

# MOBILITY MAKES STATES

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Migration and Power in Africa

Edited by

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## Chapter 7

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# Kinetocracy: The Government of Mobility at the Desert's Edge

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The present chapter contributes to this volume's aim to theorize the state and mobility in Africa by exploring the relation between centralized states and those nomadic societies that resisted state control by following alternative and at times antagonistic rationales of power as control over mobility, which I call "kinetocracy."<sup>1</sup> The study of African governance is conceptually ill equipped to investigate forms of political rule that do not fit the state model.<sup>2</sup> A narrow focus on the modern state has resulted in a purely negative characterization of nomadic and seminomadic societies in the desert as the state's "exteriority."<sup>3</sup> Yet desert-like environments, characterized by low population densities and the necessity to be mobile, support the development of particular governmental rationales that should be conceptualized in their own terms.<sup>4</sup> Here, power comes to be expressed primarily as control over one's own and other people's movements,<sup>5</sup> because it is through such control that access to water, food, and other assets is secured.<sup>6</sup> In these contexts, political authority is based on three main conditions: ability to access resources and make them available to allies and dependents; ability to make others move in support of one's economic and military purposes; and ability to hinder the mobility of one's enemies. These conditions are achieved and retained through a combination of military might and the development of habits adjusted to the requirements of life in the desert.

I am not suggesting that geographic or climatic conditions *determine* the establishment of particular political formations. Desert and semidesert

regions and the societies that inhabit them have historically been integrated in a variety of political structures, including kingdoms, empires, and nation-states. In the case of Ader, which is the focus of this chapter, various political systems from the late nineteenth century to the present successively developed different strategies for coping with the desert. In Tuareg hierarchies, droughts resulted in an exchange of slaves, who needed to be fed, for cereals provided by traders from the savannah. This was one of many ways to cope with the duress of the Saharan climate. It depended on the power of Tuareg elites to trade slaves out of the desert, and freely move their own families and dependents to southern locations in times of famine. After the abolition of slavery, new governmental authorities developed alternative measures. In post-1940s colonial developmentalism, the desert came to be seen as something that could be fought against through technological means.<sup>7</sup> Clearly, political relations influence the ways the desert is interpreted and acted upon.

Yet, following Fernand Braudel, “a desert is a desert, with its requirements that never change, at the time of Abraham or David just as in our own times.”<sup>8</sup> At the desert’s edge, productive resources (for example, water sources, land that can be farmed, pastures) are rare and recurrently exposed to droughts and other threats. In these circumstances, securing access to scattered, precarious resources is more important than securing ownership rights over productive assets. Here, the development of intensive agriculture (or pastoralism) is limited because the risk involved in investing a disproportionate amount of resources and labor in one or more farming fields (or herds) would be unsustainable. Here power lies in the capacity to move freely to access a variety of resources and economic opportunities scattered in multiple locations. This situation is reversed in environments that support higher population densities and where stable resources produce high yields and high returns to labor. Material conditions of life have implications for the logics that govern social and political relationships, without ever determining the particular political arrangements that take place at specific moments in time.

One way this chapter distances itself from the arguments advanced in the introduction of this volume is that it focuses not on the state, which is seen here as only one particular institution of government, but on governmental rationales (that inform the activities of the state and other institutions). This approach allows me to compare the rationales that govern centralized states with those undergirding other forms of political rule, such

as the rule of Tuareg hierarchies in seminomadic societies. The latter may share some characteristics with territorial states, but they are structurally and functionally different. When they coexist with such states, giving rise to forms of legal and political pluralism extensively documented in African history, the result is a clash between different governmental logics and not merely between two sets of political elites with opposed interests (for example, a Western colonial one and an indigenous one). The state should be seen as one of many institutions whose members partake of a particular governmentality broadly defined, with Foucault, as “the conduct of conduct.” In Ader, the practices of agents inhabiting the state administration or other institutions have been influenced by broader historical and cultural discourses that defined certain ways of moving and controlling movement as acceptable and not others, or not for all members of society. Especially in contexts like Ader, the state does not shape the conduct of its subjects/citizens any more than do the mosque, the school, or indigenous political institutions that, due to Ader’s marginality, remained semiautonomous from state control.

I should, once more, qualify my argument. I am not supporting a culturalist interpretation that sees different culture groups (for example, colonizers and colonized) as belonging to compartmentalized worlds of knowledge. In Ader, and elsewhere, some colonial subjects—for example, native chiefs—were familiar with both the government logics of the colonial state and the kinetocratic logics that informed precolonial government. To some extent, their choices may have taken shape at a subconscious level. But they also chose to alternate strategically across different “paradigms of argument,”<sup>9</sup> which derived strength from different governmentalities. Government as the “conduct of conduct” encompasses a continuum of practices ranging from the exercise of political sovereignty to relations within and across various types of social institutions, interpersonal relations, and “technologies of the self” governing the ways individuals manage their own bodies and persons. Thus, although the modern state and its agents may have a greater capacity to prevent, promote, and channel mobility than do other institutions and individuals, it is not the *only* institution capable of influencing how people move; its reach is stronger in certain regions than in others and among certain groups than others. For example, illegal migrants in the so-called informal economy eschew state controls and follow alternative rules and logics of movement.<sup>10</sup> If we are interested in distinguishing different ways of moving, a narrow focus on the state can

be heuristically limiting: for instance, the Western state may indeed not differentiate between the mobility of male and female citizens, but specific religious communities often regulate differently, and very effectively, the mobility of males and females, irrespective of common citizenship. We need to ask whose rationales of movement are influenced most by state rule and which ones operate autonomously, irrespective of state regulations or in antagonism with state rules. To answer these types of questions, the state should be understood less as the main source of meaning and praxis than as an important vehicle of some of the normative views of the time—not all.

This chapter suggests that kinetocracy differs from the governmental logics of centralized states, which emphasize territorial control and define membership in relation to residence and fixed, calculable property that the state accesses through taxation.<sup>11</sup> Although part of modern state power consists in its capacity to monopolize the means of legitimate movement,<sup>12</sup> control over mobility is only one of many defining characteristics of the contemporary nation state. By contrast, it is *the fundamental axiom* that structures relations of power and governance in kinetocratic governments. The first section of this chapter suggests that the tension between kinetocratic societies in the desert and centralized states has been central to African politics for centuries. It argues that we need to look both at how the state has been attempting to govern mobility within the reaches of its power and at how centralized states are related to kinetocratic societies. The second and third sections discuss the case of the Ader region in the period 1885–1946. Ader lies at the southern edge of the Sahara desert. Before colonial occupation, Ader accommodated a hybrid form of governance, whereby the most mobile sections of society dominated both nomadic and settled groups. This section considers the interaction between Ader’s kinetocratic government and colonial government up to the mid-1940s. It shows that, over the course of the twentieth century, as the specialized economic functions of desert dwellers progressively lost significance and as these societies came to be seen primarily as a security concern, the balance of power in this relation shifted in favor of the state. Therefore, the focus is on how mobile lifestyles in Ader adapted to encapsulation in different political rationales and technologies of rule. The conclusion advances some final reflections on the broader theoretical implications of the ideas presented in this chapter.

