

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

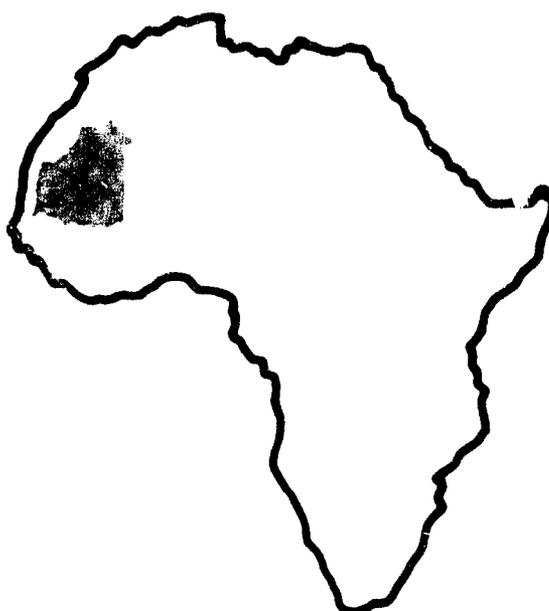
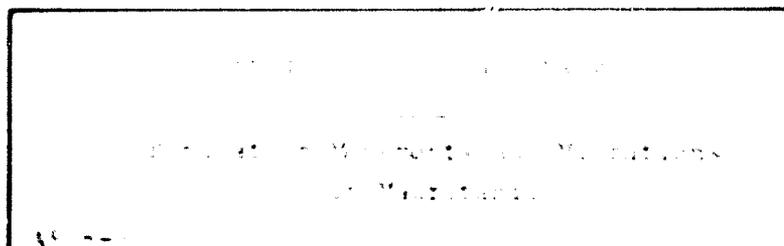
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POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND MIGRATIONS

IN MAURITANIA

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POPULATION MOVEMENTS AND MIGRATIONS IN MAURITANIA

By Pierre BOUTE

One of the major aspects of economic and social change in Mauritania is the marked mobility of the population. From time immemorial, the different ethnic groups of Mauritania have been involved in important population movements for reasons connected with their lifestyle as well as with geographical and economic conditions. As a result, they have come to be characterized by a particularly fluid and mobile mode of spatial organization. This is especially true of the pastoralist and nomadic Moors, as well as of the Peulhs, who are relative latecomers in Mauritania. This mobility of Mauritania's population groups is primarily a feature of their economic organization. The more or less regular rhythms of livestock movements often get extrapolated into political movements connected with control over grazing areas, or into ideological movements such as the spread of Islam which, beginning in the 11th century, has helped justify the southward advance of Berber tribes. These movements are more or less definitive, and are dictated by economic considerations such as the need to open up new pasture lands. On the other hand, the agricultural potential of the Senegal River basin has made it a magnet for many farming populations. Varying land claims as well as political and ideological conflicts have often resulted in significant instances of population ebb and flow. Scattering, spreading, mixing, these movements have ended up shaping the complex population network we have today.

During the colonial period, especially during the last two decades of

that period, this mobility was intensified to an appreciable degree. It also took on a different character. Apparently, its underlying causes were no longer political or ideological, but essentially economic. The drought certainly was a climatic catastrophe forcing populations to undertake massive shifts; but it was equally the consequence of the situation of dependence in which Mauritania's producers were placed. Formerly, population movements could be starting points for political and social reorganization. The current population movements, however, take the form of labor migrations or a drift from the rural areas; as such, these movements seriously dislocate the social structure. In fact, not to put too fine a point on it, they are destructive of the social order. In former times population movements were an integral part of the pastoral and nomadic lifestyle, as well as to a certain extent of agricultural life, being connected with the search for new farmland, the practice of leaving land lying fallow for long periods, etc. These days, however, population movements are causing a radical transformation of these lifestyles. This is especially true in instances where these population movements bring about the sedentarization of herdsmen or the unplanned urbanization of migrant groups.

In this study we shall attempt to clarify two issues : first, the historical and cultural aspect of this spatial mobility; and secondly, the current economic and social changes related to it.

Thus we shall isolate four factors:

1. the historical and cultural dimension of spatial mobility
2. the prevailing conditions, factors and reasons favoring migration;

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3. the spatial and social organization of migration ; and
4. the settlement of migrants in the urban areas.

1. Spatial mobility: the historical and cultural aspect

We shall first try to find out how this mobility fits into the culture of Mauritania's ethnic groups, and how it manifests itself in their history. We do not aim here to present an exhaustive treatment of the subject entailing a survey of the population movements which have produced the present demographic mix and determined the spatial location of these groups. We shall limit ourselves to a discussion of principal changes during the colonial period. We shall also try to gauge the way in which this spatial mobility operates and how it fits into the cultural framework of each of these groups. In other words, we shall attempt to evaluate the way in which this spatial mobility fits into the specific articulation of the features of the economic, social and political structures peculiar to each of these groups.

1. 1. Pastoralist mobility

A certain degree of spatial mobility is necessary for pastoralists. The principle of the pastoralist mode of production, after all, is that the livestock herd itself travels in search of its fodder. This necessary mobility is summed up in two terms : transhumance refers to a situation in which the human population remains settled while its livestock travels under the guidance of herdsman ; and nomadism refers to a situation in

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which the human population and its livestock herds both travel. It is hardly necessary to harp on the cultural implications of this nomadic lifestyle at the level of forms and practices of spatial organization. (1)

The forms and values so shaped naturally affect current forms of mobility in Moorish society. For example, the establishment of geographical commercial networks which at times extend over long distances -- some reaching all the way to Central Africa -- in a certain measure reproduces networks of relationships between tribespeople, herdsmen and caravan teams capable of spreading human groups over thousands of kilometers while still keeping alive in them a feeling that they belong to the same community.

Climatic conditions, pasture quality, the species of animals reared, access to water, etc. were all factors that helped determine the nature of pastoralist and nomadic movements in Mauritania. To simplify the matter slightly, we may distinguish the following types :

- Exploitation of pasture land supporting annual vegetation in the Sahel zone : in this case movements follow a South-North axis, with livestock herds moving up to the northern pastures in the annual rainy season. All the livestock species are involved, especially cattle and small livestock herdsmen which extend much farther north, may from time to time be superimposed on movements of cattle-herdsmen.

(1) A.Leroi Gourhan, in Le Geste et la Parole, Albin Michel, 1963, makes a special study of the "radial" organization of nomadic space, contrasting it with the "concentric" organization of space characteristic of sedentary agricultural cultures.

- Exploitation of pasture land supporting non-annual vegetation in the Sahara zone : the feasibility of this type of pastoralist activity depends on irregularly distributed rainfall caused by the confluence of varying climatic hinterland. In this zone the necessity of long, irregularly-timed treks, coupled with the difficulty of access to water, puts a premium on the raising of camels.

- Exploitation of pasture lands in zones experiencing marked floods : these zones produce rather stable shrub-type vegetation along the seasonal river basins and in the water catchment areas. This makes possible a type of nomadism ranging over shorter distances, primarily involving small livestock, but also embracing camels and cattle when rainfall is sufficient.

From the colonial period to this day conditions governing this pastoralist mobility have remained constant, even if contingent difficulties have occasioned more or less long-term disturbances. For example, in periods of drought, the southward movements of herdsmen get prolonged (as happened as a result of the rain precipitation shortfall in the Eastern Sahel zone in 1979). Or certain pasture lands may be closed off for safety reasons or because of war (as was partly the experience of some camel herdsmen during confrontations with the POLISARIO movement). On the other hand, a series of good rains in the northern regions with well-known pasture lands, such as Tiris and the dune areas etc. can attract a temporary concentration of livestock on these pasture lands. This was the case after the heavy rains of December 1969 -- a situation likely to be repeated in the

same zone after the 1979 rains.

Nevertheless, the spatial distribution of population groups has been considerably modified during the past decades, and there have been very large pastoralist group movements. The reason is that territorial organization, which is the social form taken by this spatial distribution, does not reflect only ecological and economic constraints. Thus, to understand the nature of these movements, we shall have to say a few words about the concept of territory among Moorish pastoralist populations. We shall also have to discuss how this concept evolved during the colonial period.

The concept of territory was particularly complex in precolonial society because of the constant superimposition of usufruct and appropriation rights, and of economic, legal and political control.

In no instance was there a clearly defined notion of tribal territory in the sense of the exclusive use of specific natural resources either definitively or periodically. This is contrary to the situation observed among North Africa's Bedouin tribes, (2) or those in the Middle East. (3) Most often usufruct rights are extremely tangled: they are non-exclusive, and may be found superimposed on each other over a period of time. This is particularly true in the Emirates, but it is also true in the more segmented, less centralized societies in the North and the East.

(2) E. Marx, "The Tribe as a Unit of Subsistence : Nomadic Pastoralism in the Middle East," American Anthropologist 71-2, 1977. pp. 343 -363.

(3) Digard, "Contraintes techniques de l'élevage sur l'organisation des sociétés de pasteurs nomades," Cahier du CERM, No. 109, 1973. pp.33-50.

For example the Tribe of Rgibat, the territory of the Rgibat, was a vast zone in which other groups or tribes roamed. At the most, some of these groups tended to get integrated with the Rgibat as client groups. Such intergration could lead to complete absorption into the tribe.

In general, the hierarchical aspect of territorial organization is very noticeable. But it does not directly overlap the social hierarchy, as it does in the southern farming societies we shall be looking at later on. Many landholding rights, especially regarding control of water wells, belong to the Zawaya tribes, historically the principal organizers of the pastoralist economy. (Several other tribes have likewise taken their "cut" from livestock herds). At any rate, the political rights of the Hassani group were entrenched in rights over well-water which they acquired after the Shar Bebbu War. That war established the political supremacy of the Hassani over the Berber tribes. In fact the hierarchization of land tenure rights was primarily characterized by rights based on the assurance of protection to users of pasture lands. The quid pro quo for such protection was the payment of fees to the Hassani either collectively by the user group (ghafer) or by individual families of herdsmen (hurma). The different levels of usufruct rights thus came to a peak at the political level : in the final analysis political control over the territory was the basis of territorial organization. On the other hand, the colonial political structure was in part a consequence of this territorial control.

The political nature of territorial organization is particularly evident at the level of the Emirate. The Emir does not hold any specific

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usufruct rights over the land, apart from rights to his own private settlement, his palm groves, and access to pasture land. Still, the Emir is identified with the territorial unity of the Emirate. Thus Adrar is known as "the land of the Ethnan," after the Emir's family name. This identification takes concrete form in the Emir's prerogative of arbitration in land use disputes, where he may impose fines known as tiwanin, and in the power to impose fees on caravans crossing the area, etc. In its hierarchical aspect, in connection with Hassani power, the territorial unity of the Emirate is expressed by the fact that groups from outside the Emirate wishing to be granted access to its pastures are obliged to make ad hoc payments (hurma tanajert) to specific Hassani families or to the Emirate to ensure their protection.

This much simplified analysis of the concept of territory brings out its essentially political character. We must also bear in mind the nature of power relationships and political situations in a society in which power had no absolute character whatsoever and remained anchored in other kinds of kinship relationships in which the political hierarchy, especially in its ideological aspect, remained operative, as in the power of the religious brotherhoods. During the colonial period the political bases of this territorial organization underwent radical changes. These changes will show up as a major cause of population movements among the pastoralist Moors.

Colonialism destroyed the traditional territorial organization by promulgating the principle of "freedom of pasture" and by placing administrative controls on the movements of herdsmen. Consequently, political constraints which had hitherto regulated these movements were lifted.

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at the same time other factors, this time more purely economic, ~~incited~~ incited the herdsmen to resume their movements.

Such, for example, was the case of the Rgibat and other camel-herders in the north of the country -- a section which remained dissident for a long time, actively resisting colonial penetration. In an attempt to enhance its political control, the colonial administration adopted a "policy of cooptation" toward these northern dissidents. This policy comprised in the main the opening up to them of southern pastures to which in former times they had no access except as a function of prevailing political or military power relationships. As a result they pushed farther south, putting the southern pastures under intense pressure. This pressure was all the more onerous because the dissident nomads, on their seasonal trips back north, made it a habit to pillage the herds of tribes already colonized. (4)

Similarly the Znaga tribes (dependent herdsmen) have a tendency to abandon territories on which they worked traditionally as politically and economically subject groups. In this they have been motivated as much by the search for greener pastures as by the desire to break free from their traditional overlords.

The break-up of the political frames of reference governing territorial organization can be more generally seen in the southward movement of pastoralist populations. This southward movement involves all the categories of herdsmen, and is the manifestation of two very different processes :

(4) P. Bonte, "L'émirat de l'Adrar après la colonisation et la dissidence de l'émir Sidi Ahmed (1905-1932)," in Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, publication scheduled for 1981

- the search for richer southern pastures with the potential for supporting more numerous livestock herds as well as a greater human population. In the colonial period this search became more imperative because the bringing of animal husbandry into the market economy and the herdsmen's need for money caused a marked increase in pastoralist production (see Section 2.1). The consequence was a general southward slide of the tribes.

This movement also demonstrated the northern herdsmen's greater potential for expansion, and brought long-term trends to a peak. The ecological and economic conditions attendant on camel herding are responsible for the greater capacity for expansion characteristic of these pastoralist societies. (5) The region of T i r i s Zemmour has functioned as a sort of geographical matrix of the historical movements of pastoralist populations over Mauritania's land area. The high degree of mobility has in the course of history resulted in a progressive southward push of the tribes, population shifts, the establishment of new political power structures etc. In the new context created by colonialism, this mobility did not operate simply as a facet of the economic and political dynamics of the pastoralist populations. Rather, it became coupled with the economic dynamic, thus aggravating pastoralist pressures on the Southern pasture lands.

To the list of the Moorish pastoralist population movements that took place during the colonial period must be added those movements that arose in response to changes in pastoralist production modes and life-

(5) P. Bonte, "Pastoral Production, Territorial Organization and Kinship in Segmentary Lineage Societies", in P. Burnham and R.F. Allen, eds., Social and Ecological Systems, ASA, 18, Academic Press, London, 1979.

style whether these changes were intended by the colonial administration or not. The development of palm cultivation and the settlement of population groups in the oases simply extended a process already observable in the 19th century, whereby those periods in which the Emirates enhanced their power were characterized by the plantation of new palm groves. It was the policy of the colonial administration to give maximum encouragement to the development of these plantations. In the first place they constituted fixed population centres, easier to keep an eye on. Secondly, they were able to generate in short order an appreciable production surplus which could be used to pay taxes or to feed the growing population.

Finally, the southward movement of pastoralist groups, the decrease in population and the evolution of economic and social relationships resulted in an increased settlement of Haratin farmers, who tended more and more to make permanent homes on the lands they farmed. Here again the initial impulse came from the colonial administration.

In this section our primary focus has been on population movements among the pastoralist Moors. The colonial period also saw a northward movement of Peulh herdsmen. Formerly these herdsmen have settled mainly on the River Senegal's left bank. In the colonial period they streamed steadily northward in a search for fresh pastures. This northward push of the pastoralist Peulhs was qualitatively different from former Peulh migration movements which contributed to the settlement of the Senegal Valley. The Peulhs were latecomers to the Valley. As such they only had a precarious toehold among the pastoralist and agro-pastoralist populations they found already established. Hervouet points out, for instance, that the Fulabe

Dieri, who trickled into the Aftout de M'bout area in small groups after 1914, have suffered much heavier losses from the drought than the Fulabe Walo, who have been settled near the River Senegal over a longer period. On the other hand, the Fulabe of Karakoro have only been settled in their area a short time (since about 1940). But they have a highly structured village organization, and they also have been able to resist the drought much more effectively. At any rate, the pastoralist Peulh population has grown considerably in certain regions. In 1908 the Peulhs of Guidimakha, Assaba and adjacent areas numbered less than 3,000. In 1972 they had grown to 42,300, almost as many as the Moors in the area. (6) Hervouet also points out that migrations of Peulhs into this whole zone were facilitated by previous migrations among the Moors: the Peulhs simply moved onto pastures and farmland abandoned by the Moors.

1.2. Mobility among farming populations

It should be pointed out at once that the farming systems we find in Sahelian societies are extensive systems. They entail a certain amount of spatial mobility. This extensive land use has repercussions in a number of areas : long fallow periods, shifting cultivation, and rather unstable duration of farming villages. The practice of agriculture in Mauritania fits into this general picture. With only a few exceptions, the increase in population densities during the colonial period was not supported by any major changes in farming techniques.

(6) J.P. Hervouet, "Stratégies pastorales et agricoles des Sahéliens durant la sécheresse, 1969-1974," in J. Gallais, ed., Travaux et Documents de Géographie Tropicale, Centre d'Etudes en Géographie Tropicale, CNRS, Paris, 1977.

The overload therefore made the farming systems even weaker. The settlement of the Soninke at Guidimakha is an example of this system of extensive agriculture in Mauritania and in the Southern Hodh. These farming groups had long congregated in a few large villages for political and military reasons. In the colonial period they settled in their old farming villages, which themselves spread outward, taking over unoccupied land and pushing northward in a search for new land. In these climatically marginal regions, however, they did not reach those population densities observed in certain Sahelo-Sudanese areas, as in the Mossi areas of Upper Volta, in the Hausa areas of Nigeria, or in the Southern Region of Niger.

Were, as in the Senegal River Basin, land regularly subject to floods has its fertility periodically renewed by deposits of alluvial silt, the situation is very different. The Senegal River floodlands (walo) have been occupied from a long way back in no uncertain manner by a peasant population which no doubt comes from different ethnic backgrounds, the result of successive waves of migrations throughout history. But this population has in the main become part of Toucouleur society. The annual cultivation of the alluvial walo land is complemented by the farming of sandy dieri land. The high productivity resulting from these agricultural systems has made this region a zone of relatively dense population and an area of demographic and political expansion. In the 19th century this political and demographic dynamism seems to have been channeled into politico-religious movements. The importance of the Futa Toro as an epicenter of successive migratory waves which have shaken up West Africa from the Tekroul era (around the 11th century) to the time of El Haj Umar is well known.

At that time the society was poised on the eve of colonization, and the scope of demographic expansion and of population movements originating from the Senegal Valley can better be appreciated: "50,000 (Toucouleurs) are spread out from Bakel all the way to Nopti by way of the Niore Sahel ; 55,000 along the Boundou and the valleys of the Sine, the Saloum and English Gambia; while 11,000 of them still hold the old base of the Commander of the Faithful at Dinguiraye, on the eastern frontier of the Futa Djalou.⁽⁷⁾"

This political dynamism resurfaces within Toucouleur society with the traditional constitution of tightly hierarchized and centralized political structures. A reconstitution of this political organization is not within the scope of this study. But we do need to discuss its effects on the history of the populating and occupation of the land, especially the occupation of the fertile walo land. In Toucouleur social and political stratification pride of place goes to landowners. Admittedly, this situation has been hazed over by the Torobe movement, which partly reflects the aspirations of a profoundly Islamized class of small peasants. But the fact is that real power lies in the hands of those who control land tenure rights acquired as a result of complex and fluid historical processes.

(7) T. Richard-Mollard, Afrique Occidentale Française, Berger-Levrault, Paris, 1956. p. 102

These are the great landlords, owners of extensive estates, the lawakabe.

"The sovereigns who have reigned over the Futa, from the Saltigui to the Alamanis, used the same strategy to maintain and entrench their domination: the distribution of chiefdoms to their most faithful companions and allies. In particular, the reigns of Koli Tengella, Saltigui Sulay Ndyaye, the Almani Abdul Kader, et al., were distinguished by grants of large parcels of land. That method of political domination was a method in general use, and the French, at the start of their occupation of the country, were to have ample recourse to it."⁽⁸⁾

So here, just as we find among the Moors, we have a politically determined territorial organization which helped to channel and to direct population movements before the colonial period. But that is where the similarities halt, as is evident from the very different effects colonialism had on these two societies.

In the first place, colonial "pacification" resulted in the growth of a movement to open up farmland, especially along the Senegal River's right bank. In the 19th century this area had been hotly disputed between Moors and Toucouleurs, with control over it resting primarily in the hands of the Moors. Numerous villages sprang up at that time along the right bank, often starting as offshoots of villages on the left bank.

(8) Abdoulaye Bara Diop, Société toucouleur et migration, IFAN, Université de Dakar, Initiations et études XVII, Dakar, 1965, p.15.

What happened was that people now settled on land which they had thitherto farmed from across the river. In their search for fresh land the Toucouleur farmers also ranged along the Senegal River's right bank tributaries and distributaries, seeking out especially the areas of alluvial walo soil. Such was the case in the Pkiz region; it was especially the case along the Gorgol valleys, which dig deep into the hinterland, channeling waters from Assaba and Afolle. The advance of the Toucouleur population involved almost as many people as the Paulh advance. In 1908 the Toucouleur population was estimated at around 6,000, by 1972 it had reached 37,000.

This occupation of new land partly situated outside the traditional Toucouleur sphere of influence modified the land tenure situation -- a situation particularly transformed by the direct impact of colonial conquest on the Toucouleur political system. In 1891 the post of Almami was officially abolished. The families of electors and notables who had taken part in resistance movements against the colonial power had their estates confiscated. Quite often they were constrained to go into exile. The confiscated estates were amalgamated with bayti lands -- the property of the Muslim community formerly managed by the Almami -- and put under the direct control and management of the colonial administration.

The new kind of spatial mobility which followed in the wake of colonization was thus a manifestation of the aspirations of a class of Toucouleur small peasants hungry for land. (Other ethnic groups living in the valley experienced the same needs, especially the Soninke, who had also settled on new farmland). The new mobility was also destined to contribute

to the development of increasingly individualistic forms of land tenure, all the more so as the entire political framework governing the concept of land tenure had been profoundly transformed. Transformed, but not totally overturned. Because the colonizer in effect created a new stratum of Chiefs which was to play a significant role in the distribution of land, especially in the newly settled zones, and more generally along the entire right bank. Inequality in land tenure was therefore far from disappearing. But it did change its features. Certainly, in Toucouleur society, landed property continued to be a status criterion especially for distinguishing groups of free people from slaves. But in this area also economic power relationships tended to intrude: to an increasing extent, landowners were confronted with landless peasants who could only obtain access to the former's land after agreeing to make a series of payments or to enter into sharecropping arrangements. The result was a reinforcement of the traditional social hierarchy. But as for the political hierarchy, that was seriously shaken up.

In conclusion it might be said that during the colonial period there was a certain development of spatial mobility in these black African societies south of Mauritania. The development was not an entirely novel phenomenon, however. It was more of an extension of tendencies already present in these societies. The economic and political dynamism of populations inhabiting the Senegal Valley thus brought about sizeable agricultural migrations and the speedy occupation of land on the right bank of the river, the Mauritanian side. In the regions where extensive rain-dependent agriculture is practiced we find again this tendency toward agricultural migrations and the concentration of high population densities on the land.

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The convergence of these agricultural migrations and the increasing settlement of Haratin farmer-herdsmen in the south was bound soon enough to lead to a situation of relative saturation, bearing in mind the kinds of production techniques involved. Nevertheless, during the first stage, these agricultural migrations encouraged a certain development in cereal production within the valley so that the area, right until the 1940's actually produced enough cereal to generate an exportable surplus.

1.3. Roots of Moorish Migratory Movements: Islam and Trade

We have examined those characteristic features of mobility in Moorish society which are connected to its economic and social organization, in particular to the pastoralist mode of production and the nomadic lifestyle. This mobility and the establishment of migratory channels are in turn linked to two functions which historical conditions have helped develop within Moorish society:

- the religious function: Mauritania and the Western Sahara have been a key zone for the spread of Islam into Sub-Saharan Africa.
- the commercial function. In this region the two functions (religious and commercial) are closely linked, since the Islamic religion has spread along between the Maghreb and Black Africa ever since the Middle Ages.

1.3.1. Migrations and the Spread of Islam

We need to treat succinctly this issue which is essential to the understanding of the historical evolution not only of Moorish society but also of Mauritania in its entirety. From our point of view, the most interesting aspect is the aspect of Moorish Islam, typified by an organization into brotherhoods (tariqa) strongly marked by Sufist inspiration. Significant

population movements in fact take place within this religious structure.

Brotherhood organizations first appeared in about the 15th century, but their period of greatest development has been from the 19th century to the present. The historical model, so to speak, seems to be based on the proselyting career of the Kuntas, who entered the Western Sahara as initiators of the Qadiriyya Way of Islam, especially Sidi Ahmed el Bakkayi and the Kunta Sheikhs who settled in Northern Mauritania. We might note that this region, together with the Saqiyat al Hamra farther north, is once again the center of a religious and political movement destined to affect the whole of Mauritania (see Section 1.1.).

This model of organization into brotherhoods was to reproduce and perpetuate itself down to the present day. We shall summarize its principal aspects with the help of the study conducted by C.C. Stewart on the Sidiyya movement formed in Trarza at the beginning of the 19th century. ⁽⁹⁾

On the religious level a brotherhood is formed around a sheikh who possesses a spiritual power. Known as baraka, this power can be transmitted to the brotherhood's leaders. The baraka is in principle a religious power, initiation, and its possession is made manifest in miracles. It is basically theological, founded on the knowledge and application of the sharia, the muslim law. The sheikh has an entourage of talamid, members of the brotherhood who receive from their chief the wird, or an investiture. The grant of this

(9) C.C. Stewart, Islam and Social Order in Mauritania : A case Study from the Nineteenth Century, Oxford Studies in African Affairs, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1973.

investiture commits the talanid to observe a number of distinctive rules peculiar to the brotherhood, such as rules pertaining to prayers.

The head of the brotherhood may delegate his powers to Khalifa or to Mugaddam : these then become his representatives, especially in cases where the brotherhood extends over a considerable geographical range.

The brotherhood is not exclusively a religious mode of organization. It also performs very important political and economic functions. From this aspect it demonstrates a certain flexibility which accounts for its ability to adapt to new conditions created by colonialism, as well as for the role it continues to play to this day. Prior to colonization a brotherhood developed on the basis of tribal, kin-group and segmented models of organization. This was true of the Kunta, certainly the most important Saharan tribe. It was equally true of the Ould Ebieri, the tribe of the Sidiyya, and of the Ahel Sidi Mahmud etc. The brotherhood organization thus appears as an instrument of geographical and social mobility from this perspective. Individuals of assorted origins cluster around the sheikh : members of the Hassani ruling lineage deprived of political power who take on the status of towba , abandoning their status as warriors ; dependents fleeing from the domination of their former overlords either individually or in groups; groups driven off their pasture lands, etc. Generally, these tribes are characterized by a very high degree of demographic and political dynamism. They make up the social forces on which the sheikhs depend when they enter the political arena. An example is the case of the Sidiyya sheikh playing a

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part in the nomination of the Trarza Emirs. After colonial conquest the brotherhoods based themselves less and less on the tribal model of organization. But they continued to function as rallying points, and to be consistently significant as a force for economic and political mobilization. This holds particularly for the more recent Tijania brotherhoods.

The brotherhood, or rather its head the sheikh, also develops political plans. C.C. Stewart shows the way in which the Sidiyya organized pasture land zones, bored wells, constructed trade routes, acted to facilitate the settlement of Moorish farmers in the Chemama area, got involved in the gun trade, etc. In this way they may contribute to the communal good; they also draw some personal profit. The quasi-institutionalized practice of presenting gifts to the sheikh (hadiyya), and the practice of going on collection visits (ziara) make it possible for the sheikhs to accumulate considerable wealth, thus becoming property owners of some consequence. This aspect of brotherhood organization has continued after colonialism. And the economic function of the brotherhoods has made it possible for them to develop export cash crop production aimed at supplying the colonial metropole's needs. The case of the Mouride brotherhood in Senegal is a good example.

In the 18th century, and especially in the 19th and 20th centuries, the brotherhood movement spread considerably. The movement has crossed existing frontiers and served to some extent as a channel for new advances made by Islam. Thus Peulh leaders who organized the islamization and conquest of the Futa Jalon at the close of the 18th century were members of the

Kunta Bakka'iyya. In Senegal also it was a group of Kunta sheikhs who settled in the 19th century: first Sheikh bu Nazara and then his son Sheikh bu Kunta who settled in Diassane, the station to the north of Thies which is still Senegal's principal Qadiriyya center. In the 19th century, new brotherhoods of this type were formed in Mauritania: the Sidiyya already mentioned, and the Fadeliyya movement. The latter spread rapidly from Southern Morocco to Senegal; starting from Smara, the seat of Sheikh El Zaynin, it passed through Adrar, the seat of Sheikh Muhammed Fadel, and reached Senegal, where Sheikh Saad Bu helped enhance the Islamization of the country. It was also in the 19th century that the Tijania movement spread, first in Mauritania, then into Black Africa. This movement was soon to proliferate into numerous brotherhoods. It was started by the Idawali of Chinguetti, the great caravan transporters who had moved into the Tagant and then the Trarza areas. Its first sheikh was Muhammed Hafed ul Muktar. This brotherhood was more dynamic and aggressive, and at times provided a channel for the spirit of resistance to colonial conquest, as in the case of El Haj Umar at the end of the 19th century, that of Sheikh Hamallah at Niore, and that of his Soninke disciple Yacuba Silla, at Kaedi. In its expansionist thrust, the brotherhood first grew at the expense of the Qadiriyya movement before advancing into areas where the population had only recently been converted to Islam.

The simple exposition of this political dynamism makes it possible to understand better the population movements it has engendered and continues to engender to this day. The proselytizing of the Sheikhs or their Khalifa always sends them on new routes in a search for new followers.

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The talamid also set out on missions in fulfilment of their religious commitment. They move, either because they want to get closer to their Sheikh, or because the Sheikh himself gives them a mandate to open up new farm lands. Such methods have been systematically developed by the Mourides to exploit new peanut plantations. This need for movement is expressed in the concept of Siyaha, the mystical and material quest in aid of the knowledge and propagation of Islam. It is no accident that Sidi Ahmed el Bakkadi, one of the first great brotherhood leaders, has been credited with the famous saying: that the faithful have a duty to "undertake" the Siyaha quest without ever settling down in a sedentary or populous community. The principle is that the faithful must flee the entrapments of worldly affairs, but at the same time they must indefatigably roam the world.

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The brotherhood movement is also evidently one of the channels along which the Moors have spread across West Africa, especially in Senegal. This is also true for other Mauritanian population groups, namely the Toucouleurs and the Soninke, who are similarly involved in this brotherhood movement. Moors have often functioned as transmitters of the wird of the leaders of those Senegalese brotherhoods formed in the 19th century. This, for example, was the case of Ahmadou Bamba, founder of the Mouride movement which, after colonization, helped to deepen the Wolof society's conversion to Islam. He received his investiture from the Kunta Sheikh Bu Kunta, son of Bu Nazama, who himself had converted Kayor to Islam.

(10) J.R. Willis, ed., Studies in West African Islamic History - 1. The Cultivators of Islam, F. Cass, London, 1979.

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He also maintained close links with the Sidiyya movement. But above all, the Moorish Sheikhs who actually lived in Senegal gathered around themselves large and significant coteries of talamid disciples. At the same time they attracted their own relatives or Moorish disciples, thus contributing to the expansion of the Moorish population in Senegal. This is what happened with the Kuntas at Diassane. The first son Sheikh Saad Bu, Sheikh Talibuya, also had a large Senegalese following whose members regularly went on pilgrimages to his father's tomb in Ninjatt, even though he himself lived not in Senegal but at Mederdra. Fadiliyya adherents settled in Senegal have opened a veritable Islamic pioneering front in the Casamance Region, chiefly among the Socé. They have founded small centers where they have settled together with their families and disciples. Quite often they have named these new centers after their old home areas in Mauritania.

These brotherhood networks which reach beyond Senegal and which are not, as we have already pointed out, limited to the Moors, form an important part of migratory channels established by the Moors. The religious networks help the Moorish migrants to gain an economic and political foothold on the local scene. This in turn helps other migrants, especially traders, to find security there. The brotherhood networks are therefore a very important aspect of the formation of a Moorish diaspora which has steadily spread throughout West Africa. On a smaller scale this process has been repeated among other Mauritanian ethnic groups. To take just one

(11) F. Dumont, La pensée religieuse de Amadou Bamba, Nouvelles Editions Africaines, Dakar, 1975.

example: the presence of a significant Soninke population in the Ivory Coast, with a role in that country's commerce, received a decisive boost when the colonial administration deported Yacuba Silla there after the Hamalla resistance movement was crushed, especially after Yacuba Silla settled permanently in the Ivory Coast. We have come full circle, back to a consideration of the relationship between Islam and trade -- the point with which we began this section. We now proceed to develop our discussion of that relationship.

1.3.2. Trade and Migratory Movements

These historical trends in the evolution of commerce in Moorish society will be analyzed at greater length in a different paper. Here we shall simply summarize the principal conclusions drawn from this analysis, focusing on those points which are relevant to the relationship between trade and migratory movements.

That trade is an old pursuit in Moorish society is an incontrovertible axiom. But equally incontrovertible is the fact that in the 19th century Moorish trade went into a decline reflecting the problems faced by trans-Saharan commerce in general. True enough, the elements of the commercial exchange between the Sahara and the Sudan regions remained in existence. This was particularly true of the exchange of Moorish salt, dates and handicraft products for cereals. And some Ksour tribes like the Idawali of Chinguetti and Tijikja continued to function as transporters. Furthermore, new commercial networks were established, especially in the south, linking Moorish society with the traders of Saint-Louis,

who were themselves ousted by the colonial trading companies at the start of the 20th century. In this trade the Saint-Louis traders mainly wanted gum, in exchange for which they supplied manufactured goods. But here again the Moors operated more as transporters than as traders. In the 19th century they were also active in the peanut production areas of Senegal, again as transporters. In short order the Moorish caravans reached down all the way to M'Bour and Dakar. In the process they made handsome profits, usually getting between 11% and 33% of the price of the produce they transported, and sometimes getting as much as 50%. This business was dominated by the camel-herding tribes, the Rahahla and the Euleb, together with the experienced Idawali transporters and the Oulad Busba, a group more entrenched in commerce. Competition from the Dakar-Saint-Louis railway posed only partial threat to the caravan transport business. As a matter of fact, after 1932 and especially during the 2nd World War, caravan transport got a new lease of life on account of the curtailment of automobile transport.

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We shall be discussing the role of this caravan transport business. At any rate, during the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20th century commercial business, strictly speaking, was not yet well developed in Moorish society. European companies or their branches, which remained restricted to the Senegal Valley "ports", played a unique part in the area's commerce. Aside from them, part of the distribution of manufactured

(12) Santoir, "L'émigration maure : une vocation commerciale affirmée," in Cahiers de l'ORSTOM, Série Sciences Humaines XII-2 1975. pp.137-160.

goods from Europe, or goods distributed by European capitalism -- such as tea, sugar, cotton fabrics, munitions, etc. -- was at that time handled by Moroccan tribes recently settled in Mauritania: the Oulad Busba and the Tekna.

A certain number of factors explain the rapid development of a commercial vocation among several Moorish tribes. We shall study these factors in detail in a further report. But two of these factors bring out in a more direct sense the growing interlinkage of commerce and migration. The destinations of these commercial migrations were partly outside Mauritania's land space: the principal destination was Senegal, but to a lesser extent Mali, then known as the Sudan, was also a destination. This meant the development of economic poles outside Mauritania, which itself came to constitute, from the colonizer's perspective, a reservoir for consumer produce, livestock, and, to a much smaller extent, manpower. The fact that both Mauritanian livestock and human labor power could be had for peanuts made the exploitation of Senegal's peanut zone much more profitable.

The first of the two factors referred to was precisely the trade in livestock oriented toward Senegal's urban centers and the peanut zone. In this connection 1904 was a signal date. That was when the Louga livestock market was opened: it acted as an entrepot for livestock coming from Mauritania, collecting herds there for later distribution to Dakar and as far as Gambia. This was also the time when Moorish cattle dealers, the ndiatigui, settled at Louga. In their wake came shopkeepers part of whose business involved the reexport of food products and textiles purchased in Senegal to Mauritania. But in a short while the Louga livestock market

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slumped. The slump took on the dimensions of a recession after 1930, when the trade routes shifted toward the Ferlo area and the middle Senegal Valley, all the way to the Hodh. After 1950 it spiraled into a full scale depression when improvements in Senegal's road grid made it easier to bypass Louga and transport livestock directly to the great urban centers. In 1965 the Moors still made up nearly 16% of Louga's total population. Many of them have settled there permanently, carrying on a trading business (13) between Senegal and Mauritania.

All the same, for two decades the livestock trade and the migratory movements ancillary to it have been essentially oriented toward Dakar, where because of that trade there is a high concentration of Moors in sections like Pikine.

Another important factor strengthening the commercial vocation among Moors in that their function as transporters enabled them to take a steady and substantial cut from the cash crop earnings of peanut farmers and in this way to build up trading capital. We find this same pattern in Mauritania itself, where the transporter, especially the kind of transporter who was traditionally not just a renter and leader of transport caravans but also a trade partner in the Ksour style (Ksour being the marketing and transport entrepot) quickly evolved into a shopkeeper. (We have adopted this distinction between Ksour-style commerce and the shopkeeping variety from (14) F. Dubié). Such, for instance, was the case of the Idwali, who grew

(13) M. Sarr, Louga et sa région, Collection Initiations et Etudes Africaines, 30, IFAN, Dakar, 1973.

(14) P. Dubié, La vie matérielle des maures, Mémoire IFAN, Dakar, 1954.

into one of the chief Moorish trading tribes.

There are two aspects to the control of these trade distribution networks by certain Moorish tribes:

- tribal and kinship relationships are important. Often the way capital is raised is by appealing to tribal and kin-group bonds of solidarity. And members of the same tribe are placed at various nodal points of the commercial network.

- hierarchical stratification is highly developed among Moorish traders. This trait does not contradict the first trait, the importance of tribal and kinship relationships. Important traders lend money or make up the inventory of small shopkeepers. In return they pocket a percentage of the profits. In other cases the small shopkeeper builds up his own inventory of goods while working for a wealthier trader.

