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Sarah-Joy Hunter

College of the Holy Cross, sarah-joy.hunter@nih.gov

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The thesis of Sarah-Joy Hunter

entitled

Senegalese Women: A Comparative Analysis of Economic

Development in Sine-Saloum and Dakar

submitted to Department of Special Studies

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of Bachelor of Arts

at the College of the Holy Cross has been read and

approved by the following:



Advisor

1st reader



2nd reader

May 6, 1991

Date

Director of Honors Program

**Senegalese Women: A Comparative Analysis of Economic
Development in Sine-Saloum and Dakar**

Sarah-Joy Hunter
May 6, 1991
Honors Thesis

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PREFACE

Writing this thesis has allowed me to explore several complex issues surrounding the livelihoods of Senegalese women in economic spheres. Many of the questions which I raise are being asked and answered by scholars and activists all over the world. A project of this scope was undertaken through various experiences and with lots of help. In particular, the time I spent in Senegal during the 1989-90 academic year allowed me to take courses addressing the realities in African societies. In addition, most of my fieldwork and much of my library research was carried out there. My work there was guided by several Senegalese women. I especially want to thank Oumoul Khayri Niang Ly for her theses and for introducing me to some fish-sector state officials and research centers. Dr. Fatou Sow was gracious to let me use her own library full of helpful resources and her course on African women was instrumental in my intellectual development. Dr. Marie Angelique Savane made herself available when I had questions and facilitated my access to many important documents. Dr. Mbodj and Dr. Coulibaly introduced me to the literature dealing with the peanut sector and African anthropology respectively. Soukena Ndiaye Ba and many other women made themselves available for interviews and to help me find additional information. Many women farmers and fish marketeers invited me to spend the day(s) with them. My friends, the Seck family and many students were also supportive.

In the U.S.A., Dr. Caroline Sommerville at Hunter College helped me continue research and start my outline while living in Manhattan. Professor Mack-Williams and others provided helpful resource information. Two professors at Holy Cross College were instrumental in the formation of my thesis. Dr. Hussein Adam provided helpful advice and contact names for my

trip to Senegal and was my thesis reader. Dr. Diane Bell, my advisor, provided tremendous assistance by introducing me to bodies of feminist and development literature, closely guiding my writing process, and acting as a constant source of inspiration and encouragement.

Finally, without family and friends, none of this would have been possible. Mrs. Wright has been a constant mentor, friend, and 'mother' throughout my college years. Dad, Rebekah, Zaneta, Bethuel and extended family members have all stood by me, worried about me while I was away in Senegal, and somehow added assurance that I could finish this thesis. Dear friends--Diankamissa and Demetrius among others--have been there offering advice and strong support. All of you have helped me along this difficult journey. Thank-you.

CHAPTER ONE

Developing Theories: Afro-centric Feminisms; Economic Dependency; Weak State.

Afro-centric Feminisms and Dependency Theorists

Afro-centric feminisms, as manifest in the writings of women in Africa and in the African diaspora, as well as by Dependency theorists, provide broad analytical frameworks in which to analyze Senegalese women's survival and Self-Reliant strategies within the interlocking nexus of gender, race, and class oppression. Women's roles in ensuring the well-being of African peoples in pre-capitalist, self-reliant societies have been radically altered as a result of slavery, colonialism, and imperialism. Contemporary Afro-centric feminisms, on the one hand, originate in this "...experience of oppression, a lack of the socially prescribed means of ensuring one's well being, and a true lack of access to resources for survival" (Steady, 1981:35-6). On the other hand, Black feminisms incorporate the activist elements of the self determinist struggle for liberation--for a future devoid of some of the harshest atrocities known to humankind. Along a parallel course, Latin American, African, and Asian economic theorists generated Dependency Theory as integral to the "...struggle of the Third World against the dominant hegemony..." (Amin,1984:219). In direct contrast to western paradigms, African, Latin American, and Asian theorists asserted that their underdeveloped societies originated in the neo-colonial dictates of the capitalist, imperialist world order. In so saying, they espouse 'Self-Reliant' as opposed to 'dependent' strategies, for economic development (see for example, Haggis, 1988:44-5; Franke; Nkrumah, 1963; Fanon, 1961; Rodney, 1982; Amin, 1973, 1984, 1990).

The thoughts and actions of women in Africa and in the African diaspora as well as of Dependency theorists are integral to the Self-Reliance movement. Self-Reliance has been defined in varying ways to address the specificities of unique contexts. In this thesis, my definition will be consistent with aspects of self-defined consciousness as expressed through Afro-centric feminisms. Black women globally have identified Self-Reliant strategies as central to forging "powerful mechanisms of political action" in order to reclaim their intellectual tradition and ensure the survival of their communities (Terborg-Penn, 1987; Collins, 1990). Women themselves initiate the struggle against multiple forms of oppression by forming alliances with other women and with institutions in their communities (Collins, 1990:26).

A Personal Reflection

This re-focusing of theory in a way which reflects the experience of oppression, but does so without creating 'victims' and without disempowering, has special resonance for me. Because the personal is so closely interwoven with questions pursued in this thesis, I am making several aspects explicit. In my own life, Self-Reliant strategies have been a necessary part of survival in the face of financial, racial, and gender oppression. Hooks notes that oppression "refers back to a choice, an explanation, a situation that is political" (1984:5). In so doing she allows agency: the subject of her study (woman) moves into active voice. There are many narratives from which I could draw, but I have chosen those which are not too painful to write about here and now.

Survival had become a priority to me ever since my dad had faced that critical juncture in his life where the state was in a position to threaten his career. He had a choice: he chose to fight. My high school years went by

in a blur of working for wages, school work, and driving impossibly long hours. Along with my dad we were all fighting--to survive, to make it; my sisters and I formed close-knit support alliances. Then there were the racist taunts which the principal always wanted 'explained' to him. In having to articulate the structural principles of what he understood as merely anecdotal and personal experiences, I clarified in my own mind the systemic and multi-faceted nature of oppression. I also realized the political consequences of acknowledging that racism was pervasive; it permeated the halls of my high school and the words of classmates. In order to survive in this society I needed to draw on inner strengths and to know that this was a source of pride.

Within the confines of family there were other tensions. One of the recurring issues was that I as a young woman was 'supposed' to learn and be knowledgeable about household chores including cooking. It was my domain, 'naturally.' But, even from a young age, I was aware of the injustices in pre-determined, socially constructed roles for masculine and feminine. Through it all, tenuous familial bonds maintained some semblance of survival and Self-Reliance, a necessary part of living in a rural, white environment. College brought the usual stages of confusion as I struggled to find my intellectual self as part of my social-spiritual being. Self-consciousness, support from family and friends, and gradual self-discovery set me on a course to study in Senegal. When I arrived there in October of 1989, Self-Reliant strategies became paramount as I worked to pay my rent, learnt as much Wolof as possible, and adapted to a radically different education system and cultural milieu.

Then I saw Goree Island. I understood the enormous significance that this place holds for a student who is empowered through the knowledge of

her history and, I hope, for all peoples of African descent. Goree Island links us back to a past of pillaging and destruction during the Atlantic slave trade. It calls us to remember the thriving, ancient empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai which existed prior to this bloody era of our history. The shared roots of all African peoples cannot be ignored, in spite of different nationalities in contemporary contexts. Knowledge of how our history mitigates and shapes contemporary struggles, has the potential of affirming our identities while empowering us to create innovative strategies which effectively address unique realities.

Afro-centric Feminist Thought: Self-Reliance

Moving from my personal perspectives of Self-Reliance, let us continue tracing its emergence as a fundamental paradigm within Afro-centric feminist thought. Afro-centric feminisms re-conceptualize and re-define issues and frameworks which are central to the specificities and the experiences of African women. Black women scholars and activists draw on pre-colonial traditions of survival and Self-Reliance which are overlaid by destructive, colonialist forces and mitigated by Black women's creative acts of resistance. Women's writings and activism lead the way to a more holistic, non-paternalistic, non-hierarchical, and non-racist approach to development issues. Issues such as motherhood, polygyny, land ownership and other societal realities surrounding the African family are addressed by African women and men who support their vision (Davies, 1986:6). Specifically, the feminist vision of women in Africa and in the African diaspora incorporates unique ways in which our history is re-claimed. History thus acts as a starting point for a re-conceptualization of studies which address women's livelihoods. Such vision acknowledges continuity

between and the cyclical patterns inherent in the time patterns of past, present, and future. With the onslaught of colonialism and racism through imperialism, African women have had to find new mechanisms for coping with everyday life.

A feminist vision as articulated by DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) members addresses the worsening status of the majority of women in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The nature of the development process, as well as cultural biases and patriarchal structures within the societies themselves, have increasingly marginalized women. For the masses of women in these societies, basic needs for survival have been de-prioritized for outward-directed development. Inadequate food, fuel, and water supplies, financial/debt problems with structural adjustment policies, culture, and the escalation of militaristic repression are all signs of a global crisis which has its roots in the west but its worst manifestations on the economic periphery. Crisis constitutes the time "when a structure or system reaches a stage when it must either undergo major changes or break down" (Sen and Grown, 1987:50).

Self-determinist strategies which emphasize women's innovation and perseverance in the face of race, class, and gender oppression form the starting point for Afro-centric analyses and activisms. Women are articulating and affirming a diversity of feminisms as a political movement which is "responsive to the needs and concerns of different" societal realities expressed by women living in specific contexts (Sen and Grown, 1987:19). Women's struggle for emancipation necessitates a clear understanding of macro and micro forms of oppression. A long term vision incorporates core activities such as: "political mobilization, legal changes, consciousness raising, and popular education" (Sen and Grown, 1987:87). On the national

level, methodologies for political action and support to women's issues are emerging within broad-based local and national movements.

In Senegal, Yewuu Yewii, a feminist group, has placed public educational mechanisms at the center of their politico-social activism (Savane, 1990; Fippu, 1989). More specifically, the vision of Yewuu Yewii members includes raising societal awareness of gender oppression as socially constituted and the need to cross class, ethnic, geographic, and language barriers in order to construct "une identite nouvelle tout en participant a une collective de transformations sociales"[a new identity while participating in collective social transformations] (my translation) (Fippu, 1989:6-7). Increasing democratization of recently formed women's organizations such as Yewuu Yewwi allows for a widening membership base, and thus the potential for grass-roots participation and leadership is encouraged. Grassroots organizing is central to a global phenomenon of grass-roots mobilization often rooted within traditional forms of networking. My thesis incorporates an analysis of several of these alliances, initiated from the resourcefulness of the masses of women. This continuity and broadening of women's survival tactics emphasized through a re-claiming of history, and through a focus on women's resilience and leadership in contemporary struggles, renders the feminist vision positive, empowering, and culturally enriching.

While Afro-centric feminist thought is often articulated in the form of a social science treatise, Ngugi, Ba, Ousmane, Mugo and many others express their visions through literary works. The literary form frees them to provide an ideological as well as to develop analytical frameworks incorporating the critical themes mentioned above--as well as many others. Their work also gives evidence to the many faceted women's movement in Africa

(d'Almeida,1986:162-3;Ngugi,1967;Ousmane,1970; Davies,1986:11). Here women such as Buchi Emecheta can speak their own words and claim the narratives which shape their lives through works such as The Joys of Motherhood (1979).

In this context, feminism refers to the critical study of gender relations and, in particular, to the material position and social condition of women in society both as societal constructs and as those who are integral to familial and larger social units. Feminism, as I am using the term, embraces one's identification with and naming of various women's movements labelled-- feminist, womanist, and/or woman centered. This definition of feminism necessarily emphasizes the different ways that issues are prioritized within different experiential situations, indicating activist strategies which are formulated and acted out (see for example,Haggis,1988:2-3;Young,1988;Collins,1990;Hunter, 1990c). Afro-centric feminisms recognize that gender inequities existed in Africa before colonialism and that these patterns of relationships were reinforced by the gender order of the colonizers in ways that undermined the negotiating power of women (Davies,1986:8-9;Sen and Grown,1987).

Afro-centric Feminist Thought:Gender; Race; Class

The ways in which we highlight gender in our conceptualization of the African underdeveloped state allow us to critically examine women's societal status in a broader analytical framework encompassing micro and macro structures. For the purposes of this discussion, 'underdeveloped' refers to the exploitative economic relationship of supremacist western powers with African countries who, due to a colonial and neo-colonial history, do not have equal bargaining leverage (Rodney,1982:13-15). This phenomenon

incorporates both past and continuing ties of dependency. The 'sexual division of labor' serves as an analytical grid which is central to my analysis of women within dependent societies. Here I am following Haggis(1988:6) who defines gender as "a matter of culture...the social classification into 'masculine' and 'feminine.'" Gender orders thus are "one of the main ideological and material grids within which social meaning is created (encompassing) the entire society," (*ibid*).

Since the 1970's and, in particular, the 1975 inauguration of the International Women's Decade, scholarly works have attempted to highlight gender in a re-conceptualization of the concept of women in development within underdeveloped countries. From these studies emerged new theoretical approaches by primarily (white feminists) which analyzed how the forces of modernization and development have denied women equal access to political and economic spheres, as well as to education. More recent literature in the Development of Women's Underdevelopment field is grounded in feminists' critique of Dependency Theory (see Haggis, 1988:68-71). White women's exploration of theories of development stressed the notion of gender as integral to our understanding.

In the textual and contextual field of Development Studies, as in others, women, unlike men, have not been central to a methodological and ideological framework of analysis. Language-usage, within primarily western scholarship, has often been a reflection of western as well as Asian, African, and Latin American notions of patriarchal policies, laws, institutional, familial, and other societal structures. In addition, some white, middle-class feminists began their research with different questions based upon their own history and experiences within a Victorian mentality, and as western women living in nations girded with imperialist power. As a result, they pursued

very different lines of analysis, wittingly or unwittingly imbued with racist, classist assumptions. While gender was a major theme in their analysis, class, and, particularly race issues, were not always seriously assessed. These methodological and ideological systems, which fundamentally shape our world views, have often ignored women's presence and rendered her 'invisible' in public spheres surrounding the emergence of African states. Nationalist movements for independence from colonialist powers as well as the Civil Rights Movement, the UN Decade for Women, and women's movements globally have contributed to the emergence of Afro-centric feminisms which address development issues.

Afro-centric feminist scholarship affirms that the transformations due to gender, race, and class oppression have been detrimental to societal values and survival and, particularly, to women's well-being. However, their analyses emphasize the mechanisms which women use to cope with, and to overcome, the daunting obstacles of hunger, malnutrition, and landlessness. These and other exploitative forces emanate from western, imperialist dictates and global patriarchal powers based on domination and control. Through critical examinations of concepts, perspectives, and methodologies, women in Africa and in the African Diaspora render research a process of liberation. Revolutionary transformation in development literature are thus brought about as African women's history is re-claimed from being a "product of western power structure [and] used as a tool of domination" (Steady, 1987:4).

While assessing women's subordinate position to men in the past, Afro-centric feminisms decry the negative affects of the colonizing gender orders which have reduced women's negotiating leverage (Davies, 1986:8-9; Sudarkasa, 1987). Some forms of male domination were held in check by

norms of parallel autonomy, Self-Reliance, cooperation, and reciprocity in pre-capitalist societies. Thus women's work and her roles were valued and respected; she maintained autonomous domains of life-sustaining power within a larger societal structure. As a result, emphasis is placed on women as members of a social unit--the extended family and on women as individuals. Despite daunting forms of oppression women continue to use female networks; they draw on a combination of traditional mechanisms merging with contemporary strategies to ensure the survival of their families. Afro-centric feminisms thus focus on the common nexus of race and class oppression shared by both African men and women, and on forms of gender oppression shared by women. In this context, women's roles are pivotal to individual, familial, and societal survival (see for example, Savane and Niang, 1986; Ogundipe, 1987; Wanjiku, 1987; Ewombe-Moundo, 1987; Steady, 1981, 1987; Sudarkaska, 1987).

African women are re-defining conceptual grids of analysis undertaken by western scholars which render women an object of investigation. As such, she must be 'integrated' into the development process in traditional/modern and public/private oppositional frameworks (Ewombe-Koundo, 1987:43; Ogundipe, 1987; Mwajiru, 1987; Sudarkasa, 1987). Such terminology, 'integration of women into development,' pegs African women as 'victims.' It denies their historical and contemporary reality. Women are tagged as passive non-participants in development dynamics. Racism is justified through the "racist alibi" of labelling, and of generalizing in such a way as to affirm existing notions of power as domination and control (see Memmi, 1962:194).

Western[white women and men] scholars and development planners are too often speaking from the position of race and class privilege. Racism

is defined by Memmi as "the generalized and final assigning of values to real or imaginary difference, to the accuser's benefit and at his[her] victim's expense, in order to justify the former's own privileges or aggression" (1962:185). Don't class, race, and gender privilege constitute forms of permanent oppression? By generalizing and by labelling, responsibility and accountability are neglected; relations of subordination/ superordination are maintained. "The ideology of racism...[remains] a permanent stimulus for the ordering of unequal and exploitative relations of production [capitalist imperialism] along 'racial lines,'" (Magubane quoted in Steady, 1987:11-12).

African women affirm themselves as central to development strategies, as actors rather than victims, albeit, frequently unrecognized (Mwajiru, 1987; Sudarkasa, 1987). Women's strategies in economic development incorporate the "essence of becoming, of changing, of evolution," a mixing of the old and the new, and the intermingling of tradition and modernity as a society goes through transformations (Ewombe-Moundo, 1987:42-44). Hierarchical relations of class are intrinsic in the interlocking nature of oppression. Building on a "matrix of domination" approach, Patricia Hill Collins (1990:229) notes that "oppression is filled with such contradictions because these[Eurocentric] approaches fail to recognize that a matrix of domination contains few pure victims or oppressors." Afro-American development planners and scholars as well as African elites are frequent accomplices in the maintenance of class privilege. Oppression through class hierarchies in any society constitutes serious barriers in the struggle for liberation.

Black feminists share with Dependency theorists the experiential domains of political independence[or interdependence] and economic dependence on the capitalist world order (Steady, 1981:10). These women[as

well as white women supporters] incorporate a critical analysis of women's roles in both the productive and reproductive spheres as an expansion from the Dependency Theory emphasis. This analysis of development re-instates women and render her a publicly recognized citizen and serves as a conceptual framework for achieving Self-Reliance.

In a broad context, development includes "an increasing capacity to regulate internal and external (social) relationships" through the control of specific tools(technology) (and)...modes of organization to promote development (Rodney,1982:3-4). Economic development specifies an increasing capacity to control the use of material resources in order to meet community needs and thus direct varying forms of social relations, beliefs, and institutional structures (*ibid*:5,7). Underdeveloped countries are subject to the foreign domination of nations which have built their empires through the exploitation of African labor and resources (Sow,1986:202-3;Rodney,1982; Mbere,1/18/91). "The history of capitalist expansion is not only that of the 'development' it has wrought, but also of the savage destruction on which it was constructed" (Amin,1990:68-9).

Theories of Development

Dependency theorists "development ideology" was pre-dated by the 1955 Bandung Plan. At this meeting Asian and African leaders outlined goals in order to achieve political decolonization. The Bandung Plan participants espoused a neutral and non-aligned stance in relation to countries in the North. Later, in 1963, the Organization of African Unity was formed in keeping with perogatives for Self-Reliance through unity, with a Panafricanist agenda (Amin,1990:43,44;Nkrumah,1963). Development theories stemming from western scholarship emerged in the 1950's. Moder

nization Theorists located the causes of underdevelopment in the values, institutions, and patterns of action of 'backwards,' stagnant (African, Latin American, and Asian) societies. In order for these societies to develop, these theorists assumed that they must replicate the western dictates of education, technology, and so forth. Liberal theorists critiqued the Eurocentric, paternalistic attitudes implicit in Modernization Theories. However, by advocating routes for development along lines of capitalist expansion, Liberal theorists, in essence, repeated many of the dictates of the Modernization theorists (Botman,1991; Haggis,1988:31-8). Neither theory incorporated African, Latin American, and Asian leaders' plans for development along lines of national autonomy, collective Self-Reliance, in short 'popular' development (Addo,1984:215-8).

Dependency theorists, emerging in the 1970's in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, asserted that underdevelopment had its origins in the west. Dependency theorists critiqued the western theories of development for their a-historical, biased, and ethnocentric approach. Finally, they re-affirmed the prerogative of the Bandung Conference (Amin, 1984,1990;Haggis,1988:44-5;Franke,1967).

As Franke and Chasin explain, "...what distinguishes countries with dependent economies is a set of political and economic relationships that render the dependent country relatively powerless to control or affect its course of development," (1980:85). Such dependency of peripheral market systems on dominant international economic orders is characterized by a lack of diversity in terms of trade options and integration into intercapitalist rivalries which undermine African interests. In addition, dependent countries are characterized by extreme dependency on foreign 'aid,' often in the form of investments, and low rates of industrialization that depend on

and are directed to foreign markets (Franke and Chasin, 1980:85-7; Amin, 1973, 1985; Rodney, 1982:22-7; Nkrumah, 1963). We can see from Nkrumah's characterization below that Senegal fits the description perfectly.

The birth of African, Latin American, and Asian states was mired in tight chains of economic dependency which have constituted a critical constraint on the development during formational years. Senegal has faced a plethora of impediments dictated by a colonial history and a neo-colonial rapport with the French and others after the state's 1960 independence. Senegal's integration into the international economic order on highly unfavorable terms is similar to that of many other technologically underdeveloped countries (Coulon, 1988: 141). A steady flow of literature and policies from western, imperialist nations has come to the 'aid' of these underdeveloped countries. Such 'aid' usually came in the form of investments for social and economic development.

