

A TRIP TO SENEGAL/REPORT ON SENEGAL

by Sherman Lewis

April, 2000



by
Sherman L. Lewis III
Professor of Political Science
California State University, East Bay
Hayward CA 94542 USA

510-538-3692

sherman.lewis@csueastbay.edu

A TRIP TO SENEGAL

Travelogue: A Trip to Senegal

January 17, 1999, Sunday, to JFK and Air Afrique
January 18, Monday, la Résidence, Embassy, downtown Dakar
January 19, Tuesday, Gorée Island, Parcelles Assainis, Tostan
January 20, Wednesday, Meetings with leaders, visit Pekine
January 21, Thursday, drive to Simenti, river tour
January 22, Friday, a day in Niokolo Koba Park
January 23, Saturday, home from Mount Assirik
January 24, Sunday, Village Artisanal, fly home

The Lewis family visited Senegal from January 18 to 24, 1999, at the invitation of then U.S. Ambassador, Dane F. Smith, and his wife, Judy. Dane and I roomed together in college, 1959-1962. A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity presented itself, now or never, as Dane approached the end of his Foreign Service career. Judy and Dane invited us when we saw them at a college reunion in spring 1997, so we'd been trying for more than a year and a half to make the trip. Finally, we took it: me, my wife Alison, son Sherm (29) and daughter Eleanor (25).

We did not know much about Senegal—it's in Africa, about the size of Nebraska, on the far western hump, a former French colony, poor, black, about nine million people. The major languages are French and Wolof. Knowing we were going, I noticed things in the paper, like:

Land Mines Plague Senegal Province

Dakar

Land mines have made 80 per- cent of land in Senegal's fertile southern province of Casamance unusable, a local human rights watchdog said yesterday.

The African Grouping for Human Rights said that the mines, blamed mainly on separatist rebels, had killed, or wounded close to 500 people in the year to August 1998, including 61 soldiers (Nov. 21, 1998). (Author's note April 17, 2024, I unsuccessfully googled this phrase to find the source.)

Well, we did not go to the Casamance, named for its river that flows east to west and supports rice growing. The Gambia is a micro-nation along the Gambia river, an English-speaking former British colony. Senegal wraps around The Gambia to the east, but the direct route from Dakar, the capital, and the major population centers, which are also in the west, must cross The Gambia. While The Gambia and Senegal have friendly relations, they still maintain enough of a border to slow things down at crossings, which heightens the isolation of Casamance.

The land mines indicated a recrudescence of violence which had been stopped by a cease-fire in December 1995. Negotiations had stagnated, and the government does not want to use military action to solve the problems. During the whole of our visit, the Casamance situation was unimportant, as it seems to be a kind of slow-moving conflict between the government and its soldiers in part of Casamance, and rebel clans in another part who have not yet been able to cut a deal with the central government. In January 1999, President Diouf of Senegal met with the rebel leader and later attended a conference in The Gambia, and use of landmines has declined.

However, in an otherwise peaceful and improving nation, it reminds us of larger issues, a Senegalese echo of the pain and strife of other parts of the world. The butchery in Sierra Leone during the last few years has been horrible, with other problems in Rwanda, Congo, Ethiopia-Eritrea, and Sudan, not to mention the rest of the world. Recent great progress on outlawing land mines may help over time, but the U.S. government and the Congress have refused to ratify the new international Landmines Treaty supported by almost all other nations. The U.S. continues as one of the three major manufacturers of landmines banned by the treaty. The U.S. insists that landmines are necessary to defend South Korea, a claim disputed by the Federation of American Scientists and others. Landmines, in practice, kill and maim mostly women and children.

On a more positive note, President Clinton's visit to Africa, a first in American history, highlighted growing American ties to this huge continent, second only to Asia in size. When Clinton came through Senegal in April 1998, he visited Gorée Island, an historic site of transshipment of slaves to the Americas. Clinton visited a restored slave house and spoke to a crowd with the Atlantic Ocean behind him. CNN news broadcast a bit of this: Ambassador Smith could be seen for approximately .7 seconds following the President as he walked to the dais. Also, Mrs. Smith could be seen, or at least the back of her head and a hat, for about .6 seconds while the President spoke. The international coverage on the Smith family is still considerably ahead of that on the Lewis family.

Another little fact we had before our trip was a quote sent by a friend who e-mails international environmental news: Senegalese ecologist Baba Dioum said, "In the end, we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand; and we will understand only what we are taught."

We also discovered a travel advisory about malaria. Dane explained by e-mail we wouldn't need it in Dakar, but we would for a trip to Niokolo Koba Park, in the eastern part of the country. We had to start taking weekly Mefloquine pills before we left, during the trip, and afterwards. Our well-stocked Kaiser Health Plan supplied them. Generally, e-mail and the web were useful in getting more information about Senegal—even a biography of Ambassador Smith and one of his speeches.

Going to Senegal is extremely expensive, and I am a tightwad. I went through a period of psychological adjustment and grief over loss of my money. I spend hours on websites trying to get the best deal, which was usually about double the theoretical "lowest fare." No websites listed all the direct New York to Dakar flights, all by "RK," Air Afrique. Dane suggested Spector Travel of Boston, an Africa travel specialist, and they were helpful. However, fares over the Christmas holiday are very high, about \$2,500, and by postponing to mid-January, we saved half the cost, which enabled me to enjoy the money I was keeping, while repeating a little mantra about "once-in-a-lifetime." The round-trip cost from San Francisco via JFK Airport in New York to Dakar cost about \$1,200 each, of which JFK-Dakar-JFK was \$905 each.

Through incredibly careful planning, the four Lewises landed simultaneously in New York's JFK from three different airports on Saturday, January 16th, rented a car, and spent a day in Darien visiting my dad and stepmom Betty. We returned the car to JFK on Sunday evening the 17th and vanned into the airport. The glassy, spacious terminal was uncrowded and checking in was routine. We saw monster suitcases heavily wrapped in plastic sheeting. A small knot of people stood around a machine which could shrink-wrap luggage for about \$10 a pop, evidently to secure a lot of New York merchandise about to be sold at the African end, where it would travel by bus and open truck to reach its markets.

After a long walk out the concourse, waiting, and gradually boarding, we took off across the ocean on Sunday evening. The plane was very modern with an up-beat African flavor and people speaking French. The food and drink were odd but good. Here and there TV-like screens displayed flight information; they would rotate a large-scale color map of plane location on its route between New York and Dakar, a close-up map of the same, and a list of statistics on our air speed, distance remaining, time of day, time to arrival, and expected time of arrival. After a very short, mostly sleepless, night we met the new Monday sun in a new place and saw the dusty brown promontory of Cap Vert (Cape Verde) below us. (The Cape should not be confused with the Cape Verde Islands, a country about 1½ hours west of Dakar by air.)

The plane did not pull up to a covered ramp at plane door level. It pulled up to a spot on the pavement and we walked down a stairway. The word “tarmac” leapt to mind. And there, standing on it, were Dane and Judy, in the flesh.



Amazing. The special treatment began. We would insist on nothing less if we had but known what to demand. As the hoi polloi filed over to the terminal, we were ushered into the embassy van, which whisked us a very short distance to another entrance, through which we were led into a large, curtained room with carpet and a long couch all around the walls—the Ambassadors Lounge. We were relieved of our passports. While we celebrated our survival and arrival, various invisible functionaries magically moved our luggage from the plane to the van and our passports came back with a stamp:



only with less ink.

We reboarded the van, which now appeared on the street side of the terminal. Our driver, Thierno Ndiaye, pronounced “CHAIRno enDJiye,” was a real pro. We got to know him over our week in Senegal. He was always pleasant and calm (in contrast to the traffic he drove through) and knew English pretty well. The coast road goes north from the Senghor Aéroport then winds east and south around the Cap Vert promontory. Dakar center is on a southward jut of the Cape. It grew around a sheltered port, so that the old harbor actually faces east toward the continent. What appears from a distance as just a little bit of a point on a long coast has complicated geography close-up.

The Cape is now exploding with auto-oriented growth, mostly at a fairly high density. Dakar probably has over two million people now; there is no recent census. There are some large lot subdivisions along the road from the airport (Route de la Corniche Ouest). The term “subdivision” may be misleading, suggesting an American style, but in Senegal most of the houses of the affluent are cement block, two story, on small lots, with high walls around, so that often the walls, landscaping, and upper story are all that can be seen from the road. We get great views of the ocean, and at one point down almost on the beach we see a large, unusual building which we learn is the Divinity Mosque. Senegal is mostly Sunni Muslim, but with a moderate style, and has a secular state. The weather is hot, the sun intense; and we are very grateful, because the alternative is even hotter and sunnier. In January, the average temperature is 70° F; in October it is 81° and often gets over 100°. We go several miles further to an older upper-class suburb, Fann, on the coast. Here, the

current embassy residence, “*la Résidence*,” is located on a pleasant side street near the ocean and the Corniche.



Through the blue door in the wall, we go with luggage and meet various guards and house workers. Security is tight after the bombings of two other U.S. African embassies. Outside the wall stands a guard post on the street corner where the residence is located, manned round the clock. Inside the grounds at night there is an occasional patrol. The vulnerable bedroom window is covered with metal. The pictures show non-private, semi-public, tax-paid non-security-sensitive parts of *la Résidence*. The residence is spacious and beautiful. It has a big entry hall, with a very large living room to the left, which opens to a formal dining room.





A hallway to the pantry and kitchen is next to left, then stairs. Straight ahead through the entry is a window wall and sliding glass doors that open onto a porch and then a small pool and the lawn. The porch is a pleasant place to sit with plenty of room for tables for meals.

Sherm and Eleanor got bedrooms off the right of the entry hall, and Alison and I went upstairs to a large bedroom next to a bathroom almost as big. I took a picture of this bathroom, but the photo did not do justice to it, so you don't get to see it. On the bed stand I found a booklet on "Welcome to Dakar" and an envelope, which had a card printed in French with an embossed U.S. emblem and an invitation with details filled in by hand, in this case inviting Alison and me to a formal lunch on Wednesday.



Dane gave me CFA 200,000. The CFA (“SAY ef ah”) is the local currency. Originally CFA stood for Colonies Francais d’Afrique, but now it’s Communauté Financière Africain. The CFA franc is pegged to the French Franc (FF) at 100 CFA/FF. The dollar buys about 560 CFAs; Dane and I will reckon-up at the end of the visit. Meanwhile, I doled out tens of thousands of CFAs to my family, giving us all an odd feeling of wealth. We ate lunch on the porch and went to sleep, the mandatory multi-time zone adjustment unconsciousness. By the time I worry if I’ll be able to fall asleep, I am trying to wake up.



Late Monday is time for our first serious sightseeing. Alison sleeps on; Dane, Judy, Sherm, Eleanor, and I make a special trip downtown. We start from *la Résidence*, go a block to the Corniche, a fast, four lane avenue on the bluff above the beach.



We drive south and east down the Corniche, passing the university, which, I got the impression, suffers from admitting too many and teaching too few, often because of long student strikes. The campus is trashy and poorly maintained but there is hope a new Rector can sort out the politics and make it work.

Meanwhile, small private institutions have stronger academics. There may be a poor balance between democracy and discipline, with too little learning in the open public university and too much elitism in the smaller private ones.

Next down the Corniche comes Soumbédioune (SUUM be June), a memorable place with (for me) a difficult name. It is a south-facing cove with colorfully painted fishing boats, the “pirogues,” pulled up on the beach below and the bluff above. The long, graceful curve of the hull allows them to be launched into the surf. Fish is the major meat in coastal Senegal.

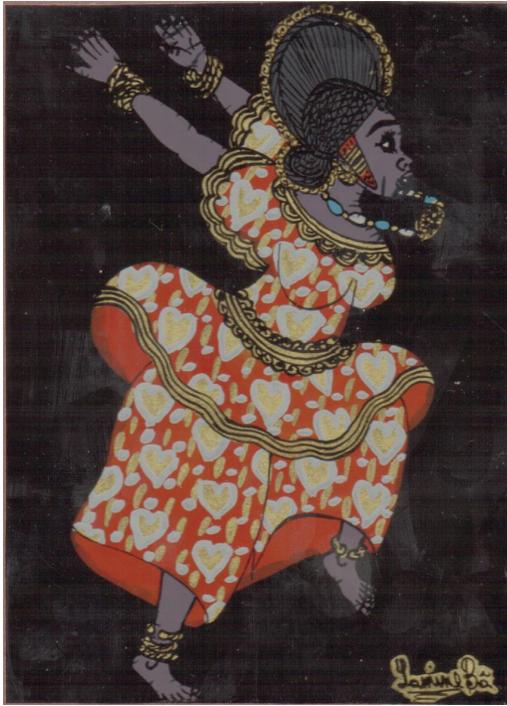


Further along we pass on our left the large, dense, residential area of Medina, the municipal soccer stadium, and a prison, we enter the old downtown, a grid of small blocks and narrow streets overlaid by a few cross cutting avenues, mostly named for famous Frenchmen. Judy drives to a shopping street near some European hotels. There are parked cars, bicycles, carts, and vendors along the sidewalk. We go into a spacious store selling textiles, art objects, and furniture—clearly, a store for the affluent. Judy shows us sample books of many kinds of cloth. I am impressed by the range of designs and the variations on themes, but my ability to take it all in diminishes rapidly.



We come out past a street vendor and walk down a narrow side street with tiny stalls of vendors of handicrafts. A kind of painting on glass caught my attention and with suitable advice from Judy. I buy two of them, of a colorful dancer and a musician.

The Wolof often hold traditional "sabar" and dance on the street to traditional music in Dakar. This kind of painting is a major popular art form. (A few days later we caught a glimpse in a neighborhood of some dancing with a small crowd gathered round.)



A block or so more brings us to a hexagon-shaped modern market, the Marché Kermel, which is almost deserted so late in the day. The center of the building has meat counters, so that vendors can store meat in refrigerators in the very center. The market is spacious, with a roof about 20 to 30 feet overhead. Two rings of aisles go past long counters where all kinds of food is sold. Back outside, I



snap some photos of old balconies on narrow streets.

Back to the van, we proceed along the Boulevard Republique to the embassy to see it and Dane's office. A traffic circle by the cathedral leads to the Avenue Jean XXIII (Pope John the 23rd), which is blocked by military vehicles and a metal gate. The soldiers let the embassy van through, and after half a block more we turn past more guards and go through another gate.

We are now at the Embassy. The small lobby has a prominent glass enclosed booth where the marine guard controls the door to the main lobby. We elevate to the third floor and through the secretary's office into the inner sanctum, the actual office of the ambassador. It is mostly suitably impressive, but there are a number of post-hoc cables along the floor behind the desk and a fair amount of computer equipment, telephones, and papers on the desk and table. I am not surprised; it is a working office. Most of the work with the Senegalese government takes place in their buildings. The Embassy is a medium sized operation; I describe it later.



Back to the van, we head on south around the narrow tip, Cap Manuel, and back into the city via the Avenue Roume, so we can see the heart of government: a very long mid-rise office building, known as "le Building," with the Prime Minister and many ministries, then to the east on the ocean side a smaller building housing the Office of the President, followed by the dignified Presidential Palace in the midst of spacious grounds, visible through an iron fence.

Further north is the Place de l'Indépendance, location of the Foreign Ministry and Bureau of Trade so important for Dane's work. We see modern offices, apartments, hotels, and restaurants as well as colonial buildings.



