

MALI

Tuaregs

Activity: 1960-1964; 1990-2020

General notes

- The names Tuareg and Touareg are used interchangeably throughout but denote the same group.

Movement start and end dates

- Already prior to Mali's independence, there had been dreams of an independent Tuareg state (Azawad), comprised of territory in northern Mali, northern Niger, and southern Libya (Keita 1998: 108). The Minority Rights Group International also describes expectations during the colonial period among the Tuareg for an autonomous state (Azawad). The first evidence for political mobilization we could find is in 1957, when Tuareg leaders wrote an open letter to Charles de Gaulle suggesting that "Our interests and aspirations can never be validly defended as long as we are attached to a territory that is validly represented and governed by a black majority whose ethnicity, interests and aspirations are not even ours" (Richter 2015). Lecocq (2010: 47f) also refers to this letter, suggesting that the Tuaregs in it claimed a right to self-determination.
- According to Hewitt and Cheetham (2000: 300), a rebellion started in 1962, whereas Lecocq (2010: ch. 4, esp. pp. 161ff) suggests the First Tuareg Rebellion started in 1963, not 1962, while preparations for the rebellion had begun before 1963. The government violently repressed the rebellion in 1964 and instituted military rule, sending many Touareg into exile. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Tuareg nationalists operated from exile while the violent suppression in 1964 appears to have ended all local mobilization. We code an end to the first phase in 1964 (Cunningham 2014; Lecocq & Klute 2019). [end date 1: 1957; end date 1: 1964]
- Many Tuareg insurgents moved to Libya, where they received military/insurgency training. Together with Tuaregs from Niger, they formed a Tuareg liberation movement in Libya, which in 1988 became (after shedding the Niger connection), the Mouvement Populaire de Libération de l'Azawad (MPLA). The MPLA invaded Mali from Libya and attacked government posts in the summer of 1990 (Macartan & Mohamed 2005: 255). This is the first evidence of separatist mobilization in Mali, so 1990 is coded as the second start date.
- The government used political cooptation of elites to divide the movement, talks followed in 1991 following mediation efforts by Algeria, and the movement went through a re-organization process, shedding the "liberation" claims and becoming the Mouvement Populaire de l'Azawad (MPA) with the Arab groups distinguishing themselves from the larger movement by creating the Front Islamique et Arabe de l'Azawad (FIAA). Generous terms offered by the government in the Tamanrasset Accords led to a decline in violence. Regime change in the spring of 1991 and public opposition to Tamanrasset Accords, which were perceived as granting autonomy to the North, led to more attacks and intensification of the conflict.
- The MPA remained committed to the Accords and tried to resist conflict escalation, which led to fragmentation in the group with the FIAA breaking off to form the Front Populaire pour la Libération de l'Azawad (FPLA), with another splintered group, the Armée Révolutionnaire pour la Libération de l'Azawad (ARLA), forming later on. The government tried to organize all the groups in a unified movement, the Mouvements et Fronts Unifiés de l'Azawad (MFUA).
- A National Pact signed in 1992 offered economic concessions to the North, as well as substantial autonomy (decentralization) through proposed constitutional reforms. However, just as with the earlier peace efforts through the Tamanrasset Accords, the resources were not available to deliver on all the promises made by the National Pact. Inter-communal violence continued due to frustrations with the implementation of the National Pact, increased banditry, and factionalism (Lecocq 2010; Macartan & Mohamed 2005; Minahan 1996, 2002; MAR; UCDP/PRIO).