In Senegal, the FAC (Fonds d'Aide et de Coopération) and CCCE (Caisse Centrale de Coopération Economique) investment "was largely an euphemism for the siphoning of funds through FIDES into these former French colonies and back again to France (Nkrumah, 1963:173). Nkrumah continues (1963:173-4):

It has been estimated that as much as 80 per cent of such so-called investment returned to France in the form of payments for materials, services, commissions, bank charges, and salaries for French staffs and agents. Projects undertaken were mainly in the sphere of public services and agriculture... [and were]... woefully inadequate and improperly planned, with little or no regard for local conditions or needs. No attempt was made to lay the foundations for industrial growth or a diversification of agriculture... [All this]... covered up under the guise of aid and protective solicitude, one of the more subtle forms of neo-colonialism

Franke and Chasin's analysis addresses the national bodies of states created from the 1885 Berlin conference. At this conference, western colonial

powers carved up or 'balkanized' the African continent according to the boundaries of territorial domains which were providing wealth for their economies. Hegemonic, bourgeois classes emerged to dominate the national states. Through the control of the production and reproduction of labor power, they controlled agricultural resources as well as national markets and the financial machinery to ensure the centralization of surplus (Amin,1990:16). But the national middle classes was not vested with financiers nor industrial magnates. Even their Bandung Conference Plans "to build within the Third World a bourgeois national state with a capacity to make progress in solving the problems of underdevelopment" was riddled with contradictions (Amin,1990:42-44). How could elites[state leaders] with little economic power 'provide' collective Self Reliance? Attempts at development were "smashed each time by the combination of their internal fragility and imperialist aggression," notes Amin (1990:47). Peripheral ruling classes "ceased to be national and became the subordinate ally of imperialism..." Indeed, they have been termed an "underdeveloped middle class" (Amin,1984:212-3;Fanon, 1963:149).

Sembene Ousmane's film Xala depicts the rampant corruption of a chauvinistic, classist, and non-authentic bourgeoisie cut off from the voices of the masses. This conflicting notion of both control and a weak economic base which destabilizes political power within internal markets; yet, the wholesale dependency on and, in some cases, co-option by external forces characterizes the African state. A historical understanding provides an important pre-cursor to my critique of how this 'pseudo-bourgeoisie,' despite conflicting power demands, is instilled with patriarchal notions of power which direct the lives of its citizens. As such, state power, defined as a 'dominating, controlling, and centralized force' is vested with male

leadership and affects men's and women's lives in fundamentally different ways (see Fanon, 1963).

"In indigenous, colonial, or modern forms, the state is overwhelmingly controlled by men; this control has translated into laws and policies...which, not coincidentally, benefit men," writes Staudt (1989:1). Senegal, a small West African nation, has been shaped by specific ways of viewing male and female existence through both state and family structures. Even before the state's inception, constructs of gender, shaped norms to appropriate behavior of men and women in pre-capitalist societies. With slavery, colonialism, and neo-colonialism came the influx of western patriarchal values. Mechanisms which held pre-colonial male forms of domination in check were undermined or destroyed.

In rapidly changing societies, various practices, mythologies, and later, state-instituted laws and policies ensured that power often accrued to men. This process reinforced aspects of women's subordination, and this, despite the pre- and post-capitalist economic autonomy, (albeit limited and varied), of women. In particular, the Senegalese state's regulation of taxation, of segregated labor policies, and of land laws have affected women's relationship with the state differently than men (see Moore, 1988:131). The sexual division of labor within the household reproductive and market/household productive spheres has been altered in ways that shape women's access to resources, to power, and to the decision-making arena. An analysis of Senegalese women's work in the informal and rural commercial sectors, and, ultimately, her participation and leadership in the country's development strategies allow us to examine these transformations and women's agendas despite the changes.

Overview: Women and Work

Emphasizing historical and contemporary Self-Reliant strategies, I will analyze both the sexual division of labor as this relates to land ownership and family laws within a primarily national context but also given international forces. My purpose is to highlight the transformations of women's work in market and familial/household spheres through pre-capitalist, colonial, and neo-colonial eras. Women's work includes all types of labor in the productive sphere--commerce, for wages, field work, as well as domestic tasks--house cleaning, women's garden plots, bearing, rearing, and educating children, cooking meals, and other types of family care (Beneria and Sen, 1981). Focusing on women's work allows me to emphasize women's survival and self-determining strategies for economic development given the constraints and the authority of Senegalese state institutions. Finally, two questions will be asked in this context: How do women's livelihoods(roles, status-position and material condition) facilitate or constrain their access to critical resources in order to attain and maintain economic autonomy? How do Senegalese women maintain and maximize their decision-making powers towards providing health and happiness for their loved ones and for Africa's future?

Throughout the thesis I emphasize the ways in which women have been marginalized and how women have used Self-Reliant strategies, which shaped past societal structures, to mediate contemporary forms of race, gender, and class oppression. In so doing, very little attention is given to development planners and projects initiated from western countries. Rather, societal transformations, the nature of the state and of African women's activism and survival imperatives, remain paramount. This brings us to the terms which I use to describe the state. Given the prevalence and the

multitude of Socialist ideologies espoused by many African leaders, I often refer to the past societal structures as 'pre-socialist'. However, Leopold Senghor's (Senegal's first president) plan for state development incorporates both socialist themes as well as technocratic aid from the capitalist world order. In this case, both socialist ethics, as understood by Senghor, as well as capitalism through foreign 'aid,' become intrinsic to the nature of Senegal's development. Understanding this ideological hybrid has important ramifications for my use of both 'pre-socialist' and/or 'pre-capitalist' terminology, and for the outcome of development practices (see Hunter, 1990d).

Senegalese women's power, contrary to notions of patriarchal power as 'a tool of domination,' affirms long-standing norms of Self-Reliance, espouses creative acts of resistance, and re-instates women's "control over [their] existence and the existence of others" (Steady, 1981:30-1). Throughout the thesis, my notion of power is open-ended and multi-dimensional as I shift from patriarchal notions of power to that espoused by middle-class women's organizations and grassroots strategists. In the latter case, 'power' refers to women's ability to organize, to take direct action through finance management, initiative, and perseverance, and to influence the direction of their own, familial, and community lives (Underwood, 1988:29-34; Peterman, 1981:26-7). As such, power is positive, empowering, and interactive, as opposed to hierarchical and marginalizing.

Chapter 2 provides a historical accounting of women's livelihoods in pre-socialist West African societies and, in particular, of Senegal's Wolof and Lebou women and men. I then trace the transformations of peanut and fishing commerce from the colonial era to the birth of the Senegalese state, and note specific land and tax laws and policies which deny women their

formerly ensured mechanisms for maintaining autonomy and prestige. Emphasizing the Self-Reliant nature of African societies does not preclude the hardships and varying forms of oppression which existed; it does, however, relate the ways in which Africans shaped their past histories. This phenomenon serves as an important guide to my analytical framework. Furthermore, it has important implications for contemporary challenges faced by African societies and communities globally.

In Chapter 3, I summarize various theoretical paradigms which address the negative impact of development policies in light of women's changing survival imperatives. Pre-socialist norms of Self-Reliance and the alterations of societal structures due to race, class, and gender oppression, shape women's contemporary strategies.

Chapter 4 addresses my two case studies: women's work in the rural peanut commercialization process and in the urban, informal fish market sector. My analyses of women's livelihoods emphasizes both micro and macro forces.

In Chapter 5, I move beyond literature reviews to emphasize women's continuing roles as actors who are central to societal survival. A close assessment of a variety of women's organizations and coalitions is undertaken.

In my conclusion, Chapter 6, I summarize the main points of my thesis and pose specific questions about women's alternative visions (strategies and unifying potential) in terms of development in regional, national, and international contexts.

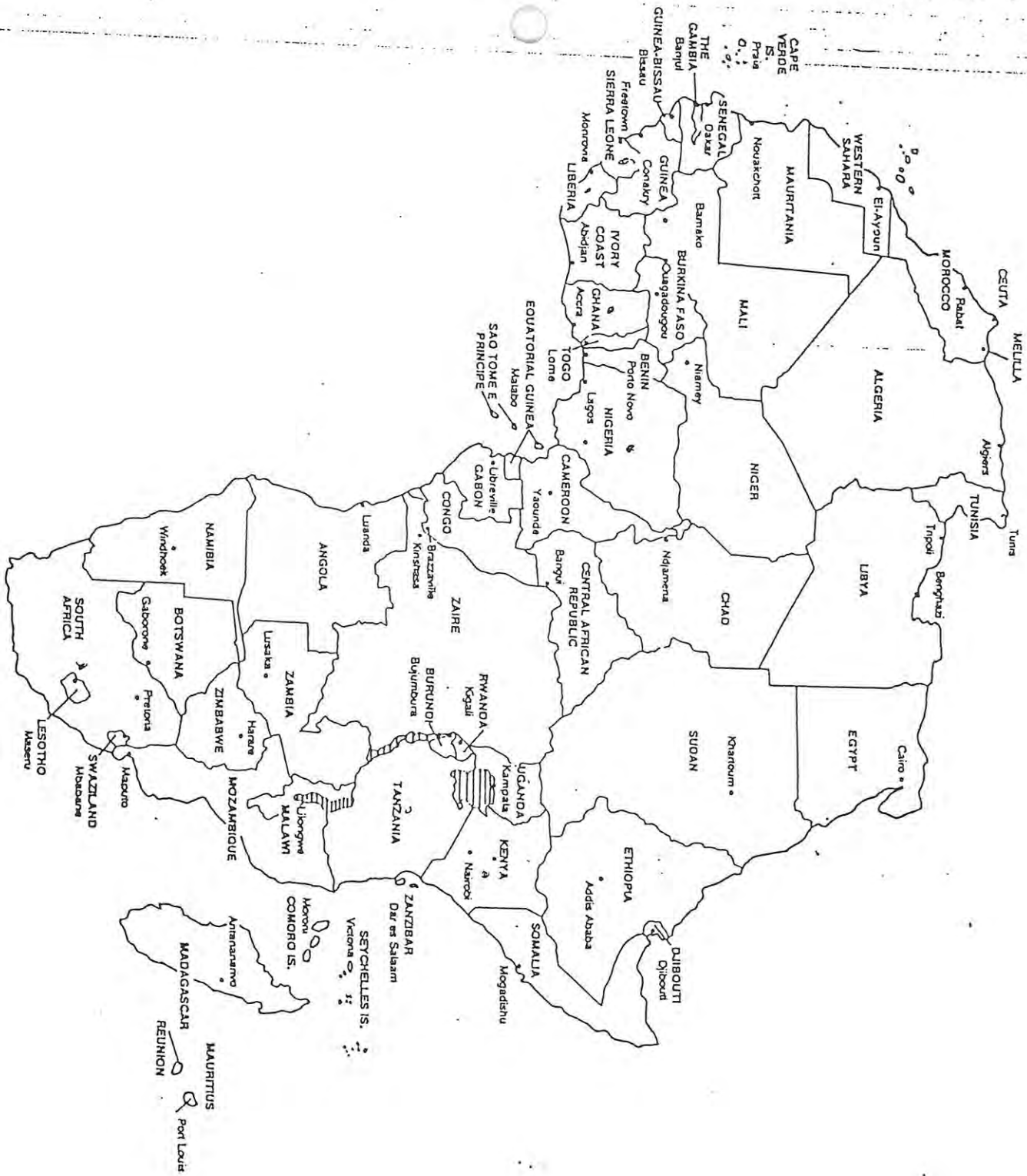
CHAPTER TWO

*Shifting Contexts: Pre-Socialist West African Societies; Colonization; State Economy and Law.*Senegal: Population, Ethnicity, and Economy

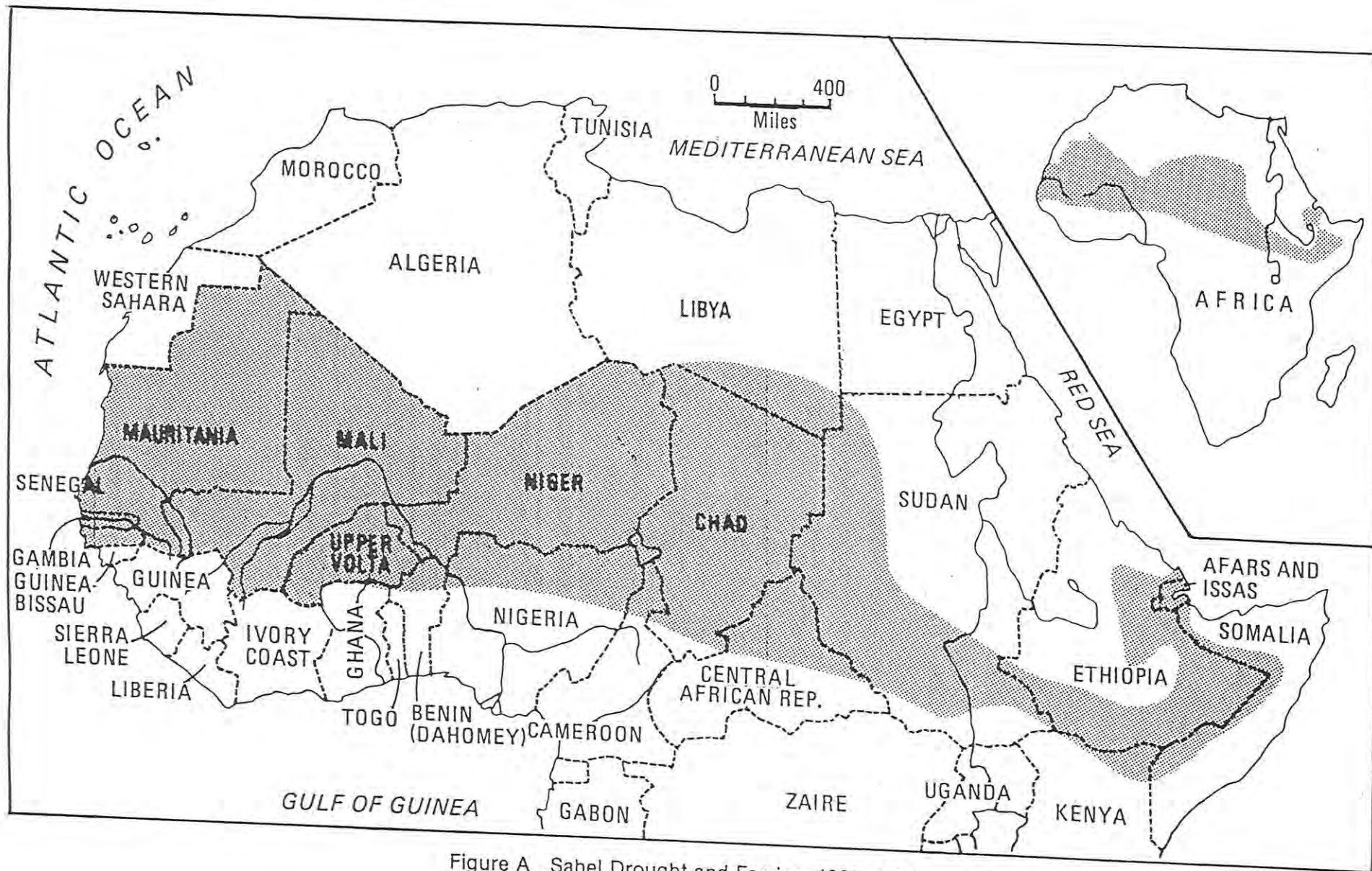
Senegal is located on the western tip of Africa on the Atlantic Coast south of Mauritania, north of both Guinea-Conakry and Guinea-Bissau, and west of Mali. It is one of the countries which form the Sahel region, a 200-300 mile zone stretching from the Senegal River almost to the Red Sea coast. Characterized by a dry, desert climate, the Sahel is given to drought spells with intermittent heavy rainfalls (see Franke and Chasin, 1980:21-3).

Because of the delicate ecological climate, farmers and herders have devised survival strategies in order to ensure the abundance of crops and the well-being of cattle. With colonialism and the continued exportation of raw materials from Africa to western countries, these traditional survival mechanisms have been altered and, in some cases, destroyed. In particular, the introduction of the peanut crop and the over-use of the soil has resulted in widespread ecological destruction. This phenomenon manifests itself in terms of desertification (as trees which kept back the desert are torn down), the deleterious effects of newly-introduced fertilizers and machinery, and finally, in the horrific and unprecedented Sahel famine of 1968-74.

Real per capita income, estimated at \$500 in 1960, has fallen to the per capita GNP of \$380.00 in 1984 (Newton, 1988:379; Sommerville, 1988:2). In 1979, the population of Senegal was 5,507,684 (Savane and Niang, 1986:135). However, with a rapid population growth, the number of inhabitants had reached approximately 6.6 million people by 1986 and is now over 7 million



209.



206.

Figure A Sahel Drought and Famine: 1968-1974

(Sommerville,1988:2). This population increase, in light of the country's continuing and even lessening ability to feed its people, places enormous stress on resources.

Senegal has a Muslim majority where 80% of the people adhere to forms of African Sufism within three Sufi brotherhoods, the Tijaniyya, the Qadiriyya, and the Mourides (Newton,1988:379;O'Brien,1979:10,156-7). The Mouride leaders, as controllers and major producers of the peanut crop have acted as mediaries between the French colonialist government and the Senegalese state on the one hand, and the masses of farmers and herders on the other hand. Furthermore, these Islamic sects have important implications in terms of present-day ramifications of Islamic fundamentalisms which attempt to provide alternatives to state leadership and societal survival. I will expand on this briefly in my last chapter.

Senegal's ethnic diversity is presently dominated by the Wolof, most of whom live north of Dakar and Thies. The Wolof make up 30-40% of the population and it is these peoples with whom we will be primarily concerned. Detailed studies of Wolof culture, politics, and economy are provided in the work of O'Brien(1975:2);Mbodji(1990); Barry(1979, 1983);Diop(1981,1984);Savane and Niang(1986) among many others. Other ethnic groups include peoples such as the Fulbe(the Peuhl in the southern Casamance regions, the Toucouleur to the north on the Senegal River), the Mandigue and Diola in the central to southern regions, the Sereer in the Siin region, and the Lebou fishing communities in the CapVert Region around Dakar. Each ethnic group has its own language and cultural specificities, though the Wolof language remains the country's lingua franca (O'Brien, 1975:155).

Senegal is primarily an agrarian society: an estimated 80% of the

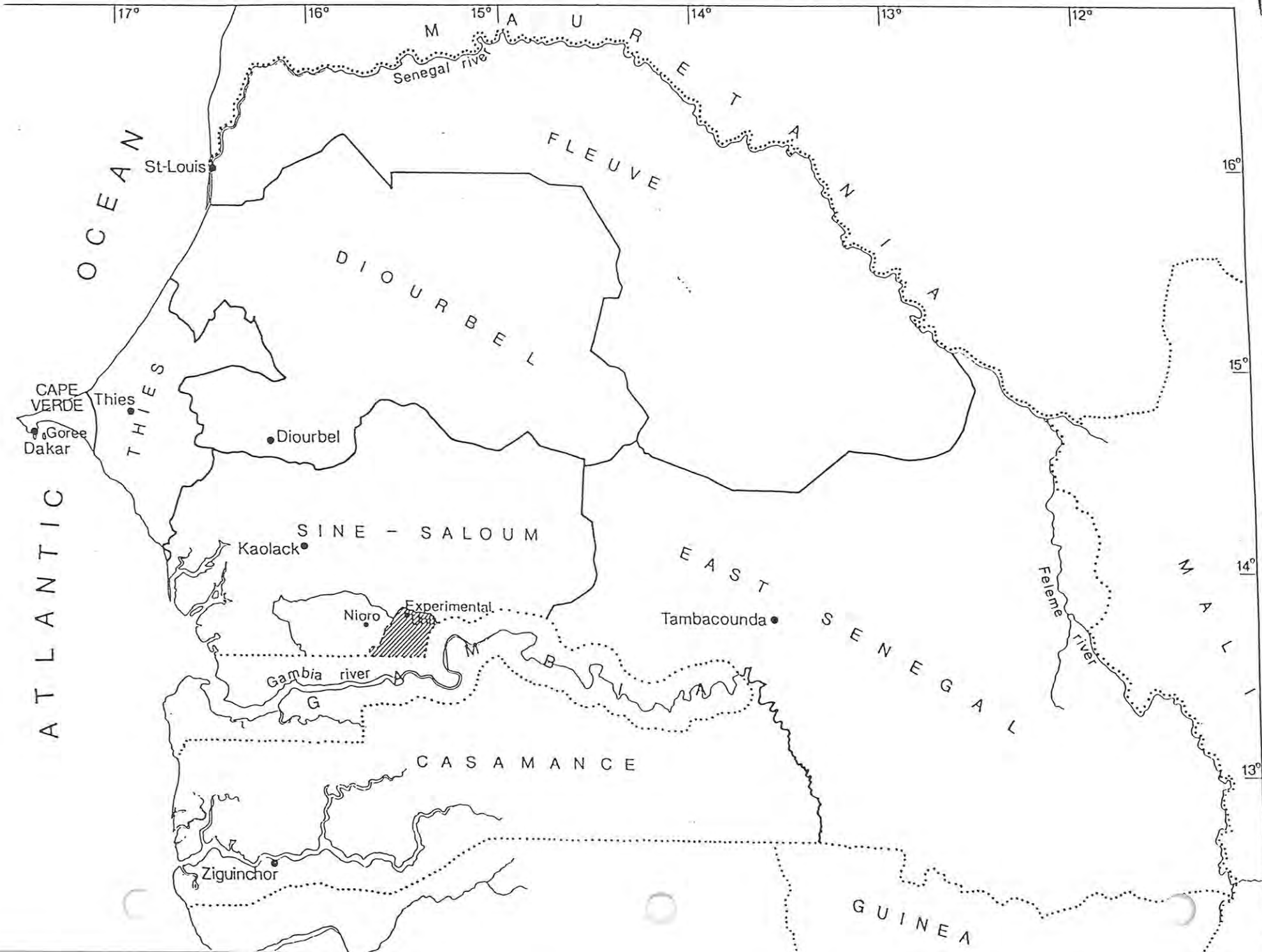
population is engaged in this sector (Sommerville,1988:2). The Saalum River, the region where my study of the peanut will be focused, is located in the southeastern portions of the Sine-Saloum region within the broader Senegalese "bassin arachidier" (peanut basin). Thies, Diourbel, and Sine-Saloum comprise the Peanut Basin region, which contains 71% of the cultivated land, and over 50% of the Senegalese population (Faye,1988:139). The peanut crop yields are the country's primary revenue generator, accounting for four-fifths of total export value (O'Brien,1975:115;Franke and Chasin,1980:6;Thomson,1981:42).