### **Access and Ownership: The Long-Term Tension Between Desert Life and Urban Life**

The desert and the particular forms of authority that develop in it pose a limit and sometimes a threat to the expansion of centralized states.<sup>13</sup> Some studies of African governance emphasize the ways in which low population densities have hindered state power. Hence, Jeffrey Herbst suggested that “the fundamental problem facing state-builders in Africa—be they precolonial kings, colonial governors, or presidents in the independent era—has been to project authority over inhospitable territories that contain relatively low densities of people.”<sup>14</sup> Similarly, John Iliffe noted that “in the West African Savannah, underpopulation was the chief obstacle to state formation,”<sup>15</sup> and Robert Bates found that, in Africa, “the higher the population density, the greater the level of political centralization.”<sup>16</sup> A corollary of this argument is that the impervious conditions of the desert, while undermining state organization, support different social and political structures that pose a threat to the centralized power of states. Tension between the nomadic dwellers of the desert and urban-settled society have sometimes resulted in positive complementarities between the different economic specializations of urban, settled society, and nomadic pastoralists and long-distance traders.<sup>17</sup> But, both in Africa and elsewhere, this tension has always retained the potential to turn into violent confrontation.<sup>18</sup>

The history of north and west Africa over the *longue durée* is marked by the opposition between on the one hand centralized “states” (kingdoms, empires, caliphates) supporting settled lifestyles where natural resources allow higher population densities; and on the other nomadic societies structured into segmentary lineage kinship units practicing transhumant pastoralism and stratified into hierarchies headed by a warrior nobility. This tension is prominent in sources covering roughly the last thousand years of West African historiography. A case in point are descriptions of the relation between the Sanhaja (and their militant offshoot, the Almoravids) and the Kingdom of Ghana. It has been suggested that defense against the former was a factor in the formation of the Ghana empire.<sup>19</sup> Control of movement in and across the desert figures as a distinctive trait of Sanhaja social organization. Writing in the ninth century, Al Yaqubi portrays the Sanhaja who inhabit the desert between Sijilmasa, to the north, and Awdaghust, to the south, in characteristic terms: “they have no permanent dwellings. It is their

customs to veil their faces with their turbans. They do not wear [sewn] clothes, but wrap themselves in lengths of cloth. They subsist on camels, for they have no crops, wheat or otherwise.<sup>20</sup> About one hundred years later, Ibn Hawqal gives a longer description of the same society:

Between Awdaghust and Sijilmasa there is more than one tribe of isolated Berbers who have never seen a settlement and know nothing other than the remote desert. Among them are the Sharta and Sam-sata and the Banu Masufa. The latter are a great tribe who live deep inland around inadequate water points and do not know wheat or barley or flour. There are among them some who know these things only figuratively. Their food consists of milk and only occasionally of meat, yet they are sturdier and stronger than anyone else. They have a king who rules them and administers their affairs. The San-haja and other people of this region respect him, because they control that route. They are steadfast and brave, good camel riders, lightfooted in running and tough. They know well the conditions and forms of the land and how to find their way over it, and how to be guided to water-points by description and discussion. They have a sense of direction which no one comes near to except those who are close to them and lead the same life.<sup>21</sup>

El Bekri's *Book of Roads and Realms* belongs to a literary genre that emphasizes the contrast between stretches of travel ("roads"), often through inhospitable deserts inhabited by nomads, and urban centers ("realms")—oases, hamlets, and towns—defined in terms of their human and material "contents." His description of the rise of the Almoravids at the following of Abd Allah ibn Yacin, whose fanaticism had been shaped by desert life, evokes the theme of the potential threat of desert warriors on settled people.<sup>22</sup> The usual *topoi* of constant mobility, lack of attachment to any type of settlement,<sup>23</sup> and the habits (and foods) of farmers recur in his writing as they do in most other authors. To some extent, these are literary conventions. Entire passages are sometimes reproduced from earlier writers without acknowledging the source. Undoubtedly, these characterizations constitute discursive tropes that reflect how society was imagined by the authors of these texts.<sup>24</sup> But recognizing their biases does not mean that these representations were not real, in the sense that they shaped people's

imagination and had concrete consequences for social relations between desert nomads and urban dwellers.

In the second half of the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldoun placed this tension at the center of his philosophy of history: “Civilization may be either desert (Bedouin) civilization as found in outlying regions and mountains, in hamlets (near suitable) pastures in waste regions, and on the fringes of sandy deserts. Or it may be sedentary civilization as found in cities, villages, towns, and small communities that serve the purpose of protection and fortification by means of walls.”<sup>25</sup> The contrast between “desert civilization” and “sedentary civilization” that permeates the *Kitab al-Ibar* focuses less on the difference between nomadism and settlement and more on the moral implications of urban life and life in the desert. In the desert, according to Ibn Khaldoun, social institutions are aimed at obtaining what is necessary and uncorrupted by the luxury of cities, which create dependence on superfluous pleasures. The relationship between these two domains is dynamic: Ibn Khaldoun sees desert civilization as (structurally) dominated by the urban population because of the desert dwellers’ inability to procure material necessities and the products of crafts and specialized industry in their own abode.<sup>26</sup> Yet he views these two worlds as interdependent.<sup>27</sup> The moral, and consequently physical, strength of desert society poses a constant threat to centralized states. When desert rulers conquer cities, they initially attempt to remain isolated from urban centers. But, in few generations, they often embrace the corrupt urban lifestyle that, without a close observance of Islamic precepts, leads to moral decadence. In the *Kitab al-Ibar*, the tension between desert and city life appears as the fundamental dialectic of human history.<sup>28</sup> Yet Ibn Khaldoun avoids essentializing these two realities—in his work, nomads and urban dwellers are not represented as incommensurable “types of being.” Particular groups may periodically change their lifestyles as they cross desert/urban boundaries and gradually adopt worldviews that he sees as well adapted to the localities they inhabit.

Ibn Khaldoun provides the most thorough conceptual analysis of this relation. However, the distinction between desert-dwelling societies and centralized states runs through most discussions of the political history of northern and western Africa. For example, writing in the seventeenth century Al-Sadi argues that Timbuktu was founded by Tuareg nomads who used it originally as a “depot for their belongings” and a summer grazing ground for their herds. Before it was conquered by Sunni Ali, the sultan of

the Tuareg Akil delegated the government of Timbuktu and its settled society to a representative who acted as a settled ruler, while he himself continued to move in desert camps with his animals.<sup>29</sup> This reveals the perceived difficulty for desert rulers to adapt to the sedentary lifestyle required for governing settled society. Conversely, other sources underline the attitude of settled rulers toward desert-based societies. Hence, Ibn Fartuwa's account of the wars of Bornu's sultan Idris Alooma distinguishes sharply between the defensive tactics that Bornu's armies adopted in relation to Tuareg nomads and Hausa polities. When the former's continuous raids were repelled, nomad attackers were scattered back into the deserts where they had originally come from. Instead, Hausa fortified cities were sieged, and their permanent defense structures challenged Bornu's mighty army.<sup>30</sup> The distinct habits of the "people of the desert" and of Sudanic settled civilization were later noticed by nineteenth-century European explorers. Colonial administrators described the different requirements of rule in the desert. For instance, French sources differentiate between *circonscriptions sédentaires* and *circonscriptions nomades*, or sedentary and nomadic districts, respectively structured into *cantons* and *groupements*. In nomadic districts, security was maintained through the deployment of special camel corps (*pelotons méharistes*).<sup>31</sup>

Changes in the technologies of trade, travel, and rule that followed colonization altered the relation between the desert and urban seats of centralized power. The decline of the trans-Saharan trade, controlled by networks familiar with desert life, altered the terms of the relation between centralized societies and "desert peoples" to the latter's disadvantage.<sup>32</sup> As the connecting functions of desert societies progressively lost relevance, the maintenance of peaceful relations with them became less necessary. Security concerns prevailed as the colonial administration saw the desert primarily as the abode of dissidents and rebels, beyond the reach of "normal" state power. Centralized colonial and postcolonial states governed the desert by alternating politics of noninterference with violent repression. Modern state governments could afford to ignore the different governmentality that prevails in desert regions, when these regions did not pose a threat to state power. Yet, when they threatened to destabilize central rule, states intervened on desert society through the use of exceptional measures. While states had resorted to violence to assert their power over boundary semidesert regions since precolonial times, what appears to have been new under colonial rule was the loss of incentives (which had once been primarily economic, as desert societies ensured trade) to tolerate kinetocracy in the desert.