- The civil war ended in 1995, but sporadic clashes continued throughout the rest of the 1990s and 2000s, with an escalation in 2007-2009 (Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl 2019; UCDP/PRIO).
- The National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), formed in late 2011, brought together Tuareg leaders from the National Movement for Azawad (the MNA, formed by young Tuareg students and graduates the previous year), and more militant leaders of rebel groups. Many of these leaders were Tuareg who had left Mali in disappointment following the 1992 National Pact, and had been recruited by Ag Bahanga in Libya (Lecoq & Klute 2019).
- In 2012, fighting escalated between MNLA rebels and the Malian army, which led to a military coup d'état on 21 March 2012. President Toure resigned shortly after, together with the the coup leader, Cpt. Sanogo. The weakening of the state allowed MNLA rebels to overrun the northern third of Mali's territory and to declare the independence of the state of Azawad on 6 April 2012 (Girardin 2021: 1215).
- On 14 January 2013, after the French intervention in the conflict had commenced, the MNLA declared it would fight alongside the French and the Malian government to "end terrorism in Azawad" (Hirsch 2013). At the same time the MNLA warned the Malian forces not to enter territories it considered its own before an autonomy agreement was signed (Star Africa 14th January 2013).
- In June 2014, various northern groups grouped themselves in one of two camps, the CMA (Coordination des Mouvements de l'Azawad: Coordination of Azawad Movements) and Platform. The former included MNLA, MAA-Ould Sidatti, HCUA, CM-FPR II (joined in August) and CPA (joined in September), all of which are pro-independence. The latter was made up of MAA and CM-FPR, which favor autonomy.
- In mid-2015, some Tuareg rebels signed a peace deal that will give Azawad autonomy, though other groups continued to fight for independence (UCDP 2017). The failure of both parties to successfully implement the deal and for regional autonomy to be conferred contributed to the ongoing conflict in Mali which persists to the present. [start date 2: 1990; end date 2: ongoing]

Dominant claim

- The first Tuareg rebellion was predominantly caused by marginalization both under colonialism and in post-colonial Mali. But self-determination was also among the claims. Already prior to independence, there had been dreams of an independent Tuareg state (Azawad), comprised of territory in northern Mali, northern Niger, and southern Libya (Keita 1998: 108). The Minority Rights Group International also describes expectations during the colonial period among the Tuareg for an autonomous state (Azawad). These expectations carried into independent Mali. [1960-1964: independence claim]
- The second period of activity started in 1990, when the 'Mouvement Populaire de Libération de l'Azawad' (MPLA) invaded Mali. The MPLA was initially the first Tuareg organizations fighting the Malian government, but the Arab component of the movement soon broke away and created the 'Front Islamique Arabe de l'Azaouad' (FIAA) in 1990. Many splinter groups were formed during the early 1990s, such as the Front Populaire pour la Libération de l'Azaouad (FPLA) or the 'Armée Révolutionnaire pour la Libération de l'Azaouad' (ARLA) in 1991.
- In addition to the fractionalization of the Tuareg claim, the individual organizations also changed their claims over time. Lecocq (2010) provides an overview of all relevant movements and their claims.
- The UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia provides additional information on the individual claims: When the MPLA was still the only Tuareg self-determination organization, it demanded independence. However, when the MPLA changed its name to MPA (Mouvement Populaire de l'Azaouad) in early 1991 and signed the Tamanrasset accord in May 1991, it limited its aim to autonomy within Mali. The FIAA also signed the accord that granted northern Mali widespread autonomy. The accord was rejected by both FPLA and ARLA, which according to UCDP returned to the ideology of independence. Since UCDP described both movements as "much smaller groups" than MPA and FIAA, autonomy is coded as the dominant claim from 1992 onwards following the first of January rule.