We return home for dinner on the open porch. The food is wonderfully prepared and nicely served, but there is one little aspect of life in the embassy that cannot be ignored. Every once in a while, an airplane flies over on its approach to the airport, and the conversation pauses.

January 19, Tuesday, turns out to be a very special Muslim holiday, Korité, the end of Ramadan. Thierno shows up for work in an elegant robe, a boubou, and as we drive around, we see lots of people and children on the streets all dressed up for church. The boubou is a light weight, full- or

mid-length robe of fine material, mostly one color, but often with special design in the fabric. It is often worn over baggy pants of the same material.

We are all on our way to small, rocky Gorée Island—Dane, Judy, Alison, Sherman, Eleanor, and me. We wend our way along narrow streets of a confusing port area to the boat that will take us across five kilometers, (three miles) of harbor and open sea to the island. Judy buys round trip tickets for us at a little booth, 3,000 CFAs each, about \$5.40, and we thread through a dark waiting room with souvenirs to the pier. The old boat is full of tourists who sit on benches under a canopy; it is powerful and serviceable but worn. The weather: a beautiful sunny day in the dead of winter, not much over 80 degrees. I take pictures; Alison takes pictures; Eleanor takes pictures. How many would you like to see?



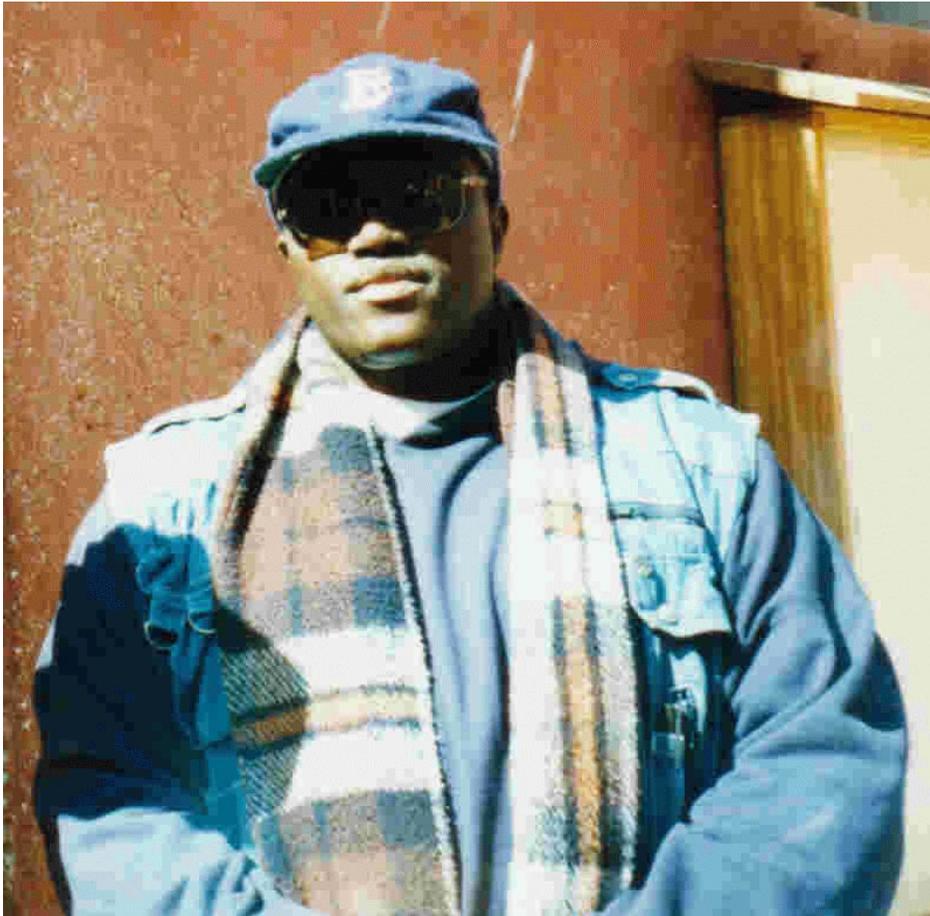
Gorée has seen a lot of history, changing hands from the 1400s to the 1800s as the strongest vessels hove into view. A ship of Prince Henry the Navigator of Portugal was the first to come in 1444, when tribal political systems ruled the interior. Despite the lack of fresh water, the island lay in the lee of the peninsula, protected from the ocean by the downward thrust of Cap Manuel, and from natives by the sea. The Portuguese brought “Christianity” and slavery. They started slave stations in 1536, but their method--sneak up on villages and grab people--taught locals to run, and early slaving had a short life in the Cap Vert area. The Portuguese learned about Africa from their captives and used them to establish a more “rational” system, paying stronger Africans to capture weaker ones. French and English pirates and merchants created some problems. The Dutch took the island in 1588 and gave it its name, which means “safe haven” in Flemish. In 1617 they bought it from a local fisherman and the chief of the Cap Vert area and built forts. The English took Gorée in 1633, the same year France started the French Senegal company on the river to the north. The Dutch took Gorée back in 1664, the French, based out of St. Louis, took it from the Dutch in 1677, and the British destroyed it in 1693 (so in 1694 the French blew up the English fort on the Gambia). The English came back from 1757 to 1763.

The Dutch came back somehow, at least to build the slave house in 1776, and it was the last one built. The French regained control in 1802. The Atlantic slave trade was gradually abolished from 1792 (Denmark) to 1842 (Ashburton Treaty enforcing earlier bans). The French abolished slavery itself in their colonies in 1848 and gave citizenship to natives of the four major towns in Senegal. Slavery, thus, lasted on Gorée for 312 years. (Lincoln’s proclamation came later, Sept. 22, 1862.) Some 15 to 20 million Africans went to the Americas through many slave ports, one of the largest and longest forced migrations in history. Several million died in capture, transit, and the new world.



Gorée preserves its late 18th century colonial architecture, when about a hundred people lived there, mostly descendants of slave women and soldiers. The small island has fortresses at each end, a small harbor, and two-story buildings packed close to narrow streets. It is being restored as an historical landmark and tourist attraction.

We walk up a narrow street to the old, restored slave house, and enter through a wooden door in the wall. The slave house was visited by Nelson Mandela and Bill Clinton, and it is interesting to know they were there, but the power is in the place itself, a modest structure with great poignancy. It is a symbol of oppression, diaspora, and death, the opposite of the Statue of Liberty. Countless thousands of Africans last saw home from this place, slaves on their way to a new and not better world.



The museum guide was exceptionally well informed and provided great detail, much of it given in short bursts of French with translation by Dane. The victims, seized in the interior and bound for Brazil, the Caribbean, and America, would be delivered for transshipment. They were kept on the ground floor, pairs of captives shackled at the ankles with chains to a heavy iron ball between them. Escape was impossible, even a jump into the sea would mean death by sharks.

The rooms are arranged around a courtyard with two curved stairways to the second floor. The slave house has a weighing room, part of a classification system to determine price. There are separate rooms for various categories: underweight men who would be fattened up, ready-to-sell men, sexually attractive young women, women with infants, older women, children. Under the stairs to the second floor were small punishment cells, not for the claustrophobic. The house could hold about 150 to 200 captives. The sick were thrown into the sea to die; their diseases risked spoiling a whole batch. Sharks took advantage of this situation, further deterring escape.



The slave merchant living quarters were on the second floor. At the top of the stairs was a terrace from which buyers could view the merchandise and guards could patrol. Within a few days, the slaves would be shipped off. Down a hallway opposite the street is a small door opening directly onto the ocean, the “door of no return,” which once led to a wooden wharf where slave

ships docked and loaded their cargo. The captives’ last step on Africa was at that door. It was impossible not to feel great emotion, realizing what that door meant and the injustice it symbolizes. Some believe that even today Africa is underpopulated because of the millions shipped out from Gorée and other slave ports. (Much of this information also comes from Joseph Ndiaye, Principal Curator, *The Slave House of Gorée Island*.)



Yet through the strange twists of history, the Afro-American descendants of those poorest of the poor now generally enjoy wealth and income many times that of the people left behind. A few come back to visit after 200 years; Senegal needs the tourism. Equally intriguing,

Senegalese now go voluntarily to the U.S., particularly New York City, for economic opportunity.

Across the street from the Slave House is the Henriette Bathily Women's Museum, which once functioned as a residence, and where many artifacts of daily life are on display. A few women slaves were kept by French slavers for their own use, and some of their mulatto daughters, known as "signares," became educated, politically influential, and even wealthy. By the late 18th century, they owned 9 of 13 estates on the island. They had nice houses, fancy clothes, and slaves of their own. One French governor relocated the seat of government from St. Louis to Dakar to be closer to one of these women. We explored a bit of the old fortress and walked around the island. We went to lunch on a veranda under an awning, looking out on the harbor, and ferried back to Dakar.

Gorée, from after slavery to century's end, continued as a seat of government, then declined with the rise of Dakar. For many years the American consulate had home and office on Gorée.

Back in Dakar we pile back into the van and drive north. Judy Smith has been working with local people to establish a shelter for homeless girls in Dakar. While family, clan, and village bind most Senegalese, in the urban areas of Dakar the old social order may break down. The rural population drifts into the city, forced off the land by too many people and too little rain.

Parcelles Assainis (par CELS ah sen EE) is on the north facing coast of the Cape, with great waves rolling down onto its wide beaches. The whole subdivision is sandy. Once the pavement of the main road runs out at the entry, the streets are all sand, about two lanes wide, with not much room for parking. Traffic, however, is infrequent and can't go very fast, and there are few parked vehicles. The two-story buildings seem working class and even middle class in quality. One of them is the girls' shelter, the Ker Yakaaru Jigeen Yi. We visit the house; it is cement, austere, with small bedrooms, a kitchen, dining room, and a small outside laundry area with a wall separating it from the yard of the next house. The stairways are narrow and steep. On the roof is a place to hang clothes to dry. Judy and the staff catch up on the details and we hear a few stories about the girls—some come in then disappear, others stay long enough to get some help. As we leave, we find a swarm of enthusiastic, delightful children attracted by the oddity of so many white people and a really neat van on their street.

A short distance away is the home of a missionary couple which faces out north onto a large beach and the ocean. It is on the second floor, spacious and nicely decorated, warping us back to an American ambience. The couple runs a wellness center nearby, where we find an impressive variety of ingenious, hand-made weightlifting machines. Not much is going on because of Korité.



Finally, we return to *la Résidence* for a quiet dinner on the cool porch with Molly Melching, a dynamic middle-aged American woman, and her daughter. Molly has lived in Senegal many years and speaks Wolof fluently. She is the Director of Tostan, a community development non-profit agency headquartered in Thiès (“chess”), a few kilometers east of Dakar. She helped found the agency in 1991 after several years of developing educational programs in native languages for children and women. Tostan, meaning “breakthrough” in Wolof, organizes village women’s groups to help with literacy, democratic decision-making, and problem solving. It is funded largely by UNICEF and is supported by the Government of Senegal.

She told us about a great and recent social transformation relating to female genital mutilation. From a Western perspective, it is barbaric. From a traditional point of view of some rural Senegalese, such cutting of parts of a girl's genitals assure her chastity and ability to find a good husband. To those who have practiced it for centuries, it is an important rite and done out of love and a desire to see their daughters succeed. Certain women made their living performing these operations.

In the rural village of Malicounda Bambara, one of the Tostan classes learned about the dangerous consequences of the practice: hemorrhaging, infection, and problems at childbirth, to mention only a few. After discussing the issue at length among themselves and then with husbands, village elders, and religious leaders, they decided to end the practice forever. On July 31, 1997, they made a courageous public declaration to share their decision with the rest of the nation. They talked about banning the practice to other women and men, and, by January 1998, 31 other villages learned about the dangerous health consequences and human rights violations involved and made similar declarations.

Representatives of these villages even traveled to the National Assembly on January 12, 1999, to testify before parliament, who on January 13, voted a law to ban female genital mutilation in Senegal. Such laws are impossible to enforce, and continuing education seems likely to have more effect. While Senegalese women have always had social power within their domain, most real power has been held by men. The women's groups expanded the scope for political action by women. (More on Tostan is presented below.)

Molly also talked about some of the subtleties of differences among ethnic groups, classes, and castes. She spoke of an acquaintance who was sent on a mission to deal with some problems and who was unable to succeed. Evidently, the people would not deal with him as they saw him coming from an inferior caste, despite his education and ability. However, she has noticed that the Tostan human rights education program is helping to eliminate these discriminations. (A section of from her book on Senegal is quoted below.)



January 20, Wednesday

I was expected to have recovered enough from jet lag to talk to important Senegalese leaders on some issues I'm interested in, a suit and tie day. I had two meetings, followed by a formal lunch, and another meeting.

Ten a.m. was the time to meet with Dr. Bakary Kante, Director of Environment. I went to the embassy and arranged to have some traveler's checks cashed, which seemed to involve several offices and several people. I think I unintentionally asked for a bigger favor than I realized.

Dane and I hustled into the embassy car with Thierno at the wheel and we sped off with American flags flapping from the front fenders. In seconds we were at *Le Building* and went up to the floor where Kante worked, except it turned out he didn't. A young aide informed us that Kante was probably, or reasonably, at CSE, an environmental institute, at the north end of the city, actually not too far from the residence. Without too much time lost we whisked uptown with flags flying. We went in to meet with Kante, but it turned out he didn't work there, either. The secretaries were not exactly sure where he did work and tried to make some calls for us. I admired the skill with which they tried to take the situation seriously while now and then smiling at the SNAFU. Back downtown we flew—Thierno, flags, and our black embassy car—to *Le Building*, and back up the stairs to the hapless bureaucrat, who finally called around and discovered Dr. Kante in an office in the Tourism Ministry. While Dane is ordinarily cool, calm, collected, the soul of discretion and restraint, I distinctly heard some choice four letter American swear words echo up and down the stairwell of *Le Building*. Finally, in a few more blocks and flag flaps the imperturbable Thierno took us down old narrow streets and into the back lot of Tourism on Rue Calmette and found Dr. Kante. We soon calmed down and immersed ourselves in Senegal's environmental issues.

Such as: Investment in gold and phosphates has increased, but in the east the owners of a cyanide heap leach gold mine have abandoned it with no clean-up, breaking their agreement... A lot of

Dakar sewage still flows untreated out to sea.... Some 100,000 cubic meters of treated sewage is being reused for agriculture near Rufisque.... Surface mining of phosphates has damaged land in the Thiès area.

Kante himself, however, is about to move to a new post. He is Chair of the U.N. Subsidiary Body for Implementation of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, a reminder of the high level and quality of Senegal's participation in international diplomacy. The report below covers more issues.

The next meeting was with Col. M'Barek Diop, a civil engineer and "Conseiller au Président" on environment and transportation, in the Secretary General offices by the Presidential Palace. Since Dane had to talk to the President about embassy security, a young (a term which covers more and more people) foreign service officer from the economic section, Andrew Haviland, accompanied me, in another embassy vehicle, over to see the colonel. Mr. Haviland's card said he was "Second Secretary." Haviland had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Senegal, was fluent in Wolof, and had good things to say about his boss. Haviland himself was very committed and had market-oriented ideas about how Senegal should develop. As for myself, I am more concerned about cultural survival, the impact of rural agriculture and population growth on the environment, and the popular urban economy. (The popular, partially monetized, economy of the marginal population is a mix of family work, barter, and largely untaxed, low-cost markets.) I'm skeptical of some aspects of development, especially the automobile. Globalization makes me nervous, yet at the same time I can see why so many leave their villages.