Saloum is predominantly inhabited by the Wolof peoples(among Fulbe pastoralists and Tukulor) and by the Sereer peoples in Sine (Klein,1979:67). The region comprises 19 percent of the Senegalese population where 496,14 men and 510,922 women live (Savane and Niang,1986: 135). Since the 1930's, more than 50% of the country's monocrop has been grown there (Klein,1979:65).

The CapVert Region, including Dakar, Rufisque, and Goree, is home to Senegal's major fishing port. As Ndiaye(1990:1) asserts, "La pêche représente une ressource naturelle majeure..."[fish represents a major natural resource](my translation). Fish comprises one-fifth of the country's exports through both artisanal but, primarily, industrial sectors (Ndiaye,1990:1,4). A diverse and plentiful supply of fish can be found along the 65 kilometers of rocky and sandy beaches stretching from Camberene to Toubab Dialao.

In 1960-61, the Wolof peoples already comprised 50% of the Dakarois population and thus played a major role in the social and economic spheres. However, in earlier times, this was not the case. Traditionally, the Lebou peoples(presently, comprising about 10% of the region's population) were the major fish merchants. They have retained vestiges of this powerful position

Map 1. Some administrative and geographical features of Senegal



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(Le Cour Grandmaison, 1972:24). During the 17th-19th centuries, when St. Louis was at the center of French enterprises, the Lebou in Dakar, the Wolof of the Guet-Ndar, St. Louis island, and the Wolof and Lebou signares of both St. Louis and Goree Island, played important roles in the fish trade (Permann, 1989; LeCour Grandmaison, 1971; Brooks, 1976). Historically, and through to the present day, West African women have organized and controlled the market trade. Fishing enterprises, which I will address, are only one aspect in their many other their economic activities (Hafkin and Bay, 1976:6). I return to this below with a brief historical sketch of the fish trade.

Pre-Socialist West African Societies

The historical context of Self-Reliant West African societies offers powerful insights for a deeper understanding of women's survival and self-determinist strategies in the face of contemporary challenges. In the past, norms of reciprocity, cooperation, and autonomy underpinned the livelihoods of pastoralists and agriculturalists. By exchanging goods and services, such as cattle manure and dairy products for vegetable goods and pasturing ground, the animal herders and the farmers maintained a life of relative prosperity for all. Adapting to the ecologically-delicate Sahel region, these peoples depended on a form of social and economic organization based on interdependence. Likewise, large kingdoms and empires depended on the trans-saharan trade for wealth. Between the elites and the masses of herders and farmers, and between the masses and nature, a balance was maintained which allowed all to attain varying degrees of economic productivity and social well-being (Franke and Chasin, 1980:40-62).

Within this larger context of relative prosperity, women's roles were

paramount to societal survival. They had degrees of autonomy and of leverage through "food power." They were the decision-makers with respect to food productivity, processing, and distribution. Women owned crops and livestock and produced dairy and agricultural goods (Steady,1981:11-12). This economic system was imbued with notions of "parallel autonomy; communalism; cooperation; [and distribution] for the preservation of life" (Steady,1987:8). Following these values, the sexual division of labor operated along parallel, not hierarchical, lines. While promoting separate spheres of activity, the division relied on reciprocity and equally valued the contribution of male and female work (Sudarkasa,1987:32-3). The 'use value' of women's productive and reproductive work ensured that it was considered important to societal survival and had "symbolic,...metaphysical...not just materialistic" dimensions (Steady,1987:5-7). 'Use-value' refers to women's labor in a household which was the unit of production and reproduction; thus women's and men's labor was produced for and benefitted the members of the household.

If we view polygyny as primarily an economic institution through which a man could have more wives, more children, and thus attain greater wealth and prestige, we have evidence of manifestations of male domination. However, this was counter-balanced by several safeguards which inhibited a wholesale imposition of male privilege. For example, women enjoyed economic security and men had obligations towards fulfilling household duties. Several women in one household meant that women had personal freedom and mobility to create strong female consanguinual bonds outside conjugal relationships (see Steady,1981:6-7,16-17;Sudarkasa,1987). Thus we can not read from the sex division of labor, to a model of gender relations wherein men dominate and women are destitute and subordinated.

Another aspect of social organization which mitigated the power of men was that modes of descent were not strictly patrilineal; indeed some emphasized descent through women. Strong matrilineal societies existed as a counterpoint to, or in conjunction with, patrilineal societies and "encourage(d) self-support among women and female kin" (Steady,1981:17). Since descent was traced through women, mothers were central in extended families and kin-groups. In consanguinual and conjugal relationships we find that "female and male are not so much statuses but "clusters of statuses" for which gender is only one of the defining characteristics." Women's age and her standing in the community, in terms of accumulated resources, are other important indicators of her status (Sudarkasa,1987:27,38). Thus, rights and privileges, as well as respect and responsibility, were accorded women independent of her gender status. Ownership of and access to land was determined by "common property usufruct" thus, women had some degree of control over their labor input (*ibid*,1987:5-7). Women's ability to utilize these mechanisms was orchestrated through their use of power as an innovative force which ensured their autonomy and the survival of their communities.

Pre-Socialist Wolof Societal Organization

In the past, Wolof society was hierarchically structured according to a binary-status social system between freedmen and slaves in the political realm, and between artisans and non-artisans in the market economy (Savane and Niang,1986:138). The freeborn included the nobles(geer) and the peasants(badolo). The caste system of artisans (nenyo) included leatherworkers, blacksmiths, praisesingers (griots) and, finally, slaves(jamm) at the very bottom of the social ladder (Gamble,1967:44;Diop, 1981:48). Within each of these social divisions there was further categorization. For

example, the freeborn consisted of the royal lineages (garmi), the nobles noted above, and the warriors(gelowar) in Sine-Saloum. Both ethnic-group and biological differences underlie this high degree of social stratification, according to myth-based beliefs (Diop,1981:44,48).

In ancient Wolof history, mythical tales explain the broader picture of the societal stratification within which gendered roles are encapsulated.

The myth was described as follows (Diop,1981:42-3):

Un homme, ayant épousé une femme d'une grande beauté, meurt avant la consommation du mariage. Mais le cadavre révèle un aspect curieux:L'érection du sexe. Un sage, présent dans la demeure mortuaire, suggère que la femme accepte d'avoir des relations intimes avec le défunt. Ce conseil étant suivi, le cadavre redevint normal. La femme se trouva enceinte, par la suite, et donna naissance à un enfant qui devait être l'ancêtre des noole. Ceux-ci ont la particularité de se décomposer rapidement après leur mort[a man, having married a beautiful woman, died before the marriage was consummated. But the body revealed a curious aspect:the erection of his sex organ. A wise person present during the burial suggested that the woman accept to have intimate relations with the dead man. Having followed this advice, the body came back to normal and the woman was found herself pregnant, after which, she gave birth to a baby who must be the ancestor of the noole. These people have the particularity of decomposing rapidly after death](my translation).

The child later became the ancestor of the noole or 'people who decompose rapidly after death.' This work refers to the 'unclean' smell of a dead body and symbolically, to the smelly work of leathertanners and the dirty work of blacksmiths (Diop,1981:43). The man's ethnic differences--since he came from a foreign land though Diop (1981:44) argues that the man's biological and not his ethnic differences, explain his 'foreign' origin) justify "le mythe de la race supérieure," [justifies the myth of the superior race](my translation).

This myth served as an ideological rationalization for social

stratification, for some aspects of the sexual division of labor, and for the continuation of endogamous marriage practices. Endogamous relationships refer to those in which women and men marry inside their kin group, society, or other designated social framework as opposed to outside. Throughout Wolof history there was a delicate balance of interdependence, though it was built on a system of hierarchy, between the freedmen and the castes. The former depended on the latter for agricultural tools and other services while those in the caste system looked to the freeborn for both material payment and physical protection in time of war (Diop, 1981:73-90).

Descent Lines: Arbitrators of Land Ownership and Social Status

But, what modes of descent determine who has property rights and who is merely a vehicle through which property passes? Here it is important to have some understanding of the social system and of the household structure, as well as property rights. Earlier, I noted the complexities of the broader social system, but here I will expand on the transmission of power within this structure as evidenced through lines of descent.

During the era of Wolof monarchies, the descent lines of the gelowar (Saloum rulers) were matrilineal, though the state political power itself was primarily in male hands. The head woman of the chiefdom-- usually the mother or the sister of the gelowar--had the title of linger. As such, she ruled over a group of villages which cultivated her farms and paid her taxes. The chief wife of the bur (king), known as awa, did not have these privileges (Gamble, 1967:58). However, while the succession of political power was determined matrilineally, the inheritance of this power rested in male hands. With the increased influence of the Islamic law of the malekite

rite and French domination, we find that the rulers' descent line gradually shifts from matrilineal to patrilineal, though those with slave status often maintained matrilineal descent (Gamble,1967:48;Chabas,1965:80;Mbodji,1990:11;O'Brien,1975:3). Clearly, such a trend places men at the apex of the social ladder in determining political succession and inheritance, while women are increasingly marginalized within their familial group. According to a Wolof saying, "it is the breast milk or (men)" which determines descent from an ancestress, within relationships of solidarity (Gamble,1967:46-7). The matrilineage has a crucial biological role in transmitting both the blood and the mother's milk. This blood is also said to transmit psycho-social values which hold the kin groups together and give needed healing and other support (Diop,1981:29;1984). Thus, if a person was sick, or had broken societal norms of solidarity, he or she appealed to the mother's family for assistance. Patrilineage played a secondary biological role but a primary socio-political role (Gamble,1967:46-7).

Within the extended family, household units formed compounds which were and remain the basis for social organization (Thomson,1981:45). The laman or male elder runs the house and the activities of his dependents and wives. Even his wives are accorded respect depending on their seniority. The first wife or awa is often included in his secret plans and has the freedom to distribute household goods to the other wives. Rights to land included the right of the laman who first cleared the land, use rights of the household farming the land, and areas given out by rulers and, later, by marabouts which superseded the laman's rights (Klein,1979:82-3).

Colonization

Barter trade had long been intrinsic to the Wolof peoples economic system. Migrating from the northern borders of Senegal, the semi-islamized Wolof had developed the political kingdoms of Boal, Waalo, Kaajor, Jolof, and Saloum within the Jolof Empire by the 15th century (Barry, 1979:40; O'Brien, 1975:157). The Atlantic slave trade was introduced by the Portuguese during the same century and later continued by the French through the St. Louis trading post in 1659 (Barry, 1979:47). As Barry (1979:47) noted, "Black Africa was reduced to a mere supplier of slave labour for the plantations of America." "Les Wolofs représentaient néanmoins près de 20% des esclaves exportés de la Sénégambie," writes Barry (1988:75) [The Wolof represent nearly 20% of the slaves exported from the Senegambia](my translation). During this turbulent period, the slave-trade instigated ceddo (fighters from slave origin) violence and maraboutic wars between Islamic leaders and traditional buurs (African kings) (Klein, 1979:67-8; Barry, 1988; Mbere, 1991). As the violence escalated, formerly cohesive social orders were devastated. Between 1859 and 1887, after the decline of the slave trade, the French consolidated their power over war-torn kingdoms (Klein, 1979:68-9).

In the Protectorat (rural areas of Senegal), the French ruled through chefs de canton, who followed French orders to collect taxes and to conscript soldiers into the military (Mbodji, 1990:11,13). But in terms of socio-economic organization, the war-torn Wolof society was re-structured and re-organized under the realm of the Mouride brotherhood espousing a form of Sufism, and led by Cheikh Amadou Bamba, during the late 19th to early 20th century. Bamba and later followers, such as Shaikh Ibra Fall, organized the Wolof masses into daras through a religious ideology which encouraged hard labor above prayer and the complete submission of the common peoples to

maraboutic saints. In return for this allegiance, the marabouts undertook functions of teacher, spiritual and political guide, and powerful representative of the masses to the French. Today, they are the intermediaries between the peasant farmers and the Senegalese state (Diagne, 1981:26-7; O'Brien, 1975:102,212). Politically and economically, the Mourides became an important force drawing nearly 30% of the population (nine-tenths Wolof) and producing nearly 25% of the country's peanut crop and 14% of Sine-Saloum's total (O'Brien, 1975:82; Klein, 1979: 82).

The re-emerging Wolof rural family structure was dependent on the Mouride organizational structure. After working on the dara for several years, the talibe (young male laborers) were given land by the marabouts before starting their family. In return for access to the state through the brotherhood hierarchy, the peasant farmer often continued to work on the marabout fields in addition to their own (O'Brien, 1975:61-2,71-2). Scattered Wolof villages covered the watered and underpopulated terrain of southeastern Saloum as the Mouride daras forced the Fulbe pastoralists onto new grounds. As a result this region became home to large numbers of migrant laborers (navetaans) as well as former slaves (Klein, 1979:82-3). Because of the absence of population pressure on the land, there was much mobility and no close ties between lineage and land. Village and household heads first from freeborn then from slave-born families, claimed the land (Gamble, 1967:35-6).

Peanuts: a Colonial Legacy

Though cotton and various types of millet dominated the traditional economy, peanuts were introduced by the French in parts of Sine-Saloum around 1910 (though it had been in Senegal since the middle of the 19th

century). Imported goods were also introduced and began to replace any local cotton trade (Venema,1978:105,609). Traditionally, women picked the cotton on communal plots and controlled cotton production and sale or trade (Venema,1986:85;Klein,1979:66). With the peanut came new tax and land laws and the dissolution of the African family's economic power.

Payments once made to traditional chiefs were transferred into a 3% export tax. Later, a head tax was implemented. Both taxes increased throughout the years under French law code affecting those living in rural communities (Klein,1979:69,76). In 1900, the colonies were forced to become economically Self-Reliant from France, a factor which mandated increased production, collection of taxes, and the recruitment for soldiers (*ibid*:71). The distribution of individual rights to land was abolished by the decree of 1906 (O'Brien,1975:96). Because labor was plentiful with migrant workers and land abundant in southeastern Saloum, the French only invested in better seed not in agricultural modernization. At the same time they exploit the traditional organizational structures (Klein,1979:85). From this date forward, the peasants were co-opted into a debt pattern to the French, which Mbodji notes, ended their food self-sufficiency, particularly during the April-May months while waiting for the harvest (1990:18).

Providence Societies were then established by the French to provide seeds and fertilizer at a 25% interest rate. Their purpose was to break the debt cycle of the peasants who were underpaid for their crops, but this only worsened the situation (O'Brien,1975: 123). Membership into cooperatives was made compulsory by a January 8, 1915 decree enforcing tight control over peasant actions. European commercants such as Maurel & Prom were thereby able to maintain official control over the price and import-export of agricultural products. Peanuts produced for manufacturing Marseille soap

totaled from 12,000 tons in 1901 to 104,000 tons in 1914 (Klein, 1979:68;Mbodji,1990: 16,13).

During the 1960 year of independence, Leopold Senghor, the President of Senegal, introduced a unique brand of African Socialist ideology, methodology, and practice. His humanist-socialist doctrine advocated a reaching-back to the egalitarian values of traditional African community organizational structure. Its ideological basis was founded in notions of Negritude and Teilhard de Chardin's philosophy of universal civilization. The former espoused the mythical essence of African realities in the face of European sarcasm, while the latter emphasized the necessary interdependence of world cultures. These ideologies became the basis of a plan for development based on continued close links with the west through technocratic aid (Hunter, 1990d; Markovitz, 1969:123,75).

Three major elements of the doctrine included Animation Rurale, the "mechanism of socialist social change;" Cooperatives, the "institutional expression and embodiment" of socialisms; and foreign investment (Markovitz, 1969:172). Together, they combined Senghor's ideal of cultural independence and technological progress through scientific plans for equitable distribution. At the same time they increased rates of production. The cooperatives and a new land law are most important for our purposes, for they acted as a continuation of the French Providence Societies and 1906 land law, albeit, with some changes.

The cooperatives handle approximately 80% of the peanut crop and provide essentials such as seeds, fertilizers, equipment, and loans under the state's auspices (Markovitz, 1963:173). State bodies such as the Center for Regional Expansion(CER), the State Marketing Board(OCA), and Regional Centers for Development(CRAD) directed this process through a specific

chain of command flowing from the state down to the village cooperative (*ibid*:173-4). The 1964 Law on National Domain was implemented to ensure that the farmers did not lose access to land user rights being taken over by the emergence of an elite, landowning class (Markovitz,1969: 181;Klein,179:83;Savane and Niang,1986:148). Male rural councils carry out the law under state jurisdiction. As men are both political leaders and land owners women continue to be excluded from land owning opportunities.

In spite of these measures and for a variety of factors, peanut production has actually stagnated in recent years. This phenomenon has resulted in a burdgeoning urban artisanal sector, a factor common to many underdeveloped countries in parts of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Amin,1987;Franke,1967).

As Mbodji mentions, the peanut enterprise has ocsillated over the years. After the 1914 high export tonnage of 280,000T, exports reached a low of 126,000T by the end of World War I (Mbodji,1990:14,25). The boom years starting in 1919 to 1929 saw a steady increase in exports with a value of 202 billion FCFA to 674 billion FCFA in the respective years. After 1929, the local economic crisis was compounded by a world economic recession.

In recent years, agriculture has become a less viable venture due to the ecological destruction wrought by colonial and neo-colonial forces. The 1968-74 drought and declining rural incomes seriously undermined any remaining self-reliant mechanisms (Franke and Chasin,1980;Gerry,1979,134;Sommerville,1988:2). Much of the revenue generated from the peanut production was spent on the burdgeoning civil service(already large under French colonialism) which grew 123% after independence taking up 60% of the budget (Sommerville, 1988:4).

Exacerbating the situation, "groundnuts as a percentage of total exports

dropped from 80% to 40%" further decreasing the prices paid to the peasants (Sommerville,1988:2).

In 1970, statistics showed that 46% of the Dakarois population had arrived since the 1960 independence (Sow,1986:211). Over a third (2.3 million) of the Senegalese now live in urban areas, with 1,5 million living in Dakar alone (Sommerville,1988:2). In addition to the high(7%) urban migration increase, stable employment in the cities has become harder to find (Sow,1986:211). The debt crisis and continuing foreign ownership of the major means of production ensure that the country is responding to foreign demands rather than domestic needs.

Fish Production: A Natural Resource in Pre-and Post- Colonial Eras

As a consequence of these demographics and historical realities, the fishing sector, once predominant in traditional economies, is again becoming central to the Senegalese economy. In 1980 and 1982, fish exports surpassed those of the peanut as a primary product (Permann,1989:5). Fish is an important part of the Senegalese diet. Senegal is fourth among the world's nations in their consumption of fish (Le Carne,1985:562). In addition, the fishing sector provides a total of 100,000 jobs, 34,000 of these jobs are in commercialization and sales, while 10,000 of these are in food processing. These are the economic activities in which women predominate (Permann,1989:5;Gerry,1979). Most of the work takes place in the informal rather than the formal, structured, and industrial sector. Women's fish trade activities pre-date western colonialism. Klein (1979) notes the active fish and salt trade along the Saalum River.

During the fifteenth century, the commencement of European trade in West Africa, the Portuguese, Dutch, French and others set up trading

companies for the extraction of gold, minerals, slaves and other African resources (Rodney, 1982; Mbere, 1991; Barry, 1988; Brooks, 1976:21).

Lancados(adventurers from the Cape Verde Islands and Portugal who lived among the Africans) intermarried with the Wolof and Lebou women traders in Goree and in St. Louis (Brooks, 1976:19; Boulegue, 1972:5-10). These women, called, signares, "represented an economic nexus between European men pursuing personal gain, and African and Euroafrican women determined to acquire European merchandise," as well as socio-economic status and wealth (Brooks, 1976:44). The women provided access to commercial networks, while themselves hiring out domestic slaves to the trading companies, sending the slaves out to bring back goods, trading in crafts, and owning property and houses (see Brooks, 1976:20). Women wielded tremendous power, and often had titles, as did the Bainouka queens along the upper Gambia River in what is now Casamance (Brooks, 1976:19). In 1749, ten out of thirteen private properties on Goree belonged to Euro-Africans, nine of whom were women. In 1779, eleven out of 18 compounds belonging to the French government were occupied by the signares (Brooks, 1976:23-4).

