

**Negotiating Dress Practices in Northern Côte d'Ivoire:  
Social Belonging, Social Becoming and Generational Dynamics**

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Focusing on dress practices in northern Côte d'Ivoire this contribution shows how consumption and social group affiliation correlate. In order to analyse contemporary dress practices the author introduces a model of social milieus in postcolonial Côte d'Ivoire and identifies different criteria for the constitution of milieus and lifestyle groups. In the description of dress styles, the references and contentions between social milieus and lifestyle groups as well as the structural limitations determining consumption practices in northern Côte d'Ivoire are discussed. It is shown that dress styles change evidently in the course of a socially and culturally constructed life, making the issue of age, gender, and generation an additional critical factor in the exploration of consumption practices. The author describes how female and male dress change from youth to adulthood and how the alternation of generations and the ongoing process of negotiation between succeeding generations are fuelling the change of dress practices in Africa.