Colonel Diop was fluent in English and had a wealth of factual information. I read on his business card that his email address was "@hotmail.com," and I wondered a second if I'd really left the U.S. He explained policy development on desertification, discussed below, and transportation. The discussion between Colonel Diop and Mr. Haviland on bits of their mutual business was most interesting, one of mutual respect and appreciation focusing on issues. I kept noticing the map on the wall behind the colonel's desk. As he explained it, I became very impressed. It was a map of Senegal ecology, its problems, and remedies, which I will discuss in more detail below. There was also a map of the emerging road system, indicating some order could come out of the congestion I had observed here and there. At the end of our meeting, we could not find our ride, so Haviland and I walked back to the embassy.

I returned to the residence for the 1:30 lunch, a bit late, and I came into the living room where my family was sitting around on the chairs and couches and talking to the guests. I met a slew of people whose names I instantly forgot, but, thanks to a guest list, can now report.

>Col. Diop, whom I'd met earlier,

>M. (Monsieur) Ousmane Thiam, Director of CETUD, the Executive Council of Urban Transport of Dakar,

>Mme. Lillian Baer of the Centre Baobab, a consulting firm which teaches languages and Senegalese culture,

>Mme. Haby Ly of AELP,

>M. Mouhamadou Ouattara, a young man working for Sony's computer operations in Senegal,

>Commandant Souleye Ndiaye, Director of the Parques Nationaux du Senegal, and

>M. Malick Gaye of ENDA (Environmental Development Action, an international non-profit organization helping self-help development, sponsored by 5 European and 3 UN aid agencies).

I was served a interesting local fruit drink, and asked for more. We were called to the porch, where two tables were elegantly set, including cards with a gold embossed U.S. emblem and our names with French titles. Dane gave a nice little speech about us, the guests of honor, and welcoming the guests, in French and English.

After lunch I went out to CETUD in Hann on the outskirts of the old city. Old Dakar is connected to the larger metropolitan area to the north by a modern highway, the Autoroute. Hann is about 12 kilometers north, on the gulf of Hann where Cap Vert curves north east back to the main land. Hann has an old public forest and zoo on the north side and a village on the south side. CETUD is just off the Autoroute. There was small two story office building and a bus maintenance garage. We went up a narrow open staircase in the middle of the office, down a hall that opened on the left to the courtyard below, past several doors, through his secretary's room, and into Director Thiam's spacious office. We sat on some chairs at one end and tried to talk, but his English was too limited. He called in a friend, Soudou Diagne, Executive Secretary of CETUD, who had the same problem, and they found a staff person who could talk to me. Details are in the report below.





My ride comes to pick me up at CETUD; it is the embassy van with Thierno at the wheel, Judy, and the rest of my family. We drive further to the northwest side of the metro area, to Pikine, a huge low income worker settlement. The entry road to this neighborhood is congested, but soon we are on sandy streets with two story row houses, and we come to a kind of settlement house, the Jokkoo AJC3 Social Center, a youth center. The leaders know Judy and we meet many people, shaking hands. We file through the narrow door into a wide open-air hallway covered with matting for shade. A class room is off to the left and small rooms off to the right, one of which is library - TV room, with mostly French books and a few in English.

Chairs are arranged around the hallway, and my family sits on the left with Judy and the center director, Abdoul Aziz Ndoye, across from us. To my left sit some young women and, behind them, a passel of kids. I remember the side-by-side contrast between one woman in native dress and another in a grey suit, every hair in place, who looked like she could have been a receptionist for a major corporation, if not a young VP. To my right and across are other women and center leaders, and at the end on the right sit five elders in boubous, one of whom has a lot to say in answer to our questions. We talk about the youth center, and a soft drink is served all around. Judy has some questions, and I ask about the drought and peanuts. The older men gave animated responses about how drought drove them into the city, and we talked about their various occupations. After about an hour we file out, take a big picture of everyone, and take our leave. A “history” of this center was sent to us later, and I include it below in the report.

On the way back we visit a UNESCO educational facility, the “Ecopole,” with various environmentally related displays. I buy a clever model bicycle made from silver-covered wire.



We return home to dinner on the porch. Sherm has the energy to go out with Mouhamadou to the Café Metissicana, Senegal's computer and Internet café. I help Dane figure out how to set up the tent we are going to take on our trip tomorrow. A friend has delivered it; there are no written instructions. It is a large cotton tent with two walls, white cloth and mosquito netting. The roof is a colorful mosaic of designs—a Mauritanian desert tent, for where it never rains. We succeed in getting it to not fall over too quickly. There seems to be some options as to how it works, and some of the tent stakes may be missing a hook, intentionally or not.



January 21, Thursday, we begin a three-day trip across the whole country to Niokolo Koba National Park and back, a distance one way of 604 km or 375 miles. That morning two new, four-wheel-drive vehicles appear on the street in front of the residence. Thierno drives one, Dane the other, all the way there and back. I take charge of packing the rear ends full of our gear. Thierno and the soldiers try to help me and adjust to my opinions. With some trial and error, late-packed boxes, last trips to the bathroom and impatience by those of us ready to go at least an hour ago, our two-van caravan rumbles up Avenue Diop and hangs right onto the Route de la Pyrotechnic. We head north up the new highway to the freeway interchange, one of



two in Senegal, and west out highway N1. For the first time we get to see the hinterland, the real Senegal for most of its inhabitants. The road is two lanes wide, mostly well-maintained pavement.

Once past Rufisque, an old industrial town on the south "little coast" of the cape, we find ourselves in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by strange, stumpy looking trees--a huge forest of baobabs, as unique a landscape as I have ever seen. They are spaced out on the bone-dry landscape, looking half dead, except I don't know what they are supposed to look like alive. The baobabs are waiting for the rainy season of June to September to leaf out. The story we heard was that an angry God yanked up a normal tree, turned it upside down, and shoved it back into the ground. That's as good an explanation as any for this tree, revered by natives so much that it is not cut for firewood and must die of old age. Its leaves, bark, fruit, and flowers are useful.

The baobab is characterized by a fat trunk with a tubular surface coming up to a line about six or more feet above the ground, then a round trunk rises six or more feet higher. The trunk branches abruptly into short stumpy limbs with short twigs for branches. Its angular stark beauty contrasts sharply with the dense leafiness and fine branching of American trees. Baobabs can live over 1,000 years and become huge. We stop and take pictures; in fact, we go a little nuts over baobabs. They become much less common as we travel east.

Hour after hour on the road tells us how flat and dry Senegal is, with some areas more populated than others. At Fatick we cross the short Saloum River, which to our right and the south widens out into a huge delta with its own national park and a large number of European vacation hotels and pensions. We break for a drink at Kaolack, the peanut capitol of Senegal. Peanuts are not much in evidence; it's not the season. Drought has been reducing the crop, but peanut oil is still a major export. (Peanut butter seems to be an American thing.) Many kilometers onward we pass through more provincial towns, Kaffrine, Kounghoul, and finally the big one, Tambacounda, with its modern hotel and airport. The towns have some traffic, including trucks and little horse-drawn two-wheel carts. We stop for a late lunch.

Other patterns emerge. The typical country dwelling is a compound mostly fenced off with matting. Within the compound are one or more trees such as kad (*Acacia albida*), seng (*Acacia raddiana*) or oul, that provide year-round shade for outdoor living. Such trees are also protected from the saw, and their rounded green profiles are usually the first sign of a settlement ahead. There is a small oven, a circular hut with a conical thatched roof, and small animal corrals. Running around on the loose are small sheep and goats, which look very similar, but, as the American Ambassador pointed out, the goats have little tails that go up and they get off the road quickly, while sheep tails go down and they are very dumb and slow.

At Tambacounda we head south and east toward Niokolo Koba, seeing a monkey or two along the way. We turn off the main road at Dar Salam, a native village with a kiosk ticket office manned by park rangers. As I climb out of the passenger seat I am greeted as the ambassador, which is quickly straightened out. We tour an adjacent rural education center staffed by a Peace Corps volunteer. It has an architectural oddity, a building looking like a big hut but built of cement block, with a sleeping room, kitchen-dining area, and classroom.

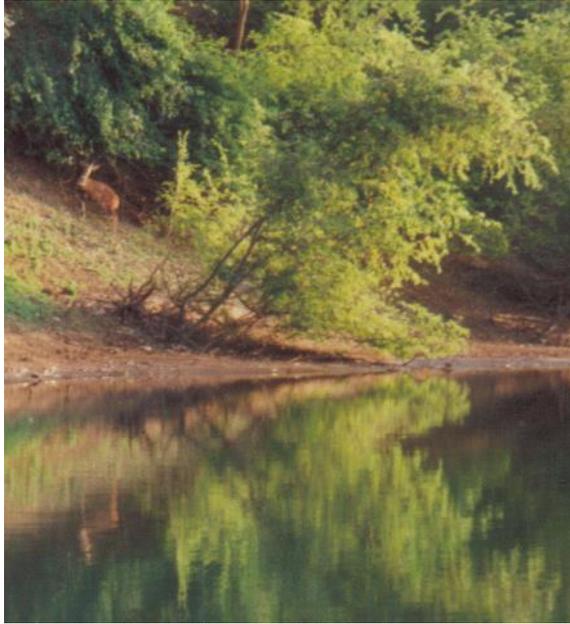
We meet our guide, the Assistant Park Director (Conservateur adjoint), Lieutenant Boucar Ndiaye (this is the third Ndiaye we've met), who lives in Tambacounda and turns out to be of the same ethnicity as Thierno Ndiaye. He is a small, well-dressed man with fluent French and some English. He is very knowledgeable about the park and its wildlife and rides up front with Dane to keep an eye out. There is a close connection between the park administration, the rangers, and the military.

We enter the park, which has an area of 913,000 hectares (2.26 million acres, or 3,525 square miles). The park itself is much more wooded than what we have been seeing, but it is a dry forest, fairly flat, with spaced out, mostly small trees, maybe 20 to 30 feet high, and lots of leaf litter on the ground. Once in a while we see a big termite mound. The narrow dirt track leads on and on along level ground until finally we reach Simenti, a hotel/motel resort on the Gambia River.

Time is getting on, Dane is anxious to get out on the river in a pirogue, which in this case is a small metal boat with an outboard motor. Our guide, Boucar, is up front, the motorman behind, and all of us in the middle. The hunt for hippos is on.



Simenti is located where two arcs of the Gambia meet. Downstream a mile is a high rock ledge which holds up the river, creating a lake-like area for both arcs. We are only a little below the elevation of the main forest floor. The banks of the river are heavily forested, much more so than anything else we've seen--a hint of an African jungle.



We troll slowly up the first arc, seeing some birds and maybe a crocodile, and getting tired of seeing the surface of the water with no hippos. It is very pleasant-setting sun, calm water, green walls of the wide river, peaceful and quiet. We pass back and head slowly down the lower arc and give up.

As we head back, biggish birds in twos and threes come swooping overhead, from up river and down, to land in one particular tree off to our right. They sail smoothly and silently to the tree, and when they land all sorts of squawking breaks loose, quiets down, then erupts again with the next landings. The grace of the overhead flight contrasts sharply with the shrill racket from the tree. Behind us two big eyes surface above the water. We had been seeing a bit of extra swirl in the water under some branches. We had some suspicions. And there they were, or

at least one was. In the fading light we strained our eyeballs to see their eyeballs and used our imaginations to visualize the bulk beneath the surface. A little bit of hippo is better than none.

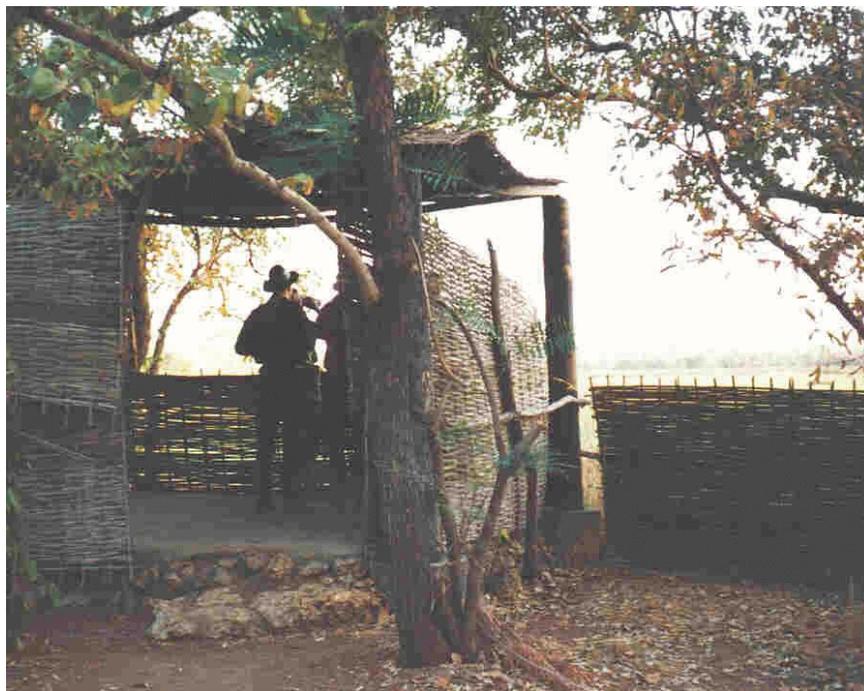


We eat an oddly civilized European style dinner on the restaurant veranda overlooking the river, and retire to our rooms, which were cement block round buildings, in imitation of a native hut, with a bed or two in the center and a closet and bathroom behind a partition wall.

January 22, Friday, a little monkey was waiting in the dim early light on the wide top of the low wall along the terrace. He or she had a serious look that suggested a trading relationship, pictures for food. After breakfast, I paid the bill for the four Lewises. Huge sums were involved, and I was determined to figure it out without Judy's help. She wasn't at the desk anyway. The dollar was worth about 560 CFA in Dakar, but only about 500 in Simenti, minus 5 percent surcharge for cashing

travelers checks, or 475 net. The rooms were 36,000 CFA; dinner, 18,000; T.P.I. [?], 1,600; breakfast, 4,800; total 60,400, which just struck me as an awful lot of money. However, it was US\$127, under \$32 per person for a room and two meals. Given the alternatives in a strange, remote wilderness, it was an excellent deal.

We drove a short distance to a blind looking out on a grassy plain and saw a fair number of wildlife grazing. We stopped at a few blinds along the way and saw more wildlife, mostly small antelope grazing in the distance. At one of these an absolutely amazing bird, the Abyssinian Roller, flashed its colors at us and was gone.



The dry, flat forest had mostly small and medium height trees and was fairly open. As the day progressed we traveled through more of the park and saw little wildlife in the main forest. Most of the grazing animals were predictably in or near the “mares,” meaning ponds, but really open swales with year-round grass found at a few places along the rivers. We soon reached Camp du lion, a small nature study compound near the Gambia whose major interest was a leopard in a cage.