French laws, which forbade European-African intermarriage, and which did not permit the filhos da terra(Euro-African woman's children) to inherit property, did not prevent the signares from accumulating wealth and power until well after they had attained high social status around the 1780's(Brooks, 1976:22, 19, 23, 41). However, these laws and the women's low social origins(grumete-seafaring peoples and jamm-slave descendents), did increase their marginalization from the African communities and meant that their survival was between the African and European societies (Brooks, 1976: 27-8; Boulegue, 1972:13).

Following the highly stratified and endogamous Wolof and Wolofized

Lebou society (mentioned above), the women moved up in social status as they married Europeans. Because of their powerful position and the resilience of traditional customs in the face of European invasion, property and other goods continued to pass through matrilineal lines. The suppression of the slave trade around 1815 contributed to the disruption of commerce, and the peanut crop became the center of economic activity (Brooks,1976:41). It is likely that many of the women lost their powerful positions. Yet, Le Cour Grandmaison (1971) notes that a minority of the Lebou women are fairly well off and own the piroques and other expensive fishing equipment used by their husbands. Are these women some of the signare descendants? Whatever the answer, it is evident that the masses of women, to whom we now turn, could be found within the center of Lebou and Guet-Ndar fishing communities engaged in subsistence fish market activities.

Lebou Societal Organization and Fish Marketing

"As far back as men have been catching fish...women have been preserving them," notes one Guet-Ndarian woman (Permann,1989:17). This task, along with the commercialization and sale of the fish in market areas closer to home have traditionally been women's lot. From the 1500's onwards, as St. Louis became a major French trade center(with periodic British intervention), many changes occurred with the French colonial administration. In the 1930's and 40's, demands for increased production by the French Economic Community coupled with the introduction of new technology such as motors and fish nets, instigated major changes in the Guet-Ndar community (Permann,1989:3-4).

Later, in the 1940's, French policy put in place National Cooperative

Units, first for the fishermen and later for the women transformatrices/commercants (Permann,1989:16). As in the peanut sector, these units were set up to provide tools which would increase production and thus export revenues. Just as independence was approaching, the government sold or distributed materials such as salt, hay, and knives to the women for the transformation process. In addition the sin (drying commune) was built so women could work with drying tables and cleaning tubs (Permann,1989:17). While the co-ops were the major tool of government intervention into local community spheres in Guet Ndar, St. Louis, land laws transformed the Lebou communities around Dakar.

Around 1569, the Lebou settled in the towns of Hann, Yoff, Ouakam, and N'Gor, where they were under the reign of the damels (rulers) of Cayor, a Wolof monarchy (Le Cour Grandmaison,1971:37-8). Political leadership was vested in male hands through the serigne while the transmission of possession, solidarity ties, land and other goods passed through matrilineal lines of descent (hetu nday) into the uncle's or nephew's hands (Le Cour Grandmaison,1971:38,42). In addition, women played a very important role in traditional religious ceremonies. Some still serve as yaye u xamb (ritual officiators and healers) (ibid:45). Traditionally, the Lebou did have the social hierarchy between freedmen and slaves but no castes. However, years of assimilation with the Wolof and the Sereer peoples have altered this (ibid:40,42). Similar to the Wolof, the power of transmission within matrilineal descent lines, has dissipated with the fairly recent influence of Islam and under the impact of French policies (ibid:42,45).

The major destructive agent of change was French land laws, which transferred matrilineal power to patrilineal lines. In addition, the basis of the Lebou communal structure was disrupted by usurping their land and forcing

them into a rapidly growing urban centers. French law was implemented in 1862 with the Decree of Jaurreguiberry, then was followed by the 1906 Government General Decree (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:49-51). With the first law, the colonial government overstepped the power-boundaries of the traditional Lebou rural councils and declared that all property under their jurisdiction would be transferred to the French colonial administration. Those who used the land had no choice but to follow colonial mandates (*ibid*:49). The second law demanded that the Lebou, lessen the precarious nature of land ownership, and register their land with the colonial magistrates to give them quasi-ownership status (*ibid*:50-1).

Slavery, colonialism, and neo-colonialism have undermined and altered past African norms and practices. Thousands were sold into slavery and thus had to find new ways of surviving in other worlds. Colonialist and neo-colonialist forces have set in motion relentless cycles of dependency which are in direct contrast to pre-capitalist Self-Reliance. Power relations based upon western domination and exploitation undermine the creative, life-sustaining forms of power "as a humanist vision of [self-determinism] and self-actualization (Collins, 1990:224; Steady, 1987).

Women[and men] resisted. The 1929 Nigerian Women's War as well as Sembene Ousmane's depiction of women's leadership during the 1947-8 Dakar-Niger railway strike, give evidence to these acts of resistance (Steady, 1987: 12; Ousmane, 1970). These courageous acts stemmed the tide of colonialist destruction and served as important pre-cursors to contemporary strategies.

In tracing the history and ethnography of the Wolof and Lebou peoples, who have played an important role in the peanut and fishing commercialization in the regions addressed, we can note several

predominant trends. Pre-capitalist West African peoples espoused norms of Self-Reliance which guided many areas of their lives, including the sexual division of labor. The self-provisioning nature of past societal structures was partially destroyed by colonial powers inflicting imperialism, increasing hierarchical relationships based on class, and compounding gender oppression. Notions of communalism, reciprocity, and distribution were subsumed by values of individualism, competition, and accumulation. The 'use value' of production was replaced by 'exchange value' as primarily men were targeted for co-option into cash cropping.

Communally owned property was transferred into private hands. Many men migrated in search of cash for tax payments, or to escape conscription into the colonial military. Whether noticable through land or cooperative policies, the state, both colonial and post-colonial, acts as a major agent in the transformation of rural and urban communities. In many cases women have been negatively affected by these transformations and laws, through the shift from patrilineal to matrilineal descent lines and the subsequent ramifications in terms of her reproductive and productive work. In short, the exchange economy created conditions where "the relationship between women and men has moved decidedly in the direction of a hierarchical one" (Sudarkasa, 1987:36).

CHAPTER THREE

*Conceptualizing and Re-Conceptualizing: The Developing Critiques.*The Nature of the African State

The state's gendered ideological apparatus, and its rapport with Africa's rural and urban economies explains the intricacies of the harmful ramifications wrought by transformations in market spheres. In light of my case material, it is helpful to conceptualize the state as having two faces. On the one hand, the nation state is embedded within the world capitalist system and subject to forces beyond its control. On the other hand, the energies of the instruments of the state are directed towards its own peoples. An important aspect of this inward looking face is the role the state and its agents play in the survival of the populace.

On the macro level, the state answers to demands for debt payments from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as seeking concessions for foreign investor corporations. On the micro-national level, the state, having spent many of its resources externally, has limited options and resources for regional and local development. Here, the state's control of the economic sphere sets off a chain of commands which structure and re-structure rural and urban social orders. By 1963, three years after independence, over 14,000 cooperatives, supervised by state civil servants and intermediary businessmen and marabouts, dotted the Senegalese countryside as well as growing urban areas. In this context, state power is exercised through male leadership who constitute a patriarchal elite capable of dominating and controlling privilege. Such power constrains women's options, especially in terms of their ability to pursue certain survival

mechanisms.

On the micro-household level, social linkages had already been transformed from "ties of kinship to contractual bonds among...communities within the co-ops and between the co-ops and the national government." Increasingly, they have become subject to post-colonial state demands (Skurnik,1965:358). State intervention in the Senegalese peanut basin and the informal urban market sector has brought about a transformation of norms. Consequently, we can trace the shift from gender differences in the pre-colonial society to gender hierarchies in post-colonial society. As state authority descends from the level of government through intermediary markets, to village and town co-ops, the power of the state is dissipated. This chain of command is in keeping with state objectives for increased economic productivity with the introduction of modern tools and with better prices for crops, fishing canoes, and equipment (Skurnik,1965:359).

But, women are forced to the bottom rungs of this hierarchy. Their previous position of limited status and of power, ensuring access to resources and some degree of economic autonomy, is undermined. Why? State policies, while reordering rural and urban societal relationships, impinge differently on women. The state itself is not gender neutral. Through policies affecting access to resources and decision-making arenas, it actively contributes to the construction of gender inequalities. Men and women constitute different categories of person in the manner in which they might enjoy the status of their citizenship.

Literature Review

Sudarkasa's (1981,1987) analysis of pre-socialist societies, exemplifies the re-claiming of history by African women. We can thus read the following

development literature bearing in mind the self-determinist and self-reliant nature of past West African societies, and in the light of societal transformations in which some of these strategies have survived. Two white, western scholars, Ester Boserup (1970,1975,1980; Beneria and Sen:1981) and Bernhard Venema (1978,1980, 1982,1986) as well as two African scholars, Marie Angelique Savane and Oumoul Khairy Ly Niang, (1986) have made important contributions to the analysis of women's changing roles.

Boserup's earlier theoretical analysis pointed out some general trends in the African economy. She contended that the transformation from a subsistence to a cashcropping economy has resulted in women's loss of their central position in kinship-based agricultural systems and in their exclusion from cashcropping (1980:38). Venema, through a case study of the Wolof people, argues that these generalizations do not apply to all African societies; for, Wolof women have their own cash cropping plots (1986:85). Savane and Niang, as Senegalese, Wolof women, affirm these assessments and move beyond them to analyze and to critique the impact of the state's gendered policies. They outline potential strategies for a successful continuation of development efforts (Savane and Niang,1986).

In spite of their different perspectives, these authors support Sudarkasa's concluding statement that the erosion of deeply rooted traditions ensured radically different roles for women in socio-economic spheres. Women's independence has been negatively affected under new authoritative structures. However, the authors differ in their interpretations of the root causes of women's diminished status. Examining their scholarly work enables us to understand this trend, and its ramifications, in relation to how women's status and power in economic spheres enhance or constrain

their autonomy. Drawing on my own insights developed during the time I spent in Senegal, I will elaborate on women's deteriorating status as this relates to her loss of access to the means of economic production. Land, in the form of usufruct plots, the transformations of Wolof women's roles in cotton production, and the nature of state power are especially important here. Though major issues such as land, access to resources, and state policies addressed in the literature applies to both rural peanut cash cropping, as well as to urban fish markets, the literature addresses only peanut cash-cropping. Cities such as Dakar are relatively recent colonial creations. Thus the informal market sector, characterized by marginalization and remarkable survival strategies, is also a recent phenomenon. This discussion will continue in Chapter Four when I focus on the case studies of the peanut and fish industries.

In 1970, Boserup's pioneering scholarship initiated a critique of the state, and of the external forces (for example USAID), which gave rise to gendered approaches to development, while purporting to improve the lot of all. Focusing on women's position in economic production, Boserup (a Danish scholar) described the sexual division of labor as a "natural" division where men cleared the land and women sowed the crops. According to Boserup, this "natural" pattern of sexual stratification is not biological as is commonly assumed. Rather, sexual divisions are mandated by existing social structures and are maintained by a complex kinship network held together by communal obligations which determine male and female roles in the economy (Boserup, 1970:15). The lower population densities (compared to today), easy access to land, and relatively small class differentiation ensured a perpetuation of male/female systems of shifting agriculture where women were the primary farmers. Their high status was assured because of

their dominant role in farming, and because of their role in procreation ensuring more laborers. With the shift to plowing systems, using intensive methods on permanent fields, the male role became increasingly important as labor intensive techniques and the cashcropping systems were introduced. These new tools were distributed to the household heads, that is the men (*ibid*:34). To the extent that women's dominant role was lost in terms of visible productivity with both cash and subsistence returns, her economic and social status was undermined.

This shift in agricultural methods, wherein the "economic autarky of family groups [was] superseded by the exchange of goods and services," brought about a change in both the economic and the social roles of the sexes (Boserup, 1970:15). The state policies, by recognizing males as heads of households, and not women, directed a system where men, on the one hand, had access to modern tools and were introduced into cashcropping. Thus, men were able to maintain a relatively high status. Women, on the other hand, were relegated to the use of traditional tools, to the non-lucrative business of subsistence farming, and, consequently, to a lowered status (*ibid*:33,35). Even in areas of intense cultivation, where men and women worked very hard for the family's survival, men still had the upper hand in commercial production (*ibid*:35). Women looked for other ways to generate income (*ibid*:56). For Boserup, sex roles were both a construct of and intrinsic to the socio-economic structure of communal based norms.

While assessing the negative effects colonialism has on women, she downplays the exploitative imperialist interests of colonialism. Using a neoclassical framework, Boserup emphasizes African patriarchy where men "monopolize social roles and access to resources," (Duley, 1986:58). A kinship system wherein polygyny was practiced, permitted prestige to accrue to

men. Polygyny meant that men controlled more land with women's usufruct plots as well as indirectly controlling their labor services (Beneria and Sen, 1981:279-80). Men's economic standing and status were thus enhanced. Colonialism, by demanding large increases in production at any cost, was to have an effect on this situation as well.

Boserup's argument was premised on a cause-effect relationship between colonialists' land reforms, based on the belief that 'cultivation was men's work,' and women's relegation to the subsistence sector (Beneria and Sen, 1981: 281). The transformation brought about by colonialist policies, which introduced forced cashcropping, resulted in a breakdown of the family system of solidarity. In addition, communal land ownership passed to the private ownership of land by men. Women's access to usufruct plots, instead of being a 'given' in family systems, became increasingly dependent on the whims of male heads of households, who control the user rights and/or own the land (Boserup, 1980:16). There has been a shift from the traditional land tenure system to increased land privatization in the hands of the rich, and to state ownership schemes which controlled stricter user rights for the masses. As men have more money from cashcropping, they can buy the land and increase their control over women, who are no longer protected by communal familial structures (*ibid*:37). As a result, their labor productivity has increased while that of the women's has declined (*ibid*:53). I shall return to this later in the paper.

As a strategy to ameliorate the impact of colonization, Boserup calls for long-term state and internationally run programs, education, and employment which would increase women's earning power (Boserup, 1975:27-28). She highlights the necessity for institutionalized reforms through collectivization of agriculture where women are paid for their work.

She discourages women's participation in male cooperatives. According to her, women need "legal right and access to available means of self improvement," (*ibid*:30).

Unlike Boserup's macro approach to African economic systems, Venema looks at the micro level of Senegal's Thyse-Kaymor and Sonkorong regions (1978,1980,1982; 1986:88). A Dutch anthropologist, Bernhard Venema has done extensive research in Senegal's Saloum peanut basin. He finds some subtle differences in women's roles. While asserting that women's position is not necessarily undermined by the externally imposed transition from shifting to plough culture, he affirms that their access to resources has certainly been exposed to new limitations.

Bernhard Venema maintains that Boserup's generalizations are not applicable to Africa as a whole. He refutes the notion that women are relegated to the subsistence sector, and notes the Wolof women's active participation in cash cropping on their own usufruct fields. He explains that the Wolof farming system is based on a complex interaction of gendered social obligations, where men continue to perform male tasks with food crops, and women perform female tasks in the cashcropping system (Venema,1986:82-3). Women's position has not been undermined in the shift from mobile to ploughing systems (allowing for agricultural intensification) because they have indirect access to familial resources and this actually alleviates their workload in the fields (Venema,1980:31). Women use their position as mother-in-law, fiancée or some other relative, to ensure that sourga (young, unmarried men), or their husbands, fulfill their social obligations, and use these tools to do the sowing and weeding tasks performed by women (Venema,1978:108).

Venema agrees with Boserup's assertion that land shortages have

often meant that women lose their usufruct plots due to population growth, and refers to heavily populated areas, like Thies or Diourbel, where this has taken place. However, he points out the contradiction in Sine-Saloum, where a shortage of land due both to intensification of cashcropping and to population increases, did not come about until fairly recently. As a result, most of the Wolof women still have their plots (Venema,1982:615).

Venema's elaboration on Boserup's prediction is based upon the different circumstances concerning land availability in certain regions of the Senegalese peanut basin. Secondly, Venema expounds on the thesis of continued male-male prestige rivalry for land where women in polygynous marriages no longer constitute a means for their husbands to accrue wealth. When a household ceases to become the unit of production, the amount of goods numerous wives could produce in the home becomes inconsequential in terms of the state demand for tax payment and more crops for export. To the extent that women have successful cashcropping plots outside of the subsistence sector, they are ensured some economic autonomy. Male rivalry perpetuates a system of land user rights under male households; women's commercial plots allow for varying degrees of her financial independence (Venema,1982:615). Yet, women's autonomy is limited; for, unlike the men's land user rights, women's user rights do not have a "hereditary nature" and can thus be lost when the woman marries or when the state imposes another gendered policy (*ibid*:616).

Venema maintains that, despite claims to the existence of a double descent system in the Wolof traditional kinship system, "it is highly questionable whether headmanship was ever inherited matrilineally," (Venema,1978:96). However, he asserts that there was a matrilineal transmission of property which passed through a woman's uncle. Such a

descent-group membership followed a system of "complementary filiation" (Venema, 1978:98). Within this system of reckoning, descent and filiation, there was no distinct matrilineal kin group but, rather, clans were divided according to descent from a common ancestor with different ancestresses carrying on the family line. Matrilineal descent was also important in relation to the transmission of success and fortune (barke), of witchcraft, of feelings of solidarity, of the noble class, and of slaves. Yet, land ownership remained in male hands (ibid:98-99,101).

Bernhard Venema examines the intricacies of differences in household expenses between men and women as a potential factor in the undermining of women's economic independence. He notes, in contrast to Boserup's depiction of 'overworked African women' responsible for the support of themselves and of their children, that women's autonomy is not undermined. In fact, men tend to be equally responsible for financial obligations (Venema, 1986:90). Most of the bridewealth payment and the food crop for family consumption, as well as medicines for the male members of the family, is the man's responsibility. Women pay one-sixth of the bridewealth payment, for added spices and condiments for the meal, such as oil, firewood, pulley for water, clothes, medicines for herself, her daughters, and the young children, and grinding mills (Venema, 1980:32-3; 1986:90-91).

Like Boserup, Venema assumes the appropriateness of modernization along neoclassical lines. The state's vulnerable economic position on the periphery of the global economy is barely noted as key to women's position in a society transformed through outside influences. According to Venema's analysis, projects must be initiated to help women increase their material position. However, close attention must be paid to the intricacies of women's role in the socio-economic spheres before policies are implemented

(Venema,1980:92-3).

Venema is forced to conclude that, despite women's participation in cashcropping, their position "compared to men is unequal in many ways," (Venema, 1986:91). First, though women do use their position to enforce familial obligations for plowing tasks, their fields, mirroring their low position on the social hierarchy, are the last to be tilled--after the communal and head of household fields! Since the timing of mechanical intervention is so crucial, this plan has reduced their crop yields (Venema,1980:31). Thus, the amount of peanuts they could sell for income is greatly reduced (Venema,1986:87). Second, he notes that since the male cooperatives are dominated by male land owners, women do not have direct access to seeds, and to tools coming from the state and delivered through the cooperatives (*ibid*:89). In addition, they often pay much higher prices for these agricultural necessities. One example of this finding indicates that women are sometimes charged a 25-100% interest rate by their husbands in return for seeds and fertilizer (Venema,1980: 32). Venema(1986:91) warns that:

A slow but steady structural improvement in the position of the head of the household relative to the rest of the family may result if the extension service limits its contact to him.

Venema(1986:87) disagrees with Boserup's statement that the move from shifting agriculture to agricultural mechanization results in a loss of work and consequently a loss of status for women. Yet, at the same time, he recognizes that the introduction of modern technological tools such as the nut cracking machines, oil presses, and rice threshers has resulted in a loss of income-generating activities for women. Clearly, some tools such as the seed drill used by men to sow groundnuts, increase women's economic independence--if they can get the men's help. Others, such as the grain mill,

lead to a loss of revenue, because women no longer ground the millet in income-generating working parties (*ibid*:87-8). As a source of revenue is lost, and another does not take its place, the livelihood of women is transformed.

In spite of the crucial role played by extension agencies, Venema questions Boserup's suggestion that women form village cooperatives similar to those of the men. He notes the low level of efficiency in terms of the Senegalese state delivering capacity. Finally, referring to specific policies surrounding agricultural mechanization, Venema is quick to note that the introduction of oxen, "met with great success," (Venema,1986:87). Certainly the cow manure as fertilizer, the well-tilled soils, and thus the increased water retention capacity are positive factors. But if, women, who contribute over 50% of the productive labor force, are excluded from receiving agricultural implements provided by the state agency, can we call this a success? (Savane and Niang,1986:136).

Marie Angélique Savane and Oumoul Khairy Ly Niang make woman's limited access to resources the centerpiece of their study. Savane and Niang are Senegalese women scholars who have contributed a detailed analysis of Senegalese women's concerns in the light of development trends. Women's commercial activities do not imply that she benefits from the same status, rights, and resources as men. Access to resources have a direct affect on her cashcropping and working party activities. All constitute the basis of Wolof women's ability to generate income and, thus, to provide for her family and her needs through decision-making control. Thus Savane and Niang's statement that, "la modernisation n'est pas profitable aux femmes," (Savane and Niang,1986: 198) [modernization is not profitable to women](my translation) is unconditional. Their research in Sine-Saloum brings to the fore some critical reasons why women's access has been so limited and shines a

new light on the after-effects of state, externally-directed, and local agendas. In light of their conclusions we must ask: given these realities what are necessary state changes which would increase women's options in terms of ensuring their access to the means of production and thus to obtaining control of their decision-making powers?