To summarize, mobility challenges centralized state rule. The state asserts its power by delimiting and defining space.<sup>33</sup> It classifies and controls forms of property and labor in relation to territorialized places and resources. To be sure, nomads too have a territory<sup>34</sup> and recognize areas of nomadization over which certain groups have priority access. But such precedence is defined by their capacity to defend their freedom of movement, ensure the safety of allies and dependents, and restrict the mobility of enemies. In deserts, the power of political rulers depends less on material wealth than on being unencumbered by possessions and yet capable to access needed resources at any time. Societies adapted to desert-like conditions tend to prioritize access over-ownership. In contexts where land and other valuables are highly vulnerable to recurrent risks, such as minor shifts in rainfall patterns, securing *access* to scattered resources is safer than securing exclusive *property rights* over volatile capital (for example, land, live-stock). To be sure, essentializations of either nomadism or “desert life” should be avoided. Deserts may not be the only conditions where power is expressed primarily as control over movement, but they constitute the example used in this chapter. And nomadism may not be the only form of social organization informed by this rationale of government, but surely it is a case in point. With Ibn Khaldoun, “desert civilization” and “urban civilization” are not unchanging identities: they are social and political responses to environments that can carry different population densities. Desert-based groups can defeat and conquer centralized powers and arrange ways to rule over them. Or they can become encapsulated in the territorial and political boundaries of powerful empires and states. Specific forms of dependence and integration between desert and city life change over time and across regions. But control over movement is the very axiom of the government of desert-based societies—more than, and in opposition to, urban rationales of government. When centralized states attempted to impose their rule upon desert-based groups, they mostly proved unable to control the latter’s movements.

### **The Government and Self-Government of Mobility in Ader**

Kinetocracy is rooted in the *longue durée* of Ader’s history. While this region underwent major political transformations over the period considered here, the environmental circumstances of Ader imposed a particular

rationale of government to both powerful and powerless. In its least fertile regions, Ader's resources were ephemeral and scattered in different locations. Securing access over a multiplicity of scarcely productive sites mattered more than exercising exclusive control over any single location. In Ader, kinetocratic governmentality was in a dialectic relationship with centralized state rule. When incongruences could not be breached, because of a lack of incentives to establish a cooperative relation between nomadic rulers and centralized states, states attempted to impose their rule through exceptional measures. Yet those very conditions that induced kinetocracy eluded the normalization of exceptionality, which, from the centralized state's perspective, would have implied the integration of populations settled at the desert's edge within its own rationales and apparatuses of rule. Centralized states, be they the Sokoto Caliphate, the Sultanate of Agadez, or the French empire, struggled to control mobility in Ader and faced resistance primarily in the form of the exit option: people at the desert's edge resisted settlement and pressures to change their habits. They refused to settle and invest primarily in local productive resources at the expense of diversification because the risks involved would have been too high: they knew that, in the likely event of famine and impoverishment, distant state institutions would not have provided effective relief for their families. They never ceased to strive to retain control over their own movements, as mobility allowed them to diversify their livelihood options spatially. And they continued to be integrated in precolonial hierarchies, which progressively lost some of their former functions but still provided access to networks of support and protection, within Ader and elsewhere.

This section looks at transformations in the government and self-government of mobility that took place between the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century in Ader, which is in the southern half of what is today the Tahoua administrative region of southern Niger. Ader is located at the edge of the Sahara desert. In the nineteenth century, southern Ader was the northernmost extension of the Sokoto Caliphate and northern Ader fell within the sphere of influence of the Sultanate of Agadez.<sup>35</sup> Yet Ader was relatively distant from the centers of political power of both Sokoto and Agadez. Lying, respectively, at the northern and southern margins of these areas, it was difficult to control. Ader-based elites acted as *de facto* rulers of the country. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Ader's society was subjected to the power of two Tuareg

warrior elites: the Iwellemmeden Kel Denneg in northern Ader and the Kel Gress in southern Ader.<sup>36</sup> The rationales and practices of rule adopted by these two groups were unlike the bureaucratic administration of neighboring centralized states. These Tuareg elites did not have a fixed abode. They changed residence constantly, and their capacity to move autonomously was a direct consequence of their power. Any loss of power corresponded to decreased autonomy to move freely.

Political rule and control over movement cannot be separated in Ader. Ultimately, the military might of Tuareg warlords rested on their capacity to attack sedentary populations; raid, pillage, and kidnap slaves; access and exploit scarce and scattered resources; and resist attacks by the armies of their sedentary neighbors. More vulnerable groups either obtained the protection of these nomadic warrior elites in exchange for tributes or were subdued and enslaved. Protection allowed dependents to carry out productive activities and trade without the fear of raids—in other words, it was protection to move in ways that did not hurt the interests of the warrior nobility (*imajeghen*). In some cases, slavery corresponded to completely controlled mobility: slaves moved (or did not move) depending on their masters' will.<sup>37</sup> A master could be absent most of the time, and this gave some autonomy to slaves settled in separate villages. But they only moved independently at their own risk.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Kel Gress and Iwellemmeden confederations operated in somewhat different ways, reflecting the different environments they controlled.<sup>38</sup> Kel Gress wealth depended on caravan trade and the herding and farming on which such trade relied. A large proportion of the camels and cereals traded appear to have been their own and were produced through the use of slave or freed-slave labor. Their power was partly territorial, and they had to entertain good relations with powerful neighbors in Sokoto if they wanted to trade with them. The area of influence of the Kel Gress comprised many villages of former slaves whom they had liberated and turned into sharecroppers or tributary farmers. The latter owed a large part of their harvest to Kel Gress elites. Unlike slaves, they had to provide for all their needs. Yet they were motivated to produce more on lands that they perceived as their own.