These hierarchical tribal trade networks evidently function as the underpinnings for sizeable migratory flows within Mauritania, toward Senegal, and even, with rising momentum, toward the rest of West Africa and Central Africa. In all these regions the traders constitute nuclei for more or less numerous groups of Moorish migrants. Quite naturally, these migratory movements are shaped by the ebb and flow of trade. In the colonial period, the key artery was the Dakar-Saint-Louis-Rosso-Atar axis, that was the route along which colonial migratory movements started, to spread afterwards into the urban centers and right down to the small villages of the peanut zone. With remarkable flexibility, the Moors made their way into trading niches not already occupied by European or Syrio-Lebanese

trading companies. Thus in 1957 when the Senegalese capital was shifted from Saint-Louis to Dakar, occasioning a slump among the local trading companies, the Moors moved in to take control of a sizeable chunk of Saint-Louis's commerce. In a corollary development, the Moorish population rose steeply, to constitute around 25% of the population in some quarters of Guet-Ndar.

The movement of Moorish traders into Mali has never had the same amplitude as that into Senegal. And outside the border towns where there is an important trade in livestock, the Moorish traders do not offer much competition to Mali's traders, who themselves are heirs to long commercial traditions. On the other hand, they have spread out in considerable numbers along livestock trading routes from the Hodh regions into the Ivory Coast, which is the principal market.

Among the Soninke, migratory movements tied to trade are not the most important migrations. Still, they are far from insignificant. In superficial form they are identical to commercial migrations among the Moors. But in reality they are quite different, if we exclude such movements as the migration into the Ivory Coast of Soninke groups from Fædi who constituted Yacuba Silla's entourage. Originally these Soninke traders were often peddlers who speculated on the transport of certain commodities from country to country. Occasionally this kind of business borders on smuggling, involving such commodities as diamonds from Liberia, Sierra Leone or Zaïre. On this kind of foundation admittedly large fortunes have been built up, but the methods of accumulation in such cases tend to be rather individualized. Following an axis from Mali to the Gulf of Guinea, these migratory movements have only slightly touched Senegal.

In fact most of the Soninke traders currently living in Senegal have moved there from Guinea.

Religion and commerce thus go into the making of the social, political and economic network which has directed Moorish migratory movements chiefly outside Mauritania but also within the country, through such means as the spread of religious brotherhoods, the settlement of trading tribes from Adrar in the south of the country, etc.

1.4. MANPOWER EXPORT AND THE ORIGIN OF LABOR MIGRATIONS

We have already mentioned the fact that in the colonial period the formation of poles of economic attraction inside Senegal instigated quite sizeable population movements. We should not overestimate the importance of these labor migrations in the development of Senegal's peanut production. In the main, these population movements took place within Senegal itself, as a result especially of population movements among the Wolof in their efforts to break new arable ground in the Ferké border areas. Nevertheless, in the Mauritanian zone bordering on the Senegal River the force of attraction had long been extremely powerful. It involved chiefly the black African groups settled on both banks of the river; but it also involved part of the Moorish population. With the upsurge of urbanization in Senegal, especially the growth of Dakar, migratory movements were increasingly directed toward the urban areas.

We shall treat the current mechanisms of migrations among these different populations in greater detail (see 2.1, 2.5, 2.6). These mechanisms are the consequence of a historical process set in motion very early with

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the onset of colonialism. In this section we do not intend to analyse this process which continues to develop to this day, constraining Mauritanian populations to migrate in ever-increasing number. We shall for the moment limit ourselves to a descriptive and historical treatment of these population movements. At this level, no matter which ethnic groups are involved, the causes of the phenomenon appear somewhat similar.

- Rising population and stagnant production:

Without making a fetish of statistics, we have collected some figures on the evolution of population and production during the colonial period:

Table 1

Population and Production Index - Colonial Period				
Population	1920	260,000	1950	520,000
Millet	1929	47,727 tons	1959	60,000 tons
Palm trees	1924	190,000	1955	565,000
Cattle	1929	239,009	1947	260,000
Camels	1929	50,922	1947	90,000 *
Goats and Sheep	1929	2,500,000	1940	2,340,000

* Of these, 13,000 were in the Hodh region, united with Mauritania after 1945.

Source: Archival Papers.

Apart from the planting of palm trees, which increased considerably during the colonial period -- the increase being possibly an extrapolation of trends already operative in the 19th century -- these figures tell a clear tale: While the population doubled in two decades, production only rose negligibly, with some figures actually going down. Admittedly, though, these

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figures refer to the period of economic crisis ending in 1947- 1948, as far as livestock production is concerned.

During the initial years of the colonial period, the movement to open up new arable land, together with the mobility of Moors over pasture ranges, resulted in a relative increase in production linked to the fact that a larger land area was put to use. This relative increase also reflected the effects of "colonial pacification." Starting from the 1930's and the 1940's migration became a necessary strategy for generating income, since income from agricultural or livestock-herding occupations was definitely inadequate.

- ~~growth~~ of cash needs and deterioration of terms of trade: with the establishment of the colonial system, the demand for cash grew tremendously. In the first instance this was a result of deliberate pressures exerted by the colonial administration, especially in the form of taxation: there was a pool tax and a livestock tax, the achur tax on harvested produce, and a tax on commercial transport and caravan movements. Secondly, the rise in cash demand was a simple consequence of the growth of the market economy, the spread of new tastes for imported commodities like tea, textiles and firearms and the substitution of cash exchanges for previously non-monetary exchange systems. An example of the last was the case of traditional regional exchange systems based on the distribution of cereals.

The reality of these monetary needs and the difficulties the people faced in meeting them, in other words the shortage of cash, became evident

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for example in 1929 when the repercussions of the great world depression hit Mauritania. Here was proof, if proof was needed, of the penetration of market relationships and of phenomena of economic domination. The gum trade took a nosedive with the drop in gum prices. Business slowed down all over and prices plummeted: "A camel which cost between 800 and 1,500 francs seven or eight years ago now fetches only 200 to 300 francs. A cow which used to cost 400 to 800 francs is now sold for just 125 to 150 francs." (15) As a result, the producers ran out of cash in very little time and taxation became extremely burdensome: "Almost all the money earned from transport and the supply of animals for transportation purposes to the GN, as well as money from the supply of palm wood to the administrative post, is used to pay tax. The chiefs are highly dissatisfied with this state of affairs." (16) Under such circumstances the producers had no option but to get rid of their herds or their harvest crop and then to look for other sources of income. More and more, such income came from migrations.

To round out this point let us again refer to an archival document which illustrates the limited role of money in Moorish society at the start of the colonial period even though market-oriented production and distribution already existed. On the eve of the conquest of Adrar, when Gouraud was playing host to the Tekna traders of Chinguetti, he suggested they should open branches at Atar, which was then by-passed by the trade routes,

(15) Archives: Rapport de mission Beyries, 1935.

(16) Monthly Report, Atar, April-May 1932.

"so that you can make money there as middlemen between the Snaqid who are dying to get their hands on Guinea fabric, and the French, whose pockets are bursting with money."⁽¹⁷⁾ Thirty to forty years later the Snaqid were to become one of the main trading tribes of Adrar.

The first result of the rise in cash demand was the extension of market-oriented production. Livestock very rapidly became a commercial commodity. Even the great nomadic tribes of the north, the camel-herdsmen, got involved. Even though politically they were unsubdued till 1934, economically they were active as suppliers to the Senegalese and Southern Moroccan markets. Nevertheless, as we have just pointed out, the market value of livestock knew a relative decline. All through the colonial period, economic crises set off periodic collapses in livestock prices. These collapses limited the cash earnings of livestock herdsmen considerably. In extreme cases they forced them to abandon livestock herding.

In the Senegal River Valley and among the southern farmers the principal cash crop was millet. At the beginning of the century, the opening up of new arable land and the increase in population made it possible to generate a large surplus from the fertile Walo soil. These surpluses went into local or regional trade, which was partly based on barter, with Toucouleurs and Peulhs bartering cereals for milk, for example. But increasingly, these exchanges also took monetary forms: the Saint-Louis trading

(17) Cahiers, Colonne de l'Adrar, 03/02/1909.

companies were not above profiting from the cereal trade. It has often been estimated that right until the 1940's the surplus of cereals traded could be as high as 10,000 to 20,000 tons depending on the year. This situation changed when population continued to soar while possibilities of opening up new lands fell. Surpluses available for trade dropped sharply. In poor years there were actually shortfalls in production. According to estimates included in the MISOES studies conducted in the best years. If we take into account deductions for barter and for different payments in kind, we see that the trade potential was very much reduced. In 1957-1958 the surplus available for trade was 3,000 out of an overall surplus of 6000 tons or thereabouts. Clearly, cash revenues obtained therefrom were insignificant. (18)

It must be added that cash income from traditionally commercialized production also dropped. Gum production leveled off at about 2,000 tons; as for gum prices, they kept dropping steadily, except in the 1910-1920 period. Salt production and marketing became monetarized and brought in appreciable profits from the Malian and Senegalese markets. But political difficulties made it impossible to expand production.

Labor migrations during the colonial period therefore were principally a response to rising cash demand in much the same way as the upsurge in livestock trading and the transportation and commercial business. Still, there had also to be some demand for labor. Labor demand in Mauritania itself had long been very low, even nonexistent, so that the colonial administration there only operated in a desultory way the forced labor system which

(18) La Moyenne Vallée du Sénégal, PUF, Paris, 1962.

created so much havoc in other French African colonies. That system, on the other hand, did operate in an increasingly serious way in Senegal. And it was toward that country that the first streams of migrant laborers headed. These first streams of migrant laborers therefore involved mostly the groups living in the border areas near Senegal. In particular, they involved the riparian tribes: Soninke, Toucouleurs and Moors living in the Senegal Valley were to provide the first batches of migrants.

Before getting into a detailed discussion of migratory movements among these various groups, let us note the common features of their movements:

- the migrations were temporary and seasonal. This was the seasonal migratory phenomenon known as navetanes in the peanut zone, after the Wolof word navet which means the rainy season. Migrant laborers hired themselves out to peasant farmers for the duration of the planting season. Alternatively, they were given the use of farmland in return for a fraction of the harvest. Seasonal migrations directed toward the urban areas were also considerable. There the migrant laborers took poorly paid odd jobs. The migrants preferred to plan their homeward return trips annually so they would coincide with the busy season for farming and pastoralist activities at home. With an increasing proportion of migrants going to the urban areas, it became most common for return trips to be made after one or two years' work in town. MISOU'S studies conducted in the 1950's indicate that among Toucouleur migrants the average duration of one migrant trip was 10 months. These migrants would migrate again after one or two seasons of farm work at home. According to the same studies, out of every 100 males

over 15 years old, 12.5 % had never migrated; 41 % had migrated once; 29.5% had migrated twice; and 17 % had migrated three times or more. Migrations among the Moors, where they do take place, present practically identical features, with an even more pronounced seasonal rhythm.

- The migrations involve a specific category, that of young males. They are closely intermeshed with the domestic economy in the sense that their essential function is to provide the cash income the migrants' families need. As we have already seen in the 1950's almost 90 % of Toucouleur males over 15 years old had migrated at least once. According to the findings of the MISOES studies over 50 % of first-time migrants were less than 24 years old, and 50 % were still single. Among the Moors, who have smaller families, it is more often the practice for the family head himself to migrate, leaving only women, children and the aged at home during the dry season.

The migrations were aimed at serving demands generated within the domestic economy, but in fact they ended up profoundly changing these needs themselves, together with the structure of the family. (see chapter 2).

- Finally, because these migrations were of short duration, because the migrant laborers were unskilled, and because the jobs they held were not steady, the income they brought in was very meager.

The following table gives estimated amounts brought home by migrant workers according to job category.

Table 2

INCOME FROM MIGRATION (1958 - 1959)				
Job category	Months spent away from home	Cash brought home	Value of property brought home	Total
Farm Laborers	10.5	9,500FCFA	10,000FCFA	19,500 FCFA
Urban Laborer	13.5.	10,000 "	8,500 "	18,500 "
Domestic servants	15	12,000 "	20,000 "	32,000 "
Craftsmen	9	9,000 "	8,500 "	17,500 "
Employees	60	22,000 "	15,000 "	37,000 "
Traders	89	28,000 "	12,000 "	40,500 "

Source: MISOES, p. 252.

In the interests of giving a balanced interpretation to these figures, which seem rather low by absolute standards, let us add that the "domestic budgets" as determined by MISOES during the same period gave the average income per head among these same Toucouleurs as 10,000 FCFA. Average cash income was stated at 4,400 FCFA; under the circumstances 20 % of this came from migrant earnings. (To this must be added profits from trade brought in in part from outside). This figure must be compared to that portion of cash income coming from agriculture, which was less than 10 %.

Toucouleur migration appears to have become a generalized phenomenon by the end of the 1950's; but it is relatively recent. In fact, between 1890 and 1920, after the great movements that took place in the time of

El Hadj Umar, the Toucouleur population seemed more stable, at least in the valley, since this was also the period in which new arable lands were opened up. No doubt the still recent habits of mobility developed at that time might have played a catalytic role in the migratory explosion that followed the deterioration of the economic situation. Age group structures (plural: pelle) were particularly important here, because they brought the youth together and oriented them very early toward their assigned economic and political roles. In this way they helped organize and direct the migratory movement. About 1966 there were 70,000 Toucouleurs from both banks of the Senegal River valley temporarily living outside the valley. In addition, there were 120,000 permanently settled outside, some from a long time back. In 1957 it was estimated that these migrants numbered 60,000; of this number 31,000 were already settled in Dakar. Migrant groups also went toward upper Casamance, around Medina Gousse, where the followers of the Tijania Sheikh El Haj Seydou Ba settled. Around 1960 there were about 4,000 of them in this region. This migratory movement had a recent and explosive character linked to the fact that it was mostly directed toward the Senegalese urban areas, which absorbed 86 % of Toucouleur migrants. A.B. Diop points out that Toucouleur migration into Senegal's rural areas was quite limited, possibly because these migrations were a direct challenge to the farming activities undertaken in the valley around the same period. He notes further that seasonal labor did not develop in the valley until pressure

(19) A.B. DIOP, Société Toucouleur et migration, Initiations et Etudes VIII, IFAN, Dakar, 1965.

(20) Lericollais, "Peuplement et migration dans la vallée du Sénégal," in Cahiers de l'Orstom, Sciences Humaines, XII-2, 1975, pp. 123-136.

from the colonial administration forced its development. And when this pressure eased off, it too rapidly fell off.

The AB.Diop study also makes it possible to indicate accurately the reciprocal importance of both banks of the Senegal River as far as migrations are concerned. The Senegalese bank plays a much greater role, with 75 % of the migrants coming from the two districts of Podor and Matam. These two districts are also the most densely populated, as well as being the districts in which the system of large landholdings is most developed. The remainder of the migrant force comes mainly (23 %) from the districts of Kaedi and Boghe on the Mauritanian side, the right bank. Thus the Mauritanian side provided about a quarter of Dakar's Toucouleur immigrants, numbering about 10,000 in 1960, when the population of these districts was 106,000.

The first Toucouleur labor migrations principally involved the Toucouleur heartland between Kaedi and Podor, where population densities were highest and economic and social structures most rigid, making land acquisition difficult. Moorish migrations principally involved the lower Senegal Valley and the Trarza area. There were historical explanations for this: first, long-standing ties existed between Trarza and the Walo area, the site of one of the Wolof Kingdoms; secondly, Moorish groups had formerly penetrated as far as the left bank of the Senegal River in this zone. The area is also the Mauritanian area with the longest history of penetration by foreign interests, being close to Saint-Louis. Finally, it was the first area conquered by the colonial power, in 1902.

The fact that Moorish population movements in this region date back a long time is borne out by the existence of small groups of Moors from very different backgrounds settled on the left bank. They make up 10 % of the population of the Ross Betyo district in Senegal, that is, about 2,000 people, most of them Haratin fleeing the domination of their Bizani overlords and looking for new land. Here again we must take into account a background of protracted mobility which no doubt has oriented these migratory movements southward. There is also the fact that a measure of assimilation has taken place, evidenced by such indices as the adoption of Wolof names. Dubié estimated in the late 1940's that 5,000 Moors were settled on the left bank in this region. Sometimes the settlements involved whole groups.

On the right bank the districts of Keur Macène, Rosso and Rkiz experienced the heaviest migrations. In the 1950's this migration involved mostly Haratin. These, like the migrants on the left bank, very soon headed for Senegal's peanut farming areas and urban centers, where they took jobs as laborers, water carriers, butchers etc. In the course of the MISOES study⁽²¹⁾ the Terz and Brakna sample yielded the following demographic distribution:

Table 3

MIGRATION IN SOUTHERN MAURITANIA ACCORDING TO AGE AND SOCIAL CATEGORY, 1955-1958

Age	Haratin	Abid	Others	Total	<u>Haratin</u> Abid	Others	Grand Total
0-14	113	272	1016	1401	115	-	1516
15-34	50	219	712	981	216	44	1241
34	95	195	1039	1329	252	26	2607
Total	258	686	2767	3711	583	70	5364

Sources: MISOES, Populations noires du Chenana

(21) "Quelques données quantitatives sur les populations noires du Chenana," Document de travail MISOES, undated.

Basically, then, the migrants were overwhelmingly Haratin, and came from all age categories. This fact indicates that sometimes whole families migrated, going to Senegal in the dry season to find something to live on. The slave group, Abid, also migrated in considerable numbers; but among them those involved were primarily single adults. Members of the other social groups did not migrate. In this same period, there was practically no Moorish migration in the Gorgol area: out of 4,364 persons counted, 70 were migrants as against 653 out of 4,364 upriver.

By the time Santoir conducted his study in 1971 the situation had changed appreciably: more than 20 % of the male adult Moors in the valley migrated seasonally or temporarily. On the right bank of the lower valley the proportion rose to about 33 %; on the left bank it almost reached 60 %. It should also be added that other regions were now involved: in the Gorgol region (Monguel district), 15 % of adult males were migrants, while in the Guidimakha region the proportion reached 13 %. In all these regions, then, migration had become a significant fact of life.

On the other hand all social strata are now involved in migration even though higher proportions come from Haratin and Abid groups. But in the zones only recently affected by migrations, the proportions of migrants from other social classes is higher than that of Haratins, who maintain closer ties with their home areas because of their activities as farmers.

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Table 4

MIGRATION ACCORDING TO SOCIAL CATEGORY: SOUTHERN MAURITANIA, 1971 (number of migrants per 100 adult males in each category)			
Destination	Haratin	Haratin	Abid
Keur Macène	32.6	33.4	27.7
Rosso	21.6	17.2	-
Rkiz	14.3	2.8	-
Monguel	20.1	12.3	-
Ross Betyo	54	59.5	-

Source: Santoir, 1975

We shall take up the issue of this evolution of the features of migration movements in recent decades later. For now all we need to do is to show that movements of Moorish migrant workers in this River Valley region go back some time and involve considerable numbers. These migrations have Senegal as their destination. Just like the Toucouleur migrants, the Moorish migrants also head rapidly for the urban areas, especially Dakar. Dakar in fact absorbs nearly 60% of the Moorish migrants from this region. But some also go to Saint-Louis, which is the goal mostly of the neighboring Moors of Keur Macène; others end up in Kaolack, the destination of a sizeable stream coming from Rkiz. These last may be following in the footsteps of much earlier migrants from Rkiz to the Sine Saloum region.

It is rather difficult to draw up a quantitative balance sheet of the first Moorish migrations in Senegal: Santoir (1975) has estimated that before the second World War the population of Moors in Senegal was around 14,500.

Dubié (1954) gives the much higher figure of 31,085 migrants, of whom he places 4,396 in Dakar as opposed to Santoir's 1,800. Santoir's statistics apparently exclude seasonal or temporary migrants, while Dubié's figures possibly include them. At any rate, if we base our calculations on Santoir's figures, the Moorish population in Senegal reached 33,000 in 1961, and climbed again in 1971 to an estimated 50,000.

There have also been changes in migrant destinations. They focus on the urban centers, avoiding peripheral areas like the River Basin Region and the Eastern Senegal Region.

Table 5

DESTINATION OF MIGRANTS FROM SOUTHERN MAURITANIA		
Destination	1943	1961
Dakar	12.1 %	24.2 %
Casamance	-	3.1
Diourbel-Louga	27.3	3.1
River Basin	47.9	18.2
Eastern Senegal	1	-
Sine Saloum	12	24.2
Thies	5.7	27.2

Source: Santoir, 1975

Moreover, 1971 Senegal census data on transients (temporary migrants) confirm the fact that an overwhelming majority of migrants (76%) head for the Cape Verde, Thies and Sine Saloum regions.

About the movements of migratory workers which began quite long ago from Eastern Mauritania into Mali, we have far less information. Here also, these migrations were extrapolations of traditional transhumance trips as transportation and trade movements oriented toward the farming areas and the towns of Mali. Here the movement has not been as large. It has also been much more seasonal in nature, often being a result of the travels of Haratin families in search of odd jobs or cash to tide them over the dry season.

We turn finally to a discussion of labor migrations among the Soninke. Among them also, and quite early on, there were large outflows of migrants headed mainly for Senegal's peanut zones where they worked as seasonal laborers before the practice of streams of migrant workers going to Europe began.

The Soninka area of Guidimakha plays an important role in the economy of the upper Senegal Valley. Many of the points made with regard to the Middle Valley and the Toucouleur areas could be repeated here: the decline of precolonial exchange systems, stagnation of millet production and trade when the period of intensive opening up of new arable lands ended. (22) In 1923 migration seemed to be a feasible response to cash needs and difficulties from the Soninke point of view, since they had a long tradition, of migrations owing to their involvement in long-distance trade with the south; in addition, during the colonial period they had become accustomed to voyaging on French boats.

(22) Vide P. Bradley, C. Reynaut and J. Torrealba, Le Guidimakha Mauritanien -- Diagnostic et propositions d'action, War on Want, London, 1977.

A large percentage of migrant laborers working on the peanut plantations came from the Soninke districts of Mauritania, Mali and Senegal. The use of these migrant workers in peanut production was profitable from the point of view of the trading companies to the extent that it eliminated transportation problems by developing production near the export outlets. No doubt it would have been possible to grow peanuts in other areas, including Soninke areas. But it was more profitable to bring labor to selected farming areas. Moreover, the seasonal laborers were exploited by landowners who provided them with land and seeds in return for four days' labor per week. This arrangement reinforced capital accumulation among a social category whose importance we shall show in another report.

In the course of time, with urbanization proceeding apace in Senegal and Soninke migratory movements also growing, the latter came to be directed more exclusively toward the Senegalese towns. Later, they moved beyond these towns, heading in a great migrant flood toward France. The early 1960's were benchmark years. At that time even the remotest Senegal River Basin villages began to send out appreciable numbers of migrants, even though right down till today significant differences have remained between these remote villages, which have an average migrant statistic of 16 %, and the villages of the Valley proper, where the figure is as high as 35 %.

To understand features of current migratory movements, we shall

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need to examine the establishment of migrant worker networks in the colonial period. Such an examination will clarify the context of political and economic dependence in which these migrations take place. The principal pole of attraction is the Senegalese peanut zone. Next come the urban centers, which are functionally ancillary to this principal economic pole. The mechanisms governing these migratory movements have continued to operate to this day. Granted, during the colonial period political coercion, sometimes nakedly violent, was used to supply the export cash crop zones with seasonal labor, and this practice is now obsolete; but economic coercion is still very much in force. It takes the form of a scarcity of cash incomes, stagnant production, population pressures, dependence on the market economy, etc. In the remainder of this paper we shall look at the ways in which these mechanisms affect the producers themselves. One thing is clear, at any rate: as from the 1960's, these migratory movements grew tremendously. In the ensuing chapter we propose to analyze factors behind this recent acceleration in the growth of migratory movements. One of these factors can in fact be discussed forthwith, viz.: the effects of these migratory outflows on the societies where they originate. In effect, these abandoned societies, deprived of their most active manpower, profoundly disorganized, are not really in any position to use the foreign remittances coming to them to improve domestic productivity. They therefore get plunged into a vortex of crises which help to explain the current problems besetting the rural sector.

1.5. Migratory Movements and the Creation of National Space

In the foregoing sections we have pointed out the centrifugal tendencies and the external forces exerting a pull on Mauritania's population

groups. We think it necessary now to devote a short passage to a discussion of the way in which the steady integration of Mauritania's national space has in its turn conditioned the direction taken by these migratory movements.

As far as the colonial period is concerned, two facts leap into prominence:

1- The demarcation of this national space was not achieved overnight. As late as 1934 and the time of joint military expeditions launched from Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania, the colonial administration was still not in control of the North, that area that was to be known as the "Outlying Territories" under the military administration. This occupation sanctioned a geopolitical vision of the colonial enterprise in which pride of place was given to the axis along which ran the Imperial Highway: Bir Moghrein - Atar- Rosso - Saint-Louis. There were no eastward connections save by way of Dakar or Mali. Furthermore, the Hodh region was still attached to the colony of Sudan down to the eve of the Second World War; and for a long time yet, the administrative and political integration of this region remained extremely frail, quite apart from the fact that prevailing economic and migratory vectors were still oriented toward Mali.

2- Economically, Mauritania's national space was annexed to Senegal, and to a lesser extent to Mali also, in the colonial period; this de facto annexation was reflected on the political level too, a fact symbolized by the siting of Mauritania's capital at Saint-Louis. On account of this siting, Mauritania's bureaucrats were based in Saint-Louis right down to the time of independence. The relative synchronization of colonial administrations, and the fact that they belonged to the same metropolitan power, made

certain frontiers artificial indeed. This is true of the Senegal River frontier, since some of the people inhabiting the two banks have a common origin. Such a situation facilitates migrations from one country to the other and causes a certain amount of confusion as to who is a citizen of which country. This confusion has been perpetuated with the creation of an independent Mauritanian state. The first projects involving the Senegal River valley tended to approach the valley as if it were an entity unto itself, thus failing to give any real consideration to the Mauritanian hinterland. MISOES provides a concrete example of this approach.

Colonial administrative policy thus tended to fall in line with economic interests which gave prior attention to the developmental pole constituted by the Senegalese export cash crop economy. This policy was only changed under specific circumstances, for example during the 1942-1946 crisis and the Second World War, when the principle of the autonomy and even the self-sufficiency of colonies was promulgated. Mauritania's independence has of course affected this situation profoundly, and it is contributing to a reorientation of migratory channels. The building of the capital city, Nouakchott, in 1958, and the development of a political and administrative bureaucracy chiefly centralized in the capital implied the rise of a new pole of attraction for migrants. The steady construction of a communications network, especially of paved highways which have radically changed transportation conditions, is effecting a redirection of economic and migratory channels. Of the new roads the most important is easily the eastern road artery joining Nouakchott and Néma. That road is reintegrating the entire eastern region with the rest of the country.

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The opening of the Kedia d'Idjil iron mines expanded Mauritania's domestic job market and gave migrant workers a second pole of attraction. Other factors contributed to the organization of an autonomous national market and determined economic behavioral options, including the option to migrate and the choice of migratory destinations. Among these factors were the establishment of public trading corporations, the installation of a national banking system, the creation of a national currency, the ouguiya, the institution of exchange controls, the withdrawal from customs agreements which gave Senegal lopsided advantages, etc.

To put it briefly, in the first place migratory channels were realigned in the direction of domestic poles of attraction. Secondly, the distinction between internal migration and foreign migration, which had been somewhat irrelevant in colonial times, has now acquired serious significance. Current migratory movements fall within this new context.

2. CONDITIONS, FACTORS AND MOTIVATIONS OF CURRENT MIGRATIONS

In the past two decades migratory movements have swelled considerably. They have also undergone qualitative changes, relatively speaking. In this second chapter we shall attempt an evaluation of these changes. In addition, we shall endeavor to examine more precisely the factors currently responsible for the flight away from the rural areas and the dislocations it is helping to cause among Mauritania's various population groups. Some of these factors, such as the opening up of iron mines and the drought, may seem to be merely fortuitous by nature. Nevertheless, it seems to us that they are linked with those previously mentioned factors which in the colonial period set the gears

of migratory movements going.

2.1. General Conditions Governing the Rural Exodus

We have already posed the question of rural depopulation, examining the origin and development of labor migrations in the colonial period right up to the eve of Independence. In that examination we pointed out the part played by the frustrated craving for cash incomes, the key motive behind the option to migrate. The stagnation of subsistence production at a time of increased population growth, the deterioration of systems and terms of trade (a deterioration linked to the producers' dependence on the market) justified these migrations. It seems that the main responses of Mauritania's producers to the penetration of the market cash economy comprise the sale of livestock among herdsmen, and labor, whether it takes the form of wage labor or not.

In fact this preliminary analysis merely touched the superficial, epiphenomenal aspect to the extent that it applied to the immediate laws of the market: the producer is obliged to sell his labor power abroad because he no longer has any products to sell even if he had any in the first place, or what he does have to sell is of insufficient quantity to generate the cash flow necessary to meet his financial obligations, namely the payment of taxes and the purchase of trade goods. Indeed budgetary studies conducted by MISOES in the late 1950's in the Senegal River valley show that labor migrations provided on the average 20% of cash income. Among Moors in a position to sell livestock, during the same period the comparable figure for cash income from livestock sales was 80%. But among the Haratin the figure

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was only 42.5%: in their case the figure for cash earnings brought in by migration shows that migrant earnings supplied only 3% of needed income.

This, however, is far from the complete story. What, for example, accounts for the marked differences in migratory patterns among the Toucouleurs and among the Soninke ? How is one to understand the acceleration of these migratory movements in the 1960's up till the point where they actually jeopardized the self-reproduction of these societies, during the drought ? Why is it that certain forms of property, especially landed property, did not, save in exceptional cases, get drawn into the market context and the cash nexus ? Why were other cash crops, such as cotton and peanuts, not developed ? Why, instead, did peanuts, long proven viable in the Senegal River valley, actually lose ground in this period ? In order to answer these and other questions, we shall have to raise the level of analysis. In these societies, the economy was not oriented toward production or marketing. Exceptions to this rule occurred in specific economic sectors such as salt production; but even there, there were no generalized systems of legal tender (money), the basis of market production. It is the ways and means by which these societies were induced to produce for the market (their products including exportable labor power) during the colonial period and even before, since European penetration in this region has been of long duration, that can really explain the mechanisms and the differentiated effects of the rural exodus. It is our intention to develop this analysis more fully in a study entitled "The Evolution of Modes of Accumulation and Social Change in Mauritania". Here we shall simply present an outline summary, emphasizing points related to migratory movements. In other words, the focus

will be on conditions conducive to the "liberation" of the labor force.

2.1.1. "Double Dependency"

By the term "double dependency" we refer to the situation Mauritania's producers found themselves in after the establishment of the colonial system. This was also the situation of Sahelian societies in general. (23) This situation which, at the level of the market, manifests itself as a devaluation of labor power and its products, is a result of a double bind built into the way market production works. It is, in short, a case of "double dependency", this:

1. It results from the production of cheap commodities for export to the colonial metropolises. In Mauritania this production is destined for export only in an indirect sense, since it consists mainly of the provision of livestock and secondarily of labor to Senegal's peanut production zone and the urban centers which provide that zone with such ancillary services as transportation and processing industries. This supply of cheap food and labor at rockbottom prices make it possible to continue the profitable production of peanuts for export. We should point out that these mechanisms which ensure cheap productivity also operate within Senegalese society itself. We have seen these two causative factors of Mauritania's migratory

(23) P. Bonte, "La sécheresse des années soixante au Sahel - Transformation des systèmes pastoraux et agricoles sahéliens," in Man and Drought, Geneva. Publication pending.

movements at work : migrations linked to the livestock trade, and labor migrations, first in the form of seasonal labor, then in the form of the drift into the urban centers. These movements began quite early, about 1920, and developed steadily. In between the two World Wars and during the Second World War extra-economic pressures became necessary to keep the flow going. These pressures took the form of livestock requisitions and forced labor. Therefore, the economic mechanisms already engendered sufficed to feed the movement. After the Second World War, especially during the 1960's, the speed of labor migrations grew faster and faster. As for the drought of the 1960's, it encouraged a massive rural exodus which is still going on today. Other countries in the Sahel zone have suffered a similar fate : they also share this function of providing livestock and migrant labor for the colonial development poles which were most often cited on the coast. Such is the situation of the Hoshi areas of Upper Volta, as well as the Hausa areas in Niger and Nigeria, etc.

2. At the level of the local market, there is also the dependence of the producers on a social stratum of merchants whose indispensable role it is to keep prices low. This merchant stratum makes considerable profits from marketing, and these profits are only possible because prices paid for producers' commodities are steeply devalued. No doubt, this situation has its roots in the specific historical conditions of these Sahelian societies, in the role commerce formerly played in their social and political organization, namely, the way their states were organized, and in the existence of a merchant sphere partly but not totally linked with international trade.

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Let us make clear the necessary quality of this level of dependence on the domestic market. The European trading companies did not really control this market even during the most unchallenged periods of colonial power. Most certainly they could not have done so; because to achieve such control the Europeans would have had to integrate themselves into local society, and to be in a position to use relationships that were not of a directly economic type -- relationships enabling local merchants to manipulate production prices and to maintain them at a low level. Not only could the Europeans not do this; they assuredly did not in the least want to. Because this type of commercial organization has to be worked out on a micro-scale. It does bring in profitable returns, even speculative killings; but these are also limited in size. And then this kind of trading activity is not compatible with the sort of permanent investment that ties up capital: branch shops, salaried personnel, etc. So the European trading companies remained restricted to the "river ports." And even in those cases where they showed some fledgling interest in local trade, they soon enough abandoned it to local merchants. Such was the case in the cereal trade.

Furthermore, the perpetual undervaluing of local prices required the operation of a series of non-economic constraints of a kind that the repressive apparatus controlled by the colonial power could not establish and maintain. The political and economic power of these social strata, exemplified by the ability to fix interest rates, enable them to maintain just such a system of extra-economic sanctions both during and after the colonial period.

Such, then, in quick outline, are the features of this situation of

"double dependency": since commodities imported from abroad continue to be sold on the Mauritanian market at their actual price, it is obvious that cash needs will continue to mount, and that to meet them the producers will be obliged to sell more and more of their products or their labor. This process works itself out through phases of acute crises; in Mauritania, as in the entire Sahelian zone, such crises appear to be most closely connected with periods of drought.

Droughts and the famines which follow them are constant fixtures in the country's history. They have invariably been accompanied by large-scale migratory movements, which constitute one of the ways in which the local population groups respond to the deterioration of local conditions of production. There were other ways: and a whole gamut of economic and social stratagems would help the society to restructure itself after each crisis, admittedly at a heavy cost. Such stratagems included the setting up of collective granaries, the award of loans and grants for rebuilding decimated livestock herds, and even livestock rustling, etc. (24)

But the situation is entirely different when Sahelian societies appear less interested in their own self-reproduction than in the development of market-oriented production. Then the periods of drought become phases of massive commercialization, times when the need to sell labor power becomes acute, and the downward drift turns into a flood.

(24) P. Bonte, "Pasteurs et nomades : l'exemple de la Mauritanie", in J. Copans, ed., Sécheresses et Famines au Sahel, Volume III, Maspero, Paris, 1975. pp. 63-86.

In the short run such periods result in a further lowering of local commodity and labor prices -- proof of the effectiveness of the mechanisms of domination even during these crises. In 1948, the colonial officer in charge of Chinguetti noted, at the height of the crisis, that among Moorish herdsmen "the proportion of wealth held in the form of livestock herds is rising, the number of middle-level owners is falling, and former members of this groups are joining the mass of petty owners, while large livestock herds continue to accumulate." These crisis periods were also periods of intensive local accumulation and sharp economic differentiation. Many were the trading fortunes built up during the 1942-1948 crisis.

This crisis came on the heels of the 1942-1943 drought, itself made more catastrophic by a series of very damaging locust invasions. This was the first indication, after a long period of colonial penetration, that the colonial system had definitively become established among the Moors. In the Senegal River valley, of course, the system had established itself much earlier. This was also the starting point for migratory movements which were soon to pick up speed. Numerous herdsmen lost their livestock herds, either because they had to sell the animals, or because the drought decimated them. The most southerly of these herdsmen at that time drifted in large numbers into Senegal. There they found temporary pastures to help build up their herds again, in the process escaping the official livestock requisitions which had again become extremely burdensome during the war. They were also able to get better prices for their animals, and even to find work in the Senegalese towns or villages.

It was also during this period that people began to settle in the urban centers in steady, appreciable numbers. According to Dubié (1954), between 1939 and 1944 the population of small Moorish towns grew 400%: Port Etienne climbed from 500 to 2,000; Tidjikje grew from 1,000 to 5,000; and as for Atar, it began to look like a real city, etc. As yet none of this was of earth-shaking significance, but it did signal the start of a process whose culmination can now be seen: currently, almost 25% of Mauritania's total population is settled in the urban centers.

From the perspective of the analysis of migratory movements, we might therefore surmise that by its very logic this situation of "double dependency," aggravated by the society's chronic cycles of crises, results in a "liberation" of the work force, which then becomes available for employment. Naturally, this "liberation" also affects products as well as livestock, which tends to become increasingly commercialized. All this in turn has repercussions on migratory movements. So much for the general scheme. The question now is: how do the mechanisms referred to actually work in the society? How do existing social relationships get sufficiently unraveled to facilitate this kind of "liberation"?

2.1.2. The Evolution of Dependent Labor and the "Liberation" of the Work Force

Mauritania's societies share this common trait: in their precolonial history the modes of labor organization which typified them were hierarchical and dependent modes. To be specific, slavery was widespread in each of these societies. In addition to slavery there were other forms of dependent labor,

such as the serf labor of the Moorish Haratin, the vassal labor of the Zenaga, the dependence of landless peasants on landowners, etc. In itself the dependent character of these forms of labor organization was an obstacle to the "liberation" of the work force thus exploited in a contextual framework of domestic political relationships incompatible with wage labor. Now in the colonial period there was a steady corrosion of these dependency ties. In turn, the loosening of former bonds helped "liberate" the work force and gave the movement away from the countryside added momentum.