Savane and Niang cast a critical eye on the negative repercussions brought about by state and by externally directed development plans. The CNRA(Centre National de Recherches Agronomiques) of Bambey introduces new mechanization in rural areas for farmers:

considéré comme un laboratoire humain où les paysans sont à la fois sujets et supports de l'expérimentation scientifique (Savane and Niang, 1986:163) [considered as a human laboratory where peasants are both subjects and supports at the same time in scientific experimentation] (my translation).

Such development strategies accentuate social stratification which, in turn, constrain Wolof women's access to land. In addition, they undermine women's position in the sexual division of labor and leave them locked in an endless cycle of mothering and domestic duties "exclus des circuits de decision et de formation" (Savane and Niang,1986:197).

Within the local power base, patterns of societal stratification in traditional and in modern societies, direct different articulations of authority and status. At different points, within the pre-capitalist social system, women's position was economically validated in ways which have gradually disappeared. In the past, Wolof society was hierarchically structured, a factor which I expanded upon earlier in the thesis. Today, strong remnants of this system remain embedded within new divisions, which are superficially based on class status, as manifest in the difference between agriculturalists and commercants, and between the elites and the masses (Savane and Niang,1986:136);(Sudhebdo newspaper:2/1/90). Here, however,

we will focus on another manifestation of this hierarchical system.

Savane and Niang emphasize this system of hierarchical stratification which permeates relationships in the household and between men and women. In a marital relationship, the woman's position is determined through her husband's status, and she must remain respectful and subservient to his wishes (Savane and Niang, 1986:139,174-5). Islam reinforces this through proverbs like, the woman "mérite le paradis en servant son mari," (*ibid*, 1986:1975) [merits paradise in serving her husband](my translation). The distribution of funds between men and women follows a hierarchical system where Savane and Niang assert, in agreement with Boserup, that women are the major bearers of household expenses. Increasingly, since funds are scarce, men migrate to urban areas for more gainful employment. Women are left to fend for the household. Often they are forced to sell some of their valuable possessions in order to make ends meet (Savane and Niang, 1986:160-1,186).

Ce qui est à déplorer en définitive ce n'est pas la participation des femmes aux travaux agricoles, mais la multiplicité des travaux qu'elles accomplissent quotidiennement et le fait qu'elles constituent une main-d'oeuvre familiale exploitée sans contrepartie ... (Savane and Ly, 1986:178) [That which is deplorable in definitive is not women's participation in agricultural work but the multitude of work which she accomplishes daily and the fact that she constitutes a family worker who is exploited without counterpart](my translation).

As part of his responsibilities, the laman parcels out land and is responsible for the land tax base. Though matrilineal descent lines pass on the family blood, with its symbolisms of character and success, men control the land resources in the household (Savane and Niang, 1986:139). Women, are not only mere vehicles through which land passes to their sons via their brother's hands, but receive less land than the men. As Savane and Niang note:

les parcelles affectées aux femmes sont de dimension inférieure à celles des hommes... (même) ...les femmes mariées à un homme du carré reçoivent aussi une parcelle, mais moins grande que celle des hommes (Savane and Niang, 1986:140-141)[the parcels given to women are of an inferior dimension compared to those of the men... even... married women of the household also receive a parcel, but smaller than that of the men's](my translation).

With the introduction of cashcropping systems, Savane and Niang point out that familial needs increased, and women's work load became heavier. Their assessments contrast with both Boserup's and Venema's predictions that women's work load would decrease with agricultural mechanization. The Senegalese scholars note that women's dependence on manual labor, because she has little recourse to modern tools and her lack of funds to pay for outside help, ensure that she is overburdened with domestic and field tasks (Savane and Niang, 1986:151,181). Women's ability to pay for imported materials has also decreased (*ibid*:151). The increased limitation of women's access to land, and to male plough labor, directly affected her time spent in the fields and her decreased revenues (*ibid*:181-2).

The fact that women are increasingly unable to obtain regular help from male relatives, is symptomatic of the erosion of her status and is made worse by her decreasing access to cash as a resource. Savane and Niang expand on Venema's assessment that women's fields continued to be the last to be plowed in accordance with the dictates of social hierarchy. Wolof women farmers' returns diminished at 2% per late day. In 1971 only 30% of the fields were tilled for women as compared to 70% for the men (Savane and Niang, 1986:181-2). The recently high population increase between 1970-80 from 1,465 to 2,500 persons in Thyse-Kaymor and Sonkorong only exacerbated an already deteriorating situation. Women's plots were the first to be decreased and taken away (*ibid*:131,136). Her loss of control over the

market economy means of production left her with few income-generating options, and certainly with nothing compared to the amount of funds she could earn through peanut production. This was one of the potential after-effects of a sudden population increase mentioned by both Boserup and Venema.

Social factors, such as demographics and interfamilial hierarchical structures, were not transformed in and of themselves. State power, first under French colonialists, and then under Senghor's and Diouf's leadership, imposed its law enforcement powers on rural systems of production. The encroachment of this authority on the delicate balance of household relationships gradually eroded traditional norms. Women, who had once been necessarily located at the center of family structures and home could be assured of being heard in economic discussions affecting the household. Men, who no longer had to negotiate with their wives for organization of the production, had moved from the household to the state cooperatives. Their ownership of the means of production was determined by the state--not by women's sons. Part of this process is summarized above, but Savane and Niang's second major emphasis on the state's control of agricultural mechanization and its impact on women have yet to be elaborated upon.

The state acted primarily through two major policies--the 1964 Law on National Domain, and various extension agencies and cooperatives. Savane and Niang's critique of the state, and of the CNRA externally directed developmental project, concerns (in part) the exclusion of women from their land plots, and from access to agricultural implements delivered by these organizations (Savane and Niang, 1986:177).

The land law was directed to male headed households and carried out by male councils. On the one hand the law did keep at least some of the

land away from rich poachers; but, on the other hand, it gave the state power to dispose of land at any time and to reinforce the power of the marabouts (Islamic religious leaders in Senegal), through land-giving favors in return for votes (Savane and Niang, 1986:148-9). Following these class hierarchies women themselves have been affected very differently by state policies. Some have actually aspired to more lucrative long-distance trade activities while others have faced worsening living conditions (Savane and Niang, 1986). For women, inequalities were exacerbated through the regimentation of an order which placed state power in the hands of rural, male-dominated councils. Women's centrality in the household unit of production and her own role in commercial cropping was not taken into account (Savane and Niang, 1986:81). Placing land, the means of production, in men's hands, while eroding familial land agreements, the state undermined the need for men to ensure that women had usufruct plots. Acting on population growth, state demands for increased returns, and in their own interests, the male-dominated councils excluded women from their decisions concerning land. Impermeable boundaries were set by state mandate and carried out by village councils. This same trend can be seen with reference to the introduction of technological implements.

Agricultural mechanization transformed women's access to resources by delivering them to male cooperatives as Boserup and Venema noted. It also increased their burden of manual labor--factors which were explained above. Other realities--such as the heaviness of the equipment, the fact that only implements that addressed male labor were distributed, and the unwillingness of the technicians to work with the women--played a role in women's access to tools (Savane and Niang, 1986:193). This exemplifies the fact that policies, training programs, and the types of tools delivered were

inappropriate in addressing the Saloum division of labor. Men, as the recipients of this aid and of traditional resources such as the sourga labour, were often the primary beneficiaries of modernization efforts (ibid:194).

Savane and Niang challenge state and local officials with a plan which would redress these issues. Modernization can only be effective if women have equal access to land, to technology, and to education. Discriminatory state laws would have to be eradicated, they exhort. In the villages, specific tools such as water pumps and mill grinders must be made specifically to suite women's needs (Savane and Niang, 1986:198). Finally, in order for women to meet escalating financial pressures for familial needs, other commercialized activities must be encouraged (ibid:199).

The important contributions made by these scholars predicts the negative impacts wrought by modernization under the dictates of a gendered state and other development policies which are, in turn, shaped by neo-colonialist forces. Boserup's general theoretical analysis set the stage for Venema's ethnographic detail, while Savane and Niang write with the knowlege of being Senegalese women themselves, albeit, women living in a different class structure. Several themes stemming from these predictions, namely: women's access to land, the erosion of her economic independence, and state power, will be the focus of my own analysis in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

*Societal Transformations: Peanut Commercialization and Fish Marketing;
Neo-Colonialism and the State*

Case Study Introduction and Overview

The case studies presented in this chapter--women peanut farmers and market fisherwomen--provide graphic examples of the intertwining of macro and micro, as well as survival imperatives acting upon and directed by Senegalese women. Women's access to resources and her ability to shape and act as instruments of power have been constrained by pre-and post-colonial state policies. Senegalese women's farming land in rural areas and land for gardening and for her market stall has been usurped by state laws which privilege the rights of male heads of households and middle and upper income peasants. Equipment delivered through state cooperatives follows these lines of class stratification and gender hierarchy. Seeds, fertilizer, and other tools for farming as well as motor canoes end up in male hands. Different types of tools and resources which women need, such as ice and knives for fish preservation, and mills and pulleys for grinding millet and drawing water, are not given equal priority with the men's needs. As we shift from gender issues to those of macro economics, we note the larger picture surrounding women's lives.

The economic exploitation of the capitalist world order, maintains large amounts of peanuts and fish exports. Food grown for exportation does not meet domestic food needs. In addition, foreign merchants who control large peanut warehouses and oil industries as well as foreign-owned fishing boats, encroach on the productivity of African peoples.

In light of these constraints, women have formed female networks. At the same time they have remained active in communal alliances and thus have been able to ensure societal survival and well-being. Women farmers working parties and the peasant farmers withdrawal from cashcropping are examples of these coping mechanisms and resistance strategies. Market women form coalitions for trips to the market. Female networks often ensure that the precious commodity of market stalls remain within the family, and is passed from mother to a younger female relative. These strategies not only ensure survival, but are central to the affirmation of Self-Reliance as a guiding principle and the restoration of structures which will give force to the vision of those espousing self-reliant norms.

Case Study I: Another Strategic Perspective: Personal Reflections on Peanut Commercialization: Gender, Imperialism, and Change

In addressing the peanut sector, I will respond to some of the literature in the last chapter while incorporating my own critique. Several factors indicate that women's and men's financial responsibilities may not be as equitable as Venema assumes. Here I will re-illustrate and interrogate some of Venema's points. Central to my analysis is an acknowledgement that the household is another domain where women's position and economic autonomy are undermined. The situation is complex. In agreement with Savane and Niang, I argue that due to both female subordination and male superordination within the household, as well as to external forces directing the fragmentation of socio-economic relationships, women are losing power within the household. First, household expenses have increased because women need to buy more store products. Due to agricultural intensification, women no longer have the option of relying on natural resources such as

trees and plants. Secondly, some household items come from external imports which are more expensive and more numerous. Items like soap and matches are examples of products which were once handmade but are now store bought, at higher prices (Venema, 1986:90-91). Women's usufruct plots are generally smaller than men's, thus bringing in less funds. Her other heavy household responsibilities limit her field time.

Clearly, women's cashcropping funds are not inexhaustible. To the degree that she is unable to generate the funds she needs, she is forced to rely on her husband's decisions in terms of household expenditure and on any additional funds he can contribute. The use-values of work, and the centrality of women's position, has been partially replaced by the exchange value for work and women's marginality. Western imperialist dictates compounded by state officials' acquiescence, have altered former socio-economic structures to meet their needs. More expensive goods were imported by the French. Widespread ecological destruction means that women's resources, drawn from natural environments, have largely been destroyed. In an increasingly individualistic system, where each person tries to generate the most funds for personal and state demands, women have been forced into a particularly vulnerable situation. Unchecked by pre-capitalist African norms, men may control and dominate the power of the state, and, particularly, at local levels in newfound ways. These factors limit the extent to which women may be effective in decision-making and in use of and access to equipment, land, and funds. Most importantly, such constraints hamper Wolof women's ability to initiate and pursue strategies of survival for herself and her loved ones.

Venema mentions, but does not emphasize, how, around the end of the 19th century, the transformation from African farming systems to

cashcropping forced women to abandon their cotton selling activities. But this was a very important source of income which they controlled. What are some of the transformations which denied women access to an important source of revenue, and how does this translate into their socio-economic status and strategies?

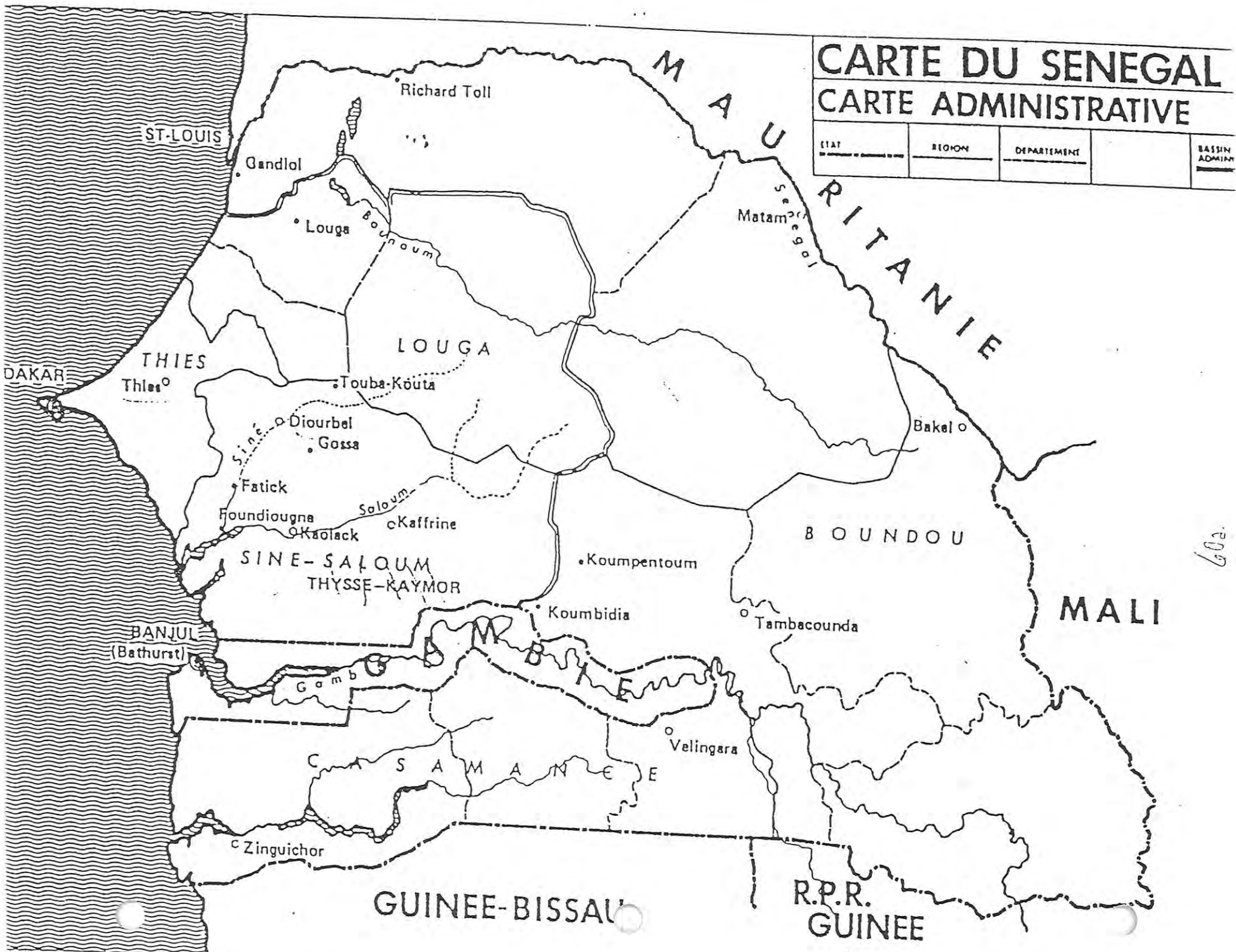
In pre-socialist agricultural systems, the Wolof peoples adapted their market economies to their survival needs. A critical element of this self-reliant system included interdependence between agriculturalists and animal herders. There was, as well, a trade system between the Berbers to the north and African traders to the south which crosscut the Sahel region (Franke and Chasin, 1980:40-83; see Chapter Two). Women's production of the cotton crop provided needed sources of revenue and of goods, and clothing for the family. In addition, cotton production accorded them an important status position within extended families. Today, the system is determined by values of profit maximization and capital-intensive methods, which have eroded traditional values, and destroyed some of the market principles on which Saloum socio-economic systems were based (Peterman, 1987: 4).

Monetization of the economy by French colonial forces has transformed reciprocal exchanges of goods and services into cash transactions. It has undermined women's power by replacing the cotton crop with the peanut crop, when this suited the needs of imperialist forces, and then by re-planting the cotton crop in later years. By selling imported cloth, and by introducing forced peanut cashcropping, the French imposed their economic demands on rural social orders. As the African peoples began to buy imported cloths instead of the women's cotton-cloths, women found themselves with goods but without a market (Venema, 1982:609). To generate income, Wolof women found themselves resorting to labor on

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usufruct plots, often land controlled by men.

Around 1910, peanuts were introduced by the French in parts of Sine-Saloum (though it had been in Senegal since the middle of the 19th century). Imported goods were also introduced and began to replace any local cotton trade (*ibid*:609;1978:105). As early as 1910, the French knew "the misery cash-cropping was producing in West-Africa...yields were declining." In 1913 "a scientific mission" in the form of "an experimental station" was set up at Bambey "to find peanut varieties that would be disease resistant, give high yields, and have a high oil content" (Franke and Chasin,1980:75).

In pre-colonial years women picked the cotton on communal plots and controlled its production and sale or trade (Venema,1986:85). The devaluation of the cotton crop forced women to start buying more expensive cloths, a factor which increases familial dependency on imported goods (Savane and Niang,1986:181-2). Women relinquished ownership of their cloth and began to work for others. In this externally-generated transformation, we can see that the cloth which women owned, and the cotton crop which women picked together, was replaced by work on peanut plots. This resource fed an external market over which women have no control. Furthermore, working on their individual peanut plots, women were unable to enjoy the benefits derived from communal field work. In more recent years, the cotton crop has been re-planted, but women have little of their former control.

While I was in Medina Cherif, a small Peuhl village in the Casamance, I saw how men control the weighing and the selling of the cotton. This takes place quite a ways from the 'women's domain' in the village. Though I am uncertain as to whether or not Peuhl women traditionally controlled cotton production like the Wolof women, it is certain that this scenario, of

men weighing the cotton, is similar in Sine-Saloum where Wolof women no longer control cotton production. Similar to the Wolof women, Peuhl women have had to find alternative ways to provide for their families. Formerly, the owners of cattle and makers of dairy-products for trade, many of these women continue the production of cheese, butter, and milk when possible. However, years of being chased off of their grazing lands by Mouride commercants and the Sahel Famine have resulted in the decimation of many herds. As Franke and Chasin (1980:8) note, "the whole way of life of the herdspeople was threatened as their cattle perished in the sands or were sold for a pittance to buy some food" (See Chapter Two).

In spite of these harsh realities, women and their families have developed coping mechanisms through self-defined agendas. One important strategy has been to form working parties to pick cotton. Though women are at the mercy of the landowner for wages, working through female networks allows them to support one another through pooling resources. Pooling child care and household duties, as well as negotiating as a group with landowners, have provided avenues to ensure women's survival and that of their families. Forming strong ties between women in the same family, from different age groups (especially since women's status often increases with age), as well as those from different class backgrounds, are alliances that women use to support each other all over Africa.

A third point to be made concerns the state's role in the survival of its populace, and the role of the masses in re-directing state actions to meet the basic needs of Senegalese peoples. Interaction between centers for rural development such as village cooperatives at the local level, SODEVA and CRAD (Centres Regionaux pour le Developpement) at the intermediary level, and the state Agricultural Marketing Board was all a part of Prime Minister

Mamadou Dia's and President Leopold Senghor's plan of animation rurale or (rural animation) (Markovitz, 1969:174,168). Though women have been marginalized by state polices as mentioned above, there are ways in which state agents and women are working together in order to "stimulate widespread participation in efforts for self development," (ibid: 168).

Since 1975, there has been a shift in government policy towards inward-directed development through diversifying production and increasing cultivation for domestic consumption(millet and sorghum). This re-orientation has been undertaken while maintaining goals to increase groundnut production for export. Part of this plan has included the Cereals II Project which entails exemplary steps to value and support women's participation in development. State plans were focused in the Thies and Diourbel regions(located to the northwest of Saloum) and were spurred forward through international events and input, such as the UN conference resolution for the International Women's Decade (Lewis,1984;see Thomson,1981). In particular, the project's design "seeks to ensure that...women active in groundnut and millet cultivation receive full and regular access to SODEVA's services. It also provides "extension services [which are] broadened to include new activities" in which women are involved, such as vegetable gardening and food preservation" (ibid,1984). Most importantly, women themselves have been pivotal to implementing these plans.

Questions and analyses concerning this organizational cooperation will be dealt with in Chapter Five.

The fact that state officials are addressing provisions for basic needs, such as domestic food supplies, as well as who controls and has access to limited resources, gives form to self-reliant mechanisms consistent with

women's priorities. Furthermore, women join with husbands and families to place checks on state actions. The farmers know that their cashcropping activities bring in the majority of state funds. For years, they have used this knowledge as a point of leverage when financial and service returns are not forthcoming. For example, in Dakar, rice imports (which today have been decreased) meant that local rice was under-consumed, and therefore local producers suffered. In addition, Senegal's vulnerability to France's dictates in terms of peanut oil prices has led to drastic fluctuations in the prices for peanut crops throughout recent years.