Iwellemmeden rule in northern Ader was different. In these arid regions at the border with the Sahara, slaves were less valuable as producers than as capital. As slaves, they did not own anything and had no rights over their

own persons and their offspring. They merely looked after their masters' possessions, which included their own and their children's labor and bodies. Their villages also functioned as stations in the travels of their masters and their allies. The harshness of this system was mitigated by the fact that slaves who lived in these separate villages enjoyed a greater degree of autonomy than other slaves. They were particularly vulnerable in moments of crisis, when the elites had priority access to scarce resources and could sell the most marginal of their slaves.<sup>39</sup> The most exposed to the threat of being sold at slave markets were slaves newly captured in raids against villages falling in enemy territory. The Iwellemmeden were desert warriors whose political supremacy was rooted in their military superiority to local farming villages and their knowledge of the desert territory.<sup>40</sup> Because scarce resources were scattered over vast spaces, retaining the capacity to control their movements was essential to Iwellemmeden elites. Rather than investing in productive resources and therefore developing ties to the land, they asserted their supremacy over entire villages of farmers and herders and forced them to provide anything Iwellemmeden *imajeghen* required, at any time, in the form of tributes or casual contributions. They supplemented what they obtained from these dependents through raids and pillages targeted primarily at other Tuareg confederations. Their capacity to move unhindered in and out of the desert allowed elites to satisfy their needs without having to settle in one place and negotiate their legitimacy politically with local populations. They controlled the mobility of their dependents, and anyone entering their region unprotected exposed him/herself to their attacks. They exemplify kinetocracy more than most other groups.

Ader's Tuareg elites had established their supremacy over Hausaphone groups, who retained their own political organization and status system but were incorporated as tributary dependents in one or the other Tuareg chieftaincy. Seminomadic ruling elites camped with their families, servants, and some animals in different places throughout the year within areas of nomadization over which they had asserted their supremacy through war. Animals, mainly camels, were the main form of wealth of these Ader-based Tuareg groups. Herders followed the movements of their own and their masters' or patrons' animals.<sup>41</sup> Elites would normally participate in the main transhumance cycles but were free to attend to any other business, anytime.<sup>42</sup> They traveled light. Wherever they stopped, they were hosted by people who owed them allegiance or by allies and dependents scattered in distant regions. Slaves built tents and camps for them and carried out all

tasks related to food preparation, water provision, and animal husbandry. Tuareg elites did not engage in productive labor directly (farming and herding). Their subordinates, of free or slave status, did all manual work for them. The most trusted among them, often of artisan status, coordinated and supervised various activities.

Clashes between Tuareg groups usually took the form of raids and counterraids. Incursions on settled villages could be carried out by small groups of mounted warriors and were usually aimed at kidnapping children who would be enslaved. Larger raids against entire farming villages incremented cereals levied from dependents. Tuareg chiefs summoned dependents by playing the drum of war (*ettebol*). The drum resounded over a great distance, and scattered dependent groups would gather at the chief's moving camp, from where their next movements would be planned.

Ader-based nomadic rulers, Kel Gress and Kel Denneg, established their supremacy over regions that included both (semi-)nomadic pastoralist and settled farmers. The latter were more numerous in southern Ader falling under Kel Gress power. Most farming villages were inhabited by Hausaphone groups. Moreover, when Tuareg slaves were liberated, they usually embraced a semisedentary lifestyle, settling down in villages and taking up farming.<sup>43</sup> Taking up agriculture as the main productive activity implied giving up transhumance. Yet it would be wrong to assume that farmers were wholly sedentary. In precolonial Ader, farming involved considerable mobility. Most farmers owned several fields in different locations. Given erratic rainfall patterns, this allowed them to minimize the risk of harvest failure. It was (and still is) common for some Hausaphone groups in Ader to have a wife in each of a man's productive locations. Until the early twentieth century, new fields could be acquired by clearing the bush with the help of sons and often in association with male relatives and age peers, with the specific purpose of increasing the farmland in one's possession. The practice of migrating seasonally to farm distant fields is called *idik* or *edir*. Farmers built temporary huts in their "region of *idik*" and stayed there (or sent an adult son) in the farming season.

Hunting occupied an important place in Hausaphone groups known as "Asna."<sup>44</sup> Asna groups farmed, hunted, and were skilled archers. They arranged hunting trips to surrounding forests that today have been lost to the desert. Sometimes they built camps of temporary huts where they could rest in the course of hunting expeditions that lasted several days. Moreover, both Tuareg and Hausa groups contained specialized long-distance traders

(Hausa: *fatakke*) who exploited Ader's location between two ecological zones, the desert and the savannah, and price differentials for the complementary products of the north and south. The main caravan traders of Ader were the Kel Gress.<sup>45</sup> The elites coordinated the most important cycles of trade, which was labor intensive and absorbed different categories of dependent workers. There were also more or less autonomous trade networks, such as the Isawaghen, who traded salt from Tegidda, or the Illabakan who sold magic charms.<sup>46</sup> These groups displaced themselves in smaller numbers and specialized in the trade of specific goods. The organization of Ader's Hausaphone trade networks was less internally diversified and stratified than that of the networks headed by more important Kano-based traders.<sup>47</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century, Hausa long-distance trading groups from Ader would have involved about ten to fifteen trade partners traveling together. Trips from Ader to Kano or Sokoto lasted fifteen to twenty days, depending on the sites of arrival and departure.<sup>48</sup>

To summarize, in precolonial Ader farming, herding, hunting, and trade involved mobility. Movements matched the seasonality of productive activities. Freedom to choose when and how to move was a function of social status. The higher one's status the greater the freedom to move independently and make others move. The movements of clients and slaves depended on the will of their patrons and masters. Free Tuareg and Hausa tributaries conducted long-distance trade in insecure conditions. Their trajectories ventured outside the areas dominated by specific *imajeghen* groups, with whom they had established economic and military alliances and to whom they paid various kinds of tributes. Their travels exposed them to the risk of raids, attacks, and enslavement. On the other hand, slaves and dependents could not move without the consent of their masters. If intercepted, they would be punished or recaptured by new masters. While some slaves escaped, escape does not seem to have been frequent.

### Movement Under Colonial Rule

I have discussed elsewhere the process through which colonial government limited the capacity of former elites to move freely and, by restraining the latter's power, allowed former slaves to take control over their own movements.<sup>49</sup> Yet, at the same time, colonial rule attempted to control and reorganize the mobility of subjects in new ways. At the desert's edge, France

extracted what it could and gave little in return. Ader's hostile environment did not lend itself easily to the establishment and maintenance of infrastructure. And the limited yields of local production did not justify significant investments, which might have encouraged some degree of urbanization.

French armies invaded Ader in 1900. The first twenty years of colonial occupation of Ader were characterized by ongoing raids and insecurity. "Pacification" was a precondition for the normalization of colonial rule, and it depended on crushing the resistance of former rulers. Repression took the form of military clampdowns and, as in Tanout in 1917, the virtual extermination of the *imajeghen* (see below). Dissident Tuareg elites relied on their superior knowledge of the territory, their ongoing hold over their former subjects, and the incapacity of an understaffed and underfinanced French administration to track and confine their movements. In the early years of colonial occupation, controlling the country amounted to establishing who could move freely across dry, impervious lands and who could control the mobility of local subjects. The French soon realized that punctual military victories and peace treaties were meaningless unless they could actually check dissidents' movements and make local people comply with the requirements of the new regime (for example, taxes, forced labor, military recruitment, progressive settlement of nomadic groups). This, in turn, depended on their capacity to move safely in the territory they had invaded. None of these conditions were even remotely achieved in the first two decades of colonial rule, and they were never fully achieved afterward.

