3. Perceptions of the effectiveness of news media

According to the respondents, the media which best informs them about the armed groups is public media (34.1%), followed closely by Western channels (30.1%). The pan-Arab channels are mostly accredited by respondents in Mauritania (48% of them made this choice). The private channels are chosen in Senegal (28.4%) and Nigeria (40%), just as Senegal was the only country where a significant percentage of people chose the internet (10.8%).
Women and young people turn to Western media proportionately less than men and older people. Note that young people turn primarily to public media (41.1%), while people with a political affiliation make up the majority of those using Western media (51.4%).
Muslims are proportionately more likely to turn to Western media (30.3%) than Catholics (19.5%) who prefer the public media of their respective countries.

Which type of media keeps you best informed about the existence and activities of the armed groups?		Local radio	National public TV-Radio	National private TV-Radio	Pan-African channels	Pan-Arab channels	Western channels	*Internet and Social media*	*SD Card, cassette and others*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**14.9%**	**34.1%**	**10.2%**	**4.2%**	**3.4%**	**30.1%**	***1.4%***	***3.3%***	***7.2%***
Country	Chad	**53.5%**	**60.6%**	0.0%	5.6%	7.0%	33.8%	*2.8%*	*1.4%*	*1.4%*
	Burkina Faso	21.7%	36.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.0%	*0.0%*	*8.3%*	*18.3%*
	Mali	14.3%	20.4%	0.7%	1.4%	0.7%	44.9%	*0.0%*	*9.5%*	*8.2%*
	Mauritania	13.6%	39.8%	0.0%	0.0%	**14.8%**	31.8%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Niger	12.0%	39.0%	1.0%	0.0%	3.0%	45.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Senegal	5.4%	17.6%	**28.4%**	1.4%	0.0%	28.4%	***10.8%***	*4.1%*	*4.1%*
	Cameroon	5.3%	44.7%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	44.7%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*36.8%*
	Nigeria	1.7%	32.5%	**40.0%**	18.3%	0.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*7.5%*
Gender	Female	15.4%	32.6%	12.6%	4.6%	7.4%	**23.4%**	*0.6%*	*2.9%*	*9.1%*
	Male	14.7%	34.6%	9.4%	4.0%	2.1%	32.3%	*1.7%*	*3.5%*	*6.5%*
Age	18-25 years	10.5%	**41.1%**	14.7%	8.4%	3.2%	**25.3%**	*2.1%*	*1.1%*	*3.2%*
	26 years+	15.6%	32.9%	9.5%	3.5%	3.3%	30.8%	*1.3%*	*3.7%*	*7.8%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	12.3%	29.7%	8.7%	2.1%	7.2%	32.8%	*1.5%*	*6.6%*	*3.1%*
	Political affiliation	9.2%	28.4%	5.5%	2.8%	1.8%	**51.4%**	*3.7%*	*2.8%*	*1.8%*
	Other	22.4%	40.6%	7.3%	3.6%	4.2%	31.5%	*3.0%*	*0.6%*	*3.6%*
Religion	Islam	11.1%	30.3%	11.3%	3.6%	3.2%	**30.3%**	*1.4%*	*3.7%*	*6.5%*
	Catholicism	2.4%	43.9%	12.2%	9.8%	0.0%	19.5%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*26.8%*

Analysis: For 53.5% of the people surveyed in Chad, local radio stations are the media which best inform them about the existence and activities of armed groups.

5.4. Degree of trust in the media

The most trusted media is national public television and radio (33.8%), followed by local radio stations (25.9%) and Western channels (16%). The results vary across countries: for example, in Nigeria, respondents say they most trust the pan-African channels (50.8%); and in Chad, local radio stations are the most trusted (42.3%).

Young people (proportionately) put more confidence in state channels (+3.2 points) than their elders; and, vice versa, for the Western channels, which are more trusted by those over 25.

People with a political affiliation trust Western channels more than those with a religious affiliation (+20.3 points).

What source of information do you trust the most?		Local radio	National public TV-Radio	National private TV-Radio	Pan-African channels	Pan-Arab channels	Western channels	*No opinion*	*No preference*	*No answer*
	TOTAL	**25.9%**	**33.8%**	**3.0%**	**9.7%**	**3.6%**	**16.0%**	***0.1%***	***1.7%***	***6.0%***
Country	Chad	**42.3%**	28.2%	1.4%	2.8%	2.8%	19.7%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*2.8%*
	Niger	33.0%	36.0%	1.0%	1.0%	6.0%	23.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	28.4%	**52.3%**	0.0%	0.0%	10.2%	9.1%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	27.2%	39.5%	0.7%	1.4%	0.7%	22.4%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*8.2%*
	Nigeria	26.7%	12.5%	0.8%	**50.8%**	2.5%	3.3%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*3.3%*
	Burkina Faso	21.7%	**45.0%**	0.0%	1.7%	1.7%	15.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*15.0%*
	Senegal	8.1%	36.5%	23.0%	0.0%	4.1%	21.6%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*6.8%*
	Cameroon	5.3%	18.4%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	13.2%	*2.6%*	*31.6%*	*26.3%*
Gender	Female	28.6%	31.4%	5.1%	7.4%	7.4%	12.6%	*0.6%*	*0.6%*	*6.3%*
	Male	25.0%	34.6%	2.3%	10.5%	2.3%	17.2%	*0.0%*	*2.1%*	*5.9%*
Age	18-25 years	25.3%	**36.8%**	6.3%	12.6%	2.1%	13.7%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*3.2%*
	26 years+	26.1%	33.4%	2.5%	9.2%	3.8%	**16.3%**	*0.2%*	*2.0%*	*6.5%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	28.7%	37.4%	5.1%	0.5%	7.2%	**17.9%**	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*3.1%*
	Political affiliation	22.0%	27.5%	3.7%	1.8%	3.7%	**37.6%**	*0.0%*	*3.7%*	*0.0%*
	Other	26.1%	43.0%	3.0%	4.8%	3.6%	13.9%	*0.6%*	*0.6%*	*4.2%*
Religion	Islam	24.4%	35.9%	3.6%	8.9%	3.6%	16.6%	*0.2%*	*1.4%*	*5.5%*
	Catholicism	17.1%	14.6%	0,0%	31,7%	4,9%	4,9%	*0,0%*	*7,3%*	*19,5%*

Analysis: Out of the different sources of information, 42.3% of the people surveyed in Chad place most trust in local radio stations.

5.5. Perceptions of the role of the media in response to violence

The majority of respondents think that, in general, the media contributes to preventing violence (53%), while just over one-third of the remaining respondents say the media is mainly involved in fighting violence (24.6 %) or in spreading it (11%).
Women are more likely to assess the role of media in terms of the spread of violence (14.3%) than men (9.9%), while young people are, proportionately, three times less likely than their elders to have this opinion.

In general, do you think the media mainly helps:		**Fight against violence**	Warn against violence	**Spread violence**	*No opinion*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**24.6%**	**53.0%**	**11.0%**	***3.4%***	***7.9%***
Country	Nigeria	**77.5%**	20.0%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*2.5%*
	Senegal	36.5%	37.8%	14.9%	*9.5%*	*1.4%*
	Niger	25.0%	60.0%	14.0%	*1.0%*	*0.0%*
	Burkina Faso	8.3%	88.3%	3.3%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mali	12.9%	63.3%	15.0%	*0.7%*	*8.2%*
	Mauritania	3.4%	64.8%	31.8%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Chad	0.0%	66.2%	0.0%	*21.1%*	*12.7%*
	Cameroon	0.0%	21.1%	0.0%	*0.0%*	*78.9%*
Gender	Female	24.6%	50.9%	14.3%	*5.7%*	*4.6%*
	Male	24.7%	53.7%	9.9%	*2.7%*	*9.0%*
Age	18-25 years	26.3%	60.0%	4.2%	*4.2%*	*5.3%*
	26 years+	24.3%	52.1%	12.1%	*3.3%*	*8.2%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	17.9%	57.4%	17.4%	*4.1%*	*3.1%*
	Political affiliation	12.8%	66.1%	11.9%	*2.8%*	*6.4%*
	Other	25.5%	47.9%	16.4%	*5.5%*	*4.8%*

Analysis: 77.5% of the people surveyed in Nigeria say that, in general, the media contributes to the fight against violence.

5.6. Perceptions of the influence of the media on community social values

A majority of all the respondents (56.1%) say the media has a strong influence on community social values. In Nigeria, this opinion is unanimous among those who answered the question.

Young people, even more than their elders, consider this influence to be "strong", with 31.6% of them calling it "very strong".

People with political affiliation are more likely to say the media influence is "weak" compared religiously affiliated people, who are more likely to consider it "strong". Finally, notice that 48.8% of Catholics say this influence is "very strong".

What influence does the media (mass media, social media) have on the social values of your community:		**Strong**	Very strong	Somewhat strong	**Weak**	Somewhat weak	Very weak	**None**	*Don't know*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**56.1%**	***22.1%***	***34.0%***	**19.1%**	***14.8%***	***4.3%***	**12.5%**	***2.7%***	***9.7%***
Country	Nigeria	**97.5%**	*75.0%*	*22.5%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*2.5%*
	Senegal	60.8%	*39.2%*	*21.6%*	23.0%	*12.2%*	*10.8%*	2.7%	*9.5%*	*4.1%*
	Burkina Faso	58.4%	*1.7%*	*56.7%*	25.0%	*18.3%*	*6.7%*	10.0%	*3.3%*	*3.3%*
	Mali	52.4%	*15.0%*	*37.4%*	27.9%	*23.1%*	*4.8%*	6.1%	*5.4%*	*8.2%*
	Niger	52.0%	*10.0%*	*42.0%*	36.0%	*28.0%*	*8.0%*	10.0%	*2.0%*	*0.0%*
	Mauritania	39.8%	*2.3%*	*37.5%*	27.3%	*23.9%*	*3.4%*	33.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
	Chad	39.4%	*0.0%*	*39.4%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	43.7%	*0.0%*	*16.9%*
	Cameroon	5.3%	*0.0%*	*5.3%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*94.7%*
Gender	Female	55.5%	*20.6%*	*34.9%*	16.5%	*13.1%*	*3.4%*	16.6%	*4.6%*	*6.9%*
	Male	56.3%	*22.6%*	*33.7%*	19.9%	*15.3%*	*4.6%*	11.1%	*2.1%*	*10.7%*
Age	18-25 years	59.0%	***31.6%***	*27.4%*	15.8%	*8.4%*	*7.4%*	16.8%	*4.2%*	*4.2%*
	26 years+	55.6%	*20.5%*	*35.1%*	19.6%	*15.8%*	*3.8%*	11.8%	*2.5%*	*10.5%*
Social affiliation	Religious affiliation	**51.8%**	*17.4%*	*34.4%*	24.1%	*18.5%*	*5.6%*	18.5%	*2.1%*	*3.6%*
	Political affiliation	45.0%	*14.7%*	*30.3%*	**33.0%**	*25.7%*	*7.3%*	9.2%	*5.5%*	*7.3%*
	Other	53.3%	*22.4%*	*30.9%*	19.4%	*15.2%*	*4.2%*	16.4%	*3.6%*	*7.3%*
Religion	Islam	58.1%	*22.9%*	*35.2%*	22.4%	*17.4%*	*5.0%*	9.6%	*3.2%*	*6.7%*
	Catholicism	58.6%	*48.8%*	*9.8%*	2.4%	*0.0%*	*2.4%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*39.0%*

Analysis: 97.5% of the people surveyed in Nigeria say the media's influence on their community social values is "strong".

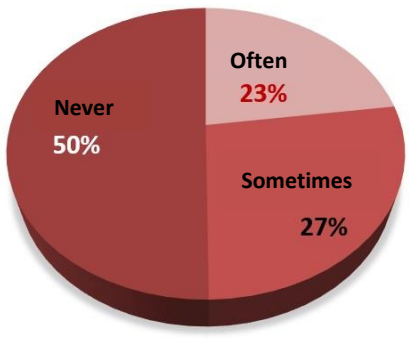
5.7. Frequency of internet use

There are almost as many respondents who never use the internet (36.5%) as those who use it "often" or "sometimes" (36.2%). Just over half (54.1%) of those who use the internet, do so “occasionally” or “rarely”. Also, 6.6% of all the respondents use the internet “very often” and one-tenth use it on a regular basis ("often"). The most frequent use is in Niger and Senegal.
Women are more likely than men to never use the internet, while young people use it much more often than their elders.

How often do you use the internet?		**Often**	Very often	Somewhat often	**Sometimes**	Occasionally	Rarely	**Never**	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**16.6%**	***6.6%***	***10.0%***	**19.6%**	***10.7%***	***8.9%***	**36.5%**	***27.2%***
Country	Niger	**40.0%**	*25.0%*	*15.0%*	11.0%	*10.0%*	*1.0%*	38.0%	*11.0%*
	Senegal	36.5%	*25.7%*	*10.8%*	23.0%	*6.8%*	*16.2%*	37.8%	*2.7%*
	Mauritania	30.7%	*0.0%*	*30.7%*	26.2%	*11.4%*	*14.8%*	4.5%	*38.6%*
	Burkina Faso	20.0%	*3.3%*	*16.7%*	5.0%	*5.0%*	*0.0%*	70.0%	*5.0%*
	Nigeria	8.3%	*0.0%*	*8.3%*	45.9%	*31.7%*	*14.2%*	45.8%	*0.0%*
	Mali	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	19.0%	*6.1%*	*12.9%*	59.9%	*21.1%*
	Chad	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*100%*
	Cameroon	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	0.0%	*100%*
Gender	Female	9.7%	*2.3%*	*7.4%*	21.7%	*8.6%*	*13.1%*	**42.3%**	*26.3%*
	Male	18.9%	*8.0%*	*10.9%*	19.0%	*11.5%*	*7.5%*	34.6%	*27.5%*
Age	18-25 years	**21.0%**	*12.6%*	*8.4%*	28.4%	*13.7%*	*14.7%*	25.3%	*25.3%*
	26 years+	16.0%	*5.7%*	*10.3%*	18.1%	*10.1%*	*8.0%*	38.4%	*27.5%*

Analysis: 40% of the people surveyed in Niger say they "often" use the internet.

5.8. Overall frequency of internet use



Analysis: 23% of respondents say they "often" use the internet.

5.9. Motivations for internet use

Over half of the respondents (56.7%) gave no answer to the question about internet use. Having said that, the respondents who did answer the question say they use the internet primarily to "network" on Facebook, Twitter and similar social media (26.1%) and for information (18.8%).
Internet use varies in different countries, with a more balanced distribution in Senegal, where 40.5% of respondents say they use the internet to "get information". A strong majority in Mauritania (54.5%) and Niger (51%) uses the internet to "network".
Finally, young people under 26 are more likely than older people to use the internet mainly to "network" (+5 points) and to "get information" (+7.7).

If you use the Internet, it is mainly to:		Check my messages	Communicate (Skype or similar)	Network (FB, Twitter, G+ or similar)	Watch films (YouTube or similar)	Get information	*Other*	*No use*	*Non-response*
	TOTAL	**6.4%**	**7.2%**	**26.1%**	**7.3%**	**18.8%**	***0.7%***	***2.1%***	***56.7%***
Country	Senegal	**32.4%**	14.9%	24.3%	18.9%	**40.5%**	*4.1%*	*0.0%*	*40.5%*
	Nigeria	10.0%	15.0%	0.8%	2.5%	24.2%	*1.7%*	*0.0%*	*45.8%*
	Mauritania	9.1%	17.0%	**54.5%**	4.5%	20.5%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*42.0%*
	Niger	1.0%	0.0%	**51.0%**	14.0%	28.0%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*48.0%*
	Mali	0.0%	0.7%	18.4%	0.0%	4.1%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*80.3%*
	Chad	0.0%	0.0%	29.6%	21.1%	16.9%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*60.6%*
	Burkina Faso	0.0%	8.3%	25.0%	1.7%	8.3%	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*75.0%*
	Cameroon	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	7.9%	*0.0%*	*39.5%*	*52.6%*
Gender	Female	9.1%	7.4%	19.4%	2.9%	8.0%	*0.6%*	*0.6%*	*65.1%*
	Male	5.5%	7.1%	28.3%	8.8%	22.4%	*0.8%*	*2.7%*	*53.9%*
Age	18-25 years	13.7%	11.6%	**30.5%**	11.6%	**25.3%**	*2.1%*	*1.1%*	*40.0%*
	26 years+	5.3%	6.5%	25.5%	6.7%	17.6%	*0.5%*	*2.3%*	*59.4%*

Analysis: 32.4% of the people surveyed in Senegal say they use the internet mainly to check their messages.

II. DE-RADICALISATION: PANACEA OR SMOKE SCREEN?

Hervé Gonsolin

The partial erosion of guaranteed security at a moment when 'Armed Religious Movements' (ARM)[1] across the Muslim world number several hundred thousand members, when tens of thousands of people are in detention for violent activities linked to radical Islamism, and when the rate of recidivism of those released from prison is a cause of particular concern[2], raises a question which is more pressing than ever: how to deal with the growing number of individuals identified as potential, or actual, violent extremists in order to forestall them from 'contaminating' others, either in prison or in society at large?

> "Every family has children who have gone to join Boko Haram or who will sooner or later be prepared to do so" (Quotation from a traditional chief in the border zone close to Lake Chad)

1. A new approach?

The de-radicalisation of extremists involves an intervention at the level of individuals which must be based on a clear understanding of what impels a person to join such a movement and also to leave it. For decades, psychologists have claimed there is no personality trait that is identified with 'terrorism' and that its perpetrators are psychologically 'normal'[3]. Historically, if such movements arise in response to feelings of injustice, as a last but necessary resort to remedy or struggle against some 'evil', an individual's choice to join an armed group is not prompted solely by religious fanaticism or the desire to participate in combat against the West. Their members are motivated by the need to express a collective identity and by the urge to fulfil personal expectations associated with their struggle[4].

There are some forty de-radicalisation programmes presently under way around the world. The most recent have got under way in Somalia, Kenya and Pakistan, while the most longstanding have been in existence since the 2000s in Saudi Arabia and Singapore. In different countries, the principles adopted may range from the isolation of subjects at one extreme, to their integration into society at the other. In Europe, programmes frequently have their origin in earlier social programmes intended to combat European neo-fascist movements[5]. In Denmark, a centre for "detoxification" from jihad set up by the government provides a model of one approach. It employs dialogue and psychological support, and assists individuals regarded as susceptible to find work and accommodation and to

[1] This designation is to be preferred to the reductionist use of the term 'terrorists' or 'jihadists' to describe movements with a social programme based on a religious ideology which they seek to impose through the overthrow of the established order by force of arms. The expression includes the so-called Islamic State, Al-Qa'ida, Boko Haram and the Taliban, as well as their proliferating subsidiary branches and clients.

[2] Little reliable information is available on the issue of recidivism. Nevertheless, according to a recent US government report, out of the 647 detainees released from Guantanamo, almost 30 per cent were confirmed, or suspected, to have re-engaged in activities related to armed insurrection in the early years after their release. See "Summary of the Reengagement of Detainees Formerly Held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba", National Intelligence Bureau, January 2015. http://www.dni.gov/files/documents/Guantanamo%20Unclassified%20Release_March%202015_FINAL.pdf

[3] See the work of John Horgan, Professor of Security Studies at the School of Criminology and Justice Studies and Director of the Centre for Terrorism and Security Studies, University of Massachusetts: John Horgan, *The Psychology of Terrorism*, London: Routledge 2005 (new edition 2014).

[4] See, for example, *Why do Youth Join Boko Haram?*, Special Report, United States Institute of Peace, June 2014. http://www.usip.org/publications/why-do-youth-join-boko-haram

[5] For further information on initiatives in the field of de-radicalisation in Europe, go to the website of the "European Network of De-Radicalisation" – http://www.european-network-of-deradicalisation.eu/

resume their education[6]. This Scandinavian approach is controversial since it is sometimes regarded as idealistic, just as there is controversy at the other end of the scale in Australia over the proposal, by a former judge, to keep in prison indefinitely at the end of their sentences all terrorists who have not explicitly repented their actions and renounced violence[7].

In 2009, the first international conference on the rehabilitation of 'terrorists' was held in Singapore. This was organised by the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research (ICPVTR), a Singapore-based research institution headed by Rohan Gunaratna[8], a leading figure in the development of new counter-terrorism strategies. For the first time, the possibility of the use of detention to provide a period of re-education and preparation for reinsertion was aired, as an alternative to allowing prisons to become academies of radicalisation. A number of examples were adduced in justification of this approach, including that of the Jama'a Islamiyya (the Islamic Group) in Egypt, whose imprisoned leaders in the end not only rejected terrorist practice but wrote numerous articles in refutation of terrorism.