- This coding is continued also for the relatively peaceful period between 1995 and 2007. The claim for autonomy in this period is also confirmed by Minorities at Risk.
- In 2007, conflict erupted again with the ‘Alliance démocratique du 23 Mai pour le changement - Ibrahim Bahanga faction’ (later the ‘Alliance Touareg Nord Mali pour le Changement (ATNMC)’) revolting against discrimination of Tuareg in the Malian military. According to Call (2012: 171), Banga “demanded greater autonomy (though not independence)”. The claim for autonomy is thus continued.
- In 2011, after the fall of Gaddafi in Libya, Tuareg fighters returning from Libya formed the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), together with remnants from the ATNMC and a Tuareg organization called MNA. The goal of MNLA was the creation of an independent Azawad (UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia). In November 2011 the MNLA organized protests demanding self determination or independence (Lococq and Klute 2019: 42). In 2012, MNLA declared the independence of Azawad (BBC 2012).
- The second major group in the renewed insurgency was the islamist Ansar Dine. According to UCDP and Cline (2013: 623), Ansar Dine favored the implementation of sharia law in the entire country and did not demand the creation of an independent Azawad. However, a short-lived agreement in 2012 between Ansar Dine and MNLA to create an independent Islamic state of Azawad and the fact that Ansar Dine created a de facto Islamic state in northern Mali after driving out MNLA (UCDP) would also suggest secessionist tendencies.
- In June 2014, various northern groups grouped themselves in one of two camps, the CMA (Coordination des Mouvements de l’Azawad: Coordination of Azawad Movements) and Platform. The former included MNLA, MAA-Ould Sidatti, HCUA, CM-FPR II (joined in August) and CPA (joined in September), all of which are pro-independence. The latter was made up of MAA and CM-FPR, which favor autonomy. We continue to code independence as the dominant claim because it is not clear what claim is dominant.
- After the signing of the 2015 Bamako peace agreement, important Tuareg factions that had previously been secessionist, including MNLA and CMA, moderated their claim to autonomy (Al Jazeera 2015: IPI 2017), so we code an autonomy claim from 2016 onward in keeping with the 1st of January rule. [1990-1991: independence claim] [1992-2010: autonomy claim][2011-2015: independence claim; 2016-2020: autonomy claim]

Independence claims

- The first period of the SDM was primarily about independence. [start date 1: 1957; end date 1: 1964]
- The second period of the SDM is more sporadic. Independence is a clear claim until 1991, when the movement split into pro autonomy and pro independence factions. Although the FPLA and ARLA are noted to be minor groups, these are still an armed, organized independence groups. MAR also indicates that the conflict escalated, and it was only in 1995 when all the groups came together in a peace process. The peace process, which began in 1992, sought to integrate the Tuareg provided some autonomy concessions in exchange for the Tuareg giving up on independence claims (Chauzal and van Damme 2015: Online). Therefore independence is a claim until this peace deal. [start date 2: 1990; end date 2: 1995]
- Lococq and Klute note that the MNLA began demanding independence through a series of protests in late 2011 (but did not publish the demand on its website until 2012) (2019: 42). This began the next period of independence claims, which lasted until 2015 when the Tuareg factions making independence claims moderated their claim to autonomy (Al Jazeera 2015: IPI 2017). [start date 3: 2011; end date 3: 2015]

Irredentist claims

NA

Claimed territory

- The territory claimed by the Tuareg in Mali is the region of Azawad, which consists of the regions Gao, Tombouctou, Kidal and parts of the Mopti district (Minahan 2002; Roth 2015; Alvarado 2012). A map can be found in Roth (2015: 230). We code this claim using data on admin units from the Global Administrative Areas Database (2019) for polygon definition.

Sovereignty declarations

- On April 6th 2012 the MNLA declares independence of Northern Mali announcing the creation of a new state: 'The Republic of Azawad' (Lecocq & Klute 2019: 43). [2012: independence declaration]