The French encountered major difficulties as they tried to establish viable routes across the country.<sup>50</sup> Long waterless tracts of land posed insurmountable obstacles to French military administrators. Vast areas in Ader could not be controlled. Former Tuareg rulers defeated in battle by French superior military technology responded with guerrilla warfare, in which they had objective advantages vis-à-vis the French. They knew the land and its resources and inhabitants better, and they could rely on the support of some of their former dependents. Most local groups feared the *imajeghen*; some also respected them. Either way, Ader's inhabitants did not trust the colonial state enough to dare denying support to the fearsome *imajeghen*.

Two different types of boundaries gave refuge to dissident Tuareg elites: the edge of the Sahara, to the north, was a line beyond which the Iwellemmeden felt secure and French military strategies became substantially less effective. The Iwellemmeden resistance continued to launch raids on

settled villages and hide in the desert until 1917. In the south, the border with English Nigeria remained disputed until 1907.<sup>51</sup> This allowed the Kel Gress to elude colonial authority in a no man's land where power and responsibility were disputed between French and English forces.<sup>52</sup> However, unlike Iwellemmeden elites, the Kel Gress could not abandon their territorial interests in order to elude French control. When Kel Gress *imajeghen* realized that they stood no chance to win against the superior French military technology, their main concern was to resume control over the production and trade that underpinned their wealth. After the defeats of Zanguebe and Galma in 1901, Kel Gress resistance ceased, and small numbers of Kel Gress were even mobilized in French offensives against other Tuareg "rebel" groups.<sup>53</sup> In northern Ader, the Iwellemmeden Kel Denneg resisted until 1917, when they were exterminated in Tanout.<sup>54</sup> At the height of the "rebellion," French government declared state of siege, which made exceptional military measures possible in what was already a regime of exception, the *indigénat*.

Following occupation, the French established administrative posts that had to be interconnected by practicable routes and required provisions to guarantee their normal functioning. They needed horses and camels for the functioning of their mounted armies, for standard administrative displacements across villages, to follow up village life and customary rule, to administer justice, to carry out censuses and collect taxes, and to transport building materials and other goods. Animals were acquired in several ways: they were requisitioned from rebels in the course of battles and counter-raids and kept as booty; they were demanded as a peace condition in submission treaties; they were received as a form of tax in kind; and they were rented from the largest owners, such as the Kel Gress. Thus, the country had to provide the horses and camels that the French administration needed to rule. It also had to provide all the labor necessary for carrying out public works, manning the army, and servicing colonial posts and operations. Ader populations opposed a strenuous resistance to colonial exactions, forced labor, and compulsory military recruitment. They hid their livestock and horses, migrated to northern Nigeria, escaped into the mountains, and attacked the customary chiefs (*chefs de canton*) who carried out recruitment operations on behalf of the French administration.

In the 1920s, large numbers of emancipated slaves from Ader started migrating to Nigeria. By the 1930s, this exodus was recorded by independent French and British sources as a phenomenon of great demographic

and economic magnitude. French colonial administrators referred to this constant movement as “la question des exodes.” They strove to stop it and regulate it, without success. What appeared as an undifferentiated mass of migrants concealed, in fact, different groups with different reasons for migrating. Among the migrant population were slaves who left never to come back and whose movement was an attempt to leave their origins behind and start a new life. Others migrated to avoid forced labor and compulsory recruitment. They also left to avoid having to pay taxes or, alternatively, to find paid jobs abroad that would allow them to pay taxes on their return.<sup>55</sup>

Through migration, Ader’s inhabitants resisted taxation and demands on their labor. They also resisted, more generally, having to abide by norms and regulations that were not suitable to the living conditions at the desert’s edge. When the new rulers’ decisions proved intolerable, people moved to British territory or retreated into the desert. If their interests clashed not with the French colonial administration but with the village or canton chief, unhappy subjects sent delegations to the *commandant* exposing their complaints. Ader’s society chose which governmentality it would operate in, depending on the circumstances. Locals acted politically with political representatives of the centralized state when this could yield convenient results. They migrated when they judged that political action would not yield desirable outcomes.

### **Conclusion: Kinetocracy as Governmentality**

Kinetocracy is not a type of state; it is a type of governmentality. This chapter has followed Foucault’s suggestion that we should avoid putting the state at the center of the analytical focus.<sup>56</sup> The state does not shape society any more than it is itself shaped by cultural rationales that inform social norms at any one time and place. If the state shapes people’s conduct in a variety of ways, so do the school, the market, and the family. The state’s governmental rationales are an outcome of broader historical, cultural, and social dynamics. Understanding state action requires us to inquire into the underlying rationales that inform government, in the broadest sense of the term. Foucault uses the notion of government in two ways. At one level, his notion of government is very general:

The exercise of power is a “conduct of conducts” and a management of possibilities. Basically, power is less a confrontation between two adversaries or their mutual engagement than a question of “government.” This word must be allowed the very broad meaning it had in the sixteenth century. “Government” did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states; rather it designated the ways in which the conducts of individuals or of groups might be directed—the government of children, of souls, of communities, of families, of the sick. It covered not only the legitimately constituted form of political or economic subjection but also modes of action, more or less considered and calculated, that were destined to act upon the possibilities of action of other people. To govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible field of action of others.<sup>57</sup>

This first meaning allows us to distinguish between different governmental rationales that inform different types of rule. It implies that institutions (including the state) shape the conduct of socialized individuals according to the values of the time, and that certain categories of actors, by virtue of their social status and position, can act on the actions of others even without the use of force. Tuareg elites in kinetocratic systems could expect to control the movements of their dependents who, in turn, needed the protection of their nomadic patrons if they wished to travel safely. Less successfully, the French administration tried to control the movements of Ader’s population, issuing travel permits to traders, expecting migrants to return from their destinations in order to pay taxes, and recruiting workers on colonial worksites. But it proved difficult to turn people into disciplined colonial subjects.

Foucault also talks of “government” as the specific shape that state rule started to assume in seventeenth-century Europe. In this sense, French colonial administration partook of a particular mentality of government, a governmentality, different both from how suzerain power manifested itself in earlier European history and—for the purpose of this chapter—from the rule of Tuareg warrior elites.<sup>58</sup> Following Foucault, France occupied Ader at a time when its governmentality was peculiarly concerned with shaping the conduct of the population understood primarily as living beings. In Foucault’s analysis, the establishment of this specific form of governmentality marks the transformation of politics into biopolitics, and is to be seen

as the most recent transformation in Europe's rationales of rule: "For millennia man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with the additional capacity for political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics calls his existence as a living being into question."<sup>59</sup>

Foucault's primary interest in power/knowledge, rather than in power as it manifests itself in class struggles and other types of confrontations, yields consensual views of power, that is, views that highlight the ways in which the governed and the governors, the victims and the perpetrators, partake of the same cultural rationales that shape how people think and act.<sup>60</sup> However, as has been noted by several critics, Foucault did not try to apply his theoretical framework to multicultural contexts.<sup>61</sup> This chapter attempted to do just this: examine a situation in which two governmental rationales with different social and historical origins interacted in the same place. Of course, we all know how the story ended. Colonial forces defeated Tuareg kinetocratic rule, and imposed a new ideology of government. But how far was the colonial state *really* capable of shaping the conduct of local inhabitants in marginal desert regions? Plainly stated, not much. The desert had remained, as in earlier times, an environment that eludes "normal" state governance due to its intrinsic characteristics. These environmental factors are not static and unchangeable, but, with Braudel, they change more slowly than political regimes.<sup>62</sup>