"The struggle against violent extremism": the new international doctrine

In September 2011, the "Global Counter-Terrorism Forum" was launched[9], together with a series of associated subsequent initiatives[10], in order to revitalise international co-operation. This initiative, largely pioneered by the United States, was a response to the inaction of the United Nations on the issue as well as the failure of the G8 "Counter-Terrorism Action Group" (CTAG)[11], which had been suspended in 2007. At the same time, the now well-established principle of "Countering Violent Extremism" (CVE) emerged. In line with the "Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy" adopted in 2006 by the United Nations, this approach implies that states should act on the political, social and economic roots of terrorism in order to facilitate the de-radicalisation and social reintegration of extremists.

In February 2015, the representatives of more than 70 countries met in Washington DC in the context of a high-level ministerial meeting organised by the Presidency of the United States to discuss the modalities of the fight against violent extremism[12]. At this meeting, it was reaffirmed that "intelligence gathering, military force, and law enforcement alone will not solve – and if misused can in fact exacerbate – the problem of violent extremism". It was also emphasised that "measures directed at addressing the terrorist threat, should be developed and implemented, in full compliance with international law, and, in particular, with international human rights law". These declarations were a contribution to an open acknowledgement that the abuse of defence and security powers, and the systematic suppression of dissident opinion, would be liable to result in the alienation by governments of the communities concerned and the recruitment of new militants. They were, therefore, a signal that a new initiative was under way in the 'War on Terror' – or, to be more precise, the 'Combat Against Violent Extremism', as the political designation had now become – thus signalling the defeat of those who had declared the so-called 'War'.

[6] See "Denmark's deradicalisation efforts", Ministeriet for Flygtninge, Indvandrere og Integration, August 2011. https://www.nyidanmark.dk/NR/rdonlyres/8A7278CB-EFAD-43CC-B6E4-EE81B8E13C6D/0/factsheetderadicalisation.pdf

[7] See, "Judge's call to keep terrorists in prison indefinitely stuns civil liberties campaigners", *The World Today*, ABC News, 29 January 2015. http://www.abc.net.au/worldtoday/content/2015/s4170363.htm

[8] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rohan_Gunaratna

[9] The GCTF (www.thegctf.org) is made up of some 40 countries, with the goal of bringing together all the leading figures in the struggle against terrorism in a joint programme of study and action.

[10] These include "Hedayah", an international centre for dialogue training and research in the fight against violent extremism; the "International Institute of Justice and the Rule of Law", intended to provide training for professionals in charge of the penal justice system in Africa; and the "Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund" (GCERF), intended to support communities in their efforts in the struggle against extremism.

[11] Set up by the Group of Eight (G8) in June 2003, the objective of the CTAG was to strengthen the abilities of states to wage the anti-terrorist struggle.

[12] Washington Summit, 17 February 2015. http://www.state.gov/j/ct/cvesummit/releases/237673.htm

It can, therefore, be said that 2015 has been marked by unprecedented diplomatic activity when, over a period of a few months, a series of high-level international encounters has been held[13] all on the same theme: the intensification of the struggle against radicalisation and violent extremism which has become the key issue in the 'War on Terror' for governments around the world. There has been criticism of this approach[14], but it has nonetheless offered the possibility of moving forward from the black-and-white approach to the problem which had hitherto prevailed (especially since the attacks of 2001), turning instead to confront the more profound causes of the development of Armed Religious Movements.

The example of Saudi Arabia was considered during the conference held in Singapore on the rehabilitation of 'terrorists'. The Saudi authorities have widely publicised the beneficial action of their "Centres for Religious Re-Education", intended to put back on the right track former inmates of Guantanamo Bay and ex-combatants from Iraq and Syria. Many journalists and researchers were invited to visit these Centres, in a gesture of openness untypical of the Saudi authorities. 'Good Islam' was taught at these centres, in conditions which were less stringent than in other Saudi prisons. In order to restore these 'lost warriors of Islam' to the correct pathway, as many as 150 religious dignitaries and psychologists travelled the length and breadth of the Kingdom. The condition for the inmates' release was their attendance at three hours of correctional courses each day for a period of ten weeks, subject to a final examination. The discussions were centred on a number of concepts: *jihad* (a personal struggle for control of personality together with defensive action against an invader); *takfir* (declaring another person to be an apostate); *bay'at* (allegiance); and *wala'* (loyalty to the Muslim community). Activists undergoing the process of rehabilitation tended to be between 25 and 35 years old, and prisoners were held as close as was practicable to where their relatives lived. On release, prisoners would be absorbed into a social and economic programme for both themselves and their families. Perhaps surprisingly, another element in the programme was the emphasis of the principle that Saudi citizens were permitted to wage jihad only with the approval of the Government and the King of Saudi Arabia in his capacity as Head of State, and not on the basis of a "fatwa" (a religious and juridical opinion) issued by an ideologue linked to a clandestine military organisation.

There is no reliable information on the basis of which this programme may be assessed. However, both its desired results, and the motivations of the Saudi Government, continue to be the object of a multiplicity of questions[15]. A further point is that the programme is a major departure from the prevailing policy of the Kingdom in its treatment of opponents. Amnesty International, in its 2014/2015 report, once more singles out Saudi Arabia for the number of improper arrests of opponents and of members of their families; for the unfairness of trial procedures, including those before special anti-terrorist tribunals; and for legislation which conflates criticism of the Government with terrorism, together with excessive use of the death penalty.

[13] East Asia Summit Symposium on Religious Rehabilitation and Social Integration, Singapore, 16 April 2015; Niamey Conference, 14 May 2015; European Conference on Combating Violent Extremism, Oslo, 5 June 2015; Sydney Summit on CVE, Sydney, Australia, 11 June 2015; Regional Conference on Countering Violent Extremism, Kenya, 26 June 2015.

[14] See, for example, Belén Fernandez, "The pseudoscience of countering violet extremism", *Aljazeera America*, 17 April 2015. http://alj.am/1DNlXHh

[15] Christopher Boucek, "Saudi Arabia's 'Soft' Counterterrorism Strategy: Prevention, Rehabilitation and Aftercare", Carnegie Endowment, September 2008.

Religious rehabilitation

In Indonesia, on which the International Crisis Group published a report in 2007[16], the rehabilitation of terrorists has been undertaken by the prison administration. It includes the investigation of prisoners' ideas as well as dialogue with Muslim theologians. The objective of this dialogue is to bring prisoners, if possible, to accept that terrorist acts are non-Islamic. This ideological initiative is accompanied by economic assistance for freed prisoners to help in their reinsertion into society. Some of the ex-prisoners, who have recanted, are then recruited to preach against the beliefs they formerly held. In Malaysia, the Department for Islamic Development ("Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia", JAKIM), a governmental organisation, has the remit of bringing imprisoned extremists back to correct thinking, following the model of the experience gained in earlier decades with prisoners from militant communist groups. A parallel programme addresses the partners of prisoners. After liberation, contact is maintained with the ex-prisoners to ensure they do not return to armed insurrection.

In Singapore, the programme of re-education and re-insertion has set a standard for international practice. It is implemented by the "Religious Rehabilitation Group" (RRG), a non-governmental institution set up in 2001 under the aegis of the authorities. It is inspired, in part, by the work of the "Committee for Theological Dialogue" established by the Yemeni Government to attempt to institute dialogue with fighters who had returned from the jihad in Afghanistan. A group of some forty religious leaders within this Committee, with the support of a group of psychologists, works to achieve the re-education and reinsertion of former jihadists. Since 2003, according to the Prime Minister of Singapore[17], the work of the RRG has enabled the release of 57 individuals with only one case of recidivism, although the overall number of those taken into the programme has not been disclosed.

In Yemen, the Islamist threat had already been provisionally neutralised by a programme of rehabilitation for terrorists, with the participation of more than 400 Al-Qa'ida sympathisers imprisoned under pressure from the US after the attacks of 11 September 2001. According to some observers, the programme has allowed the authorities to come to an agreement with the jihadists according to which they undertake not to engage in any action in Yemen in exchange for a degree of impunity and to co-operate with the authorities in putting down the Zaidi Shi'ite rebellion[18].

2. Fending off the radicalisation of states

In Africa, Armed Religious Movements, operating out of their historic strongholds in Nigeria, Somalia and Algeria – with violent, and sometimes spectacular, actions spreading over a widening area – have become a threat to the stability, and even the very existence, of certain states. Having previously largely underestimated and neglected this risk, regional governments are urgently organising their response to it, sometimes even giving the impression of a desperate headlong rush. Their response takes two forms: the reinforcement and redeployment of security and military resources, accompanied by an extension of the scope of measures available to the judiciary for the control of society as part of the 'War on Terror'. The immediate consequence of these measures has been, on

[16] "Deradicalisation and Indonesian Prisons", ICG, Asia Report, No.142, November 2007.

[17] "Important to rehabilitate, reintegrate extremists to manage terror threat", *The Straits Times*, April 2015 (http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/important-to-rehabilitate-reintegrate-extremists-to-manage-terror-threat-pm-lee).

[18] "Talking to Terrorists Can Work", Inter Press Service, May 2004. http://www.ipsnews.net/2004/05/religion-talking-to-terrorists-can-work/

the one hand, heightened violence against civil populations in conflict zones, and, on the other hand, a marked diminution of public liberties together with violation of international human rights conventions. On the excuse of preventing terrorism, journalists are swept aside, while activists within associations – as well as ordinary citizens – are subjected to harassment and repression in various forms. More than 140 countries have enacted emergency laws connected with terrorism since the attacks of September 2001 and, though not all are necessarily detrimental to freedom, the African continent is particularly liable to excess. On 12 March 2015, in parallel with the 28th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, a side-event specifically on this issue was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva by a group of human rights organisations, under the title "Misuse of anti-Terrorism Laws in Africa: undermining civil society, eroding human rights, stifling dissent". This tendency is typified by the case of Cameroon, where "Law no. 2014/028 of 23 December 2014, concerning the suppression of acts of terrorism" prescribes the death penalty for any person found guilty of any terrorist act (very broadly defined).

> "Member of Parliament, leader, Mayor – it's of no matter who you may be. The security forces suspect us all of being in league with Boko Haram. They constantly interrogate us, threaten us, beat us …" (*Quotation from a community leader, speaking in a focus group session in the frontier region close to Lake Chad*)

Uganda, Egypt, Kenya, Ethiopia, Mauritania, Cameroon, Nigeria and Chad have all been cited by NGOs for misuse of their anti-terrorism legislation and for abuses committed by their security forces. Individuals classed as 'terrorists' are systematically handed the death penalty at trials that are a travesty of justice, as has been seen recently in Chad (and in Egypt in early 2015). Sometimes the accused are simply executed without trial by the security forces, as has happened in Nigeria, which is suspected of having murdered 7000 supposed 'terrorists' out of 20,000 people arrested in the north of the country since 2011[19]. Since 2003, several hundred confessed or suspected Islamists in Mauritania, including Imams and religious dignitaries in addition to those accused of links with Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), have been arrested as part of the 'War on Terror' and have been systematically tortured. Others have been summarily executed in detention or by "anti-terrorist brigades"[20]. Obviously, the precise scale of these extrajudicial executions in the area covered by this report is not known, but witness accounts give the impression that they are widely practised by the defence and security forces.

> "When Boko Haram people are captured or become prisoners, they disappear, they are systematically wiped out, it's just a question of time. None who have recanted are still alive" (*Quotation from a community leader, speaking in a focus group session in the frontier region close to Lake Chad*)

The longer term consequences of such practices by states, whether they are the result of taking easy options, the bungling of operations, or simply blind disregard, is to categorise whole sections of the population as enemies and to treat them as such. Such population groups therefore have no choice but to regard the state as their enemy and to act accordingly. Their options are, therefore, limited: either to flee, or to participate – to the extent they are personally able – in the degradation, or even the destruction, of the state. Radical actions taken by states in their struggle against violent extremism reinforces the capacity of extremist groups to attract recruits and completely undermined the legitimacy of the state as the guarantor of common welfare, equity and justice. This process can be catastrophic. Skilfully instrumentalised by the armed groups, it substantially extends the range of

[19] Amnesty International, "Nigeria … War Crimes Committed by the Nigerian Military", 2 June 2015. https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr44/1657/2015/en/

[20] Hannah Armstrong, "Torture Against Terrorism", *The New York Times*, 7 May 2013.

motivations which prompt individuals to join such organisations (in addition to religion, anti-Western sentiment, anti-Zionism, as well as criminal and other venal considerations).

> "Kanuri women [from an ethnic group favourable to Boko Haram] come every day to the prison at Maroua to bring food to their sons or their husband without even knowing whether they were still alive, or even there, … nobody tells them anything"
> "The soldiers, some of them just want to protect themselves and others are just made to kill. They have orders to kill: raids, beatings, mass killings…"
> "Rather than concentrating on reinsertion into society, it would be better to halt the flood of recruitment caused by the military crackdown"
> (*Quotations from a focus group session in the frontier region near Lake Chad*).

3. The road to hell is paved with good intentions

In the eight countries of the Sahel region, the effort to combat radicalisation by 'soft' techniques consists of initiatives to bring the religious authorities under control (by fiscal or administrative means) as well as schemes to promote religious tolerance. Only in Niger and Nigeria are there rudimentary programmes to combat radicalisation, centred on the processes of economic and social (re)integration of individuals who are involved with Armed Religious Movements or are liable to become involved with them. Such initiatives are entirely driven, financed and assisted by multilateral institutions and international providers of funds (such as the European Union and the United Nations, together with individual countries such as the United States, Great Britain, France and Spain). International initiatives are, at the moment, focused on prison conditions, since the Sahel states all have highly dysfunctional prison systems. With prison overcrowding among the highest in the world – reaching 230 per cent of ideal occupancy according to the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) – the conditions of detention are alarming, often degrading, and especially liable to produce new 'jihadists'.

The authorities in Niger, with a programme of reinsertion in mind, have therefore begun to think about the management of those presumed to be 'extreme terrorists'. In April 2015, a workshop was held in Niamey on the conditions of high risk detainees and the development of a national plan for the reintegration of prisoners. On this occasion, the Director-General of the prison's administration acknowledged the particularly large contingent of detainees awaiting trial, the delay in processing the files of the accused, and the "very large number of individuals" (including some minors) arrested for acts of terrorism. Whatever scheme eventually emerges, it seems likely that the financial requirements, and the level of reform, that will be necessary will be beyond the capacity of the authorities in Niger to implement in the near future.

On 16 January 2015, Abuja hosted the official launch of Nigeria's prison-based de-radicalisation programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by CIVIPOL, a consultancy group linked to the French Ministry of the Interior. Though laudable, this initiative will be greeted cautiously by those acquainted with Nigeria's prisons, where torture is endemic. When a special report was issued on this question by Amnesty International[21], Netsanet Belay, Amnesty International's Director of Research, in his accompanying statement, offered the view that, "this goes far beyond the appalling torture and killing of suspected Boko Haram members. Across the country, the scope and severity of torture inflicted on Nigeria's men, women and children, by the authorities supposed to protect them, is shocking to even the most hardened human rights observer"[22].

[21] "Nigeria: 'Welcome to Hell Fire': Torture and Other Ill-Treatment in Nigeria", Amnesty International, 18 September 2014. https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR44/011/2014/en/
[22] https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2014/09/nigeria-s-torture-chambers-exposed-new-report/

In May 2015, the G5 Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Chad, Mauritania and Niger) met to consider this issue for the first time. On this occasion, they focused on the reasons for the radicalisation of their populations and how they are linked to security, religion and development[23]. It is illuminating to look at the situation in the countries of this region in the light of a number of fundamental indices relating to the level of wellbeing, the public services, and the level of participation by citizens in governance. If these factors do not offer a full explanation, they are nevertheless highly indicative of the environment in which the dual radicalisation of both the state and society is taking place.

COUNTRIES	*Human development (2014 ranking, out of 187 countries)*	*Corruption in the public sector (2014 ranking, out of 174 countries)*	*Democratic Index (2014 ranking, out of 167 countries)*
Burkina	181	85	114
Cameroon	152	136	130
Mali	176	115	83
Mauritania	161	124	112
Niger	187	103	115
Nigeria	152	136	121
Senegal	163	69	74
Chad	184	154	165

Sources: UNDP, Transparency International, The Economist Group.

In the absence of an awareness of the deeper causes of prevalent political and religious radicalisation, the states of the Sahel appear to be more concerned with their own survival and with access to the bonanza of international funds, than with fundamental reform to offer greater equality of opportunity, justice and wellbeing to their populations as a whole.

4. An anticipated failure

> "These people have no intention of coming back into society: quite the contrary, it is they who are inviting us to join them. No-one can talk to them, it's a stand-off: they don't want to listen to anything" (*Quotation from a prominent figure in the Lake Chad region*)

Inevitably, questions are raised about various programmes for the 're-education' of 'jihadists', but at least they have the merit of existing and could represent a way out for those individuals whose enthusiasm for their cause has waned, for one reason or another. An essential feature, however, will continue to be that there should be genuine feedback, with no preconceptions and in full transparency, if there is to be any prospect of assessing the real impact of such programmes, and determining what works and what does not. Programmes must also avoid becoming merely a subterfuge to use the surrender of former jihadists for the objectives of existing governments (such as intelligence-gathering as well as the identification and elimination of hard line opponents), or simply to satisfy the humanitarian priorities of international paymasters.

Whatever their degree of sophistication, de-radicalisation programmes will not reverse the basic tendencies currently contributing to the situation and will have no impact on current geopolitical shocks, which have occurred in recent years with an increasing frequency. Despite the atrocities they commit, Armed Religious Movements have succeeded in capturing the hearts and minds of hundreds

[23] The G5 Sahel is a joint political and security institution set up in 2014 and financed almost exclusively by multilateral donors (the World Bank, the European Union and the United Nations). The meetings on the radicalisation of the Sahel took place in Niamey at the initiative of the office of the UN Special Envoy as well as by the EU.

of thousands of individuals, and in controlling geographical areas extending across multiple countries. As time goes on, some such movements are beginning to furnish themselves with the apparatus of public administration and other attributes appropriate to states, such as currencies. Their influence grows constantly in proportion to the strength they draw from their confrontation with an armed international coalition which has no real strategy or alternative to offer, except the defence of the established order and of allied states.

In reality, Western governments seem most likely to have underestimated the level of rejection, or even hatred, engendered in Africa and in the Middle East by decades of interventionist policies, as well as by, what is seen as, their policy of unconditional support for Israel and for certain Arab and African governments. Meanwhile, most of the states in Africa and the Middle East affected by radicalisation are unable to offer any plan for the future which will serve as a unifying project for each nation respectively, and it is highly unlikely they will be able to reform themselves in time to restore their legitimacy and prevent further radicalization. Regional states are, therefore, obliged to maintain equivocal relations with the Armed Religious Movements, combining confrontation and collaboration in a situation where each party's very existence is at risk. In the future, the world will face not just a war against terrorism but multiple wars of a revolutionary nature with complex lines of confrontation extending over several continents.

> "At present, the people suffer more at the hands of the security services than they do at the hands of Boko Haram. Some people have told me unequivocally that they prefer Boko Haram" (*Quotation from a prominent figure in the Lake Chad region*)

Experience of wars against the Taliban and Al-Qa'ida has shown that the Armed Religious Movements can only be defeated by military means with great difficulty, whichever methods are employed. The worst enemies of the Armed Religious Movements are not US drones, the Chadian army, or the techniques of psychological manipulation: their most effective enemies are peoples proud of who they are, efficient public services and democratically elected leaders. To be limited to a choice between corrupt and torturous pseudo-states and fanatical, bloody and autocratic zealots can lead only to the most undesirable of outcomes.

> "When you have drunk human blood, you can no longer live with humans" (*Quotation from a militant association in the Lake Chad region*)

The psychological dimensions of enrolment and indoctrination

To go beyond the status of a criminal gang and achieve a critical mass that enables it to pose a serious threat to a state in the course of a long and bloody war, Armed Religious Movements must be able to fulfil the expectations of a wide range of potential recruits. These will be different in relation to whether the recruit in question is (for example) a French convert to Islam, an unemployed graduate in the suburbs of Abuja, or a young man whose father has been publicly executed in Saudi Arabia. However, the expectation that will lead to attachment to an Armed Religious Movement will correspond to each of the following categories:

- Basic physiological needs (hunger, thirst, sex) will be provided for by membership of an entity that legitimises the seizure and redistribution of goods and the bodies of others. A kind of normative framework based on religious and traditional rites is created by the group to provide a context for theft and forced or consensual sexual relations, enabling the recruit to free himself from established custom.