Ousmane's film, Xala, addresses the corruption of the 'pseudo-bourgeoisie' as middlemen who embezzled state funds for their own import-export businesses in the midst of escalating poverty. Peasants were not remunerated for their subsistence nor cash crops. In an act of organized resistance, the farmers decreased production and withdrew from the cashcropping sector or sold their crops to the neighboring Gambians for higher prices (Mbodji, 1990). Such alliances fulfill not only survival imperatives, but act as a powerful call to state cooperation. This example illustrates a reciprocal chain of leadership from the masses to the state using organized resistance and the strength of initiative measures taken at the grassroots.

Case Study II. Lebou and Wolof Women: Fish Marketing and Preservation:
Gender; Imperialism; and Change

Senegalese women's role in the urban and rural market fish trade was significant long before the colonial development of peanut cropping (Klein, 1979:66; Sow, 1986:206-7; see also Brooks, 1976; Boulegue, 1972). While rice and millet were consumed as a food staple, women monopolized and

continued to dominate the fish preservation process and 60% of the commercial sector (*ibid*,1986;Akadire,1983:3;Le Carne,1985:557). This preponderance of women in the productive spheres is not uncommon throughout West Africa where, for example, Ghanese women account for 80% of urban and rural trade (Boserup,1970:87;Stichter,1984:2). Lebou and Wolof women fish merchants in Dakar exemplify this trend.

During 1955-61, the capital of Senegal was transferred from St. Louis to Dakar, which was already a major West African city. In 1971, Wolof peoples in the CapVert (Dakar) region comprised about 50% of the population while the Lebou made up 10% of the population (*ibid*:24). As migrants swelled the city's quarters, Dakar expanded into an even larger center for commerce, for industry, and for public investment, while St.Louis experienced a migrant out-flow (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:21). Despite the rural-urban influx, urban-urban movements, and the aspirations for both jobs and higher standards of living, women have become increasingly marginalized by modern commercial enterprises (Stichter,1984:4). The rural-urban migration has been due, in large part, to the financial crisis undermining peanut commercialization. In 1971, only 7.5% of the Dakar women were in the formal, modern sector; a lack of jobs and training programs for women has forced many into petty trade (Le Cour Grandmaison,1971:16). The minimal amount of cash needed to get one started in the informal sector has been a major attraction for women with little cash (Ly,1988:13-14).

The relocation of the Senegalese population into rapidly growing urban centers, has meant an erosion of self-reliant production modes, particularly for the Lebou as original inhabitants of the CapVert region (Le Cour Grandmaison,1971:53). Animals and vegetable gardens disappeared, to

be replaced by a greater dependence on one major monetary and natural food resource--fish. Much of the fishing industry is owned by foreign enterprises (primarily European and Japanese) which can afford the best fishing boats and can rapidly deplete the richest regions near the coast (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:51).

French instituted land laws initiated during the colonial creation of Dakar, replaced matrilineally-inherited communal land rights with individual rights held by male heads of households (see Chapter Two). In less than 20 years, much of the land was bought up by merchants and swallowed up by urban markets and other infrastructure needs (Le CourGrandmaison, 1971:149). Within this context, "les femmes restent au service de l'unité domestique tout en étant intégrées dans des circuits marchands où elles ne tirent pas beaucoup d'avantages"[women remain in the service of the domestic units while being integrated in the market circuits where they don't hold many advantages](my translation) (Ly, 1988:12). Women's predominance in the market spheres(see Chapter Two) has been partially usurped by the rapid influx of Lebanese and Syrians after World War I. Today, one is more apt to find women on side-walk stools or in an overcrowded market stalls competing for business.

The monetarization and the modernization of market economy production have resulted in the creation of new socio-economic norms, but little or no redistribution of power, or responsibility in the household and the market spheres (Ly, 1988:12). Monetary exchange has transformed differences between highly respected groups into social and economic inequalities. Community leaders who directed political functions have been left with a mere title, while a distinct class of the economically privileged has emerged (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:153-4). Women's undermined position within the

urban economy is, in many ways, mirrored by national and international economic and ensuing social malaise around them. (Savane,1981:2), looking at these factors emphasizes ways in which..."capitalism à des besoins contraire à ceux des économies pré-capitalistes"[capitalism has needs which are contrary to those of pre-capitalist economies](my translation).

The Informal Sector

As in the rural sectors, the Senegalese state has tried to control and to finance the economic spheres through a strong centralizing policy and through foreign investments (Hunter,1990d;see also Markovitz,1969). However, a burgeoning administration, the dependency on foreign aid, and the debt crisis of the 1980's(see above), have impeded the modernization process (Sow,1986:204). In light of these factors most of the women work in the informal sector, a term which, Zarour notes, became widely used by international organizations at the beginning of the 1970's because of widespread urbanization(in the so-called underdeveloped countries) and the fact that industry and other arenas of the modern sector couldn't employ the unemployed (1990:1). These peoples were thus forced to turn to self-make trades often similar to those in rural commerce as a strategy for survival.

To understand the concept of informal sector, we will place our analysis within a Marginalidad (Gerry,1979) approach. This will permit an examination of the specific historical and socio-economic contexts which produced this phenomenon. Marginalidad (usually associated with the Dependency school of thought) analyzes members of the small-scale sector as "relatively underprivileged" in the work force while examining the mechanisms which "give rise to the status of marginality" (Gerry,1979:126). The global relation between the international capitalist markets and the

masses of the population, allow us to connect the life situations of urban workers to the mechanisms in international and state practices, which continue to exploit and impoverish the masses (Gerry,1979:128). The 'unemployed' are strongly affected by the strong French and Lebanese control of many sectors (see Chapter Two). Most of the industrial goods are exported, or enjoyed by the elite, and thus do not meet domestic demands (Gerry,1979:130). The history of colonialism and a continuing neo-colonial rapport with France and the USA, in particular, in the form of investment has resulted in foreign control of peanut oil and other industries.

The words 'informal,' 'quatrieme secteur,' 'non-structured,' "petit commerce," or 'underemployed' often evoke images of marginalization, of exclusion, and of disorganized and aimless masses. However, both Gerry and Zarour argue that these urbanites, comprising one-third of the Senegalese population, though marginalized from much of industrial enterprise, are an organized and dynamic force in the urban market. They contributed 31.1% of national value in 1986 and provided 50% of urban employment in 1976 (Zarour,1990:4;Sow,1986:215). As Zarour(1990:3) explains:

les entreprises du secteur informel sont les entreprises qui ne sont pas légalement enregistrées, qui n'engagent pas du personnel conformément au code du travail, qui ne tiennent pas de comptabilité régulière et qui ne sont pas taxées sur la base de cette comptabilité[the small firms of the informal sector are enterprises which are not legally registered, which do not hire people according to work legislation, and whose employees do not keep regular books and which do not pay taxes on the basis of these accounting methods](my translation).

While his definition is generalized, it does list some of the major features commonly associated with the informal sector though not all of these apply. Below, you will note that women often pay taxes and for trading licenses when their earnings allow it. Furthermore, Zarour's analysis does not assess

the class, ethnic, and birthplace differences, among others, which affect the resources women have and the options they utilize to maximize them.

Sexual Division of Labor and Household Expenses

In the fish production process, men are solely responsible for the fishing and women for the distribution (LeCarme, 1985:562-3; Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:145). Men are involved in long-distance trade while women often but, not always, remain in local or regional markets (Permann, 1989: 17). Each day, most women traders sell fish caught by brothers or husbands and save part of the catch for the family (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:151). A woman's earnings are often divided between husband and wife following norms of complementarity, or the woman may keep more for herself, and give a smaller portion to her husband, or keep only 10% (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:174; LeCarme, 1985:462-3). It varies depending on the couple.

Under Islamic law, the husband is responsible for giving his wife a daily allowance for rice and millet to make ceeb-u-jen, but when he is short on funds, or away on a long fishing voyage, the woman is left with full responsibility for the family (see also Permann, 1989:9-10). In addition, pre-Islamic, African norms have remained strong and one is more apt to find women and men equally responsible for the family upkeep, particularly those engaged in informal trade. External factors have decidedly tipped this balance. With the deepening financial crisis, women have more responsibility for the family and often have no earnings for themselves (Ly, 1988:11).

Though fish are not affected by droughts, the prices oscillate depending on when they are sold after being caught and on the fluctuations

between bountiful and not-so-bountiful seasons (LeCarme,1985:566). Increasingly, the fluctuations in fish resources, due to overfishing by foreign companies, is gradually depleting the fish supplies which are accessible to local fishermen. All of these internal and external factors, as well as the introduction of the new fishing technology noted below, direct alterations in "familial power relations" (Permann,1989:4).

Women Fish Processors and Merchants

Because of its proximity to the market zone, the Lebou and Wolof women of Dakar engage in a considerable amount of commerce or fish trade in trading centers such as Gueule Tapee, where 72% of the fish is commercialized, and even on the beaches (Le Carme,1985:565). They are selling fish, not only from their own markets, but from surrounding regions, such as St. Louis. These Senegalese women and men provide 60% of Dakar's fish consumption needs (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:188). Guet Ndar, St. Louis, which is a long way from the major markets, is a village where many of the women are involved in methods of fish preservation (Permann,1989). However, in both areas, women engage in both fish preservation and marketing. Sandaqa is the largest market (though Guele Tapee is the largest fish market) followed by Kermel, a major re-distribution center to smaller markets, and Tilene, located right in Medina, an ancient African neighborhood (Le Cour Grandmaison,1971:162).

Because of the Lebou women's traditional ownership of the first market stalls, some have maintained access to the market stalls which are favorably located. The Dakar urban population consumes far more than its own workers can supply. In 1963, the demand for fish exceeded 18,000 tons, far more than what the local market could supply. Finally, the proximity of

the debarking sites partially eliminated the need for intermediaries who demand higher prices for the fish. Despite some of these advantages enjoyed by the Dakaroise, there are also some heavy expenses. The lucrative returns disappear rapidly in the high costs of urban living. The daily tax payments, trading licenses, and the costs of the ride to and from market, for the selling site, and for lunch constitute some of these high costs (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:161-2). In addition, the work is tedious. A lack of cheap transportation owned by the women means that they must often walk to market carrying the fish on their heads (Le Carne, 1985:566).

Preservation methods remain critical because of the tropical weather which brings about rapid spoilation of untreated goods (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:151). Here, I will focus on preservation practices used in St. Louis though they are similar throughout many parts of West Africa. This also allows for an analysis of state cooperatives which were implemented in order to provide equipment. Finally, the urban-urban migrations have given rise to a decreasing population in St. Louis, a factor which makes preserving the fish increasingly necessary. The St. Louis markets do not have a steady flow of customers so the fish is often preserved then sent to Dakar and other areas or saved for lean times.

The women work in sin (work areas) (Permann, 1989:9). Transformation methods include braisage (smoking) or fermentation (ibid). The fermentation process constitutes cleaning, salting, and cutting the fish in two. It is then exposed to the sun on racks and turned regularly. In smoking, the fish is cleaned, scaled, spiced, and then placed in a rack over the fire. Afterwards it is exposed to the sun to dry (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:151). Today, metal racks and coal-filled, mobile stoves are used, but the process has remained remarkably constant over time.

Guedj(fermented), katiakh(smoked or fire-dried), and sali(salted and dried) fish are the major preserved fish staples (Le Cour Grandmaison,1971:9;Permman,1989:9-10). These foods taste delicious in ceebu-jeu, the daily platter of rice and fish with various vegetables, that is eaten daily by most Dakar residents, particularly the Wolof. In past societies, preservation methods were used to reduce losses and, later, after the railway system was completed between Dakar and St. Louis in 1886, a way to transport the fish to other markets was provided (Permman,1989:10-11). Women remain dominant in this sector despite the problems of providing a steady supply of fish and the competition with mareyeurs (often male wholesale fish sellers) who act as intermediaries between the fishermen and the women. In former times, women had easy access to the beaches and formed groups to buy the catch and then resell it to wholesale merchants; increasingly, however, the wholesale merchants are getting hold of the fish first (LeCarme,1985: 563;Sow, 1986:207).

Changing dynamics in the sex division of labor are directly related to the motorization and to innovations introduced first through colonial and later state channels. Colonial government Fishermen's and Fisherwomen's Cooperatives were established in the 1940's to help with the purchase of mechanized materials and to organize the fishworkers into more controllable groups. Furthermore, it was hoped that these measures would serve to ameliorate the working conditions so as to allow for an expansion of production (Permman,1989:21,12). Later, the Centre d'Assistance pour la Motorisation des Pirogues (CAMP) was introduced to increase the power of the co-ops that administered the distribution of tools for fishermen (ibid:12-13;Ndiaye,1990:5). In 1962, after independence, fish co-ops came under the auspices of the Senegalese state through CRAD (Centres Régionaux pour la

Distribution Agricole). In addition, the government organised other programs of aid through DOPM (Direction Océanographique pour la Pêche Maritime) and the BNDS (Bank of Senegal). The former was installed to direct modernization programs while the latter gave loans to co-ops; DOPM, operating primarily in Dakar, met with rapid failure. In 1966, the government passed a law to stop taxation on all motors to co-op members who paid their dues (Permann, 1989:12-13). This was an important step taken in an attempt to reverse the trend of indebtedness for expensive equipment generated by French policies. The period from the 1950s to the 1960s was the St. Louis boom years: 39.4% of the country's fish production was commercialized there, as opposed to 11.7% in the Saloum region and 3.6% in the Dakar(CapVert) region (Permann, 1989:17). For many women, these measures allowed them to be solely engaged in food processing (Permann, 1989: 17). With a loan from Denmark, a huge refrigeration warehouse (Sofrinord) was built in the mid to late 1970's, but by early 1984 Sofrinord was out of business (ibid:19).

Today, these co-operatives and Sofrinord are no longer functioning in St. Louis. Expensive canoes, motors, gasoline for fishermen; and, ice and implements for women's fish preservation work are no longer available, or are available at prices unaffordable to the masses. Access to any form of credit has become a major problem created by the shift from subsistence production to monetary relations as more expensive equipment was purchased through a spiralling and complex credit system (Permann, 1989:3-4). A community that went from being consumption-based to commercial-based, has been left increasingly "dependent on a monetary system and market whims" (ibid:20-1). Tracing the links from self-reliant trading systems between signares and other women, to dependency on state provisions with

mono-production, illuminates the crucial factors which have directed the marginalization of women traders.

Men were the first and primary beneficiaries of these plans as outboard motors, larger fishing nets, and the like were the types of equipment introduced to help them catch more fish. Only later were women's co-ops formed and, from the outset, their work was de-emphasized by the state. CAPAS(Centre d'Assistance a la Pêche Artisanale Sénégalaise) is a case in point. It is a project financed with Canadian aid, and, as Le Carne (1985:570) notes, its net result is that women are treated like "intervénants extérieurs dans le chema de commercial-isation"[exterieur interveners in commercialization](my translation). It was assumed that with a minimum of tools such as salt, hay, and knives distributed for fish preservation and insufficient credit to expand their market trade, women would continue their work. But where were the freezers, ice, transportation vans specifically for market trade, and sanitized mini-warehouses for food processing? Of course their trade continues, but women remained far more 'invisible' than men, a phenomenon clearly seen in colonial and later, in state policies.

The increasing dependence on the monetary system and on distributed work materials, combined with the failure of state-run cooperatives, has been exacerbated by competition from industrial and semi-industrial fishermen, who take fish from shallower waters reserved for local fishermen. The Lebou and Guet-Ndar fishermen must then go to deeper waters, which becomes increasingly difficult with inadequate equipment, with longer absences away from home, and with the inability to meet familial responsibilities. Many of them have been forced to work for the industrial vessels which are notorious for failing to fulfill their contracts

(Permann,1989:23-4).

With the onset of this crisis, the women's burden of household responsibilities is exacerbated by the need to provide for living expenses as well. As Permann (1989:27) says: "with or without the financial help of her husband or son, the woman is the one who must take action when the family does not have enough money." Female-headed households are becoming more and more common in both rural and urban areas as women face greater familial responsibilities and, of necessity, become the household heads with which the state must negotiate. In desperation, many women have also gone to join the queues outside factory doors in search of work. But the work is temporary and they are not given the proper health and sanitary protection.

Women's Self-Reliant Strategies

In the face of their decreased access to credit and decision-making arenas to ensure economic independence and their families well-being, women have evolved "intact coping mechanisms" and remain a "strong dynamic force" (Mwagiru, 1987:71). Senegalese women, stratified by class, ethnic, and geographical boundaries, have been an integral part of women's struggle to survive, to be recognized and valued. In urban areas, they face particularly difficult circumstances. Away from their usufruct plots, they lose any access to land. Collective female strategies and familial connections are central to women's livelihoods, despite added constraints.

A critical element of the African market and one that women tend to maximize, is the market socialization. I am referring to a complex system of socio-economic rapports which emphasize the individual's need to earn the maximum, but is balanced by the purely social aspect of the circulation of

goods given to friends and family to maintain solidarity and community spirit (Sow, 1986:203). Islam is often invoked for good luck; clients demand the price and often get it. The pre-eminence of the social over the economic is central to the teranga (tradition) of collectivity, of ndawal (giving) and receiving. These practices override the essentially individualistic nature of relations of exchange in capitalist societies (see LeCarme, 1985:565,567-8). When one enters the market lined with vendors calling out the prices and showing out the wares, it is wisest to know ahead of time the correct price, as shrewd bargaining is a critical element of the experience. I often felt like I was going for a series of social visits, rather than to purchase necessary items. Names would be exchanged among greetings and questions about the family's well-being. Often, before I turned reluctantly towards home, another fish, mango, pineapple, or tomatoes would be placed on top with a smile that said, 'Come back next time.' Indeed, there was a marked difference between the warm and service-oriented market activities and the cold, rude service I received in the grocery stores (frequently French-owned). This difference relates directly to the ways in which market relationships have been altered to suit the demands of foreign-owned enterprise. In this relationship based upon economic exploitation, the fruits of a person's own labor is exchanged for money, much of which is siphoned off for the metropole consumer.

This emphasis on the social, rather than the economic aspect, is evidenced with the women's groups that gather together for trips to and from the market, and for other activities to cut down the costs of individual trade. The women's groups are not based on lineage, but on socio-economic affiliation, on available capital, and on whether or not the women are daily or occasional traders (LeCarme, 1985:564-5). Women's strong ties to their

matrilineal lineage is a source of support and power allowing them to maintain degrees of economic independence. An example of this would be the market stall, which is handed down from mother to daughter, or to a younger female relative, so that it never leaves the family (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:120,173).

Tontines--credit and savings associations--are another strategy utilized by women. As Woodman(1988:34) notes, some of these associations are a continuation of traditional working parties, while others have been formed during recent decades. I will examine the tontines in Chapter Five. Women's self-help strategies are evident all over Africa. For example, in Kenya, women have organized in creative ways which are both similar to and different from women in Senegal. In addition, a more regulated form of organization, namely the fish cooperatives, will be discussed.

Media campaigns, through the publication of Fippu and other journals, are run by middle-class women who seek to change patriarchal structures and mindsets. Fippu is published by Yewuu Yewii, a group of feminists directed by Senegalese women who formed their association in January of 1984. Savane, (1989:5) points out that it is a movement formed: "pour provoquer une prise de conscience sur la necessite de lutter pour faire changer des mentalites...de faire reculer les frontieres de l'ignorance...car la lutte des femmes est une lutte sociale et culturelle" [to provoke an awakening conscience over the necessity to struggle to bring about changed consciousness...to roll back frontiers of ignorance concerning women's status...because women's fight is a social and cultural one](my translation)(see Chapter One).

Noting the major transformations within African societies, Marie Angeliqe Savane, Yewuu Yewii president, asserts that "la creativite

individuelle," [individual creativity](my translation) must be formed by men and women within a society. In so doing, freedoms of expression are encouraged which would meet future challenges in rapidly changing African societies (Savane,1989:6). Given the focus of my thesis on women's role in economic spheres, the fact that some middle-class Senegalese women have chosen to focus on socio-cultural liberation raises an important question. To what degree is socio-cultural liberation an intrinsic part of the struggle for economic autonomy? One issue addressed by middle-class women concerns legal reforms such as La Code de la Famille in Senegal. How would legal reforms empower the masses of women in peanut and fish production?

Animation Feminine or Direction de la Condition Feminine has been another tool through which women, within a socialist democratic state, have addressed women's needs. Clearly, class issues are also essential in these plans, for it is most often women with a high degree of education as well as government ties (often familial), who are placed as a liaison between the state and the masses of women. Class background shapes a person's life experience and life objectives. Thus, to the degree that women within state bureaucratic structures are co-opted by the state, peasant women's autonomy is constrained, not enhanced, through negotiations with state personnel. As Roberson mentions, "A few women, aided by powerful male governmental connections [sometimes make] things extremely difficult for most fish traders" (1984:38). Self-help strategies can only be termed effective to the degree that they are brought under the control of and benefit the majority of women, and not just the elite. This would enable one to highlight ways in which women themselves utilize state resources and negotiate for decision-making power.

CHAPTER FIVE

*Organizing for Change: Strategies of Self Determination*Actors and Strategists

In previous chapters I have emphasized how external constraints, generated by a state shaped by colonial and neo-colonial forces, have negatively impacted women's autonomy and her ability to exercise power at home and in political fora. In spite of these constraints, women are neither "helpless pawns," nor mere "appendages" in the economic development process (Mwagiru, 1987:75; Emecheta, 1979). I have noted West African women's acts of resistance through the 1929 Women's War, the Dakar-Niger railway strike, peanut farmers' withdrawal from the cashcropping sector, and women's networks as examples of women's active roles in changing societal milieus.