Separatist armed conflict

- UCDP/PRIO does not code an armed conflict in the initial phase, but there are several indications for LVIOLSD. First, Hewitt and Cheetham (2000: 300), suggest that a rebellion started in 1962. Second, MAR's quinquennial rebellion score is 6 in 1960-1964 (the second-highest value, suggesting "large-scale guerilla activity"). Qualitative evidence also points to significant violence, though Lecocq (2010: ch. 4, esp. pp. 161ff) notes that what they refer to as the First Tuareg Rebellion started in 1963, not 1962, while preparations for the rebellion had begun before 1963. The sources we consulted suggest that anywhere from several hundred to 1,500 Tuareg rebels were involved and up to 2,2000 soldiers on the government side. Humphreys and Mohamed (2003: 255) suggest that 1,000 Tuaregs were killed overall. Lecocq (2010) does not provide an estimate of the total number of casualties, but the narrative (pp. 161ff) clearly points to sustained, reciprocated violence with more than 25 deaths in both 1963 and 1964. [1960-1962: NVIOLSD; 1963-1964: LVIOLSD]
- The HVIOLSD coding for 1990-1995 follows Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl (2019). [1990-1995: HVIOLSD]
- Though there is sporadic violence, fatalities from 1996-2006 do not meet requirements to be considered low-level violence, and this period is thus coded NVIOLSD. UCDP/PRIO codes an armed conflict over Azawad 2007-2009, thus these years are coded as LVIOLSD. [1996-2006: NVIOLSD; 2007-2009: LVIOLSD]
- No source codes violence over Azawad in 2010-2011 and, according to UCDP/PRIO, there were no battle-related deaths in those years at all. [2010-2011: NVIOLSD]
- Sambanis & Schulhofer-Wohl (2019) code an ongoing civil war in Mali in 2012-2020. The war includes a variety of rebel groups with variable goals; in a broad sense, there are separatist groups (especially MNLA) and Islamist groups whose goal is to impose sharia law throughout Mali. Because the latter constitutes a center-seeking rebellion, we follow UCDP/PRIO, which separates battle-related deaths from the separatist and center-seeking rebellion. According to UCDP/PRIO, the 25 deaths threshold was met in 2012 and 2014-2015 for the separatist rebellion (more specifically: 131 deaths in 2012, 12 in 2013, 94 in 2014 and 54 in 2015). Given sustained violence in 2013, we code LVIOLSD throughout 2012-2015. UCDP reports clashes in subsequent years, but the maximum number of casualties reported is 1 in 2017. 2016-2020 are therefore coded as NVIOLSD. [2012-2015: LVIOLSD; 2016-2020: NVIOLSD]

Historical context

- 1st phase:
 - o Historically, the Tuareg inhabited the Central Saharan mountain ranges – the Ajjer, Hoggar, Air, and Adagh n Ifoghas, the adjacent Sahel-Saharan plains on the southern edge of the desert, and the interior bend of the Niger River. Politically, Tuaregs were organized as a number of similarly structured tribal federations (Lecocq & Klute 2019).

- The French attempted to colonize the territory, but were met with fierce resistance. Tuareg federations surrendered at the beginning of the 20th century. There were several Tuareg revolts around the time of WWI (Grémont 2010). The French solidified their grip over the region in 1934. Tuaregs enjoyed a degree of ‘colonial privilege’ relative to other groups as they were exempted from forced labor and military conscription (Lecocq & Klute 2019).
- In the 1950s, southern black tribes began their drive for independence from France. Fearing domination, Tuaregs demanded the creation of an autonomous state in northern districts of French West Africa and southern Algeria in 1959 (Minahan 2002). Tuareg demands were ignored (Lecocq & Klute 2019).
- Decentralization was inscribed in Mali’s constitution, which declared that “all territorial authorities in the Republic of Mali shall be freely administered by elected bodies”. However, this was not implemented at the time (Diarra et al. 2004).
- 2nd phase:
 - No concessions or restrictions were found in the ten years before the second start date.