- The group also provides security for the individual through access to arms and the physical solidarity of the membership. From having been victims, group members –, once trained, equipped and organised –, themselves take on the characteristics of a threat themselves, with the ability to confront the government's security organisations and to combat the established order.

- The need for an affiliation to a group and the desire for emotional links are also provided for by the development of a strong collective identity expressed through physical signs and dress conventions as well as various social behaviours characteristic of adherence to the group, (as distinct from the symbols of the established order). Sharing a common cause –, such as pan-Islamism –, provides a unifying ideal that overcomes social, economic and cultural differences.

- The need for approval (confidence and self-respect, recognition and appreciation from others) is also furnished by approval on the part of the group and its leaders for enterprising and even heroic actions – which may go as far as suicide – that excite pride and admiration when carried out in the name of a cause as noble as the defence of a Muslim people which has been artificially divided-up by Westerners and their Israeli ally in order to more effectively oppress them.

- And finally, self-fulfilment may be achieved through the sensation of being the master of one's own destiny; of having access to levels of potential individual realisation which are beyond reach in one's society of origin; or of the achievement of a condition of absolute purity, thanks to one's personal abilities and to a total devotion to the cause. The more groups are able to structure themselves, the more they can satisfy this need for earthly and spiritual achievement, even if the road lies through one's own suicide.Overall, the full spectrum of range of human needs –, such as has been laid out, for example, by the American psychological researcher Abraham Maslow, – is broadly fulfilled by adherence to an Armed Religious Movement, and this seems likely to lie at the root of the success of such movements. Their attraction is enhanced by repugnance felt towards existing political, social and economic systems (whether modern or traditional) which are seen as impure, anti-Muslim, and unable to meet any of these fundamental needs or, even, to offer the hope of meeting them one day in the future. Adherence to an Armed Religious Movement, therefore, even if it's at the price of one's life, provides the hope of a better and fulfilled existence.

Once recruits have joined such a movement, the mechanism by means of which they surrender themselves to it, offering it absolute obedience, is also well-oiled. The lessons taught by the celebrated experiment carried out by the Yale psychologist Stanley Milgram, in its different variants, offer illuminating insights. These show that, in whatever culture and in relation to whatever personalities, two individuals in three are capable of acting as a torturer. To achieve this, they must be subjected to an authority perceived as legitimate and must be placed in a suitable context. The experiment was repeated in 2010 in the course of a television programme broadcast in France, where the authority was represented not by a supposed '"scientist'" but by a television presenter. The rate of conformity was similar to that observed by Milgram. What a simulated scientist and a television presenter are able to achieve, throws light on the level of obedience of individuals who are subjected – either by conversion or by education – to an absolute and omnipotent Deity in whose name the leaders and ideologues of Armed Religious Movements express themselves. What Milgram's experiment also shows is that, once enmeshed in the process, the common man does, in general, what is expected of him – only a minuscule minority are able to disobey – despite the enormous internal tensions which he will experience.

III. STRATEGIC ALLIANCE: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE IMPLANTATION OF JIHADISTS IN MALI

Gwenola Possémé-Rageau

This report is based on the testimonies[24] of twenty-eight men and women in Bamako, Gao and Timbuktu collected with the help of two investigators, Cheick Traore and Mohamed Mahmoud (in Gao and Timbuktu). It covers the period of occupation by armed radical groups (from April 2012 to January 2013) until the arrival of the French force, Serval.

This report seeks to understand the roles played by women in the integration of jihadists within Malian society: in which ways women were a determining factor in their implantation; and how women contributed to the jihadists becoming closer to local people. The initial findings from the study show that, in the Timbuktu region as in Gao, the jihadists used the strategy of alliance, especially marriage, to establish themselves in the area without, however, managing to integrate into local society. This report also considers how these alliances helped to change community perceptions of the jihadists.

The study found that Malian women, over and above those interviewed, were reluctant to address this issue, for the wounds are still raw. Instead, they focused more on violations committed against women and the local people in general. In itself, the question does assign women a share of the responsibility for the occupation of northern Mali. This is a responsibility women do not wish to accept, especially since, in most cases, they had no choice.

1.The strategy of implantation

The people of Gao and Timbuktu have different perceptions of the jihadist occupation. Residents of Timbuktu consider themselves followers of the Sufi tradition, a tolerant and peaceful tradition within Islam that is incompatible with the Wahhabi sects, although the latter are beginning to take hold. The people of Timbuktu present themselves as a bulwark against religious extremism. The Gao region shares the same tradition, but the implantation of radical movements there is older and more entrenched in certain communities on the outskirts of the city. Under President Moussa Traoré, the Wahhabis settled in the municipalities of Gounzoureye – notably in Kadji, Ber and Bourem. Over time, former members of Algerian and Malian armed groups have sought refuge in this part of the desert and managed to rally to their cause people who feel abandoned by the state and who have accepted jihadist ideological beliefs and struggles.

Sources interviewed for the study explained that, in 2012, it was the children of former rebels who returned. When the men from the MUJAO settled in these Wahhabi villages, they were rather well received. *"They were dealing with very poor people, to whom they offered money and food. They dug water points in very remote regions. All of which attracted the people",* one source explained.

The jihadists spoke in religious terms and invoked the *Da'wah*[25], "*passing messages of peace, preaching the messages from God and his prophet Mohamed, invoking the word of God and inviting*

[24] The study gathered the testimonies of 4 ex-wives of jihadists, 3 other women and 7 men in Gao; in Timbuktu, 1 ex-wife of a jihadist, 1 mother-in-law of a jihadist, 8 other women and 4 men; in Bamako, 3 women and 1 man from Timbuktu as well as 2 women and 2 men from Gao.

[25] "*Da'wah* is the invitation to men to adhere to Islam. For the Prophet Muhammad and his followers, it meant calling the faithful to the path of God, in wisdom and humility, without extravagance and without resorting to violence. In the original *Da'wah*, only scholars, people imbued with a deep mastery of the Quran, were allowed to spread Islam. Indeed, after the

people to listen". *"They started by showing benevolence and philanthropy* (e.g., building mosques, distributing food) *to seduce the people and invite them to their sermons".* The people offered them housing; fathers offered their daughters as wives and their sons as soldiers, thinking that the movement was fighting in the name of Islam. *"When fathers understood that MUJAO was not a Muslim group, they wanted to withdraw their children from the armed groups, but it was no longer possible",* explained one source.

According to the sources interviewed in the study, the people had no hope of the Malian army coming to their defense; they felt abandoned by the state. *"MUJAO arrived, presenting itself as a bulwark against the MNLA, which contributed to their acceptance by the people, at least initially".* In Gao, the MUJAO even set up a toll-free number to allow people to call in case of problems with the armed groups, especially the MNLA. *"When we called, they arrived within five minutes, ten times faster than the police – and for free!"*

In the first six months of implantation, the jihadists took care of all the social needs of the people and provided fuel. All the consumer products coming from Algeria were much cheaper than before because the jihadists controlled trade and, therefore, prices. The women were delighted. This period only lasted six months, but it helped bring them closer to the population. This is how some families allowed their daughters to marry members of MUJAO.

2. Strategy of alliance

The sources explained that some of the jihadists participated in the occupation of the northern regions, accompanied by Mauritanian or Sahrawi women whom they had already married. Others looked for women to marry, not out of concern for integration into local society, but *"to safeguard their image as 'good Muslims' instead of taking 'girlfriends'".* These marriages were of short duration, from one week to several months. There were no civil weddings, only religious ceremonies. The wives were of all nationalities: Malian, Afghani, Burkinabe, Cape Verdean, European, Algerian, Pakistani...

In the history of society, marriage has always been an important factor in integration. It is through marriage alliances that the Armas, descendants of Moroccans, ended the Songhai Empire in 1591 by marrying Songhai women to establish themselves in the region and build their political power[26]. In Gao, the members of MUJAO started marrying girls from the Wahhabi villages of Kadji on the outskirts of Gao, and subsequently settled in Gao city centre. *"In some religious communities, it is prestigious to have a jihadist in the family"* explained one source. They targeted the most vulnerable women, orphans and widows in the outskirts of cities – the poorest neighbourhoods – irrelevant of ethnicity. They would not have married girls from the city centres (meaning, the more socially prominent families of Gao or Timbuktu).

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demise of the Prophet and through history, *Da'wah* has taken other ramifications. This is how, in Pakistan, one of the largest sites of the *Da'wah*, there arose the so-called *Da'wah Tabligh* whose members dedicate their lives to travel, to carrying the message of Islam throughout the world. As we can see, *Da'wah Tabligh* eventually expanded into other countries, including Afghanistan, India and Qatar, and reached Africa through Algeria, Mauritania, Libya, Mali, etc." Alassane Cissé, "Mali: Islam: La Dawa est-elle synonyme de radicalisme?", *MaliActu.net*, 27 August 2015. http://maliactu.net/mali-islam-la-dawa-est-elle-synonyme-de-radicalisme/

[26] Gremont C., Marty A., Ag Mossar., Toure Y. H., *Entre fleuve et dunes. Les liens sociaux dans l'histoire. Région de Gao (Mali),* (Paris: Karthala, 2004).

In most cases, families did not seek to marry off their daughters, but some poor families would have easily given way: a marriage can represent a significant financial source, between 500,000 and 3 million FCFA. *"The jihadists did not negotiate the dowry. They brought what they had, a little or a lot of money. We could not discuss it",* said the mother of a Timbuktu girl, forced to marry a jihadist. Moreover, witnesses recall that, according to Islam, one cannot deny the hand of one's daughter to a Muslim who proposes marriage. Moreover, fear of retaliation on the family should they refuse must have guided the decision of more than one father during this period of occupation. Through marriage, the family also ensured its protection by the occupant: *"Families who gave their daughters were protected by people from MUJAO. The marriage was a form of protection for families".*

The role of intermediaries

Only in rare cases would the jihadists themselves approach the girls they wanted to marry. A young Gao woman said that it was after she ran into a group of armed jihadists in the street that she received a visit from a woman she did not know, announcing that a man wanted to marry her. When she refused, the man went to her parents' house. *"He went to see my mother, who, in turn, said that she would never give her daughter to a stranger and that, besides, the decision to give her daughter in marriage was not up to her, that only her husband had the power to accept or refuse".* The father eventually gave in, but he never explained to the young woman the terms of the agreement with the man who wanted to marry her.

Another woman, a trader in Gao, was visited in her shop by an unarmed jihadist (she could not identify him as a jihadist straight away who proposed marriage. He introduced himself to the family as a "uniform-bearer" from Kidal and a member of a family known in the area. Since their daughter seemed willing, the father agreed. It was only afterwards that the girl discovered that her husband was a member of an armed group. *"I only begin to have doubts during the wedding ceremony, as well as my first three days of marriage with him. In the middle of the wedding celebration there were shots near the wedding site. In fact, it was jihadists expressing their joy. Then one night, I discovered that there was a large calibre gun under the mattress".*

In some cases, women have played the role of intermediary between the jihadist and his future wife. According to sources interviewed in Timbuktu, the jihadists made use of radicalized women from Mauritania to encourage Malian women to marry. "*Some foreign women radicalized many other women through sermons to prepare them to accept marriage with jihadists".* This indoctrination and radicalization occurred well before the occupation. *"They passively contributed to the integration of jihadists but they never used violence". "In some communities where women receive Quranic teaching, many have radicalized and share the visions and perceptions of the jihadists. They participated by organising sermons of radicalization and this went on for years".*

In Timbuktu, the jihadists also approached young men for information about unmarried women. Then, they negotiated directly with fathers or brothers and sent intermediaries to approach the young woman. Some Imams were also brought in to play the role of intermediaries between the jihadists and the young women's families.
As for the mothers, nothing suggests they had a role in these alliances since it is the father's place to make decisions, especially concerning the giving of a daughter's hand in marriage. An official in an NGO in Gao states that no mothers had come forward to complain about a forced marriage. Although the mothers have not been the instigators of marriage, then, they also did nothing to oppose or protest them. As for the role of women in the recruitment of their husbands or children into armed groups, no source has indicated that they had much influence, at least not in urban areas and non-radicalized communities. In contrast, one witness did report the case of a young man from the Wahhabi community who was encouraged by his wife to join MUJAO although he was not really inclined to do so.

Procreation: a strategy of implantation?

Alliances, even short term, have resulted in the birth of children, making the implantation of jihadists effective and sustainable. Without actually blaming these children, local people see them as reminders of the nightmare. *"The children of these marriages are still young; some are not even recognised as the children of jihadists. The relatives keep them secret so that they are not considered to be children of the community executioner". "These women and children are seen as reminders of the aggression of violent extremism on the people, but society is open and without bitterness".* Some of these children have stayed with their mothers; in Gao, NGOs currently support around thirty of them. Some witnesses expressed concern for their future: what stories do their mothers tell these children? Do the mothers idealize this episode of their lives at the risk of making the fathers seem like heroes of the past to the future generation?

3. Questioning the balance within the community

The abrupt and unexpected arrival of the jihadists took people by surprise. They had no time to develop avoidance strategies, in particular, how to cope with marriage proposals – this was particularly the case because the forms of alliance proposed by the jihadists were sometimes far from the tenets of Islam. The forced marriage of girls 14 or 15 years old, or of women already married, or collective marriage or forced polyandry[27] (i.e., several men – four or five men – combining their financial resources to marry the same woman) are practices foreign to Islam and Sharia. Such practices remained marginal but they had a significant enough impact on people for the sources interviewed in the study to mention them.

These various forms of alliance show that the jihadist groups, as well as their practices and customs, were not homogeneous. Those interviewed confirm this, speaking of men from Africa, Europe and Asia (i.e., Pakistan, Afghanistan etc.). These practices also reveal a certain degree of autonomy among the troops and the weakness of MUJAO command which allowed men to behave in violation and contradiction of the very principles they sought to impose on the people through Sharia.

Out of fear of reprisals, local society put up little resistance to the violation of these principles. The violent abuse committed by the MNLA before the arrival of MUJAO certainly explains the torpor of local people; this passivity, in turn, helped legitimize the practices of certain jihadists. That the victims of forced marriage, rape or sexual exploitation should remain silent after occupation may be surprising; civil society organisations in Gao report less than ten complaints. However, this silence can be explained by social pressure on all subjects of an intimate, family nature. In addition, when a father gives his daughter in marriage, society no longer considers that marriage to be 'forced'.

The tradition that keeps girls under the control of their father, women under that of their husbands, persists – although neither fathers nor spouses are now able to protect them. One can draw a parallel between the state's lack of protection of its citizens and the lack of protection of women by fathers and husbands. It was not, then, jihadist occupation that upset the customary rules for the protection of vulnerable people. Rather, these rules of protection underwent a transformation before the jihadists' arrival. The occupation only revealed the weaknesses in the social fabric, the

[27] Polyandry is only found in Africa among the Abisi and other ethnic groups in central Nigeria. Forced polyandry, as practiced in northern Mali during the occupation, does not exist in Africa. Currently, it is practiced in India where young girls are kidnapped in villages that have an insufficient number of girls for young men.

community and the State to provide protection to the most vulnerable, including women and children.

The use of women as pawns by an occupying army is not unique to Mali. However, the exploitation suffered by these women reveals their level of submission and the absence of protection from both the state and traditional society. No endogenous mechanism helped prevent the sexual exploitation of women. However, according to Malian historian Bintou Sanankoua[28], in the past, rules governing the art of war in Mali did protect women:*"In Mali, warfare was seen as both too serious and too dangerous to risk the life and liberty of women. As soon as war became imminent, we moved the women and children to a safe and supervised place".* This principle of protection is no longer respected today.

Instead the jihadists pursue a warrior tradition that is primarily found in East Africa, according to Yolande Diallo, – with marriage as one of the spoils of war – and this tradition has spread to the whole of Africa, most notably to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In a survey of African traditions and humanitarian law in Africa, Yolande Diallo[29] shows that, in conflicts in East Africa, women were never killed, but were instead kidnapped and married off to the victors. She explains this tradition by the image that these societies held of women: *"Woman is the origin, the source of life. If women are killed in fighting, the flow of life will soon dry up".* Since then, other research has provided different interpretations around superstitions. *"Fighters believed that attacking a woman was simply the first sign of their coming defeat. So, it was not because of their status as mothers that protection was provided, but this protection remains firmly rooted in the mentality of fighters"* [30]. Typically, these alliances also served to bring together families who had previously clashed. Thus, they also had diplomatic virtues.

Finally, respect for the person, temporarily or permanently, weak or dominant, is an essential rule of Islam, says Professor Ly Djibril[31], citing Koranic Sura 4, verse 36[32]. This rule, to protect the vulnerable (women, children, the elderly) in war was not respected by some jihadists from MUJAO nor by those in the community responsible for doing so.

4. In search of protection and the role of women in "humanizing" the jihadists

Through the interviews the study found that families, as much as the girls in them, were in search of protection, something only members of MUJAO were able to provide. This search for protection is expressed in the so-called 'marriages of interest', but also in the various remarks by women who were forced to marry jihadists yet show neither hatred nor bitterness. Speaking of her jihadist husband, one woman said, *"This is a gentleman who did not speak much and who has always met his family responsibilities. He always cared about me and did his best so that I would not be sad".*

Some low-status women in the Malian society (divorced, unmarried with a child, widowed, aged between 25-28 without marriage prospects) found a form of protection in marriage with jihadists. In some cases, such a marriage was even interpreted by those interviewed as a form of social

[28] Bintou Sanankoua, *Women, Endogeneous Governance and Conflict Prévention, Volume 2*, working document, CSAO/OCDE, October 2006, p.31.
[29] Yolande Diallo, *Traditions africaines et Droit humanitaire,* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1978), p.8.
[30] Ly Djibril, "Fondements humanitaires dans la société pulaar en Mauritanie et au Sénégal" International Review of the Red Cross, 832, 31-12-1998. https://www.icrc.org/fre/resources/documents/misc/5fzgmc.htm
[31] Djibril (1998).
[32] Djibril (1998), "Worship Allah and do not associate anything with him. Be kind to parents and near kinsmen, to orphans and the needy, to your neighbour who is your kin and to the neighbor afar, to the companion by your side and on the road, and to whomever is slave in your hands."

recognition. This social recognition was not nullified by the fact that the marriage took place during the period of occupation. *"Pretty much everywhere in the northern regions, there were cases of single women who married jihadists to gain respectability; because, in some circles, for a woman to be unmarried is frowned upon". "Some widows who could not provide for their children were tempted to marry the jihadists, but not for social prestige".* At Kadji, a village in the region of Gao where MUJAO had its headquarters, some of the more religious women also agreed to marry jihadists for religious reasons *"because they promised them a place in Paradise".*

Many testimonies highlight the role that women played in 'humanizing' the jihadists. Indirectly, the wives contributed to making them less violent and more socially acceptable. Several sources noted a change of attitude once jihadists married. *"Women make them more human because they bring them attention and affection; suddenly, it humanizes them. Even during the occupation, those who were married argued with the other jihadists committing flogging and other abuses".* Another testimony: *"Those who were married, often even intervened to ease the pain of a person presumed guilty of misconduct according to Sharia".* A young wife, speaking of her husband, minimizes his radicalism: *"In reality, he was not as radical as his other companions. He respected everyone and did not abuse his jihadist power. I think that is why I agreed to be his wife".*

These young women do not describe these men as monsters or murderers. One young woman even speaks of respect: *"He always showed respect for our home by refusing that his friends or relatives bring their weapons when they came to eat or chat. In addition, he always paid for food, except when he left for the bush".*
Through the interviews conducted in Timbuktu, the study found that the jihadists who came with their own wives, behaved differently from others: *"Many fighters came with their wives; these men were much more normal, open and flexible than the others".*

Alliances between jihadists and the young women of Gao and Timbuktu, therefore, brought the jihadists greater acceptance by society, gave them another social role beyond that of a warrior, and eventually made them part of the society. For the people, establishing a hierarchy between the 'married', 'good' jihadists and the 'unmarried', 'bad guys' helped them to better tolerate the presence of the occupiers.

5. Implantation or integration and what resistance?

The people of Gao, as of Timbuktu, do not speak of the 'integration' of jihadists in society but rather of their 'implantation'. Integration assumes roots in the family or the community. Certainly, by marrying local women, the jihadists implanted themselves locally – they entered families and offered some protection – but their aim was never to start families. Young women married to jihadists say their husbands would leave without warning to go off into the bush for days or on 'leave' to Mauritania. *"What was most amazing is that every time he traveled, he took all of his belongings, everything that was his. He could be gone for more than three months in the bush without leaving me so much as the money for food".*

According to the testimonies of jihadist wives, the men were seldom home and did not seek to integrate with the family or the community. *"He would show up unexpectedly and leave again at dawn with no explanation of what he did or where he went",* said one young woman from Timbuktu married to a jihadist.