As suggested earlier in this chapter, desert-based societies and urban societies are not compartmentalized, but rather they are engaged in a dialectic relationship. The desert's "refusal to cooperate"<sup>63</sup> with the political rationales that govern social life in urban centers is manifest in the difficulties that empires and states encountered when they attempted to transform desert regions into areas where settled life was possible. From the centralized state's perspective, the establishment and maintenance of urban infrastructure in the desert has high costs. From the perspective of local inhabitants, investments in valuable property—from elaborate dwellings to productive resources—are too risky. These enduring conditions favor the entrenchment of kinetocratic governmentality and resistance against the normalization of state rule. As briefly discussed in the previous section, kinetocracy is antithetical to at least some of the main traits and characteristics of government in urban centers and settled societies. From the perspective of Quirk and Vigneswaran's conceptual framework, this might be a case of mobility *unmaking* states. In kinetocracy, it is not state policy that channels mobility, but instead it is the necessity to move—ultimately for

survival—that structures political hierarchies and social relations. Kinetocratic resistance to state rule takes the form of escape and migration, giving rise to struggles over the meaning and control of people’s mobility. The state tries to regulate movement, but state representatives in desert posts do not share those kinetocratic rationales that enable the exercise of power in these regions. Faced with their failure to enforce their rules and regulations, central states resort to violent clampdowns at the margins.<sup>64</sup>

In the desert, kinetocracy and state rule follow separate governmental logics. Resistance consists in guerrilla or the “exit option” independently conceived and self-managed by migrants. The “voice option” would imply political action *within* the state apparatus. By contrast, “exit” is an avoidance strategy—a rejection of the political rationales of centralized states. This can be a circumstantial—not an absolute—position: migrants may change their behavior once they reach the city. Again, the two systems are not mutually exclusive; they express a tension familiar to all the men and women who navigate between them. Through mobility, migrants and modern nomads travel between the desert, where kinetocracy prevails, and temporarily settled lifestyles in cities, governed by different rationales of social and political conduct.<sup>65</sup> In the absence of consistent, state-financed safety nets that allow local populations to shift from an emphasis on “access” to an emphasis on “ownership,” the capability to control one’s own and other people’s movements has remained a fundamental condition for survival and a precondition for the exercise of power at the desert’s edge.

62. Interview, Ghana Immigration Service, Accra, April 2008.
63. Mitchell Dean, “Demonic Societies: Liberalism, Biopolitics, and Sovereignty,” in *States of Imagination*, ed. Hansen and Stepputat, 47.
64. Vanessa Mensah-Adu, *Database for Ghanaians in US*, [www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/diaspora/artikel.php?ID=199\\_649](http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/diaspora/artikel.php?ID=199_649); Ghana Embassy, [www.ghanaembassy.org](http://www.ghanaembassy.org), accessed January 14, 2011.
65. Scott, *Seeing like a State*.
66. Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat, “Introduction,” in *Sovereign Bodies: Citizens, Migrants, and States in the Postcolonial World*, ed. Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005), 3.
67. Scott, *Seeing like a State*; Wedel et al., “Towards an Anthropology of Public Policy.”
68. Interview, Ghana Immigration Service, Accra, April 2008.
69. “European Union Gives to Immigration Service and Police CID,” March 25, 2013, <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/european-union-gives-to-immigration-service-and-police-cid-58079>.
70. Interview, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Accra, May 2008.
71. Interview, Ministry of Education, Accra, June 2008.
72. Harrison, “Economic Faith, Social Project and a Misreading of African Society.”
73. Levitt and de la Dehesa, “Transnational Migration and the Redefinition of the State”; Gamlen, “Diaspora Engagement Policies.”
74. Cf. Nina Glick Schiller and Noel B. Salazar, “Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39, 2 (2013): 183–200.

### Chapter 7. Kinetocracy: The Government of Mobility at the Desert’s Edge

I wish to thank Joel Le Corre, Amanda Hammar, Loren Landau, Joel Quirk, and Darshan Vigneswaran for helpful comments on different versions of this chapter.

1. The term *kinetocracy* combines elements from the ancient Greek words *kinēsis* (κίνησις, motion, movement) and *krátos* (κράτος, “force” or “power”). I use it to indicate a form of government whereby power corresponds to control over (one’s own and other people’s) mobility. Together with words such as *theocracy* (a form of government in which priests rule in the name of God), *democracy* (government by the people), *technocracy* (government by an elite of technical experts), and *kleptocracy* (government characterized by corruption, government by thieves), kinetocracy allows us to compare a particular logic of government, in which power corresponds to the capacity to move freely and control other people’s movement, to other historically specific governmentalities. In terms of word formation, kinetocracy fits loosely in this category: literally, it means “government by movement.” Through a further interpretative step, we can understand this term to mean “government by (those who can control) movement.” This is possibly similar to the interpretation of the term *plutocracy*, meaning “government by wealth” (πλοῦτος, *ploutos*, wealth), and, by extension, government by those who possess or control wealth.

2. Most studies of governance in Africa focus on the perceived “failure” or “weakness” of the African state and do not develop conceptual tools for studying political authority in nomadic societies. Notable exceptions are Victor Azarya, *Nomads and the State in Africa: The Political Roots of Marginality* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1996); Victor Azarya, “The Nomadic Factor in Africa: Dominance or Marginality,” in *Nomads in the Sedentary World*, ed. Anatoly Khazanov and Andre Wink, 250–81 (Richmond: Curzon, 2001).

3. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980; London: Athlone, 1996), 377.

4. The case of Tuareg society considered in this chapter, and in particular of the incongruence between Tuareg social organization and state power, has received some attention, but this literature has not influenced general reflections on African governance. See Edmond Bernus, “Le nomadisme pastorale en question,” *Études Rurales* 120 (1990): 41–52; Edmond Bernus, “Le Berger touareg et le paysan,” in *À la croisée des parcours*, ed. Chantal Blanc-Pamard and Jean Boutrais (Paris: Orstom, 1994); Pierre Boilley, “Les droits d’un peuple Touaregs: De la rébellion à l’assimilation,” *Monde des Débats* 10 (1993): 27–28; Pierre Bonte, *Segmentarité et pouvoir chez les éleveurs nomades sahariens: Éléments d’une problématique, équipe écologie et anthropologie des sociétés pastorales* (Paris: Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 1979); André Bourgeot, “L’herbe et le glaive: De l’itinérance à l’errance (la notion de territoire chez les Touaregs) in nomadisme: mobilité et flexibilité?” *Bulletin de Liaison Département H: ORSTOM* 8 (1986): 145–62. André Bourgeot, “Le lion et la gazelle: États et Touaregs in États et sociétés nomades,” *Politique Africaine* 34 (1989): 19–29; André Bourgeot, *Les sociétés touarègues: Nomadisme, identité, résistances* (Paris: Karthala, 1995); Hélène Claudot-Hawad, “Les Touaregs ou la résistance d’une culture nomade,” *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 51, 1 (1989): 63–73; Hélène Claudot-Hawad, “Nomades et état: L’impensé juridique,” *Droit et Société* 15 (1990): 229–42; Hélène Claudot-Hawad, “Le Tashumara: Antidote de l’état,” *Revue du Monde Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 57 (1990): 123–40; H. T. Norris, “Tuareg Nomadism in the Modern World,” *African Affairs* 51, 203 (1952): 52–55.