The Zenaga were a specific stratum of Moorish society. Working as herdsmen, or as palm cultivators in the north, they were technically free men. But they were bonded to pay various fees in kind, that is to say in the form of animals for meat and milk, dates, cereals, etc., to Hassani families, their overlords. Sometimes they also had to perform unpaid labor for them. In Moorish society this form of economic dependence was closely tied to the political system of the Emirates and to the power of the Hassani. The way it evolved was to depend on the manner in which the colonial administration progressively yoked this whole political system to its own needs. To start with, the colonial administration left the system of tributary payments intact. In so doing it was motivated by the desire to seduce the Moorish warrior stratum into helping it against the anti-colonial dissidents. The colonial administration was also unwilling to risk a rebellion among the warriors themselves. Nevertheless, it did become the practice for the tributary fees increasingly to get commuted into cash payments. Furthermore, the Zenaga began to protest against having to make the payments in the first place. Not only that: very often they actually fled from their masters in order to avoid

having to make these payments. Thus the political ascendancy formerly enjoyed by Hassani was progressively weakened. In the north, this weakening became complete with the exile (as a dissident) of the Emir Sidi Ahmed and his subsequent death. (25) In addition to this political weakening, the fact that the tributary fees were getting commuted into cash payments made it inevitable that they would come to look rather like a duplication of the colonial tax. All this engendered a serious crisis in these tributary relationships, making them a chronic source of tensions and conflicts in the period between the two World Wars. The 1942-1948 crisis dealt the tributary relationships their coup de grâce. Hard hit by the drought and by economic privation, the Zenaga herdsmen increasingly refused to pay tribute. For their part, the Hassani warriors, impoverished and with no access to political power, were impotent to enforce their privileges. The redemption of the hurma tribute (meaning the lifting of the tributary obligation in return for the payment of a contractual fee), a process organized by the colonial administration, started in Trarza in 1946 and ended in Adrar in 1952. The Zenaga liberated as a result of this exercise swelled the number of small, autonomous Moorish herdsmen, moving with them on their transhumance treks, and also following the same production orientation. In this way livestock production for the market got a boost.

As for the Hassani warriors, at the time of the redemption exercise they received large sums of money, worth over 3,000,000 francs at that time.

(25) P. Bonte, Cahier d'Etudes Africaines. Publication pending.

they received large sums of money, worth over 3,000,000 francs at that time. But colonial administrative reports note, with perhaps a note of chagrin, that they did not use the money to acquire livestock capital. They therefore went as bankrupt as before in very little time, but with the difference that now they had lost their principal source of income.

Another form of dependent labor characteristic of Moorish society is that of the Haratin. Most often these are former slaves, now freed, and working as farmers. In the southernmost reaches of Moorish society, the Haratin make up as much as 80% of the population. Their relationships with their former masters are partly political, taking the form of integration into the latter's tribes as a specific stratum; and partly economic: the Hassani warriors and the Zawaya marabouts (both the warrior group and the marabout group had Haratin dependents) enjoyed land tenure privileges entitling them to part of the Haratin harvest, often 10%. In the colonial period the political bonds were gradually severed: the Haratin tended increasingly to escape the control of their masters and to look for free land. We have already discussed the slow southward slide which brings numerous Haratin groups into Mali, some even crossing the River into Senegal. The relatively fluid character of tributary payments results from extremely varied types of evolution. At the risk of extreme simplification, we may distinguish three types:

- Some Haratin groups very definitely abandon their tribal links.

This is true of the Haratin who have inhabited certain parts of the Senegal River valley for a long time, an example being the Idyadeba Haratin, situated

between Boghe and Kaedi, south of Brakna. The old tributary payments are transformed into "presents" of a more or less voluntary kind, timed to coincide with visits paid by the former masters at harvest time. External pressures are not very strong, but these Haratin are often small-scale producers involved in a diversified but fragile economy, consisting of small livestock herds and tiny plots of land. Among them labor migrations are extrapolations of transhumance trips. In the dry season the families settle near Senegalese or Mauritanian Villages, doing odd jobs that bring them modest cash incomes.

- In other cases dependency relationships are maintained in a more oppressive fashion. This may be due either to the fact that the former masters enjoy greater political status, or that the political relationship is reinforced by a religious one. Santoir (1973) overlords⁽²⁶⁾ In all such cases a large portion of production is alienated; as a result, the fragility of the economy is correspondingly worsened.

- The Haratin who work on the Tagant and Adrar palm groves belonging to their former masters form a category unto themselves. Traditionally work contracts in these areas were either of the Khames sharecropping variety, entitling the master to 20% of the harvest, or of the co-planter type, which after some time would give the Haratin farmer title to some of the trees he had planted, if not to a portion of land. In this case one decisive factor of evolution was the introduction of motor pumps, a

(26) See C.J. Santoir, La Région du Lac Rkiz, cyclostyled, ORSTOM, Dakar, 1973.

development which spurred the growth of wage labor. In the Adrar region, this happened in the 1950's. Currently, the following varied forms of labor exist among the Haratin : there are small holdings with a combination of labor practices that may also be found independently; there are sharecropping arrangements, and there is wage labor.

Later on we shall resume the analysis of the Haratin situation, and look at the special features of migratory movements within this social group. Right now, we need only point out that in this social group which is clearly disadvantaged as regards access to the means of production, especially land, work patterns are evolving in such a way as to make these producers progressively autonomous. As a result, they find themselves in direct confrontation with the mechanisms of the market economy.

Still the most important changes are those involving the evolution of slave labor, a phenomenon rampant in all of Mauritania's societies. The abolition of slavery was the official colonial position; in fact, it served as one of the justifications for colonial conquest. But between the seated principle and the actual political practice of the colonial administration, there was a gap, and sometimes a wide gap. The different evolution of slavery in different ethnic groups illustrates this discrepancy.

Among the Moors, the slaves (Abid) number far fewer than the Haratin. Formerly, their function was to provide family units with supplementary labor, in the richest families, they did more than just provide supplementary labor : they did all the work. In this case, then, the evolution of slave labor is linked to the evolution of the family unit. In one way or another, depending on the family - unit's skill in maintaining a certain economic or political status, these old slave-master relationships have survived in the form

status, these old slave-master relationships have survived in the form of domestic relationships in both senses of the term. Quite often, too, the Abid worked for his master, but not necessarily within his family. When, as was common in the Southern regions of the country, the Abid worked as a farmer, his situation tended to resemble that of the Hartani, with the crucial difference that there was a tendency for the master, who of course was also the landlord, to appropriate everything the Abid produced. As a rule, the colonial administration was extremely accommodating on the issue of slavery in Moorish society. In some instances it actually acted to frustrate the emancipation movement, sometimes even hunting escaped slaves and turning them over to their masters. On account of all this, liberation was an extremely slow process, and as for the "liberation" of the work force tied up in the institution of slavery, it too was a very slow process, growing as it did out of the evolution of the Moorish family unit itself. In the end, the inability of the master to maintain his Abid slaves was as much a cause of emancipation as the slaves' own agitation for freedom. Actually, in many instances the former slaves have become the most deprived producers. To survive, they are forced to sell their labor power under most disadvantageous conditions, and their position on the labor market is most unenviable.

In the black African societies, even though slavery is likewise linked to domestic production, the question of slavery appears in a very different aspect. Among both the Soninke and the Toucouleurs, in precolonial times slaves formed a sizeable portion of the domestic work force. Sometimes, in the highest aristocratic families slaves supplied all the

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labor. Among the Toucouleurs the rapid breakup of the coresidential household production unit (galle) enhanced the social emancipation of the slaves (Matiube). Thenceforth they became an autonomous social stratum. On the other hand, slave-master dependency relationships have been replaced by other dependency relationships based on effective land tenure. They own dieri land, and even some recently cleared fondé land. But as a general rule, they are still dependent on their former masters for access to land (MISOES study).

Table 3

LAND DISTRIBUTION ACCORDING TO SOCIAL CATEGORY					
Mode of access to land	Rent	Payment for right to farm	Joint family landholding	Freehold	Total
<u>Castes</u>					
Torodo	25 %	24.5 %	18 %	32.5 %	100%
Matiube	78	12.5	2	7.5	100%
Total ¹⁾	37	21	11	31	100%

Source : MISOES, p. 117.

1) Total within Toucouleur society.

In simple terms, we may say that among the Toucouleurs the master-slave relationship has been rapidly replaced by a landlord-landless peasant relationship, a new dependency relationship with multiple forms, from the kind of sharecropping known as rempetiene to tithing arrangements. Meanwhile, a number of prejudices about the servility of the former slaves persist.

In Soninke society the land tenure system was very different. Access to land was politically controlled by certain landowning aristocratic lineage groups;

the mass of free people had usufruct rights. The evolution of slave labor, which was just as important, was also very different. Among the Soninke, slaves were the property of the head of the extended family, the Kagumme. They formed an essential part of the pecking order within this family unit, the Ka. The slaves, a ruthlessly exploited group, very soon rebelled against their masters, sometimes deserting them en masse. This development undermined the authority of the Kagumme and heightened friction levels in relations between elder and younger age groups, between Ka heads and their dependent male relatives. Social status seems relatively rigidly defined, so the former slaves (Komo), here as among the Toucouleurs, remain deprived of access to land, except for dieri land, which is easy to come by. (27) (In one village they owned 50-90% of the dieri land). Within a context of ongoing social tensions, they remain economically very dependent on the family heads who want to use their labor power to build up and perpetuate their own power within the family.

The evolution of master-slave relationships also takes the form of the slaves escaping from the family, which was the context for most slave labor. But the master-slave relationships persist in different, more mercenary guises such as wage labor, land renting arrangements etc. On account of this the slaves do not exhibit characteristics one might expect from those social strata most affected by colonialism by virtue of their having been the most deprived members of the society, the least committed to kinship relationships at the base of the society's production system.

(27) Information obtained from the War and Want Study entitled Rapport d'activité et de recherche, 1979

Quite the contrary: they are sometimes relatively "conservative". They are slower to get involved in migratory movements, and they seem more motivated to seek access to land than to seek any kind of total, immediate social emancipation.

Whatever the situation may be with regard to slave labor, in Mauritania's different societies dependent labor relationships generally follow the same pattern: in the first place the social and political framework of these dependency relationships gets broken up; then the obsolete relationships are replaced with forms of labor exploitation based on wages or cash payments. In both cases this means the producers are put in an increasingly weaker position: cut adrift from their traditional moorings, they find themselves in an extremely disadvantageous position in the market economy. These processes thus generally contribute to the "liberation" of the work force. In short order, more or less, they also enhance migration among these social categories.

2.1.3. The Development of Domestic Labor Patterns and the "Liberation" of Labor

No matter how important the different forms of dependent labor are, in Mauritania's various societies work is organized around the family unit. That is the production unit, the consumer unit, and the unit which handles the appropriation of the principal means of production. What this means is that labor relations are based on kinship. Kinship in the first place determines daily work and production routines covering such details as farm workteams, herd duty etc. But beyond that, kinship ramifies into a wider, lineage-based, tribal structure. And this structure plays a part

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in determining conditions of access to collective means of production for each family unit. The means of production thus involved include village land, river waters, fishing banks etc. In colonial times these domestic relationships underwent changes in both the immediate planning of work routines and the collective determination of access to production facilities.

In Moorish society the family, taken as a production and consumption unit, was relatively small. Exceptions developed in cases where the family's numbers were swollen by the addition of household slaves. A more elaborate division of labor became practical only at the level of the settlement, where cooperation was the rule for such tasks as livestock rearing, herd protection, caravan assemblage and farmwork organization, etc. Farmwork was most often restricted to one specific phase in the cycle of migratory and transhumance movements. Within any settlement each family enjoys a great measure of autonomy, and is free to choose its own neighborhood. Most often such choices are determined by kinship or matrimonial ties. This autonomy is linked with the close relationship between families and their livestock herds. The family is the unit that both owns and manages the herd. On the other hand, pasture access and access to collective production facilities are determined by membership of much larger units such as the tribe or the Emirate. And such access depends on the producer's political ties and status. It is precisely at this level that dependency relationships come into operation, in such forms as the Hassani aristocrats' protection of their Zenaga vassals; the guarantee they give the latter of access to pasture land; the financial control exercised by the former masters over the Haratin, etc.

Since colonial times two main factors have dominated the evolution of domestic labor:

- The breakdown of Moorish society's political framework:

We have already discussed the effects of this breakdown in connection with the development of the notion of territory. Political relationships governing access to land disappeared. In their place the colonial administration instituted direct controls over movement; the new system gave producers a great deal of latitude, save in exceptional circumstances. The only rights left intact were usufruct rights, strengthened by ownership rights over man-made water outlets, such rights belonging to the tribe, the clan, even the family who made the particular outlets. This breakdown reinforced the autonomy of family units. In the course of time it had the effect of bringing the status of producers in line with that of small-scale herdsmen in control of their own labor power and herds, producing directly for the market. As we have seen, the principal obstacle in the way of such a development was the opposition between the Haratin and their former masters -- an opposition kept alive by virtue of the land tenure rights still enjoyed by the Bizani.

- The close association of families with their herds and the important role now played by the livestock trade make up a second factor in the evolution of domestic labor. The two factors work together to ease the penetration of market relationships and the cash nexus, plus the rise of forms of private property. In rapid order different scholars have noted the penetration of all sectors of economic life by the market economy. Contrary to what happens in black African societies, farmland has thus

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become a cash commodity; it can be sold. And traditional fees and payments have now been commuted to cash, though here again the Haratin provide an exception, still making payments in cereal.

In periods of crisis this penetration of market relations and the cash nexus leaves the producers, that is to say the family units, somewhat at the mercy of the laws of the market place. The Moorish paterfamilias may lose his livestock herd as a result of a period of drought; or he may just find himself forced to sell his animals. In either case the family head, thus having lost his principal means of production, is increasingly reduced to one last resort: migration, the townward drift, the search for different sources of income. This is what happened during the last drought, a situation which brought about a profound transformation within pastoralist society. In the preceding period other factors had mitigated these risks of impoverishment. There were economic factors such as the search for supplementary incomes, participation in trade, farming and the transportation business. There were also employment opportunities in the army or in the government bureaucracy. Finally there were income opportunities connected with the commutation of previous statutory rights into cash payments, and incomes derived from religious activities. Then there were social factors, such as the maintenance of borrower-lender relationships or even donor-recipient relationships, which made it possible to build up herd strengths again, at least to some extent. These relationships were supplemented by the possibility of employment as shepherds entitled by right to a percentage of the flock on a yearly basis; by patron-client arrangements; and by a whole gamut of rules ensuring the social redistribution of wealth -- rules

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linked with kinship and social status. By virtue of these rules, social groups that acquired a dominant position through control of the market, i.e. the merchants, would steadily carve for themselves a social and political position commensurate with their economic power.

In the black African societies the evolution of domestic labor has followed a very different pattern. In precolonial times, household organization among the Toucouleurs and the Soninke shared some common features. The extended family, which embraced several conjugal families, was both a production and consumption unit. Within it work relationships were strictly hierarchized according to sex and age group. The family jointly managed property such as livestock or slaves, or worked land which it held in common. Land access rights were also determined at this level. As we have already pointed out, these land access rights were strictly hierarchized and controlled by a specific social group in both societies. However, household organization among the Toucouleurs and the Soninke exhibited certain differences; during the colonial period, its evolution in the two societies followed divergent paths.

Among the Toucouleurs the galle or extended family unit comprises several conjugal families, known as foyre. Rules governing access to land are exceedingly varied. The existence of large landholdings, with their roots in political acts of redistribution, is evidence that especially in the Toucouleur heartland, social differentiation is a phenomenon of long standing. In addition, movements that, at the beginning of the 20th century, opened up new arable land, have also enhanced the creation of private pro-

perty. According to the 1957-1958 MISOES study, in the Toucouleur country taken as a whole, 32 % of farms belong to those who till them. In the oldest inhabited areas this percentage drops down to 24 %; but downstream, that is to say, in recently settled areas, it shoots up to 70 %. Traditional modes of land acquisition, namely, the payment of fees to the holder of farming rights, are ignored except in 21.5 % of cases studied. By contrast, leasing and shareholding arrangements (rempetiene) are very well developed, accounting for 37 % of farms. (In the older areas the figure is 40 %; in the newer downstream areas it is 28 %). To all intents and purposes, it seems as if landed property-holding differentiations have provided a basis for a new social and economic differentiation. This differentiation kept intact the old forms of individualized appropriation; at the same time, it sharpened the conflict between landlords and landless peasants. These two aspects of the evolution of landed property helped inject disintegrative elements into the extended family, the galle; the resulting disintegration worked to the advantage of the smaller family units, the foyre, which in fact were the operative working units. Admittedly there still remained collective extended family landed property or dyowre whose management and inheritance were collective. But these farms were reapportioned within the family, and were not cultivated by means of collective extended family labor. The direction taken by the family and domestic labor among the Toucouleurs is therefore that of a strengthening of the nuclear family's functions at the expense of the extended family, the galle. Rising monetary demands, which are at the root of the flight from the countryside, are existentially experienced at the level of the nuclear family as a budgetary unit. Land tenure differentiation and pronounced social and economic inequalities make the situation of

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some social categories additionally hazardous. But, far more than statutory considerations, the principal factor is that of inequalities in land holdings. This explains the fact that in the course of MISOES studies it was found that the percentage of migrants was higher among all the castes situated upstream than among those downstream: among the upstream groups 65 out of every 100 males above 14 years old had migrated at least once; but among the downstream groups the corresponding figure was 35.4 out of every 100. Nevertheless, among the downstream castes, the Matiube migrated more often (45.6 out of 100) than the Torobe (37.5 out of 100). In the upstream regions where landholding differentiations inherited from history are strongest, the proportions are reversed: 60 % among the Matiube, 70 % among the Torobe. Under these circumstances, it becomes clear that though Toucouleur migrations involve mostly young males, it touches married men quite as much as bachelors, and rapidly turns into a migratory movement involving whole families.

Among the Soninke domestic labor has evolved very differently. There the extended family group, called the Ka, was tightly structured under the authority of the elder, called the Kagumme. The Kagumme was the group's manager. His authority over the slaves, who in times past supplied a large part of domestic labor, was absolute. He also controlled the harvests obtained from collectively worked lands, known as tekhore. Men and women had use of individual plots called salumo for men and yakharinte for women. Women's plots were smaller, but they had a certain amount of control over their labor and its resultant harvest. Men, however, were obliged to work on collective plots, then on plots belonging to family elders,

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before finally getting to work on their own plots. Nor was that all: the crops harvested from the men's individual plots were also subject to the Kagumme's control. This rigidly hierarchical organization of domestic work encouraged the maintenance of an extended family group, but only at the price of explosive tensions within the family organism. These tensions were aggravated by the speedy flight of the slaves, since the effect of this flight was to make much heavier the hierarchical impositions operative in domestic labor. But here again the evolution took the form of a degree of individualization whose chief characteristic was that the Kagumme lost control over the labor power of his nephews, his younger brothers' sons. (28)

In this context, the departure of migrant workers, again in search of cash income, a departure partly controlled by family elders, seems from the point of view of young males in a dependent situation at home to offer a possibility of advancement, a means to escape the control of the elders. Among the Soninke then, more than among the Toucouleurs, and of course far more than among the Moors, the migration option became a major aspect of a conflict festering within the family. At stake in this conflict was the individualization and the "liberation" of the work force. This might be the explanation of the paradoxical aspects of Soninke migratory movements: wholesale departures on the one hand, and the conflict-generating perpetuation of social forms of patently pre-market economy type.

(28) Pollet and Winter, La Société Soninke (Dyabunu, Mali) Université de Bruxelles, Institut de Sociologie, 1971.

This rapid analysis of dependent and domestic types of labor among Mauritania's varied societies has enabled us to show that the phenomenon of migration belongs within a wider context: the context of a much more general process of the liberation of the labor force, which involves a whole range of economic and social changes.

Migration is sometimes the culmination of this process. This is the case among the Moors, where migration was a response to the pauperization and expropriation of producers battered by market forces during the last critical phase brought about by the recent drought. Migration can also in itself constitute an essential factor in this process, helping to dismantle tightly hierarchized domestic structures only partially shaken by market forces and the cash nexus. That is the case among the Soninke. Before moving on to a deeper study of the role of migratory phenomena in these different societies we shall take a look at other factors which have recently contributed to the rural exodus, either speeding it up or channeling it in new directions.

2.2. The Creation of a Wage Sector in Mauritania

In Mauritania the creation of a wage sector, in other words the creation of a national labor market, is relatively recent. It began just after the second World War, but knew no serious development till the 1960's. That was when industrial enterprises were established, and the independent state of Mauritania was founded.

After the Second World War there were a number of changes in

colonial economic options. Typically, there was much heavier investment from the metropole, especially on the infrastructural level, through the agency of such organizations as FIDES. Concurrently, a "policy of development" was elaborated. In addition, France constructed new military facilities, notably during the Algerian War. And finally, mineralogical surveys were also begun. All this brought about a certain amount of development of the wage market, though the development was still very modest. It is true that at that time there was an incipient urban boom, especially around Atar, which was indisputably in the ascendant then. But in its overall direction the migrator drift, speeding up just then, was almost wholly pointed toward Senegal.

After the MIFERMA mines were commissioned in 1952, and especially after all the necessary groundwork had been completed in 1963, the situation was set to change. With the creation of SOMIMA (founded in 1967, in operation in 1971) the modern sector grew steadily. An additional contributing factor was the building of a fishing port at Noundhibou between 1965 and 1968. We shall treat the problem of employment in this modern sector elsewhere. For now we shall simply present a few statistics which give an overview of the development of the situation prior to the drought. Between 1959 and 1971 these jobs grew from 1,500 to 12,000. Of these the mines accounted for 5,000. Jobs in the administrative bureaucracy reached 7,500 in 1971. To this we need to add the total of jobs in the category dubbed "the unstructured modern sector."

This sector includes all artisans, and ancillary jobs dependent on the urban bureaucracy. Only one study of this sector has been done, a study dated 1977 and exclusively focused on Nouakchott. ⁽²⁹⁾ The study covers 2,000 jobs in Nouakchott, of which 1,500 are wage-earning jobs. It gives an estimate of 3,000 such jobs for all Mauritania. This would give us an approximate idea of the number of wage-earning jobs in the sector at that time: about 3,500. The figure of 20,000 to 25,000 wage-earning jobs at the beginning of the 1970's should correspond to an appropriate order of magnitude if we include wage-earning day laborers, workers employed on piece-rate jobs, et al.

This figure looks disarmingly low. But the existence of even that much of a labor market was to contribute in no measure to the redirection of migratory currents, turning them around from their former external destination of points inside the national territory. We shall be examining this turnaround later; but first we must say a few words about this wage-earning population itself, a group with its own specific evolutionary history. In doing this we shall draw on data gathered in the course of studies conducted by ourselves in Zouerate and Nouadhibou in 1969 and 1970. The focus of these studies was on the working-class population of the two towns; but its conclusions may to a certain extent justify extrapolation, since the phenomenon they highlight is precisely the decisive importance of the wage-earning condition.

(29) Nihan and Jourdain, "Le secteur non-structuré moderne de Nouakchott", in Revue Internationale du Travail, 117, No. 6, 1978.

Those migrants who settled in Zouerate and Nouadhibou in the early 1960's and later were often first time migrants from the countryside, though a number of them had already made one or two previous migratory trips and experienced town life. (Among the workers interviewed in Zouerate in 1969, the percentage of such experienced migrants was 33%; in Nouadhibou, in 1970, it was practically the same.) Except for a small number of expatriate workers, the wages earned by those employed at this relatively low level of qualification were low. (In 1968, 72% of MIFERMA workers earned less than 20,000 F CFA each, and their total salaries amounted to 25% of the gross total. On the other hand, 10% of the wage-earners, mostly Europeans, were paid 50% of the total.) The workers' material situation was made more difficult by urban inflation. Budget analysis conducted in Zouerate in 1968 show that in over 50% of the cases studied, the budgets were definitely in the red, and that to make ends meet extra income had to be sought from such sources as trade, gardening, even contraband hustles, etc. As a result, these working class families were in debt to the tune of several months' wages. Sometimes, the debts reached a whole year's wages. All the while, a strict wage freeze policy was in force while living costs were rising rapidly, especially after 1970. This situation was one of the reasons underlying the social upheaval that shook the mining towns at that time and continued till 1973. In 1974, the minimum wage was given a really hefty boost.

We have dwelt on this aspect of the issue because in spite of the difficulty of the workers' material situation, we find quite soon a remarkable stabilization of this working class population, which then goes on to develop other social and economic behavioral traits. This is worth noting because previously, the way working class recruits responded to such

difficult situations was to abandon jobs and to head for other migratory destinations, to go to other towns where they hoped to find better paying jobs, or even quite simply to go back home. We take this change in attitudes to be a result of a process of proletarianization. Such a process marks a definite break between the old situation, in which migrations were undertaken as a tactical means for satisfying cash needs, and the new situation, the situation of wage earning workers. (In the case of the mineworkers the break was radical).

Let us first summarize the principal data dealing with labor turnover in the MIFERMA corporation.

Table 7

Evolution of Worker Turnover at MIFERMA by Job Category				
Job Category	ZOUERATE		NOUADHIBOU	
	1964	1970	1963	1970
S1	115 %	nd	73 %	24 %
S2	62 %	nd	70	7
S3	67	nd	64	12
S4	31	nd	55	11
S5	41	nd	56	15
S6	25	nd	42	10
H C	7	nd	48	20
Worker Total	56	10.5	61	10.5

Source: Study by F. Bonte, 1969-1970.

Currently, personnel turnover rates among Mauritanian Workers and Foremen are extremely low. Even during the War they remained low, annually fluctuating between 2% and 6%. This is in contrast with the prevailing situation in the initial years, when Mauritanian personnel behaved so unstably as to jeopardise the continued functioning of the enterprise. An analysis of reasons for resignations and dismissals at Nouadhibou between 1966 and 1970 would be the best way to approach this issue. About 33 % of Workers who left the factory were dismissed. This percentage included workers on probationary trial who did not make the grade. Reasons for layoffs remained relatively uniform from year to year: abolition or conversion of job positions: 5.8 %; incompetence: 4.9 %; insubordination: 2.6 %; desertion: 3.9 %; absenteeism: 5 %; work-rule infractions: 2.8 %. By contrast, voluntary walk-offs dropped sharply. In most instances the causes were failure to return from leave, unpremeditated resignation, trips back upcountry, etc. Leaving aside such objective reasons as military service, health, etc., if we add up the various personal motives we see that they play a progressively smaller role as time goes on. In 1966 they accounted for 53 % of total departures and dismissals; in 1970 they accounted for only 28 %. The evolution of the turnover rate primarily reflects this falling off of voluntary walk-offs; secondarily, it reflects the fact that the workers had become better integrated into the industrial system, and thus committed fewer work-rule infractions.

Initially, MIFERMA workers were migrant laborers in search of jobs. As such they still maintained their old behavior patterns, and some of them wished to return regularly to their original homes, because they thought

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of migration as a stop-gap measure. Under these circumstances, dissatisfaction with low wage levels and working conditions aggravated the tendency to quit jobs.

Two developments changed this behavior pattern and to a remarkable degree stabilized the working population: the first was the process of proletarianization; the second was the acceptance by the workers themselves of their condition as wage earners.

This was a complex process related to the initial indebtedness of the working population. After all, to pay one's debts one had to stay on the job. Another aspect of this proletarianization process was on-the-job promotion resulting from the acquisition of a professional qualification and the policy of Mauritanianization which got a special boost after MIFERMA was nationalized in 1973.

Table 8

Evolution of Worker Distribution at MIFERMA and SNIM by Job Categories

	NOUADHIBOU			I	ZOUERATE		
	1964	1970	1980		1964	1970	1980
S1	28.3	4.3	-	7.1	2.1	1.3	
S2	14.6	28.4	15.6	25.7	15.8	13.4	
S3	19.4	19.8	19	16.5	24.8	13.6	
S4	13	16.3	26	16.4	16.5	22.9	
S5	12.8	17.1	21.2	15.4	20.5	22.9	
S6	9.2	10.8	17.8	11.7	14.1	14.2	
HC	1.7	3.4	3.6	7.5	6.2	10.3	
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
NB Mauritanian Foremen	39	157	414	22	170	769	

Sources: Study by F. Bonte, 1965-1970; SNIM data.

A parallel development was that a series of benefits were obtained or improved, particularly in the domain of housing. These helped stabilize the working population. Many behavior patterns, for instance consumption patterns, changed. (We shall return to a discussion of such changes in chapter 4). Finally, these mineworkers gradually became conscious that they formed a group with its own distinguishing characteristics and specific interests. In this regard, the turning point came during the social struggles which spread considerably between 1968 and 1971. More recent events such as the March 1980 strike at Nouadhibou, the call for which the workers respected to a very great extent despite real political and ethnic schisms dividing the working population, give an indication of the high degree of awareness that population has of itself as a group with common interests.

The creation and stabilization of a modern wage sector in Mauritania affected the development of migratory movements in important ways.

First, it gave rise to a second wave of urbanization directed essentially toward those new urban centers where the jobs were to be found : Nouakchott, Nouadhibou, Zouerate, and, somewhat later, Akjoujt. Thus, the urban population grew from 90,000 in 1961 to between 150,000 and 180,000 and 200,000 around 1971. (Of the increase, Nouakchott accounted for 35,000 to 40,000, Nouadhibou for 20,000, and Zouerate for between 15,000 and 20,000.) In part, this increase came from the relocation of groups already urbanized. Some workers at the mining enterprise already had qualifications previously acquired in urban areas; they moved to Nouadhibou or Zouerate because of prospects of better pay. This explains why a large number of inhabitants in these towns had

already lived in town by the time of our study: 20 % of the adults at Zouerate, 30 % at Nouadhibou. In particular, a good number of them had been to Dakar. In addition, quite a large number also moved over from Atar. Atar used to be a busy economic center during the colonial period, and the construction of an important French military base there had resulted in the development of a wage sector of some size. But after 1960 the town suffered a quick bust, and its most active inhabitants moved to Zouerate, Nouadhibou or Nouakchott.

Another consequence of the growth of this modern sector was that migratory movements which heretofore had gone almost exclusively to Senegal were redirected into Mauritania's national territory. This redirection implied a reorganization of the national space itself. Some of the inhabitants of these new towns were also migrants who had settled previously in Senegal; these were returning with the hope of finding better jobs or of putting the skills they had acquired, to use in a less competitive environment than the Senegalese towns. Moreover, the rural exodus, instead of being oriented exclusively toward Senegal, would also get redirected into the new Mauritanian towns. In any case the initial inhabitants of these towns came from regions already involved in the rural exodus during the previous period. Thus the population of Nouadhibou in 1970, apart from the original groups and those from Adrar, was made up of Moors from Trarza (13 %) and Brakna (13.2 %) as well as of Haratin from these same regions (10 %), from the Toucouleur areas in Mauritania and Senegal, etc.

In the North, where the mining towns are, the rural exodus became particularly serious, and it resulted in the relocation en masse of

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pastoralist and nomadic groups in the new towns. Thus, in 1969, 75 % of the population of Zouerate comprised people from Adrar and Tiris. In Nouadhibou they were 13 % of the population, while in Akjoujt they constituted a majority. This rapid desertion of most of the active population seriously damaged the pastoral economy as well as the palm groves. It also in the end had a cumulative effect resulting in the very clear depopulation of the region. Right now, more of the region's population live outside than inside this region.

The creation of this modern wage sector has had a third effect on migratory movements, an effect due to the fact that the wage-earning class has been spread out over a wider area. The new towns became centers of attraction for many migrants mainly looking for work, but also some who came to seek help from relatives or fellow tribesmen or villagers who had already got jobs in town. This pattern holds most consistently among the Moors, where wealth redistribution goes on more within the urban areas themselves than through the sending of remittances back home. We shall pick up these issues again in later sections of this work. For now, let us conclude by highlighting one last point: These new models of urban life or wage-earning employment which are closer at hand than those available in Senegal, and which offer a definitive alternative to rural lifestyles instead of a mere source of extra cash income, are important factors in the determination of directions open to migratory movements.

2.3. The Drought of the 1970's and the Migratory Explosion

Several times previously, we have mentioned the part played by droughts

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at the onset of economic and social crises in Mauritania during the colonial period. Now the drought which started in the late sixties and took on quite extraordinary dimensions in 1972-1973 again seems to have played a catalytic role in unleashing a crisis whose actual causes were not in the least climatic. A major aspect of this crisis was the speeding up of migratory movements and the flight from the countryside, the enormous numbers of people involved in these population shifts, and the resulting changes in lifestyle.

It is not our aim here to offer an in-depth analysis of the drought and the accompanying crisis. We think such an analysis could well fit into the general framework presented above. One immediate effect the drought had was to bring about a kind of double bind: it intensified the need for money, but simultaneously it made the satisfaction of this need harder. Food prices soared dizzyingly while, at least in the first phase, livestock prices fell. The rural exodus was set in motion just as much by hard times in the agricultural sector as by the shortage of cash and resources for obtaining food. At any rate the crisis was more serious, far deeper than all other crises before it. As such it laid bare the deep roots of the factors reshaping Mauritanian society. Means of production were affected, being destroyed in large quantities in the case of livestock; but that was not all: the social cadres of production were also affected. Livestock producers had no means of making up lost stock except by resorting to wage labor; in some places farmland was abandoned for years on end; and attempts to modify agricultural production by starting irrigated patches on farm fringes failed because of complex reasons relating to the organization of farm labor and land tenure

practices. The meaning of all this was clear: Mauritania's societies had undergone changes that had pushed them to a breaking point where in their entirety they would have to get reorganized if they were to survive. Henceforth the germane issue was not whether to reorganize, but how. Nor was that the worst. The drought and the crisis also jeopardized the chances of success of any such reorganization. What was threatened was the environment itself; it was necessary to conserve it because it was endangered not only by natural causes but also by the reckless growth of human exploitation. The Guidimakha study (War and Want, 1977) actually provides evidence that in many areas the vegetation, after getting adapted to drought conditions (some species surviving better) was to a large extent intact; and that in fact the Livestock Department on the local level had taken over several pasture zones that were still intact, having been abandoned by livestock because of the lack of water. The same is true of dieri lands which were not much used; in this case people had moved away before the drought hit, for reasons linked with difficulties encountered in getting people to work on the farms (see Section 2.6.2). So these dieri lands had been saved, while wilo and fonde lands had deteriorated on account of new farms being started on them and their tree cover being destroyed.

In this general context, mobility among the population involved was considerably intensified. Among livestock herdsman this mobility at first took on the aspect of a readjustment to the drought. The most precise studies of the prolongation of normal pasture treks and the modification of transhumance routes among the different pastoralist groups in Southern and Central Mauritania are those conducted by Hervouet (1976). In the Eastern

Region the climatic difficulties encountered in 1979 started a general southward exodus of livestock herdsman into Mauritanian Guidimakha, as well as into Mali.

All that notwithstanding, the principal result of the drought was the large-scale sedentarization of Mauritania's livestock herdsman. We shall give this phenomenon detailed scrutiny in Section 3.2. It deserves such a close look, because it is a complex phenomenon, quite different from the rural exodus, involving as it does a profound alteration of lifestyles without necessarily being incompatible with animal husbandry or, naturally, with farming. In fact, in a number of cases, people actually settled down on farmland, or with the intention of procuring access to farmland. Very often this was true for the Haratin and for some Peulhs, but former Bizani herdsman were also involved. In this case agricultural sedentarization is equally a result of increasing difficulties confronting the Bizani in their attempts to get cereals from their former vassals. A different form of sedentarization involves the settlement of herdsman at watering points which in former times they merely visited regularly. Sometimes the resulting settlements are large. This type of sedentarization leads directly to migration when it becomes impossible to carry on animal husbandry. Finally, in some cases sedentarization comes about directly in the form of migration, as a flight away from the countryside. Herdsman have resorted to these three types of sedentarization in response to local conditions; it is therefore possible to find all three types operative within the same group (Santoir, 1973).

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Santoir was thus able to investigate habitat changes among several Moorish tribes of the Lake Rkiz area in 1972, focusing specifically on their immediate responses to the drought.

Table 9

Habitat Changes Among Rkiz Area Moorish Tribes, 1972						
Places	Idabihacen		Idawali		Tadjahanet	
	1972	Pre-1972	1972	Pre-1972	1972	Pre-1972
Lake Rkiz	12.8%	62.5%	62.2%	97.2%	18.1%	63.7%
Wells	52.5%	30	14	1.1	46.3	29.2
Chemama	6.1	2.6	1	-	6.3	2.5
Towns in R-I-M	8.7	0.8	6.8	0.1	7.9	0.7
Towns in Senegal	18	4	15	1.3	19.7	3.8
Other	1.9	0.1	-	-	1.7	0.1
Total Population	2,360 ¹⁾	12,887	193	2,349	3,085	20,191

Source : Santoir, 1973

1) Heads of tent-households

The study was conducted in March 1972. It covered agro-pastoralist tribes farming Lake Rkiz floodbanks at ebb tide. That year, since the lake did not flood, its banks could not be farmed. Groups settled either on their farmlands, or around their wells (such settlements were particularly large) or headed for the urban areas. The option selected depended on the relative importance of agriculture (in the Rkiz and Chemama areas, local sitting was also important) and animal husbandry. More than 25 % took the urban option, though it must be pointed out that the tribes involved lived in a

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traditionally familiar with migrations into Senegal.