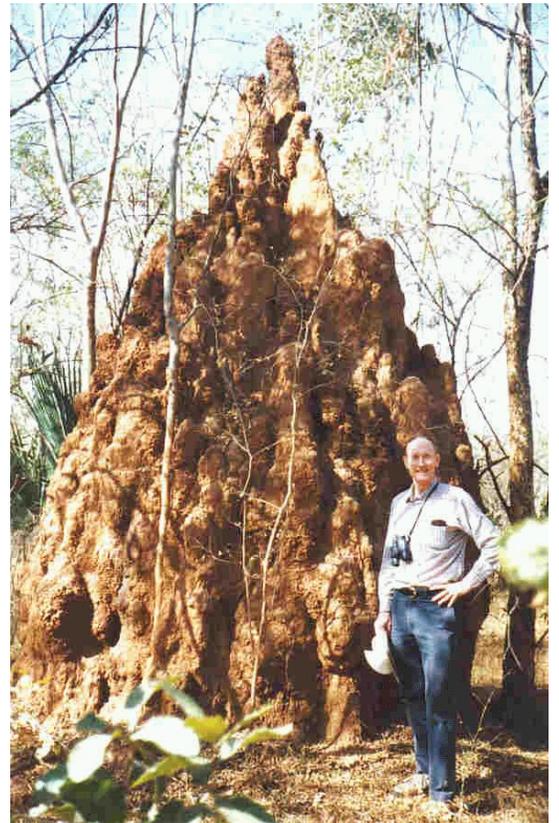
to one edge, but your hands were too low to do much about it. There were crocodiles below, or maybe alligators, or was it piranhas? The water seemed far below, thick green, and very wet. Once across, we took a nice little walk through the woods on the other side, saw nothing, and walked back. We took plenty of pictures to show our bravery or record our last moments. I let the women go first, just in case they should need my help.

The road went on to another point close to the Gambia, the *Pont de liane*, or Bridge of vines, a rickety old swinging foot bridge across the river. Boucar hopped across as if on a regular sidewalk and the rest of us followed with varying degrees of trepidation. There were a number of factors causing concern. At the ends, there was little if any sway, but in the middle, a lot. There were missing steps. The hand cables were high at the ends but got lower in the middle, and swayed back and forth too much, so that your center of gravity risked being too far





Here and there we saw black stubby mushroom-like things scattered on dry flats, about a foot and a half high. They are homes of the “mushroom” termite. Occasionally we would also see big termite mounds, maybe 12 feet high.





At a blind we saw, perhaps two hundred yards away, a large number of big vultures clustered on the ground. We thought we should not disturb them, but our guide, Boucar, marched resolutely toward them and I jumped to follow with camera ready. The big birds lumbered off into the air and we found the remains—a little hide and bones--of a Cob de Buffo (Kobus kob) at, I made a note, 11:45 a.m. The missing body parts told our guide that a poacher had recently been at work. The poachers come into the park on bicycles and shoot wildlife for food and money, and the army tries to catch them. There is a gradual process of developing respect for the park in surrounding villages.



The road continued narrow and uneven, slowing us down enough so we could see things. We turned right at Patte d'Oie (Footprint of Goose), forded the small Niokolo Koba River, wended our way around some mares--perennial ponds--and headed south.

By this time, we were really beginning to appreciate wart hogs. They were a little more abundant and less skittish than other wildlife and would trot away slowly enough to get a good look at their rumps.



They have tough, no-nonsense faces only a wart mother could love. Alison's Ph D. in Art History helped her perceive the higher qualities of our fat friends. I am informed that wart hogs are not, in fact, fat, but rather sleek and muscular, but I maintain that their bullet like shape with skinny little legs can *appear* fat to the uninformed, and anyway has better alliteration.



Wart hogs also caused me considerable embarrassment. At one stop I was looking at some kobs and other animals disappear a few hundred yards away through some trees, using binoculars. I distinctly saw an elephant moving away and told everyone. However, it did not make sense. What did make sense is that the rear end of a wart hog at a distance is indistinguishable from that of an elephant, and the binoculars cause one to lose a sense of scale. Anyway, must have been a big one.

After a long stretch of road and a late lunch near the Malapa ford, we climbed down to the river to look around.

We packed ourselves back into our vehicles. The road drifted more easterly and then to the northeast and the vegetation became more sparse.

We were climbing very slowly, but it was hard to tell. Somewhere along here we saw some soldiers. Our guide jumped out, walked briskly over to them, and saluted. They were working as wardens, and he was one of their commanders. They would be camping near us that night.

We looked ahead for our destination, Mont Assirik, elevation 311 meters, but since we were already at about 150 meters, it was hard to see. The slight rise ahead had to be it. My American idea of mountains was definitely getting in the way. We climbed over the south ridge of the Mont, caught some view, and descended to a harsh, flat plain on the east side.



At the south end of this area was an abrupt drop to a brook and a dense forest. Our camp was just above the trail down to the brook. We were glad to be there after bouncing around in two land cruisers for hours looking at woods. We heard baboons in the trees nearby; they are very noisy and complain a lot about everything. Just when you think they've calmed down another ruckus starts, and our presence itself started a few outbursts. They were, however, always out of sight, and movement toward them ignited a huge commotion and they moved further away. The guide took us down a trail to a tiny little brook in a ravine with the densest jungle we'd seen—finally, the heart of Africa the movies had prepared us for. Along the trail was a water supply.

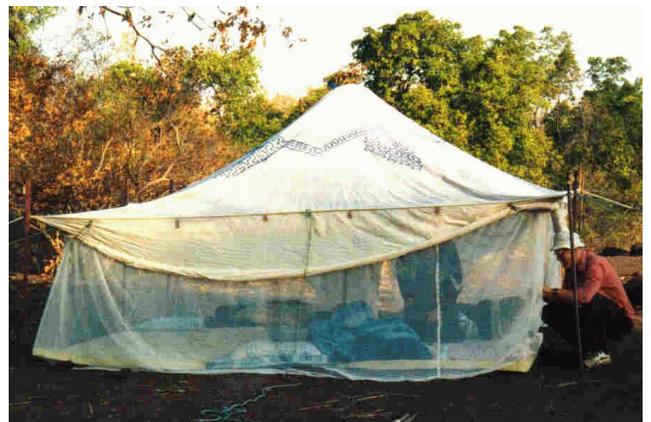
We pitched the Mauritanian desert tent up by the land rovers by a cookfire site. It looked great, but seemed a weak defense against malarial mosquitos, should one want to get us. Despite the warmth, the air was bug free, and we cooked, ate, cleaned up, and turned in, six people arranged in small rectangles of sleeping bags under the big rectangle.

Saturday, January 23, we hustled out of camp in hopes of seeing some of the rarer beasts. We did get a look at a Hippotrague, a big antelope, and a few buffalo. We never did see the endangered Elan de Derby, a.k.a. Western Giant Eland, but I didn't expect to. I only mention it because it is shown



on the "Africa Threatened" map by National Geographic which I'd been carrying around for thousands of miles. No elephants or lions, either. We did see more rocky looking termite toadstools on barren flats.

We drove through about a hundred yards of dense rushes that towered over our rovers, brushing strongly against us as if to hold us back.





Amidst the generally rocky harsh terrain was a gullied area with dense stands of bamboo.

Along flat barren stretches were some small yellow flower growing close to the ground with little if any supporting stems or leaves.



Heading north, we soon reached a well-paved road, the N7, which took us past our first turn off at Dar Salam and on to Tambacounda, where we dropped off Boucar and ate lunch at the same hotel as on the way in.



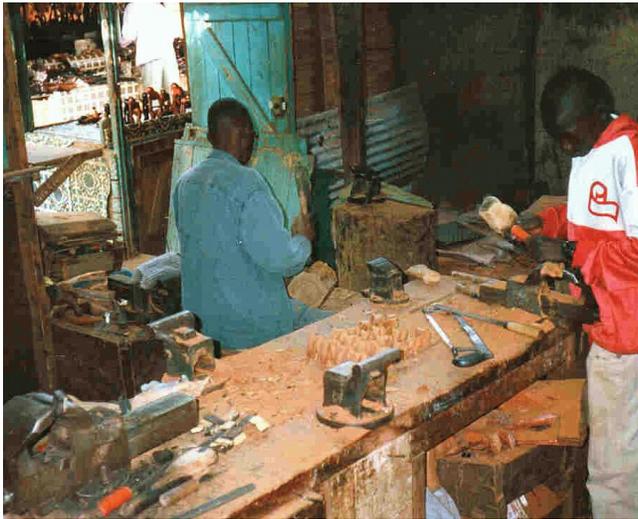
The long drive back to Dakar on N1 showed us the back side of everything we'd seen the front side of two days before. Stretches of road were in good shape; others had potholes. At one point some village boys had filled up the holes and signaled they'd like a little compensation for their labor.



We saw charcoal bags by the road and trucks overladen, headed for Dakar.
We had a final dinner on the embassy porch, feeling that we'd been gone a week.



January 24, Sunday, was our day of departure but there was time for some shopping and picture taking. Jammed onto the eastern end of Soumbédioune is the Village Artisanal, a crowded warren of artisan handicrafts and textiles and furniture and more. The area is a major tourist attraction and deserves to be. It is better organized than it first appears, and so old a tourist trap it should not be called that. Sleek, huge buses full of Europeans pull into a dirt area just barely big enough, and the bargaining begins.



At the Village Artisanal I bought a family of small hippos carved out of ebony and a boubou to try to improve my appearance. Judy helped us bargain, and Eleanor tried out her French with the vendors. She had learned quickly from Judy—a look of disbelief, a counter claim that the price is too high, throwing up one’s arms in dismay, turning to walk away—to the consternation and amusement of the vendors. As for me, I paid the asking prices on those hippos.

Soon we were all packed up and Thierno drove us up to the airport and the Ambassadors Lounge, where we had a fairly long wait. Our passports were returned, now with a second stamp,





Out the window I shoot one last shot downward of Africa, possibly that new neighborhood on the north side of Cap Vert, Parcelles Assainis.



Air Afrique was fashionably late arriving at Kennedy Airport, but we sent Sherm over to TWA anyway. Our luggage was slow, so I went ahead and took the bus to United. The bus was late in coming. It was very hot and crowded on the bus, and the road was under construction and very congested, so it was extremely slow inching to terminal 6. I knew we'd missed our flights. I went up to the counter to see how merciful United would be and to wait for Alison.

To my surprise she came bounding up demanding to know where I'd been; she'd searched the terminal for me. Evidently, she got the luggage and a faster bus, and her bus had passed mine in the hyper-mega-congestion of ground transport purgatory. United was merciful; we got a good flight. We debated what might have happened to Sherm Junior at TWA and how to manage possible problems for him.

When we got off our flight at SFO, there was Sherm! He had missed his flight and asked TWA for mercy. They gave him a voucher for a soon-to-leave Delta flight, which had many available seats because the Delta terminal is an almost incomprehensible maze of reconstruction without adequate signs. Eleanor, at least, made her connection back to Pittsburgh.

Alison's turn: What a wonderful trip! Senegal matched my every expectation; and our dining room table is piled with beautiful fabrics, necklaces, the sacred warthog carved from blond horn, wooden hippos, two boubous, plastic-bag puppet, glass paintings, postcards, etc., which I can't bear to put away yet. [Written January 28, still true July 25, 1999.] Each one speaks of a vivid memory, whether Judy bargaining energetically at the artists' market, Dane leading our explorations on safari, the poignant island of Gorée, the women's shelter, the recycling center, the community center, the comforting meals on your lovely patio and back yard, that interesting luncheon on Wednesday with distinguished guests, and my special discovery of the evocative hundreds of baobab trees on the way out to the countryside and back -- how much we packed into those seven days! Thank you so much, both of you, for making our visit so full of memorable activities and interactions with people. I know it takes time to set these things up, and you fit us generously into your busy lives. I know for Sherm and Eleanor, who haven't had any equivalent experience in non-European countries, this was a whole new way to live and explore.

Eleanor: It made all the difference in the world staying with people who were so knowledgeable and obviously respected and liked in the country. The "insider" knowledge and access let us have a unique look into not just what Senegal is like for a tourist, but what its people think and how the culture and life of the city and country as a whole are changing. It was hard to finally send off all the presents that I bought for people; some of them I wanted to keep! My next project is to figure out which of my friends I can convince to join the foreign service.

Note: Sherm Jr.'s excellent email thank you has been lost. Also, several pictures were lost when a camera was lost.



REPORT ON SENEGAL

Table of Contents

Abstract and Acknowledgment

Geography

Society: The Three Senegals

The First Senegal; Ethnicity

Food

Population and the Status of Women

The Malicounda Bambara Story

Forestry and Energy

The Second Senegal

Political history

Economy

Transportation

Desertification

The Science behind the planning

The Plan

The U.S. and Senegal

The Third Senegal

Public transit

Self-help public services

Report on the Jokkoo - AJC3 Social Center

Conclusion

Senegal on the Web

Maps of Senegal

Report on Senegal

Abstract: The Three Senegals

Senegal is about the size of Nebraska and sits on the westernmost hump of Africa. Its eight million people are diverse, but broadly divide into three "Senegals." The rural population belongs to many different ethnic groups, the main language being Wolof. Much of the north and east is dry and sparsely populated by herders. The densest farming area is in the central west, the Peanut Basin. Peanuts, sold to Europe, are a major source of foreign currency, along with phosphates, fish, and tourism. In the last few years women's groups, with help from a development agency, have worked to end female circumcision, developing a capacity for decision-making which is elevating their status.

The second Senegal, the educated French speaking population, is concentrated in Dakar, with a long history going back to the slave trade. The small island of Goree near Dakar was for centuries a major slave trading center. France gradually won the colonial wars and created the state of today, but the nation was created by Leopold Senghor, poet and Senegal's George Washington, leading a socialist party that dominated the government to early 2000, though its philosophy has evolved while in power. Senegal has become America's most important partner in French speaking Africa.

The modern nation has been stressed by overpopulation, over-cultivation of peanuts, overgrazing, and deforestation to the point where the desert, moving south from Mauritania, covers more and more area. Senegal with international help has done interesting research and launched a major program to deal with the problem. Yet refugees from the impoverished countryside have streamed into the cities, especially Dakar, now a major metropolis with large worker suburbs and a colorful but struggling transit system. These newly urbanizing people are the third Senegal, rapidly learning French and modern business, hardworking and entrepreneurial, but with many ties to the countryside. Using appropriate technology, another development agency has helped one old city cope with burning stinking trash heaps in poor neighborhoods and developed an affordable water and sewer system.

Senegal's distinctive culture is evident in its dress and in crafts sold to tourists. The unique beauty of the countryside is displayed by the huge, ungainly baobab tree, and, in the southeast, a large park, Niokolo Koba, where park rangers are working to protect wildlife from poaching.

Acknowledgments: Karen Fung, Gray Tappan, and anonymous

Most helpers are acknowledged as I go along, but here I thank Karen Fung for putting my paper on the Stanford site and finding some link and typo problems. I thank Gray Tappan, author of the Environmental Profile of Senegal, the wonderful poster of maps I saw in Col. Diop's office, and of the vegetation maps, and rainfall trends maps which are part of it. He works for the EROS Data Center of the USGS, whose website is at the end. I thank him for the great work he has done on Senegal, for his appreciation of my lesser efforts, and for not complaining that I used two of his pictures of Baobab trees ("the Baobab Tree" and the one with horses) without attribution. I did not document my sources as I went along, hoping such an informal paper could avoid that extra work. I must therefore also in general acknowledge, and apologize to, other sources of visual images for using their work without attribution. Most of the photos are mine.

Geography

Senegal sits on the westernmost hump of Africa, well below the Tropic of Cancer. It is hot and flat, about the size of Nebraska, 76,000 square miles. On the east, the Faleme River flows north and marks the border with Mali. The Faleme flows into the Senegal River which sweeps in a great arc to the northwestern corner of Senegal, defining the national border with Mauritania. The southern boundary with Guinea-Bissau and Guinea is an east-west line just south of the Casamance River. Just north of Casamance is Gambia, a micro-nation along the Gambia River encircled by Senegal. Next going north along the coast is the large delta of the Saloum River and adjacent estuaries (the Sine Saloum) with a growing resort industry. Thus, along the coast south of Dakar, the Casamance, Gambia, and Sine Saloum form large estuaries, mangroves, marshes, and mud-salt flats. (See “Vegetation and Land Use of Senegal” and “Senegal Population Clusters.”)