Usually, upon marriage, women were installed in houses occupied by jihadists and had very little contact with their own families. *"The jihadists did not even want their wives to have contact with the community. Once they were married, they took them away. The few cases where they left their wives near the community, the women managed to socialize and humanize them",* says the mother of a girl married to a jihadist. The evidence shows that proximity with the community could change the

behaviour of jihadists by 'socializing' and 'humanizing' them, but that few of the jihadists seem to have agreed to live within the community.

Some women speak of their 'isolation'. *"My marriage brought a change in my relationship with my family since it was not possible for my parents, especially the males, to come see me. Only my father and my brothers were allowed to visit".* The wives did not have the right to have friends of either sex at home. This distance did not contribute to the social integration of their husbands.

The limits of resilience

What is interesting in the testimonies of women who married jihadists is their resilience and their forgiveness of their husbands. Not one source expressed hatred, anger or disgust. They did not speak ill of them. Those interviewing could even detect a certain regret about the sudden departure of their husbands. Some jihadists even gave their wives permission to remarry, implicitly accepting divorce: *"Only three months after the end of occupation, he sent someone to tell my family to give me in marriage to someone else, if ever the opportunity arose, for I am very young and he did not want my life to be ruined because of him".*

For these women – already considered by society as a "mujahideen wondo" (wife of a mujahideen) – reintegration into society can be difficult. In a highly stigmatizing society where deviance is not officially tolerated, these women may suffer a kind of double jeopardy. Today, they are abandoned women; some have left their villages, even the country, but little is known of their fate. In Gao, young people took the initiative, from the start when the first marriages started to happen, to organise awareness campaigns to prevent discrimination against these women. This campaign continues through community radio programmes and in youth meetings.

Resistance to occupation

In Gao, the occupation of the jihadists was perceived as more violent, and the people there seem to have resisted more, than in Timbuktu. According to those interviewed, women and young people in Gao demonstrated against the jihadists, who soon realized that it would be difficult to make the population accept them. The testimonies show a certain mistrust of jihadists by the young people, who would provoke them: *"Some young people brought out TV sets or devices for listening to music to challenge the jihadists".* If the jihadists were forced to negotiate with civil society, they did not manage to 'win their hearts'. For example, when MUJAO wanted to destroy the Tomb of Askia in Gao, the women and young people demonstrated in the streets and prevented its destruction.

One young woman, forced to marry a jihadist, said her marriage lasted barely a week: *"As soon as I knew that they, he and his companions, did not like women to go unveiled, I no longer covered my head and that discouraged him so much he filed for divorce".* The nonchalance of this remark on the part of a 15 years old girl is evidence that some forms of resistance were possible.

In Timbuktu, the jihadist groups expressed disappointment at the lack of co-operation from the people. *"They had little success in recruiting young people to join them. In the suburbs, they recruited less than ten men. In the end, they became more violent".* To punish the people for being unco-operative, for example, the jihadists stopped fueling the power plant, but quickly realized they were also hurting themselves so they put the electricity back on. *"At the end of the occupation, the jihadists became very aggressive and their methods changed. It was then that they started to rape and flog. They were very angry because they knew that they were losing the city and would have to leave".*

Conclusion

From the many testimonies collected during the study, this report has found that, through passive or active resistance, the people prevented integration of the jihadists into local society and that the occupiers were unable to win hearts. At best, some were perceived as more 'human' than others. Their frequent trips and long absences may also explain their inability to take root. Despite alliances with the women, these wives say they had very little information about their husbands; the men approached them and that was all. Most jihadists preferred to move their 'homes' away from the communities of their wives, suggesting a desire for 'implantation' rather than 'integration'. Time was also an important factor; their presence in the local community was much too short for full integration. Most of them never even saw the children born of their unions.

The birth of children from such alliances, however, remains an important and lasting sign of their implantation. Whether it was a strategy of alliance or just its consequence, the presence of these children remains an indelible mark on the communities which were occupied.

Malian society has emerged weakened by this crisis, for it revealed the inability of society to protect its most vulnerable members. The upheavals within local society caused by the occupation could have consequences on the relations between men and women. The women have learned that they cannot count on their men to protect them. Hence, the traditional relationship of submission in return for protection is now obsolete. New forms of relationship between the sexes must now emerge.

If, for the moment, Malian society is not yet ready to address the issues around reintegrating women married to jihadists, the issues are still there. What will happen to these women abandoned by their husbands? How will society take care of them, especially those who agreed to marry members of MUJAO? What will be their status? And what about the children, whether from forced marriages or not, who remain living symbols of the occupation? Finally, how can society do a better job of protecting young girls, who are among the most vulnerable in areas where insecurity persists?

Occupation will also have an impact on inter-generational relationships: the young jihadist fighters demonstrated that it is enough to be armed to rule over the adult world. It will, consequently, be necessary to think about the relationship between young and old in Mali. Another important issue is the radicalization of young people: if the jihadists did not manage to integrate into local society, their ideas do seem to have convinced some young people. In Timbuktu, testimonies indicate the presence and/or return of former jihadists close to AQIM who are attempting to recruit young people, encouraging them to leave school in favour of mosques with a radical teaching of Islam. If Malian society ignores this phenomenon now, it risks allowing a new religious crisis to arise in the forthcoming years.

IV. THE INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS OF THE SAHEL'S BORDER REGIONS: A DEEPER APPROACH TO THE SECURITY ISSUE

Pierre-Michel Joana

Why are insecurity and violent extremism so characteristic of the border regions of the Sahel? There are several answers to that question, stemming from three different factors.

The first factor is the nature of these borders. They are sometimes areas of intense activity and contact, sometimes mere lines on an official map, unknown or ignored by the few people who frequent the region. In both cases, the borders exist mainly for governments. For the local people – who tend to view them as virtual, unjustified obstacles and who deliberately break any rule that seems meaningless – respect for borders is far from obvious. This is emphasized by the fact that the rules which accompany the borders, enforced by agents of the States on both sides, actually create a degree of insecurity for these people.

The second factor is the opportunity the borders offer for a range of lucrative activities – legal and illegal – for the people who live there, and for traffickers and government officials. These activities are an obvious manifestation of the weakness of the States concerned and lead to conflict and additional insecurity.

The third factor is that the borders offer refuge from threat, disaster and prosecution 'on the other side'. This use of the borders is both a consequence, and the cause, of the insecurity which is common in these regions.

All three factors concern ethnic groups which are distinct but who share solidarity, complicity, and the same compromises in terms of lifestyles and methods of survival. These groups function in informal systems of such 'viscosity' as to confuse the outside observer, and they also suggest the search for security is, perhaps, not as essential as it seems at first glance.

1. A brief history of the borders

The borders of the Sahel region have two main features: their topography and their colonial geo-politics. Some of these borders were established along a geographical feature that is less a barrier than a natural advantage, and which concentrates human activities. This is the case, for example, of the border between Mauritania and Senegal where people have long shared the use of the Senegal River (for fishing and agriculture). It also applies to the Mali-Niger border between Ansongo and Tillaberi, where people's livelihoods depend on the Niger River. A further example is the Lake Chad region where four nations (Chad, Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon) exploit the same fish stocks, the same pastoral and agricultural potential, and whose people live on both sides of the rivers emptying into Lake Chad (the Yobe River between Niger and Nigeria, the Chari and the Logone between Chad and Cameroon).

In most cases, however, the Sahel's borders are 'unnatural' and virtual: long straight lines drawn across maps of the Sahara. The General Act of the Berlin Conference, signed on 26 February 1885, allowed Britain, France and Germany to divide up their zones of influence. This led, after 1900, to the borders of French West Africa (AOF, north of the 14th parallel) and French Equatorial Africa (AEF), as well as the borders of Nigeria and Cameroon which exist today. The present boundaries of the States considered in this report were drawn up in the late 1950s and created from the two major French colonies (AOF and AEF). On the eve of independence, thousands of kilometres of new borders were consequently added to the region to partition the AOF into the eight French colonies within it.

These colonial borders were subsequently legitimized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Cairo in July 1964, with the resolution "to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence". Respect for these colonial borders, however, partitioned some ethnic groups into different states. Members of a Tuareg family, for example, may have ended up with no less than six different nationalities. The situation is the same for the Peul/Fulani and other ethnic groups who frequently find themselves as minorities in the States which administer them, often not without mistreatment and, of course, a people mistreated by several States can have no sense of security. When the OAU made its decision in 1964 to uphold "the principle of the inviolability of borders inherited from colonization", it did so out of fear that territorial disputes between neighbours would be numerous. In fact, except for the Algerian-Moroccan border conflict in 1964 and the Moroccan dispute over the former Spanish Sahara, skirmishes between neighbouring countries have been rare. In the area considered by this report, only three border areas have been the subject of dispute and conflict between States: the Aozou strip between Chad and Libya (1978-1987); the Agacher zone between Mali and Burkina Faso (1985[33]); and the Mauritania-Senegal Border War (1989-1991[34]).

When the countries of the region became independent in the 1960s, they faced innumerable challenges concerning ethnic diversity, the management of outlying regions from the capital, economic transformation, development and education. They also had to establish systems of security, from almost nothing. The weakness of initial governance contributed to the emergence of deep inner crises. The situation in the Sahel today is the consequence, half a century later, of these poorly-met challenges. In terms of security, the Sahel is even more complex than it seems to the majority of outside partners who have only taken a serious interest in the region since the outbreak of the terrorist threat. The relative stability mentioned earlier has not prevented the Sahel's borders, once believed to be the solution, from gradually becoming the problem.

First, territorial and nationalist claims have arisen inside each country concerned[35] without challenging the existing borders. Rather, these claims seek to add additional borders[36], just as virtual and questionable. These borders have been drawn across vast, desert areas which are sparsely populated yet places of intense human activity due to the increasingly easy movement of people[37]. They are also extremely difficult to oversee (although, in principle, technical progress allows for closer monitoring[38]). Frequently, these areas turn into 'no man's lands', as the central authorities are incapable of providing administrative control with any meaning for the people who live and work there.

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[33] The Agacher Strip War, also known as the "Christmas War ", concerns a strip of semi-desert land 160km long by 30km wide, believed to have natural gas and mineral resources. The case was arbitrated by the International Court of Justice in The Hague which, in its decision of 22 December 1986, confirmed the colonial borders.

[34] Friction between the sedentary people of Senegalese origin and the Peuls and Moor pastoralists in Mauritania has led to violent inter-ethnic confrontation in Mauritanian, as well as Senegalese, towns along the river. Some 160,000 Mauritanians and 70,000 Senegalese had to be repatriated to their countries of origin. Diplomatic relations between Mauritania and Senegal were broken off from 1989 to 1992.

[35] "While the West has borders that were generally established over centuries of warfare and through multiple negotiations, the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa inherited borders traced by the colonialists barely a century ago. The concept of borders is, then, relatively recent, as are the distinctions of identity that these limits may generate", Christian Bouquet, "Artificialité des frontières en Afrique sub-saharienne. Turbulences et fermentation sur les marges", *Les Cahiers d'Outremer*, No.222, April-June 2003.

[36]It is interesting to note that the latest claim for independence for Azawad, concerning the majority of the Tuareg people, does not contest Mali's exterior borders which make the Tuaregs citizens of five different countries (to which can be added Libya, which has no border with Mali). This claim, if satisfied, will lead to the creation of a 'new border' which cuts Mali in two: a border which will be just as artifical and dubious to the people of northern Mali.

[37] Due to modern methods of transportation and geo-localization which allow the use of traditional routes adapted to the foot (or camel) and which, most importantly, have sources of water.

[38] Indeed, only people whose papers are 'in order' are allowed to cross by the border guards.

Now, a system is needed to counter large-scale trafficking (human/weapons/drugs) and to fight the armed groups who use these borders as a virtual curtain of protection. This system should, however, not handicap the survival activities of the people there[39]. The solution probably involves consideration of how these border areas are managed, with the States concerned taking a co-ordinated and harmonized approach.

2. Opportunity on the borders

Whatever the type of border, probably the Sahel's primary characteristic is the persistence of deep ethnic solidarity across transnational groups who are different in many ways but share the same space. This transnational solidarity in the region is increased by ancient[40] and intense migration for economic, family and religious reasons[41]. The major transnational groups are:

- Nomadic or sedentary Arabs (Berabiches, Kunta, Gihayna, Libyans, Shuwa etc.) who migrate from Mauritania to Chad.
- Tuaregs, mainly nomads, who migrate from Mali to Chad.
- Toubou, nomadic or sedentary, in Niger, Chad and Libya.
- Peul/Fulani, who are either nomadic or sedentary and who are present throughout the Sahel from Mauritania to Chad and Senegal to Congo.
- Different sedentary Songhai groups who live along the Niger River, from Mauritania to Niger.
- Wolof, Toucouleur, Mandingo in Senegal, Mauritania and Mali.
- Hausa, who are sedentary but travellers, who migrate from Mauritania to Cameroon.
- Bornouans (Kanuri, Kanembou, Beri-Beri, Buduma) around Lake Chad including inNiger, Chad and Nigeria.

In addition, the Sahel-Saharan zone is a space where human societies are *societies of mutual knowledge* (i.e. where everyone knows everyone else, on both sides of the border). For any issue arising in the area, then, there are three viewpoints: that of the 'people of the Sahel', who know every detail which unites, or causes conflict between, them; that of governments, who feign ignorance of such knowledge; and that of local government officials, themselves 'people of the Sahel', who can adopt either position. Mutual knowledge is both the source of informal, even illegal, practices, but also the best way to understand and resolve conflicts[42]. However, it must be understood that management of such networks of mutual knowledge is often quite localized and largely beyond state control. Consequently, in the present circumstances, it is in the relevant government's interest not to interfere, in order to avoid poisoning relationships which manage themselves and are not easily reconciled with international law. Non-interference, however, should not prevent governments from trying to analyse these situations and it should not prevent them from giving instructions for flexibility to the officials who must deal with them.

The predominance of the so-called informal economy at the centre and on the periphery of all countries in the Sahel makes it all the easier for people to practice a range of lucrative activities. In

[39] The Buduma people of Lake Chad offer a typical case. This group, originally pastoralist, turned to fishing to take advantage of the informal trade in dried fish across the virtual border between Chad and Nigeria, since the rules were easy to get around. However, Boko Haram's presence in the area, and the strict control of activities and borders by Chad and Nigeria's military forces, have temporarily interrupted these activities and created a shortage of fish in Niger and Nigeria and a partial control of the trade by Boko Haram. See Christian Bouquet "Artificialité des frontières en Afrique subsaharienne. Turbulences et fermentation sur les marges", *Les Cahiers d'Outremer*, No.222, April-June 2003.

[40] This explains the mix of ethnic and linguistic groups throughout the Sahel.

[41] There is an intense circulation of preachers and students of Quranic schools from one country to another and, in particular, of students into Mauritania, Senegal and northern Nigeria.

[42] See Mohamed Sylla, "Frontière Mali-Mauritanie: Vive tension à Léya ", *Maliweb.net*, 10 August 2015. https://www.maliweb.net/insecurite/frontiere-mali-mauritanie-vive-tension-a-leya-1098062.html

addition, there is a tradition among the border peoples, whether sedentary or nomadic, of 'mixed' commerce. This combines both legal and informal transactions – the smuggling of consumer goods and the trafficking in illegal goods or weapons – often performed by the same groups of people. The same person may furnish weapons and logistical support to armed groups or to the bandits known as 'highway bandits' while continuing his/her main commercial activity (for example, smuggling/trading in pasta, fuel and cigarettes, with some occasional cocaine) without being ideologically committed to violent religious extremism or even feeling that he/she is involved in serious crime. Assisting in the transit of illegal migrants to Europe can be another source of additional income[43].

From another point of view, the government agents expected to act in the name of the state take advantage of the opportunity offered by the border to make money off the traders, and even the traffickers. This racketing sometimes represents their main source of income, and stories abound of customs officials refusing promotions which would require a transfer, so as not to give up such lucrative activities to others[44]. As for the security forces, earning €100 per month, how can they resist €5000 offered by a dealer in arms or intercepted cocaine[45]?

What international partners call "corruption" is often a means of survival or a way to achieve social status through the informal redistribution of state resources or the personal use of state authority. Respect for the powerful[46], which is deeply rooted in this culture, promotes a carefully maintained paternalism. The humble are kept in a state of dependence by the uncontrolled capture of the informal system of the redistribution of state resources (without which many people could not live) and the collection of additional income by those with some power or administrative or judicial authority (something known by all, described in detail by the ordinary citizen, and generally accepted). Obviously, all of these opportunities are a source of conflict and insecurity as they create competition for opportunities for potential profit, and this kind of competition has nothing to do with the struggle of good against evil, or that of the law against illegal activities.

Thus, the greatest need of the people of the Sahel is human security: to be able to feed themselves, educate their children, get medical care, enjoy free movement, obtain justice simply and equitably, and have access to a modicum of modernity. Unfortunately, the further one is from the centre or the capital, the less human security is assured. It will not be action plans (theoretically combining development and security) which significantly change things. The major factors for development are put in place only after a certain level of security is achieved[47]. So, the security forces often arrive first, even if their arrival is supported by brilliant programmes of reform in the security sector. The people living on the borders, however, perceive their arrival as a takeover, which in no way meets their own needs. For them, the priority is to fill the needs listed earlier, even if doing so means accepting a certain level of insecurity which they cope with in their own way (e.g., through ethnic relations, mutual acquaintance networks, Islam, and traditional chiefs). The eruption of violent extremism is

[43] An extract from a text by Cristina Barrios of the EUISS, "Transit Niger: migrants, rebels and traffickers" provides an example: "The city of Agadez is the staging post of choice for most groups of migrants coming from West Africa, who are hosted – often by nationality – in houses and neighbourhoods that are well-known to the local authorities. Migrants wait there for a matter of days or weeks until their trip to the border with Algeria or Libya can be paid for and organised; 85% of them currently opt for Libya, according to the Government of Niger. Drivers who can take 30-40 people in pickup trucks make about €4,000 per month. They co-operate with traffickers on the Libyan side of the border and often act in collusion with local security forces". http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/transit-niger-migrants-rebels-and-traffickers/

[44] From the author's conversation with President Gbagbo in 2004.

[45] Interview by the author with the Directors of internal security in Niger (June 2013).

[46] During a seminar organised by the EUTANS project in Nigeria ("Workshop on human rights in military operations", Abuja, October 2014), the participants, who were all members of the Nigerian security forces, estimated that the most important values in Nigerian society are religion and power.

[47] Examination of the "exit strategies" of different countries in the region clearly show that few administrators, judges, doctors or teachers are willing to be sent to the area, or sent back, unless security is first assured (Mali is a case in point).

merely an additional degree of insecurity, disrupting the margins of a daily life which is already difficult.

3. Borders: disorganised and sometimes dangerous zones of refuge

The political and security situation in the Sahel States transforms the border regions into, often disorganized, refuge areas. This is probably the most obvious manifestation of government weakness and the difficulties in controlling territory, especially in areas which are remote from the centre and difficult to access. This problem is a historical fact which is not unique to the Sahel, nor even to post-colonial States, since it applies elsewhere and at other periods of time[48]. Each country also suffers, to a certain degree, from the consequences of instability in other countries of the Sahel. The emergence of transnational threats due to the weakness or bankruptcy of certain nations makes things worse. The development of organised crime and terrorism, and the insecurity which results from it, are factors which further complicate the situation in the border areas.

Moreover, many refugees, even the "returned"[49], live in camps or with families near their country of origin, but on the other side of the border. In the Sahel, they come mainly from Mali and Nigeria with over 300,000 refugees camped near these borders. To these people must be added 1.5 million displaced people, 1.4 million of whom are Nigerians who have fled the border areas of the northeast[50]. Their hosts, like the displaced people, suffer shortages[51]. Insecurity outside the refugee camps[52] (which are being better controlled and protected thanks to aid from international organisations) adds to the precarious situation inside them (with makeshift accommodation as well as malnutrition, lack of healthcare, and little schooling).