The drought and the ensuing crisis had yet another consequence: a third wave of people moving into Mauritania's own towns. After 1971 the urban population growth shot up spectacularly. In 1977, according to census figures, the urban population was estimated at 300,000; in effect, it had doubled in just about 5 years. The most spectacular growth was in Nouakchott, which climbed to a population of 134, 704; in other words, in the single year 1972-1973, its population had doubled, and in 1974 its growth was just as fast. Meanwhile, practically all towns grew in population size. One particularly strong reason for this urban drawing power, the distribution of food aid, was and continues to be almost completely restricted to the urban areas.

Because of the drought the flight from the rural to the urban areas no longer predominantly involved job-seeking adult males; it came to involve entire families. After the worst years of the drought, however, this tendency seems to have slowed down, and the male-female sex ratio among migrant streams as monitored during the 1977 census seems to have fallen. (On this, see the RAMS Demographic Report for a detailed analysis). Several cases may be distinguished:

- Nouadhibou remained an urban center attracting only job-seeking migrants. The sex ratio among migrants remained high: in 1969-1971, for every 100 women there were 194 men; in 1976 the male figure was 173. The town's rather peculiar character and the small size of the area's pastoralist population have precluded a rural exodus directly connected with the drought.

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- Nouakchott and Zouerate were two important towns attracting migrant workers; but they also drew migrants pushed into motion by the drought. Once the worst part of the crisis was over, sex-ratio figures again climbed higher: in Zouerate the ratio was 132 in 1972-1973, and 188 in 1976; in Nouakchott it was 126 in 1972-1973 and 170 in 1976.

- In those centers where there were no labor migrations, the sex ratio among migrants remained constant throughout this period, at Kiffa it was 86 in 1972-1973, and 77 in 1976; at Boutilimit it was 86 in 1972-1973, and 93 in 1976; at Tijikja it was 107 in 1972-1973 and 106 in 1976. In the first two cases, it even appears that first migrants settle in town as family units, and later the men go off in search of work.

- Finally, there are a few atypical cases, atypical because of local conditions: the Mendes workyards were at the root of the sex ratio imbalance in the Aleg area after 1974 (in 1975 the figure was 199); while the cause of massive movements of males into the area around Atar was the war; corresponding figures for that area were 124 in 1972-1973 and 316 in 1976.

Among this third wave of migrants moving into urban areas, individual places of origin are also much more varied. Formerly the migrants mainly came either from certain areas traditionally involved in migratory movements, or from the regional hinterlands of the urban centers, such as Adrar and Trarza. But now migrations involved all of Mauritania's regions. The large number of people from the Hodh area settled in Dakar was evidence of the attraction of migrant streams toward poles within

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Mauritania's own borders. As for the inhabitants of the Senegal River's right bank, they no longer headed for Senegal as in the past; reversing their traditional direction, they now tended mainly to move into Mauritanian towns.

By virtue of the population movements it brought about, the recent crisis instigated by the drought - is the crisis in fact over? - completed the "liberation" of the work force, a process we examined in Section 2.1. It also highlighted the dominance of market forms in the area of production. As we pointed out at the start of this section, the crisis grew worse because of the additional circumstance that Mauritania's rural societies found it impossible to continue to perpetuate themselves given the context of "double dependency" in which they existed, as well as the dramatic changes affecting the environmental, material and human factors of production. Current aspects of the crisis now make it possible to give a sharper focus to a number of points in our historical analysis of these social changes.

Thus it seems to us that the clear-cut rise in livestock prices in 1974 was a very interesting phenomenon if we relate it to the parallel rise of a wage sector in the livestock industry. The crucial factor in the partial rebuilding of depleted herds was the raising of large herds by bureaucrats and businessmen, who paid shepherds to look after them. This fact makes it abundantly clear that one of the bottleneck factors in the previous situation makes it all the more important to note that this revaluation of labor takes place in a social context which favors market relationships and the cash nexus, this mainly benefiting the social category which controls these market relationships, instead of benefiting the livestock producers

themselves. As a result, these producers have simply moved from being victimized in the market place to being victimized as wage laborers possessing no assets beside their labor power. In other words, they are subjected to a new form of domination within the context of these same market relationships.

The present crisis also makes it clear that the producers are not in a position to make the kinds of investments which would enable them to increase their production and raise their productivity. Problems encountered by projects designed as responses to the crisis, to the extent at least of guaranteeing that nutritional needs would be met, are evidence of this incapacity. This question of the lack of investment capacity on the local level arises immediately whether what is at stake is the development of irrigated areas, the opening up of village land through the use of public funds, or the supply of fodder, etc. Even when such investment capacity exists, for example in the form of resources repatriated by migrants, their profitable use is doubtful on account of the low prices fetched by produce on the market. Here again, the insurmountable obstacles confronting rural peasant investment are likely to create a vacuum to be filled by private investment in those few areas such as truck farming and vegetable gardening, where profits may be realized.

Finally, the crisis has helped entrench the economic and political power of the social category in control of the local market. At times the crisis has even enhanced the capacity of this class to accumulate wealth, through speculation involving market produce, including foodstuffs.

Thus the drought, the crisis and the resulting large-scale population movements indicate that Mauritanian society cannot evade profound changes. The question is whether these changes in store for the society will happen spontaneously, with all the grave critical implications attendant on such spontaneous evolution: intensified impoverishment, famine, anarchic population movements, speculative development of private investments, and the ravaging of the environment; or the changes can be directed and controlled. This hypothetical option of directed, controlled change is the option advocated by those in favor of planning.

2. 4. Effects of Policies on Migrations

Mauritania, an independent state since 1960, has the requisite facilities for the conduct of an autonomous national policy. Overall economic and political options made after independence, as well as specific policies followed in different administrative sectors, have since then become significant factors in the economic social transformation of Mauritania, even if they have not been the only decisive factors, since other aspects of dependence continue in force, especially in the economic domain; in addition, mechanisms of economic and social change inherited from the colonial era are still operative. In a report such as this, it is of course difficult to present a comprehensive evaluation of the effects of these policies on migratory movements, especially since in most cases these effects are indirect. We shall therefore select a few key points to focus on.

The options at issue are stated comprehensively throughout the three plans designed and implemented in Mauritania. The options adopted

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when the First Plan was designed (1963-1966) were especially important for the evolution of the rural sector -- mainly because of their negative effects. Developmental choices made at the time were based on an extremely pessimistic vision of the rural sector. Great stress was laid on the limitations inherent in the environment, the low level of human resources, and the impossibility of achieving a real production increase in the sector. By contrast, the vision of spilloff possibilities from investments in the mining sector for the Mauritanian economy's development was very optimistic. Here we need not get involved in a critique of this latter point. (30) The first analysis resulted in extremely low levels of public investment in the rural sector. Moreover, the investments actually made were often highly expensive. Development projects were few; management was neglected; some facilities established in the colonial era collapsed. What was even worse, although the rural sector was allotted a mere 8.6 % of total investment capital, at the time of evaluation only 77 % of that small allotment had in fact been used. Budgetary appropriations earmarked for this sector dropped from 7 % of the total budget in 1960 to 4 % in 1969.

There is, needless to say, no iron-cast guarantee that any other planning strategy could have reversed the trend toward deterioration in the rural sector. Still, it is clear that the policy of "laissez-faire" and the relative neglect of a sector which still comprised the majority of Mauritania's population could only aggravate that trend.

(30) See P. Bonte, "Multinational Corporations and National Development: MIFERMA and Mauritania," Review of African Political Economy, 2, 1975. pp. 89-105.

The lack of facilities, clinics and schools widened the gap between the urban and rural sectors. The lack of a price policy, and the absence of any policy covering trade and reserve stockpiling, left the field open to the untrammelled play of market forces. The failure to improve production factors, in other words, the degradation of these production factors, made them more vulnerable to the kind of crisis brought about by the drought. So the speed-up of migratory movements throughout this period seems equally to have been a result of political options defined at the national level.

When the evaluation was made, the danger was in fact pointed out in the comments made. At the end of the 1971 BIRD mission, the expert R.F. Westebbe had this to say : "By the end of the first plan, it was clear that despite the high hopes attached to the dramatic growth of the modern sector, the basic problem of raising the standard of living of the bulk of the population was not being solved. Although a great deal of money had been spent on highly capital-intensive and relatively small hydro-agricultural works, the results obtained did not, in retrospect, in most cases, warrant the investments made. Too little emphasis had been placed on returns from investments that little affected the bulk of the rural population.

"In part, the planners did not know enough about the ecological possibilities of traditional livestock and crop agriculture, and, in part, they placed excessive reliance on the stimulative effects of infrastructure investments. In addition, the basic studies that must be the foundation of any long term effort to transform the economy and social structure have yet,

in most cases, to be accomplished. In short the country seemed to be in a vicious economic circle." (31)

The Second Plan (1970-1973) and the Third Plan (1976-1980) admittedly tried to make up for this orientation, and the proportion of the investment budget they set aside for the rural sector rose to 13.9 % for the Second Plan and 18.6 % for the Third Plan. But the problems became more difficult to deal with because at the beginning of the 1970's the effects of the drought were beginning to be felt, and the necessary emergency aid programs made it imperative to divert available resources into ad hoc relief efforts. Besides, the revaluation of the rural sector was still a somewhat equivocal issue: for instance, in the area of employment, priority was still given to the modern sector. Possibly because the necessary studies had not been done, the resources needed were not always well defined. They thus vacillated between short term expediencies aimed at making up food shortages, and the raising of pastoralist productivity through the development of fodder and pasture lands. In short, the problems did not get solved; they got worse. One indication of this deterioration was the drop of the proportion of the GNP supplied by the rural population.

Table 10

GNP Index of Total Population and Rural Population		
YEAR	Total Population	Rural Population
1968	100 %	48.5 %
1970	100 %	42 %
1972	100 %	35 %
1973	100 %	30 %

Source: Table prepared from various sources.

(31) R.P. Westebbe, The Economy of Mauritania, Praeger, New York, 1971.

Such being the circumstances, the rural exodus could only get aggravated, even leaving aside the immediate coercive force of the drought. The Adjustment Plan proposed by the new regime in September 1978 again warns of the disturbing situation of the rural sector, suffering such "constant degradation" that this sector, which in the 1960's provided 60 % of the Gross National Product, provided a mere 20 % in 1978. In other words, the rural sector had become completely marginal in the Mauritanian economy.

To do justice to this type of problem, we would have to undertake a more comprehensive critique. Suffice it that we here point out the importance of the political factor in a context where the proportional weight of public investments in the overall capacity to finance development is considerable. Other aspects of national political options also have had repercussions on migratory movements. On this head we shall merely state a few points, since the topic is more fully dealt with in other RAMS Project Studies.

1. Educational Policy: The effort mounted in this area has been appreciable, especially considering that the starting point was very low. Thus, in 1950 only 2.5 % of the school-age population was in school. At the time of Independence the figure was 7.3 %, and in 1976 it reached 18%. Meanwhile, Mauritania's educational policies are confronted with problems common to developing countries: the difficulty of expanding school intake while maintaining teaching quality levels; and the discrepancy between instructional content and the country's cultural and economic realities. In addition, Mauritania has her own special problems: the question of multilingualism, and the cost of education, a problem partly linked to the

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decision to use both Arabic and French in school.

Educational policy has affected migratory movements in two ways: On the one hand primary schools tend to be concentrated in urban or sedentary centers. As for secondary schools, they are exclusively located in the urban areas. Thus they contribute to the movement of families with school-age children into urban centers. This, for example, was one of the principal reasons given by families from Adrar for moving to Atar. On the other hand, the youth themselves, once educated, remain in these same towns where they look for jobs capable of satisfying their aspirations. From this double point of view educational policy has worked as an important factor affecting migrations.

2. Infrastructure and Urban Development: Generally, the policy favoring the development of communications networks is a factor contributing to the direction migratory streams take. In the area of communications infrastructure the colonial legacy in Mauritania was very skimpy, and independent Mauritania has had to build up the bases of a communications network serving the national territory. From the point of view of development and the direction of migratory streams, what seems most important to us is the construction of a highway grid. The Rosso-Akjoujt road which incidentally provides easy access to Atar, and especially the East-West road artery linking Nouakchott and Nema have helped integrate certain regions with the whole country; they have also made it possible for migrants from the eastern regions, who in times past used to go to the Senegal River Valley, into Senegal itself, or to Mali, to move to Nouakchott. We shall focus on the influence of these communications arteries on migratory movements in the third Section (3.4).

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Urban investments in particular, and in general those investments going toward the upkeep of the urban bureaucracy, have been especially high because in Mauritania the new state has had to build a capital city from scratch. The distribution of the investments involved was as follows :

Table II : Urban investments

	1963-1966	1970-1977
Nouakchott	3 207	6 277
Other towns	4 269	3 620
Total	7 476	8 997

The tendency to give Nouakchott the lion's share of investments actually gets intensified, quite apart from the initial necessity of investment involved in building the capital city ex nihilo.

These public investments in the urban sector have a double importance : first, they have helped to expand the urban job market and to attract migrant workers. Secondly, they reinforce the importance of the modern urban sector in the state's political economy, while at the same time providing role models for the migrants. (32)

2.5. Circumstances and Effects of Migration in Moorish Societies

We have examined at length the historical or contemporary factors determining migratory movements. We shall now, in the two concluding

(32) On these different points common to the Sahelian countries, see Urban Growth and Economic Development in the Sahel, World Bank Staff Working Paper, No 315, January 1978.

sections of this chapter, shift the focus of our analysis and pay special attention to the circumstances under which migrations take place in Mauritania's different societies, and the effects the development of migratory processes have on these societies. We shall limit ourselves to three groups: the Moors, the Toucouleurs and the Soninke. In each case we shall seek answers to the following sets of questions:

- How do the migrations take place? Under what circumstances? What are the immediate motivating factors? What is the position of the migrant within the relevant economic and social structures?

- What consequences follow the development of migrations? What is the economic fallout attendant on migrations? How do migrations affect household organization? How do they affect modes of ownership? How do they influence wealth distribution and consumption patterns? What effects do they have on social organization, kinship and marriage? And finally, how do migratory movements impinge on political organization?

This is a tall order, and we shall only partially fill it. Fact is, those precise studies which alone would enable us to answer these questions have not been done. What we have tried to do is to bring together the relevant documentary resources, and to eke these out with information gathered from field work. We have not hesitated, where such recourse was justified, to refer to studies on neighboring societies. On certain issues gaps still remain, and all we can do for the moment is to adjust to them; the alternative would be to mount a crash program of studies which would make it possible to fill in the blanks.

On the subject of migrations within Moorish society, we have been able to data collected in the course of our study of Adrar in 1970-1971. We have in addition relied on other studies conducted at about the same period in the South, near the Senegal River Valley. Analyses made after the drought, a phenomenon that profoundly altered these data, are not available.

In the Adrar region migratory movements have been going on for a relatively long time. And they have expanded greatly in scope with the construction of the northern mining towns. Among Moors, the migrant is called tenusu. The term is highly evocative, being in its literal origins the word for maverick livestock broken loose from the herd, foraging alone. The tenusu is an individual who risks a possible break with his society. Often very young, this individual roams between the different places where he might find work (living meanwhile with relatives or fellow tribes people) and his original settlement. In the sample covered by the study, among the Oulad Qaylan, these young migrants at the settlements they had returned to, proved to be extremely mobile; they had made very many trips to Mauritania's towns.

Table 12

MOVEMENTS OF NON-MIGRANT YOUTHS (Adrar Sample, 1969-1970)				
Destination	Zouerate	Nouadhibou	Akjoujt	Nouakchott
Number of trips				
0	4	20	34	36
1	10	8	14	15
2-4	20	17	7	4
5-9	7	6	1	3
10 and over	7	2	2	2
Many	12	7	2	2
TOTAL SAMPLE SIZE	60	60	60	60

Source: Study conducted by Author, Adrar, 1969-1970.

These trips were often of short duration, but they could also last several months:

Less than 1 week	48
Less than 1 month	41
2 to 6 months	30
7 to 12 months	14
Over 1 year	12

In the course of the first trip, or sometimes later, the rupture that took place was often traumatic. The young tenusu started job-hunting. Occasionally, it was a matter of shepherd abandoning his flock while passing close to a town. After that, return trips were always provisional, a chancy affairs, even though some of the migrants interviewed expressed a wish to return to the countryside, most of them saying they intended to invest what they made in the traditional home.

Once settled in town, and having found a job, the migrant very often brought his family over: if the migrant was married, this meant the spouse and children; if he was an unmarried breadwinner, this meant parents, full siblings and clan relatives. Studies conducted in the migrants' urban destinations show that settlement by family groups is more widespread among the Moors than in the black African societies studied. Furthermore, even though among the Oulad Qaylan the majority of migrants were young, there were migrants in all age groups:

Age in years	Migrant percentage
16-20	17%
21-25	25

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Age in years	Migrant percentage
26-30	34
31-35	25
36-40	17.5
41-45	15
46-50	11
51-55	9

These percentages would be still higher if the figures covered men only. Back in the countryside, the remaining population was perceptibly older, and some settlements had only women and old folk left in them. At that time, before the drought, tendencies toward sedentarization became intensified because of this. People bought palm groves and houses, even though there was a shortage of labor to look after the palm groves.

Nevertheless, the number of migrants varied widely according to tribe and statutory group. We were able to make more precise calculations of the percentage of the migrant population in Zouerate and Nouadhibou as compared to the total population, among a number of tribes in the Adrar region:

Oulad Akchar-Oulad Ammoni	30%
Rgibat	16.5
Oulad Qaylan	15
Smasid	12.5
Teyzega	10
Angarij	8
Torchane	6.5
Ideishelli	5
Oulad Shaykh Muhammed Fadel	5

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These migrations mostly involve the politically dominant warrior tribes. In the Adrar region, these tribes were hard put by the cessation of wars and the drying up of their opportunities for employment as auxiliaries in the colonial armies. Their plight contrasts with that of the Zenaga tribes; these, practicing a diversified economy combining palm groves, agriculture and animal husbandry, seldom left home. Among the Smaasid, migrations were for the most part occasional.

Certain traits stand out in other studies on Moorish society conducted at that time, in the 1960's:

- 1) non-exclusive migrations among youth;
- 2) ease of family-group migration;
- 3) extreme mobility;
- 4) variations in economic, social and geographic situations; variations also in the importance of migration;
- 5) variations in goals motivating migration: work, trade, religion.

In the Senegal River region, we saw that labor migrations were also a phenomenon of quite ancient vintage in Moorish society (see Section 1.4). We also saw that in the first place they had mainly involved the Haratin and those people living in Southern Trarza, but that at the onset of the 1970's they expanded to embrace all social categories and to affect some new regions such as Rkiz, Gorgol, etc. According to Santoir's study (1975), 16% of able bodied male Moors make migratory trips. Among certain Haratin groups on the left bank, this percentage rises as high as 86%. Nevertheless, there are marked disparities depending on the circumstances of families and groups involved. Thus, 8.4% of the total Haratin population in the Keur Macene district had migrated, while in Rkiz, where farming was a much more

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important pursuit, the figure was a mere 0.9%. Migrations involve the Hassani more than the Zawaya. Among the former 20% of all active males are involved; among the latter, only 16.7%. Types of migration also account for palpable differences. Because migrations among the Zawaya are oriented toward trade, they help the Zawaya make appreciable profits, thereby facilitating the maintenance of social relationships, especially of the master-slave variety, back home. In this category only 5.6% of the Abid migrated, while among the Hassani who were finding it hardest to control their subjects, the proportion was as high as 47.2%. In our opinion, these variations have to do with the fact that among the Moors migrations are not the only source of cash income, as is the case with the Toucouleurs, and especially among the Soninke. The Moors have other options: sale of cereals or livestock, trade, transport, etc. In contrast to what we observed in the North, where the attraction of regular paid employment and the problems faced by local production had rapidly resulted in family migrations, here migration was very much an individualist phenomenon, still in the main oriented toward Senegal, and involving young bachelors mostly. Here again mobility is a feature: 80% of migrant Moors inhabiting Dakar's outskirts go on regular trips, as against 30% of the Toucouleurs. Above all, the young Bizani and the Haratin are more stable; when they do move, they tend to do so as part of a family group. So here, mobility manifests itself as instability among migrants, an instability similar to that of the Adrar region's

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(33) M. Vernière, Volontarisme d'état et spontanéité populaire de l'urbanisation du Tiers-Monde--Formation et Evolution des banlieus dakaroises: le cas de Dagoudane - Pikine, EPHE Dissertation, Paris, 1973.

Tenusu, except that here there is no settling down at a specific base, because migration is not regarded as a definitive event, and thus does not result in proletarianization.

With the onset of the drought, all this changed markedly: from a situation in which migration was a voluntary process integrated into a set of economic and social behavior patterns as just one more available option, there was a shift to a situation in which migration was in effect "compulsory", since in certain cases it offered the only avenue to survival. Now all regions were involved; or, to be more precise, all the Sahelian regions from Trarza to the Hodh area. Also, all social categories were involved. Most often whole families migrated; either the entire family settled in town, literally pitching its tent right in town, as happened in Nouakchott in 1973 and 1974, or the family settled down in an accessible place conducive to the sedentary life, such as around wells, in small farming villages or towns, along highways, etc., while the men went off to look for money and work in the major centers. Pilot studies of these recent phenomena are not available to us, so we shall often resort to delineations of typical case studies to make it easier to understand the way these phenomena have evolved :

Mr H. ul B., aged 62, from the Ideykub tribe of Mederdra, was a small -scale herdsman with between 50 and 70 sheep in his flock, relying mainly on transport work and salt sales for cash income. Economically, the drought wiped him out. In 1974 he sold his last remaining sheep to raise money for moving himself and his family to Nouakchott. He got there with his tent and household belongings, but otherwise dead broke. At his advanced

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age he could find no jobs. For five years now he has been totally dependent on relatives and neighbors in Nouakchott. He has no hope at all of returning to the countryside.

Unfortunately, this case of the ruined small-time herdsman is quite common. There are more complex cases:

Mr. M. ul S. is of the Ideybussat tribe. Aioun was his home town, and part of his family was settled there, because he divided his time between animal husbandry and trade, in partnership with his brother. As a result of the drought, they lost their livestock herds -- a loss apparently linked with the fact that their situation was half-sedentary. At the same time, local trade crashed because of the difficulties faced by the rural sector. But in this case the migratory move was highly organized. The two brothers sold their livestock, of which enough remained to fetch sufficient cash for use as trading capital. In 1975, M. ul S. traveled alone to Nouakchott to set up a new business. A little later his brother followed suit; he in turn set up a small construction outfit. The two brothers then bought land and began to built on it. At that point they brought over their family, in 1977. They still kept their home in Aioun, since they toyed with the hope of rebuilding their livestock herd as soon as feasible, and even dreamed of returning to live in Aioun.

We could cite many more examples, but the point seems clear enough. In this situation of unavoidable migration, the essential characteristic of Moorish migratory movements seems still to be their mobility, the ability to move fast and to achieve rapid integration in a different milieu. What

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makes such mobility possible is not only the traditional features of the Moorish lifestyle, but also the flexible adaptability of Moorish social, domestic and tribal organization, together with the wide range of available economic alternatives.

When these movements take on massive proportions and involve whole families, they drag the home societies very rapidly into ruin. For proof of this, all one need to do is to visit the Ksour areas and the Adrar palm groves. The shortage of labor, and the problems inherent in any attempt to manage livestock herds or palm groves from afar, make the investment of migrant earnings (already slender enough) in the local economy rather difficult. For the most part, then, the social redistribution of migrant earnings is accomplished in the urban destinations, not in the rural homes of the migrants. And this circumstance generalizes migration. In the Adrar region, on their many trips the Tenusu had the additional motive of cadging money or gifts from wage-earning relatives or fellow tribesmen. In extreme cases the motive was quite frankly to live off these relatives for a few weeks or months.

When migration is one option in a range of economic possibilities, its chief purpose is to ensure the accumulation of capital for investment in livestock, a house, or trade. Members of the family who have remained at the rural base, close relatives, or even dependents are trusted with the care of livestock, the management of trade, etc. The network of family and tribal ties of solidarity is sufficiently resilient to accommodate the handling of economic business in separate locations, sometimes spatially distant from each other. As far as trade is concerned this network actually

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undergirds a trading arrangement which depends on the speculative manipulation of regional discrepancies, and even national economic differences. An example would be the opening of a shop in Senegal and a second one in Mauritania.

In both cases the strong penetration of market and cash relationships into Moorish society favors the society's adaptive flexibility and its mobility. As the two case studies demonstrate, people do not hesitate to sell their remnant livestock, even if they hope to buy a herd back some time, as happened in 1969 for example, when abundant rainfall in the Tiris region made it feasible for wage-earning employees in Zouerate to buy livestock again and to bring their families to live in tents within a 50-kilometer radius of the city. Similar behavior patterns were observable with regard to houses and even farmland -- a phenomenon already pointed out in the MISOES study in the Chemana conducted in the late 1950's.

In Moorish society the family or household group is the fundamental social unit. We have showed that this unit has gone through some changes linked with the ascendance of market relations and the cash nexus (Section 2.1.3). We have also seen that the underdog position to which producers are relegated on the market results in a serious weakening of the domestic economy; a manifestation of this weakness was the expropriation of these producers during the recent drought, and their consequent migration en masse. These factors working toward the rural economy's fragility and even its disintegration, such as the difficulties involved in attempts to maintain gerontocratic authority relationships at the time of Tenusu departure, might seem on the surface, ultimately to contradict our analysis of

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the adaptive flexibility of Moorish social organization. But, in our opinion, there is no real contradiction.

Admittedly, migrations affect domestic organization; and, as we shall see in Chapter 4, the Moorish family in the urban environment continues very clearly to undergo transformations. But in the main, the social relationships at the basis of family relationships, namely, kin relationships, continue rather harmoniously. This is so because these relationships have been put to use under novel circumstances. One germane example of such new uses is the mobilization of kinship ties for the purpose of business organization. So these social relationships are still of determining importance, whether we look at them from the simple viewpoint of the social redistribution of resources, a phenomenon which has become increasingly important because of the impoverishment of producers during the drought, or from the more complex perspective of strategies for acquiring economic or political power. In Chapter 4 we shall see in greater detail how the success of a major trader from one of the Adrar tribes resulted in a status climb en bloc for the tribal clan he belonged to. This kind of upward social mobility takes tangible form in the erection of houses, the relatively exclusive appropriation of productive property such as palm trees and livestock, better education for one's children, etc. And it all happens mostly within a framework of these kinship relationships and alliances. It requires in particular the successful development of matrimonial strategies which are at the core of power plays, just as they were in the pre-colonial society.

Furthermore, those factors tending toward disintegration, such as

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the rising incidence of divorce, the commutation of marriage fees into cash payments, geographical dispersion of family units, and the generational authority crisis, tend to be cancelled out by factors which reinforce the maintenance and the reproduction of the family unit. In addition, domestic relationships work to support those mechanisms of social solidarity which make it possible to develop those economic alternatives whose importance we have pointed out: the relatively harmonious nature of these domestic relationships even reinforces the functioning of the family group even though other aspects of social organization, such as political and hierachical mechanisms, were profoundly altered in the colonial context.

No longer does extreme mobility seem to be a factor of the family unit's disintegration. Concerning this, we shall have to bring greater refinement into the analysis we made of a progressive shift from individual patterns of migration to family movements. Without a doubt, family migrations are encouraged by the abandonment of former occupations in the home areas, whether such abandonment be occasioned by a voluntary option to try wage-earning employment, or by ineluctable constraints such as the loss of means of production during the drought. That is the obverse side of the coin. But there is a recto side: this high mobility also makes it possible for those who are economically well off to support their families back in the home society.

It is thus an aspect of sedentarization in certain centers in the Trarza area where families of Nouakchott's bureaucrats or traders have settled. Sometimes the family even maintains its nomadic style of life,

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or settles in a tent on the outskirts of a particular town for more or less extended periods.

A consequence of this mobility is that women continue to enjoy a certain degree of independence which they already had in the traditional family. This is particularly true in the lower social categories: small producers among the Zenaga and even the Hassani and Zawayya groups, and the Haratin. Transhumance imperatives, pastoralist activities, the business of the caravan trail, and the bustle of migration often leave women in control of part of the management of the tent-household. It should be remembered that the tent in fact is the woman's property, along with the household utensils. She owns private property, and the importance of matrimonial alliances in social power strategies enhances the woman's status in social life. Because migrations accentuate mobility, they tend to reinforce female autonomy; at the same time urban life offers women new opportunities to follow their personal interests.

To end this section we have to take a look at the special problem posed by migrations among the Haratin. Here too we are presented with a great situational diversity, but there are a number of specific characteristics which we shall try to identify.

Often the Haratin evince even greater signs of mobility than the Bizani because theirs is a more vulnerable economy, with a more disadvantaged position in the general market economy. Particularly in the South, migrations have had a much longer history. Here other motives supplement purely financial causes: chiefly, the need of the Haratin to distance

themselves physically from their former masters (or, in the case of the Abid, their present masters) in order to achieve greater autonomy and to evade all sorts of pressures. This was why, very long ago, some of them settled in the Senegal River Valley towns or near the black African population groups. Some cooperation was then established with these black African groups, involving work in the village settlements, access to land, etc. Moreover, the Idveydeba Haratin have settlements in the South. Haratin from the Oulad Ahmed ben Daman, the tribe of the Trarza emirate, have mixed a great deal with Toucouleurs and Wolofs in the Trarza section of the valley. They enjoy land tenure rights by virtue of membership in the tribe, but are not obliged to make any fixed payments. On the other hand, at harvest time they still offer a few gifts to the Bizani and especially to the Marabouts who request them. Their migrations trend partly in the same directions as those of the black Africans, but they have some special features, namely extreme mobility and, where home roots have been pulled out, a tendency to move together as a family unit.

When Haratin continue to be more dependent on the Bizani, their migratory behavior tends to resemble more closely the patterns observable among the Bizani. In fact, the Bizani can sometimes help block migrations among the Abid for fear of losing part of their labor resources. In recent years this relationship has been known to explode into conflict on numerous occasions, especially when the former dependents demand total, unhampered control over the farms they work on. (The paper on agricultural labor and land tenure structure contains a discussion of such problems in the Maqta Lahjar region).^{*} Here again migration seems to offer the option of an

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* See: Fikry, M., The Social Organisation of Agricultural Labor, RAMS, Studies in Social Change, 1980.

escape from an underdog situation. During the drought, it sometimes took on enormous dimensions.

To help illustrate these various developments, we here present three case studies:

. A. ul M., a member of the Tinwajib tribe in the Aioun region, had a few years' schooling in Aioun town. His father whose main occupation was animal husbandry, having returned to the home settlement, died in a matter of a few years. The livestock herd got scattered. A. ul M. traveled to Kayes with some livestock dealers who paid his travel expenses. He then headed for Nouakchott, right then under construction; it was 1960. He learned the trade of driver-mechanic, working in that capacity in Nouakchott from 1961 to 1966, in Nouakchott from 1966 to 1969, in Akjoujt from 1969 to 1970, in Aioun from 1970 to 1971, before returning to Nouakchott. Twice, on going back home to his Tinwajib people in Aioun, he got married; but his contacts with his tribes-people were few. Since then, his family has settled down permanently in Nouakchott.

Because of A. ul M.'s relative success at work, a success linked with his education, this case is somewhat atypical. But it does illustrate the extreme mobility of these migrants. The break with the home environment is pretty sharp, though it is true that his two marriages took place in the tribal milieu, and many relatives and fellow tribesmen stay with him while in transit.

. B. ul A. comes from the Oulad Ebieri tribe of Boutilimit. He too

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left the countryside a long time ago, in 1963. He used to work as a herdsman and a farmer in Chemana. His father had already migrated to Senegal, where he got married again, to a Senegalese woman. After which he disappeared from the family's ken. When B. ul A. lost part of his livestock, he decided to move to Nouakchott in search of a job. From 1963 to 1971 he alternated short stays in town with return trips to the countryside, during which he did farm work. When the drought hit he was obliged to stay in Nouakchott. There, in 1976, the other members of his family -- mother, two sisters, a brother, wife and children -- joined him. Between 1963 and 1971 he moved around a great deal, working in Nouakchott, Bir Moghreïn, Zouerate, Rosso, Dakar etc. It was the drought which helped him make up his mind to move permanently into town, bringing his family along with him.

The case of A.F. ul M, a Haratin from the Idawabi tribe of Rkiz, working mainly as a farmer, is similar. After moving back and forth between Dakar and Rkiz, his home area, on a seasonal basis for 10 years, he left Rkiz permanently in 1975. In this case also, it was the drought which motivated the final decision to move. He sought work in Senegal, but gave up because of problems confronting job-seeking foreigners there. In 1976 his family joined him, but many of his relatives stayed behind in Rkiz.

Superficially, then, these migrations share many common characteristics with migrations among the Bizani: extreme mobility, the importance of family groups, physical separation from the home area without severance of tribal and kinship ties. Nevertheless, here these solidarity ties can work differently from the way they operate among the Bizani, for two reasons:

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1. In general, the Haratin are among the most deprived strata of Moorish agro-pastoralist society; and
2. under certain circumstances, black African migrations exert an influence on movements among Haratin exposed to them.

Thus in Nouadhibou in 1970 some Haratin migrant groups lived in communal dwellings -- a thing absolutely unheard of among the Bizani. Sometimes they even integrated with the Soninke. Similarly, we sometimes find among Haratin migrants mutual aid facilities such as emergency aid funds, similar to those in operation among black African groups, though much less developed in structure. Such similarities, however, remain rather superficial. They have to do mostly with the great poverty of these migrants, and the need to organize collective facilities to ease adaptation to the urban environment. These structures are necessarily based on voluntary association, since it is difficult among the Haratin to maintain tribal and kinship solidarity ties, they being less widespread and less effective than among the Bizani. Very often, the mutual aid funds are organized on a neighborhood basis as much as a tribal one.

2.6. Circumstances and Effects of Migratory Movements in Black African Societies

On this score we shall focus on migrations among the Toucouleurs and the Soninke. Data available on other groups such as the Wolofs and Peulhs are too scanty to form a basis for serious analysis. We should also note that this ethnic differentiation, though it may explain several of the differences between observable migratory phenomena, does not explain everything. In some

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aspects geographical distinctions are just as relevant: upstream, migratory movements are massive, and their destination is Europe. In the central region, the Toucouleur heartland between Kaedi and Boghe, these migrations are just as massive, but their orientation is primarily regional, the destinations being Dakar and lately Mauritania's own towns; in addition, these migrations are accompanied by population shifts. Downstream in Toucouleur country the migratory movements tend to peter out.

2.6.1. Migrations in Toucouleur Society

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Lericollais and Vernière, in their evaluative study of Toucouleur emigration from both banks of the Senegal River, point out that in the beginning these movements were temporary, even seasonal movements involving young males who undertook trips to service their household economies; but that in very short order they slipped away from the control of family elders. Family movements became increasingly prevalent. We have demonstrated above (Section 2.1.3.) that among the Toucouleurs the evolution of the domestic group tended toward the disintegration of the extended family unit and the autonomy of young males -- developments favorable to the permanent migration of families. Finally, we pointed out that the aggravations causing such family migration were more severe in upstream areas, where rigid land tenure structures made it harder to gain access to land, than in downstream areas where settlement was more recent and landholding disparities were less pronounced. Now the question is, when did this evolution start ?

When the MISOES studies were conducted in the late 1960's, migrations were still mainly individual affairs involving males. A.B. Diop's study of
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(34) Lericollais and Vernière, 'L'émigration toucouleur du fleuve Sénégal,' in : Cahier Orstom, Sciences Humaines, XII-2-1975, pp. 167-176.

Toucouleur migration into Dakar, based on a sample drawn from both banks of the Senegal River, showed the situation changing. First, the study brought out the fact that the category of young adult males was not so predominant, though 65 % of migrants were between 20 and 34 years old. Migrants made their first job-hunting trips quite young, usually between the ages of 15 and 19, but occasionally even as early as between 10 and 14, with a marabout as guardian. Furthermore, more women were involved. For the period, the sex ratio among Dakar's Toucouleurs was 794 women per 1,000 men; among seasonal migrants the figures were 125 women per 1,000 men. Married men made up 57.5% of the migrants, and tended increasingly to arrange for their wives to join them. Also, some unmarried women migrated with the hope of finding husbands in Dakar and escaping the impositions of life at home in the village. Diop estimated that at the time 12 % of Toucouleur migrants were sedentarized. Seasonal migration dropped sharply, being resorted to mainly when migrants could not find jobs. In short, the study showed a population in the process of settling down in town, progressively cutting off its links with the home base. Another indication of this process of settling down: cash remittances from the migrants to folks back home did not increase; in fact, they dropped in comparison with amounts estimated by MISOES studies a few years previously. On the average, the remittances from each trip were 25,400 F CFA less than the amount remitted by the average seasonal migrant, even though the latter took shorter trips. Increasing sums of money were spent right there in Dakar for the upkeep of the migrant and those directly dependent on him.

The tendency for Toucouleur migrants to settle down in Dakar, hardly a unique tendency, and the trend toward family migrations of a more or less permanent type, both date from the late 1950's. During a study conducted in Guia, a Toucouleur village in Senegal, situated 10 kilometers south of Podor, Lericollais and Vernière found that out of a total of 938 people grouped in 151 families, there were 344 people settled outside the village, including 42 households whose members lived and worked in urban areas; there were also 18 couples staying in town but not yet settled; then there were 26 youths who had set out in search of jobs. The following table lists time periods during which these migrants settled down in town:

Table 13 : Periods During Which Migrants Settled down in Town

	1930/1	1940/49	1950/59	1960/69	1970/73	TOTAL
Men	1	7	10	29	10	57
Women	-	1	12	19	13	46

Females joined the migratory movements rather late, but they are now a very important part. In this connection women's demands carry a lot of weight. Whenever wives left in the villages consider that their needs are not being met, they send a delegation to the migrant spouse in town. Its mission: to confront the delinquent husband with three options: divorce, the husband's return to the village, or the wife coming to join him in town. A key factor in the husband's response is the relative cost of supporting his wife in the village as opposed to bringing her to town. As a rule, the husband estimates that it is cheaper to keep her in the village, but the amount of money he is obliged to send back to the village having grown steadily larger, he might prefer to send less money home and bring his wife to town.