Women are "key agents in development," though their work may remain "invisible" due to women's and men's socialization, to state planner's calculations, or to GNP statistics (Underwood, 1988:11). Male power based on "artificial notions of masculinity" has directed specific social processes in which women are delegated a subordinate position vis a vis men and fulfill roles which maintain this subordination (Enloe, 1989:17; Young, 1988:18). Yet, "women have always been and still are fully involved in productive labor that forms the basis of the national economies...the real problem is that their contribution is frequently not recognized, under-numerated, and not valued..." notes Mwagiru (1987:77; Sen and Grown, 1987:15-16). Thus, it is essential that women are understood, not only as individuals facing constraints, but as actors, within a social milieu of kin networks of

husbands, children, and other relatives. As such, women determine their own course of action so as to ensure their survival and that of their families.

A closer examination of tontines and other self-help organizations, fish cooperatives, middle-class women's associations, and state-controlled branches of women's ministries, illustrates the leverage that women have over their own lives and thus the respect, autonomy, and power that they can attain within complex social networks. In Chapter One, I discussed my open-ended definitions of power; here we will use the ways in which Steady and Permann have defined power.

Women's Traditional Organizing Strategies

In past Wolof and other African societies, women organized into seasonal working parties and age-set groups such as nadant, santaane, and ngont to perform reciprocal aid-functions through work on millet, cotton, or peanut fields (Venema, 1978:147). Other self-help methods included the dimboli, "helping a person," and tankhoudje, "visiting a parent." Both offered the critical means for increasing women's food supply through harvesting other fields (usually those of the household head) for monetary or food returns. In the latter case women would go to a richer relative to help with groundnut shelling and receive some of the goods in return (Venema, 1978:147-152).

Social custom ensured the respect for these women's power mechanisms. Not only women but often poor men, actively participated in these organized ventures. Sex and class issues are important here. Women, overburdened with household labor were often behind with their agricultural and fish preservation work and thus needed to seek revenues elsewhere. In addition, her usufruct plot ensured that she received the smallest returns as

the poorest farmers, thus work on the household head plots provided more income. In the market sector, signare long-distance trading activities and the Lebou women's market selling activities, were central in socio-economic structures.

Strategies in Economic Spheres: Tontines/Self-Help Groups

Rotating credit and/or savings associations known as tontines or (naths), refer to both traditional and modern cooperative measures through women's autonomous organizing strategies (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:124-5). Tontines operate according to an organizational principle in which each person donates a daily or weekly sum. At the end of a pre-agreed time period one or several members receive the sum. This process is then rotated to benefit all the members in turn (Mottin-Sylla, 1987:1-2,7; see also Nzemen, 1988). Their purpose is to meet personal and/or familial needs in societies where earnings are too small to put in a bank, and where saving funds is difficult because of constant demands from and obligations to needy relatives. Tontines allow women practicing similar trades with similar degrees of success to establish social networks while accumulating capital (Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:124-5; Lewis, 1976:135; Emecheta, 1979:52; LeCarme, 1985:568-9; Mottin-Sylla, 1987:2-5). "Ces formes de crédit mutuel rotatif permettent l'épargne au jour le jour, a l'aide de sommes minimales," [these forms of mutual rotating credit permit day to day savings of minimal amounts] notes LeCarme (1985:568-9). The balance between familial and personal needs, as well as economic and social interests, are negotiated within the tontine framework. Economic interests served the needs for specific purchases which women could not have attained through other means.

Women themselves agreed on the terms of the organization: who would collect the funds (often the oldest member); how often the drawing was to take place; and whether the money was to be distributed to each member in turn or to several at a time. Funds were often used to help women start their own market trade businesses as the case of Nnu Ego who is sent from a rural village to Lagos, Nigeria suggests. Buchi Emecheta, in Joys of Motherhood (1979:52), notes that:

The other women taught her (Nnu Ego) how to start her own business so that she would not have only one outfit to wear. They let her borrow five shillings from the women's fund and advised her to buy tins of cigarettes and packets of matches

so that she could make a small profit between buying and selling. Nnu Ego's transition into urban life becomes far more bearable with women's help. Eventually, she earns enough to support her family and to send her children to school, despite her husband's disapproval of Nnu Ego's work.

Women's self help groups in Kenya, known as haramblee or "let's unite," are based on the "successful mobilisation of local communities" (Moore, 1988:155). These state-encouraged, self-development initiatives fulfill economic directives and are exemplary of the Kenyan national policy of Self-Reliance (see Lewis, 1984). But, at this local level women often face constraints from the agendas of both village and state leaders (see below pp.88-9).

Organizing Around Societal Demands and Needs

Of equal importance to the economic spheres are the social ramifications which directly affect women's ability to attain economic autonomy. Women's social groups, called mbaxal in Wolof, are founded on the same principal as tontines. Here, however, all of the money goes to one

woman who spends it on food, drinks, and the like for the benefit of all. Often aid is reciprocal or consists of a privileged relation between two or more persons--ndey dikke (Mottin-Sylla,1987:8-10). As Mottin-Sylla (1987:4-5) notes, "ce n'est pas pour de l'argent, mais pour les relations qu'on en fait partie"[it is not for money, but for relationships that they are part of the group](my translation). The communal relationships refer not only to social cohesion, equality, and support, but, also to ceremonial groupings to meet the costs of baptisms, marriages, and funerals which are largely women's responsibility (see for example Le Cour Grandmaison, 1971:125;LeCarne;1985:568-9;Underwood, 1988:24-6). In many Wolof families, men pay the bride price in theory while, in actuality, it is the groom's mother who pays most or all of it. This means that older women's power is enhanced through economic autonomy, for she can heavily influence her son's choice of spouse. In so doing, she can thus determine with whom she will interact and look to for support as she advances in age (Underwood,1988:24-6).

Through their management of these activities women not only strengthen their networks, but also maintain respect vis à vis their families and society as they fulfill their societal duties. Traditions and cultural norms are maintained and reinforced. While in Senegal, I was invited to Thies to participate in a women's daa'ira, or Islamic grouping, in which women organize a religious singing function. These singing functions at which only men sing, are ways through which women draw together to re-affirm social, religious, and political networks and thereby preserve societal norms. In addition, money is given to the singers and important religious leaders. On this occasion men, women, and children of all ages from the Tijane religious brotherhood gather and sit in sex-segregated arrangements to listen to

religious chants. As midnight approaches, the men start to chant Islamic verses, while the women, dressed in white, sit together continuously orchestrating the event by their very presence and specific agenda, namely their fund-donating activities and, later, feast preparations. The next day, we women all took off to Tiaoune, the Tijane brotherhood capital in Senegal, where the women re-affirmed religious, social, and political allegiance to the religious order.

To the degree that women successfully negotiate social ties within the community and fulfill their obligations to maintain social stability and cohesion, their power in economic spheres is increasingly assured. Thus, participation in both economic and social tontines, and other self-help groups, is essential in terms of women's ability to enjoy power. I return to a closer analysis of the survival of these associations below.

Cooperatives are "a more formal organizational structure defined by the co-operative laws of the country," (Meynell, 1986:78). Though these groupings vary according to degrees of formality, they are most often "set up to perform a function or to overcome a problem" that can't be done individually (ibid). Thus fishermen's fish-catching enterprises are best left to individual initiatives while land-based activities of marketing and credit--where women predominate to varying degrees--are where cooperatives can be successfully formed (ibid). Credit becomes particularly crucial in light of the middlemen's prices (mentioned above), and in light of women's lack of collateral, which has the effect of cutting them off from credit sources. Cooperatives are organizations often directed by state policies and, in Senegal, these apply to both peanut and fish production. Here we will be primarily concerned with fisherwomen's work in terms of fish production and fish marketing, particularly, the income generation which sustains these

activities. Cooperatives, in contrast to trade unions, do not have a high political role but focus, instead, on the production process.

In Chapter Four, I noted how the supply of services (boats, engines etc.), as well as resource management which addresses overfishing, pollution and so forth, have often catered to fishermen's (as opposed to both fishwomen's and fishermen's) needs. Provisions of ice, and other necessities for processing and marketing are beginning to receive more attention due, in part, to the louder demands by women themselves, and aid from re-directed state policies and international development organizations. I had also discussed the ways in which the state had re-directed its policy to address the needs of village women through providing access to SODEVA's services and other extension services. In particular, the Women's Extension Unit, a state agency has been coordinating the women's component of the project in the peanut basin. Questions must be raised about long-term implications.

How do women ensure that their needs are met within the complex networks of inter-agency buckpassing, the ambiguity of organizational jurisdiction, and women-only projects? "The realities of development assistance in the face of inevitable competition of scarce resources means that the promotion of women's interests is far from guaranteed" (Lewis, 1984:185). In this context, the centrality of village women in the project's implementation as well as the efforts of women's advocates within the Women's Extension Unit are both mechanisms which facilitate women's ability to ensure their own and familial livelihoods. Finally, the degree to which projects provide benefits and are applicable to the entire communities needs (not just those of the women) has ramifications for the long-term survival of women's strategies (Lewis, 1984).

Women's Access to and Shaping of Domains of Power; Balancing Societal and Personal Needs

In both social and economic spheres, women's ability to shape power structures is increased as she initiates actions which ensure her economic autonomy and which allow her to direct communal and familial life towards improved living conditions. In economic spheres, "economic complementarity and mutual help engenders a certain equality" between men and women (Underwood, 1988:35-7). Most often, women's authority and influence increases with age. However, the types of groups and associations she invests in, and how she uses her money, are her decisions but are contingent on her husband's approval in many cases (Moore, 1988:160). In social spheres, authority is channeled through hierarchical relationships; men are most often recognized as household and state heads. Thus women's power is often contingent not only upon her abilities to negotiate with her husband. It is also dependent on her ability to negotiate with other local and state officials on behalf of women's groups and in terms of the balance between household and their personal needs. Moreover, such negotiation affects the productivity of economic investments to improve life conditions (Moore, 1988: 156, 160-1).

Respect for a woman's social status is an important pre-condition to her economic autonomy. Perhaps women's most important social obligation is that of bearing and raising children. The number of children, particularly sons, to whom they give birth is critical (Thomson, 1981: 66; Savane, 1975:374; Emecheta, 1979). Emecheta (1979:136-7, 186) emphasizes the burden of social pressures and the conflicting survival crisis faced by many African women by noting Nnu Ego's agonized statement.

It was not fair...the way men used a woman's sense of responsibility (to her children) to actually enslave her. God when will you create a woman who will be fulfilled in herself, a

full human being, not anybody's appendage ...Yes, I have many children, but what do I have to feed them...?

As she fulfills her social duties, a woman's husband is more likely to consent to her participation in women's groups, as well as to her free use of earned income. In the Wolof-Lebou village (with a few Peuhls) of Niaga Wolof, just outside of Dakar, women garden, sell parsley and engage in salt collection, to meet food and clothing needs, and to fulfill social obligations (Underwood, 1988:2-3,20-2). Their ability to travel to the distant market of Thiaroye to sell their goods is contingent on their successful negotiations with their husbands (see Underwood, 1988). State officials are more likely to recognize women's groups which are working towards the betterment of the community through strategies that are approved by predominant social ideologies, than those which are not seen as consonant with women as mothers and care-givers.

In Niaga Wolof, Underwood notes how a women's association, a "groupement féminin" started in October 1987, initiated construction of a village maternity unit, which also serves as a health center with a pharmaceutical unit. Women followed specific strategies of organizing autonomously. They used their own saved funds, and then sought outside sponsors who respected their original initiatives. Finally, male village elders followed suit and donated money from the village fund (Underwood, 1988:33). We note that women acted on an issue--health--considered by society to be a 'woman's issue.' Secondly, they were able to persevere through organizing, strong financial management, and good leadership and thus maintain group cohesiveness while influencing community life.

Women in Niaga Wolof demonstrate a remarkable adaptability to the situation at hand. As land was bought up by rich middlemen, women's usufruct plots were taken over by their husbands. Thus women were forced

into using other strategies, such as gardening on even smaller plots, or resorting solely to market trade (Underwood,1988:19-23). Adaptability also applies to the highly regulated fishing or agricultural cooperatives. Both economic concerns in terms of proximity of access to markets, a sound financial base, and exploitation by other fishermen(mentioned in Chapter 3) as well as social issues such as incentives and commitment are important (Meynell,1986:79). Other factors, such as well trained management, government support, and a high degree of autonomy, ensure that the co-op stays under the control of its members and serves their needs (*ibid*:80).

Tontines, self-help groups, and women's groupings don't just happen; women must sacrifice their earnings and personalized agendas for the betterment of all. In Nnu Ego's case, which exemplifies many others, familial needs represent the highest priority in terms of both food and, other expenses, such as schooling for sons (Emecheta,1979:90,109,216). In addition, strategic planning and specific objectives are necessary. Strict social equality (nawle) in terms of motivations and gains, confidence in oneself and others, often reinforced by strong religious and geographical ties are critical to the success of women's tontines (Mottin-Sylla,1987:16-17;Lewis,1976: 156).

Aggressive and competing Dioula market women in Abidjan's Treichville market have had to form different types of cooperative alliances which allow for a great deal of independence. Rotating credit associations have met with failure because of social tensions which cause the group to break up before the rotating cycle is completed (Lewis, 1976:138-41). Even collective buying efforts have failed due to women's refusal to repay the cooperative. The high degree of competition and class hierarchies create the need for different forms of collaboration as one ascends the socio-economic

ladder. The socio-economic status of women often translates into differing access to economic and political resources. However, moni social associations, based on strong cultural and religious (Islamic) unity, is an organization where women of similar ethnicity, but varying socio-economic backgrounds, can come together (ibid:151-5). Many Ivorian Dioula women have resorted to an "ambulatory banker" system, despite the risk of losing funds to unknown collectors and the cost of monthly fees (ibid:141-2). Perhaps, a booming "marketplace [is] not conducive to associational innovation due to interest conflicts, but rather enhances individualism" Lewis suggests (ibid:156).

"Booming" needs to be contextualized within the prevailing sexual division of labor dominated by capitalistic modes of production which encourage consumerism and profit-motivated tendencies. Contrary to Lewis' conclusion, I suggest that Dioula women's individualist tendencies have a counterpoint within communal social activities. Secondly, Lewis' research does not indicate ways in which women with the same economic background are able to organize, nor does it address specific ways wherein, despite the competition, women have formed informal alliances in economic spheres. The above example highlights the different natures of West African market women. More importantly, it suggests that women in varying circumstances face the challenge of finding new and creative ways of bonding in rapidly changing societies.

Women in Niaga Wolof demonstrate a remarkable adaptability to the situation at hand. As land was bought up by rich middlemen, women's usufruct plots were taken over by their husbands. Thus women were forced into using other strategies, such as gardening on even smaller plots, or resorting solely to market trade (Underwood, 1988:19-23). Adaptability is

needed to adequately address concerns in the highly regulated fishing or agricultural cooperatives (see above, pp.89-90).

As with Senegalese women, Gambian women have faced constraints in terms of lack of capital, poor transport systems for accessing markets, high competition for access to resources, and the need for mechanized fish processing tools (noted in Chapter Four). Women there have formed a self-help groups called faamakoikafo in order to organize themselves to effectively address these needs (Jobe and Godfrey, 1986:12,14,10). Similar to the Gambian women, Senegalese women have formed self-help groups and some receive financial and training support from external sources. *Projet de Pêche Artisanale Maritime de Ziguinchor (PAMEZ)* is financed by *Comité Catholique contre la Faim et pour le Développement (CCFD)*, a French Non-Governmental Organization (NGO). CCFD supports women's efforts to diversify production, in training, fish-processing and provides financial support through credit for equipment (Le Hyaric, 1986:4).

Equipment such as Chorkor ovens for the fish-drying and smoking process, a donkey-drawn cart, and training through literacy classes are all part of the Senegalese women's agenda (Le Hyaric, 1986:6). However, important concerns arise around the long-term feasibility of the Chorkor ovens and women's time for literacy classes. To the degree that the ovens are made from local materials, their long term viability is better assured and women's economic autonomy is increased. Literacy classes can only be effective to the degree that women's household and market burdens are reduced so that they have the time to learn. In addition, as long as the language of instruction is applicable to serving women's needs--not external directives--women will benefit. Senegalese women in the Casamance visit the Gambian women of Gunjur, and thus learn smoking methods, while the

Gambian women learn other helpful suggestions from those in the Casamance (Jobe and Godfrey, 1986:14). This mutual aid and reciprocal support is essential as women broaden their networks and strengthen their Self-Reliant strategies. It is not only poor women who use these mutual aid strategies; middle-class women often organize along similar lines.

Women who have prominent social and/or political roles and/or form the middle class are in a position to further the development of women's emancipation movement on national and international levels. In Ghana, the Women's Federation was formed in 1953 and comprised over 40 affiliated groups (Little, 1972:280). A sister-group called FAFS (Fédération d'Association des Femmes Sénégalaises) can be found in Senegal. Forty women's groups belong to this federation. The women do not focus on the question of women's status, but rather, preserve their economic privilege, and try to improve the legal policies in Senegalese society. Their attitude towards the masses of Senegalese women is one of 'charity on a voluntary basis' (Savane, 1984:597).

A major danger for these associations is their co-option into state bureaucratic structures. To the degree that this is the case, their very existence and their agenda's directives survive at the "discretion of the ruling party" (Moore, 1988:148). Given these circumstances, how can the needs of the masses of women, through reciprocal aid networks mentioned above, be addressed? How can women's ability to shape and direct domains of power be facilitated? The National Council of Ghanaese Women was incorporated into Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (Little, 1972:280). FAF's members have also been co-opted into government structures through members of families and husbands, who fill high positions in public institutions and expect their wives to fulfill specific social roles. If middle-

class women are content to merely maintain their socio-economic status and position and have no serious commitment to their less privileged Senegalese sisters, little or no forward progress will be made to ameliorate the livelihoods of all Senegalese women. Yet, governmental and other contacts in high places, can and have been beneficial to women depending on the ways that women and their supporters take the initiative to utilize state resources.

There are many instances where women from different class and ethnic backgrounds bond together around common goals and unique alliances. In these networks women initiate a dialogue among themselves which forms the basis for exchange networks of goods, training, and other needs. Women, in elite social clubs, attain social prestige through help gestures to market women by orchestrating literacy classes and through teaching women other skills common to the elite classes. In return, the market women teach women in higher socio-economic classes various African skills such as basketry, songs, and dances. An example of one such group is the Keta women's Institute in Ghana (Little, 1972:278). Women's social position in both classes is enhanced. The leverage they may exercise in both economic and socio-political spheres is increased with the creation of larger and broader organizational networks. Powerful market associations such as the Nanemei Akpee or "society of friends", have been successful through contacts with influential patrons who help promote savings and loans for market women (*ibid*:281). Senegalese women, such as Soukane Ndiaye Ba, who have the talent, training, and the resources, have started a credit business (Femmes, Développement et Entreprise en Afrique[F.D.E.A.]) with the help of such connections, and are working to help market-women all over West Africa.

Some upper class women's groups such as Yewuu Yewii, opt for other strategies. Above, I noted the group's focus on eradicating socio-cultural oppression by addressing prevailing ideologies, laws, and patriarchal mindsets. This vision addresses fundamental social norms and values which must be re-constructed in order to raise societal consciousness. In so doing, demands for equitable development measures and actions initiated by both men and women could be recognized and adhered to by all concerned. Yewuu Yewii members highlight the fact that women's work is not recognized and valued, despite the important role they play in societal survival. The women's campaign provides a channel for public opinion to be informed on a regular basis, and serves to lessen fears of the consequences of radical change. It provides a forum where some women's concerns are clearly defined so that "common cause can be made" and action taken which would affect society as a whole. Men have a means of being incorporated into the support networks of women's movements. Most importantly, consciousness-raising, on an individual male and female level, as well as social awareness, on a societal level, sets in motion the first stages of critical thinking towards the goal of women's emancipation (Young, 1988:10-12,14).

The Senegalese Family (Code de la Famille) was one measure initiated by President Senghor during the 1972-3 year in order to reconcile societal and islamic laws with modern laws (Aw, 1988:7; Fippu, 1989:9). The Senegalese Family Code is one example of the commitment, on the part of Socialist Democratic state planners, to address basic socio-economic needs.

The 1989 issue of Fippu thoroughly analyzes how the Family Code constrains and facilitates women's social status as a way of critiquing patriarchal structures and of problematizing women's ability to affect power.

Though the Senegalese Constitution(Fippu,1989:11):

assure l'égalité devant la loi de tous les citoyens sans distinction de sexe...dans le Code, on retrouve...le mari [comme]...chef de famille, l'autorité sur les enfants est appelé autorité paternelle, la succession musulmane est en faveur de l'homme[assures equality before the law of all citizens without sex distinctions...in the code...one finds the husband as family head, authority over children is paternal, and Islamic succession favors men](my translation).

Despite these constraining factors, women's position in social and economic spheres has been partially improved through legal reforms. Consent of both spouses is now mandatory before marriage. The bride price has been regulated thus putting an end to the escalating prices (as if women were mere objects to be sold). A new marriage-minimum age of 16 years is mandatory. These measures acknowledge and affirm the need for negotiations between men and women concerning the conditions of marriage. In a society where Islamic law has become important, and is used to justify men's control over women, these measure are critical. A wife may maintain her separate profession and, as Mariama Ba notes in her novel, So Long a Letter, widows are no longer obligated to marry a former husband's brother (Fippu,1989:9;Ba, 1981). Ba's book illustrates the ways that fundamentalist and traditionalist ideologies often work to constrain women's ability to influence and shape their livelihoods and the livelihoods of others.