Illegal armed groups, as is usual with insurrectionary movements, use the border region close to their 'target' country as a zone of refuge, a logistics base and, sometimes, a pool for recruitment among the refugees and local people. Thus, in Ansar Dine's recent attacks on Malian towns near the border, the attack on Nara[53] originated in Nema (Mauritania), while the attacks on Misséni[54] and Fakola[55] came from the Ivory Coast. Both sides of the border in the Sahel also suffer from insecurity generated by armed groups which benefit from:

- The great difficulty for governments in countries on either side of a border to co-operate spontaneously, and the existence of a kind of 'code of silence' between them. Indeed, it is not uncommon for a government to refuse to provide spontaneous assistance to another, or to not even think of doing so, for fear of 'getting involved in what does not concern it'. It is even more rare for a government to acknowledge abnormal practices in another jurisdiction, for fear of 'reprisals'. This difficulty is multiplied when it comes to getting two or more different governments to co-operate.

[48] The Ghana Empire (4th-11th century), the Mali Empire (1st-15th century), the Songhai Empire (15th-16th century), Greater Morocco (18th-19th century), the kingdoms of Bambara, Peul, and then Toucouleur from the 19th century, the Empires and cCaliphates of Sokoto and Bornou, French West Africa (AOF), and, later, the short-lived Mali Federation, were all confronted with the same problems on their fringes.

[49] People who have emigrated to a neighbouring country and returned to their country of origin due to serious crises, often subsequently living as refugees in their country of origin.

[50] The figures cited come from UNHCR statistics, July 2015. http://data.unhcr.org/SahelSituation/regional.php

[51] In the region of Diffa in the south of Niger, half of the population already suffers from a lack of food and the arrival of Nigerian refugees has doubled the population.

[52] For example, the border regions of eastern Mauritania are under military authority.

[53] 27 June 2015.

[54] 16 June 2015.

[55] 28 June 2015.

- The inadequacy of the army (and the rare internal security forces) to deal with security problems faced by the States. Poorly equipped, badly organised and with little support[56], these forces are perceived by the population as enforcers for those in power, rather than as units intended to provide security for the people.
- Reluctance by the population to be controlled by the government, which is often mistrusted. There is a particular lack of confidence in the courts and, as a result, people do not appeal to the justice system to defend their rights, sometimes preferring to establish – or employ – vigilante justice. This choice is the denunciation of the state's absence in the border areas, and, simultaneously, the expression of a demand for real government.
- The persistence of traditional rule which often generates consensus and social peace but is even more difficult to control in terms of 'governance'. One of the biggest risks is that the official government will use traditional rule, thereby discrediting and weakening it in the eyes of the people[57]. Some traditional rulers – used as channels of influence by the colonial States, then by the independent governments – have lost all authority. There is probably an urgent need to identify, and use, other channels of influence.
- The low level of education, which makes people more susceptible to manipulation and other abuses of authority.
- A relationship with physical and social violence which is out of step with the perceptions of Western societies: the suffering of the weak and the defeated (captured rebels, thieves or criminals in custody[58]) leaves too many people in the Sahelian States indifferent[59]. While this is unfortunate, it shows that Sahelian societies have a greater tolerance of a certain level of violence in society.

Only Islam, the religion of the great majority in all border areas of the Sahel, has the potential to regulate social life, even if it is also used by the most violent extremists. Islam, with its main brotherhoods (Tijaniya, Sanoussiya, Mouridiya, Qadiriya etc.) and numerous forms, has considerable influence. Whatever the state constitution, the concept of secularism is not easily accepted in the Sahel, let alone applied[60]. The transnational solidarity of the *Ummah,* combined with a certain permeability and tolerance of the extremists[61], and a degree of collusion between the most radical Islamists and the most peaceful believers, complicates the understanding of the phenomenon but, perhaps, helps mitigate violence between competitors. For example, in informal interviews conducted by the author between 2011-2015 with Muslim religious leaders, journalists, security officers, magistrates or officials of civil society in the Sahelian countries, it was obvious that everyone knew radicalized individuals, and often even the places where the most radical theses were spread, without denouncing them. This tolerance of extremists, although it may be deplored and even

[56] Defense budgets are low in countries in the Sahel in comparison with their richer neighbours. In millions of US dollars: Senegal, 240; Chad, 250; Niger, 150; Mali, 154; Mauritania, 150; Burkina Faso, 161; Cameroon, 400; and Nigeria, 2400. In comparison, Algeria's budget is 10,000 and Morocco's is 4000. The budgets are even lower for internal security forces and the court system (source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI).

[57] See the role of the Lamido in the far northern province of Cameroon.

[58] In Bamako, the act of putting a tyre around someone's neck and setting it on fire is called a "320" (from the price of a can of gasoline and a box of matches).

[59] Cf. Aboubacar Dicko and Sory Ibrahima Coulibaly, "L'Etat de droit ridiculisé: Les populations continuent à lyncher et à brûler les 'voleurs' à Bamako", *Maliweb.net*, 20 August 2014. http://www.maliweb.net/societe/letat-droit-ridiculise-les-populations-continuent-lyncher-bruler-les-voleurs-bamako-476782.html. François Bamako (pseudonym) and François-Damien Bourgery, "Bamako: brûlé vif pour avoir volé une moto", *France 24*, 8 October 2013. http://observers.france24.com/fr/20131008-mali-bamako-article-320-voleur-brule-vif-moto

[60] During the meeting of the G5 Sahel Security and Religious Affairs Ministers (14 May 2015), the idea to "tropicalize" secular society was raised. The final declaration states: "The nations of the Sahel G5 consider that religion is a factor for development and peace when it is not treated as a marginal issue through lenses that favour radical trends. Hence, the religious question must be considered in its transversality, in the management of the problems of durable human development".

[61] As can be the case even inside a family or within a circle of friends.

considered double-dealing[62], may also help to keep a tenuous link with 'misguided brothers' and, as such, curb their violence.

Conclusion

It is in this environment that the border communities live – both victims and actors of the 'viscosity' resulting from the three factors described earlier (nature, opportunities, and uses of the border). These people attempt to survive, sometimes to prosper, in poor regions that nevertheless offer sources of income (both legal and illegal) while profiting from, or submitting to, cross-border ethnic and religious solidarity. To limit the impact on their livelihoods they deal with violent armed groups and with government officials who are not always honest and of little help to citizens.

Under these conditions, the concepts of security and insecurity seem vague and do not always constitute the primary concerns of the men and women living on the borders. These people can cope with a level of insecurity which appears unbearable to outside observers because they know the codes and they concentrate the bulk of their energy on meeting their main concerns: earning a living, educating their children, finding basic healthcare, and preserving their ethnic and religious identity which provides a certain solidarity. For now, economic resources from the informal sector (trafficking and petty deals) ensure survival. As for violent extremism, these people suffer more from the consequences of this extremism (for example, the burden of supporting refugees) than from its direct effects. These direct effects tend to affect the government of cities, with the notable exception of Nigeria where the Boko Haram madness affects everyone.

Consequently, radical (and bureaucratic) solutions which result mainly in military and police measures are likely to prove ineffective in the long term. This is often misunderstood by both the central States and their partners outside and correcting this should lead to a better understanding of the 'security–development' relationship. Governments should probably accept the need to live in, and with, this 'viscosity', which implies a certain level of insecurity. Integrating the related risks, gradually seeking solutions on a case-by-case basis with the people in their communities so they can cope better with these difficulties – this is the best hope for a gradual exit from insecurity. International partners should, with goodwill, support the States of the Sahel in this process and not regularly invent new solutions in their place[63].

However, the current trend among the partners of the Sahel nations is to address the problem of borders by first improving control. This approach, while certainly logical, adds additional stress to the lives of local people without addressing the challenge presented by those whose illicit or subversive activities allow them to avoid border crossings. If measures by the police, customs officers and military in the area were truly effective (fortunately, an unlikely hypothesis), a large part of the population would probably be deprived of income from the informal economy and trafficking. This would aggravate the situation since development measures would not be able to compensate for this loss of income at the same rate. New security problems would then be likely to appear, to be immediately exploited by the violent extremist groups.

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[62] Extract from an interview by the author with M. T., Director of a Nigerien NGO in Niamey on 10 April 10 2013: "The overwhelming tendency in society is to make an ostentatious practice of Islam (behavior, dress). In the high schools, there are more and more sermons, at the request of the students. Meanwhile, the Government does not reflect on the problem, all the ideas are coming from the outside, whereas it is the Government's place to think of them. It seems that the elite is preparing itself intellectually, and underhandedly, for an Islamic state, just in case. The more that outsiders take care of the problem in Niger, the more difficult the situation will be to handle and the more that any solutions imagined will be suspect".

[63] "Sustaining peace – which fundamentally concerns reconciliation and building a common vision of a society – must be understood as a task that only national stakeholders can undertake" (review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, 21 May 2015).

V. SECURITY REGIMES IN THE SAHEL: THE ROLE OF THE STATE

Jean-François Bayart

From analysis to action: Avenues for reflection

Avenue for reflection 1: The political nature of violence, and of its social roots, must be understood if states are to respond other than by crude police or military suppression.

Violence in the Sahel, though it may be characterised as jihadist, is not reducible to ethnicity, Islam, or the combined effect of Salafism and Pentecostalism as "complementary enemies"[64] (to quote the title of Germaine Tillon's classic work on the Algerian war of independence), the latter being a phenomenon particularly in evidence in Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire. From the sociological standpoint, it relates to a broader range of phenomena than that represented by Islamic mobilization alone. The spectrum encompasses the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda; the various Congolese rebels and militias; the armed movements involved in the civil conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic; as well as including the criminality of highway robbers and the self-styled 'combatants' who exact cash payments and steal cattle. It also extends over the adventures and misadventures of individual young men – particularly when they travel away from home – and may be seen as a rite of passage on reaching the age of adulthood, just as the choice of emigration can be seen this way. It also has a political dimension, in the sense that it is a sign of the inability of states which have emerged from colonization to cater for the social needs of the mass of their populations. Regrettable though it may be, violence is a response from the least privileged to the injustice and oppression of the dominant class, which can even overcome the otherwise predominant will of the elite groups. It is a response framed in an ideological or religious form by the semi-educated who have emerged either from state schools or from the Quranic system of instruction. It also arises from the prevalent economic problems, which include issues such as land and housing; the relationship between cattle raisers and crop farmers; and the checks on cross-border markets. In other words, violence finds real social roots among the young – and, more specifically, the young of subordinate groups, inferior castes or humble origins – as well as among women, who act not as the passive objects envisaged by Islam, but as fully independent in their own right. As to its targets, these are more or less focused on the administrative and governmental authorities as well as the status of traditional chiefs and the religious establishment.

No military or security policy will succeed in eradicating violence if such a policy is not accompanied by a programme of public investment and redistribution of wealth on the part of regional states (whose people aspire to improved living standards, and whose principle and legitimacy they do not reject, as long as the states live up to their responsibilities). Oppression alone, as the case of Nigeria and, more recently, of Cameroon demonstrate, has a contrary effect, exacerbating the radicalization of the Islamic movements and enhancing their ability to attract recruits. Meanwhile the elevation of radicalization to a regional, or even international, scale can be sufficient to destabilize states which become involved in combatting radicalization (following the pattern of events in Kenya after its intervention in Somalia, and as Chad and Cameroon have quickly discovered to their regret with their involvement in Nigeria).

[64] Germaine Tillon, *Les Ennemis complémentaires*, Paris, Éditions de Minuit, 1957, reprinted, Paris, Tirésias, 2005.

Avenue for reflection 2: Africa's intellectuals must play their part in the state and contribute to its redefinition, in conjunction with the machinery of technocratic, and neoliberal, 'good governance'.

The multilateral machinery of the 'construction of the state' and of 'good governance' has revealed its limitations, particularly in Mali. The promised depoliticization of problems, in fact, leaves them impossible to solve. Violence brings to the fore issues of a political and social nature, which must be dealt with. The tacit consensus on which development is based, together with the cash flows involved, have drawn virtually all intellectuals and academics into the machinations of a morally bankrupt state. Thus, it is not by accident that democratic demands are made today by musical performers rather than by intellectuals, as is the case in Burkina Faso and Senegal. It would hardly be an exaggeration to speak of a "trahison des clercs" in the Sahel. *In the modern world, Africa may have greater need of political philosophy, jurisprudence and even ideology than of the science of economics*. Only African thinkers have the ability to formulate the questions relating to the necessary restructuring of the state, on the intersection of its Western origins and its Sahelian resources. This will include its approach to the religious sphere – bearing in mind that the concept of secularism is, historically, inextricable from that of subjection to a dominant class – and to institutions that have emerged from colonization which are broadly seen as socially undesirable.

3: The idea of territory (including frontiers and ownership) should be reconsidered, in both its political and juridical aspects, to enable the state to accommodate the social and geographical mobility of the citizens of the region.

This exercise in reinvention should primarily focus on the definition of frontiers, in the sense of frontiers as both a margin and a limit. Sahelian societies are mobile societies, societies of movement, even pioneer societies. This is vouched for by the scale of the migratory movements within, and between, states (greater than the scale of emigration to destinations beyond the continent); by the existence of subcontinental, continental and intercontinental diasporas; and by the commercial dynamism of bodies of water bounded by different states, such as Lake Chad. The state should learn to deterritorialize itself, adapting its territorial laws to take account of demographic dynamics – for instance, by according special status to frontier inhabitants and through the formalisation of the law concerning the use of common resources to prevent their being acquired by national elites or by foreign investors. It would be inappropriate, however, to turn back to antiquated notions of tradition, such as were invented by the colonisers. In the past, this only served to disguise the crude accumulation of capital by foreign occupiers as well as by the local wealthy people. Rather, what is required is the reinvention of a novel and authentic state, based on the rule of law for the benefit of its citizens.

The recommendations above are based on the analysis which follows.

For some ten years, jihadism has guaranteed the position of the Sahel in the forefront of the news. It has regenerated the time-worn theme of Africa's 'failed' states – a phenomenon purportedly due to the intrinsic inadequacy of Africa's societies – with the novel feature that this already badly-formulated problem is reduced to an overarching concept of 'security'. Jihadism, however, can only be understood through the lens of history, and in political terms, and no military solution to it will be successful. A political response, on the other hand, which would imply reinvention of the state, would be able to stem the advance of jihadism by reducing the social base available to jihadism for mobilization.

1. Security regimes in the Sahel: the vocabulary

In interrogating the issue of security regimes in the Sahel, it is crucial to return to basics. None of the fundamental terms of the discourse, though apparently natural, are in fact self-evident.

***First*, the idea of a regime** clearly resonates with that of a political regime. In reality, a number of the states around the Sahara are in the grip of political regimes which are evidently security-based, which could even be called "securocratic". Algeria and Tunisia (as the latter was in Ben Ali's day) are examples. Every such security-based state has provided itself with a powerful police or military security service whose scope ranges well beyond what is compatible with democracy, except perhaps in the case of Senegal. In this context, the distinction between military and civilian regimes is not meaningful. The majority of military regimes have in the end 'civilianised' themselves – while continuing to base their power on the army – while civil elites have always contrived to benefit from coups d'état. The most significant process, concealed behind the facade of formal institutions, is that of the reproduction of a dominant class. This is, in the normal case, one which has taken shape during the colonial period and has since engineered the continuation of its prosperity, whether under dirigiste and statist economic policies or during periods of liberalisation.

At the same time, the concept of a "régime", in French usage, also has other dimensions. First, there is the "régime" of an engine (a French language expression signifying what is called, in English, its rpm – revolutions per minute). A further relevant concept is Foucault's "regime of truth" (*régime de verité*)[65]. The definition of this expression draws attention to the fact that social and institutional actors, according to their roles, choose their relationship to the realm of security, finding in it what Foucault calls "subjectification": the creation of a moral subject. This places the accent on the diversity of possible regimes of 'security', none according the subject the same significance, or effectively the same "truth".

***Second*, the concept of 'security' has, itself, multiple senses and has taken on very different meanings from one era to another, even in the West,** as the philosopher Frédéric Gros has pointed out[66]. It may mean:

1) Calmness in the face of danger and in danger; a good conscience in adversity; a confident and peaceful state of mind; the *ataraxia* (freedom from passion; calmness) of which the ancient Greeks spoke; *securitas* in the vocabulary of Seneca (whose dictionary definition is "freedom from anxiety").[67]

2) Security in the sense of the objective absence of dangers and threats: an idea whose origin is largely Christian which persisted into the Communist notion of the "Millennium" or notions of universal Monarchy or Empire. This concept may have persisted, without his awareness, into Francis Fukuyama's notorious idea of the "end of history".

3) Security as a synthesis between state and security, with the one as guarantor of the other. In this case, security becomes an element of objective public order, characterised by the absence of threats to life, liberty or the right to property, and which is dependent on the existence of a sovereign state, which takes on, over time, an increasingly 'national' character – somewhere between a state of security and the security of the state. In this context, the state is often described as 'national' but is, in fact, increasingly 'global', though, as this report

[65] As Foucault puts it: "Each society has its regime of truth, its general politics of truth: that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true". See Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power", in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, Colin Gordon (Ed.), New York, Pantheon, 1980, pp. 109-133.

[66] Frédéric Gros, *Le Principe de sécurité*, Paris, Gallimard, 2012. For a review of this work, see the survey undertaken by Blaise Bachofen, "La sécurité, toute une histoire", *La Vie des Idées*, 12 December 2012, http://www.laviedesidees.fr/IMG/pdf/20121203_gros_cr_bachofen.pdf.

[67] See *ataraxia*, Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* (abridged), Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 112; *A Latin Dictionary*, Charlton T. Lewis, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 950.

outlines, the same reality is in fact designated by both descriptions, as it becomes clear that the nation state is a product, rather than a victim, of globalisation, in contrast to the received idea on this subject.

All these different senses of security are evidently political, ideological and even philosophical constructions, each of which has its own moment in history. For example, in the 1950s, the French state condemned the so-called Algerian terrorists – the same group with whom it negotiated in 1961 and from which it now buys oil and gas while condemning, instead, the "terrorists" of AQIM ("Al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb")[68]. It is a known fact that, if you want to drown your dog, first you call him a terrorist[69]. In addition, the various definitions of security can be distinct from, and in contradiction with, each other. Theorists and practitioners in the field of the security of the state do not always experience *securitas* in the face of danger, and their responses may objectively create danger not only for troublemakers ("terrorise the terrorists", as the late French former interior minister Charles Pasqua said) but also for ordinary citizens – who may potentially fall victim to drones deployed in the 'anti-terrorist struggle' – or for migrants. Similarly, security may manifest itself in different ways within a specific framework. In the context of the contemporary state, security takes different forms: police action, military response, judicial intervention, health policy, road and traffic measures, and even social action in general (as the Brazilian dictatorship understood in the 1960s). Meanwhile biometric data has recently opened the way to a new field of 'bio-power'. We should not become prisoners of the delusion that security can be omnipresent while, at the same time, panic as well as disproportionate action and response should be avoided. No security regime can prevail over the autonomy, and necessity, of social existence. This, come what may, guarantees the heterogeneity of the constituent elements of society – and, in particular, the religious sphere – as well as the diverse practices associated with the resilience and free will of individual actors. From this standpoint, security in the Sahel does not flow only from Western-style definitions but must also take account of autochthonous concepts related to history, politics, warfare, Islam, the moral sphere, generational issues and gender issues. What emerges, as a result, is that it is not self-evident that security in the Sahel can simply take the format of the conventional maintenance of security: the diversity of the region's regimes must always be kept in mind.

***Third,* even the expression "Sahel" is no more a natural and self-evident category than "regime" and "security".** The word is of Arabic origin, signifying "shore". For West Africans, it was long taken to mean the north or north-western margin of the Sahara, rather than its southern shoreline, though

[68] The most iconic example of an "autochthonous citizen of the republic" turned "Algerian terrorist" was the instance of Ahmed Ben Bella (1916-2012), the 20th century pan-Arab and pan-African leader. He fought on the side of France in WWII and was decorated in 1940 for having shot down a German Stuka during a bombing raid on Marseille. In 1944, he was decorated on a second occasion by General de Gaulle – this time for exceptional actions during the battle of Monte Cassino, where he was serving as an officer with units of Moroccan and Senegalese troops. However, immediately after VE day (the end of the war in Europe on 8 May 1945), Ben Bella became aware of the massacres committed by the French army in Sétif and Guelma in Algeria in their bid to put down a popular insurrection. Decades later, he recalled that this was the moment when he understood that only armed violence could overcome colonialism. In 1948, he joined the OS (the Special Organisation) which was the forerunner of the National Liberation Front (FLN), of whom he would become one of the nine historic leaders. He was arrested for the first time as an OS leader but succeeded in escaping two years later, in 1952. After November 1954, when the FLN was set up, he became the Algerian "terrorist" most sought by France. In 1956, when he and his associates – including Aït Ahmed, Khider, Boudiaf and Lacheraf – were engaged in setting up the external command of the FLN, they took a Moroccan Airlines flight from Rabat to Tunis but their plane was landed in Algiers by its French crew. This was one of the first acts of aerial piracy in the history of civil aviation and it was the French state which was responsible. Imprisoned in France from 1956 until 1962, Ben Bella became the first President of independent Algeria and, as such, was received by President de Gaulle. In 1962, he welcomed Nelson Mandela to Algeria together with his fellow leaders of the South African ANC (themselves regarded as terrorists up to the end of the 1980s), offering them military training in the Algerian village of Maghnia, where he had been born. See Charles-Henri Favrod, "Ahmed Ben Bella, président un peu prisonnier beaucoup, exilé sans amertume", *Le Temps Stratégique*, Geneva, No. 3, Winter 1982-1983; and Charles-Henri Favord, "Le tirailleur Ben Bella", *Le Temps*, Geneva, 5 October 2006.