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Let us make it quite clear that urbanization is not tantamount to the breakdown of ethnic ties. Quite the contrary: the growth of a Toucouleur tribal community has been observed in urban areas. The very strict controls exercised by older, more settled migrants over younger migrants, the well-known urban land acquisition strategies, collective housing patterns etc., all help to maintain solidary bonds; at the same time they reinforce tribal hierarchies.

No longer is Dakar the almost unique destination of Toucouleur migrants. Their organizational proficiency and their efficient adaptation to the urban environment stood them in good stead in the period of Mauritania's intensive urbanization beginning in 1960, allowing them to play an important part in that urbanization process. According to a study conducted by this author, in 1970 the Toucouleurs made up 15 % of Nouadhibou's population. On account of such factors as distance from home, and problems faced in getting settled, the percentage of individual migrants was still high. As a matter of fact this was true for all freshly settled migrants in Nouadhibou. But in 50 % of the instances studied the spouse was in town; furthermore, a large number of migrants were married men, even if they had left their wives behind. (57 % of Nouadhibou's Toucouleur migrants were bachelors; among the Moors the percentage was 60 %, while among the Soninke it was 70 %). Unfortunately, we have no credible data on Nouakchott's population as seen from an ethnic perspective; but it seems clear enough that of the black African population the Toucouleurs are an overwhelming majority.

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What effects have migratory movements had on Toucouleur society ?

As we have already noted, the cash spinoff is not all that impressive, especially when compared with gains from migratory trips to Europe. And when the migrant settles in town and gets a more lucrative job, the spinoff diminishes even further, since the migrant tends to bring his family to town and by the same token to skimp on remittances to the village. The breakup of the extended family, the galle, and the importance assumed by the nuclear family, make this type of migration easier. The converse also holds: Migration also hastens the extended family's disintegration.

From what goes on, it seems as if the final aim of Toucouleur migrations were the transfer of populations from the river valley where there in fact is a population excess in relation to existing productive capacity, into the urban areas. For some two decades the population in the valley has to all intents remained constant. Production also remains stable, contrary to the implications of the MISOES studies, and bearing in mind also the impact of the drought years; during that period, production fell sharply, and migration rates rose. According to Lericollais's interpretation of aerial photographs taken in 1970-1971, all arable land was in fact under cultivation. The problem was that because floods varied in extent, the land surface areas that could actually be farmed at any specific time also varied. Consequently population size and the volume of migratory movements should be coordinated with minimal average data. Lericollais concludes: In the Middle Valley area emigration is not aimed at taking land out of cultivation. Sure enough, it worsens the valley's desertion and economic stagnation, but in the main, farms and agro-pastoralist systems remain intact. (35)

(35) Lericollais, 1975, p. 134.

Unfortunately we have no accurate studies on the consequences of migrations in their present form, i.e., since large scale family migrations began taking effect, on Toucouleur society and the Toucouleur economy. In particular, we may wonder what lies beneath the apparently stable fashion in which tribal ties have been maintained beyond the village, especially in town. The young Toucouleur is taken under control by grown-ups; in his own psyche collective values are strong. And he surely is not oriented toward a permanent return to the village, since young migrants in steadily increasing numbers will get integrated into urban life. Still, he does have to remit money to his family back in the village, and on trips home he has to give presents to more distant kin; he must contribute to the mosque collection; he must save money for his marriage, most likely to be held in the village, to a close relative, etc. No matter how fast his personal rate of advancement, in social terms he comes of age rather late. This permanence of ethnic relations beyond the village is due to the internal stabilization of the social system, especially the land tenure system.

It remains a fact that these migrations pose problems of manpower availability. For a dozen or so years, however, these problems have been hazed over by climatic conditions which have greatly reduced cultivated land areas, pastoral activities, fishing etc.

For a number of years appreciably large groups of Haratin have settled close by Toucouleur villages in the valley, partly because of pressures created by the same crisis. From the Toucouleurs the Haratin obtain land-- a practice that in some instances goes back a long time.

We may wonder if this signals an increasing resort to external labor power, whether this resort be in the traditional sharecropping form, rempetiene, in land lease form, or even in the form of actual wage labor. Even though the shortage of cash prevents a rapid development of wage labor, such an eventuality should not be counted out.

If we project from the trend toward the disintegration of the galle extended family to the advantage of the foyre nuclear family unit, a trend considerably accentuated by the fact that the usual home unit among these migrant families in the urban areas is the couple or the individual household, we discern two types of social relationships apparently evolving from the migratory process. (A caveat: we have more accurate information on this evolution in the urban context than in the rural home base).

Relationships between the sexes: The decision to migrate as a family was ultimately a male decision; but as we have seen, women exerted a strong influence on the decision-making process. For identical reasons, the support of the wife, who among the Toucouleurs rarely works for pay, unlike wives in other Senegalese ethnic groups, leads to an increasing incidence of divorce. According to the NISOES study, in 1958 the average woman was a partner in 1.32 marriages, but among migrants the figure was 1.6 marriages.

Relationships between slaves and the freeborn: For a long time migratory movements among slave castes, the Matiube, were relatively feeble than those among the Drobe, for instance. This seemed to indicate the presence of certain pressures working to keep manpower at home. Since the drought these pressures seem to have weakened, and migrations among the Matiube are

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bound to have an inevitable result: the raising of questions about their status back home. Also, we have seen that among the Toucouleurs all social differentiations tended to be subsumed in the opposition between landlords and the landless.

The Toucouleur zone of the Senegal River Valley, where, as in Soninke territory, immigration is oriented toward Europe, needs to be treated separately. Thus, Sangue, a village in the Southern Maghama area, had about 300 men in France; the next village, Oualli, had 250. (Both villages were founded by Denyanke Peulhs, but are identical in structure to Toucouleur villages). Here the modalities and effects of migrations are close enough to those among the Soninke; but there are also salient differences.

These migrations bring in a lot more net cash income than do regional migrations. Very seldom are they family migrations. As among the Soninke, they involve young males exclusively, and among the Halpularen this exclusivity is even tighter. Again, just as among the Soninke, cash earning from migrations make it possible to compensate for the manpower shortfall by hiring laborers to farm walo land in good years. In addition to using Bambara workers, the Haratin hire themselves out after working on dieri land earlier in the season; sometimes having practically given up farming themselves, they settle near the villages.

However, this employment of paid laborers takes place in a context different from that found in Soninke villages. Village organization is characterized by marked inequalities in access to land, and the system is controlled by the Denyanke nobility who founded these villages, working

with groups to whom they delegate rights. This land tenure system has remained stable enough, though land is generally granted to family dependents without payment of any substantial fee. On the other hand, domestic organization here seems less deeply fractured than in those Toucouleur villages where regional migrations have taken place. In short, what we have here is a situation midway between the Toucouleur and Soninke cases.

2.6.2. Migrations in Soninke Society

For a long time large scale migrations have been familiar phenomena in Soninke territory. At first these migrations were oriented toward Senegal (see Section 1.4.). But for the past twenty or thirty years Europe (principally France) has become just as important a destination. Simultaneously with the shift in destinations, certain changes have taken place in the composition of the human mix involved in these migrations. Prior to 1960 departing migrants came from the whole gamut of age groups, with those above 30 years old quite strongly represented. Then, too, migratory trips were seasonal affairs covering rather short periods. But since that time the bulk of migrants have come from the age group between 20 and 30 years old, and departures at increasingly lower ages are becoming common: "The quota comes more and more definitely from the age group just reaching working age, and it is becoming normal for youngsters aged 16, 17 and 18 to go off."⁽³⁶⁾ This analysis finds support in data from the first of the recent series of administrative census exercises (1980) carried

(36) Kane and Lericollais, "L'émigration en pays soninke," Cahiers Orstom, Sciences Humaines, XII, 2 1975-1977-138.

out in the Selibabi region. In the two villages of Olombonni and Coumba Dao, migrations directed mainly toward Europe but also toward Libya and more southerly parts of Africa involved respectively 55 out of 1,028 and 60 out of 1,077 people. The age distribution of the migrants was as follows:

Table 14 : Age Distribution of Migrants

	Olombonni	Coumba Dao
Less than 20 years old	3	4
21-25 " "	9	9
26-30 " "	16	18
31-40 " "	18	18
41-50 " "	7	10
Over 51 " "	2	1
TOTAL	55	60

Generally, provided we make allowances for significant local variations, we can suppose that in the Soninke villages of Guidimakha about 33% of the able-bodied male population is away from home (Mar and Want, 1977). We have already remarked that migration is much more prevalent in the Senegal River valley, where it sometimes involves more than 50 % of the active males (as for instance in Diaguili), than in the Guidimakha interior where it involves 21.8 % of the same group. (These figures were obtained from the above villages, both in the Selibabi district).

Even where there still is seasonal migration or migration into the Senegalese towns as well as those in Mauritania, it is often just a preparatory stage for longer-range trips to Europe. Migratory channels oriented

toward Europe are well organized. Trips are often paid for by relatives, by migrants already settled in France, or even by a businessman or a dignitary, who provides the tickets. The whole move is closely controlled from departure to arrival in the French reception centers. This type of migration is most unlike the disorganized, unstable movements of Moors toward the urban centers. It does not have much in common even with the large-scale Toucouleur urban migrations involving real population shifts. Here we have highly organized migratory movements involving a specific category: young adults whose status in the domestic economy is a dependent one. These movements require organization on the economic, social and even political levels both at the point of departure and at the receiving end to ensure continuity of the migratory phenomenon within Soninke society without risking the total undermining of that society's foundations.

All the authors agree that this type of migration has particularly far-reaching effects on the home society and its economy, if only because it involves an important transfer of the local work force and because it implies consistent modifications in the local agro-pastoralist system. The War and Want draft paper (1977) gives a quick evaluation of these effects on the agro-pastoralist systems. Generally, one finds that land under cultivation shrinks in size, and the shrinkage is directly due to the difficulty of getting the land developed. In the Senegal River valley villages the dieri plots are abandoned by cultivators who then concentrate on farming the walo areas. Similarly, fonda plots near the interior villages are abandoned in favor of farms on the lowlands and slopes.

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In these two instances distance prevents development of the land. There are also changes in the types of crops grown: on dieri land, where formerly women grew peanuts, we find that peanut planting drops sharply. Apparently, cash needs are met through migration now, as opposed to cash crop sales; simultaneously, the need for subsistence crops has become acute, and women have shifted increasingly to planting sorghum to satisfy this need. Similarly, cotton and indigo, also formerly planted by women, have practically disappeared from the fonde plots on which they used to grow. And finally, the total cultivated area remains stagnant. In 1923 Saint Père estimated a total of 17,500 hectares under cultivation in Guidimakha. In 1972 the Selibabi sector estimate was 16,800 hectares. (It must be pointed out that the two areas are not precisely identical, though). If we factor in the population increase, we might well conclude that there has been a significant relative shrinkage in the area under cultivation.

The labor shortfall has been aggravated by the large scale drop in slave labor since the start of this century. Formerly such losses were made up by domestic labor (2.1. 2.). This compensatory arrangement in turn meant that the extended family, the Ka, which was a coherent production unit under the Kapume's control when the colonial era began, was forced to undergo profound changes. The family head's loss of power during the colonial era resulted in a relative fragmentation of the Ka, the unit which in former times held together all the descendants of a specific group of blood relatives under the authority of the family elder. Since colonial times the Ka has acquired a more clearly patriarchal structure: it comprises a father and his married sons.

Migratory movements were to result in a whole series of fresh economic and social changes. However, they did not, as in the case of the Toucouleurs, accentuate the tendency toward the extended family's breakup.

In Section 2.1.3. we described the pronouncedly hierarchical structure of domestic organization among the Soninke. In broad outline this organization remains the same: the Kagumbe supervises collective property; the young men work as dependents, and women do ancillary work, bringing in supplementary cash income and providing certain special kinds of produce, mainly condiments. But beyond the purely formal maintenance of the domestic structure important transformations are noticeable.

These important transformations involve female labor, which is increasingly employed in the growth of food crops in the absence of male workers. Women increasingly concentrate on sorghum cultivation, contributing to the family's subsistence needs. But they maintain a measure of control over their own production, a fact which gives them an increasingly important economic role.

Young dependent males remain bound within the context of the hierarchical labor system. But they are to an increasing extent exclusively involved in the phenomenon of labor migrations. Their involvement is designed to help them contribute to the domestic group's subsistence needs just as in times past; but these days they contribute by remitting cash. One of the first duties of migrants is to contribute to the family's food and survival needs by sending back the wherewithal for buying food. In effect, there-

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fore, their situation in the society is very different from what it used to be.

On the one hand, they can no longer directly take part in farm work, which is increasingly handled by paid laborers, mostly migrants from the Bambara region. Sometimes these Bambara laborers also follow the former Soninke practice of seasonal labor migration.

They are provided with board and lodging. In return they owe their bosses three days of work per week. On the remaining days their work fetches a daily wage. Quite often, too, they are simply employed as day laborers, earning between 100 and 150 ouguiya daily. The development of a form of agricultural labor tied to the market entails changes in consumption patterns. In Soninke villages the consumption of imported foodstuffs like rice, bread, hydrogenized oil, tomato sauce, coffee etc., bought with migrants' remittances, has increasingly become the style.

The growth of the labor market is not the only feature of the development of the domestic group. This group was formerly a coherent group on account of the control the Kagumme exercised over slave labor. Nowadays it needs the individual participation of each member: young women work on their individual plots, while young men participate by sending remittances from their migrant earnings. Here we find a potential for individualization and the fragmentation of the Ka; but this potential has so far not manifested itself in any strong tendency. In fact such tendencies become most operative at the point when the migrant gets married. No longer is it the Kagumme

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who makes the necessary payments -- an arrangement which in days gone by enabled him to control the labor of young dependent males; now the young migrants take care of the payments themselves. As a matter of fact, one of the aims of migration is to save enough money for these payments: a marriage may cost up to 100,000 U.M.

These potential tendencies toward individualization are held in check by the fact that the Kagumme still manages to maintain a relative degree of control. He continues to control the women's direct labor, as well as the work done by children, who tend to start farm work at an increasingly early age, around ten. The Kagumme also continues to manage the Ka, which from the migrant's viewpoint is seen increasingly as a collective structure ensuring the support of his wife and children while he is away in Europe. So important is this point that family elders strive to block -- very effectively too -- the practice of family migrations to France. As a result, the individual character of migration, a point already noted, is accentuated. On this topic we refer to the War and Want document: (37)

In this new context the functioning of the kin-group cell as a coherent unit, as in daily life and in agricultural work, becomes in a way ancillary to the phenomenon of emigration. Emigration, in other words, is the dominant center around which all other factors in the family economy orbit. In effect, the emigrant can go off and leave his family behind without exposing it to excessive risks precisely because there is an ongoing communal support organization behind him which is capable of ensuring the survival

(37) War and Want, 1977. p. 109.

of those left behind, especially women and children. So the family cell in its present form provides the collective security base which makes it possible for individuals to get involved in what has become their principal economic activity: emigration. Thus far the War and Want analysis.

It is not a false analysis. But it does seem to us incomplete to the extent that it offers no real explanation of the fact that the form of the domestic groups is still intact. After all, among the Toucouleur the basic data are identical, but there the extended family has to all intents and purposes become totally fragmented. It seems to us that the War and Want document pays too little attention to the contradictory aspects of this process. In particular, the use of the term communal is infelicitous. Collective organization would have been a more germane phrase. And the maintenance of the domestic group explains the maintenance of a whole range of social differentiations and hierarchies.

In the first place these differences show up as differential access to land. Within the domestic group access remains under the control of the Kagumme, who is the specific manager of common property. In general, former slaves are banned from access to land. At the other end of the scale, only a handful of families possess real control over land tenure rights; they merely delegate these rights to those in a position to use them. Thus, slave labor continues alongside wage labor, accounting for 15 % of the cases. It is a method by which the slaves hope to maintain their usufruct rights. And this is one of the principal sources nourishing the antagonism between the freeborn and the slaves among migrant laborers in France. Should the slaves

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challenge the system in any way, they would risk losing access to land back home, and the disbarment would hit their families too.

Still, the principal contradiction is to be found within the domestic group itself. There, there is a constant imperative, in the interests of system maintenance, to suppress the migrants' capabilities for autonomous behavior and individualization. The migrant of course has to take care of payments necessitated by his own marriage. Occasionally he ventures to make personal investments (see Section 3.1). But he finds himself enmeshed in collective structures which are not the evolutionary offspring of any putative ancient village communal lifestyle, but actually structural innovations. These structural innovations involve the organization of migrants in receiving centers or foyers at the destination points as well as the organization of cash contributions at village level. On this issue, the War and Want document (1977) notes the development of a veritable "collective village budget," one of whose prime functions was to ensure group coherence, specifically through construction of a mosque. In effect, the aim was to reproduce statutory and economic hierarchies operative within the domestic group at the level of the village as a whole.

In these conditions migrants may on the one hand tend to undermine the foundations of the society's organization by exacerbating all its contradictions; but, on the other hand, they also maintain and reproduce the anti-egalitarian features of this organization. This is contrary to the Toucouleur experience. Among the Toucouleurs migrations encouraged the transformation of domestic and hierarchical arrangements while stabilizing production

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conditions. But among the Soninke migrations necessitate changes in production systems but on the whole preserve the social organization. And this social organization works to reproduce what in fact has become the only commodity the Soninke have for sale: their labor power.

3. THE ORGANIZATION OF MIGRATIONS

So far we have approached migration as a phenomenon determined by a number of factors, a phenomenon which itself is one aspect of a gestalt of economic and social transformations. We thus examined migration according to its distinguishing features as related to ethnic groups, regional reference points, social stratification, etc. Within the limits of this perspective each social category in effect injected a measure of originality into the overall issue of migrations. To take just one example, that of the Senegal River valley, we found Moorish groups living cheek by jowl with each other, yet following very different patterns in their migratory behavior. Some groups had a very long history of migrations into Senegal, while other groups only began to experience migrations as a result of the drought. In some cases what is involved is as much a matter of sedentarization and a resort to the urban areas for protection from the drought's effects as a matter of genuine migration. Similarly, certain Toucouleur villages quite close by have only developed migratory channels oriented toward Senegal or the towns of Mauritania. Again similarly, in the Adrar region some tribes have almost half their able-bodied men in the Mauritanian towns, while others have very few migrants.

Beyond the diversity of these migratory situations, we may also approach migration as a phenomenon in its own right. From this perspective we may see migrants first of all as a specific group which has only partially severed its ties with the home environment, and is as yet not completely integrated into the host urban milieu. To start with, we shall attempt to gauge the degree to which migrants' links with their home environment have been lessened. (The examination of urban integration will take a chapter all by itself.) Next, we shall examine the organization of migrations. In this examination, we shall use the following questions as probes: To what extent are migratory movements identical with the sedentarization of herdsmen? To what extent are they different? What is the spatial organization of migrations like? What is the function of those regional centers which have seen their population swollen as a result of the drought? To what extent is migration structured along existing communication axes? How do migrations fit into the national space? Now, in particular, are we to evaluate Nouakchott's role as the focus of migratory movements?

In this chapter, we shall assay answers to these questions. Obviously, they are centered on national migrations. This is because ever since the 1960's, when the area's nation-states came into being, while simultaneously the region's migratory movements underwent major qualitative changes, it has become increasingly necessary to distinguish between national and international migrations. (The qualitative changes at issue include Soninke migrations into Europe, the increasing tendency toward family migrations among the Toucouleurs, and Moorish migrations into urban areas, etc...).

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In a way, international migrations are to a certain extent extrapolations of migratory channels established in the colonial era, when these channels were directed mainly into Senegal. But they deserve to be given special attention (Chapter 5).

3.1. The Migrant and His Home Environment

The manner in which the question of the degree to which links binding the migrant to his home environment get weakened varies widely according to type of migration. In this respect we may isolate three types of migrations:

- Senegal Migrations: These were formally the dominant type, but their incidence has gone down steeply. What is clear, though, is that this was a type of migration totally conditioned by the home society's characteristics such as available working time, cash needs etc. They therefore tended, at any rate in the short term, to reproduce the home environment's economic and social organization.

- Temporary Individual Migrations: This type was typical of Soninke migrations into Europe, but the pattern was also maintained among Toucouleurs and Moors, at any rate before the drought. Migrations of this type may last a long time or not, but they always involve single individuals or married men who leave their families back home.

- Family Migrations: These are prevalent among Moors and Toucouleurs. They entail the highest degree of rupture between migrants and their home origins. This, however, is not necessarily tantamount to a radical break, since

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ties of social solidarity may be refashioned in the urban environment.

(See Chapter 4).

In our examination of different migratory channels we have gauged the respective significance of individual and family migrations in each ethnic and regional group. Our evaluation was markedly qualitative, because given the current state of available data, quantitative assessments were out of the question.

Family-type migrations entail the highest degree of rupture on the economic level. The reason is that with a family's movement into town those redistribution mechanisms which operate within the context of village kinship ties or tribal and ethnic bonds begin to operate right there in the urban environment. In Chapter 4 we shall see how some social solidarity structures get built up in town, using traditional solidarity bonds as a basic, but in fact acquiring a different character. Indeed, the use of tribal and kinship networks among Moors as well as the use of village and regional associations by the Toucouleurs seem essentially to have the character of structural strategies for achieving integration into the urban milieu. And the solidarity bonds on which their operation depends are much more responses to the economic and political imperatives of this integration, that is, responses to the new forms of social competition involved than to any need to perpetuate traditional ties with the home environment.

Nevertheless, before the drought a certain economic relationship remained to the extent that the migrant could invest his urban savings, which were very modest and dependent on contingencies, back home in the form of

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buildings, the purchase of livestock, or that of palm trees.

Judging by the findings of a study conducted by this author in 1968-1971, it was rather rare, to find such cases among urban mineworkers when migration was not an individual affair with short term goals. Naturally, problems stemming from the drought and the recent crisis have not facilitated such investments. In the current context, they do not develop in any real sense except in the form of private investment using paid labor, especially shepherds. But this phenomenon is not directly linked to migration, as may be seen from the report on the growth of modes of accumulation. In addition, it involves only one specific category, that of bureaucrats and businessmen.

The rupture of economic relationships between this kind of migrant and his home environment does not, however, mean the severance of all social relationships. Here we shall focus on a discussion of two aspects of the continued maintenance of ties between migrants and their home societies:

- Family Trips Back Home: Within the limits of financial capability, family trips back home are regular affairs. This regularity is compromised, however, the fact that transport costs have risen steadily, so that many of the migrants interviewed do not think they can make these trips so regularly anymore. The visits happened under institutionalized circumstances, such as when a wife goes to have a baby-- among Moors this has to happen at home --or when there is a death in the family, etc. They can also happen when the migrants go on vacation, or when they pay regular visits to wives left behind. The visits are opportunities for property redistribution to family members at home.

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Among the Moors, however, since the drought which brought about massive population shifts, and also on account of the poverty - stricken condition of urban migrant recruits, these visits may slow down or dry up altogether. On the other hand, among the most wealthy migrants a reverse motion might be discerned: these private sector employees, businessmen and bureaucrats have taken to settling their families back home in the country and visiting them regularly. This tendency was enhanced by the sedentarization of herdsmen around wells, along road arteries and in small urban settlements etc. There they erect a house, buy enough livestock to supply the family's milk needs, and for the rest, buy all other necessary food items from Nouakchott. Such choices may be economically motivated, for example by the desire to have low-rent housing in one's possession in Nouakchott. But they are also motivated by a desire to revalue country life. It even happens, when pastures near urban areas are green, that this Moorish population actually shifts back to the country in appreciable numbers. At Zouerate, after the abundant rains of December 1969 in the Tiris area, a section of the working class population settled in just this manner within a 50-kilometer radius of the town. Similarly at Nouakchott, during the rainy season, quite a few people who have the means settle their families under tents together with milk-producing livestock, and visit them there every weekend, sometimes every evening. A question arises: does this persistence of cultural behavior models mean the preservation of ties with the home environment? Such a supposition is not to be taken for granted. What is involved here is rather a reshaping of relationships between the urban areas and the badiya, the nomadic habitat. What in fact is going on is an inversion of former

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relations, in which people lived permanently in the badiya and used the towns as zones of transition for purposes of religion, commerce etc. Here, then, we have a phenomenon analogous to the use of country residences in France, mutatis mutandis.

- Marriage: Matrimonial strategies continue to function as center-pieces of social and political strategies among urbanized Moors, and marriages thus perpetuate several old social solidarity mechanisms, appropriately adapted to the urban environment (See Chapter 4). Often spouses are chosen from the home base, according to traditional rules of preference. In this way marriages help refurbish ties with the home environment, by means of frequent visits between the couple, cash remittances to the in-laws etc. But here again we must not let the formal aspect of the perpetuation of the marriage link obscure deep underlying changes. What is at play is much more the readaptation of kin-group and tribal solidarity mechanisms to ease insertion into the urban milieu, rather than any maintenance of comprehensive economic and social relationships with the home environment.

The situation of the Toucouleurs varies slightly. Among them there is an organizational duality contrasting those remaining in the village with those coming from the village. Here too marriage is at the center of the maintenance of ties with the home base, but it functions principally as a way to reproduce rural solidarity mechanisms in an urban context. An important aspect of these traditional solidarity mechanisms is ethnic and kin-group endogamy as practiced in the village, mainly the marriage of close cousins. In the urban context all this remains extremely important,

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especially ethnic endogamy. On the other hand, the preference for close
(38)
relatives as spouses gets weakened. The control exercised over marriages
by the elders among migrants, even in town, encourages the preservation of
this endogamous pattern, which among the Toucouleurs is more resistant to
change than among the Moors, since the former set greater store on tribal
criteria. (The Toucouleurs are generally a minority in urban areas, in
Dakar as well as in the Mauritanian towns. This point will be treated in
Chapter 4).

In the case of individual temporary migrants, ties with the home
environment are very different. Here we shall limit our discussion to the
Soninke, who provide the most distinctive example, and to the Toucouleur
villages in the Maghama region, which experienced identical migrations.
The fact is that even though migrant salaries are low in France and job
security is also extremely hazardous, migrants send back home sums of money
much greater than the amounts migrants in the national urban areas can
afford to remit. A factor here is the fact that migrant workers in France
have an extremely high savings capability, reaching 40 % of their income.
An IDEP study conducted in 1971 estimated total remittances to Mauritania
(39)
at 220 million U.M. For the Guidimakha area, the same author came up
with an estimate of 67 million U.M. based on official postal and other trans-
fer statistics. No doubt this figure understates the actual total, since a

(38) A.B. Diop, 1965.

(39) Dussanze-Ingrand, Effect de l'immigration sur la région de départ,
IDEP/ET/R/24.16, Undated.

lot of money gets into the country by other channels, such as being remitted first to Senegal, direct cash transfer, and remittance through trusted personal intermediaries etc. The 1977 War and Want study gives a higher estimate of 100 million U.M; this breaks down to about 40,000 U.M. per migrant yearly, and can reach 80,000 U.M. in the Senegal valley area where there is a preponderance of sailor migrants -- a better paid category. We conducted a few polls in Maghama and Selibabi, zeroing in on postal transfer often involving administrative payments such as family allowances and social security payments. In 1978 total remittances from France were 3,628, 740 U.M. in the case of Maghama. At Selibabi, for the first four months of 1980, remittances from France alone totalled 11,521,734 U.M. So the War and Want figures seem to us minimal, and in need of upward revision. At any rate, the amount involved is considerable, and by itself provides a reason for the maintenance of these migratory channels, no matter what problems have to be faced.

Beyond the upkeep of migrants abroad, these sums of money are totally or almost totally reinvested in the home area. Such reinvestment comes in a number of phases:

- First, the migrant must support both his nuclear family and the extended Ka. This is an imperative duty, and those who shirk it dare not return to the village. In fact, it is one of the reasons people sometimes give for not returning to the village, though such cases are rather uncommon.

- The money sent back by migrants, as we have already seen, helps reorganize collective life in the village, which transcends former antagonisms.

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The principal function of this reorganization is to recreate social hierarchies and mechanisms of cohesion threatened by migrations. The "collective village budget," to use the War and Want term (1977) is organized around two foci: the fund established by migrants from the village in the receiving centers abroad (See Chapter 5); and the assembly of village elders. The most spectacular projects are prestigiously constructed mosques costing great sums. At Sangue, for example, 221 migrants contributed 16 million francs CFA toward such a mosque; this large sum did not cover the interior furnishings or the opening festivities. The prestige quality and the ostentatious nature of these investments may pose problems. In reality, we have to take into account two aspects of these collective investments:

On the one hand the construction of the mosque symbolically reinforces village unity by presenting it on the only level where it is unchallenged, the religious level. All the village community's contradictions such as generational conflicts, and master-slave conflicts, are thus symbolically transcended, and the hostile energy they engender is displaced onto the plane of inter-village competition. And this unity is particularly important to maintain social cohesion, threatened by the migratory phenomenon.

On the other hand, it is not always easy to locate profitable collective investments. Problems experienced with experimental farming on irrigated land make migrants shy away from sinking their savings in that sector. Besides, the migrants are in no great hurry to invest in projects from which only the big shots and merchants would profit.

(40) On this issue, see the revelatory passages in M. Samuel, Le prolétariat africain noir en France, Maspéro, Paris, 1978.

Moreover, choices are difficult to make, in spite of the lively interest in "the development of villages" pointed out by War and Want. At Ouahi, the migrants' fund made it possible to buy a canoe for crossing the river. Other cogent examples may be cited from the Assaba area: small-scale farm projects involving newly cleared land, group purchase of water-draught facilities etc. If we consider the available financing possibilities, total investments of this sort are low. But in our opinion the overriding explanation of the failure to develop productive investment options is that it is difficult to make these investments really profitable in the present situation, since the potential investors are not eager to help perpetuate situations of inequality.

- Migrants' remittances also serve to finance the departure of new migrants, specifically by paying for tickets. The money is paid back later. Meanwhile, it helps maintain a kind of rotation among migrants. Before one migrant returns home, he arranges for a relative to come over.

- Finally, the migrants also prepare for their return by making a number of personal investments. This personal core of investments they will do their best to preserve intact no matter what intense collective pressures are brought to bear on them in an attempt to induce them to redistribute their gains.

In the first place the migrant must save up enough money for his marriage if he is still unmarried. The sum is large, and can reach 100,000U.M. Also, he must provide money to set up his house in the family compound to buy furniture and clothes, etc. Quite a number of migrants get married in

France, but for those who do not want to risk a rupture with the home base, marriage at home is still a must. This is so because work, both domestic and agricultural, is organized according to sexes. Here a very effective block is put on female migration, contrary to the practice in Toucouleur society. This is one of the most efficient mechanisms for ensuring that migrations remain a temporary phenomenon.

Individual investments might have a more speculative character. It was the practice for migrants to buy livestock, and with the growth of the migrations village livestock herds increased considerably. Others work through "trusted intermediaries". These duntagne may be businessmen, retired bureaucrats, migrants come back home; they invest the savings entrusted to them in trade, real estate construction, etc. Thus they tend to invest intensively in Dakar or Nouakchott, buying up vacant lots on which they build "Shacks for rent," containing 10 rooms each 3 meters square, and hired out to transient Seninke migrants for 20,000 to 30,000 Francs CFA a month. Such situations often generate conflicts between migrants, their relatives and the duntagne, who are sometimes keener on their own profits than on those of their migrant clients. Still, individual success stories are not unheard of : at Selifabi, a migrant came back in 1972 with an accumulated net worth of over 1,500,000 Francs CFA in the form of savings and the yield from family investments. He started a construction firm and opened a cinema theater. At Bakel another migrant started a welding workshop. Another bought a boat to run a transportation business on the river, etc. These different cases are still exceptions, and they need more detailed study.

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In the final analysis, temporary migrations into Europe among the Soninke and their Toucouleur neighbors reinforce ties with their home bases in contradictory ways. On the one hand they reinforce the collective village structure which, on account of the relative dissolution of domestic structures, appears indispensable if migrations are to be kept functioning as temporary phenomenon, through the prevention of permanent migrant departures. (We say the dissolution of domestic structures is only relative because the Ka extended family still has some cohesion, and its elder, the Kagume, still has authority.) On the other hand, the same migrations create novel self-advancement opportunities for the migrants back in their home societies. In short, they reflect and develop the same contradiction we saw at work in Soninke society. Because these migrations are a recent phenomenon, it would be unwise to attempt any definitive assessment of the direction in which they will go, especially since we must also factor in France's immigration policy, which is becoming less and less liberal. Nevertheless it seems that the current maintenance of traditional hierarchies and structures conceals in an increasingly ineffective manner, deep-seated tensions which could result in a sudden change of migrant attitudes toward their home societies.

3.2. Sedentarization and Migrations

One of the major factors in the economic and social transformation of Mauritania during the last two decades is the large scale sedentarization of nomadic herdsmen. The principal reason for this, though not the only one, is the drought. Other causes include labor migrations, access

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to schools and the modification of production systems. Let us recapitulate here a few statistics. These are well known figures; nevertheless, they need to be handled with care. (See the RAMS Demographic Report).

Table 15 : Sedentarization in Mauritania

	1965	1977
Nomads	65 %	32.2 %
Rural Population	25	41.9
Urban "	10	21.9
TOTAL	100	100

Part of this evolution is accounted for by the movement of herdsmen toward urban areas so that it is not, strictly speaking, an instance of sedentarization, understood as the settlement of herdsmen in the rural sector. The development which most lucidly explains sedentarization is the growth of this rural sector during this period. It is also necessary to take account of subtle distinctions in the small urban centers where we might find a continuation of rural activity patterns. Sedentarization and urbanization are two phenomenon hard to tell apart. We must also take note of cases of family settlement in which the men go off to town hunting jobs. We are in effect dealing with complex processes with only one constant factor: the pronounced reduction in one type of animal husbandry and the relative fading of a way of life based on nomadism. This process is an ongoing one, as 1977 census data bearing on the intention to settle down of people interviewed show. During the census 91,695 nomadic households were located. Of these 80 % or thereabouts practiced animal husbandry as their chief occupation, while 15 %, most but not all of whom were Haratin, worked as farmers.

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Table 16

NOMADS' PLANS TO SETTLE DOWN TABULATED ACCORDING TO PRINCIPAL OCCUPATION						
INTENTIONS	PREDOMINANT		OCCUPATION:		TOTAL	
	ANIMAL HUSBANDRY		FARMING			
No intention to settle	58,562	82.3 %	7,102	52.3 %	69,565	75.8 %
Already settled	2,837	3.9 %	787	5.8 %	3,966	4.3 %
Planning to settle next year	2,795	3.9 %	1,218	8.8 %	4,859	5.3 %
in Nouakchott	241	0.3 %	2	-	284	0.3 %
in other towns	524	0.7 %	178	1.3 %	1,012	1.1 %
elsewhere (villages)	2,030	2.9 %	1,038	7.5 %	3,563	3.9 %
Planning to settle later	6,995	9.9 %	4,429	33.1 %	13,305	14.6 %
in Nouakchott	217	0.3 %	52	0.4 %	385	0.4 %
in other towns	1,069	1.6 %	106	0.8 %	1,504	1.8 %
elsewhere (villages)	5,709	8 %	4,271	31.9 %	11,318	12.4 %
TOTAL OF HOUSEHOLDS	71,189	100 %	13,356	100 %	91,695	100 %

Source: 1977 Census.

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Thus, about 25 % of nomad households aimed to get settled sooner or later. 10 % of these were in fact either already settled or just about to do so. Among agro-pastoralists whose main occupation is farming, there were much more serious plans to settle down, involving 50 % of them, of whom 15 % wanted to settle down immediately. A tiny number, 3.6 %, saw sedentarization as a matter of settling down in town: on this issue there was practically no difference between herdsmen and agro-pastoralist farmers. This means, predictably, that the occupation of farming inclines people strongly toward sedentarization, while herdsmen think of sedentarization as a long-term project. For example, only 8 % of them were either already settled or planning to settle down soon.

The important role played by farming as a catalyst in the sedentarization process long antedated the drought, and several authors have noted (41) this importance.

To take just one example, sedentarization on arable land around Lake Rkiz began long before the drought (Santoir, 1973). At the outbreak of the drought about 3,000 Moors were already settled around the lake. A majority of these were Bizani; their numbers grew rapidly as a result of development projects using water from the lake.

The sedentarization of agro-pastoralists may result from intensive farming connected with development projects of the type referred to, or with the erection of dans, etc. It also results from a decline in animal

(41) See especially C. Toupet, La sédentarisation des nomades en Mauritanie Centrale Sahélienne, 1977.

husbandry is based on a social differentiation between Bizani herdsmen and Haratin farmers, though some Zenaga used to do their own farming. In most cases, then, this development of farming posed a number of problems. Either the Bizani entered into competition with the Haratin for use of the best land, like the land improved by development projects, or they tried to reassert their domination of the Haratin. In both cases the situation generates conflicts which can sometimes explode openly, as happened in the case of the Magta Lahjar dams. (On this score, the report on farm labor and the land tenure system is worth studying). Thus, formerly, the sedentarization of Haratin, especially around agricultural development projects, seemed to be a means of intensifying their farm production, an intensification which would benefit the Bizani who still held on to control of the land. But then the situation changed, often forcing the Bizani either to take to farming themselves or to move closer to farmlands and to settle down there.

The sedentarization of nomads whose principal occupation is farming poses other problems because to a certain extent it makes it necessary to harmonize animal husbandry with the sedentary lifestyle. Beyond that, it is also necessary to distinguish between types of animal husbandry (see the distinctions drawn up in Section 1.1). Here again, 1977 census statistics enable us to refine our analysis somewhat according to region and type of animal husbandry. (See Table 17).