Then comes the “La Petite Côte” and the basalt rock Cap Vert peninsula with the Dakar metro area. Above Dakar the big coast runs in a long curve of dunes and humid depressions (“niayes”) up to the delta of the Senegal River and the old port town of St. Louis.

Most of the rest of Senegal is a sandy plain of savanna--grassland with scattered trees--under 100 meters in elevation. With so much savanna, distinctions can be made. There are eight kinds of savanna:

1. Dry shrub or bush savannas in the center (and a little elsewhere).
2. The very dry shrub-tree steppes of the north.
3. Shrub-tree savannas in the northeast.
4. A narrow band of tree-woodland savanna across the middle east.
5. Steppe-savanna valleys along most northern drainages. These first five are the “Pastoral Domain,” called the Ferlo, part of the Sahel where grazing has been the primary land use for centuries and population is sparse.
6. Savanna woodlands in south central, the “Eastern Transition Zone,” with enough rain for some cotton and corn.
7. Denser savanna woodlands of the Shield Region, in the southeast where foothills rise to about 1,600 feet and Niokolo Koba Park is located.
8. Denser savanna woodlands south of the Gambia River. These three plus woodland forest valleys along the southern drainages are sometimes lumped together as the Sudanic zone, after the French usage which applies to a transition zone south of the Sahel in West Africa.

The wettest area of woodland forests south of the Casamance River is like Guinea. The large area of agricultural lands in the center west is the Peanut Basin, or West-Central Agricultural Domain. Cultivation is moving into the western part of the Eastern Transition Zone. The smallest but most densely populated geographic area is Cap Vert. Administratively, the nation is divided into 10 regions, 30 departments, and 90 arrondissements.

Society: The Three Senegals

One way to interpret Senegal society is along a spectrum from rural tribesmen who speak only a native language to city people who speak only French. Along this spectrum, to simplify discussion, are three Senegals.

> The first Senegal is that of the rural peasant, poor and illiterate, but rich in culture and heritage, tracing back over centuries of subsistence grazing, fishing, and farming. They might be about 60 percent of the population and 15 percent of GDP.

> The second Senegal is the French (about 20,000 in Dakar) and the French-educated elite, who dominate the modern money economy and run the government, mostly urban and middle class by American standards. They might be about 10 percent of population and generate 35 percent of GDP.

> The third Senegal, the remaining 30 percent, is an emerging indigenous urban business class, mainly in Dakar but also in Thiès, Kaolack, and the provincial towns. It might produce about 50 percent of GDP. The per capita income of \$1,600 and literacy rate of 33 percent (from the U.S. Mission's Briefing for the President) obscure the complex reality of a subsistence rural sector of the first Senegal, the fully monetized second Senegal, and the newly monetizing third Senegal.

The First Senegal

Ethnicity

The first Senegal has many ethnic groups, each with its own language and culture, and no one group in a majority. They usually do not speak French, just as the second Senegal does not usually speak a native language, and the third Senegal is generally bilingual. The Serere, a small ethnic group, have lost their original language yet retain several distinct customs. From largest to smallest are **Wolof** (North coast, Cap Vert, peanut basin), **Pulaar** (or Peul or Fula, on Senegal River and pastoralists in the north; others in the east), **Serere** (or Serer, in the Sine Saloum), **Diola** (in the Casamance), **Bambara** (near Mali), **Mandingue** (in the east), and **Soninke** (Senegal River). Other lists mention separately the Toucouleur (a dialect of Pulaar, on the Senegal River). In fact, every list of ethnic groups I read was a little different from the others. The ethnologue data base lists 39 tribal languages, or 38 if you don't count French. Several variations in spelling of the names and dozens of dialects exist, and many groups spill over into other countries, where they may be more numerous.

The biggest ethnicity is the Wolof (43 percent), and the Wolof language is a common lingua franca throughout the country, spoken by 71 percent. Wolof society has internal divisions similar to but not as strong as India's castes. Molly Melching, *Ndank Ndank, An Introduction to Wolof Culture*, "The Caste System in Wolof Society," has this to say.

To speak of Wolof society necessarily requires a discussion of the caste system. I long hesitated in writing this chapter since I have found many Senegalese to be extremely sensitive to the subject. In fact, it is perhaps wise not to discuss this topic with casual Senegalese acquaintances.

Many people have told me that the caste system is no longer valid in modern society and that it in no way affects work or personal relationships as it did at one time, particularly in Dakar. Others

have commented that to this day, the notion of caste is still prevalent in society and that without a knowledge of traditional social organization, it is difficult to understand attitudes and behavior of Senegalese in both their personal and professional lives.

I finally decided to include the chapter at the insistence of a Wolof friend who comes from the artisan's caste. She told me, "It is time we speak openly and frankly of the positive and negative aspects of the caste system in Senegalese society. I have suffered prejudice myself from being a "blacksmith" because it is considered an "inferior" caste. Traditionally, people were afraid to touch the clothes or other belongings of blacksmiths, believing it would bring them bad luck. Some people still believe in these superstitions, and I am made aware of it by things they say or do. Despite the influence of modern society, I am still expected to follow the traditional notions of what a woman from the blacksmith caste should do or should not do. If I want to marry a man who is a gèwèl or a gèer, all of society will oppose me in my choice. I will be ostracized totally from my family and my children will not be accepted. Therefore, the caste system must be openly discussed because it still strongly remains in the mentality of the Senegalese people."

According to Abdoulaye Bara Diop in *La Société Wolof*, there are four castes: the gèer (nobles), the jëf-lekk (artisans), the sab-lekk (singers and story-tellers), and the ñoole (court jesters and buffoons). These castes are endogamous, hereditary, and interdependent. The latter three castes may be grouped together under the category of ñeeño, those who exercise a traditional profession. Diop notes that within the traditional system, slaves (jaam) were not considered a caste.

THE GEER The caste of gèer, which is considered the "superior" caste, is comprised of farmers, fishermen, or animal breeders. The gèer in Wolof society often have the last name of Jóob or Njaay. They are not allowed to exercise traditional professions and only may marry within their own caste. In some instances, however, a man may have four gèer wives and take a fifth wife who is of slave origin. In this case, his children will be considered "benn tànk" meaning "one leg" or "one-legged". These children can neither marry someone of the gèer caste nor of slave origin, as he or she will not be accepted by either group. They must marry others who have the same status of benn tànk.

THE JEF-LEKK Jëf-lekk literally means "those who eat by their profession". The jëf-lekk are divided into sub-castes: the tëgg or blacksmiths or jewelers; the uude or shoemakers; the seeñ or woodcutters; and the ràbb or weavers.

THE SAB-LEKK The sab-lekk are the "griots", the oral historians and praise singers. Traditionally, the griots had a very important role to play in society. They were feared by most because they could publicly criticize or praise individuals of the society.

THE ÑOOLE The ñoole were the court buffoons. According to Diop, this caste no longer exists, mainly due to the impact of Islamic leaders who considered the behavior of the ñoole unacceptable.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE CASTE SYSTEM

American Peace Corps volunteers have told me that they often have had problems when their counterparts are of an "inferior" caste or of "slave" origin because the gèer in the village refuse to follow orders or recognize them as leaders. One gèer villager explained to me that members of an

"inferior" caste may indeed be village leaders, however only when he or she is chosen by the villagers and not by an outsider.

Another volunteer said she had no luck with her village vegetable garden when she tried to organize it communally. When she let the villagers organize the garden themselves, she found that they divided the field according to caste.

In one interview, a villager told me that only a gèer may be a village chief unless there are no gèer left in the village.

Islam is opposed to the caste system and proclaims the equality of all men before God, yet almost all religious leaders in Senegal are gèer.

A foreigner who marries a Senegalese may want to first find out about the social origins of that person. Most non-Senegalese whom I interviewed said it made no difference to them what others thought; however, it helped them to understand certain attitudes people may have had in relation to them and their children. It is interesting to note that a child of a "mixed caste" marriage is always considered to be of the "inferior" caste.

During the summer of 1992, a journalist for the daily Senegalese newspaper, the SOLEIL, wrote: "Will the caste system one day disappear? It is difficult to answer this question knowing how strongly prejudices are anchored in the minds of the collective unconsciousness. But who in fact is caste? Can the division of labor alone explain an ideology based on blood and race? How can we explain the persistence of this phenomena in a country which ratified all the United Nations Charters concerning the rights of the individual?"

“Despite the teachings of religion and the law, social stratification into groups has remained unchanged. Neither Islam nor the colonization of Senegal was able to undermine this phenomena based on a mental representation of individuals. Both the public school and urbanization, factors of integration and change, should have helped to eliminate the prejudices or at least diminished their importance - and yet they have only reproduced these social divisions.

“At a time when ideas of the 'civilization of the universal' of 'integration' and 'democracy' have become key words in our generation, it seems obsolete to speak of the caste system. But can we overcome prejudices without totally changing the people who persist in perpetuating them? The role of political and spiritual leaders is extremely important, but the subject has become taboo in all circles. And so, who dares to struggle for the elimination of this tenacious problem which has its roots in the mists of time?”



Food.

The first Senegal does not have much surplus; one third of Senegal's cereal needs must be imported. The rivers and deltas support rice farming, and the ocean and deltas provide fish. The irrigated areas, though small, are especially important for rice and for the new crops of cotton, peanuts, potatoes, and other vegetables which came in when the rice subsidy was eliminated. The Senegal River is so flat that salt water during the dry season comes 280 miles upstream. US AID has promoted dikes to keep the fresh water in and the salt water out, increasing cultivated area by 20 percent. Also, along the north coast about 4,000 hectares have been reforested to stabilize the dunes and increase vegetable production.

Only 19 percent of Senegal is suitable for crops, and only 1.5 percent is irrigated, mostly along the Senegal, Saloum, and Casamance Rivers. The cultivated area of Senegal, the rural population, and the road system are concentrated in an area in the central, western one-fourth of the country, the "peanut basin." Over the last thirty years, the northern half of Senegal, including the basin, has become increasingly dry, gradually reducing the amount of peanut farming. Farmers also grow millet, cowpeas, sorghum, and melons. Millet is used for food and thatched for huts. Animal traction is used for plowing. Also, here and throughout the nation people tend cattle, small sheep, and small goats.

The desertification creeping southward is turning the far north into Sahara Desert, and the mid-north, almost half the country, into Sahel, with only 200 to 400 mm (7.87 to 15.7 inches) of rain per year. Rain increases going south; Casamance gets about 80 inches a year. Rain falls less than 30 days a year. The rains of June to October come later, or less, or not at all. In many places, tree stumps and brown earth stretch to the horizon. Mali, Niger, and Chad are experiencing the same problem. (See "Historical Rainfall.")

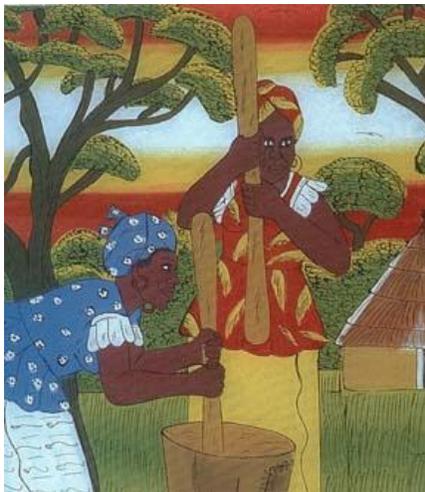
There are many human reasons for the crisis of droughts and desertification: over-population, over-cultivation, over-grazing, deforestation, and erosion. There are also reasons beyond control of the nation: locusts and, most important, global warming.

Both wind and water cause erosion. Peanuts when harvested are ripped up by the roots, loosening the sandy soil, exposing it to wind erosion. In some places cultivable soil is gone. Water erosion is caused by deforestation, overgrazing, fires, a failure to return organic matter to the soil, and inadequate physical barriers to run off.

As the north gets drier, some farmers are burning and cutting easterly into new areas of eastern Kaolack province and beyond to get fuelwood and fertilizer to grow millet and peanuts. The sandy soils of the peanut basin decline; rusty gravels and soils increase and are less fertile. About 80,000 hectares (200,000 acres, 300 square miles) a year of scrub pasture and forest is being converted to agriculture, often using bush fires. Clandestine tree cutters encroach upon once protected woodlands (Forêt Classée). The fires add to the global warming problem. Then the denuded land cannot hold the rain, and there is erosion and less retained water. However, there are also places where fallow periods are long enough, trees are maintained, and the vegetation is stable.

Population and the Status of Women in the First Senegal

The last official estimate of Senegal's population was 8,152,000 in 1993. At an estimated current growth rate of 2.7 percent, it probably reached about 9,565,000 by 1999. The population is growing too rapidly. It doubled from about one million in 1900 to 2.1 million in 1950, doubled again by about 1974, and doubled again by 1995. Life expectancy is only 54.2 years for men and 59.8 years for women. Half the population is under 18 years old. The population growth rate is, however, slowing. In 1978, the average woman had 7.2 children, declining to 5.7 children in 1997. The major reasons for decline were delay of first marriage and of first birth; more recently the rise in use of contraception from 4.8 percent of couples in 1992 to about 7.1 percent in 1996. Maternal, infant, and child mortality rates are high. Children die of dehydration from diarrhea, lung infections, measles, malaria, malnutrition, and parasites, especially in rural areas. Rehydration and immunization can save lives at least temporarily, but without other measures will only make matters worse.



The traditional patriarchal Muslim faith allows polygamy and an inferior status for women. Alisa Stone was a Peace Corps Volunteer in a village in the central area where drought and population problems were evident. ((Alisa Stone, "International Spotlight: Senegal," *Population Report* 3:1, Sierra Club, Spring 1999)) She reports women work the fields, pull water, pound millet, clean rice, collect fuel, prepare meals, wash clothes, and take care of many children.

They are married off young by their fathers, given no education, and cannot write their own names. Letters and numbers rarely appear in their environment. Use of contraceptives is, in theory, forbidden. The women develop a deep fatalism, in which God is responsible for good and for ill,

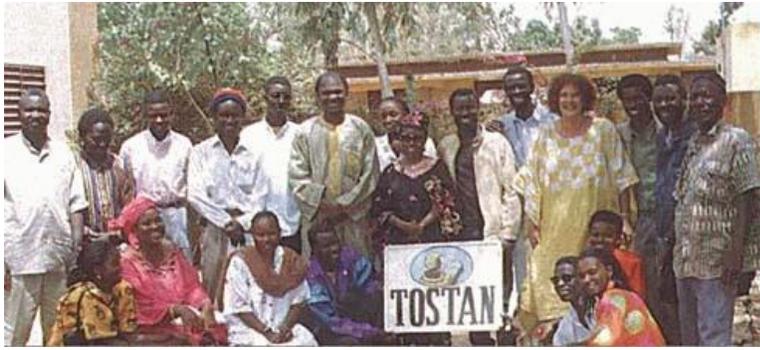
including environmental problems, health problems, and births. It is, thus, impossible for most women to consult with their husbands, who in turn lack status relative to leading men. Traditional leading men support the system, while more modern educated men, often with educated wives and small families, are not very prevalent or visible yet in the countryside.