Concessions and restrictions

- In 1960 Mali became independent. Relations with the Tuareg quickly deteriorated, with the Mali state seeing the Tuareg variously as ‘white, slave-raiding nomads’ or ‘neo-colonial agents of France’. Mali imposed ‘civilizing’ modernization policies (enrollment of children in schools) and curtailed the powers of tribal leaders (Lecocq & Klute 2019). [1960: autonomy restriction]
- In 1991 the Tamanrasset Accord was signed, which promised the Tuareg internal autonomy. However, the government fell before the accord could be implemented (Cunningham 2014; Lecocq & Klute 2019). We do not code a concession because of the lack of implementation.
- In April 1992 a new peace-deal called the National Pact was signed between the government and multiple Tuareg rebel groups. The deal included the following: integration of Tuareg combatants, demilitarization and economic integration of the north, and a special administrative structure for the three northern regions with competencies in areas including education, health, taxation, and the economy. There was some implementation, so we code a concession. However, the National Pact was never fully implemented. Most notably, Kidal region was not given the full promised autonomy and the special tax regime for the region was not implemented, either (Cunningham 2014). [1992: autonomy concession]
- In February 1993, the President enacted framework law No. 93-008, which set out general guidelines for the national decentralization policy (Cunningham 2014). We do not code a concession because the framework was an outflow of the 1992 National Pact.
- In 1999, municipalities were provided with control over fiscal spending connected to health, education and some infrastructure (Seely 2001). We do not code a concession because the framework was an outflow of the 1992 National Pact.
- 2006 saw the start of another Tuareg rebellion. Negotiations began shortly thereafter and in the same year, a new peace deal was signed, the Algiers Accords. The accords introduced a new regional assembly that would be consulted on laws affecting the Kidal region, a preferential tax system, a healthcare system adapted to nomadic life, and improvements to infrastructure. Furthermore, new north-only security units are established (Pezard & Shurkin 2015). There was some implementation, so we code a concession. However, the Algiers Accords were never fully implemented (Pezard & Shurkin 2015). [2006: autonomy concession]
- On September 5, 2013, a new prime minister, Oumar Tatam Ly, was appointed by the president. His first cabinet consisted of members of all ethnic groups. Furthermore, a new ministry was built, which was responsible for the Reconciliation of the North (US State Department 2017). We could not find evidence for a concession as defined here, however.
- In June 2015, another peace agreement was signed between the northern rebel groups and the government, though other groups continue to fight for independence (Minahan 2016: 428). In this context, the government offered Azawad partial autonomy. However, the offer appears to have been made as a result of international pressure and no concrete steps followed. (ICG 2020: Council on Foreign Relations 2020). We do not code a concession.

Regional autonomy

- While the de-centralisation act of 1992 did bring the devolution of government power in some areas, it can not be seen as meaningful regional autonomy. Municipalities across the country were given some power over their spending on health, education and infrastructure, however, major decision making remains highly centralized. While further peace agreements promising autonomy were signed in subsequent years, the extent of decentralization remains limited as of 2020 (CRU 2020). Therefore, we only code regional autonomy during de facto independence. [1960-1962, 1990-2012: no autonomy; 2013: autonomy; 2014-2020: no autonomy]

De facto independence

- According to Roth (2015: 237), MNLA, a Tuareg rebel group, took control of most of the northern two-thirds of Mali and declared it independent in 2012 and remained de facto independent throughout 2012. The de facto state quickly became dominated by Islamists, who in early 2013 began pushing further south into non-Tuareg areas in an attempt to turn the whole of Mali into an Islamic state. In response, a French and Chadian military force, with the support of Ecomog forces, invaded Azawad and dislodged separatists and Islamists from power. In keeping with this account and the 1st of January rule, we code de facto independence in 2013. [1960-1962, 1990-2012: no de facto independence; 2013: de facto independence; 2014-2020: no de facto independence]

Major territorial changes

- [2012: establishment of de facto independence]
- [2013: revocation of de facto independence]

EPR2SDM

<i>Movement</i>	Tuaregs
<i>Scenario</i>	1:1
<i>EPR group(s)</i>	Tuareg
<i>Gwgroupid(s)</i>	43202000

Power access

- We adopt EPR's power access coding, with the exception of 2013 (powerless due to de facto independence). [1962-64: powerless; 1990-1991: powerless; 1992-2012, 2014-2020: junior partner; 2013: powerless]

Group size

- We draw on EPR for the relative group size. [0.07]

Regional concentration

- EPR codes regional concentration, but EPR applies a lower bar. MAR also codes regional concentration while noting that >75% of group members live in the regional base and that the

Tuaregs make up the predominant proportion of the population of their regional base. Minahan (2002: 1992) suggests that the Tuaregs make up 80% of the population in their regional base, though he also includes territories in adjacent countries. [regional concentration]

Kin

- There are >100,000 Tuareg in Niger and Algeria (Minahan 2002: 1992; also see EPR; MAR). [kin in adjacent country]

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