Also, the different types of animal husbandry are related to the degree to which more or less extensive movement is necessary, that is, to a more or less wide-ranging nomadism entailing variable shifts of settlements. 1977 Census data shed light on these variations (See Table 18)

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Table 17

DISTRIBUTION OF NOMADIC HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO TYPE OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY								
REGION	Camels only	Camels & Cattle	Camels & Sheep & Goats	Cattle only	Cattle & Sheep & Goats	Sheep & Goats	Sheep only	Goats only
Eastern Hodh	741	2,789	4,516	575	4,167	2,688	18	897
Western Hodh	315	1,154	2,837	564	3,425	1,654	224	1,983
Assaba	343	286	522	1,640	2,242	1,036	108	1,146
Gorgol	3	120	48	78	763	628	16	466
Brakna	78	121	320	164	1,083	2,675	3	1,377
Trarza	782	923	4,882	478	3,126	6,917	114	4,244
Adrar	342	21	1,307		3	732	68	702
Tagant	242	613	2,316	63	880	1,971	44	1,844
Guidimakha		4	13	146	782	706	2	82
North	166		1,264		21	38	4	139
Entire Country	3,012	6,041	18,035	3,708	16,482	19,045	603	13,020

Source : 1977 Census

Table 18

DISTRIBUTION OF NOMADIC HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO REGION AND TYPE OF MOVEMENT

Region	Total number of households	Sedentary Households	Sedentary with migrant members	Households moving 1x or 2x a year	Households moving 3x or 4x a year	Households moving 5x or more a year	Total number of nomads
Eastern Hodh	17 145	38	-	1 524	5 372	10 161	17 057
Western Hodh	12 958	611	106	813	1 658	9 770	12 241
Assaba	9 083	768	576	2 089	3 314	2 346	7 749
Gorgol	3 133	150	130	825	1 503	525	2 853
Brakna	10 208	278	57	1 776	3 041	5 055	9 872
Trarza	23 857	669	95	5 152	7 215	10 726	23 093
Adrar	3 313	12	-	259	1 176	1 666	3 301
Tagant	8 581	123	-	1 295	2 186	4 977	8 458
Guidimakha	1 775	122	177	179	538	759	1 476
North	1 632	-	-	42	115	1 475	1 632
Entire Country	91 685	2 822	1 141	14 154	26 118	47 460	87 732

Source : 1977 Census

In over 50 % of the cases the type of animal husbandry carried on entailed numerous displacements (5 or more per year), making it hardly compatible with sedentarization, since transhumance, in which only the family shepherd goes off with the flock, is widespread only in the southern regions, incidentally the area with the largest percentage of sedentary households (Assaba, Gorgol and Trarza). On the other hand, there are quite a few herdsmen, about 15%, who move once or twice a year. These also are located in the most southerly regions, i.e., Assaba, Brakna and especially Trarza. These are areas where the abundance of pasture and the relative availability of wells have reduced the extent of nomadic practices.

It is precisely in these regions that we find herdsmen settled in the largest concentrations on their pastures. In other words, it is here that we find animal husbandry and the sedentary life most closely harmonized. In South Trarza, even before the drought, tribes of cattle herdsmen were beginning to settle down around wells where permanent houses and schools etc. were being built. Thus, the village of Lekra el Ahmar was founded by the Tachedbit tribe around the well bearing the same name about 1960. There were discussions in the tribal assembly, the jenna; then that section of the tribe whose nomadic pasture range was within 15 kilometers of the well head began construction work. By the time of the drought, a school had already been completed near the well. By 1968, 20 to 25 houses had been built. When the drought came, the sedentarization process picked up speed. But there were hardly any new buildings put up, since the herdsmen lost almost all their livestock. These lost herds did not get built up again.

because all the problems following in the wake of the drought caused large scale migrations among the male labor force, making it hard to find shepherds. Needless to say, the continuation of the drought was hardly calculated to revive animal husbandry.

When sedentarization movements reach a certain critical size, the process becomes problematic, especially since the drought entails an increasing southward population drain. These herdsmen who are not in a position to move are often the hardest hit by the drought's effects, and their livestock get wiped out first. Under these circumstances, sedentarization is often linked to livestock losses; in opposite cases, it is facilitated by the economic capacity to pay shepherds to move flocks farther south. That was the case in the districts of Kiffa and especially of Aïoun. In those districts most of the bona fide herdsmen moved to Mali in 1979. By contrast, the need to lengthen transhumance trips southward motivated some herdsmen to settle down more or less permanently on new rainy season pasture lands which formerly were their former dry season pastures. This way they could also carry on their farming.

In sum, when it comes to the need to continue their livestock raising occupations, nomads have several options, a number of which allow a relative degree of sedentarization

They may become more mobile, moving steadily farther south; this option is naturally the least compatible with sedentarization;

They may hire shepherds; this is the rich man's option;

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- They may settle around wells; this option is operative when only short-range movements are involved;

- They may settle on rainy season pastures and farm land and practice transhumance, sending part of the family off with the livestock periodically; or, they may undertake short-range movements in the dry season.

Some sedentarization situations thus seem compatible with animal husbandry. However, it is patent that the context within which this sedentarization takes place, namely the context created by the drought and attendant livestock losses, encourages the growth of other occupations such as farming, itinerant trading or labor migrations; and these occupations fill the void left by the relative decline of animal husbandry.

If the foregoing analysis is valid, we may expect the sedentarization process to happen primarily on arable land and secondarily on pasture land. The example, already cited, of the Tachedbit villages of Lekra el Ahmar south of Mederdra, is an illustration of this latter case. The fact that the group settled down some time back is an indication of its desire to become sedentary, linked to the establishment of administrative facilities, a school, the sinking of a second, cement-lined well around 1964, etc ... In the South Trarza area, there are many such villages.

A few cases may exemplify the conditions under which Moorish herdsmen got settled on farmlands recently. A few kilometers from Aleg, the Ladamani clan of the Idyeydeba tribe built the village of Tayba, in an area where they traditionally farmed. In 1972, they built the first houses there;

many families from other tribes joined them : Laglal, Oulad Ebieri, etc. To these newcomers the Lagdamami allotted arable land in return for 25 % to 50 % of the harvest. Farming proved difficult; for example, cultivation has only been feasible in two years since 1972. This, added to the problem of livestock losses, led to movements of the males toward the urban areas, though not in overwhelming numbers, since worksites along the road provided a modest amount of employment for a while. At the moment, the village numbers about 200 families. Generally, sedentarization continues in the Brakna area. The Haratin settled first, especially near the river valley where villages called adabay have existed for a long time. Recently, houses in these villages have been built of durable material, and the villages are becoming stable. The Haratin also settled in the Aleg region, the farthest limit of the dam-site farming zone. The Bizani have also moved closer to town, where they carry on nomadic occupations on the outskirts, settle around wells, or even more right into town. Many of these Bizani also trade, and the males often move to Senegal or to Nouakchott, where they open shops, leaving their families behind in a state of relative sedentarization.

Sedentarization is even more highly developed in the neighboring region of Magta Lahjar, where dams exist in the greatest profusion. In that region, migrations have not been so prevalent and conflicts between Haratin and Bizani over land rights have become rather widespread. Since 1973, there has been increasing sedentarization, in villages or small towns near watering points or the Nouakchott-Nema highway. Invariably, people settle down near farming areas, and sedentarized herdsmen prefer sending

their herds on transhumance trips under the care of shepherds. Sometimes, sedentarization might proceed on two levels : in the adabay during the planting season, with the urban centers providing a fall-back position in case rain precipitation levels make permanent settlement impractical. Additionally, urban centers have seen their population swell with the influx of the families left behind by nomads who, on account of the drought, have to range far south in search of pasture, and think it better to leave their families in these centers. In the Aioun region, and in the Tanchakett region in particular, we find this tendency to settle on farm land operative on the palm estate.

Farther to the south, people settle around rain-dependent farm areas, but the relative abundance of land brings about a kind of settlement linked to the southward extension of nomadic movements. In Guidimakha, it has even been known for Haratin or Bizani to obtain land from the Soninke in return for specific payments.

We have, as is to be expected, frozen the situation at a particular juncture when the drought-instigated large scale urban oriented migrations had already happened. As a consequence, it is difficult to identify the reasons why people chose to settle in the urban areas rather than on farmland or pasture ranges, because the key movements into the towns have already taken place. It does seem quite clear, however, that penury is often a key reason for choosing to settle in the urban areas; there, after all, help is more accessible, in the form of food allotments, social redistribution, etc... The case of the Ahel Amar Argabys, observed in May 1930, is perhaps an apt

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illustration of what these movements have become. The tribe involved is a Zawaya tribe from Trarza, normally living and raising cattle 20 kilometers south of the Oued Naga. In 1973, having lost all their possessions, they decided to move en masse. Only 40 tents remained on the old pasture land with a few surviving animals; 40 other tents were moved toward the Rosso-Nouakchott road, while others headed directly for the town. The tents set up along the road survived in total destitution, with absolutely no resources. The people wished to reach Nouakchott, but for the time being did not have the means for accomplishing the move.

Would we be justified in supposing that the sedentarization of nomads is one phase in a progression leading to more permanent settlement in towns? In several cases, the sedentarization of families goes hand in hand with the migration of working males, and can bring about a family group migration in the long run. Problems besetting the farming sector and the animal husbandry industry can act to spur on such a development. Other factors could actually or potentially have an influence in other directions. There is, in the first place, the very real attachment people feel for a land they have known for generations in some cases; this attachment only grows stronger in the light of current hardships facing those seeking jobs in town. No doubt, at this level there might have been a possibility of decentralizing such more easily the running of administrative affairs, of building schools and of distributing food and, in such a manner as to reinforce this local sedentarization of nomads.

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3.3. Migrations and Urbanization in Intermediate Urban Centers

The post-drought situation has been characterized by the dynamic growth of the principal urban centers, especially Nounkchott, as well as by a population influx into small regional urban centers, and even the creation of new centers. We shall categorize these new centers as "urban", not because of their size, which often happens to be quite small, but because they have no significant role to play within the rural sector. The population growth some of these centers have experienced has been remarkable.

Table 19 : Population Growth of Urban Centers

	1961 - 1962	1977
Kiffa	4 352	10 266
Aioun	4 377	8 505
Nema	3 898	7 933
Tidjikja	3 861	7 861
Boutilimit	2 774	7 256
Aleg	1 343	5 316
Timbedra	1 815	5 302

Source : Demographic Report, 2116

These towns are sited immediately north of the Sahel Zone, in precisely that area where animal husbandry was not devastated by the crisis. The population rise is to a great extent linked to the sedentarization movement in which the herdsmen got caught up. We have studied this sedentarization

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as such. We now proceed to probe the particular form it takes in this instance of sedentarization in intermediate urban centers. Incidentally, in the poll of intentions to settle down conducted during the 1977 census, the number of nomads who planned to settle in such intermediate towns was thrice that of those aiming for Nouakchott. To help sharpen our probing, we shall ask a series of specific questions: What problems have been attendant on the settlement of people in these towns? Do these settlement movements constitute genuine cases of migration? And if so, are these migrations then a stage on the way to settlement in larger urban centers?

People are drawn to these intermediate urban centers on account of their functions. Traditionally, these were administrative and trading centers. At the time of independence, they numbered usually a few hundred or, in some cases, a few thousand inhabitants, brought together to serve the administrative and commercial systems. Since Independence, their administrative functions have been reinforced by virtue of the establishment of regional branches of such public services as dispensaries, occasionally hospitals, and most commonly, schools. In fact, in some of these towns, colleges have been opened in the last few years. The drought and the food crisis it brought in its wake added a new function; the distribution of food aid and the regular supply of cheap food rations. By all the evidence, this new function has been decisive. Finally, we notice that most of these towns are sited along the Nouakchott-Nema road axis, which incidentally was built for the exact purpose of integrating these with the whole country as well as opening them up much more to the world at large. Worksites have also helped

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attract migrants to these towns because they create jobs and boost trade. We have already seen (Section 2.3) that sex ratios in these urban centers are extremely well balanced. This is contrary to what we have noted in those towns which attract migrant laborers primarily, and is an indication that we are dealing with family-type migrations.

This population influx, taking place in a relatively short period and in the absence of even the most elementary urban amenities to take care of the overflow, has caused very severe problems. No solutions have been worked out, and, in some cases, the problems are actually getting worse. We looked at them most closely at Miffo, one of the centers where demographic pressures are strongest, and are growing even more intense because of a series of factors we shall be looking at.

As a rule, there was no city planning of any sort in these towns, nor was there any zoning system into which incoming migrants could be integrated. Their settlement was therefore utterly chaotic, and the migrants simply moved on to vacant lots belonging to the town's older inhabitants who often derived their land tenure rights from tribal claims. This situation, what with the ignorance of the "bush people" just come to town, encouraged wild speculation. Plots of land already allocated rose considerably in value. In the zone of uncontrolled housing construction numerous conflicts broke out between landowners and squatter families, who often put up structures overnight in order to have a concrete fait accompli to confront the relevant officials with. Unallocated plots were sold at exorbitant prices, between 4,000 and 10,000 UM per plot; the sellers were either the landowners

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themselves, or even the first squatters, who, of course, had no legal title to the land. The fact that the setting up of real estate contracts was such an easy thing, requiring only the participation of a qadi and two witnesses, added to the confusion. Thus, one family that traditionally worked a piece of land simply sold this land behind the administrations's back. To maximize profits, the sellers cut up plots into tiny parcels, not even bothering to make provision for roads. In another case, a whole neighborhood grew up around one personage from the Ahel Sidi Mahmud tribe. This character, long settled just outside the town, wished to build up a personal following. So he took it upon himself to distribute plots of land free of charge, without permission from the relevant officials.

Several towns were built with a far smaller population in mind, and their infrastructures are inadequate to meet the new demands made on them. The water problem is the most tragic of all. Kiffa has no local underground water-bearing strata; it just depends on small pockets of water tapped by many wells. With the drought and the increase in population, water became extremely scarce. It was difficult to pipe water in from Tagant on account of the great distance and prohibitive cost. In May 1980, there was just a little water left in some neighborhoods, but even this little was often muddy and filthy. As a consequence, there was a lot of profiteering from the sale of water hauled generally by haratin, with a tonne-amount of the precious liquid going for 2 UM.

Another major problem involves the supply and distribution of food in these centers, which also serve as distribution points feeding the rural

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areas around them. At Kiffa, distribution operations were suspended in the rainy season, but resumed in January. Demand became especially intense in May. In 20 days, through a complex bureaucratic procedure, the operation succeeded in distributing 600 tonnes of corn, 20 tonnes of butter, 30 of milk, and 40 of dates. Kiffa was the area's only supply point, so lots of people from the neighboring area descended on the town. Both the census operation and the food distribution process occasioned numerous disputes and even incidents, involving frequent cases of impersonation, double identity declarations, and oversights. A remarkable aspect of the census is that almost 50 % of the declarations were made by women. This cannot be explained solely by the migration of working males; a lot of families split up in order to get multiple rations. At any rate, food distribution provides an opportunity for intense speculation. Penniless families sell their ration coupons to collectors who hand them over to rich traders, who, in turn, hoard the cereals they thus obtain till they can sell them in periods of scarcity.

Clearly, then, the situation in these towns is somewhat discouraging. If migratory pressures do not ease off, it may even become tragic. In 1973, the Kiffa area got a meager 133 mm of rain. Many of the region's herdsmen had to head south, some going as far as Mali. But some left their families behind at Kiffa so they could obtain food and rations. The farming population, which had had no harvest worth speaking of, also came to town in large numbers seeking succor. Under these conditions, the migrant population once again rose sharply in 1973.

We are now in a position to pick up again the issue of the relative

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population downturn in these villages seemingly indicated by the 1977 census figures. Between 1975 and 1977, Kiffa's population slipped from 16,729 to 10,266, a drop of 21 %. Aioun's dropped 20.9 %, from 13,606 to 8,505. Tidjikja's dropped 1.9 %, from 8,175 to 7,365, and so forth. The only exception was Aleg, whose population did not fall, but rose from 5,224 in 1975 to 5,316 in 1977. There is no arguing about the population decrease per se; but the question remains : is the decrease definitive ? Let us take the case of Kiffa. In 1980, this town's population climbed back to a level certainly higher than the 1975 level, being estimated at 20,000 by the district's food distribution services. This development leads us to think that a floating population hovers around these towns; they can go back to the country in a good year, but they still keep their urban contact channels clear, in the form, for instance, of still having a dwelling place in town, keeping part of the family there, etc ... In the maintenance of these urban contacts, the food distribution process plays an important part. On the other hand, the poverty of this population, the lack of employment opportunities, and the shortage of cash income mean a relative business slump in these towns which heretofore had prospered in some measure from dealings with neighboring herdsmen and farmers. Many major traders from these towns have moved to Nouakchott. None of this prevents the population of these towns, whether it be permanent or floating, from exhibiting highly mobile behavior patterns. Harsh living conditions cause many of them to move to other towns with better job prospects, and such moves may be individual or family moves. Thus, part of the population living in Nouakchott's 5th borough is made up of people from Kiffa and Aioun.

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We have to treat the new semi-urban centers built after the drought, and sometimes harboring several thousand people, in a separate category. The phenomenon takes particularly clear form along the road between Nouakchott and Yiffa. In the Aleg region, the following centers have mushroomed very fast : Atchergit, where people began to settle in 1967; Lenden (1965); and, more recently, Tombera (1975). Most of the people living in these centers are members of bureaucrats' families or people from Nouakchott. It is cheaper to leave one's family in these towns, since expenses are only 33 % of what they would be in Nouakchott; in addition, it makes it easier to "maintain traditional customs". The families own livestock which range far afield under the care of shepherds, returning during the rainy season. Motor vehicles run daily trips between these centers and Aleg. Traffic even grows heavy in the rainy season, when school children and college students return home from Nouakchott.

In the Magta Lahjar region, these centers are more closely connected with farming, and are often built close by a farm site. Magta Lahjar itself, a relatively new town with several thousand inhabitants, is thus situated, as is Sangravn, a town of similar size. Often, these towns where administrative services and schools are situated, experience a population boom in the dry season on account of the distribution of food rations. Come planting time, the people head back to their farms. For similar reasons, the herdsmen also sometimes park their families in these centers for part of the year.

In South Trarza, we find yet another situation. There, certain large centers; namely R'fiz, Pareino, Magta Neaner etc ... have grown as sedentarization

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centers because of the drought. In the region, the sedentarization movement is general. Larger concentrations grow up around bureaucratic posts as in R'Fiz, or around other poles of attraction : Sarcina and Magta Nganer, for instance, were founded by disciples of the Senegalese Tijaniyya Sheikh Ibrahim Nyass coming from the Kaolack area.

These intermediate urban centers provide supplementary channels for the rural exodus, and it would seem advantageous, in the short-term, to encourage people to settle there. Such a policy presupposes the existence of a minimum of infrastructures and amenities. Unfortunately, this minimum does not yet exist. Because of this lack, all the intermediate urban centers can do is to serve as way stations for people on their way to the largest cities.

3.4. Migratory Movements and Communication Axes

As we have already noted, Mauritania's road network grew rather rapidly after independence. These highways crisscrossing the national territory have helped redirect migratory streams toward Mauritania's own interior, especially toward Nouakchott, center of the nation. The opening of the Nouakchott-Nema highway, which, at the time of writing, has reached Kiffa, and is expected to reach Aioun in 1961, happening as it did just after the drought, played a very important part in channeling migrants from the eastern regions, the latest to get involved in the migratory phenomenon, toward Nouakchott. Similarly, during the drought, the Nouakchott-Rosso highway served as an axis along which Yrarza's nomads settled. That such tendencies have continued is evidenced by the example of the Ahel Amar Adabya settlement described in Section 3.2. At the time of

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the drought, these settlements covered dozens of kilometers, the roadside settlements serving as stations on the way to Nouakchott's slums.

With the worst of the crisis behind us, how are we to evaluate the role played by these communication axes in channeling migratory streams? Studies conducted along both the finished and the unfinished parts of the Nouakchott-Aioun highway provide a few very tentative ideas. This is definitely one of the issues that would justify a long range study all by itself.

We have noted that this highway axis plays a part in the sedentarization process: some of the new urban centers such as Oud Naga and Atcheregitt have in fact grown up along it. Actually, the process of people settling down along the road began even before the road was laid down: the workites and the boreholes of Mendes attracted the nomads there; once there, they found water, later a few odd jobs, and opportunities to set up as petty traders or get ancillary jobs, etc ... Tribal groups are often quite lucidly aware of opportunities offered by the highway. Thus, the assembly of the Idaybousat from Aioun region decided to set up villages along the Kiffa-Aioun road under construction so as to ensure that they get such basic amenities as a school, public service facilities, etc ... Two such villages, Darara and Tantan, are already going concerns, having in fact each been built in palm groves around a small Ksar which had been in existence for quite some time. Another village is under construction at Lunkhayler. To the Idaybousat, these new sedentarization points situated on their traditional pastures apparently seem compatible with the practice of animal husbandry. The nearby pastures have always been

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satisfactory: what they needed was water, and this they now hope to have, thanks to the worksite boreholes.

Seen from the perspective of population movements, the highway is not just a sedentarization axis; it also happens to make travel much easier, and this has many contradictory effects on migratory movements.

- In periods of crisis the highway makes it easy for people to travel to the cities or the food distribution points;

- But the same highway also makes reverse movements just as easy. So it makes it possible for family heads to leave their families in the village or in the intermediate urban centers while they go job-hunting in the city; in addition, it enables Nouakchott's wealthier denizens to settle their families back in the country;

- Finally, the road eases local travel, periodic dispersions or congregations for farmers and herdsmen around the intermediate urban centers. This facility acts as a check on potential tendencies to migrate into the larger cities.

It is clear, then, that the short-term effects of the construction of highways on migratory movements are contradictory and multidirectional. This becomes even clearer when we return to a consideration of long-term effects. The fact is, everything depends on the uses to which these highways will be put. In other words, everything depends on the political choices which will be made with regard to these highways. What those concerned say about the

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effects the road has had on migratory streams is very ambiguous. In the first place, they note that the road makes travel to Nouakchott easier; but travel from Nouakchott is equally easy. And the road is used to shift not only people but property : the road network enhances the growth of new trade channels, with potentially beneficial effects on the entire regional economy.

In the first place, communication facilities make it possible to beef up the administrative presence, public services and food distribution processes in the regions they serve. It is hardly necessary to harp on this factor, which is particularly important in the short run as far as food distribution goes. The need for aid was one of the chief reasons for the population influx into Nouakchott. The decentralization of these public and administrative services would certainly be an important factor in controlling the rural exodus, if not in stopping it altogether.

Furthermore, roads enhance the establishment of new trade circuits capable of benefiting the regional economy in such sectors as the livestock trade. Such benefit would accrue not mainly from the numbers or quality of stock involved (since most of the livestock as well as the better grades are still exported to Senegal), but from new opportunities of state participation in commercial processes thus made possible.

Livestock is moved to the markets along the road in trucks which remain empty on the return trips. As a rule, they are not specially fitted out to carry livestock, but they are capable of handling a full load of 20 sheep or 12 head of cattle each. The livestock comes from adjacent regions at the height of the dry season, when truck transport is particularly advantageous

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because travel on foot becomes difficult.

Prices vary according to distances :

Table 20 : Price Variations According to Distances

	<u>Aleg</u>	<u>Kiffa</u>
Sheep	120 - 150 UM	-
Cattle	1,500 UM	2,000 UM

What we see happening is the progressive establishment of a national market, though this is not tantamount to a total reversal of former trade circuits. The way in which this national market gets set up will naturally be a decisive factor in the improvement of local production conditions. Not only livestock is involved; the distribution of food products, truck farming produce and seafood is also easier. So even if road transport makes it easier for the labor force to migrate, it also makes it possible to look forward in the long run to a reorganization of market relationships likely to help check the rural exodus.

3.5. Migrations and the Political Bureaucracy : Nouakchott's Pull

In chapter 4 we intend to discuss the conditions under which migrants entering the towns are urbanized. But before we do that, we think it necessary to ask a preliminary question : what factors explain the increasing migrant preference for Nouakchott ? The question is all the more complex since Nouakchott is a new city and does not have an economic base capable of using a large labor market. When the city was being built, the city planners in no way foresaw the population explosion that was to hit it. In 1958, the population

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projected for Nouakchott by 1970 was supposed to be 7,000. What was planned was simply a political capital, and it was hoped it would remain just a town for bureaucrats. In the event, the city did not cooperate; it has grown with spectacular speed, and rather ironically, the reason for this growth was precisely that same bureaucratic character that was supposed to keep its size modest. Let us recapitulate a few statistics culled from Pitte's work :

1955	1,800	Population of the original <u>Esar</u> before Nouakchott
1960	5,000	Population during construction time
1970	35,000	
1974	115,000	Post-drought population (Pitte's estimate)
1977	134,707	Census figure

Up until the crisis created by the drought, the city's population growth rate had been higher than forecast, but it was still relatively restrained. But with the massive rural exodus of 1973 and 1974, the population exploded, with almost a fourfold increase. There had been warning signs of this development in the form of previous migrations which progressively reoriented migratory streams toward the city. We have to remember too that Nouakchott is sited in the most thickly populated part of Moorish Mauritania, the Trarza area, and that regional migrations have a very long history there. In 1977, 41.7% of Nouakchott's population came from the Trarza area. In addition, the city formerly attracted streams of migrants from the north, especially from the Adrar region. Communications with that region were easy even before completion of the paved highway between Nouakchott and Akjoujt, which makes it possible to reach Atar from the capital in just about 5 hours. There were

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additional streams of migrants from the Senegal River valley, coming partly by the way of Rosso, also linked to Nouakchott by a paved highway. Lastly, for a few years now the Eastern Highway has been in operation, encouraging migrations from the eastern regions. People from these regions are particularly concentrated in the most recent squatter sections of Nouakchott, especially the 5th borough.

We have a modest amount of data on the composition of the population, based on the 1977 census, with special reference to the distribution of the migrant population according to age group and arrival date :

Table 22

DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRANT POPULATION ACCORDING TO AGE GROUP AND DATE OF ARRIVAL IN NOUAKCHOTT						
Age in years	Migrants from other regions					Total Pop.
	1 year	1 - 4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 years and +	
All ages	14.57 %	32.42 %	13.77 %	6.7 %	3.88 %	100 % 134,704
0 - 4	10.71	17.70				100 % 18,843
5 - 8	8.36	30.70	10.94			100 % 17,010
10 - 14	11.15	31.25	23.64	9.05		100 % 11,829
15 - 19	21.08	39.72	18.71	6.66	4.04	100 % 14,445
20 - 24	20.02	44.27	21.10	5.07	3.28	100 % 15,814
25 - 29	17.28	39.56	25.53	8.19	3.81	100 % 12,445
30 - 39	14.22	33.13	25.72	12.84	6.36	100 % 13,775
40 - 49	14.13	30.10	23.26	12.60	12.64	100 % 9,042
50 - 59	14.68	29.15	23.14	10.59	12.34	100 % 4,795
60 and +	15.23	30.67	23.35	8.52	12.50	100 % 2,967

Source : 1977 Census

Almost half of the city's population has been there for only 4 years or less, as against 20.7 from the city itself or from the surrounding district. These percentages are higher for the adult age groups : 61.7 of those between 15 and 19 years old, 65.7 of those between 20 and 25, 57.7 of those between 25 and 29. We are dealing partly, then, with individual labor migrations involving a preponderance of males, as borne out by the following table of evolution of sex ratios arranged according to age groups.

Table 23 : Evolution of Sex Ratios According to age groups

<u>Age in years</u>	<u>Number of women per 1,000 men</u>
All age groups	781
15 - 19	742
20 - 24	567
25 - 29	633
30 - 39	650
40 - 49	776
50 - 59	999
60 and +	1 189

In 1977, then, in spite of a large scale rural exodus involving family group migrations during the food crisis, what we find here are features characteristic of labor migrations with a clear preponderance of job-seeking young males. A more sharply refined study of the sex ratio gives even lower figures for recent migrants : less than 400 women per 1,000 men for 20 - 24 year-old migrants who have been in town for less than a year. By contrast, for recent migrants older than 40 the sex ratio is practically even. On top of these labor migrations come family migrations linked with the drought. Indeed, as we noted in the preceding sections, the rural exodus often proceeds on two levels : first, families move into sedentarization areas or intermediate urban centers;

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secondly, men move off to Nouakchott or other promising towns looking for jobs.

Apparently, then, the economic aspect plays a major role right from the start. Nouakchott does offer a good number of jobs, especially in the secondary and tertiary sectors, though attempts to establish industries there have yielded disappointing results. In 1977, jobs available in the modern sector totalled 11,700. The distribution was as follows :

Table 24 : Job Distribution in The Modern Sector

Government bureaucracies	4,500
Fishing	100
Industry, Construction, Water Works, Electric Utilities..	2,000
Banking, Commerce, Insurance	600
Self-employed	3,200
Domestic servants	700

(Source : 5-Year-Plan, Nouakchott District, 1974)

To this number we would have to add about a hundred truck farmers, the traditional craftsmen, and domestic servants of more or less enslaved status working for Moorish families. A few adjustments need to be made; for instance, in 1978, it was estimated that the non-structured commercial and artisan sectors numbered 5,000, a figure definitely higher than the 3,200 self-employed statistic from 1973 count. But, apart from such adjustments, the figures are still valid, and currently the total of jobs in Nouakchott could not possibly be higher than 15,000.

While this job market is substantial by Mauritania's standards, it still does not explain the fact that almost 10 % of the country's population is con-

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centrated in the capital, in a situation where, unlike other African cities, the rural sector resources this city depends on are extremely limited. These figures mean one active person per 8 people, but we have to take into account the low level of wages and the cost of living.

All in all, then, economic factors are part of the explanation, but not the whole reason for the concentration of people in Nouakchott.

The orientation of migratory movements may find explanations in other roles played by Nouakchott. The fact is that there is a very high concentration of public services in Nouakchott.

Two points are of outstanding significance :

First, the concentration of educational institutions : there are over 1,000 students in Nouakchott's Secondary Schools; this is almost 33 % of all secondary students. Furthermore, rightly or wrongly, the quality of instruction available in Nouakchott's schools is often considered to be superior. As far as the national high school system goes, it also has over 1,000 students, and Nouakchott has a virtual monopoly of instruction at that level. Beyond that, again only Nouakchott has higher-level institutions, the ENM and ENS. To cap it all, Nouakchott is also the base for technical schools and colleges whose main function is to train ONET technical personnel before they are posted to the northern mining towns. This concentration of several thousand schoolchildren and students is an important aspect of Mauritania's migratory movements.

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Secondly, there is just as great a concentration of medical services, and this is one more factor encouraging migration into Nouakchott. Mauritians are increasingly in need of medical services, and quite often people move more or less temporarily to Nouakchott to get medical care. The national hospital is the only one capable of giving an essentially complete range of health services.

These factors are important; but, by themselves, they do not adequately explain Nouakchott's pull and the population concentration it has brought to the city. An additional factor must be pointed out : the distribution of food aid after the drought. Apparently, in the first few years, the distribution system worked more efficiently at Nouakchott, if only because that was the receiving point. Since then, however, distribution conditions in all regional centers have practically caught up with Nouakchott's standards, though there still are frequent transport delays, and so this factor has lost its decisive impact. Furthermore, life in Nouakchott is very difficult for migrants on account of high living costs, extremely high rents, transportation problems, etc. ...

It seems to us that if we are really to understand Nouakchott's pull, we need to take into account its political function as the capital. As a prelude to that, we have to say a few words about the way Mauritania's political system works. This issue doubtless requires a much more comprehensive study, but all we need to do here is to outline a few general ideas on the system, at least the way it was up till 1970. Naturally, the political system was part and parcel of the totality of the country's economic and social realities. We might as well start with two salient points :

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- First, there is a significant articulation overlap between this political establishment together with its personnel, and the economic interest group constituted by the traders (do they now form a national bourgeoisie?). The political establishment in this country is made up of government bureaucrats and technocrats, in a much more definite way than in countries with more complex political structures, such as France. This point will be examined in greater detail in the report on modes of accumulation ^(41a). The interpenetration of the merchant and political elites can sometimes be very great. Thus, some politicians or bureaucrats have been able to build up serious investment portfolios. As for the political influence of the merchants, it works more discreetly, mainly in connection with the second aspect of the political system, which, given the perspective of this study, seems to us important.

- The system is highly centralized, but on the local level its political and administrative underpinnings are weak. (This was true even in the heydays of the P.P.M.). The system works in such a way that those who succeed to positions of power tend to attract clusters of clients, while in turn the clientele supports them in those power positions. This is by no means a new situation in Moorish society, as can be seen in the author's forthcoming study on the Adrar Emirate. It is within these networks of supportive client-patron relationships that the interpenetration of the political establishment and economic interest groups manifests itself most clearly. This interpenetration must on no account be confused with the conflict of interest phenomenon as known in western societies; it is rather a feature Mauritania exhibits in common with many other Third World societies. The society functions through a patron-client relationship. Redistribution mechanisms are designed to create

(41a) See Bonte, P., Modes of Accumulation, and Social Evolution in Mauritania, in : Social Change, RAMS, 1980

vertical solidarity bonds, i.e. relationships between patrons and clients, which transcend the phenomena of social and economic differentiation prevalent in developing countries, and thus also to some extent serve to hide these stratification phenomena behind a mystifying veil. The patron-client system, in which the patrons are part of the political establishment or belong to the merchant group that controls economic life, works all the more successfully because it jells with those kin-group, tribal and ethnic solidarity bonds so crucially active in Mauritanian life.

Let us cite an example to shed light on this analysis and make clear its significance in relation to migrations. For quite a long time a member of a tribe from Adrar held an important post in Nouakchott's city hall. This position of his helped him advance the business interests of a number of fellow tribesmen trading in Nouakchott, among whom one belonged to the inner cabal of Nouakchott's richest traders and entrepreneurs. Little by little, a nexus of patron-client relationships partially based on members of the tribe, grew up around these political and economic power functions. Out of a tribal total of 800 people, 150 settled in Nouakchott.

On the local scene, this situation resulted in the economic and social advancement of that part of the tribe that had been most involved (see Section 2.5), which breathed new life into local political, matrimonial and economic strategies.

We could cite several similar examples, but the point is this : in our opinion, the decisive factor which explains Nouakchott's pull, its power of attraction over all Mauritania's people, and the phenomenon of large numbers

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streaming into the city, that decisive explanatory factor patently comprises the set of economic redistribution mechanisms, job opportunities, access to real estate plots, etc. which go along with the patron-client relationships described above. Shades of differentiation would necessarily have to be introduced into the analysis to refine it : some of the networks, for example those growing around some trading tribes, are commercial, while others are more directly political. In this last case, fluctuations in power positions may entail certain modifications in these patron-client relationships, though at bottom they remain remarkably stable. In all cases, such relationships play a major role in helping migrants opt to come settle in Nouakchott. Life there may be hard, and getting a job may be a difficult problem; nevertheless, people know that once in Nouakchott, they can depend on these patron-client networks which parallel and reinforce kin-group, tribal, village-based and ethnic bonds, to meet their survival needs, and then to find a job or other source of cash income.

Before moving on, let us make it clear that we do not mean to imply that Mauritania's entire political system boils down to just these two aspects. If we have put the spotlight on them, it is only because they played an important part in establishing directions for migratory movements. As for a comprehensive study of the political system, we shall leave it to other scholars, or to other circumstances.

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4. Migrations and Urbanization

Beyond the problem of sedentarization which we have already discussed, the ultimate destination of migrants is the city. The rural exodus finds its outlet in the urban areas. Contrary to the pattern of rural exoduses in Europe, here the migrant stream does not lose its rural character on reaching the city. The proletarianization process involves only a tiny fraction of the society, concentrated mainly in the mining towns where a relatively large working class has settled in. Elsewhere, no matter what the degree of rupture may be in relationships between migrants and their home bases, settlement in town does not mean a radical transformation of lifestyles and social bonds. Urbanisation is instead characterized by the setting up of transitional structures which still reproduce several features of non-urban social organization.

In this chapter, we do not plan to discuss the whole gamut of problems posed by urbanisation in Mauritania. What we propose to do is to discuss the nature of these transitional forms which have come to characterize the urbanisation process, once the general conditions under which these variegated groups settle in town have been defined.

4.1. General Conditions of Migrant Settlement in Urban Areas

Let us recapitulate a few of the urban population's characteristics. Most of the migrants are only recently settled in; in the recent period, the drought and the food crisis have actually accelerated migratory movements.

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Table 25

DATES OF MIGRANTS' ARRIVAL IN URBAN AREAS			
Number of years in town	Nouakchott (1977)	Nouadhibou (1971)	Zouerate (1970)
Less than 1 year	14.6 %	32.1 %	15.8 %
1 - 4 years	37.4 %	26.0 %	31.3 %
5 - 9 Years	18.8 %	19.2 %	46.8 %
More than 10 years (or born in town)	34.2 %	22.7 %	6.4 %
Total	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %
Sources : Author's studies and 1977 Census			

Secondly, the population involved is young. In an appreciable number of cases, the migrations are individual moves. These points are important when it comes to an evaluation of migrant integration into the urban environment.

Another fact of immediate import is the ethnic and regional heterogeneity of the migrant population mix, though admittedly, outside the towns along the Senegal River Valley, in almost all the cases the Moors are a majority : 86 % in Zouerate, 67 % in Nouadhibou in the year 1970-1971, and according to Pitte's estimates, between 61 % and 88 % in Nouakchott. To what extent will the urban environment be conducive to the preservation of this heterogeneous character, or lead to a more homogeneous mix ? Given the fact that the population has not been long settled, this is a hard question to answer. We shall attempt to probe for answers on the basis of various data.