Village elders told Ms. Stone that over 30 years ago, there was surface water, while today the wells are 150 feet deep and saline. She planted 1,500 trees over two years, and only a few survived. The farmers were reducing crop rotations, clear cutting for more peanuts, burning wood and dung for cooking, and burning fields to leave residue for fertilizing, all of which reduced crops and increased desertification. A marginal harvest her first year led to people running out of food, and the next year a drought destroyed the harvest, hurting the national as well as the local economy. Without millet, old huts began to collapse. Without a mandatory \$4 for supplies, parents could not send their children to school. Malnutrition increased illness and weakness.

The first Senegal can live without much money; it can't live without food. All the men in her village went to the cities. The animals died, reducing plowing power, transportation, food, and income. Ms. Stone also reported some villagers would walk 15 kilometers to see her for health care. Extended family mutual support spreads what little is available and prevents more deaths. Her village was a typical case.

While religion, the status of women, and poverty may be blamed, the problem is also due to lack of education and family planning services. Once these are supplied, birth rates begin to fall, the status of women rises, and they seek more educational and economic opportunities. Supplying education and family planning, however, is not simple, given the realities outlined above and the need for a comprehensive and non-coercive approach. In this situation women's groups, fostered by the Tostan program, become the only viable social mechanism for raising awareness and developing will among women, followed by working on men. Everyone knows something is wrong, and some of both sexes are ready for new ideas and change.

Tostan took time and local experience to develop, beginning with a children's center in Dakar in 1976. It trains facilitators to work in villages using the local language and culture in song, theater, stories, proverbs, games, poetry, and flip charts. The training program is interactive and fun, and it works because villagers become active in the process of learning. Facilitators teach literacy, arithmetic, telling time, calendar, human rights, health, hygiene, child care, the environment, problem solving, management, and leadership, and discuss specific issues like water that make these skills meaningful for the local situation. The six modules are in four languages. The program takes 18 months and has reached over 350 villages and over 31,000 people over the last 15 years. Tostan has also trained facilitators for 28 other non-governmental organizations. It is an application of the great knowledge gained over 50 years around the world from applied cultural anthropology and community development. The Tostan website has detailed information, and I will only present here in a little more detail from the website of the story of the village that Molly told us about at dinner:



The Malicounda Bambara Story

Malicounda Bambara was one of the many villages participating in the Tostan basic education program from 1995 to 1997 in Senegal. The women of Malicounda Bambara studied session fourteen of module seven on female genital cutting (FGC) in August 1996. Tostan facilitator, Mdey Maguette Diop, described what happened:

The women were at first hesitant to do a theater adapted from the story of Poolel, a girl who died as a result of FGC. We kept the same name as in the story - Poolel - which is a Pulaar name and didn't directly implicate the Bambaras in this tragedy, which may have helped.

The women did the story as theater but refused to discuss it afterwards. I kept asking them the questions that accompany the sessions, and no one would answer. The discussions in sessions one through thirteen were normally lively and animated. 'Why were they refusing to answer the questions?' I thought. 'Is it because I am Wolof and have not practiced FGC?'

So, I did the session again and again. Three times. The third time they finally started talking timidly then more and more women spoke up. they admitted that it was an ancient practice that they followed because it was a tradition and expected of them by the men and religious leaders.

Nonetheless, their human rights training (through earlier modules of the Tostan program) helped them understand that they have the right to the highest standard of health. They also have the right to express themselves and give their opinions. They hadn't known all this before and had never discussed it together.

Finally, we ended up talking and talking about it together often. The women decided talk to their "Ndey Dikke" (adopted sisters in the Tostan class) and to their husbands about the dangerous health consequences of FGC.

They also thought it important to first get the advice of the Imam and the village chief on the issue. They were surprised when they discovered that many fellow villagers supported an effort to end FGC. They then performed the theater in other neighborhoods of the village and decided to get those women discussing the issue."

By June 1997, the women had convinced enough people in the village of the danger of FGC that there were no public circumcision ceremonies held that year during the rainy season. A class participant said, "By that time, everyone was aware that there was a movement to end the practice in the village. If any woman did cut her daughter, she did it in secret for the first time, knowing she would be subject to public disapproval."

Tostan headquarters learned of the news and visited the village with trepidation to confirm the impact of their program. Tostan representatives were hesitant to broach the subject because of the cultural sensitivity of FGC. Tostan issued the following report:

"The women of Malicounda Bambara have made up their minds. They will no longer practice female genital cutting on the young girls of the village! There will no longer be annual ceremonies to mark the moment when 'girl' become 'real women' following the ancient traditions of their ethnic group. No longer will needles and razor blades be used to cut the girls. No longer the flow of blood, no longer suffering on the wedding night of their daughters and complications at childbirth. No longer will young girls die needlessly from infection or hemorrhaging caused by the female circumcision rite!"

The women had made this decision of their own free will and not because Tostan had tried to impose it on the village people. There were no circumcision rites held publicly that year, indicating they had really put into practice their decision and not just expressed the wish to do so. A public declaration was made and signed in a ceremony attended by villagers. The decision came after the women had already spent two years in the basic education program. They were accustomed to working together, trusted the program and one another and would be able to defend their decision with information gathered from their modules on hygiene, health, problem-solving, leadership and human rights.

The story did not end here. UNICEF and Tostan invited twenty journalists to visit Malicounda Bambara and the women spoke publicly about an issue that had been previously taboo to discuss. Despite repercussions from the village men over the publicity, the women stood firm in their decision to cease practicing FGC. Other villages soon began following their example, without having attended the Tostan training program.

Events since then have been equally dramatic, as told on the website.

Forestry and Energy.

Deforestation also causes desertification. About 57 percent of national energy comes from charcoal and fuelwood mostly produced and used by the first Senegal, and also a business of the third Senegal. In the peanut basin the farmers preserve their trees, but to the east trees are being cut for charcoal for cheap urban cooking in greater Dakar. Deforestation in the hinterland is accelerating deforestation and polluting the air in the city. Woodcutting has by far the most destructive human impact and is the major reason for the rapid decline of forest. On our trip to Niokolo Koba Park we traveled through the main area for charcoal from Kaolack to Tambacounda. We saw several big trucks piled high with large, smudged white bags stuffed with charcoal. The bags not only went

above the high walls of the cargo bed but bulged out the sides above the walls. These behemoths of petty capitalism rolled precariously down two-lane roads for Dakar.

The government is subsidizing butane, the “butaneization” policy, to save trees and clean the air. The government might consider a small tax on charcoal to subsidize butane and increase the market price difference. Education can help with people who can make a choice, but policing is unlikely to work given the vastness of the country and the small number of police. In the countryside peasants use fuelwood. The government is promoting an energy-efficient stove, saving 40 to 50% of fuel. It is being promoted through the Peace Corps and is called “ban ak suf” or “clay and soil.” Efforts to reduce use of charcoal have been somewhat successful, cutting use by 2/3 from 1992 to 1996, but only a little below 1987. Some progress has been made in butaneization and solar cooking.

An old centrally directed program of protected forests has been decentralized under a new forestry code, which gives local committees management power and incentives. They now have a stake in maintaining production for fuelwood and poles and have established new woodlots.

The first Senegal shades into the third for the more successful farmers, especially those with secure irrigation, enough land, and access to credit, markets, and technical information. They can produce a decent cash crop and move beyond subsistence, and as small farmers become part of the third Senegal.

The Second Senegal

The second Senegal is overwhelmingly urban, educated, and French speaking, and, as the third Senegal rises, its monopoly on power is gradually diminishing. It is not as a whole affluent by American standards, but is well off by African standards, and basically middle class, with only a small number of affluent and rich.

In the midst of my focus on the reality within the country, I initially forgot to ask how Senegal sees the world, which means how the second Senegal sees the world. For a medium sized country, Senegal has strong participation in international diplomacy and great influence and prestige. I have no doubt Senegal has been better at signing and ratifying international treaties than the U.S.

Why has Senegal been so prominent? The answer in part seems to be that domestic stability provides the space for paying attention to the world. This stability is not exactly based on democracy, but on an informal ability of the different ethnicities and interests to live together, an ability which is also allowing the gradual strengthening of democratic institutions. Equally important, the educated class has learned, through the historic synthesis of French and Senegalese cultures to be smoothly integrated into the world as a whole.

Political history.

The French culture of Senegal’s elite does not rest uneasily on some native identity but seems simply to be the cultural window through which educated Senegalese see the world and see it with a modern mind. Senegalese identity is, then, nested in a larger world, its regions constituting the

nation, the nation part of West Africa, which is part of a kind of French commonwealth, and is also part of the world. The world view of Americans is quite different because we are so big. We tend to be more dualistic, us and the rest of the world. Smaller nations do not have that luxury.

The French-Senegal connection is historic. The early 19th century saw a struggle for political dominance in Africa. Senegal, however, was not very profitable for the French, due to harassment by the English, the dry climate, and the reluctance of the local population to be exploited. In the now-dated words of the Encyclopedia Britannica of 1958, showing an odd sympathy for the French, “The precarious position of the governors, local wars and the cupidity of the Negro kinglets, who exacted a burdensome tribute, all combined to reduce trade to very little.” In 1849 peanuts began, shipped out of Rufisque, and grew steadily. The French built a fort in Dakar in 1857 to better help some merchants, but did not substantially subdue Senegal until 1865, and then only with a policy of respecting local customs. In 1886 the last Wolof king was killed in an insurrection. In the late 19th century, as the French expanded their influence, Senegal became part of a much larger French West Africa. France did not actually control all of the Senegal of today until 1904.

The French expanded their control into neighboring territories, and in 1908 Dakar became the capital of French West Africa (1902-1959), while the capital of Senegal remained in St. Louis. The French modernized Senegal with some industry and railroads, particularly rail from Dakar to Bamako in what was then called the Soudan part of French West Africa and is now Mali. The rail caused the role of the Senegal and Gambia Rivers for European penetration to fall. Dakar rose, also helped by port improvements pulling business from Rufisque. The downtown grew southeast of the port. North of the port along the rail line an industrial area developed.

The French gradually admitted a small but growing number of French-speaking natives into their society. Senegalese deputies sat in the French parliament. Black Senegalese fought for France in World War I. In World War II, the local French governor was at first loyal to Vichy and fought off a British-Free French attack, then later switched to the allies, allowing American troops to occupy Dakar. After World War II, two Senegalese Deputies helped write the French Constitution of 1946, and all Senegalese became French citizens.

One of these Deputies was Léopold Sedar Senghor, the Founding Father of Senegal. He was thoroughly French and thoroughly Senegalese. He was able to lead a more peaceful transition than George Washington, who was both English and American. Senghor was the only African admitted to the French Academy, for some of the best poetry written in French. His Socialist Party has been in power since before full independence in 1960. After twenty-four years as President of Senegal, he retired to France with his French wife.

Abdou Diouf has been president since Senghor stepped down in 1981. I think that is way too long to be healthy for democracy. Senegal is considered a multi-party system but, obviously, the opposition doesn't seem to be having much luck. While the political style is mostly democratic, the formal reality is still one of single-party dominance, some electoral fraud, centralized authority, and institution building.

Along with French culture, Senegal inherited old French bureaucratic centralism and new third-world socialism. Senghor and his socialist party were better at politics than economics. These

organizational and ideological problems reflected the Cold War, and Senegal into the 1980s was failing to develop. State-owned businesses were over-staffed, technologically behind, heavily subsidized, and not performing.

Now bureaucratic decentralization and market ideologies dominate the world, and the second Senegal is changing gears. Diouf's regime seems to be reasonably competent and is slowly decentralizing and moving to a market economy. The 1994 devaluation discussed below was a major turning point. A few major state industries have been privatized and others are in process. Compared to the rest of Africa, Senegal stands out for its moderation, progressiveness, stability, and democracy.

In January 1996 the parliament passed a law creating elected local governments, and the first local elections took place in November 1996. Unfortunately, the dominant Socialist Party manipulated the elections, so the vote lost some of its legitimacy. Nevertheless, in January 1997 regional, municipal, and rural councils began operating for the first time in Senegal's history, implementing an unusual, still tentative, effort at decentralization. The electoral fraud led to the creation of a non-partisan oversight group and to on-going efforts to improve the machinery of voting, a process strongly supported by opposition parties and even some in the dominant party. The oversight group monitored the 1998 legislative elections to the National Assembly, which were generally fair, although there is continuing controversy over election laws and which parties they favor. In 1999 a new Senate was elected, and in 2000, a new president will be elected. The U.S. through US AID has helped with education on how to vote and on improving procedures.

Economy

Western, highly monetized economies have learned to manage fiscal monetary policy and have stable competitiveness based on a highly educated labor force and advanced technologies. Several third world nations are part way through a transition to Western standards, especially in Latin America, the Asian tigers, and South Africa, but sub-Saharan Africa has just started, a few steps away from colonial dependency and raw material exports. World markets and export prices beyond its control can whipsaw a small economy like Senegal's. Such infancy in an era of globalization means high opportunity, but also vulnerability. The chance for one competitor to eat the other's lunch also means one may lose one's own.

Foreign exchange earnings provide the motor for growth in the domestic economy. In Senegal, fish, phosphate fertilizer mining (revenues up), peanuts (revenues down), and tourism (revenues up) earn the most foreign exchange. About 210,000 tons per year of phosphates are mined and mostly shipped to India. Senegal itself uses about 10,000 tons. Gold mining, building materials, and modern, Internet-based business services industries are growing.

Economic policy is the domain of the second Senegal. The Senegal economy is so small it needs to be part of a larger market, and it is, the Economic and Monetary Union of West African States. Making a West African Union economy work will be slow because the institutional problems of each nation are duplicated at the regional level. For example, the 16 French speaking states have different commercial codes that should be harmonized to facilitate trade and investment.

Senegal shares its currency with a collection of former French colonies, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, and Côte d'Ivoire. They participate in a monetary union, the African Financial Community (CFA, same as the name of the common currency), run by the Banque Centrale des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest ("B C E A O" on the currency). Unlike most currencies, the CFA does not float, that is, it does not vary in value daily in competition with other currencies. It is tied to the French Franc at a fixed rate. The advantage for French-Senegal commerce is a simple, fixed exchange rate, which is also an advantage for West African commerce, helping create a market big enough for a more modern economy.

Over time the money supply of one currency typically increases faster than that of another. The values of currencies get out of line for various reasons, one of which is government spending more money than it takes in and the central bank monetizing the debt (converting it into money) by buying government bonds. The money supply then expands faster than the economy. For the overvalued currency, foreign goods are underpriced, and export goods are overpriced.

The CFA over time got out of adjustment with the French franc (FF). In January 1994, France devalued the CFA, cutting the exchange value in half. For thirty years, the rate had been 50 CFA per FF and in an instant, it was 100 CFA per FF. Overnight, all import prices doubled. Overnight, Senegal received half the value in foreign currency of everything it sold on world markets. While a restructuring program had officially begun ten years earlier, the devaluation jolted the process forward.

The immediate result was hardship. For example, mini-bus fares rose to cover higher costs of imported gasoline. Briefly, inflation hit 30 percent, but more realistic prices led to the current cycle of growth, up every year since the devaluation. The economy grew 5.7 percent in 1998; with population growth, the per capita gain was about 3 percent. Inflation in 1997 and 1998 dropped below three percent. Domestic and foreign investment rose, and exports are rising faster than imports. The external debt, 69 percent of GDP in 1998, has stabilized.