[69] "Qui veut noyer son chien l'accuse de la rage" – "if you want to drown your dog, say he has rabies" – is a well-known French saying.

the Arab chroniclers of the 17th century spoke of the Kingdoms of the Sahel when they intended to refer to Gao and Timbuktu. From the 20th century, the expression began to be generally used in its present sense by geographers and weather scientists, but with the connotation of a strip of territory stretching right from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. In the 1970s, anthropologists – followed by journalists – popularised the term in regard to the 1973-1974 drought and famine in West Africa. Consequently, the various governments of the region set up an "Inter-State Committee Against Drought in the Sahel", while the OECD established its so-called "Club of the Sahel"[70]. In the closing years of the 1990s, with the establishment of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) in Algeria in 1998, students of geopolitics and neo-conservative intellectuals began to take an interest in the region. The United States also dedicated military structures and formed alliances in relation to the region, introducing into their vocabulary the expression "Sahelistan" – which they viewed as an arc of states in crisis stretching from Afghanistan to Mauritania.

It is to be noted, therefore, that the Sahel has been the subject of multiple definitions, which have varied according to circumstances and linked to a sentiment of 'insecurity' in the second and third sense of the concept (as outlined above). Over time, concerns about security have included apprehension – on the part of the French colonial administration – about encounters with Muslim religious orders and Ottoman jihadism, fear of famine, alarm over religious radicalism and terrorism, and finally the emerging spectre of a drugs threat. None of these senses of 'security' is especially conducive to a sensation of *securitas* on the part of those involved in national security, or of observers of the scene. It should be repeated here that the catalogue of definitions so far given of the "Sahel" is far from exhaustive. In Tunisia, for example, the term is used to specify a highly distinct administrative and political reality: that of a province of the southern Mediterranean of which Bourguiba and his successor were the representatives and the servants. This situation reflected the interests and dominant position enjoyed by the notable Tunisian *beldi* families in this area.

It should also be pointed out that the "Sahara", which is geographically inextricably linked with the "Sahel", is no more a natural category than the Sahel itself. In the imaginary framework of the West, it is postulated as a vast emptiness constituting a barrier between North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa in the west or centre of the African continent. Historically, however, it has always been a transit route through which the traffic is intense and where the long distance trans-Saharan trade mingles with local Saharan commerce. In addition, the Sahara as a whole is divided into a mass of local regions distinguished by history, ethnicity, geology and climate.

2. States of the Sahel: a perspective

The historical and comparative sociology of politics allows new light to be cast on the ideological mechanisms that appear to render self-evident the concepts of 'security' and of 'cultural zones', which sterilise reflection and public debate on issues that are, in fact, pre-eminently political. Four perspectives are brought into play:

2.1 Security regimes in the Sahel, as historical phenomena, are inconceivable outside their regional environment.

From time immemorial, the Sahel has been linked to North Africa by two routes of communication leading towards the north of Nigeria (oddly, both lead to the territory of the ancient African empire of Kanem-Bornou). These routes have, at different times, been in rivalry with each other. This was particularly so after the conquest of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica by the Ottoman Empire, which then found itself in competition with Morocco. One of the two trans-Saharan routes links the south of

[70] http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/archivestory.php/aid/182/The_Club_du_Sahel.html

Morocco to Gao and Timbuktu, while the other runs parallel to the Nile Valley, linking Tripolitania and Cyrenaica to the shores of Lake Chad. The Sahara was, thus, a zone between states – but one with a real historical existence of its own (this stands in contradiction to conventional international relations theory, according to which spaces independent of states are recent consequences of globalisation). The Sahara is a space that has always had a tense, but productive, relationship with the regional system of states which has come into being: states which are not, incidentally, undermined by its existence, as the same academic orthodoxy would claim. In the 14th century, the great historian of the Maghreb, Ibn Khaldun, was already well aware of such situations.
The entire issue of frontiers needs, therefore, to be subjected to renewed examination, in terms less normative than those employed today. However, it is certainly the case that the cultural, religious and commercial dynamic of the desert has been able to assert itself over the centuries in the absence of any unifying state or common currency, based essentially on the shared faith of Islam, with its juridical and scriptural authority.

Historically, the Sahel has always been linked to Africa's Atlantic coast and to the continent's forest zones by way of trading routes – including those of the slave trade as well as the commerce in gold, salt, gum arabic and kola nut – which effortlessly traversed a variety of monetary zones. In due course, colonial empires expanded and intensified these links. In this way, the existing merchant connections of Wad Nun, in southern Morocco – which oversaw the trade with Gao and Timbuktu, while controlling the Saharan links with Essaouira – facilitated the extension of French colonialism to Conakry and Abidjan. In the same way, the Hamali schism within the Tijaniyya brotherhood – which began in the Saharan hinterland of present day Mali between the two World Wars – had repercussions in Côte d'Ivoire with the deportation of one of its leaders, Yacouba Sylla, to Gagnoa – where he built up an economic, political and religious centre that became a source of support for Félix Houphouet-Boigny. Even today, Morocco's diplomacy in sub-Saharan Africa draws on these same historic links.

The recent relationships of some African figures with Latin-American drug traffickers, about which there has been a media furore, or the co-operation of African elites with the Chinese in the import of consumer goods, are therefore part of a centuries-old process. In the same way, the arrival of sub-Saharan migrants in the Mediterranean area, by way of the Sahel, is no more than a reassertion of the centuries-old integration between all these separate zones, which colonization has striven in vain to fracture.

2.2 The need for effective security regimes in the Sahel raises the issue of the reform of the region's states, which in reality do not correspond to the conventional stereotypes of "weak, "failed" or "imported".

In fact, the modern bureaucratic state – as implanted by the colonising power – has taken root in Africa, as shown by the use of the principle of inviolability in relation to borders. Studies have shown that, although borders may be breached, for example by smugglers, this is not seen as calling their existence into question. Such movements of people are seen as a function of the existence of states, which may make their own use of them. Transnational movements prompted by cultural, religious and economic considerations contribute to the formation of states in Africa, just as they do in Europe or Asia. The idea of an administration and the demand for the benefits of a state are powerfully resonant in sub-Saharan societies – coming even from the "lowest of the low" (*en bas du bas*) in the expression used in Côte d'Ivoire – for instance, in the spheres of the informal economy and of religion. It is also significant that secession movements have been very infrequent since the independence of the states, and have all failed. That the state governs by choice "through violence", to use the terminology of an expert on Colombia, does not imply that it lacks a social basis or legitimacy. Africa's experience confirms this observation: the universalisation of the nation state is a

manifestation of post-19th century globalisation. This, of course, does not mean that states in Africa correspond to the ideological criteria of neoliberal governance.

With this understood, it is obvious that the formation of nation states in the Sahel is, today, at a turning point. States are unable to ignore traumatic episodes in recent history which will not fade from memory, as the historian Henry Rousso has pointed out[71]. In the Central African Republic, the legacy of the slave trade of the 19th century, colonial over-exploitation, and the false start experienced at independence, all weigh heavily on the stability of institutions. In Mali, the split between the south and the north of the country – already an issue in the process of colonization at the outset of the 20th century between the French army in Sub-Saharan Africa and the French army in Algeria – has been thrown, once more, into relief by the issue of the indirect administration of the Ifogha (a nomadic pastoral people circulating between Mali, Algeria and Niger). The specific circumstances of decolonization, when French military interests attempted to counter nationalism in both Mali and Algeria by raising the spectre of secession in the north, has also contributed to the heightening of tension. The project of the MNLA (the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad), and the antagonism it engenders in the southern elites of Mali, have their origins in a sequence of events which have been neglected by contemporary analysts.

In addition, for more than thirty years, states have been obliged to cope with the neoliberal financial system imposed by foreign financial lenders. This has also been promoted by civil society organisations which have profited from the diminution of state power, such as, what is sometimes known as, "market" Islam[72] and the Pentecostal "prosperity" churches. Foreign actors are also involved: for example Morocco, which is stretching its wings in Africa; Algeria, which has attempted to export its security problem to Mali; Qatar, which sees in the Sahel a new field for the development of its influence; France, which has destabilized the region with its military intervention in Libya; and the European Union, which has closed the gates of legal immigration. Even the drug traffickers of Latin America have brought changes to the economics of the desert.

It is important, however, to stress that the present state of crisis in the states of the Sahel is less the product of implacable fate, or of a congenital maladjustment of local society, than the result of identifiable policy decisions – beginning with those taken by Western states. In Mali, for example, a sequence of events which has unrolled over more than forty years has had the effect of impoverishing the population and of dislocating public services related to health and education, while opening the way for opportunistic Islamic NGOs financed by the Gulf monarchies, and, incidentally, rekindling the Tuareg question. These events, which began with the economic liberalisation undertaken by Moussa Traore after his coup d'état in 1968, continued with the return of Mali to the Franc zone in 1984. Then came the programmes of structural readjustment imposed on the country's economy and the effective dismantling of the local cotton industry which ensued, as well as the obstacles placed in the way of emigration. These were followed by the French military intervention in northern Mali in 2008 – when French aircraft bombed Islamist positions in the north of the country – and finally by the overthrow of the Qaddafi regime in Libya in 2011. The consequent problems have defied resolution by the country's liberal democracy, run by a dominant class isolated from the population as a whole and lacking in political coherence. The presence of external factors, however, in no way diminishes the responsibilities of the national elite, with its "belly politics"[73]. Their dismal consensus, reposing on shameless manipulation, has ceded the field of debate and public action to Islam. However the part played by the Western states and the multilateral efforts in the disaster of 2011-2012 cannot be denied.

[71] Henry Rousso, *Le syndrome de Vichy*, Paris, Seuil, 1987, reprinted in paperback 1990.
[72] Patrick Haenni, *L'islam de marché : l'autre révolution conservatrice*, Seuil, 2005.
[73] Jean-François Bayart, *L'Etat en Afrique du ventre*, Paris, Fayard, 1989.

States need to find new ways to respond, both to international requirements and to the needs of their societies. They need, therefore, to redefine their attitudes:

a) To the mobility of populations and to the competing claims of indigenous populations, particularly in the fields of land ownership and the exercise of voting rights.

b) To property, to the capitalist and bureaucratic ownership systems, and to common ownership, in the context of increasing tension in the relations between cattle owners and crop farmers. These can lead to population pressure and climate change, while expulsions may ensue from the large-scale purchase of land by foreign speculators or the granting of mining concessions (for example, in western Mali).

c) To centralisation and to the nation, at a time when credibility has ebbed away from decentralisation undertaken in the name of neoliberal 'good governance' with no real transfer of the control of resources. Too frequently, this has taken the form of "decentralised despotism", to quote Mahmood Mamdani[74], or of a "market in development"[75].

d) To religion, when this provides the principal mechanism of social mobilization and of the application of moral categories to the spheres of economics and politics, under the impetus of both Christian and Islamic fundamentalisms.

e) To the environment, now that international constraints are becoming stronger on the multilateral diplomatic scene and climate change is manifesting itself by causing damage (unless managed) to ecosystems that are very fragile due to their proximity to the desert.

2.3 The necessary reinvention of the state and the reconfiguration of its process of formation are not fundamentally linked to culture, religion or identity – as fashionable ideology would suggest – but to a broader and more complex history.

Anthropologists and historians have shown, beyond doubt, that ethnicity is a modality of the process of appropriation of the state. Ethnic affiliation is not a static structure, but an evolving and historic act of consciousness which outweighs most other contemporary social agencies, such as the sphere of religion (both Christian and Muslim); criminal organisations; or the disturbing influence of the vast and unruly camps of artisanal diggers that effectively constitute the mining industry. Islam itself cannot be regarded as an explanatory factor, owing to its endemic divisions. Islam is split up in many ways: the difference between the Maliki and Hanbali (Wahhabi) doctrinal schools; the contrast between the sensibility of the Sufi religious brotherhoods as opposed to the Salafi or reformist approaches; the difference between the different Sufi brotherhoods; and the rivalry between the Sheikhs of the brotherhoods and their descendants. In the end, splits in Islam come down to the fundamental distinction between Sunnis and Shi'ites, and between the generations of the faithful who have always honoured their own particular social structures and religious sensibilities. Owing to this fragmentation, most conflicts in the Sahel are between Muslims and other Muslims.

On the other hand, the reform of the state must be understood according to twin criteria:

a) That of the economy, to the extent that material concerns generally take primacy over identity or cultural issues, even if the latter may be the consequence of the former. From this standpoint, the real issue is that of "marginal gains" (Jane Guyer[76]), which result in a disconnect between nation states on the two sides of the Sahara to the benefit of the desert professionals and other international economic actors (whether public or private), and foreign trading partners (legitimate or not). A further problem is that the profits to be made

[74] Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Surrey, UK, James Currey, 1996.

[75] Jean-Pierre Chauveau, Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, *Courtier en développement: les villages africains en quête de projets*, Marseille, APAD, 2000.

[76] Jane Guyer, *Marginal Gains: Monetary Transactions in Atlantic Africa*, Chicago University Press, 2004.

is extremely high, due to the existence of repressive state policies in relation to narcotics and to migration which artificially inflate the price which can be demanded for such services and products.

b) That of the local specificities which serve as the true basis for security regimes in the Sahel. These have not been taken into account by the meta-discourses which have prevailed in the international arena – such as those of the cold war of the 1950s and 1960s – or in the contemporary trope of neoliberal 'good governance'. For instance, in Niger, there is a local and national framework of concepts relating to famine, and the state as provider, which is totally unconnected to the global theme of 'hunger riots' and 'the world food crisis', which was the focus of the international news agenda in 2005. Differential perceptions on the two sides of the Sahara, and of the Mediterranean, of the attack in Paris in January 2015 are another example; as was illustrated by the angry popular demonstrations against *Charlie Hebdo* which occurred in Zinder and Niamey a week later. Indeed, the notion of historical specificity also relates to yet more detailed features of the societies of the Sahel, which lie at the origin of most of the conflicts over agricultural issues and water usage (even though such clashes can also be presented in more ideological and general terms, such as the jihad, for example in Gourma or Maci in Mali). The neo-conservative concept of an 'arc' of countries in crisis has, thus, totally insulated Western security policymakers from crucial information about areas where they purport to be in a position to be able to make decisions.

2.4 The concept of a security regime, in relation to the Sahel, is multiple and open-ended

Such regimes are capable of differing, and even conflictual, interpretations about the part played by social categories in security regimes. Movement across the Sahara has become more dangerous for the inhabitants of the Sahel who embark on the journey, at a time when such movement is seen by Europeans primarily as a threat to European security and their own prosperity: Europe's apprehension of danger renders yet more dangerous displacements undertaken by Africans. Similarly, the antagonistic proselytisation of Muslims and Christians, and in particular Salafists and Pentecostalists, actually leaves both proselytising communities in a state of spiritual insecurity (at least in Nigeria, though this is less true of the situation in Cameroon). Meanwhile European fear of Islamic radicalism is a reflection of the siege mentality of Muslims who see themselves as under threat from Western hegemony. Islam is perceived by Europeans as a religion hostile to women, while in reality it legitimises socially unacceptable unions, such as those between young women of higher social class and young men of lower social status, which families and the prejudiced may stigmatise. Although their violence is seen as a threat, it nonetheless endows Chadian combatants and Cameroonian or Central African highway robbers with a level of economic security which the state, supposedly the upholder of the law, in unable to provide for them. In Mali, it is the jihadists of MUJAO who have taken effective action against cattle rustling in Gourma. In the field of demography, the apparently high birth rate in Niger is an object of concern for Westerners, while Niger's women fret over their lack of fertility. Finally, in the realm of law, the West views the *shar'ia* as the worst of evils: in northern Nigeria, meanwhile, the *shar'ia* is the guarantee of a more transparent and equitable justice system – which is also less corrupt than that provided by either by the legal system of the state (characterised as a state based on the liberal rule of law) or from the vigilante groups in southern Nigerian towns (who impose the law of the strongest and the most able to pay).

In short, the obsession with security which preoccupies some is the cause of insecurity for others. In this situation, it is to be expected that the most vulnerable are most liable to become victims, while the most powerful affect outraged airs of righteousness. Such is the sad lesson that the plight of refugees and the African migrants bring home to us day after day, reinforcing the imperative that the state must be reconstructed in the light of the social practices of mobility, and this is crucial not only for the Sahel but also for fortress Europe itself.

VI. TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE IN THE SAHEL: TOWARDS A NEW LOGIC

Pierre Hazan

Most of the border regions of the Sahel nations have several traits in common: the state has a weak influence; there is a lack of both the means, and the political will, to protect populations living in peripheral areas; and, often, there is an inability to ensure even basic infrastructure, education or health. Added to this mix are often unkept promises for development by the relevant state, a justice system lacking independence (which is, itself, linked to the weakness of the rule of law) and, sometimes, human rights violations by the army or police acting with total impunity. Together these political, economic and social factors feed irredentism. Considering themselves second-class citizens, the people of the border regions feel justified in adopting strategies for economic survival that are sometimes on the margins of legality (for example, trafficking migrants, arms and narcotics).

The studies of perceptions conducted during this research process emphasize the significant demand by people living in these areas for justice, dignity and respect. The alternative society proposed by the jihadists[77], then, can be seductive since the rules of this new social contract, while undeniably rigid (even ruthless), are, at least, clear and well-established. In this case, there is a clash between two authorities: on the one hand, the state, whose constitutional texts and discourse promise equal rights (promises rarely fulfilled); and, on the other, the jihadist interpretation of the Koran (and the popularity of this second authority grows in reaction to injustice, to unfulfilled promises for equality, to the lack of the rule of law, and to impunity). In terms of justice, the jihadist interpretation of the Koran creates a 'horizon of expectation' for the marginalized people of the border areas. None of the Sahel regimes, whether authoritarian or weak, can compete with this horizon of expectation. The challenge for the governments and authorities of the Sahel nations, then, is to regain lost legitimacy in the field of justice and the rule of law. To do so will require profound reforms in governance.

Against this common backdrop, we must highlight local features that require a more detailed analysis since the political systems, and historical conditions, in Mauritania, Mali and Chad (to name only those countries we will discuss further) have little in common. In matters of justice, 'Sahelistan' does not exist. We will also try to determine whether transitional justice, in its judicial and extrajudicial mechanisms, could intervene to help reduce the causes of violence stemming from religious extremism.

1. International justice and Africa

For better and for worse, Africa is one immense experiment in the mechanisms of justice: firstly, in terms of international justice, with the creation in 1994 of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) which was followed by the International Criminal Court (ICC) intervention in 2005[78] and in many other countries over the past ten years; secondly, in terms of continental justice, with the creation of the Extraordinary African Chambers in the Senegalese courts in 2012; and finally, with the creation of the many Truth Commissions and neo-traditional mechanisms of justice and redress (for example, the *gacaca* and *achioli* traditional justice systems in Rwanda and northern Uganda respectively).

For years, the ICC has been the subject of intense debate in Africa. The most common criticism is that, to date, the ICC has only indicted African nationals, hence creating a double standard

[77] This report uses the terms "jihadists" and "radical Islamics" to refer to the supporters and members of the armed groups active in the Sahel region. The report does not use "terrorism" due to its imprecision and connotations.
[78] The ICC's first indictment against the leaders of the Lord's Resistant Army (LRA) on the 6th May 2005 was also the first indictment ever by the ICC.

perception: one for strong states and another for those who are less so. Indeed, neither the United States, nor China, nor Russia has ratified the statutes of the ICC.

This perception of a double standard justice system is particularly acute in Arab States and countries with large Muslim populations. Whenever Muslim civilians have been tortured or killed – the pictures taken at Abu Ghraib, the incarcerations at Guantanamo, the crimes committed in Chechnya by the Russian army, the Israeli occupation, and, more recently, the use of US drones in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen which have killed many civilians – the ICC has either been without jurisdiction (in relation to Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, Chechnya and Syria) or slow to act. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the most striking example, despite the fact that the State of Palestine, which has ratified the ICC Statutes, brought the case before the Court.