Housing : on this score the picture is not very clear. The most we can

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say it that there is no pattern of tribal segregation in separate neighborhoods or even in distinct enclaves within neighborhoods. There is a tremendous deal of population mixing as far as housing goes. Nevertheless, the importance attached to neighbor-to-neighbor relationships, the tendency to settle down near a family member or other close relative, coupled perhaps with a certain hankering after security, leads to a measure of clustering "in spots" with people from the same area coming together. In Nouakchott, the Moorish population can be found practically all over the place, but there are regional concentrations: people from Adrar, for instance, are most thickly concentrated in the first borough stretching along the Nouakchott-Atar highway, as well as in the Ksar. People from the Trarza are also numerous in these same sections. The 5th borough, more recently settled, has taken in a lot of fresh immigrants, many of them from the eastern zones of Hodh, Assaba, etc. Black Africans are most numerous in the Medina inner-city area and in certain neighborhoods of the 5th borough. As one informant put it, "the blacks head for the inner city, while the Moors head for the outskirts."

The situation in Nouadhibou was comparable in some respects; in 1971, the black African population there was concentrated in the southern section of the Laraygib quarter as well as in a few pockets in Ghirane. As for the fisherfolk coming from various areas, they lived at Icharka.

Occupations: In Zouerate, as in Nouadhibou, there was a pretty clear occupational specialization based either on traditional skills or on the use of job placement networks controlled on an ethnic basis. It is normal to find Wolof, Serere and Lebou fishermen, and Moorish traders and craftsmen. It is

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ethnic-based job networks that explain the fact that Wolofs control the taxi business, and that there is a preponderance of Toucouleurs and Guinean Peulhs working as domestic servants or hotel waiters. The situation in Nouakchott is similar.

Marriages : Marriages across ethnic lines are still rather rare; often they involve high-status individuals or educated people. The most notable exception is the relatively large number of Moorish women married to men of other tribes. On the other hand, very few Moorish men marry into other ethnic groups. To understand this phenomenon, we would have to study in more precise detail the matrimonial strategies in use among various ethnic groups. For the moment, let us just observe that marriages across ethnic boundaries are few.

So for the most part, the process of integration into the urban environment takes place within an ethnic frame of reference, as is normal in African towns. There may be no rigid barriers in the areas of housing and work, but inter-ethnic social contacts are restrained, as evidenced by the low number of inter-ethnic marriages. The explanation of this situation is not to be found solely in the migrants' traditional heritage; quite apart from that, the ethnic cocoon actually functions as an adjustment mechanism for migrants entering the urban scene. Before proceeding to an examination of these modes of adjustment used by the different ethnic groups, let us recapitulate a few general features of current urban life in Mauritania.

Because of the recent migrant influx, housing is a very thorny problem

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in all of Mauritania's urban areas. The problems encountered in the lesser centers get blown up in the major towns. Among the salient features is the growth of squatter housing, which shelters a large portion of the urban population in makeshift slums. In 1977, this slum-dwelling proportion of the population was 58 % of Nouakchott's population, almost 80,000 people; in Rosso, there were 7,000 in the Sitar slums, 42 % of that city's population; in Zouerate and Moudhibou, the percentage was 48 %. These are merely the largest concentrations of slumdwellers living in lumper urban environments with only the crudest of basic infrastructural facilities.

There are two causes behind this squatter phenomenon : first, the migrants arrived in town very fast, so there was no time to provide even minimal urban amenities for their reception. Secondly, the migrants arrived penniless, and were consequently not in a position to afford any other type of housing.

In 1974, the situation in Nouakchott was so enormously problematic that people simply put up tents everywhere. And the lack of water, as well as the lack of urban planning, resulted in tragic problems.

That same year, in 1974, certain preliminary corrective measures were taken : two new boroughs, the 1st and the 5th, were set up to take in most of the new immigrants. 5,000 plots were distributed in the 5th borough, and 2,000 in the 1st. Basic facilities were set up, including administrative service posts, schools, places of worship, markets, and water stand-pipes. Land plots measuring 100 to 200 square meters were handed out with the initial aim of relocating migrants who had settled in town during the drought. The new

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zones were steadily expanded on the principle of public land being made available for leasehold. Ownership remained vested in the state, but the land was leased on condition that the lessee took steps to develop it. In the event, it proved impractical to follow official government stipulations strictly in the distribution of plots, and smaller plots measuring less than 100 squaremeters each have in fact been handed out to slum families with the proviso that they put up no permanent buildings on such land.

So much for the principles. Reality has turned out to be a bit different, and the truth is that the process of plot distribution in Nouakchott has occasioned rampant speculation in land which is just one aspect of the general phenomenon of real estate speculation, a major source of profit in Mauritania's society today.

In theory, there is an official price for these plots, 30 UM per plot in the areas with traditional-type houses. In practice, however, de facto prices are far higher. We shall see from a few examples how high these prices can rise. The result is a contraband trade in real estate which enables speculators with cash assets to make substantial profits using false fronts in order to get these plots. Political and economic support is necessary in this hustle, but directly or indirectly, by passing through these speculators, people in Nouakchott use land sales as one of their sources of necessary income.

Housing is as hot an item of speculation as land plots are. That is why rents are so high in Nouakchott, regardless of housing quality. In the residential areas monthly rents between 5,000 and 10,000 UM are quite common.

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In the traditional quarters, also, rents are relatively high, the rent for a single room being between 1,000 and 2,500 UM monthly in some cases. Under these conditions, many families find it preferable to become "landlords" themselves. In the low income group, for example, the percentage of rent-paying tenants was 17 %, those housed gratis made up 10 %, and 73 % were in the home-owners' category.⁽⁴²⁾ As a matter of fact, considering the low income of most people, even building or buying shanty-town shacks is a costly business, taking between 15,000 and 40,000 UM. Speculation is rampant everywhere, in the squatter areas, in the areas of traditional housing, and in the modern residential areas. Beyond the more or less scandalous aspects of particular deals - government loans misdirected into real estate speculation, the use of fronts to grab land plots for speculative ends, etc. - this situation reveals the direction in which the nation's investments are trending at the present time, and indicates how difficult it is to turn them around into productive enterprises. (In this connection, see the Report on the Development of Modes of Accumulation).

To illustrate these few points whose in-depth study would require separate study, and to lay bare the sociological and economic mechanisms at play, we shall give a few examples typical of the various possible situations:

X has lived in Nouakchott since 1971. A government bureaucrat, he has

(42) "Pasoin et ressource", in : Le Logement en Mauritanie, SOGOCIM Study, 1975

been able to turn a nice profit from a plot situated in a good section of the 5th borough. In fact, he was given a plot near a garden; this he sold to buy a better plot situated near the main commercial and transport axis. He calculated that the resale value of this plot, in its undeveloped state, would have been 400,000 UM. He has started building on the plot (part shack, part permanent), and he plans to set up an account with the Housing Bank to help complete construction. For that, he will need 600,000 UM. In the present state of the property, to which he has brought water and electricity connections at a cost of 50,000 UM, he hopes for a resale value of 1,000,000 UM.

Y is a new immigrant in Nouakchott. On his arrival he set up a business, and hired a room for 2,500 UM, water and electricity included. The rent kept going up, hitting 3,500 UM after just six months. So Y decided to pool resources with his brother and build a house. For 70,000 UM he purchased a plot in the 5th borough, when land distribution started. Gradually, with his brother's help, he built his house, taking two years to do it. Now it's finished, but he still has not been able to get water and electricity connected.

Z arrived in Nouakchott in 1974. Apart from the tent in which he still lives, he was quite destitute then, and has remained destitute till now. At first, he hired space on which to pitch his tent, but had no money to pay the rental. A relative let him use a fenced-off lot for a while, but the place was then taken over for construction work was in progress. He has been there to this day. When the building is finished, he will have to move on. By then, he hopes to have found some other place to live rent-free.

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A is a long-time resident of Nouakchott. In 1971, he was living in a room in the Medina, paying 600 UM rent monthly. The rent rose steadily; by 1975, A was having to pay 1,000 UM. At that time, plots were being distributed in the 5th borough. To qualify for a plot, A bought a tent and moved into the slum area. But he has not been able to make any use of the land he thus got, and he has given up the tent for a do-it-yourself shack.

B, also a long-time Nouakchott resident, lived in a room in the Medina until 1974, paying 1,200 UM rent monthly. In 1974, he moved to the 5th borough, where he put up a shack, spending 45,000 UM to complete it. B has never applied for a plot. He thinks he does not stand a chance, because "it takes a lot of money otherwise, you're just crossed off the list."

C came to Nouakchott in 1975. In 1977, he moved to the 5th borough and built a shack there at a cost of 10,500 UM. He has put in an application for a plot of land; the application has been registered, but C has never obtained a positive response. When he first arrived he stayed with some relatives for while, but moved into a tent with his family when the family arrived.

These few examples highlight the principal aspects of the housing problem in Nouakchott: costs are high, plots and buildings are subject to speculation, squatter shacks serve as permanent dwellings for some in the slums, the ruling selective criterion is money, etc. And these examples also show how serious a problem confronts the poorest immigrants who are sometimes obliged to spend between 25 % and 50 % of their income on housing.

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The housing situation is the same in the other main towns, though on a reduced scale. In Nouadhibou, which had very large slums, two plot distribution exercises were scheduled for 1976 and 1978, involving about 2,000 plots. The idea was to sell plots at very low prices. But speculation is as rife in Nouadhibou as in Nouakchott, with plots going for as much as 40,00 to 60,00 UM in the areas with traditional houses. And there is reason to fear that the plot distribution exercise is being carried on in the same speculative fashion.

Rosso is another town with a large number of squatter shacks. There, the SATARA project, designed to provide inexpensive housing for migrants, could offer a future solution. But the project is perhaps more concerned with technical solutions of the physical problems of housing than with solutions to the land tenure problems involved.

The second set of difficulties confronting migrants settling in the urban areas involves the supply of essentials. The most immediately felt difficulties have to do with the need for water in places without connections to the city's water system. Here also the hardest hit are slum dwellers, who depend on public stand-pipes or even water-tank trucks. In Nouakchott's 5th borough water is supplied through a dozen or so stand-pipes. From these points, a water distribution network has developed, with cans of water being moved around on carts. Water purchases take up a substantial chunk of budgets in these quarters, going as high as 25 % of cash expenditures. A 200-liter cask costs between 30 and 40 UM, depending on the distance; at a rate of a cask every two days - if we consider that families of 10 persons are common, not to speak of relatives and visitors, this figure, which works out at less

than 10 liters per head per day, is minimal need - we see that water expenses of 500 to 1,000 UM monthly are minimal, and some families spend as much as 2,000 UM a month.

Often the supply problem is also posed on a daily basis for migrant families some of whom have no regular resources (see below). In connection with the official handouts of low cost food rations, we find the same problems we saw at Kiffa. Pressed for cash, these destitute families have to resell some or even all their coupons for cash with which to buy food. Monopolistic traders are thus put in a position to speculate with these food supplies, hoarding them for release later at higher prices. At any rate, these food distribution exercises only take place several times a year, and are scarcely adequate to meet the needs of families which have to feed numerous visitors, relatives and neighbors. Most of the distribution is still channeled through private trade outlets, especially by the dense network of small shops doing business in the most remote slum areas.

In the Report on the Evolution of Modes of Accumulation we shall provide a more detailed description of the urban commercial system, whose organization still preserves the principal features of the colonial commercial system, viz.: near monopolistic control by the Moors, kin-group and tribal networks, hierarchical control by the big traders, decentralized sales outlets, large-scale use of credit, etc. The hold exercised by this system is even stronger in the city than in the rural areas, since in the city all needs are reduced to the common denominator of the cash nexus. Indebtedness reaches large sums. Interviews conducted in Nouakchott yielded average debt figures amounting

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to a month's or six weeks' income; people needed several months to settle their debts. Apparently, too, credit has been getting tighter these last few years, because traders, especially owners of small shops, are no longer so willing to tie up an increasing proportion of their capital in this way. Rather paradoxically, though, the economic and social power of these also grows as a result of this credit situation, and their ascendancy has become increasingly more definite. We found many instances of their involvement in the people's affairs, including everyday family life, marriage and education. All this in addition to their involvement in the patron-client economic and social power network we have already discussed. They are especially active in land and real estate deals aimed at controlling landed property. But they are not above profiteering from the food trade either, among other interests.

Outside Nouakchott the consumer is confronted with difficulties beyond those inherent in the organization of the trading system. A number of factors make the supply of commodities to other towns irregular, or make these towns dependent for their supplies on droppings from parallel trade routes, such as the road to Senegal in the River Valley area, or the road to Dakhla and the former Spanish Sahara in the northern region, before the war broke out. These factors include the increasing centralization of the import trade in Nouakchott, transportation difficulties (these may be genuine or illusory, since speculators find artificial transportation difficulties a useful device for raising prices), and the speculative trend in big-time trading, which instigates traders to abandon sectors yielding low profits,

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especially the subsistence commodity sector.

Thus, even though Nouadhibou happens to be a seaport with good external connections, that town's commercial networks were not functioning very well. The fact that it was necessary to import goods through Nouakchott, the inability of local traders to get together and coordinate regular supplies, and their refusal to handle such low-profit-margin commodities as subsistence foodstuffs all resulted in very steep prices on the consumer market.

Quite unequivocally, the way the urban consumer market is organized perpetuates the "double dependency" situation inherited from the colonial era. The speculative manipulation of trade, indebtedness, irregular supply patterns all perpetuate the consumer's dependency status vis-à-vis the market. We have already seen that this situation played an important part in the proletarianization process which resulted in a measure of job stabilization and the creation of a working class in the industrial centers. It was from the same source that the first collective attempts to deal with the situation of consumer dependency originated. In Nouadhibou, where inflation was particularly vicious, affecting local commodities just as much as imported products, with the price of a sheep for instance going as high as 5,000 UM the militancy of wage earners evidenced during the 1968-1973 disturbances made it possible to set up more or less spontaneous consumer cooperatives. SNIM workers asked the government to institute price controls. They also formed a cooperative which bought commodities directly from the national import-export corporation, SONIMEX, thus bypassing the middlemen who formerly controlled that business and put a 10 % markup on the prices. To

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Table 26

URBAN SALARY LEVELS : Aggregate Figures							
Salary in UM	Nouakchott	Nouadhibou	Rosso	Atar	Aleg	Kaedi	All towns
3,000	23.0 %	6.0 %	18.0%	21.0 %	45.5 %	34.0 %	22.5 %
4,000	36.5 %	12.0 %	31.0 %	36.5 %	57.0 %	55.5 %	35.5 %
5,000	45.0 %	16.5 %	36.0%	52.0 %	63.0 %	63.5 %	43.5 %
6,000	55.0 %	23.0 %	47.5%	59.5 %	75.0 %	75.5 %	53.0 %
7,000	64.5 %	31.0 %	57.0%	67.0 %	79.5 %	83.5 %	61.5 %
8,000	71.5 %	42.0 %	62.0%	74.0 %	85.5 %	88.5 %	68.6 %
10,000	81.0 %	54.0 %	74.5%	81.0 %	90.0 %	94.5 %	78.0 %
12,000	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0%	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %
Households	24,543		2,994	2,968	1,166	3,791	54,419
Median Incomes	5,499.5	8,666	6,292	4,855	3,477	3,473	5,788
Source : SOGOCIM, Study, 1975							

find jobs as day laborers or dockers. As a matter of fact, the evidence of our interviews indicates that for the category of unqualified migrants getting a job depended on extrinsic factors such as one's former social status, tribal, kin-group, village, ethnic connections, even membership of a religious brotherhood, etc. It was not simply a matter of the migrants thinking subjectively that the play of these factors was indispensable to getting a job; our conclusion, based on evidence from selective interviews, indicates that these factors objectively do work.

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capitalize their cooperative, the workers raised 30 million UM. In this instance opposition to the traditional commercial structures became more combatively militant.

It is a notable fact that all the difficulties migrants face in the urban areas boil down to money problems. In the urban environment market relationships and the cash nexus dominate all sectors of social life, including the mechanisms of social redistribution which, at first glance, may seem to operate independently of these market relationships. To pay rent, and to pay for water, food, etc, the migrant needs cash. The crucial problem he faces is the problem of finding money to meet his needs. How does he fare in this regard ?

Right off, we can point out two facts : first the number of jobs available in town is limited (see Section 2.2.); secondly, wage levels are generally low in relation to the kind of expenditure figures cited above, with rent running as high as 1,000 to 2,000 UM, water costing 500 to 1,000 UM, etc.

In 1975, then, average pay levels were very low, except in Nouadhibou, where SNIM wages were higher, and in general people could barely make ends meet on what they earned. If we remember, in addition, that on the average each salary supported ten people, we get a good idea of the extremely low living standards of Nouakchott's migrants.

Now for the generality of migrants, in other words for those without some minimum job qualification, getting a job was more the exception than the rule. Young men were in a relatively advantageous position : they could

Apart from the wage sector, the urban environment makes available a number of income opportunities which supplement migrant earnings. Using categories established by other scholars, we shall make a distinction between two non-structured sectors : the modern and the traditional.

- The "non-structured" modern sector⁽⁴³⁾ : This comprises all the independent jobs connected with the trading and modern artisan sectors. Nouakchott's February 1977 census counted 3,000 traders and craftsmen, who in turn were employers of a total of 1,500 people. The corresponding figure on the national level could be 10,000 jobs. It is not our intention to present a new quantitative estimate; what we aim to do is to gauge the social importance of this sector. First, we must note that this sector gives even greater latitude to social relationships in the search for jobs than does the modern wage sector, especially since quite often the trade and craft enterprises in question got their own start on the basis of just such social networks. In the matter of hiring, this sector is more flexible than the modern wage sector. It is also much more open, only a modest amount of capital sufficing to gain entry. Evidence from the 1977 survey shows that nearly 55 % of these small scale entrepreneurs come from the rural areas. Finally, earnings in this sector are generally superior to those available in the modern wage sector. We speak here of that category of entrepreneurs possessing a capital of between 10,000 and 50,000 UM, or carrying between 2,700 and 4,600 UM weekly. Even the pay levels of employees in this sector are quite comparable to that of workers in the modern wage sector.

(43) Nihan and Jourdain, 1978.

- The "non-structured" traditional sector : Animal husbandry practiced in an urban environment does not amount to a serious job, admittedly; but it can still bring in some income. Such income is difficult to quantify precisely. If we may abstract from the type of market-oriented animal husbandry carried on by certain elite groups (namely, bureaucratic big shots and major traders), only a few animals are involved, usually small livestock at that, though herds may be found close to Nouakchott. One such example cropped up in the interviews : a herd of two camels and a dozen goats looked after by a paid shepherd near the wharf; in addition to his wages, he could use the animals' milk when the owners were not around to consume it themselves. Most often, however, this urban type of animal husbandry is a modest affair involving two or three sheep and goats raised near the compound, so the owners may get a bit of milk from them, and also have animals ready for the slaughter when religious festivals come round.

Urban market gardening represents another source of income. In Zouerate, we studied a market gardening zone irrigated with sewage water from the town. In 1970, there were 81 garden plots, 50 % of them worked either by the owner or by a slave. Income from these plots was low, but that was because the gardens were small: prices for produce were quite high at the time.

Similarly, Nouakchott has had a truck farming zone since 1965, covering a dozen or so hectares. According to Pitte, most of the plots belong to wealthy Moors, but are worked on by servants or sharecroppers.

We have just made a rapid inventory of income sources available to migrants in Nouakchott and the key urban centers. For most migrants, however,

the problem is how to survive without having access to these jobs. The way we see it, the question as to how these migrants without resources survive, how they meet their basic cash needs, remains moot. Clearly, for the most part they depend on economic and social redistribution networks, whether these are institutionalized or not. (As we shall see, such institutionalization is more the rule among black Africans than among Moors). This redistribution takes place within a context of kin-group, tribal, village-based, regional or ethnic relationships, etc. It is practically impossible to evaluate it within the reference frame of quantitative surveys, because the redistribution system takes forms very flexibly adjusted to ad hoc exigencies. A migrant may receive a meal gratis, for example, or draw water from someone else's faucet, or receive a cash handout during a religious festival, etc. We shall not attempt a precise description. But one point seems important to us : the contradiction between people's subjective perceptions of these redistribution phenomena in which they are involved, and the way these phenomena actually work in reality :

- On one hand, this social redistribution is understood in terms of kin-group, tribal, village-based or ethnic solidarity. In the final analysis it is understood as a consequence of adherence to Islam, of the sharing of common religious and ethnic values.

- On the other hand, as we have repeatedly pointed out, these social redistribution networks are patron-client networks dependent ultimately on political or economic power.

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We may therefore conclude that these redistribution practices function as ideological veils behind which phenomena of economic and social differentiation lie hidden. This is not to say that they are not effective purely as redistribution mechanisms; they certainly are, and it would be impossible to explain the survival of so many migrants in Nouakchott and other principal towns without taking them into account.

Continuing our general analysis of urban living conditions, we will now examine these conditions in different social and ethnic contexts.

4.2. Migration and Urbanization among Moors

Among the Moors, the key group, as far as integration into the urban milieu is concerned, is the family group. This follows from the fact that migrations among Moors are by nature family affairs, entailing a definite move on the part of the nomadic family, which thus breaks its spatial links with the original environment. Even in those cases where migrations happen to be individual, most often the young migrant is welcomed in town by relatives living there in family groups. This does not imply the total absence of collective structures aimed at helping migrants get settled in town.

In Zouerate, where ethnic and even regional homogeneity were strong factors, in 1970, there were a number of tribal funds known as Kas Lawha. The tribes concerned were the most populous in Zouerate, mainly from the Adrar and Tiris areas. What was involved was a traditional tribal institution; formerly under the direction of the village assembly, its purpose was the management of collective expenditure for wells, payments, festivals, the reception

of important visitors, etc. These were relatively informal associations, and did not have among the Moors the well defined status of similar institutions among black Africans. The treasurer was appointed by the council of family elders in Zouerate. Contributions to the fund varied according to need and circumstance. Subscriptions were used for aiding accident victims, bereaved families, individuals sentenced to pay a fine, sick people et al. A residual purpose was to use the fund "in connection with any objective related to the tribe's honor". This might mean receptions for griots, marabouts, or other dignitaries. In all cases, the tribal assembly controls the use of the fund. The money is collected by three or four representatives, who fix the amount each member is required to pay (about 1,000 F CFA at the time of the study). In the main tribal groups the total collected could be as high as 500,000 F CFA, especially on extraordinary occasions. In Zouerate, for instance, a sum of 680,000 F CFA was collected for the reception of the griot Sidati.

Outside Zouerate, the Kas Lawha institution became less and less effective in the ensuing years, and eventually fell apart altogether, to all intents. In Nouadhibou, the practice was rather poorly structured, and rarely operative.

On the other hand, other collective structures resembling tontine - type revolving funds developed : several people would band together to put up monthly contributions of 1,000 to 2,000 F CFA each. Every month lots would be drawn to decide which contributor would get the total collected. In this case then, the association was a voluntary type, transcending kin-group

or tribal categories, and designed to aid personal savings efforts.

In Nouakchott, formal tribal associations were relatively scarce, apart from such institutions as the Wadane Residents' Fund, fed by regular contributions. Most often, there were associations of a few dozen individuals contributing modest sums to help the neediest, the sick, et al. This is not to say that tribal or kin-group networks were ineffective. They were simply much more likely to be organized on patron-client lines and were built around important individuals. For this reason, they did not fit in with the formally democratic organization of the tribal associations.

Among the Haratine, such associations seemed somewhat better structured, even though they rarely attained great size. In Zouerate and Nouadhibou, especially, the Haratine often lived in collective homes rather similar to those of the Soninke : a group of young men from the same place would get together on a basis more local than tribal, such as the fact that they came from the same Adabay or the same farming areas. Such associations seem to have been few in Nouakchott. By contrast, one often came across "Funds" to which members of the same tribe coming from the same region contributed, with the sums collected being used to aid the neediest.

Contrary to what we find among the Toucouleurs or the Soninke, association-type structures do not play a determining role in the urban adjustment of migrants. The family group is the one social group essential for ensuring the integration of migrants into the urban environment. This does not imply that the urban Moorish family is identical with the nomadic, pastoralist Moorish family. The Moorish urban family has lost many of its characteristics

as a group collectively organized to accomplish the different tasks of pastoral life. The pastoralist life was the context for the old division of labor within the family group, which was itself the owner of the livestock herd. Within the family relationships have become extensively individualized, even though the family continues to provide solidarity support largely transcending the nuclear family's limits. In Zouerate and Nouadhibou, the nuclear family was clearly the nucleus of most residential groups, but very often it was supplemented with other relatives.

The relative weakening of social ties within the family shows first of all in relationships between the sexes. The divorce rate in Moorish society has always been high, but in both Zouerate and Nouadhibou, at the time of the study, it was on the rise. But more significant than the absolute increase in the number of divorces was the change in the status of divorced women. In Zouerate, almost 25 % of women between 30 and 40 years old were divorced and living by themselves. For women above 40 years old, this figure was almost 50 %. Marital instability accentuated family instability, and instances of broken families were frequent. Living conditions were often very harsh for these women living alone with their children. In a general manner, women are moving in the direction of greater autonomy in the urban areas. True, there always was a degree of autonomy for women in the pastoralist environment. In families without dependents to work for them, the imperatives of pastoralist work very often gave women the responsibility of independently managing the home or even the settlement. In the urban areas, working women are a common sight, and in Nouadhibou, female employment is a tradition of long standing. Some women manage trading enterprises either directly or by using

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fronts. Admittedly, there may be countervailing tendencies, such as religious and ethnic values which may experience a resurgence in the current crisis. It is not only government policy that encourages these values; it seems that currently they are also being reinvigorated within Moorish circles in the urban areas. Thus, the divorce rate seems to be going down now, relatively speaking. We shall see the same development in relation with marriage per se.

The individualization of social relationships within the family also involves relationships between generations. This crisis of patriarchal authority was already visible in the phenomenon of the maverick tenusu the young Moors setting off for the urban areas. A number of factors have acted with great effectiveness as solvents on inter-generational bonds : the large number of divorces, the dispersion of families, geographical mobility, etc. A significant index is the very steep drop in the age at which men get married. Formerly, that is, in the pastoralist milieu, this was around 30 years of age, because marriage then required marshalling of property and social resources, and it was the father who controlled them. Now, men marry around 20 years of age, and increasingly, marriage is becoming an act of individual choice.

All this makes it the more remarkable that matrimonial strategies endure and marriages continue to play an important part in the lives of urban Moors. Data on matrimonial choices in several Adrar tribes available to us (family trees, complete sets of marriage records now under study), provide evidence of great stability in marital choices and customs. Of course, there are more people marrying outside the tribe, and fewer people are marrying close relatives; but matrimonial structures seem to have preserved the functions they

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had in the old nomadic pastoralist society. To us this seems to indicate that matrimonial strategies continue to play certain roles in urban Moorish society, roles connected with social integration, and with the acquisition as well as the maintenance of power. Perhaps there lies the decisive factor determining the importance of the domestic group in Moorish society, and the reason why it has remained adaptable under the new conditions of the urban environment.

However, the penetration of market relationships and the cash nexus manifests itself clearly at this level in the inflation of dowries and the rise of other expenses connected with marriage ceremonies. The large-scale circulation of wealth on such occasions, together with conspicuous expenditure for purposes of showing off, reflect the fact that new hierarchies, based on economic power and capable under certain circumstances of transcending the traditional hierarchy, are in the process of being established. That is probably why the strongest trend toward ethnic exogamy involves Moorish women. Similarly, it is possible for people of different traditional ranks to get married.

The importance of matrimonial strategies and the social desire to maintain certain traditional "rules of the matrimonial game" now threatened by these new hierarchies as well as by the economic and social conditions of urban life, can become evident in spectacular ways. Thus, for example, among the Kunta tribe of the Tagant area, the assembly of elders recently decided to bring the dowry payment down to a mere 2,000 UM in endogamous tribal marriages in order to preserve the prestige and the reputation of the group (darja)

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and to prevent the weakening of the tribe. (As a matter of fact, the tribal assembly stepping in to define a tribe's matrimonial policy is no new phenomenon). From the time this decision was taken, that is, from 1978, there have been 97 endogamous marriages in the tribe. Before the decision, there were only 10 or 11 such marriages per year.

So the family group continues playing a number of old roles and assumes new ones even while more or less changing character on account of the individualization of relationships within it. Other types of social relationships have evolved according to the same pattern, master-slave relationships being an example.

The old slave groups, the Abid and Haratine, have quickly found themselves in an underdog position in the urban environment, just as they were in the rural home areas. This is due to their economic impoverishment, their low level of education, and also their lack of direct access to the levers of economic and political power. It may not happen very often now that a former master directly takes the wages of those of his former Abid or Haratine who have jobs; but there still is a certain amount of hierarchic appropriation, and it is especially true that many of the former underclasses have been integrated into urban life as domestic servants working for Bizani families. In that capacity, they are poorly paid, and a lot of the old social slave stigma still sticks to them.

With the coming of the drought social ties in the rural areas were loosened, and the Abid and Haratine even began to challenge the authority of their former masters to a certain extent, especially with regard to land

tenure; simultaneously, in the urban areas, these underclasses began to put forward specific demands. These demands fit in much more neatly within the current social and political structures of Mauritania, and appear to manifest the desire of the underprivileged to gain more direct access to the favors of power, to control their own power network instead of being a subsidiary part of those networks controlled by Bizani Moors. At the core of their demands are education and access to administrative and political jobs - their main hope for advancement.

We shall not harp on the reorganization of urban Moorish society, nor on the rise of new mercantile groups. These points will be dealt with at greater length in a separate report. But we would like to emphasize, in conclusion, the fact that the perpetuation of old family or tribal structures is only meaningful to the extent that it helps establish and reproduce the new hierarchies we have touched on.

For the rest, we need to add a few brief words on the evolution of Moorish religious life in the urban environment. Two facts strike us as important: for good reasons, Moorish Islam is much less urban than the variety of Islam we find in the Maghreb, for instance. Of course, attendance at mosques in Nouakchott has clearly been rising on account of their siting in the city's outlying quarters. But even so, the mosques here have not become the centers of social life ... which they definitely are in the Maghreb cities.

In the same vein, the brotherhood movement in Islam whose central importance in Moorish Islam we have already pointed out, does not seem to us to have become really urbanized, except in Senegal where it is strongly established in

the urban areas. The principal Sheikhs of course go on numerous trips into the towns to visit their disciples, but as a rule they do not settle in town. Thus, only two Sheikhs live permanently in Nouakchott : for the Qadiriyya movement, which seems better adapted to urban life, as its establishment in Senegal indicates, there is Sheikh Aba ul Shaykh Talab Khyar of the great Fadeliyya brotherhood; while for the Tijaniyya movement there is Sheikh Muhammed el Mukthar ul Maruf. This only makes it all the more intriguing to note that at least one of them has adjusted brotherhood mores to urban conditions in a remarkable style, in the sense that his disciples are often paid employees. He has developed an efficient proselytizing movement among the youth, whom he considers disillusioned and disenchanted with Islam. And in his approach to the evolution of customs and religious practices, he shows a great deal of flexibility.

4.3. Migration and Urbanization among Black African Population Groups

4.3.1. In the New Urban Centers

We shall focus mainly on the largest group of migrants, the Toucouleurs. Beyond that, we shall mainly examine migration and urbanization among the Soninke within the context of international migratory movements, where they mainly belong.

As we have noted, Toucouleurs migrations have increasingly come to involve families. Still, the specific organization of individual migrations into urban areas remains important to the extent that they play a major part in

in structuring the Toucouleur urban environment, where they set up those networks of ethnic solidarity which provide a framework for family migrations. We shall therefore look at them first.

In Nouakchott and Nouadhibou, as formerly in Dakar, migrants often had collective habitation arrangements. These took the specific form called the sudu : a group dwelling containing people from one village or region, all bachelors or married men living in town without their wives. Daily life, including rent payment, cooking and the upkeep of the unemployed, is organized collectively. In Nouadhibou, 20 % to 25 % of the tenements are occupied by such groups, and some contain as many as 15 or 20 people. In Zouerate, where there are fewer Toucouleur migrants, taking up about 5 % of the tenements, there is sometimes collective savings organization of the "tontine" type running parallel to the collective household arrangements : everyone in the group contributes a monthly sum, and every month the total collected is given to one member.

Certainly, with steady urban growth and the development of family migrations, the Sudu is disappearing. In Nouakchott, for instance, housing difficulties can result in one sudu being split up between several buildings. Also, the way the ethnic milieu and patron-client power networks operate, quite often a sudu is not, as A.B. Diop points out, an ethnocentric hyper-tribalist group. But it is very important because it is a response to problems of adaptation to the urban environment, and also because it signals new conditions of organization of the village and the antagonisms of the regional matrix society. The sudu is a microcosmic expression of the nature of Toucouleur

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migration and urbanization : the building of new social structures on the basis of village, regional and ethnic bonds, in order to ensure urban integration and the acquisition of power in the urban environment.

Similarly important are the voluntary associations proliferating on the urban scene. We examined them in detail in Zouerate and Nouadhibou; here we shall summarize our findings. The most common were mutual aid societies, sometimes organized around the sudu. In Nouadhibou, these groups were always organized in practically the same fashion : a Chairman to keep tabs on the society's books and organize activities, a treasurer to take care of funds. All members from the village or region were eligible on payment of a 500 F CFA membership fee and a monthly subscription, also 500 F CFA at the time. The money went to a social security fund which could reach quite a large amount. It was designed to aid needy members, accident victims or the sick, as well as to provide cash for repatriating families in case of a breadwinner's death, etc. Furthermore, in Nouadhibou, there was a special fund for helping unemployed migrants, into which unmarried workers paid 600 F CFA while married workers paid 300 F CFA. When it was necessary to make contingency expenditures, as for a visit from a marabout or a griot, a special subscription was levied.

Regional funds such as for Lao, Toro and Bossea kept substantial current accounts in Nouadhibou, with between 100,000 and 150,000 F CFA in them. Parallel to these mutual aid funds there were funds for the maintenance of the mosque. Subscriptions were collected every Friday by some official or other well-regarded person. Dues amounted to between 50 and 100 F CFA per head, and the amounts collected were there and then given to the relevant mosque officials.

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These associations were not mere carbon copies drawn from village or local collective life any more than the sudu. They were new structures going beyond the schisms and antagonisms of traditional local life, and serving as support points for the restructuring and reproduction of the ethnic milieu, for the emergence of solidarity bonds conducive to urban integration. As we saw with regard to Moorish migrants, movements, these solidarity bonds do not preclude the establishment of hierarchical patron-client networks which form an aspect of economic organization and a component of the political system. Among other black African groups we find similar social forms. Thus, at Zouerate, the "Senegalese Mutual Aid Society" brought Wolof workers together around reciprocal goals, while the "Senegalese union" brought together other Senegalese with the more specific aims of organizing receptions or getting ready for the 'Id el Mallud festival. The association took different forms according to differences in the urban environment, characteristics of the ethnic groups involved and circumstances under which they migrated.

And then also, Toucouleur migration have been trending increasingly toward family-type movements, especially in such a city as Nouakchott, where between 25 % and 33 % of migrants have settled permanently. This kind of settlement does not seem to have brought about such significant modifications in family structures as among the Moors. The coherence of the ethnic milieu and the pressure it exerted on migrants worked toward the preservation of sexual and generational status levels and roles. This was all the more obvious since Toucouleur family structure gave an increasingly important role to the nuclear family. Nevertheless, we find the same inflation of marriage-related expenses, for example in connection with the distribution of cloth gifts at the time

of marriage. Furthermore, the fact that the urban milieu is an expanded milieu means an inflation in this distribution of property, because now people beyond kin groups have to be included. Other social events also provide opportunities to reactivate these social networks that are thus expanded because of the urban environment. Among Toucouleurs for instance, burials have acquired an increasing importance as occasions for bringing together relatives - defined in most generous terms - and patro-client connections. Among the Soninke, Tabaski celebrations are also occasions for large gatherings and reciprocal visits.

The restructuring of the ethnic milieu in urban areas also entails the transfer of some traditional activities into town, where they assume novel dimensions. This, for example, is the case of traditional wrestling matches; these are organized on a regional basis, but increasingly now they are becoming a show-business phenomenon, and have been drawn into the context of national or even international competitions.

The religious aspect of this process of ethnic restructuring is important among black African groups. In Zouerate and Nouadhibou, it was more pronounced among the Wolofs than among the Toucouleurs : Mouride and Tijaniya brotherhoods were organized on a local level with regular collections and remittances to the marabouts. Among the Toucouleurs, we find no such precise organization; most often, their activities are organized around the local or village mosque. It is as if the Wolofs use the religious dimension to achieve the same kind of restructuring of social relationships which the Toucouleurs accomplish through the instrumentality of ethnic relationships.

No doubt, the difference springs from the more recent character of migration and urbanization, as well as from the fact that rural Wolof society, more deeply involved in peanut production, has been more radically transformed.

4.3.2. In the Old River "Ports"

Urbanization conditions in the towns along the Senegal River appear somewhat different. Here, the urban function started earlier, sometimes as early as the start of the colonial era, without the population necessarily abandoning its rural occupations. The concentration of people was encouraged by the concentrated presence of good walo soil, and the urban function is linked with the commercial and navigational functions of the river.

The towns often have old origins; and, like many of the valley's villages, they have a relatively homogenous composition, with one dominant group on the local scene. In Kaedi, that group was the Toucouleurs, but after the French took over, the Soninke succeeded in gaining autonomy first, then political ascendancy, by dint of astute politicking.

At the time of the MISOES study at the end of the 1950's, only Kaedi, with an estimated population of 7,500, had urban pretensions of any credibility. (Rosso was not included in the sample). Currently, these towns have grown, but only moderately. In 1961, the Mauritanian towns along the Senegal River accounted for 31 % of the urban population (22,612 people); now the total number is 51,364, which is only 16.9 % of the urban population. This figure also includes Rosso, the fast-growing sedentarization point for the Trarza

area after the drought.

Toucouleurs were often in the majority; in Boghe, they were 81 % during the MISOES study, and in Kaedi, they were 51 %. Everywhere, the Moors were an important minority, 11 % in Kaedi, 7,5 % in Boghe, figures approximately indicative of the size of the commercial element among the active population. Among this active population, almost 50 % carried on some such traditional occupations as fishing, animal husbandry or agriculture.