Devaluation, however necessary in the short run, is not sufficient for the long run. Sustained growth requires fiscal discipline and "structural" reform—privatizing state businesses and creating free markets. Senegal is trying now to do this, with moderate success.

Government in Africa is a major employer, and if the government owns businesses, it employs even more. Politically, it has often been too easy to employ people in unproductive ways, and privatization is delayed. For example, privatization of Senelec, Senegal's electric power company, was long delayed—but finally did occur in 1999. The difficulty was to find a buyer willing to invest substantial sums in modernization given the limited purchasing power of buyers, reinforced by fears of losing jobs and suspicions of private profiteering.

The second Senegal is more interested in government, education, culture, and diplomacy than in business, making it slow to change policy to discipline government and to support business. The second Senegal, however, has made a sea change, with the rest of the world, away from state-directed economies and toward a larger share for the private sector. Their hearts may still be with socialism, but their heads are getting into business. Senegal agreed with the World Bank and IMF (International Monetary Fund) to the Agricultural and Private Sector Adjustment (PASA) program

of market-based reforms and implemented them 1995 to 1997. In August 1998, Senegal agreed to a new round of structural reforms with the IMF.

Spending is being reined in and the tax system improved. Senegal is slowly selling off 18 inefficient state businesses, with so far 8 sold or closed. The telecommunications company, Sonatel, has been one-third privatized and is efficiently run. The Dakar Free Trade Zone and the public water company have been privatized. With U.S. help, rice importing, processing, and distribution has been privatized, subject to market supply and demand, saving the government \$20 million per year. Peanuts processing, the national airline, and oil industries are being privatized.

Trade has been liberalized: import restrictions have been eliminated and export taxes abolished. Prices have been decontrolled. The government ended many “special concession agreements” creating government sanctioned monopolies, such as wheat and rice importing. It ended or reduced other subsidies and tax exemptions to certain enterprises. Senegal liberalized the Labor Code to make it possible to lay off surplus workers.

Current problems include the tougher issues that can't be changed easily from above, such as privatizations where the return to investor is not promising, as in the example of Senelec. Institutional issues abound, such as a small, untrained judiciary, inordinate legal delay, petty corruption, and paperwork delays. A training program for judges in commercial law, accounting, and business is being proposed. The “one stop counter” for foreign investors has not worked well, and Senegal is implementing “Trade Point” sponsored by UNCTAD. Trade Point will use Senegal's modern telecommunications and Internet to link the Ministry of Finance, freight forwarders, local banks, Customs, and the Central Bank. These links should expedite permits for business activity. US AID is funding the World Bank to compile a list of governmental permit requirements for businesses (the Investor's Road Map) and will use it as a basis for discussing more streamlining.

Transportation.

Many problems affect transportation. Senegal since independence has failed to maintain or upgrade the transportation infrastructure left by the French. CETUD, discussed below, covers urban passenger transport. The rest of transportation is covered by a Transport Sector Adjustment Program, PAST, a \$600 million program mostly funded by the World Bank and smaller international entities starting in 1991. Three-fourths of the money is going into highways. Modern paving on three main roads from Dakar—north, south, and east—are gradually being repaved and extended. Since 1997 car insurance requirements are enforced by proof of payment stickers on windshields, and the auto insurance industry has been growing.

Competition by roads has reduced transport by sea and by rail to the north, but, to the south, the road has two border crossings at The Gambia, making boats competitive from Dakar to Ziguinchor, the Casamance port. The big ship “La Diola” is an interesting mixed enterprise, with private management and military security, and the “African Queen” is all private. Costs at the state-owned, deep-water Port of Dakar are higher than at its competitors, so the port is losing business and has some incentive to reform. Five percent of PAST funds are going into maritime improvements.

At the airport, Air Afrique has a monopoly providing ground support to international flights except Air France, and overcharges for its services. Air Afrique, a creation of West African states, also has a quasi-monopoly on international flights. Air Senegal, a state-owned company with two airplanes, has a monopoly on national flights. Three percent of PAST funds are going into air transport.

The old rail going 1,300 kilometers from Dakar to the Mali capital of Bamako is a major carrier of freight, passengers, and baggage. Twice a week an “express” train makes the trip in 24 to 36 hours. It carries 90 percent of freight going to Mali. There is a major delay at the border as engines are switched (the one line is run by two companies) and customs are cleared. The train crosses the border and stops to do customs again. Small traders, mostly women, crowd into hallways, spaces between cars and by bathrooms, and onto empty freight trains. Efforts at economic union are not working well, and the train is “inefficient, slow, generally tedious and unsafe.” (U.S. Embassy report on transportation, 1998). Rail is getting 16 percent of PAST funds.

I was also interested in cars coming into central Dakar. There is a fine of \$11 for illegal parking. Illegally parked cars may get the sabot (literally, wooden shoe, what Americans call “the boot”) on a tire. Gasoline costs about \$4 per gallon, and the tax on gasoline is more than 60% of the price. There are pollution controls on new cars, but 80 percent of cars are used. While my notes say 30 cars per day come into the center, I think I meant 30,000 cars. Parking management in old Dakar now looks like it consists mostly of just not having places to park, but there is a Traffic and Parking Master Plan, and a Traffic Bureau is being trained.

Desertification.

The second Senegal, that of the educated elite, has been studying desertification problems intensely in a process involving all sectors. This process also exemplifies how the world increasingly works using general purpose governments, financial institutions, and specialized organizations from the international to the local level, integrating their activities in a complex web connecting geographic levels, general and special purposes governments, and non-governmental organizations. The large number of entities creates a mind-boggling alphabet soup, overloading the newcomer.

The general-purpose governments in this case at the international level were the national governments that participated in the Rio Conference in 1992 on the global environment (which produced Agenda 21 and other commitments), the United Nations (which after Rio created a committee of governments on desertification), the nations which adopted the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) in Paris in June 1994, and the World Bank. More specialized were the Secretariat of the CCD, the UN Environmental Programme, the UNDEP, the Netherlands aid agency, the Canadian Agency for International Development, the French Mission for Cooperation and Cultural Action, and GTZ (the German aid agency).

The U.S. Government participated through its Embassy, the Agency for International Development (US AID), and EROS (Earth Research Observation System) Data Center of the U.S. Geological Survey. The international agencies were coordinated by the Permanent Committee of Leading States in the Fight against the Drying of the Sahel (Comité Permanent Inter Etats de Lutte contre La Sécheresse au Sahel, CILSS). Two international conferences of parties have been held, in Rome in 1997 and in Dakar in December of 1998.

In Senegal, the organizing and planning started in 1993. At the national level the national government created and funded two new agencies, the Department for the Environment and Nature Protection (Ministere de l'Environnement et de La Protection de La Nature, MEPN), and the High Council for Natural Resources and the Environment (Conseil Supérieur des Ressources Naturelles et de l'Environnement, CONSERE). The CONSERE Secretariat is guided by a special inter-ministerial council headed by the prime minister and by a Permanent Committee of advisors and is managed by a Permanent Secretary. The level of complexity was worthy of the U.S. government, and it gets more complex as more participants are brought into the process.

In 1993, with a mandate and money, CONSERE began work on the National Environmental Action Plan (Plan National d'Action pour l'Environnement, PNAE), a broad planning process for all natural resources and sustainability. To go into more detail on desertification, another planning process was started to produce the National Action Program (Programme d'Action National de Lutte Contre La Desertification, PAN), which was coordinated with the PNAE process. (“Senegalese NAP: A Participatory and Iterative Process,” CONSERE, no date, 4 pp.)

In February 1995, CONSERE sponsored a “national seminar” on the PNAE and on desertification and, having planned the steps of an elaborate study, began to carry them out. In March 1996, CONSERE sponsored a workshop to develop a communication and consultation strategy. In May 1997, a series of national forums began. CONSERE published the PNAE in September 1997. In August 1998, a final forum in Dakar approved the PAN, which was published in October 1998, on time for the international meeting in Dakar in December. These plans are also linked to other specific programs for livestock, forests, biodiversity, and land tenure.

Through many workshops and hearings around the country, all parties were consulted: state technical agencies, non-governmental non-profit organizations (NGOs), local government, farmers, women's groups, youth groups, “communication professionals,” training and research institutions, civic associations, religious leaders (imams and oulémas), presidents of rural councils, businesses, political parties, labor unions. Most of these entities had a representative on the 19-member Permanent Committee advising CONSERE. The planners and participants followed three logical steps: define the problem in detail, identify human activities that cause the problems, and formulate an action plan.

The CCD (the UN Convention to Combat Desertification) was translated into French, Arabic, Wolof and Pulaar and distributed, so the 22 percent of the nation who were literate could learn more. Brochures, flyers, radio, television, audio tapes, video tapes, tee-shirts, hats, and calendars publicized the issues and the proceedings. Did you know that June 17 is World Day on Desertification? Many people in Senegal do.

The science behind the planning.

Much of the scientific work was done for CONSERE by the Center for Ecological Monitoring (Centre de Suivi Ecologique pour La Gestion des Ressources Naturelles, CSE). US AID, EROS Data Center, and CSE did high resolution satellite images, airborne videography, and biological and socio-economic field research. Early work in 1982-84 covered 600 sites, with a special ten-year

assessment of 150 sites in 1994-95. They also studied Landsat images from 1972 and later. This work may be the first of its kind for Africa, in scope, technology, duration, usefulness, and institutionalization.

They produced excellent photos, maps, and analysis documenting desertification, all portrayed in a remarkable “environmental profile” on a large sheet about three feet high and four and half feet wide, the one I saw in Col. Diop’s office. On the left is a huge color satellite image of the whole nation. A key of small images helps interpret the large image. On the right are 43 color pictures of different places from a low flying airplane, each numbered to correspond with numbers on the large image. Under each picture is a description and issue summary. Along the bottom are five panels. One shows the decline in rainfall on six maps, one for each decade. The next shows regions by vegetation and land use, similar to a map in the upper center showing geographic land use zones, but more fine grained and complex. The middle panel shows 12 small satellite pictures, one for each month, of how the vegetation changes with the rain, as a wave of green sweeps up from the south, then retreats again. It also has pictures of three places showing “before” and six “after” the rain. Next come ten pictures showing various kinds of environmental degradation, and finally, at lower right, ten pictures of solutions. All the pictures have explanatory text.

The solutions include protection of Niokolo Koba Park, “one of the principal refuges for wildlife and plants in Africa.” Judging from the photo, there are at least eight hippos in the park. How did they find them? Other solutions:

- “Recycle organic matter to the soil.”
- “Keep crop waste on the fields during the dry season, which contributes to enriching the soil and fighting soil erosion.”
- “Replant and protect trees. This picture shows evidence of increased production under a tree (*Acacia albida*) on a field of millet.” And it really did, with higher growth well beyond the drip line, because the Acacia fixes nitrogen, drops its leaves in the rainy season, providing fertilizer and sunlight, then provides shade when it is dry, conserving water. Crops under Acacia are double or triple those not. Acacia seed pods provide good forage.
- “Apply the technique of ‘mise en défens’ [defensive barrier] around small fields. Put to work measures that permit sustainable use of natural resources. This aerial picture shows a 100-year-old mise en défens. It is a witness to the original forest.” The picture shows a dark green triangle of densely vegetated land and trees in the midst of an area of light green short grass with a few trees. It is not clear what stops grazing there, perhaps some kind of hedgerow.
- “Stabilize the dune” with trees, e.g., the filao tree, slowing the advance of dunes near the coast. (Sand dunes and salinization are increasing along the north coast.)
- “Build small ridges of stone or earth” to infiltrate water and prevent erosion.

The Geological Survey has all the information from this map and more—much more—at a website listed below.

The Plan.

CONSERE has the responsibility now to carry out the PAN, energizing the networks developed during the planning process. CONSERE created a Consultative Group of all national parties. The international parties created the "Informal Donors Group" to help implement the PAN.

The long, complex plan calls for many things, some of which continue actions already underway, such as reforestation along the north coast to stabilize the dunes. It calls for continuing large, protected areas of pastureland mostly in the north central area, protected forests scattered through the middle, the north coast, and Casamance, and protected parkland, the biggest being Niokolo Koba, followed by the much smaller Sine Saloum with its threatened mangroves, and a few small parks. The plan calls for continuing development of village cashew tree orchards, planting of hedgerows, reforestation, dikes along rivers to keep out salt water. Each part of the country has its own policies.

Peasant farmers need low interest loans and technical help to change their practices, to allow 1 in 4 hectares which exclude animals and have trees. From Kaolack to Casamance a cashew tree can grow to profitability in four to five years and have a crop of one hundred kilograms of nuts. Trees can stop wind erosion and provide cooking fuel. Farmers also need crop rotation and inter-cropping with legumes and better kitchen gardens. They need better breeds of cows, sheep, and goats, and to reduce their numbers. Crop residue and green manure on the fields can absorb rain.

The government has created multi-functional "Centers for Rural Expansion" (CERs) in most of Senegal's 90 arrondissements. There are 320 "rural outposts." The Ministry of Agriculture supports rural agents trained by the Ministry of Environment to educate farmers. Each primary school should have a "small school forest," and almost 70 percent do. There are also health and forestry plans. The CERs support natural resource committees in the 320 Communautés Rurales, roughly equal to a American county. The committee are elected locally, and include farmers, women, youth, and herders. Environmental and business goals are integrated. With help from American universities, 15 rural committees developed land use plans and committed local resources as a basis for outside aid. Some 56 communities in the Kaolack area have cooperatives, most headed by women, assisted by Africare, US AID, and the Peace Corps.

The second Senegal and international community are, thus, trying to help the first Senegal, but the expansive hopes on paper are slow to arrive in the fields. Politically, the international community and many nations have shifted from direct state programs to emphasizing the role of local people—educating them, involving them in planning, and giving them an incentive to change. This shift is especially important given the French bureaucratic, centralized tradition. While the big picture is continuing degradation and decline, there are many individual cases of success, and some hope these may grow enough to turn things around with family planning, education, and improved farming practices.

The U.S. and Senegal.

The U.S. has good relations with Senegal, and their importance is increasing. The primary relationship is necessarily with the government and business community, the second Senegal, but AID and the Peace Corps assure contact with the rest of the nation.

The embassy mission statement provides a good overview:

“Senegal is America's most important francophone partner in Africa. A voice of moderation and statesmanship on peace in the Middle East, conflict resolution in Africa, human rights promotion and disarmament, Senegal is a veteran participant in international peacekeeping. It became the first African country to join the Desert Storm coalition, provided troops for the West African force in Liberia, and recently became a charter member of the U.S.-proposed African Crisis Reaction Force. Senegal's 35 years of political stability and its increasing political pluralism buttress our partnership. Commercial relations with the U.S. are still underdeveloped but show promise. U.S. social influence on Senegal is on the rise, especially in the areas of education and popular culture.”

This statement, I think, mainly applies to the second Senegal, and the only part that gives me pause is “popular culture.” Heaven help them.

The Embassy operation is described in the *Welcome to Dakar* booklet. It is headed by the Chief of Mission (the Ambassador) and a Deputy Chief. The U.S. Mission itself has five main Department of State sections: political, economic (“econoff”), consular, security, and administration. The consular section provides “citizen services” for about 1,300 Americans in Senegal and for Senegalese who want to go to the U.S. There is also a medical officer. With varying degrees of independence from the core of the State Dept. are other agencies:

- > The U.S. Information Service, which runs a Cultural Center
- > The Agency for International Development (US AID) and the Peace Corps, which have a \$25 million annual budget.