5. Benedetta Rossi, “Slavery and Migrations: Social and Physical Mobility in Ader (Niger),” in *Reconfiguring Slavery: West African Trajectories*, ed. Benedetta Rossi (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 182.

6. Edward W. Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors* (1958; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 11–12.

7. For a discussion of slavery at the desert’s edge, see Stephen Bajer and Paul Lovejoy, “The Desert Side Economy of the Central Sudan,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 8, 4 (1975): 551–81. I develop this argument fully in my forthcoming monograph, Benedetta Rossi, “From Slavery to Aid: Power, Labour, and Mobility at the Desert’s Edge, ca. 1800–2000.”

8. Fernand Braudel, *Les Ambitions de l’histoire* (Paris: Fallois, 1997), 60, my translation.

9. John L. Comaroff and Simon Roberts, *Rules and Processes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 84.

10. Benedetta Rossi, “Tubali’s Trip: Rethinking Informality in the Study of West African Labour Migrations,” *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 48, 1 (2014), 1–24.

11. Max Weber emphasized the territorial nature of political organizations in *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 54. The territorialization of the modern Western state is discussed in Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State: A Sociological Introduction* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1978); Peter Sahlins, *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

12. John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9. See the editors’ opening work for a cogent discussion of this point in relation to African states.

13. For a comparative discussion of this point, see Khazanov and Wink, eds., *Nomads in the Sedentary World*.
14. Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 12.
15. John Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 70.
16. Robert H. Bates, *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa*, African Studies Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 35.
17. Cf. Robert Capot-Rey, *Le Sahara français* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1953), 63.
18. The tension between nomadic and settled societies has been attributed to different causes. Some authors saw the state's military maintenance of territorial boundaries as an act of violence directed against the outside world; see, for example, Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace, société et urbanisme* (Paris: Anthropos, 1974), 322–23; Stuart Elden, *Terror and Territory: The Spatial Extent of Sovereignty* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009). Others stressed the threat posed to settled life by nomadic “hordes,” constantly raiding peasants to satisfy their need for resources lacking in their fragile territories; see Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors*, 12. In their “Treatise on Nomadology,” Deleuze and Guattari, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, see the nomadic hordes of deserts and steppes as the prototypical counterpoint of settled civilization, threatening urban strongholds from the margins and constituting an incommensurable “form of exteriority.”
19. Nehemiah Levtzion, *Ancient Ghana and Mali* (1973; New York: Africana, 1980) 9.
20. Ahmad b. Abi Ya'qub b. Ja'far b. Wahn b. Wadih, known as Al Yaqubi, “Kitab al-buldan,” in Nehemia Levtzion and John F. P. Hopkins, *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for African History* (Princeton, N.J.: Markus Wiener, 2006), 22.
21. Abu 'l-Qasim Ibn Hawqal al-Nusaybi, known as Ibn Hawqal, “Kitab Surat al-Ard”, in *ibid.*, 49.
22. Abou-Obeid el-Bekri, *Description de l'Afrique septentrionale*, trans. William MacGuckin Slane (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1965), 311–23.
23. “In this vast region, we find nomads who do not stop in any place. Amongst them are the Beni Messoufa, fraction of the large tribe of the Sanhadja: they do not have a single town where they can seek refuge,” *ibid.*, 284.
24. John O. Hunwick, “A Region of the Mind: Medieval Arab Views of African Geography and Ethnography and Their Legacy,” *Sudanic Africa* 16 (2005): 103–36.
25. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, ed. Franz Rosenthal (London: Routledge, 1958), 84–85.
26. *Ibid.*, 308.
27. “The Bedouins need the cities for the necessities of life by the very nature of their mode of existence. As long as they live in the *desert and have not obtained royal authority and control of the cities*, they need the inhabitants (of the latter).” *Ibid.*, 308–9, my emphasis.
28. Constitutive aspects of this tension are spelled out in detail in *ibid.*, 257–58.
29. Abderrahman al-Sa'di, “Tarikh Al-Sudan,” in *Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire*, ed. John O. Hunwick (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 29–31.
30. Ahmad B. Furtu, “Kitab Ghazawat Barnu,” in *A Sudanic Chronicle: The Borno Expeditions of Idris Alauma (1564–1576)*, ed. Dierk Lange (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1987).

31. Cf. Marc Carlier, *Méharistes du Niger* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001).

32. Capot-Rey, *Le Sahara français*, 291; Emmanuel Grégoire, "Major Sahelian Trade Networks: Past and Present," in *Societies and Nature in the Sahel*, ed. Claude Raynaud (London: Routledge, 1997); Andre Bourgeot, "Une rupture du couple écologie-économie: La crise du pastoralisme touareg," in *Dynamique ses systèmes à la croisée des parcours pasteurs, éleveurs, cultivateurs*, ed. Chantal Blanc-Pamard and Jean Boutrais (Paris: OSTROM, 1994), 63–78.

33. For a critical review of the literature on the state's territoriality, see Stuart Elden, "Land, Terrain, Territory," *Progress in Human Geography* 34, 6 (2010): 799–817. The philosophical underpinnings of the distinction between space and place are explored in Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). In his study of the historical development of the modern state, Gianfranco Poggi has been one of the supporters of the growing importance of territoriality as an increasingly important characteristic of European states. For example, he sees as the first aspect of the nineteenth-century state the "unity of the state's territory, which comes to be bounded as much as possible by a continuous geographical frontier that is militarily defensible." Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State*, 93.

34. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 380.

35. Cf. Djibo Hamani, *L'Adar précolonial* (1975; Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008), 155.

36. Capitaine Brescone, "Monographie du cercle de Tahoua (1901)," Archives Nationales du Niger [ANN] 17.1.3, 1901; Capt. Joly, "Monographie du cercle ce Tahoua," ANN 17.1.1, 1901; A. Peignol, "Monographie du cercle fe Tahoua," ANN 17.1.4, 1907; Capt. Pietri, "Note sur les Touareg oulliminden du cercle de Tahoua," ANN 17.1.7, 1945; Francis Nicolas, "Notes sur la société et l'état chez les Twareg du Denneg (Iullemmeden de L'est)," *Bulletin IFAN* 15 (1939).

37. Cf. Rossi, "Slavery and Migrations," 187–89. See also P. Kolchin, *Unfree Labour: American Slavery and Russian Serfdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987). For exceptions that emphasize the ability of some categories of slaves to move long distances on account of their owners, see Camille Lefebvre, "Un esclave a vu le monde: Se déplacer en tant qu'esclave au Soudan Central (xixe siècle)," *Locus-Revista de História* 35, 2 (2012): 105–43; Bruce S. Hall, "How Slaves Used Islam: The Letters of Enslaved Muslim Commercial Agents in the Nineteenth-Century Niger Bend and Central Sahara," *Journal of African History* 52, 3 (2011): 279–97.

38. Benedetta Rossi, "Tuareg Trajectories of Slavery: Preliminary Reflections on a Changing Field," in *Tuareg Society Within a Globalized World: Saharan Society in Transition*, ed. Anja Fisher and Ines Kohl (London: Tauris, 2010).