In Kaedi just as in Boghe, outside the local population nucleus, a quarter has grown which owes its origin to runaway slaves or outcast elements. In Kaedi, the quarter is known as Jerida; in Boghe, it is called Liberté - names signifying origins. The population in these quarters is very mixed, with a strong Haratin presence. This is important because what we have here is an instance of first contacts between Haratin and black Africans. On a small scale, these quarters have become places where the Abid and Haratine, are in a position to examine and challenge their traditional status. The founder of the Jerida quarter settled there around 1940, on a plot entrusted to him by a Soninke family. Similarly, the Soninke village chief at Kaedi allowed a few Haratin to settle there. Before then, the Haratine made their homes near the Soninke in the Soninke quarter of Gataga, where they worked mainly as butchers. They were joined by dozens of other migrants, mostly Haratine fleeing first Bizani oppression, then the drought. The quarter grew rapidly. When plots were first distributed, in 1956, there were 18 families. By 1958, there were 36; at the moment, there are 585 compounds, all but 40 or 50 inhabited by Haratin. The rise in population has motivated the old landlords to demand land rent

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or title to the land. Since 1977, the question has been held in abeyance. People living in the quarter are extremely poor, depending on a bit of farming on dieri land, and mostly doing odd jobs in town, hauling wood, selling coal, working as butchers, doing manual labor, etc.

The quarter called Liberté in Boghe dates back to 1920. It was meant as a reception center for runaway slaves. People in this quarter are better integrated into urban life, and there are fewer Haratine among them, settling there mostly after the drought.

This old situation has encouraged a kind of ethnic contact or mixing which is not prevalent elsewhere. The MISOES study, for instance, found that there was a higher rate of ethnic exogamy in the river "ports", involving mostly Moorish women marrying men from other ethnic groups.

The Toucculeur-type restructuring of ethnic society that might be expected to result from migration and urbanization has not materialized here. Quite the contrary has happened, with schisms and internal hierarchies coming up stronger in the urban areas than in the villages, on account of the attitude of landowners in Kaedi. Conflicts are frequent. The fact that proto-cooperative societies have been set up among the fisherfolk and weavers at Boghe, the former oriented toward sales, is evidence that the same associational capabilities exist; but there, the associations have a very precise social or professional base, and in no instance do they exercise the same functions as those we have already studied.

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5. International Migrations

So far we have mainly dealt with migratory movements within Mauritania's national space, though at times it has not been easy to differentiate such movements from older, regional migrations in the border areas oriented toward Senegal and Mali. Mauritania also has large-scale migratory movements which reach outside the nation, even going beyond Africa in the last twenty years, into Europe.

5.1. Migrations into other Parts of Africa

Migrations into other parts of Africa have been going on for a long time. We have already discussed the origins and development of the Moorish diaspora (Section 1.3.), and of the Toucouleur and Soninke labor migrations into Senegal, which underwent more radical economic changes in the colonial era and thus became a pole of attraction on the regional level (Section 1.4.). Mauritania's migratory movements are still principally oriented toward Senegal, or to put it more accurately, the Senegambia area. Frontiers are relatively porous, with identical peoples living on both sides of them, sometimes even maintaining very close social ties. As a result, these migratory movements have maintained a very noticeable regional character. Naturalizations are quite common across the different frontiers, and even double nationalities are not unheard of. Nevertheless, divergences in political and economic choices made by the two countries have been driving the left and the right banks of the river farther and farther apart; we have consequently opted to classify these migrations as international migrations at

the present time. There is no argument at all about such a classification in the case of migrations into other African countries. After all, in those other countries Mauritanian migrants have frequently been confronted with the choice - and attendant vicissitudes - of national options. Such dilemmas have led to deportations in the Congo, incidents in the Ivory Coast, etc ...

5.1.1. The Moorish Diaspora : Current Evolution

Two reasons make a quantitative evaluation difficult : first, census statistics are not available; secondly, the population under study is exceedingly fluid, and maintains extremely close links with Mauritania. The bulk of Mauritania's migrants are in Senegal; there, as we have seen, they were estimated in the early 1970's to number 50,000. Some migrants have also been in the Gambia for a very long time.⁽⁴⁴⁾

So, there were probably several thousands involved. Migrant numbers are much lower in other African countries except perhaps in the Ivory Coast, where there might also be several thousand Moors. In the case of Mali, the issue is much more complex, since in that country Moorish migratory movements have been much less specific as to the usual functions (namely trade), and cannot be separated from pastoralist or agro-pastoralist population movements sometimes going back a long time indeed, as in the instance of the Kuntas settling in the Azawad area. Periods of drought and food shortage like the one that began in the early 1970's can cause a recrudescence of southward migration movements on the part of herdsmen, leading eventually to fresh instances of settlement.

(44) Dubis (1953) indicates that in 1934 there were 200 Moorish shops in Bathurst (now Banjul).

Essentially, the Moorish diaspora remains commercial. In Senegal, according to Santoir's 1975 study on Moorish migration in the valley, 90 % of the Bizani and 84 % of the Haratine were involved in trade or earned their living from occupations linked with trade. Here, as in Mauritania, the whole range of trading activities is represented, but the overwhelming bulk is concentrated in the area of small-scale retail trading. In some quarters of Dakar the Moors practically have a monopoly of this kind of trade. Big traders are few. Mostly, they come from Adrar, Brakna or the Hodh area, and have been in Dakar for a long time. Often, they accumulated their trading capital by dealing in livestock. They import sundry products such as tea, sugar and cloth, in great retail demand. In effect, as in Mauritania, they control the retail distribution networks involving Moorish petty traders to whom they advance goods on credit. Before the breakup of the Senegal-Mauritania customs union and the creation of Mauritania's currency, the Ouguiya, their trade networks covered both Mauritania and Senegal. Manipulating demand and supply in different product lines, they made a double profit. For example, they could buy livestock in Mauritania, sell it in Senegal, use the cash to buy merchandise in Senegal, then go and resell this also in Mauritania. The old networks still survive, but the traders are increasingly obliged to concentrate on the Senegalese market. There, they run into competition from Syrian and Lebanese traders, though their lines do not exactly overlap, or from Senegalese traders, who enjoy privileged treatment in the handling of foodstuffs.

Almost all migrant Moors are petty traders. The scope of activities is small; for example, initial capital invested in trading business in Pikine

around 1970 averaged between 25,000 and 100,000 F CFA.⁽⁴⁵⁾ The money is raised either in the form of loans from relatives, fellow tribespeople, or wealthy traders; it may also be accumulated from money earned working on the docks, in the case of Haratine. Many of these shopkeepers are Bizani or Haratine Moors from Trarza, who often have a long experience of migration into Senegal. This experience is reflected in the establishment of tribal networks with a regional extension right into Senegal itself. In his study of the distribution of Moorish shopkeepers in R'Kiz, Santoir (1973) notes that the Idawali make up more than 60 % of the Moorish population in Dakar, while the Tadjakanet are most numerous in Kaolack and the Sine Saloum region, the Idabelhassan in Kaolack and Saint-Louis, etc ... The great asset of this kind of commerce is its financial organization; this is such as to cushion it against instabilities of the market place or of any other type. A trading organization adapted to the needs of poor customers, it depends heavily on credit (the opinion is that debt collection is harder in Senegal than in Mauritania, though), and does not hesitate to impose very high interest rates and prices.

The livestock trade also remains an important occupation for Moors in Senegal, involving mainly traders from the Hodh region. Here again, the entire livestock trading system is based on credit. The trader collects the livestock, often on credit, hires a shepherd who travels on foot with the animals, and meets the trader shortly before reaching the market. From Aioun the trip may take 50 to 60 days since the animals have to be driven slowly, pasturing

(45) John-Lambert, Le Commerce à Pikine, M.A. Thesis, University of Nanterre, 1971.

on the way. Each shepherd may handle between 200 and 300 sheep. Currently, the animals are often transported in trucks from the moment they reach Senegal. Dakar is the key center. The market is extremely fickle, so that sheep of identical quality may vary in price between 10,000 and 25,000 F CFA, the average falling between 10,000 and 12,500 F CFA. When prices drop too low, livestock is kept waiting on nearby pastures pending a price upswing. On arrival the animals are often bought by brokers, working as a rule in cahoots with the same traders, they pay them part of the total in cash. The traders then buy goods for resale in Mauritania, the proceeds enabling them to pay the herdsmen. This credit system comes into play again when the beasts are sold, often to Moorish butchers, and usually Haratine, who pay after selling the meat.

This complex credit system is often cited as a cause of sedentarization among the Moors of Pikine, the great livestock market in Dakar. To recover bit by bit the credit they advance, traders, especially the petty traders, sometimes settle down for months even for years. With the first repayments the trader often starts a small shop, and this sedentarizes him further. From then on his life becomes a series of more or less regular trips between Senegal and Mauritania. His relatives join him, and he puts them to work in the trading business. Meanwhile, bonds with Mauritania, including economic ties, remain very strong, because the system is based on the extension of tribal and kinship networks and also on the possibility of reinvestment in the country. All those interviewed considered their stay in Senegal merely temporary. At any rate, after a while they will be able to afford to use shop assistants to manage their business while they themselves branch out into other lines in Senegal, or, even more frequently, in Mauritania.

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Still, not all Moors make their living from trade. Some of them, especially the Haratine, come to Senegal simply looking for jobs. These are mostly young, very mobile people, who sometimes still continue the old pattern of seasonal migrations. The drought has intensified the movement, and the number of Moorish laborers, carters and watersellers in Dakar and other Senegalese towns is large.

The second aspect of Moorish emigration, Islam, is just as important. In Section 1.3.1. we gave a few brief pointers as to the main Islamic currents in Senegal, emphasizing Moorish influences at their origins or in their current development. Two of the Qadiriyya movements are led directly by Moorish sheikhs. These are the Kunta in Ndyassan, north of Thies, who have a large following of Moorish and Senegalese disciples. (While we were in Senegal, the annual pilgrimage these disciples make to Ndyassan had drawn thousands, maybe even dozens of thousands of people). The Fadeliyya movement plays a pioneering role in the Casamance region. There its sheikhs have founded several communities. The movement also thrives in the rest of the country, and lots of disciples also go on pilgrimages to the tomb of the holy man Shaykh Saad Bu, between Nouakchott and Rosso.

Aside from the influence of these major sheikhs, who head large religious brotherhoods, there are also the activities of hundreds of Moorish "marabouts", which are perhaps even more relevant to this study. These marabouts often come from those tribes with the least amount of credibility in religious circles back home. But in Senegal, by virtue of their mystical, religious and magical activities, they exert a strong influence on their migrant compatriots as

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well as on Senegalese. These activities help to make Moors welcome in Senegal even where their economic functions, involving trading monopolies, usury, etc. ..., are not always appreciated.

To take just an example : X comes from the Kunta tribe. For quite a long time his life was far from holy. But after that he devoted himself to the study of the "Mystical Sciences", and gained a great influence, among the Senegalese. He is consulted in cases of insanity, illness and other personal problems, not only by people from the SICAP area where he lives, but also by people from all over Dakar. He is reclusive, receiving his clients at home. He says, somewhat in a boastful vein, that though he has lived in Senegal since 1952, he speaks not a single word of Wolof. His rising reputation enabled him to amass a fortune after 1971. He gave 3,000,000 F CFA to a Hartani to open a shop for him, which he does not personally manage. He also owns a fleet of transport vehicles. He maintains regular contacts with Mauritania, and every year at the time of the getna festival, his family goes to Rachid in the Tagant region.

Almost 25 % of Senegal's Moors live in Dakar. A study of Moorish settlement patterns in this city gives a pretty good overall picture of international Moorish migrations. Mainly, these migrations are individual, involving young adult males; the sex ratio in Dakar, for instance, is 158 men per 100 women. Often, they are bachelors (48 % of the men), under 40 years old, and they generally live alone. These data, collected during the 1955 population census, remain mostly valid. The fact that this situation has remained constant reflects the instability and mobility of Moorish migrants. The manner in which

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the commercial migrations involving most of these migrants take place is also a reason for this mobility : to acquire a shop, one has to have held a number of jobs and served one's apprenticeship as a sales assistant. Once the shops are set up, people usually hire assistants to run them so they are free to make repeated trips back to Mauritania and to get involved in other business. Those who go to Senegal not to trade but to look for employment often stay only a short time; sometimes their trips are in fact seasonal. The result is a marked degree of spatial mobility, which Vernière (1973) estimates at about 80 % for the Moors, as compared to 30 % for Toucouleur migrants. Dakar's Moorish population is particularly fluid and unstable.

This mobility is quite compatible with a measure of urban concentration. Of the Moorish migrants of the River Valley, whom Santoir (1975) studied, more than 80 % are in the four principal cities: Dakar, Kaolack, Thies and Saint-Louis. In Dakar itself, Moors are overwhelmingly concentrated in Pikine, especially around the livestock market. Dakar's Moorish population is not more than 2 % of the total, but the percentage in Pikine is between 5 % and 10 %.

The integration of Haratine, in particular the most numerous group, those from the upstream parts of the valley and from Trarza, presents special features in Senegal. Because these migratory movements and contacts have a long tradition, they have brought about a certain measure of assimilation into Wolof society in certain cases. Whatever the size of this phenomenon, the few cases of successful assimilation have been cited by the Bizani as proof that Senegal is practically exerting official pressure to get the Haratine emancipated.

Our remarks on Moorish migratory movements in other African countries will be brief, chiefly because we have neither first hand knowledge nor the benefit of other scholar's analytical work to base them on. Special attention should be paid to migrations into other Arabic-speaking countries, especially the Maghreb countries, but also the East African countries such as Sudan, where a smattering of relevant migratory movements have been brought to our attention.

5.1.2. International Migrations Among Mauritania's Black African Populations

International migrations among Mauritania's black African population groups have a very special character because they are oriented toward countries where very large identical ethnic communities exist. This makes it difficult to quantify this type of migration in any serious way. For this reason, too, we shall make no attempt to summarize all the texts devoted to this type of migration in Senegal. As far as Toucouleur migrations are concerned, we think there are two important points : first, these migrations bring into play the same urban integrative mechanisms we saw in Mauritania, in particular the key function of the restructuring of the ethnic milieu. Secondly, the fact that these migration and urbanization processes are part of a long tradition brought about large-scale settlement : right now the Toucouleurs are Dakar's second largest ethnic group.

Lericollais and Vernière have noted that currently migratory movements oriented toward Dakar are getting stabilized. A settled urban nucleus plays an important role in controlling migration, and family migrations often follow

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as prolongations of individual migrations among the young : "the men leave first, between 15 and 25 years old, then they go back to get married in the village, after which their wives join them in town."⁽⁴⁶⁾ These migrations fit into a very dense network of social and ethnic bonds which support the young migrants, often in the first place employed by an older migrant. After the years of apprenticeship and the time devoted to getting the dowry and money for other marriage connected expenditure together, success comes when a migrant is able to get a stabler job, especially if he is also able to buy a plot of land which will ensure his permanent settlement and provide shelter for his family. This step-by-step acquisition of urban property, the material and symbolic sign that the passage from migrant to settled status has been successfully negotiated, is made easier by ethnic bonds of solidarity. Vernière⁽⁴⁷⁾ has specially studied these urbanisation processes among the Toucouleurs, which themselves need to be reinterpreted in relation to Dakar's urban evolution. The massive concentration of Toucouleurs in the overcrowded Medina yielded explosive results during the "expulsion" campaigns started by the Senegalese government after 1960. The result was a massive transfer of the Toucouleur population into the new town of Dagoudane Pikine and its satellites, as well as into new squatter zones which sprang up around Pikine.

Toucouleur migrants are particularly involved in these urban transformations. In the first place this results from the fact that their economic status is really low, also on account of their being migrants, recently installed, with low qualifications etc. ... It also has to do with the collective fashion

(46) Lericollais and Vernière, 1975, p. 167.

(47) Vernière, "Campagne, ville, bidonville, banlieu; les migrations intra-urbaines vers Pikine", in : Cahiers de l'ORSTOM, Série Science Humaine X - 2.3, 1973.

in which Toucouleurs react to the situation they are confronted with. They have rapidly assumed a dominant position in these new quarters, an average of 40 % in Pikine, while during the A.B. Diop study they made up 80 % of the population of the core sections of the slum. (Now they are only 15 % there).

Their old ties with the Lebous, traditional landowners in the Cape Verde peninsular, made it easy for them to get access to land. The Lebous gave them favorable terms for the purchase of land in the squatter zone. Strong ethnic bonds took care of the rest : Toucouleur migrants at any rate always prefer plots in Toucouleur neighborhoods. But this access to property often came only at the end of a long series of shifts.

As urbanization has developed in Dakar, the Toucouleur population has also advanced economically and socially. In particular, they have gained better job qualifications. Enterprising young Toucouleurs settle in the slum areas and very quickly acquire plots of land. Admittedly, for the time being they maintain the ethnic solidarity which enables them to play an important role in Dakar's urban development in spite of being relative latecomers on the scene. Nevertheless, signs of disintegration are appearing, owing to the fact that this urbanization is recent, and is becoming definitive in Dakar. To quote Vernière : "There is no prospect of Dakar's Toucouleurs eventually returning to their old river valley homeland to farm again, even if the soil is irrigated. They are now city dwellers, working and living to the city's own rhythm, even if some of them, living near the Lebou villages, still harbor nostalgic sentiments for rural life." (1975, p. 175). Because of urban development and the positioning

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of Toucouleurs away from the central zones, ethnic solidarities have weakened somewhat. Fresh young migrants looking for jobs prefer to stay in the central zones; their ties with the older-established urban community become weaker. They are forced to hire scattered dwellings, splitting into little groups to occupy them, and this type of living arrangement is not conducive to the organization of sudu-type cooperatives.

Moreover, job opportunities have also shrunk because of the rise in urban unemployment. A.B. Diop (1958) cited an unemployment figure of 16 % among Toucouleurs. The figure is dated now. Unemployment most affects those same migrants whose living conditions have worsened, thus jeopardizing their ability to integrate into the urban environment. At any rate, they will be obliged to work out options different from those that served their predecessors.

Soninke migrations have taken an even more international direction than Toucouleur migrations. Beyond Senegal, we find substantial communities established in a number of African countries. We have already mentioned the community that grew up around Yacouba Silla after his exile in the Ivory Coast. Outside Senegal, these communities are mainly involved in commercial activities. But the way trade is organized among them is certainly different from the way it is among the Moors. Their type of commerce is often extremely speculative; sometimes, it borders on smuggling. Hence, the expulsion in the early 1970's of a Soninke community formerly settled in Zaire. There are other communities in Congo-Brazzaville, Sierra Leone, Gabon and Guinea. They specialize in fabrics as well as gold, diamonds, and foreign exchange deals. It is a chancy business, and even though some large fortunes have been made in it, it is

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always vulnerable to the vagaries of local policies. When traders of this type return home, their prestige, and sometimes their actual power, is great indeed. In Kaedi, the notorious "Committee of Eleven" which grew out of Yacouba Silla's following is important on the local political scene. They maintain close links with the Ivory Coast community, some of whose members have returned to settle in Kaedi.

The life history of a big-time Soninke trader from Guidimakha offers a good illustration of these sketchy remarks. This man set out in 1938 on foot, armed with 15,000 F he realized from sale of his livestock. He went to Bamako, where he bought cloth with this money. For two years, he shuttled between Bamako and Kankan in Guinea, trading Malian cloth for Guinean mats, which he resold in Mali. His profit margin for each trip : 400 %. In 1940, to avoid war-time conscription he moved to Sierra Leone where, during the war, he operated a smuggling hustle yielding a 1,000 % profit margin, according to him. He then settled in Guinea, and only moved from there after Independence to escape Sekou Touré's socialist experiments. He moved to Dakar after realizing his capital. He has built a large three-story house in which his family, all 33 children, live, and he carries on a fabric dyeing and sales business complete with a printing press, etc ...

Beside these trading migrations individual labor migrations into other African countries are substantial. But migrations to Dakar, the first stage on the way to France, are quite important. Migrants waiting for passage can wait a few years in Dakar. They hire rooms in groups, often from traders or migrants who made the grade. In this lot, the features of migrations toward Europe (which we

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shall describe in Section 5.2.) are duplicated on a relatively less well funded and less well organized level. Among them there are also quite a number of women.

Among the 364 immigrants from Diaguili living in Dakar,⁽⁴⁸⁾ there is even a majority of women, 52 %. Maybe this signals that desire of the migrants for autonomy whose premises we sought in the home environment; in effect, this may indicate a way the migrants have found to remove their families from the Kagumme's authority, and also to keep tighter check on the money sent home.

5.2. Migrations into Europe

Those mainly involved in migrations into Europe are the Soninke and neighboring groups from the upper Senegal River valley. Again, any quantitative evaluation turns out to be problematic. Fact is, not even the exact number of African workers is known, and estimates vary by a factor of as much as 200 %. A few years ago the most credible estimates cited 60,000 to 70,000 people, of whom between 40,000 and 50,000 were Soninke, and 10,000 Toucouleurs. But these figures were for Senegal and Mali in addition to Mauritania. If we assume that the migrant percentage is proportional to the percentage of the total population, then Mauritanian migrants might number about 10,000. As we have seen, this migration is almost restricted to men, and increasingly younger men at that. Studies conducted when migrants reach France confirm that the average age of migrants has been falling steadily. Debresson, citing data from the Seine

(48) M. Samuel, Le prolétariat africain noir en France, Maspéro, Paris, 1978.

Prefecture, ⁽⁴⁹⁾ shows that in a few years the average age at hiring dropped from 32 to 26 years old. He himself met a 12 year old migrant looking for work. Among the migrants, we ourselves met in Selibabi one who set out when he was 15 years old. This phenomenon is not only a consequence of the expansion of migrations. It also reflects the young men's situation of dependence at home : they are often detailed to replace a "big brother" returning home. Ideologically, the education of young Soninke prepares them for migration by presenting it as a test of manhood, and as a way to assert independence within the family group.

This type of migration is also almost exclusively male, besides involving mostly bachelors. (Admittedly, a few women have joined the stream). For this, an immediate reason is sometimes the continued refusal of families to permit reunion even though some wives get tired of waiting years for their husbands to come back : the wife's presence among the family back home is in effect the best guarantee that remittances will be regular. There also seems to be a degree of unwillingness on the part of the migrants themselves : they fear what might happen under the conditions of greater feminine autonomy prevalent in France.

One example related by a migrant illustrates this reticence : A man took his wife with him to France. He lived in the communal dormitory, cooking for everybody there and getting paid for it. He thus made a lot of money, which enabled him to buy a house in France for 8,000,000 F CFA. But she slept

(49) Debresson, "Le travailleur Soninke et Toucouleur dans l'Ouest Parisien", in : Cahiers Orstom, Serie Sciences Humaines, XII.2.1975-139.208

around with other men in the communal dormitory. The husband got to know, and in a fit of pique planned to have a second wife join him. The first wife would have none of this, and she sued for divorce, together with part ownership of the house they had both bought. She remarried later, in France.

We have already pointed out that the essential characteristic of these migrations is their highly structured character, especially their collective organization in the host countries. Organisational support, sponsored by a "big brother", a former migrant from the village or by trader, begins with the trip. Whoever pays for it gets paid back when the migrant finds work. One of the former migrants in Sangue, the first to leave the village in 1958, had himself sponsored seven people between 1959 and 1962. Having returned to France, after the failure of an attempt to set up a livestock business in 1969, on a ticket supplied by a friend, he himself sent a ticket to his nephew, but the nephew was officially rebuffed by French immigration authorities.

That was the first phase of the young migrant's sponsorship. He immediately went to one of those notorious communal dormitories or 'communities of misery' as Debresson calls them, which often exist in the slums, even in cellars. There, the migrant tried to settle in with his "big brother" from the village. In effect, they would look after him till he found work. They housed him, fed him, and gave him cash necessary in his search for a job.

Collective living arrangements are made easier by the set-up of these

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village nuclei, but other types of grouping may exist, some even transcending ethnic bonds.⁽⁵⁰⁾ Most often the group organizes a village-based common fund to receive fresh migrants, pay for collective boarding arrangements, provide aid to the unemployed, and also repatriate the sick or bury the dead as the need arose. There are often also funds organized on the basis of social categories. Also, within the communal dormitory, there is a division of labor. Since women are generally very scarce, it is the duty of the slaves to cook and to run numerous errands.

The collective organization, then, decidedly reproduces the social cleavages and hierarchies of the home environment. Age group hierarchies, and the aristocrat-slave pecking order exert a heavy influence on daily life. Funds are invariably controlled by aristocrats and chiefs, who entrust their management to their councillors. Gerontocratic authority is oppressively strong. Fines can be imposed in cases of insubordination. In short, life in the communal dormitories duplicates the structures of the home society and depends on these structures and the situation back in the home village for enforcement. Should any slaves prove recalcitrant, immediate pressure would be brought to bear on their families back home in the village, who are dependent for their livelihood on the landowning nobility. Any really strong bid for freedom on the part of a young migrant would result in the elders back in the village acting to delay his marriage, etc ...

(50) Ibid., p. 207

Another aspect of the collective organisation of migration is the association of people from the village in groups going beyond the limits of the dormitory and reception centers to embrace the whole migrant community. It is this association, again controlled by the nobility, which oversees the collection of dues for collective investment projects back in the village. Normal dues are rather small, but dues for special purposes can be heavy indeed. Dues of 5,000 to 15,000 UM, for instance, are quite common for the construction of mosques. In case of needs, the demand for such dues may be repeated. Resulting sums may be substantial, and problems frequently arise in connection with misappropriation either by those managing the funds at source, or by those handling it at the receiving end. This is particularly likely if traders get involved; they tend to "borrow" the money provisionally to fund their own business. (51)

The primary purpose of migrants in France is to look for jobs, and the collective hospitality arrangements made for them are designed primarily to speed them on this by no means easy quest. Untrained, often finding it difficult to be articulate in French, the migrant must wait a long time for work papers, and then he has to wait some more to get a job. The data below were collected before unemployment became rampant in France, hitting immigrant workers first of all. Debresson's study on African workers in Western Paris brings out a few of the principal features of the work scene :

(51) See Samuel, p. 200, for a description of several such cases.

- Generally the work involved is unskilled and extremely unstable, with a particularly high turnover rate. Thus, at the Renault factory, turnover rates among African workers in 1969 were as follows :

January 1969	first two weeks :	10 %
	second two weeks :	5 %
February 1969		10 %
April - May 1969		12 %
June 1969		5 %
July 1969		7 %
September 1969		5 %

85 % of the African workers stayed less than three years at the factory. Most of the time, those involved were specialized workers or laborers who gained no qualifications in the course of their stay.

- Employment is often concentrated in a few circuits maintained by already employed migrants who recommended recruits. One such principal circuit exists at the Renault enterprise, which employs over 1,000 Africans at its Boulogne-Billancourt factory; but there are others in the auto-industry in general, in laundries, urban cleaning services, etc ...

- Nevertheless, there is a relative prolongation of total time spent on the job per trip. This is linked with the fact that it is getting increasingly difficult to set aside savings. Wage levels play a fundamental role in determining the length of time migrants stay in France, because only after amassing a substantial nest-egg, of which a good part gets sent home, does the worker

decide to return home. On the average, the workers interviewed said they had spent three to four years in France; they also added that each stay was tending to get longer. (52)

Eventually, the migrant returns home. The problem of migrant returns has grown more acute, because of the increasingly severe crisis besetting African migration at the end of the 1970's. This crisis is first of all the result of miserable living conditions in France, and of the unchecked exploitation of migrants, not only at work, where their wages are the lowest, but also in their day to day lives in the notorious tenements and communal dormitories. The situation has brought about a certain awakening which became evident during the communal dormitory rent strikes as well as in the very sharp reaction to certain particularly tragic cases such as the Aubervilliers deaths. At the same time, unemployment was rising, in France, instigating a series of administrative measures such as the Fontanet, Dijoud and Stoleru bills, etc... These official moves make the migrants' reception in France more difficult, making integration and employment increasingly problematic. Instances of people being refused entry at immigration posts are increasingly frequent. Because numerous migrants are in France illegally and clandestinely, their living conditions are all the worse, and they get exploited much more mercilessly.

Admittedly, at the level of the village, migration continues to generate relatively large incomes, and it remains the aspiration of practically all the youth. But beyond the rigid straitjacket they find at the reception centers, the migrants are also experiencing profound behavioural changes. A

(52) Debresson, p. 203

large proportion of earnings goes toward individual advancement. We have cited the few success stories among former migrants. They are not legion, and the fact that the migrants' future is rather unpromising leads to a measure awakening to the oppressiveness of social cleavages and hierarchies both in France and in the home environment. This is becoming evident in the first place in a certain amount of distrust of the traditional orientations of migration. In Sangue, out of 300 migrants, 220 contributed toward the mosque fund. But a number of others refused, for what were termed "individualistic reasons". Samuel (1975) has made a special study of these modes of protest incubating within the African migrant populations.

It is to be feared, however, that any kind of evolution in the migrant picture will for the time being be frustrated by the increasingly draconian restrictions the French government has been placing on all migration. If these restrictive policies get entrenched, we shall have plenty of reasons to worry about the future of Soninke society, which is currently organized on the basis of the exportation of its labor power, especially since the society has no immediate alternative to labor migrations as a source of cash income.

6. Conclusion

We will summarize the various points covered in this study :

The mobility and movements of the various sectors of the population of Mauritania have taken on a new scope during the last few decades. Nevertheless, this mobility represents in all cases a long-established facet of their economic and social organization and there have always been significant population movements in the country.

Mobility is a fundamental characteristic of herding societies - Moors and Peulhs (nomadism and transhumance). Among the Moors, this mobility was controlled in relation to a given territory within a framework of political organization (the emirate). The decline of this political control during the colonial period led to a renewal of the traditional movement of herds-men towards the south.

The agriculture practiced in the southern part of the country was an extensive form of agriculture leading to frequent population movements which were accentuated during the colonial period by the clearing of new land. The River Valley is nevertheless a zone of increasing intensity of production (double harvests) and population density. The relatively dense concentrations of population which formed there led to major migrations (the last was at the end of the 19th century under El Haj Umar).

In the past, a diaspora across West Africa characterized the Moorish population and contributed to spreading the present model of brotherhood-based Islam.

During the colonial period this diaspora was increased because of the Moors' commercial function which was favoured by their role as carriers (peanut trade) and cattle herders. Trade was organized within the framework of liberal hierarchical networks that provided financing and credit for commercial enterprises.

The creation of an economic development center in Senegal (export crops and established urban growth) during the colonial era quickly led to the migration of Mauritanian workers to the peanut-growing areas (navetanes) and later towards the cities. The first areas affected were the River Valley, Southern Trarza and Guidimakha. The immediate cause of these migrations was the growing need for money to pay taxes and to buy imported goods as well as the stagnation of marketable production.

The independence of Mauritania tended to re-orient migratory movements within the country (communication network, creation of a national market) which were accentuated by the growth of the national market (creation of mining towns in the north of the country).

Beginning in the 1960's, these migrations increased tremendously as a result of new structural and chance factors.

The growing rural exodus is not only a consequence of unsatisfied needs for money but is related on a more basic level to new economic and social structures set up by colonialism which we have called "double dependency". Its result is a devaluation of rural work and of its products. It favors low-cost production for export (indirectly by the provision of labor in Mau-

ritania and food products -- animals -- at low prices). It requires the existence of a local merchant class able to put pressure on prices because its only profit is derived from marketing goods. This situation facilitates the "liberation" of the labor force from previous social relationships. The revocation of tribute payment and the decline of slavery, the development of share-cropping and wage labor are signs of the evolution of forms of dependent labor. The organization of domestic work evolves differently, according to the particular sector of the population and local circumstances. The development of commercial production and relationships among Moorish herders sapped the economic functions of these domestic relationships, facilitating the massive expropriation of herders in times of crisis (drought). In Black African societies, collective family-based systems of organizing production persisted, but were undermined by growing contradictions (elders/youth, men/women) which tended to favor migration.

The creation of a modern salaried sector at the beginning of the 1960's (mining companies and civil service) is the first circumstantial factor of increased migration. It leads to a first wave of migration to Mauritanian cities. In the mining cities the gradual work of a working class facilitates a remarkable stabilization of the urban population.

The drought of the end of the 1960's and the ensuing food crisis are the second factor favouring increased migration, particularly to cities (Nouakchott quadrupled its population in a few years). All parts of Mauritania would from then on be affected by the phenomenon of migration.

The political choices made just after independence and particularly

the choice of planning had a significant impact on encouraging migration, particularly the "laissez-faire" policy in the rural sector that was adopted by the 1st Plan.

Changing the focus of the analysis, the conditions within the original milieu which gave rise to migration were studied. In every case, it is a cumulative process; the development of migration and the changes it induces in economic and social organization feed and increase the process of migration.

In Moorish society, men, youth and particularly the Hassan or the former Haratin dependents are affected by migration. There is a high degree of mobility in the communities to which the men migrate. This phenomenon rapidly leads to the migration of families and to veritable population transfers. The cultural tradition of mobility and the adaptive flexibility of social structure and the range of economic alternatives (work, commerce, religion) facilitate this population transfer. The drought reinforced this urban tendency of the Moors. However, parental, tribal and fractional solidarities are perpetuated in urban areas. They are less effective for Haratin groups who often experience a more radical break with their original milieu.

Among the Toucouleurs, seasonal or temporary migrations of men, which were the major kind until the end of the 1950's, have been increasingly paralleled by the migration of families to the cities, thus leading to an actual population transfer of people from the River Valley. Continuity between the original milieu and the urban areas is maintained by extremely strong ethnic solidarity reproduced through collective structures of integration in urban areas. The Toucouleur socio-economic system has been strengthened as

a result even though the lack of local manpower - accentuated by the drought - can contribute to its change.

Among the Soninke, however, it is almost always the young men who migrate. This ends the authority of the Ka elders over their dependents and the lack of manpower leads to a stagnation or decline of production. However, the collective control of the extended family and its head is otherwise maintained and even reinforced by migration in that men leave their families behind or return to found a family. The tensions that arise from the use of remittances from migrants clearly reflect the growing contradiction between the individualization of the labor force and the collective and hierarchical nature of local production.

Migration is in and of itself a phenomenon and the migrants represent a specific social group.

We have first tried to assess the degree of the break between these migrants and their original milieu. This break becomes more complete as seasonal and temporary migrations lead to the moving of families. Even in the latter case, ties do remain when, as in the case of the Moors, the entry into urban areas is extensive ; there are periodic returns, marriages and eventually the settling of the family in the "bush". Temporary and seasonal migration imply an eventual return of the migrant to his original home, even when distances are great, as in the case of the Soninke. The remittances sent home by the migrants are then partly used to re-integrate them in their original home areas. The (relatively) large influx of money into Soninke villages insures the reproduction of their society on a monetary basis by

accentuating the contradictions that led to migration ("collective village budget", mosques, increased mutual assistance, etc.).

It seemed necessary to distinguish migration from the phenomenon of massive sedentarization that affected Moorish herders after the drought. Sedentarization is still linked to the development of agriculture although certain forms of herding (movements over a restricted area, paid labor) also favour established residence. In some cases, in which it is linked exclusively to the loss of herds, it can be difficult to distinguish sedentarization from migration and urbanisation.

The last decade was marked by a migration to secondary urban centers whose population growth has created major problems (housing, water, food). As a result, part of the population remains floating, depending on the season and the year and it is difficult to assess the direction in which this phenomenon is ultimately evolving : a return to the "bush"? a move to the cities?

The development of the communication networks and particularly the building of the Nouakchott-Nema road axis has had contradictory effects on migration. It favours moves to Nouakchott in the immediate future but there could well be administrative, cultural and economic reactions which might favour the settling of peoples along this axis.

It can finally be asked what is the nature of Nouakchott's attraction. Beyond economic factors (employment), administrative services (education and health facilities), political factors seem to contribute to orienting

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migration to the capital. The client networks that are inherent in the Mauritanian socio-political system function best in Nouakchott.

Almost every case of migration today ends in a city. The questioning of migrants in urban areas brings to light transitional social structures.

A certain number of general problems is highlighted by this massive urbanisation. Some are objective and are due to the deficiencies the urban infrastructure (housing, water, food, employment). Others are due to the brutal circumstances of migration. In all cases the social and ethnic milieu produces responses to the difficulties of integration in the urban milieu.

Among the Moors, these responses emphasize the importance of the family group and of parental and tribal solidarity. These structures change profoundly, however. On the one hand, there is a certain individualization of social relations (relations between the sexes and the generations, growing numbers of divorces and separations, etc ...). On the other hand, these structures perpetuate important functions in the modern political and economic sector. Similarly, old dependency relationships evolve but serve at the same time as a support for the establishment of new hierarchies.

In the Black African populations and particularly among the Toucouleurs, integration in urban areas has brought about the emergence of new collective structures (siya, mutual help, etc). which become the basis for ethnic reorganization. When families migrate this highly structured ethnic organization continues to serve as a support for urbanisation.

The last point covered concerns international migrations which, within the past two decades, have extended the former regional migration patterns which went beyond the colonial boundaries.

The diaspora movement of Moorish society has been accentuated and enlarged to cover all of Africa. Islam and especially commerce remain the two basic functions of this migration.

The major Toucouleur migrations to Senegal are still going on and partly affect the Mauritanian Toucouleurs. The ethnic solidarity previously evoked have allowed the Toucouleurs, who have a remarkable tendency to live in groups, to create a specific area for themselves in greater Dakar.

The Soninke migrations to Europe are the most original. They are characterized by a very strong collective organisation which has allowed these immigrant workers to adapt to very difficult living and working conditions in France. The restrictions imposed by French immigration policy make this migration increasingly uncertain.

We have not tried to make quantitative estimates of this international migration because even the best-kept data (migration to France) present so many variations that they make all estimates impossible.

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