In the Arab-Muslim world (including the countries of the Sahel region), the ICC's reticence in taking up the Israeli-Palestinian conflict cannot be understood[79] since it is compared with the eagerness of the same ICC to press charges against the Libyan Head of State, Muammar Gaddafi, and the Sudanese President, Omar al Bashir. The fact that ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda and a number of the judges of the Court are, themselves, African in no way changes this negative perception; nor does the fact that it is mainly the African states themselves which have requested ICC intervention (Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Ivory Coast, and the Central African Republic).

Conversely, some African governments do vocally support the ICC and the fight against impunity. These governments are pressed to do so by small, but militant, groups (victims' associations, local NGOs, human rights activists) who believe the ICC, through its principle of complementarity, helps strengthen the rule of law and active citizenship in their countries and limits impunity, itself potentially a source of new violence. Personalities such as the South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, President of the pioneering and famous Commission for Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa, and Sidiki Kaba, the current Senegalese Minister of Justice and President of the Assembly of States Parties to the ICC, embody this trend. Sidiki Kaba, a former General Secretary of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), comes from civil society. He and Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General, argue that the ICC can play a crucial role when African governments have neither the ability, nor the will, to punish the perpetrators of international crimes.

[79] Lawyers are divided on whether the Court has jurisdiction in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On one side are those who emphasize the statehood of Palestine and, therefore, the ICC's jurisdiction. Others reject the ICC's jurisdiction because the Palestinian Authority does not control all of its territory (Gaza) and because the Israeli army has conducted investigations, which challenges the need for the ICC's involvement due to the principle of complementarity. This argument is rejected by those who denounce the nonchalance and leniency shown by Israeli military justice to alleged perpetrators of violations of international humanitarian law or human rights.

Chad: the precedent of the Extraordinary African Chambers

On the 20th July 2015, at the headquarters of the Extraordinary African Chambers (EAC) in Dakar, the trial of Hissène Habré, Head of State of the Republic of Chad from 1982 to 1990 started. Habré, responsible for a policy of brutal repression against his own people, as well as Libyan prisoners of war, was indicted for crimes against humanity, war crimes and torture.

This was a precedent-setting trial: for the first time, the African Union had created a continental criminal tribunal (although integrated into the Senegalese justice system) to try a former Head of State of another country for violations of human rights. Thus, the EAC marks the emergence of a regional court. Given the hostility of many African governments towards the ICC, the establishment of a first African regional court is an innovative approach. To Africans, this court appears more legitimate than a court sitting in Europe under former colonial powers that once used the law as an instrument of domination.

For the victims of the Habré era, for human rights activists, and for Chadian society in general, the Habré trial sets an important precedent. It is a testimony to the determination of victims to judge the former Head of State, to their mobilization of international NGOs, and to a campaign which, after fifteen years of work and effort, achieved its purpose. The large part of the population which supports the trial sees it as prelude to other trials of those still in power. The current president of Chad is Idriss Déby who, in 1984, was Chief of Staff to Hissène Habré when the Black September massacres took place in the south. However, supporters of Hissène Habré (who disputed the legitimacy of the court and rejected his court-appointed lawyers) denounced his trial as two-tier justice because Déby, instead of being prosecuted for his own crimes, is the primary financial backer of the EAC.

These arguments divided Senegalese society. Some see Hissène Habré as a pious man who, right up to his arrest, went to the mosque every Friday and who married a Senegalese woman with whom he has a child. To Chadians, however, Hissène Habré's image remains inseparable from his iron rule. Moreover, in a society whose young people feel abandoned, deprived of training and a future, whose workers have returned from Libya with empty pockets and no government support, the Habré trial sent a strong message: the law can become an instrument of emancipation and justice in a country where corruption remains endemic and impunity largely assured.

Transparency International's 2013 Corruption Perception Index ranks Chad 166th out of the 177 countries surveyed. Oil revenue – the primary source of state income – benefits only the circles of power and the army. The 2013 Human Development Index from the United Nations Development Programme put Chad's income per capita at $741, placing the country in the 184th position in the world, that is, near the bottom. In addition, the people living in the border areas, traditionally neglected by the central government, suffer abuse from both Boko Haram and the army. As the Chadian social anthropologist, Remadji Hoinathy, has said, "We sell these people membership in a state they never see, except in a repressive form." In this context, it is natural that the ideology of Salafist networks – painting a picture of justice and integrity – should seduce a part of Chad's youth, who see no option beyond such economic survival strategies as drug and arms trafficking.

Against the appeal of Islamic fundamentalism, the Habré trial could set a precedent and offer hope to the segment of society for whom the rule of law and an independent judiciary no longer appear as pipe dreams, even if, for now, they remain beyond reach. The trial gave hope that the corrupt and the perpetrators of violations of human rights may, too, be punished one day. The mechanisms of transitional justice – judicial as well as extrajudicial – could then truly provide justice and could generate a debate involving the entire spectrum of opinions, including the most radical.

2. The reversal of the transitional justice logic

Definition: Transitional justice seeks to confront the legacy of violence linked to conflict or other forms of violence and oppression. It is based on respect for the law (international and domestic) and proposes an integrated approach that places the victim at the centre of the process. It combines judicial and non-judicial aspects to ensure the best results possible for reconciliation, including the search for truth, the exercise of justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition.

For the past fifteen years, the mechanisms of transitional justice and, more generally, the fight against impunity, have been an integral part of the United Nations' good practices and are strongly encouraged in the context of national reconciliation processes. Historically, the mechanisms of transitional justice were put in place after the fall of oppressive regimes. Now, they are increasingly explicit in peace agreements and introduced in the context of weak states unable to assert authority over their entire territory, or even a large part of their territory, as is the case in Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR). Hence, the logic underlying transitional justice has undergone a reversal: the goal is no longer to redefine national identity once political change has happened and prevent any further violations of human rights – as was the case at the end of apartheid in South Africa; rather, transitional justice is often used in advance and to encourage political change to end the war and hasten reconciliation. The initial objective of transitional justice, as ambitious as it was, has expanded: now, it can become relevant during war, even before political changes occur.

The examples of Mali and the CAR are striking in their similarity: both cases concern weak states where fighting between various armed groups continues locally at different intensities and where peace agreements (Algiers 2015 for Mali; the Declaration of the National Forum in Bangui, May 2015, for the CAR) included plans for introducing many mechanisms of transitional justice; both governments appealed to the ICC; and the respective peace agreements intend to reform the judicial system, to establish a truth and reconciliation commission, and to appeal to traditional mechanisms of mediation. All of these latter objectives are based on UN best practice, but implementation is problematic in countries where state authority is exercised over only a limited part of the territory.

This broadening of the objectives of transitional justice, and the fact that its mechanisms are now used in times of conflict, raises questions about the methods used so far. In countries where local conflicts – often at the community level – are intertwined with national issues, shouldn't new mechanisms be invented or traditional ones revitalized, even if it means adapting them to current needs? A truth and reconciliation commission is no doubt necessary at the national level, but insufficient. As we shall see in the examples from Mauritania and Mali in this report, local and traditional (and/or religious) mechanisms of dispute resolution are useful for addressing specific conflict situations. However, this requires adapting them to meet the needs resulting from recent violence.

3. Mauritania: how mechanisms of transitional justice can help prevent the risk of radicalization

In 1981, Mauritania was the last country in the world to abolish slavery and it was only criminalized in 2007. International pressure on the regime has never been very strong on this issue, as the country enjoys Western support for its involvement in the 'fight against terrorism'. According to the organisation Walk Free, 4% of the 3.5 million Mauritanians still live as slaves, the highest rate in the world[80]. The population consists of 30% Moors[81] (an Arab-Berber minority which traditionally holds

[80] In 2014, the UN Special Rapporteur commended Mauritania's progress in the fight against slavery, but also called on the government to "take more vigorous measures with a view to eliminating slavery and to fully implement the laws and policies..."

both economic and political power), 40% Haratine (descendants of slaves) and 30% other Negro-Mauritanians (who are also considered second-class citizens). This unequal situation is the foundation for jihadist radicalism, which promises equal rights and freedom, and threatens the power of the Moorish minority. The resolution of past and present injustice is a key issue for the stability of Mauritania although, at present, the government does not seem to have understood the frustrations of part of its population, particularly its young people.

Mauritania is a fragile state, which, since 1978, has experienced repeated coups. It should be noted, however, that Mauritania experienced a brief democratic interlude. Following the 2005 coup and the transitional government which followed (both led by Ely Ould Mohamed Vall) Mauritania elected a civilian Head of State (Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi) for the first time in April 2007 in a transparent process of democratic pluralism. However, in August 2008, the nascent democracy was once more toppled by a coup, led by General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, who was elected President in 2009. Today, government institutions are weak, especially in border areas. These are areas where the state is virtually absent, where trafficking in human beings, arms and drugs is rampant, and where the majority of Negro-Mauritanian populations are descendants of slaves , but left to themselves.

These cross-border areas have few services, lack basic infrastructure and suffer insecurity: a favorable context for the rise of radical Islamist networks which capitalize on the frustrations of young people, inspired by the legitimacy conferred in the Arab world on armed movements like Hamas in Gaza. During this study, one Mauritanian expert emphasized the “fascination” which Islamic fundamentalists held for young people, offering a form of emancipation not traditionally part of social organization in Mauritania:

> *“They brought individualism. In the voting booth, traditionally, we vote as the family or the tribe wishes. The radical Islamist, however, votes out of conviction. They have broken with the state and propose a model of equality, whose sole servitude is toward God. They say, ‘You, former slave, you are the slave of God alone.’ They value the individual and give him a noble mission and meaning to life, an entry in the world."*

Faced with a State which minimizes this issue, states that the page of slavery has turned, and emphasizes the unity of the Mauritanian nation (Moors and black Mauritanians are as inseparable as “the black and white of the eye”), young Haratines become radicalized. One abolitionist leader, Biram Dah Abeid, believes that “the explosion is imminent (...) I fear the fatal obstinacy of the ruling class intoxicated by its privileges from slavery. Slavery is prohibited, but those who go to prison are the ones fighting it, not the slavers."

This is an analysis shared by other experts:

> *“Over the past five years we have gone from the dominant discourse – ‘We are all Mauritanians’ – to claims of negroid ancestors who were slaves, marked by a strong desire for revenge against Moors perceived as exploiters. Many young Haratines throw themselves into the arms of Salafist networks. This is a time bomb, but the state does not see it yet.”*

In this sense, then, Mauritania offers a national-scale case for studying the implementation of mechanisms of transitional justice. This would have preventive value because there is still time to respond to the thirst for recognition and to start a public debate on the legacy of slavery and on equal rights. The challenge is twofold: to convince the authorities to open real debate on these issues

[81] CIA World Fact available at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mr.html

– something they currently refuse – and to regain the legitimacy of the position of the authorities which has been challenged by jihadist movements which have strongly, and successfully, positioned themselves on the themes of equal rights and the fight against slavery. Depending on local culture, the use of traditional mechanisms of mediation – even local and decentralized truth commissions – could be explored, initially on a small scale.

4. Mali: the beginnings of transitional justice

In 2012, Mali entered a new cycle of violence, leading to military intervention by France and certain African countries, but also the United Nations (MINUSMA). The conflict between armed separatist groups, the jihadists and forces loyal to Bamako added to the local conflicts between different communities clashing in the north of the country. On the 20th June 2015, a peace agreement was signed between the armed groups (with the exception of the jihadist groups) and the Malian Government, but implementation has been slow. One component of this agreement provides for an impressive set of measures on transitional justice (see Annex). Some of the decisions associated with these measures – including the decision to create a Commission for Justice, Truth and Reconciliation (CJTR) – have already been announced without, however, being implemented.

The approach suggested in this report is to put in place light and local mechanisms which will have a faster impact on the situation than processes requiring extensive training (investigators, forensic experts, lawyers) and significant resources. Moreover, the issue of security remains a major obstacle In September 2015, fighting was still continuing in the north between armed groups who have signed the peace agreement, in addition to the jihadist groups who are not party to the Algiers Accord.

Mali is a deeply fragmented society. Until independence in 1960, the Tuareg people in the north of the country had few links with Bamako, with which they share neither culture, language nor social organisation. At independence, the imposition of a sedentary and socialist development model by the central government led to the first Tuareg rebellion of 1962-1964 marked by the horrific repression led by Dibi Sillas Diarra, remembered as the "Butcher of Kidal". Memories of this repression have paved the way for subsequent rebellions, since many of today's separatist leaders are the children of fathers who were killed in 1963. Added to this legacy of violence is the fact that the Malian state has never invested in the development of the north (few water points or roads, youth unemployment etc.). Conflicts among northerners add to this north-south intra-Malian conflict and are exacerbated by many factors: tensions over the control of land between pastoralists and farmers; cattle-rustling; the absence of justice; and the fight to control the trade routes of narcotics, an important source of income.

The Malian anthropologist, Isaiah Dougnon, notes the absence of clear rules of law in the north, as well as the inability to implement them. In the name of security, opportunistic behaviour favors the upsurge of violence:

> *"In case of a conflict, communities turn first to the traditional justice system. If this is unsatisfactory, they turn to the modern judicial system. But if the court is not satisfactory, they may encourage their young people to engage in armed groups, such as MOJWA[82], and to receive weapons and training to protect their livestock and to seek revenge."*

One consequence of the lack of the rule of law is that the greater the insecurity, the stronger the attraction to join armed groups. Not surprisingly, the same Malian anthropologist notes that:

[82] The Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA) is a group of armed jihadists which split from Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in 2011 to extend the Islamist insurgency throughout the Maghreb region of West Africa.

"Part of the population in cities occupied by the jihadist armed groups has appreciated the restoration of sharia, security and order in place of a failed state."

The jihadists base their rule on religious legitimacy, which, in turn, gives great importance to the issues of justice and equity.

Faced with a national court deprived of all legitimacy and credibility, the granting of pardon is occasionally used to manage conflict. In Gao, one of the leaders who joined MOJWA, bringing his community with him, publicly apologised and – because his repentance was accepted – was able to return his community to its city of origin. Beyond this specific example, the use of mechanisms of transitional justice could make a valuable contribution to the situation, although they naturally cannot substitute for a political solution to the conflict in Mali. Under the Algiers Accord, the use of transitional justice has been broadly provided for in many forms: the establishment of the Commission for Truth, Justice and Reconciliation; the creation of the International Commission of Inquiry, as well as a Commission to fight against financial crime and corruption; the use of traditional forms of justice; the use of chiefs and traditional forms of authority and a thorough reform of the justice sector to ensure the rule of law[83]. Clarification is needed on the overall hierarchy of the levels of justice between the ICC (to which the Government of Mali has appealed), the International Commission of Inquiry (which has not yet been established), the CTJR (which has begun its work[84]), and neo-traditional and religious mechanisms of mediation.

Experience shows that the ICC makes few indictments and only does so after years of investigation, while commissions of international inquiry, as well as those in charge of the fight against financial crime and corruption, face challenges which are particularly difficult to overcome. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the neo-traditional/religious mechanisms of mediation have an important role to play in transitional justice. In the absence of effective state authority, it is the local authorities who know their people and who can use settlement methods which are adapted to local cultural and political realities. Therefore, as outlined earlier, the issue is to adapt these mechanisms to address issues related to conflict in a well-defined framework. These mechanisms would be adapted to address local conflicts, usually at the community level, even if these conflicts also have a national impact. This mechanism could be complemented by an intra-Islamic religious dialogue with some representatives having ties with jihadist groups, while others would represent the victims of religious extremism.

This approach seems all the more interesting in that jihadist groups – who are not party to the Algiers Accord – cannot participate in the mechanisms of transitional justice it provides. As mentioned previously, the main challenge remains the question of security. Transitional justice mechanisms – whether they are legal or extra-legal, modern or neo-traditional – cannot be designed independently of the political environment in which they operate.

[83] Algiers Accord, Article 46.

[84] The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) supports the Truth and Reconciliation Commission so that it develops the expertise necessary for accomplish its mandate.

Annexe (only available in French): article 46 des accords d'Alger (2015)

TITRE V : RÉCONCILIATION, JUSTICE ET QUESTIONS HUMANITAIRES
Chapitre 14 : Réconciliation et Justice
Article 46 : Les Parties conviennent de promouvoir une véritable réconciliation nationale fondée sur les éléments ci-après :

- élaboration d'une Charte nationale pour la paix, l'unité et la réconciliation nationale;
- mise en place de mécanismes de justice transitionnelle notamment par l'opérationnalisation de la Commission Vérité, Justice et Réconciliation (CVJR);
- création d'une Commission de lutte contre la corruption et la délinquance financière;
- création d'une Commission d'enquête internationale chargée de faire la lumière sur tous les crimes de guerre, les crimes contre l'Humanité, les crimes de génocide, les crimes sexuels et les autres violations graves du Droit international, des Droits de l'homme et du Droit international humanitaire sur tout le territoire malien ;
- réaffirmation du caractère imprescriptible des crimes de guerre et crimes contre l'humanité et engagement des Parties à coopérer avec la Commission d'enquête internationale ;
- non amnistie pour les auteurs des crimes de guerre et crime contre l'Humanité et violations graves des Droits de l'homme, y compris des violences sur les femmes, les filles et les enfants, liés au conflit ;
- consolidation du pouvoir judiciaire de manière à assurer l'État de droit sur l'ensemble du territoire ;
- engagement à mettre en œuvre une réforme profonde de la justice pour la rapprocher du justiciable, améliorer ses performances, mettre fin à l'impunité et intégrer les dispositifs traditionnels et coutumiers sans préjudice du droit régalien de l'État ;
- généralisation de l'assistance judiciaire et juridique et l'information sur les droits des citoyens ;
- promotion d'une formation de qualité à tous les acteurs et auxiliaires de la justice, y compris les Cadis ;
- revalorisation du rôle des Cadis dans l'administration de la justice, notamment en ce qui concerne la médiation civile de manière à tenir compte des spécificités culturelles, religieuses et coutumières ;
- valorisation du statut des autorités traditionnelles à travers leur prise en charge et la prise en compte dans les règles de protocole et de préséance.

VII. THE CLASH OF PERCEPTIONS: ILLEGAL MIGRATION AS A QUEST FOR SECURITY

Ibrahima Guissé

Historically, the African continent has been intensely marked by the many faces of migration. Sometimes, these movements were linked to transhumance or ecological migration (nomadism), sometimes to the slave trade, whether trans-Saharan or transatlantic. During the French colonial period, from the 19th century until the 1960s era of African independence, people moved freely across the Sahel space which merged with the French territories under its two subsets, French West Africa (AOF) and French Equatorial Africa (AEF). The high volume of movement across sub-Saharan Africa remains linked to the region's porous borders and a socio-historical context where national identity is ever-evolving and still faces many challenges. While cross-border movement for trade, commerce, agriculture and herding has always been the reality for the peoples of the Sahel, since the 2000s a new form of migration has been added to the circulatory networks at work in the vast Saharan-Sahelian area. This new form is the so-called clandestine migration of young Saharan people who idealize the countries of final destination – in this case in Europe – which they imagine as Eldorado.

The purpose of this report is not to quantify this phenomenon, and even less to analyse its root causes. Rather, in light of the different perceptions of what actually causes insecurity and violent extremism in the border regions of the Sahel, this report intends to question the relationship between the migratory routes being used and the networks of violent extremism.

The motivations of the young, both to undertake the migration experience and to become radicalized and turn to violence, remain multiple and complex. The analysis of some of the qualitative data collected during research for this report reveals common causes, even common 'push factors', which are structural. These common causes– poverty, the inability of states to secure their borders, discrimination and alienation – are often mentioned by the migrants, as well as by stakeholders in civil society and researchers working on these issues. Migration, then, should not be considered solely from the perspective of the countries of destination. There is a need to 'turn it around' and consider the origins of the migration process inside the societies in which it begins.

Here – through the life stories of a few, real migrants, giving their own goals for migration, and by describing the socio-cultural, symbolic and economic motivations which could justify or motivate migrants to begin a quest they, themselves, see as potentially risky – this report can explore, and more effectively explain the motivations which bring people to clandestine migration, as well as the issues associated with networks of insecurity and violent extremism. This report, however, is intended neither to validate nor invalidate security assumptions which conflate 'terrorism' and 'illegal immigration', as done by so-called nationalistic currents inside the major destination countries.