39. Bajer and Lovejoy, "The Desert Side Economy"; Stephen Bajer and Paul Lovejoy, "The Tuareg of the Central Sudan: Gradations in Servility at the Desert's Edge (Niger and Nigeria)," in *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977).

40. The intelligence underpinning French military operations against Tuareg groups shows that French officers presumed Tuareg warriors' superior knowledge of the territory.

41. Edmond Bernus and Suzanne Bernus, "L'évolution de la condition servile chez les Touaregs sahéliens" and Pierre Bonte, "Esclavage et relations de dépendance chez les Touareg Kel Gress," in *L'Esclavage en Afrique précoloniale*, ed. Claude Meillassoux (Paris: Maspéro, 1972).

42. Transhumance refers to the seasonal movements of livestock, cattle, and camel herds. For example, the camel herds of the Kel Gress followed complex migratory patterns. In the summer, roughly between July and September, the majority left for the salt cure in Tegidda n'Tesemt, near In Gall. This was a collective movement. Camels were brought to the In Gall area. From In Gall, herds and herders dispersed to Tegidda n'Tesemt, Tegidda n'Adrar, and Tegidda n'Taguei, where a high concentration of sodium chloride and sodium sulfate in the surface layers of the soil and in wells and springs had a laxative effect on the camels and stimulated elimination of intestinal parasites. The salt cure was also an occasion for obtaining salt in exchange for southern products brought by the Kel Gress (cloth, cotton, cattle, livestock, millet, butter, and wild honey).

43. Bernus and Bernus, "L'Évolution de la condition servile chez les Touaregs sahéliens."

44. For a discussion of Asna society in Ader, see Benedetta Rossi, "Being and Becoming Hausa in Ader," in *Being and Becoming Hausa: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Anne Haour and Benedetta Rossi (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 113–40.

45. Stephen Baier, *An Economic History of Central Niger* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980).

46. Edmond Bernus and Suzanne Bernus, *Du sel et des dattes: Introduction à l'étude de la communauté d'In Gall et de Tegidda-n-Tesemt*, Études Nigériennes 31 (Niamey: IFAN, 1972); Suzanne Bernus and Pierre Gouletquer, "Du cuivre au sel: Recherches ethno-archéologiques sur la région d'Azelik (campagnes 1973–1975)," *Journal des Africanistes* 46, 1 (1976): 7–68. For a study of the relation between social organization and patterns of geographic mobility among the Illabakan, see Edmond Bernus, "Espace géographique et champs sociaux chez les Touareg Illabakan (République du Niger)," *Études Rurales* 37–38–39 (1970): 46–64.

47. A. Dan Asabe, "Comparative Biographies of Selected Leaders of the Kano Commercial Establishment," MA thesis, Bayero University, 1987.

48. Benedetta Rossi, "Physical and Social Mobility in Ader, ca. 1920–2000," Final Report, Mobilités Ouest-Africaines (MOBOUA), Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, Paris, 2010.

49. Rossi, "Slavery and Migrations."

50. Cf. Général Gouraud, *Zinder-Chad: Souvenirs d'un africain* (Paris: Plon, 1914), 29ff.

51. Jean Auguste Marie Tilho, *Documents scientifiques de la mission Tilho, 1910–14*, 3 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1926), 1: xviii–xix.

52. "Rapport politique," ANN 1E2.14, April 1905.

53. "Rapport du chef de bataillon Gouraud sur le combat et la reconnaissance de Zanguebe," ANN 27.6, 1901; "Rapport du chef de bataillon Gouraud, commandant la région ouest iiième territoire militaire, à Monsieur le Lieutenant-Colonel, commandant militaire du territoire sur les opérations contre les Kel Gueress, 17–28 Juin 1901, 30 Juin 1901," ANN 27.5., 1901.

54. "Notice sur la Colonie du Niger, première partie," SHD-BAT GR5 H211, 9ff; "Télégramme du capt Sadoux concernant les opérations dans la région est du secteur," April 13, 1917; G. Alojali, *Histoire des Kel Denneg* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1975).

55. Elliott Skinner, "Labour Migration and Its Relationship to Socio-Cultural Change in Mossi Society," *Africa* 388, 3 (1960): 374–400; Igor Wallerstein, "Migration in West Africa: The Political Perspective," in *Urbanization and Migration in West Africa*, ed. Hilda Kuper (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965).

56. Michel Foucault, "Lesson of 10 January 1979," in *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–79*, ed. Michel Senellart (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008), 6; cf. Colin

Gordon, “Governmental Rationality: An Introduction,” in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 4. Charles Grémont, working on the Tuareg Iwellemmeden Kel Ataram, also emphasized the relevance of Foucault’s theory of power in relation to Tuareg political organization; see Charles Grémont, *Les Touaregs Iwellemmeden, 1647–1896: Un ensemble politique de la boucle du Niger* (Paris: Karthala, 2010).

57. Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” in *The Essential Works of Michel Foucault, 1954–1984*, vol. 3, *Power*, ed. James D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 1984), 341.

58. Michel Foucault, “Leçon du 1er février 1978,” in *Sécurité, territoire, population, cours au Collège de France (1977–1978)*, ed. F. Ewald, A. Fontana, and M. Senellart (Paris: Gallimard, 2004), 11–12.

59. Michel Foucault, *La Volonté de savoir* (Paris: Seuil, 1976), 127.

60. Foucault discusses how different types of power can be studied and justifies his choice of focus in “Afterword: The Subject and Power,” in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 208–26. For a comparison of Foucault’s work and Marxist approaches, and an assessment of their respective contribution to modern historiography, see especially Mark Poster, *Foucault, Marxism and History* (London: Polity, 1984), 70–94.

61. See Donald L. Donham, “Freeing South Africa: The ‘Modernization’ of Male-Male Sexuality in Soweto,” *Cultural Anthropology* 13, 1 (1998): 6; Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995); Benedetta Rossi, “Revisiting Foucauldian Approaches: Power Dynamics in Development Projects,” *Journal of Development Studies* 40, 6 (2004): 1–29.

62. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (1949; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

63. Michel Callon and Bruno Latour, “Don’t Throw the Baby Out with the Bath School! A Reply to Collins and Yearley,” in *Science as Practice and Culture*, ed. Andrew Pickering, 343–68 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

64. Hagemann and Korf argued convincingly that “margins” or “peripheries” should not simplistically be equated with *actual* environmental or social discontinuities. They correspond to political discourses that allow the central state to impose exceptional measures of rule on particular regions and societies that are “peripheral” only from the perspective of the central government. While I am fully in agreement with this analysis, here I suggest that the material characteristics of desert environments matter not just as a social construction, even though such environments are accessible for analysis only through their discursive dimension. See Tobias Hagemann and Benedikt Korf, “Agamben in the Ogaden: Violence and Sovereignty in the Ethio-Somali Frontier,” *Political Geography* 31, 4 (2012): 205–14.

65. I take the expression *projet migratoire* from Florence Boyer, “Le projet migratoire des migrants touaregs de la zone de Bankilaré: La pauvreté désavouée,” *Stichproben Wiener Zeitschrift für Kritische Afrikastudien* 8 (2005): 47–67.

## Chapter 8. Decolonization and (Dis)Possession in Lusophone Africa

Epigraph: Orhan Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence*, trans. Maureen Freely (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), 45.

1. See Raymond Betts, *Decolonization* (London: Routledge, 1998); Duara Prasenjit, *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Frederick