US AID focuses on family planning (about 15% of funds), child survival (15%), HIV/AIDS (5%), environmental protection for crop production (25%), and promoting small business and economic growth (40%). US AID helped develop the family planning program now being implemented. Breast feeding is increasing. Infant and child mortality have been declining, but immunization and urban problems continue. The HIV/AIDS rate is 1.4%, very low for Africa, a success story attributed to an early, aggressive prevention program using publicity, meetings with religious and political leaders, and strong surveillance.

US AID helped six bank branches improve farm loans. US AID will train managers and help improve regulation of some 30 small banks, leading to a loan guarantee program for very small loans to new clients. Some of these loans will help rural groups with natural resource projects.

US AID is now using “performance indicators” to measure progress; they are specific and useful. Examples include “ratio of private investment to GDP increase,” “percent of local governments implementing 90 percent of their planned budgets in rural communities,” and “percent of infants breast-fed increase.” Such indicators help counterbalance sweeping, vague, programmatic language which promises more than it can deliver.

- > Military attaches, who help with equipment, training, and joint exercises for West African peace keeping.

Since the Dakar airport is important, there is a representative from the Federal Aviation Administration. The Dakar mission also has four regional officers who back up six other U.S. embassies in west Africa.

The Commercial Section and interagency Private Sector Working Group of the U.S. Mission seek to improve commercial relations. Senegal's need for American technologies exceeds its purchasing power, educational level, and institutional capability. Government favoritism to socially connected firms can create problems for American business. The Embassy both helps individual American businesses and tries to reform policies affecting the business climate—privatizing the free trade zone, liberalizing trade, and resolving disputes. Initiatives are underway for telecommunications, power production, solid waste removal, and bulk grain storage.

Other countries also play a large role in helping Senegal. The pattern of multi-leveled complexity of general purpose and specialized governmental agencies that works on desertification is also found for other functions. Foreign donors fund over one third of the government's budget. They fund about 60 percent (over \$500 million) of Senegal's investment budget, of which the U.S. gives only about 4 percent. U.S. aid comes in ninth place, after France, Germany, Japan, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, the World Bank, European Union, and the IMF. (The "Briefing for the President," however, put the US in fourth place, after France, Japan, and Germany.) Other donors include the African Development Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Development Program, the West African Development Bank, Canada, Netherlands, and Italy. Aid efforts are coordinated through a consultative group, which last met in Paris in April 1998.

The Third Senegal

Drought and barrenness are pushing the tribesmen of the first Senegal off the land into cities, especially Dakar, which are growing faster than the rural areas. In 1950 the population of the larger Dakar area was a quarter of a million; by 1999 it was over 2 million. Thiès went from 50,000 in 1950 to 210,000 today, and Kaolack grew from 60,000 to 180,000. In the broad sweep of history, the first Senegal has the longest story, but lost most power to the Second Senegal, only to be forced against its will off the land into the cities, where its numerical strength and energy will gradually increase its influence, but with a radically altered culture.

The small French historical city of Dakar has since the 1960s been dwarfed by development of new areas on the Cape. The growth is so rapid the maps do not keep up. The old Ville de Dakar has been outstripped by growth in Medina, Mermoz, Grand Dakar, Baobabs, Liberté, Ouakam, and so on, just to its north; by Parcelles Assainis, Cambérène, Pikine, and Guédiawaye, all working-class areas on the north side of the Cape; and much smaller, Rufisque, an old industrial suburban about 25 kilometers to the east.

The new population is fashioning a new identity for Senegal. The third Senegal, still characterized by low education and low productivity, is learning quickly about urban life. Its members are hardworking, entrepreneurial, and often the first in their families to be educated. Their "popular" economy is more involved in the money economy than the hinterland, but not fully monetized, still depending on family connections, barter, and doing without. The third Senegal is also getting formal education and finding its way into the jobs of the modern economy.

The third Senegal depends on the second Senegal to create the conditions it needs for economic opportunity. In a crisis, the modern economy contracts and the popular economy takes up the slack. The appearance of poverty to Western eyes obscures the variations in poverty over time and among different families as experienced by locals. The casual visitor does not see the uneven but upward movement of large numbers of working-class people as they learn urban skills.

Public transit.

While “transportation” is a topic of the economy, “public transit” is a topic of the everyday life of the third Senegal. In metro Dakar about 36 percent of vehicle trips are by private car, about 11 percent by taxi, about 36 percent by minibus (cars rapides), about 14 percent by public bus (SOTRAC), about 1 percent by the PTB commuter train, and the remainder by other bus services.



Urban density, poverty, and distance, however, mean that about half of trips are by walking, especially to school and to shop. Combined with the data above, only about one-sixth of total trips are made by private car.

About two-thirds of the modern jobs are heavily concentrated in the old Ville, while the workers live to the north. A few modern roads make employment reachable by rapides and buses from new areas. Parts of the highway network have been overwhelmed by growth in traffic. Given the high tax on gasoline, there should be funds for transit and for bottleneck improvements. Many arterials are narrow, unpaved, un signaled, and unsigned.

The backbone of transit in Dakar is the privately-owned “cars rapides,” an amazing system that works remarkably well at the same time it seems about to collapse. The rapide is a Renault minibus with room for 25 people. Starting in 1947, there are now about 2,500 rapides in urban Dakar and another 1,500 in inter-urban service. Each is painted with a variety of colors and has the name of the owner and usually an Islamic phrase. One big company owned by the Mourid Islamic brotherhood and many smaller ones employ about 30,000 people. The brotherhood also owns taxis and 35 seat Mercedes buses, the Ndiaga Ndiayes.

While the driver of a rapide is hell-bent on getting somewhere, the fare collector hangs onto the back, feet on the bumper and a strong grip on the back door, which is always open for people to

board. The old Rapides, whose *average* age is 20 years, are kept alive by mechanics of awesome genius.

Since there was no subsidy, the 1994 devaluation forced fares up about 20 percent to cover foreign fuel costs. The Rapides of Dakar may not look better, but they work better, than transit in the U.S. because they mostly pay their own way. Transit privatization is much further along in Senegal than in the U.S. (Americans should follow our own advice, but that would require much higher gasoline prices.)

There is also a smaller public bus system, SOTRAC, which has been troubled by debt, non-payment of workers (caused by not having much of any fare) and dying old buses. It has 130 buses and is recently privatized with some subsidy. Its buses, now about 15 years old, will need replacing. There are some smaller firms, like SAGAM, a security company providing bus service.

The old railroad from Dakar to Bamako comes into the city along the south coast of Cap Vert to a station on the edge of downtown near some ministries. Commuter trains started fairly recently, in 1987. They are called the PTBs, for Petit Train Bleu, Small Blue Trains, which they are. They have about 20 to 22 thousand passenger trips per day, about 2 percent of public transport riders. There are also some taxis and some “clandos” (clandestine, unregulated taxis).

During the 1990s, Senegal developed a National Transportation Plan with \$700 million for transit and \$400 million for roads. In 1997 the government created CETUD as an inter-agency coordinating body to implement the plan; its assembly includes 11 national agency representatives, 6 from local government, and 10 from transit agencies. CETUD met with the World Bank in December 1998, in Paris for a loan to renew the bus fleet. The low income of riders does not permit much fare increase while the government is under pressure to privatize businesses. The new buses will cost some ten times as much as the old. The amount of subsidy is hard to negotiate. Rapide fares are low, and the expense of replacing them great. The ride costs only 100 to 200 CFA, or 18 to 36 cents. Hopefully, some international aid will help out, but, sooner or later, somehow, fares must be raised. Also, CETUD is analyzing the potential for the government to lease new rapides and buses to operators, allowing a big capital expense to become a smaller monthly payment.

Unfortunately, current trends are reducing the willingness of the growing middle class to use transit. Indirect costing of auto use, which subsidizes private demand, is a worldwide problem. Reform is hard when most policy makers drive cars. The rate of car ownership is still only 47 cars per 1,000 people, but it is concentrated in Dakar and increasing with affluence. Air pollution increases, since mostly used cars are imported. As the Rapides lose riders, given their crowding and generally low-income clientele, more private cars cause more congestion, and inefficient cars slow down the efficient rapides.

I urge a gradual transition, starting with new buses that can appeal to middle-income riders. New buses serving middle class areas could charge a higher fare and combined with other policies, reduce congestion. Those policies would be congestion pricing and parking. Congestion pricing, perhaps variable peak hour entry fees like Singapore's, could be applied to access to downtown. More aggressive parking management could help.

Self-help public services.

One of the guests at the formal Embassy lunch, Malik Gaye, wrote a book, *Entrepreneurial Cities; Public Services at the Grassroots* (1996, ENDA, Dakar). Gaye works for ENDA, a non-governmental organization specializing in helping grassroots, low resource movements. He discusses the principles, examples from around the world, and programs in Rufisque. The concept of national governments helping poor people in cities has failed. The poor people have built new cities without government. The formal model of democracy calls for electing leaders who collect taxes and implement regulations and services. The emerging model calls for continuing egalitarian collaboration among affected parties, similar to the rural work of Tostan. Local governments and local non-profits are closer to the details of new worker suburbs, and thus better able to help at the critical points.

“Marginalised citizens are being forced to find co-operative solutions to new urban problems that are reaching critical proportions. They have achieved a measure of success. Appropriate, sustainable, pragmatic solutions are being found and populations are being mobilized. Through their work they are developing the notion of *good governance*, ...” (p.8)

ENDA sponsored several community development activities in Rufisque. Neighborhood meetings and surveys in three “poverty pockets” found that few had electricity and most dumped their wastewater on the streets, creating stagnant puddles. Solid waste piled up on unofficial heaps. Only about a third of households had toilets. Most people are under 25 years old and mostly have two years or less of schooling. Only 21 percent are working for cash and make and spend about \$150 per month. The local clinic treated diarrhea, dysentery, dermatitis, and other hygiene related problems, even malaria and cholera. After the sewer and waste programs, these problems decreased greatly.

The people through various committees set up a system of door-to-door collection of waste using horse-drawn carts. Women bring buckets and basins to the cart and pay from 2¢ to 5¢ depending on how much they are disposing of. Cart waste is sorted into compost given to sewer plants, sellable bottles and aluminum, and waste going to the dump. Carters must work two hours, then are free to use their cart on their own account. They and their horses make enough to live on and pay off the \$600 loan to buy the cart. (There are variations on these arrangements.) By 1998 about 4,500 households were disposing of about 6 tons a day of waste.

The wastewater program used small diameter pipes at a shallow depth, suitable for a tropical climate and low volumes. They are cleaned periodically. The households with shower, sink, and squat toilet have to maintain a wastewater chute, fat filter, and inspection hatches. The sewage flows to lagoon-style sewer plants which produce irrigation water and compost. Some water is used for farming within the neighborhood where there were once rubbish heaps, and the crops are sold. Other water is sold for reforestation, city landscaping, and making cement moldings, flowerpots, and plaster board. The compost is used for reforestation and gardens. By 1998 about 10,000 meters of pipe had been laid connecting about 750 compounds. The waste and sewer programs created about 120 jobs, mostly for young men.

Another example of self-help services was the Jokkoo - AJC₃ Social Center we visited in Pikine, described above. Here is the report sent to us by its director.

Report on the Jokkoo - AJC₃ Social Center

The Center was founded in 1996 by the youth association of Pikine, a suburb of Dakar. The settlement is mainly caused by the exodus of peasants from the barren lands to the city in search of better living conditions. Now Pikine is one of the largest cities with severe social and economic problems.

The youth association of Pikine does community projects to tackle social issues related to the development of Pikine, particularly educational issues. The center was created with the help and support of an important part of the community.

"Jokkoo - AJC₃" means solidarity. The mission of the center is to provide schooling and training to underprivileged children and youth by giving them adequate education and social assistance. Some are from poor families; others are orphans and street children.

The first section is concerned with children under six years old. They are mostly orphans from different races and origins. They attend motherly courses under the supervision of a teacher and a social assistant, both working as volunteers for the Center. The Center provides them with comfort and family warmth through games, hobbies, and entertainments.

The second section are young boys and girls between 9 and 18 years old. Some of them have been rejected from school and are homeless or generally street children or youth, or youth working under difficult conditions to support their family. The Center provides them with schooling and training in painting, mechanics, woodcarving, and other professional fields of their choice.

The third section, arts and crafts center, has a workshop on arts and crafts. Children and youth are trained in crafts like drawing, carving, drum-making, and painting. Within three years of study, the Center helps them run their own shop and lead a normal life.

The fourth section is the literacy program. The Center develops literacy courses for adults in general and women in particular. They are taught to read and write. A small credit and sparing [?] is also set up to help them start their own business and support their family.

The Center has recently opened a new section in African musical instruments and dance. Young boys and girls and sometimes adults are taught to make African instruments like the Kora and the Balafon. A new band has been set up and is now performing over in neighboring districts.

The Center also organizes sensitizing campaigns on social issues, such as health, education, and human rights. Other campaigns are organized for young children and boys addicted to drugs and violence.

The purpose is to develop prevention and build awareness among the community for a global response against poverty, illiteracy, youth delinquency, and mistreatment of children.

For further information contact Abdoul Aziz Ndoeye, Manager

Pikine cite I cotaf 3 / Social Center

No. 3257 Dakar, Senegal

Tel.: 834-2705, fax: 834-6033, email: Ajc3@caramail.com



Conclusion.

While I'm no expert on Senegal, I continue to be concerned that the country may define its future in Western terms, when the West, particularly the U.S., despite high incomes for the affluent, continues to have severe problems of child welfare and criminal violence, and poor distribution of income and racial inequality. The U.S. causes internal and international environmental devastation, unsustainability, and exploitation of third world labor. American materialism, loss of spiritual values, and profound ignorance about the world we live in raise serious questions about our ability or right to lead, yet our flashy wealth can be all too attractive to poorer nations. Our vast subsidies to car use has devastated the landscape, burdened the economy, polluted air and water, and undercut urban living and community. I think Senegal will be helped by the Internet, a scientific understanding of its desertification, family planning, the comprehensive empowerment program of Tostan, and many other things. In my mind I can't draw a clear line between good and bad modernization, but a moderate growth rate bringing along most people seems far better than a boom based on a few hyper-growth sectors and wrenching social dislocation. Senegal seems, fortunately, to fall into the former category. The American part of me wants them to reform faster, but a deeper part is rooting for a little persistent inefficiency.

Senegal on the web

Framework for Long-Term Monitoring of Natural Resources in Senegal (very extensive environmental profile): edcsnw3.cr.usgs.gov/senegal/senegal.html

For published papers relating to the above, search USGS Publications/Library for Senegal and Tappan

edcwww.cr.usgs.gov/publications/search.cgi

Africa Data Dissemination Service (satellite images, digital maps, West African Spatial Analysis Project (WASA)

edcsnw4.cr.usgs.gov/adds/c1/54/sg/sg.html

Tostan

townonline.koz.com/visit/Tostan

US Embassy

www.usia.gov/abtusia/posts/SG1/wwwhemb.htm

US AID

www.info.usaid.gov/pubs/cp2000/afr/senegal.html

www.info.usaid.gov/pubs/cp99/afr/sn.htm

Tourist info

Destination Guide, Africa, Senegal

www.africaguide.com/country/senegal/index.htm

General info, good links www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/Country_Specific/Senegal.html

Languages, ethnicities

www.sil.org/ethnologue/countries/Sene.html

A list of 77 web sites, the best place to start additional research on Senegal

www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/sene.html