1. Illegal migration and the internalization of risk

While there are regular emigrations among young people (for family reunification, further education and training etc.), this report work focuses on young sub-Saharans who, for various reasons, resort to illegal migration, by land routes or by sea. In West Africa, particularly in Senegal and Mauritania, young people increasingly see illegal migration as an adventurous way to reach the international labour market and 'get one's relatives out of poverty' and this overshadows the risks of migration. To get through the physical challenges involved in illegal migration ("*I know the forests of Morocco. We*

know how to bypass the border guards and even how to dupe them..."), an illegal migrant is required to conceal their body, but also their identity and history. This makes the process clandestine, both internally and in reality. Out of fear of revealing who one really is, this internalized clandestinity can bring the migrant to hide all or part of their life, temporarily or permanently.

The clandestine person never stops mobilizing the resources at their disposal, which are symbolic (the migratory experience, values, beliefs and temperament) but also material possessions in nature. The hardships suffered through clandestinity could be likened to French sociologist Danilo Martuccelli's[i] "historical challenges, socially produced, culturally represented, unequally distributed, that individuals must face" (Martuccelli, 2006). In the case of those interviewed for this report, these challenges are diverse: psychological (fear, risk, uncertainty), natural (borders, forest, ocean, desert), biological (hunger, thirst, sickness, death), security (prison, police, deportation) and political (law, detention, torture).

2. The myth of Eldorado: its necessity and its socio-cultural context

The phenomenon of illegal migration to the Canary Islands began in the 2000s and was extensively covered by the media. The route is known, in Senegal, as "*Barça* or *Barzagh"* which can be translated as "Barcelona or beyond" (Bolzman[ii] et *al*, 2011). Senegalese migration along this route has a long history: far-ranging traditional fishermen were accustomed to sailing as far as the rich waters of Mauritania, Western Sahara and, sometimes, even ventured to the Canary Islands, where some would remain. In modern times, the practice has gained momentum and experienced diversification, even if it remains poorly quantified and overestimated in comparison with South-South migration flows.

The myths around travel and migration have strong religious references, particularly in Islam – the religion shared by the Sahelian countries, and which informs and structures most of the cultural conduct of the region's people. Islam states that the prophet Mohammed, faced with enemies and adversity, left Mecca for the town of Yathrib (which became Medina). This founding moment, marked by the displacement of the first Muslims, is called the Hegira (*hijra*), Arabic for "emigration". In the Senegal River Valley, inhabited by the Peul/Tukulor/Fulani (a pastoralist ethnic group found in all Sahelian countries), migration is seen as the route to success. According to legend, the great 19th century Marabout of the Toucouleur, El Hadj Omar Tall, leaving for the former French Sudan to islamise its people and fight the colonial power, proclaimed, "*Foutankobé, péréndarjon*", meaning "O people of the Fouta, migrate to succeed!" The citizens of this northern region of Senegal – the Toucouleurs – who also constitute a significant indigenous population in southern Mauritania, are known to have been a precursor for later Senegalese emigration, first towards African countries and then to Europe.

Clandestine migration to Europe, then, is understandable only when placed within the greater myth which idealizes the West as a place of self-fulfillment. As one of the people interviewed for this report, referring to the closure of borders and the security hysteria, said:

> *"If you lock your home and prevent anyone from entering, it is because you are hiding something good. Then, if every day and every night, you show on TV, the internet, etc., the good things that you are hiding, you cannot stop needy people wanting to come inside. The more you protect yourself with walls, the more you encourage people to want to climb over your walls... "*

In the remarks of people considering migration, 'away' has multiple meanings (a place of success, happiness, security) and is seen as an earthly paradise. One of those interviewed used the phrase "*teexe"* which, in Wolof, means access to paradise, or a place where one is permanently saved and in

which risk is nonexistent. Others use the phrase "*fofu moko yor*" which can be translated as "there where salvation is". Europe is perceived as the place to satisfy the basic need to work and earn a living with dignity, which is increasingly difficult for many West African youth to attain. This perception is empirical. The money transferred home, the comfortable villas or buildings constructed in their home countries by those who have migrated abroad (sometimes in rural areas devoid of basic infrastructure such as drinking water, electricity, clinics and schools), the standard of living of households with migrants abroad, are all perceived as compelling evidence that migration, even illegal migration, remains a necessity. According to the President of the Women's Collective Against Clandestine Emigration[85]:

> *"Unfortunately, what we have found is that these young people are not ready to give up; they tell you that, with nothing offered at home, 'We are ready to go'. Clearly, it is a political problem of the State unable to deal with illegal emigration. It is also a problem of mentality because, with us, people think that to be successful you must go to Europe because, if you look here in Dakar, the chic quarters where construction is going on, besides the politicians, is for emigrants. For those who stay here, when they see the achievements of their brethren, for them, emigration is the key to success. There is still this idea that wealth is outside, that one can achieve nothing by staying here. This poses a problem in relation to the possibilities that do exist here. If there was political will and support, we could mobilize today all sectors of employment whether in agriculture, farms, etc. But most often, these are just campaign promises..."*

In most of the countries and/or cities of the sub-regions of the Sahel, hit hard by the economic crisis which makes young people vulnerable and blurs their bearings, it is vital to revive a model of success. Television contributes to the fabrication of the Western success model and social networks function to 'pre-sell' the West to the young.

3. Transnational factors of illegal migration to Europe

A complexity of push and pull factors exist to explain migration which challenges, or does not fit into, an established regulatory framework. Most of the work done on this issue shows that the difficulty of obtaining a visa is the main reason why young people opt for illegal channels. It is a forced choice. Legal emigration assumes one has sufficient material and financial resources to apply for a visa with the relevant embassies. It may also assume connections to religious or artistic networks which are powerful ramps for emigration used by migrants. The restrictive migration policies of European states rarely allow the legal arrival of African workers into the Schengen area, thus leaving little choice in entry methods. The political dimension of migration is most significant here: one could see illegal immigration as a component of a 'culture of opposition' and a refusal of the established order by which young people feel excluded. It would, thus, appear to be a phenomenon of adaptation for large sections of the working class – young people with few or no qualifications – excluded *de facto* by a dominant system.

The globalization of trade as well as the construction of the European Union and trade liberalization have produced a frantic search for competitiveness and productivity. This has created a need for cheap labour, particularly in sectors that require high-value but low-skilled manual labourers such

[85] Our interlocutor, Madame Yayi Bayam Diouf, has become the icon of the struggle against youth emigration in Senegal. In March 2006, she lost her only son, aged 26, when he was trying to get to Spain's Canary Islands. She started the Women's Collective Against Clandestine Emigration association in the fishing quarter of Thiaroy sur Mer (in Dakar) where the migration phenomenon first began.

as the agricultural sector. Despite these structural factors (which attract migrants to jobs that nationals do not want to occupy), and despite the aging of the population in Europe, there continues to be a hardening towards immigration and of reception conditions. Paradoxically, however, there are often policies of massive regularization of unauthorized immigrants in response to the need for labour.

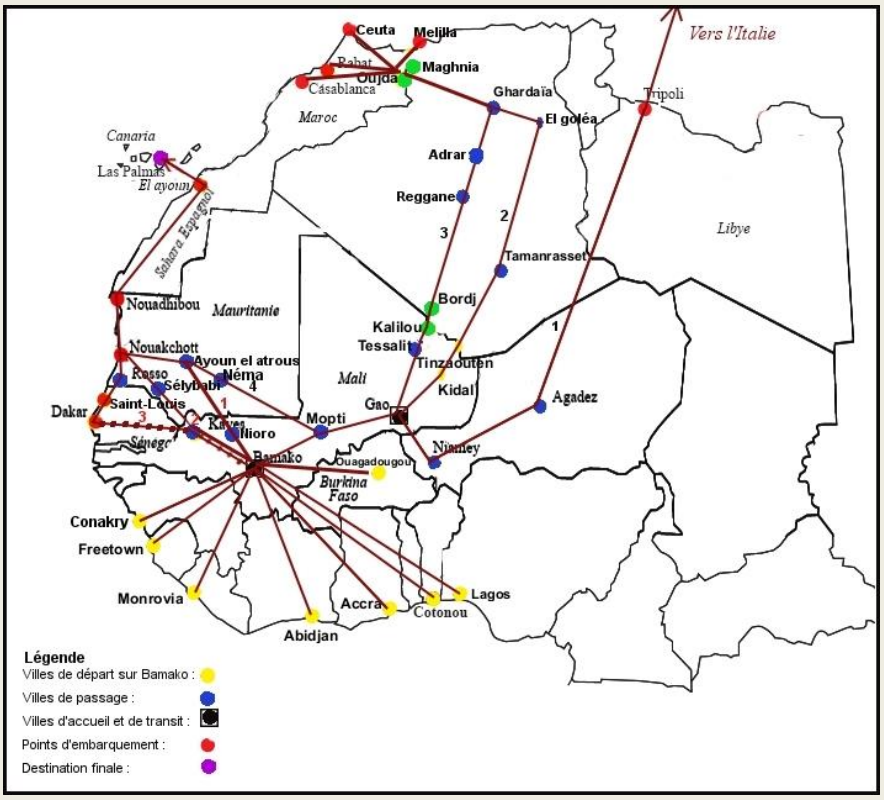
4. Migratory trajectories and traffic networks

Over months, even years, migrants use a number of land and sea routes to try to reach the inaccessible European Eldorado, passing through one or more stages of transit. All of these routes are characterized by complexity and tortuosity. The points labelled “Cities of departure towards Bamako” and/or “Transit cities” on the map below are subject to change, with spikes of use and periods of forced calm due to media coverage, security crackdowns or the outbreak of conflicts.
Often, the migrants temporarily settle in towns or staging areas along the migration route in order to work and earn enough money to continue their journey. One person interviewed for this report, from the Ivory Coast, currently lives in Nouakchott after going through Kidal in Mali, Algeria, Libya and failing twice to get to Ceuta and Malia. This appears to be a typical pattern of migration for young Africans .

In the 1990s, Gao (Mali) was in the centre of the main land route for illegal migration. In the 2000s Mauritania also became a major transit centre, for candidates for illegal migration to the Canary Islands. This recent phenomenon quickly escalated in significance, with the emergence of migrant communities in Nouadhibou, a port and commercial city. Their presence is particularly felt in some neighbourhoods of the city centre, such as Qairaan, with its Senegalese restaurants and a range of activities managed by sub-Saharans. There is a veritable diaspora waiting for the opportunity for a route by sea or land. Unable to go home to reactivate family networks[86] – since going home also means facing the prospect of eventually returning again, whether due to a lack of money or the shame of admitting failure – many migrants find themselves in a bind.

[86] This sums up the esoteric meaning of the migration within its symbolic and cultural universe. Even after hitting a wall, the hope for “a bit of luck” remains. The return to the starting point, as far as it is possible, is not excluded as a possibility although it may be with the intention to ‘arm morally’ and leave once again for the ‘front’.

Migratory trajectories and trafficking networks from Bamako, the city of departure



Map key:
Cities of departure towards Bamako
Stop-over towns
Transit cities
Ports of embarkation
Final destination

Source: Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), Dakar, 2007.

This *post-transit situation*, which often creates tensions between migrants and local populations, can also be seen in Maghreb countries like Morocco. In fact, increasingly, the transit countries become the final destination for many sub-Saharan or Asian migrants transiting through Africa, as described by this migrant originally from Niger now living in Nouakchott:

> *"I took the canoe twice, in 2004 and 2006. Each time I paid 200,000 ouguiyas to the recruiters. They are well organised, the recruiters. They may also ask you to find them 3 or 4 candidates for emigration, in exchange for a free seat. But I paid top price and we got as far as the Moroccan coast where we were turned away. Before coming here in Mauritania, I left my country, Niger, to go to Cotonou, then, I went to Accra, Ghana, then to Lome, and finally here in Nouakchott. Now I'm tired of wasting my money. What I want now is to rest my mind and stay here. I decided to stay here against my will to drive a taxi. I would like to be a mechanic, because I know myself well, but I have no means. I need support to achieve that project."*

European countries, in their negotiations, also consider these migrants as 'in transit'. Some transit countries, such as Morocco (as in this case), are perceived by migrants and by the representatives of migrant associations as implementers of the security policies of the European Union. Some studies suggest that the presence of sub-Saharan migrants in certain territories or countries in strategic positions have even turned illegal emigration into a 'geographical annuity' and a political instrument.

5. The overlap and independence of migratory routes and zones of violent extremists

The Saharan-Sahelian region has always been a mysterious place, intensively traversed by state and non-state actors, merchants and adventurers (Mbembe[iii], 2000). The double border of land and sea, and the peripheral location of some of the great cities of the Sahel, also favour the entry and exit of all kinds of material and non-material goods. From this point of view, the routes taken by illegal migration are an update of the Saharan-Sahelian trans-border routes traced long ago. The migration routes depicted in the earlier map reflect the closeness – even the overlap – with the different cross-border areas where jihadist activities and violent extremism develop.

However, this overlapping of migration routes and cross-border areas where violent extremism develops should not overshadow the important fact that migrants (and civil society actors in the countries of departure) consider, and experience, illegal migration as a *quest for security and wellbeing*. The likelihood, then, of sub-Saharan migrants falling into jihadist networks appears weak, particularly because of the significance of the life goals structuring their migration goal. As mentioned earlier in this report, the decision to migrate unfolds in **a** social setting where mythic, cultural and economic reasons are all at work. These appear to be the meta-social guarantors which inform the migratory paths of these young people and which are capable of reducing, or preventing, the risk of ideological instability of the jihadist type. The comments below, from an Ivorian migrant[87] living in Nouakchott, seem to describe emblematically the mythical-political-security context in which the migratory reality unfolds:

> "*... Frankly, it is ignoring reality to think that these young people will fall into terrorism. What motivates me – and I can say that it applies to all the migrants with whom I have been through a lot – is a successful life, earning a living. We do not take all these crazy paths, the forest, the bush, the ocean, the desert, endure hunger and thirst, fall ill and recover with no medical treatment ... in order to place a bomb to kill innocents. No, the migrant may change course, he may con, become homosexual – I have seen this – but never become a bomber. My brother* [addressing the interviewer]*, I tell you one thing, these migrants, they are so experienced, they have undergone all the challenges of the road, so they know what is happening in Europe and what is being said about them. The people making terrorism in Europe today are not people who have made our journey. They were born there or grew up there, they freaked out, were brainwashed! If you spend all your time in the forest, you suffer everything, you play cat and mouse with the police and customs, so if you get the chance to get to Europe, you will do anything to find work ... That Malian who saved lives in a Jewish supermarket was undocumented, so his path was like ours. Do anything to earn a living. One of our proverbs says that if you know where you come from, you will never get lost. We have goals. If it were up to us, we would not suffer so much to succeed, to establish a home and make a good life ... We do not think we are in the paradise for bombers. We are deaf to the arguments of terrorists who do not believe in the pleasures of this world ... who say 'If you do such and such and you die, you will go to Paradise.' Our paradise is here on earth. Work to make a living, to support the family. I'm tired of moving, I have been in the north of Mali, in Kidal, in Algeria and in Morocco which plays a lot with security to please Europe, and I had even obtained a Schengen visa in Rabat through my network* [he shows his passport which is, indeed, stamped with a Schengen visa] *but I returned to my country and, unfortunately, I could not enter Europe before it expired. And now I have come back here to Nouakchott, where I have decided to earn my living. To tell you the truth, at*

[87] He was interviewed in the presence of a representative of the Mauritanian Association for Human Rights.

some point, I even helped people to enter Europe, while I, due to bad luck, could not. I have drawn the lesson that my future is perhaps better here."

Indeed, these migrants have a clear awareness of their place in the geo-strategic and political issues beyond them. They are also witnesses of the political use being made of their illegal status by some countries of the south and aware that the north uses them as scarecrows to counter the threat of terrorism. Nevertheless, the symbolic moral arguments permeating their remarks ("fear of failure", "succeed like others", "shaming the family", "social security" etc.) reflect an unwavering commitment to their initial reasons for departure.

6. Perceptions of respondents on migration, insecurity and violent extremism

A Nigerian national based in Nouakchott notes the danger facing the Niger: *"... if the country explodes, it will be worse than other countries because of the Hausa, the Kamdi and Tubu".* According to him, radicalization is often related to the fact *"that we often wrongly accuse some groups of people of being terrorists, and they are tortured to death. You see a child who sees his mother or father tortured and even killed, that's why he becomes jihadist".*

As for insecurity and the risk of being recruited by jihadist networks, the interviewee is clear:

> *"No, why? We left home to escape insecurity, unemployment, to earn an honest living. What I also want to add is that, here in Mauritania, there are many important Tuaregs. If Mauritania supports a country or the West, these Tuaregs can do some damage. There are a lot of dormant terrorists here, and Mauritania knows it. That is why the country refuses to take tough positions against terrorists and does not dare to openly support the West."*

This comment by the migrant from Niger coincides with the remark made by the migrant from the Ivory Coast quoted above: *"... We are deaf to the arguments of terrorists who do not believe in the pleasures of this world".* It is also closer to the position of a historic Mauritanian leader who fought against slavery, a leader in the human rights movement in Mauritania. For this actor in Mauritanian civil society, migrants are in search of safety:

> *"Violent extremism and jihadism, actual or potential, both search for vulnerable locals, people who are discriminated against, from poor and marginalized communities, from the Sebha neighbourhoods, for example. The Islamist arguments may seem open and egalitarian to the youth of these neighborhoods, entirely populated by black Africans. Extremism dangles equality before their eyes. It conjures up all the values of Islam. So, there is, in Mauritania, a real danger of confrontation between communities. The failure of citizenship, then, is the legitimate son of terrorism in this country."*

As this argument suggests, as a result of internal factors specific to their country, local citizens are more vulnerable than migrants to the calls of violent extremism. From this perspective, it could be inferred that the illegal migration of young sub-Saharans is an attempt to leave behind the resentment of a state unable to meet the needs of its citizens. It is at this level of analysis, this report suggests, that considering the mobility of young people as a 'front' or 'culture of opposition' takes its full meaning. Moreover, one could even read the migration of young people across borders as the expression of a form of transnationalism[iv] from below (Guissé, 2011), which reveals the limits of the political institutions in their own countries to build and maintain a society for citizens which avoids disillusionment with, and detachment from, their country.

Conclusion: from the myth of Eldorado to the myth of security

The existence of a relationship between myth and the migration phenomenon seems to have been established. This report has shown that the myth of 'over there' – which is as much an idealized way out of crisis as it is a preferred means of social promotion – helps produce the migratory phenomenon. It has also shown that what, is generally thought of as a risky, insecure undertaking is, to the migrants themselves, a necessary and sure path to safety and wellbeing. The report has also shown how this entrenched belief grows in difficult and tormented contexts within broken economies in de-territorialized spaces. Other studies have shown that the "phenomena of mythical acceleration" (Durant, 1996) occur when institutions are overwhelmed, when they are no longer able to provide a credible alternative. This inability has, for most of the state institutions in the Sahel region, a political and economic dimension insofar as they have not been able to offer 'social security' to the thousands of young people crossing ocean and desert, nor offer them prospects of a future that could be built locally.

At the same time, the myth of 'over there' comes up against an impregnable citadel whose growing inaccessibility only amplifies the desire to enter. The gradual tightening of entry requirements creates effects that are undesirable (in the political sense of the term) for it pushes candidates to hasten their departure. Nevertheless, this myth is also socially and culturally constructed and maintained. It is at the heart of the equation that postulates that "Europe = modernity = The West = the world's future" (Corm 2009). From this perspective, migration policies must not neglect the weight of this myth. Its deconstruction must be done in the knowledge that the international community has a tendency to see certain parts of the world only in relation to their security. This report has also noted that migrants have full awareness of the security arguments that present them as potential terrorists or 'bombers'. They refute such arguments, which they see as ploys to keep them at home within regions and territories as yet incapable of building an inclusive State.

The Sahel has a variety of fault lines relating to historical factors (the opposition between centre and periphery, the impact of colonialism which redrew ethnic boundaries, the traditional lifestyle and, especially, the traditional free mobility of people and goods) and relating to destabilizing factors (the political and economic failure of some Sahelian States, persistent drought, the population explosion). All these socio-historical realities contribute to the migration dynamic and make the issue of youth migration an element that will structure South-North relations for years to come. The security myth and the technological superstructure which accompanies it (e.g., Frontex, the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation, charged with the security, and surveillance, of the external borders of the European Union) will contribute to accentuating the divide between these two worlds and the development of life strategies for that category of migrants who feel as if they are under house arrest. For these clandestine migrants, perceptions of the phenomena of insecurity and violent extremism remain a fundamental and inseparable part of the founding myth of why they leave.

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