But, a new law doesn't always mean changed consciousness. Do women--in the final analysis--benefit from the laws? If educated women, with high socio-economic status, fear for their positions when they demand the rights which these laws assure them, what of the masses of women? (Fippu,1989:9).

C'est à ces femmes qu'il faudrait d'abord redonner confiance, en leur faisant comprendre que leur sort n'a été tracé ni par Dieu ne par la nature, mais par les hommes. Le premier travail...est un travail idéologique, au niveau des mentalités et des

croyances...pas seulement..au niveau des femmes, mais les hommes et de la société tout entière"[It is first to these women(the masses) that we must give confidence by making them understand that their condition is not due to God nor to nature but to men. The first task is ideological, in terms of one's consciousness and beliefs, not only those of women, but men and all of society](my translation).

If employers and state officials ensure equal job access to both men and women, this may indicate changed consciousness. Education for both men and women are a means of raising societal consciousness about the potential ramifications of such laws. Conscious societal members are in a position to hold state officials accountable for their actions. Conferences, such as the one I attended at the Law Faculty last May(1990), are organized by Yewuu Yewii. They provide public forums for these issues to be discussed.

In 1978, the state's branch for women, Direction de la Condition Féminine (DCF) du Ministère du Développement Social, was created and placed under the responsibility of one woman, Maimouna Kane, Secretariat d'Etat à la Condition Féminine (Akadire,1983:13;Thomson, 1981:70). It, Akadiri (1983:13) explains, understood the following task: "d'oeuvrer pour la promotion et la participation de la femme au développement économique, social, et culturel"[promote the participation of women in economic, social, and cultural development](my translation)(Thomson,1981:71). The ministry is comprised of four divisions, one of which is the division of female work. This branch addresses and attempts to abolish discriminatory laws against women within the labor force (*ibid*:13). Even before 1978, women had some access to public institutions through the creation of Promotion Féminine in 1959, a part of Animation Féminine, under the auspices of Direction de l'Animation Rural et de l'Expansion(DARE), (see Chapter Two.) In 1974, Promotion Féminine had its own division and was, later changed in 1978

(ibid) into Direction de La Condition Féminine.

Condition Féminine pursued a number of strategies to achieve women's goals. As a lobbying group, women and their supporters can pressure the state to enforce or abolish certain legislative measures, to undertake specific projects, and can play a role in publicizing women's material condition and social position, as well as formulating plans to affect power. Furthermore, the office is in a unique position to unify Senegalese women and to "encourage them to assume new roles," while providing the materials necessary for such a change (Thomson,1981:71). Finally, female technical and extension agents, instructors and teachers [monitrices and maîtresses] are an important part of the grassroots development strategies directed by the state through Condition Féminine. The monitrice program was "created to assist women in agricultural production, processing, and preparation, and provide social welfare services," (Thomson,1981:71,58,63). As female state extension workers, these women play crucial roles in terms of women's education, coordinating and supervising child day care centers, health and nutrition programs, and medical care services (Thomson,1981:59-66).

The monitrices are the state arms of decent-ralization. These grassroots development initiatives were implemented through the 1972 administrative reform to "better foster the development of...a specific community...(allowing for a)...reasonable degree of autonomy...(operating)...outside the cumbersome governmental financial and procurement procedures," (Thomson,1981:50-1). Underwood notes ensuing strategies on the part of villagers, grouped into rural communities. In Niaga Wolof, a woman's organization initiated their own project, the health center, as noted above (Thomson, 1981:52). The Senegalese Groundnut Basin

Project is one area where women state agent's work is crucial (see Chapter Four).

Until 1975, aid politics for women addressed the 'family economy,' by focusing on issues such as health, nutrition, household arts and the like. After 1975 we note a shift. Ly, (1988:67) explains that the new objective of aid politics for women was as follows: "donner aux femmes les moyens d'asseoir leur indépendance économique et d'élever leur niveau de vie" [to give to women the means to achieve their economic independence and to improve their life conditions](my translation). Women's organizations and associations have been increasingly recognized as critical to developing a spirit of solidarity among women and to providing possibilities for varying needs within a rapidly changing society (Ly,1988:67). Does this recognition mean that women are still marginalized, in certain ways, from public policy arenas? As I noted above, women's growing visibility can act as a 'double edged sword.' Yet, women's negotiating leverage and use of state resources is a necessary pre-condition in terms of women's ability to maintain economic autonomy and to broaden the scope of their activities, whereby they might change socio-economic contexts.

Women have taken it upon themselves to ameliorate their socio-economic conditions, while ensuring independence and survival, by using a variety of organizational strategies in urban, rural, and state arenas. But, in order for these strategies to be sustained, broadened, and fully understood, they need to be linked to the overall processes of social and economic development. How can women as actors be central to and leaders in the development process? Women are utilizing their power and economic independence through organizing. What kinds of social, political, and economic programs do women offer--not for women alone, but "for society

from women's perspectives"--as an alternative vision for economic development which ensures the well-being of the Senegalese peoples? By expanding on the organizational structures mentioned above, we can briefly analyze the economic, political, and institutional frameworks within which women operate, and thus some of their potential options and avenues as leaders, in not only familial, but also national and international arenas.

CHAPTER SIX

*Conclusion: Women's Alternative Visions for Development*Summarizing and Posing Questions

Women are engaged in strategizing to gain access to limited resources, to impact on decision-making procedures, and to maintain their standing with familial structures. They do so secure in the knowledge of their central location within certain societal structures. Women comprise a majority of farm labor, particularly in the domain of subsistence, in African countries. According to the statistics in Mugo's scholarship, "Working class and peasant women...constitute at least 80% of the female population in most African countries" (1988:21). Women predominate in the domestic sphere, in the self-employment and informal marketing sectors, particularly with respect to market trade, and especially as regards fish processing and commercializing in West African communities. As such, they constitute a major segment of the labor force and a potentially powerful faction in shaping decisions and in attaining access to the resources they need. Thus, women's alternative visions for successful development in Senegal in particular, and, by extension, Africa are essential to a more equitable society and to a stable economy. The degree to which women's strategies can encompass and enhance survival is dependent on their visions, and on their capacity to effectively address community, national, and continental needs.

Within an analytical and ideological framework based on Afro-centric feminist scholarship, and with a methodology incorporating non-African scholarship, I have tried to highlight the complex web of issues surrounding women's position and changing conditions of life. I have emphasized the

importance of understanding the sexual division of labor in terms of the nature of pre-socialist, self-reliant African societies. This social construct frames my analysis of Senegalese state policies. I have also argued that patriarchal relations (with particular reference to gender), colonialism, and neo-colonialism (with reference to class and race) are critical frames of reference for my analysis of the sex division of labor at the local level.

My case studies focus on the transformations in Senegalese (Wolof and Lebou) women's work with the peanut crop and in the informal sector fish commercialization process. Both of these foods are critical resources to familial and state survival. Thus the degree to which women's work is facilitated, or constrained by local and state policies allows us to analyze her role as a mother, child-bearer and raiser, houseworker, farmer, and commercant in familial, regional, and state structures. This task requires that attention be given to women's access to resources, their ability to affect power, and strategies utilized to achieve these ends.

The scholars I have studied, indicate a variety of trends in the lives of Senegalese women. Sudarkasa and Steady assess the self-reliant nature of pre-socialist African societies. By re-claiming this history, they are able to re-conceptualize analytical frameworks for contemporary studies in which women are viewed as actors, and as participants in the shaping of day-to-day life. Scholars such as Barry and Ousmane affirm links to self-reliant African societies in terms of women's and men's acts of resistance to colonial forces, and their innovative ability to survive today. Boserup follows the emphasis, used by many white, western scholars, on the negative impacts of modernization on Senegalese women. Also Boserup emphasizes the increased use of mechanisms to meet women's needs through development projects so that women can be 'integrated into

development'. Venema provides ethnographic detail and suggests that Wolof women, contrary to Boserup's assessment, are cashcrop farmers. This has important implications for the ways in which we analyze the sexual division of labor.

Savane and Niang, as Senegalese women, though coming from different class backgrounds, offer an analysis in which we hear women's voices for the first time. This permits an appreciation of their perspectives about the complex factors of modernization. They point to the class differentials which are intensified by modernization. For example, they note the increasing privatization of land ownership in the hands of a few rich, in spite of state efforts to the contrary. The increasing numbers of landless peasants means that women either become poorer and increasingly marginalized, or richer with more options for successful economic activities (Savane and Niang, 1986:197). Savane and Niang also raise some critical questions about the nature of development. Furthermore, they note the need to raise societal consciousness (what they term mentalities) about women's role and position in society (*ibid*:198). Finally, they opt for legal reforms; opening more educational avenues for women; and different types of economic activities, all of which enhance women's economic independence. In short, their vision calls for women's and their community's continued well being in a society which operates according to liberating principles regarding women's position and condition. We find in Savane and Ly's analysis, women's links with past self-reliant norms through daily struggles that enable women to cope with multiple forms of oppression.

As Mugo(1988:22) writes:

For poor women in the cities, the picture[noted in Saloum] is not any better ...Psychologically, this woman has to cope with all the usual pressures associated with urban existence.

Scholars such as Le Grandmaison, Underwood, Sylla-Martin, Savane and Niang, as well as my own observations, point to the daily struggle in the lives of Lebou and Wolof women in Dakar fish markets. The separation from large, rurally-based familial networks has meant that supportive, urban family ties have had to re-adapt to face new demands. The high costs of living, the harsh domestic labor, and women's lack of critical resources, such as equipment for fish preservation, are all factors which limit their options and successes with economic activities. In the urban and rural areas which we have studied, the difficult and time-consuming nature of housework leave precious little time for recompensatory work. Yet, in spite of (or despite these and other constraints), women have developed specific strategies which enable them to cope with these hardships in ways which ensure the survival of their communities. But then, when we recall the self-reliant nature of pre-socialist societies, it is evident that women's perseverance and survival skills hark back to an earlier era. They have been changed and adapted to meet the demands of contemporary needs.

Central to these survival strategies are various women's organizational structures, or loose coalitions, which enable women to help one another to achieve ends that could not be achieved individually. However, specific pre-conditions must be met in order to ensure the survival of such groupings and associations. Class backgrounds determine a number of factors such as basic needs sought and the types of resources owned to attain them. Secondly, the types of economic activities as well as ethnic and religious affiliations become important in various settings and in different ways. Thirdly, the larger societal structures within which women work are critical. Thus negotiations with husbands, mothers, mother-in-laws, and children's (girls') help with the housework in mothers' absences becomes

necessary. In addition, local political leadership channels (such as the male elders of the town/village) and state apparatus (such as the cooperatives and ministry divisions) must all be taken into consideration. Fourthly, work with other women's organizations, usually on a local, intra-state, or state level, can provide important resources, connections, and an interchange of helpful tactics which would not be available otherwise. Senegalese women are working together through many different channels--a few of which have been expressed above. Women's survival strategies, must become integral to a new understanding of development in light of African realities. Within reshaped societal structures, both men and women might fulfill decision-making roles in determining the future course of development in African societies. African women are working on various agendas through different fora. These include: the state, women's organizations, and work within the broader context of a women's movement which expresses an Afro-centric feminist consciousness, albeit, with different voices emphasizing different perspectives.

Senegalese women's alternative visions for development center around a wide range of strategies. Common priorities which I have emphasized include: the sexual division of labor in terms of state policies which incorporate land and family laws. Organizational methods addressed in the last chapters face several challenges such as the following: What is women's ability to create cross-cultural alliances in the face of class, race, geographical, and ethnic barriers/differences? Will class or gender issues be emphasized, in terms of the inevitable middle-class leadership of women's movements, as well as in terms of the masses of women's priorities for daily needs? As women's role becomes central, is she defined as an individual, or as part of a larger social unit, i.e. the family, or in terms

of both? Through what methodological and organizational channels will women work to address strategic agendas--radio, television journals, workshops, tontines, co-operatives, social clubs, research organizations? Will ideological, structural, or band-aid solutions be proposed, or a combination of all three? Will women's socio-political and economic framework be labelled under some forms of 'Afrocentric feminist' agendas defined locally, or under other labels such as 're-negotiation of women's roles,' or 'womanist'? Within what type of broader societal context are women working? The macro-phenomenon of International Monetary Fund structural adjustment policies, the debt crisis, and increasing militarization within a patriarchal capitalist world order, as well as state and local bureaucratic structures, all have important implications in terms of women's options for ensuring societal survival and attaining increased access to needed resources.

African women's visions for development have incorporated a large variety of organizational structures and loose coalitions not only among women, but with larger institutional structures which espouse similar visions and offer financial, ideological, legal, and other support mechanisms. Given the imperialist nature of the capitalist economic order, African leaders have espoused self-reliant routes to development. I noted this in terms of former President Senghor's development plans in Chapter Two. Though gender hierarchization remains strongly evident with political independence, African women and men experience imperialist dimensions of an exploitative economic order. Even within this relationship, women and men at different levels in the power chains from the state to the household, experience race and class dimensions differently. Yet, sharing experiential dimensions of racism and classism as well as cultural and ethnic bonds has ensured long-

term ties between Black women's and Dependency theorist's visions for Self-Reliance. For example, the Lagos Plan of Action, as well as regional integration through the Economic Community of West African States(ECOWAS), among others, are part of the de-linking strategies (Dependency Theory) from the global vice-like grip. Such a Pan Africanist agenda seeks a departure from dependence neo-colonialist agendas (Hunter,1989:1-2).

Women's "strategic gender interests" must take into account these international forces and continental agenda, as well as the socialist state past and future potential state support. Many women are working through consciousness-raising plans and popular mass strategies to affect change (See Chapter One and Five). AAWORD(Association of African Women for Research and Development) is a continental African women's organization which has been forming links with DAWN (discussed in Chapter One) (ECHO,1988:26). AAWORD was formed in 1977 to decolonize and to re-conceptualize the research on African women (La Satellite,1987:3).

"Alternative gender sensitive methodologies, [as well as an emphasis on] participatory research [provide the means for] acquiring knowledge and empowering women" (McFadden,1988:5). In August of 1988, AAWORD held a major seminar which addressed "The Crisis in Africa and Women's Vision of the Way Out." Many of the African women scholars mentioned throughout the thesis have been active participants in examining the "history of a repressive colonial past,...no less repressive...neo-colonial state policies,...[and] fundamentally undemocratic policies...of foreign states" (McFadden, 1988:2). Some of the major themes of this conference are consistent with the issues addressed in my research. African women emphasize the importance of agriculture and of women as the major food

producers. Strategies which women are evolving to survive the crisis were discussed in order to address the interlocking nexus of macro and micro factors which affect women's livelihoods (McFadden, 1988:6-8).

But, do state channels encourage these trends? In 1972, the state became increasingly decentralized, thus allowing for autonomy in local development units. This could be construed as a positive step which instigates new initiatives for economic development taken by the masses. But a colonial history and neo-colonial presence, include 'divide and conquer' strategies into which the pseudo-bourgeoisie are co-opted and become corrupt and demeaning towards their own people's needs.

The 1968-74 drought gave way to an unprecedented food crisis resulting in widespread ecological destruction. This phenomenon was wrought by the maximum profit motive of the capitalist world order. The 1980s brings the ramifications of an international debt crisis, strife with neighboring Mauritaneans, and, as a result, increasing state centralization. A resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism, rooted in Soufist beliefs and practices, attempts to respond to unmet demands in order to meet socio-economic needs (Magassouba, 1985; Coulon, 1983). Seeming contradictions remain between African leaders stated objectives through socialist state networks and state economic dependence on a capitalist world order.

France is re-defining her links with West African countries. A recent article by McKesson (1991:46) entitled, "Crisis in France's African Policy," highlights what the author terms, "widespread mismanagement of the economy" and "the staggering corruption of African elites." In the face of these charges, France's 1990 imperialist mouthpiece, the "Hessel Report," advises that "any increase in total French aid be directed to other areas of the world with greater potential." In addition, any continued French aid

must be tailored "to the performance of African governments." Need I ask, who defines 'performance'? How do women become centrally aligned with forces which seek to re-direct state priorities?

International organizations and conferences such as the United Nations Decade for Women, and the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, provide macro-channels for women (and male supporters) to unite. Plans stressing the 'Basic Needs' approach attempt to offer new alternatives to women's participation in the development processes. Are these attempts substantive in terms of women's priorities? Do these international development-oriented networks, further the continuance of Pan-Africanist agendas?

The Elusive Goal of Unity

In order to affect change and to survive, women have pulled together in a variety of coalitions, associations, and organizations. A danger which they face is the dividing tactics generated by local, national, and universal patriarchal, class, and imperialist structures cross-cutting ethnic divisions. Specific patriarchal norms, structures, and mindsets within pre-socialist African societies that have been compounded through importation from the west, continue to manifest themselves. Male power and domination are enhanced, and compound female subordination and/or complementarity in ways which place women in a relatively powerless position. In addition, imperialism and women's internalization of her own oppression have acted as barriers to successful unification (Ogundipe, 1987:128-136).

African women and men share experiential dimensions of racist oppression, yet, women have different visions about linking with male members of their families. For many African women and women in the

Diaspora; negotiating with men is not a question, it is a desirable necessity for their own and their families' well-being. African women, like Micere Githae, Mugo look within their own societies to critique paternalistic and condescending attitudes of many African scholars and activists. Mugo (1988:23) warns and exhorts:

There are far too many self-appointed petty bourgeois messiahs in Africa. We must begin by identifying with [the] interests[of the masses and then] speak in solidarity with them, not for them

The recent book written by DAWN members outlined six major organizations through which women have unified. However, none of the organizations mentioned addressed the widespread existence of tontines and other locally organized coalitions. Since working class and peasant women constitute the majority of the female population in most African countries, failure to seriously analyze their Self-Reliant strategies seems to give further evidence of the dangers of "bourgeois feminism within Afrocentric feminisms (Sen and Grown,1987:90-2;Nzemen, 1988;Mugo,1988:21). Such issues leave serious questions about how the voices and the needs of the masses will be heard and addressed (Sen and Grown,1987:90-2).

African Nationalism, the movement through which Africans agitated for independence in the 1950's-60's, incorporated both the ideology behind the struggle for political autonomy, and the ensuing action of violent or nonviolent resistance. Though women played important roles in the struggle, as Fanon notes during the long and bloody Algerian resistance, male leaders have directed Africa's course of development (Fanon,1965:35-67). The "ideological spearhead of African nationalism," Negritude, grew out of the historical phenomenon of white supremacy within a capitalist world order maintained by colonialism and Black subordination (Irele;Hunter,1990c:

1). With male leaders and writers such as W.E.B. DuBois, Aime Cesaire, Leopold Senghor, the Negritude movement began as a profound recognition of the African peoples'--universally--alienated state, and progressed into a statement of African self affirmation (Hunter,1990c:1-2). Today, the movement continues under a new battlefield title: Self Reliance, from economic imperialism and from neo-colonialism, and with a new type of socio-political leadership, as women and men play critical roles.

The powerful discourses of Afrocentric feminisms have been increasingly heard and heeded, as a feminist movement in its own right, which is central to the struggle for Self- Reliance. Présence Africaine, historically linked to the founding of the Negritude movement, and representing a male dominated discourse, has opened its pages to women's scholarship. Literature (magazine and book publications) and research works are other channels of communication used by women to relate their societal position, and to outline action strategies as central to African peoples' self reliant agendas within a neo-colonial context (see Présence Africain, 1987;Echo,1988;La Satellite,1987). By encouraging African women's leadership of development plans in their communities, these women are affirming an African self identity in a contemporary context. Most importantly, their access to education and to leadership experience, affirms their ability to affect the destruction of patriarchal and imperialist power. In so doing DAWN members, re-direct and re-construct fundamental patterns of thinking about men and women in ways that combine traditions based on Self-Reliance with new challenges faced by African societies.

I want to emphasize and to re-affirm sisterhood as a leading criteria for the wellbeing of all of society's members and as a critical goal for the African women's movement. On the local level with tontines, credit-

coalitions, and cooperatives, we have seen the ways in which women work together. In this regard, I have briefly analyzed several of the pre-conditions which assure women's successful unification. The reality of black oppression by white supremacy as integral to the African feminist movement is one shared by the African-American sisters movement in the U.S.A. In fact, the emphasis on fighting for both self-determinism, and to reshape gender roles which recognize women as equal citizens, is common to African womens' movements in Africa, the West Indies, as well as the U.S.A. These women are seeking to find what Rustin and Davies call a "balance"--between liberation/Self Reliance, while maintaining strategic ties with non-African countries for Africa and the West Indies and integrating where it counts in the U.S.A. (Rustin,1972; Davies,1986). Integration, where it counts, refers to meaningful participation in U.S. communities, without being co-opted into a racist feminist movement, as well as having a powerful say in the future of an American society, which provides for the material and psychological well being of its people. African women are seeking ways to retain important traditions in a rapidly changing world where ideas and institutions incorporate much western thought.

The para-colonial situation of Afro-Americans in North America and the neo-colonialism which affects Africans on the continent and in South America, necessitates an understanding of different histories and thus of different solutions. Yet, these few, but significant similarities, reinforce the ways in which African movements globally can and have influenced one another in ways which affirm and encourage, rather than dictate the direction of self-reliant struggles. Ties continue to be formed with other Women of Color. These coalitional strategies are consistent with Patricia McFadden's(AAWORD Secretariat) exhortation, "we must keep in the

forefront of our lives, the spirit of collective strength and democratic practice"
(1988:3).

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