

PN-ABI-197
121 71977

**MODERNIZING LAND TENURE
IN MAURITANIA: THE ROLE OF
LAW IN DEVELOPMENT**

By John Grayzel

African Studies Center

1986

**Working Papers in
African Studies
No. 118**

**African Studies Center
Boston University
270 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215**

MODERNIZING LAND TENURE IN MAURITANIA: THE ROLE OF LAW IN DEVELOPMENT¹

By John Grayzel

Land tenure has been identified as one of the major constraints on rural agricultural development in Mauritania.² It helps determine what gets done and who profits from it. In one regard, therefore, this paper looks at this situation as one of a number of studies on Africa which have land tenure as a theme and the close relationship between land tenure problems, the distribution of land use rights, development activities and local environment realities as a specific case focus.³

On a more theoretical level the paper seeks to draw lessons from the Mauritanian experience for the greater issue of the hows, whys and wherefores of land concentration in Africa. In this respect, Mauritania represents a somewhat unique set of circumstances as a former French colony that was left in an almost pristine precolonial state, with vast regions of arid and semi-arid lands, but few concentrated areas amenable to permanent agricultural exploitation. Today, it is experiencing extremely rapid major national, demographic, socio-cultural, and economic change as a result of donor-funded activities in a few select areas.⁴ One result of this is the existence of several relatively clear and isolable examples of the dynamics of ongoing, still unresolved changes in land tenure practices. Precisely because these changes have not yet solidified in terms of either new national policy, law, or fixed socio-economic relations, they are particularly pertinent for highlighting several important questions regarding the intermediate process between destruction of prior land rights and practices and the acceptance and location of new ones. Such questions include: How do parties position themselves in changing yet indefinite circumstances to try and insure they will lose as little as possible and gain as much as feasible? When judging the degree of land concentration, what besides absolute area (for example, production potential, nature of rights, or surety of title) should be included in the equation? And, in assessing the consequences of land concentration, to what extent are factors such as to whom, how, and why new rights are accruing, of equal or greater importance than the simple change in the proportion of rights holders to rights, per se?

In addition to all the above, this paper also seeks to bring to the forefront of discussion three additional dimensions of land tenure, development, and land concentration issues often neglected. The first concerns the added complexity that

¹The opinions expressed are entirely those of the author. They are provided for the purpose of scholarly discussion only and do not in any way represent the opinions or beliefs of USAID itself.

²A good general review of the problems of land tenure in Mauritania has been made by Andrew Manzano, in *Land Tenure and Community Development in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania*. (University of Wisconsin Land Tenure Center paper 1981).

³See Phil O'Keefe and Ben Wisner: *Land Use and Development*, IAI African Environment Special Report 5, London 1977.

⁴While this paper will focus on the few dominant donor-financed interventions in agricultural production, the three most determinant donor-financed activities for the country are probably (1) the construction and operation of the new and ever-expanding capital of Nouakchott, (2) the construction of one east-west and one north-south highway, and (3) the continual provisionment of large amounts of food aid.

nationhood can bring to reaching a rational solution appropriate to immediate circumstances. This is due primarily to the need to consider the balance of political pressures from competing factions on both the national and local levels. Second is the necessity to see questions of access, use, and ownership as dimensions of the more fundamental question of control. Third is the relation between the way rights are couched and converted into modern legal concepts and the role this plays in the final determination as to in whom, and to what extent, control is vested. These three questions, as will be seen, not only plague development activities but can actually be engendered by them, thus making such activities a major determinant of the total pattern of land concentration within the developing state. It is their combined workings and how they manifest themselves in the particular situation in Mauritania that is the central focus of this paper.

However, while the interaction of the above three factors is a major focus of this case study, there are two separate but related hypotheses behind the conclusions drawn. The first of these is that while all of the outlined factors are important causal and explanatory agents, one of them in particular - the "legalization" of traditional rights - is the operational key in terms of applied policy in the final determination of who will end up with what. The second is that, in the case in point, the politics of nationhood has replaced environment as the major constraint on human freedom to determine the conceptual constructs of the newly evolving situation.

Background

A basic acquaintance with the environmental and social circumstances in Mauritania is a prerequisite to understanding traditional land use and holding patterns in the country, as well as the nature of modern attempts at agricultural development and their consequences. The brief outline provided is intended as such necessary background and not as an in-depth exploration of all aspects of the existing situation.

Mauritania encompasses the western-most part of the Sahara desert and is the most arid of Africa's sahel states.⁵ While a small area in the Guidimaka may receive from 400-600 mm of rain a year, most of the country receives less than 100mm a year and most of the agricultural areas less than 300mm a year. Where and when it does receive sufficient rainfall for agriculture, it shares the general characteristics of the Sahel in that the rains are highly uneven in both time and space, so that yearly averages can mean little if the rains are not properly spaced both in terms of the growing season and specific geographical areas.

Traditional Productive Zone Practices

The country's agricultural production systems can be divided into three types corresponding to three specific ecological zones. The first is represented by the riverine zone that borders the Senegal River, stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mali border. Most of the area bordering the river is predominantly

⁵J.L. Kowal, and A.H. Kassam, *Agricultural Ecology of Savanna: A Study of West Africa* (Oxford, 1972).

populated by the Toucouleur, a black sub-Saharan people, who in the centuries preceding colonization had set up several theocratic states along its banks.⁶

There, along the river, while rainfed agriculture is practiced, the crucial production system is recession agriculture. The system, little appreciated or understood by most Westerners, relies on the annual flood of the river to inundate low-lying areas, called *walo*, where, over a period of weeks, sufficient water soaks into the ground so that traditional varieties of sorghum, planted after the standing water is gone, can grow to germination solely on the moisture stored in the soil, without additional rainfall or irrigation. Surrounding the flood areas of the river are extensive areas of non-flood land, called *dieri*, that are relatively highly productive when rainfall is adequate.⁷ However, since approximately three out of ten years are *de facto* drought years, and of the remaining seven, three or four are likely to be mediocre, it is on the production of the *walo*, whose flooding is determined by the more likely rains in the far away mountains of Guinea, that the society's survival depends. Not surprisingly, therefore, it is the control of these flood lands that was most determinative of the distribution of power in the traditional society and around which traditional legal land tenure constructs were framed.

The second zone begins on the northern border of the Toucouleur production system, about twenty miles to the north of the river, where the 150mm isohyet predominates, though large shifts in this rainfall zone are common. This area is traditionally the domain of nomadic Arab-Berber groups, generally referred to as the Bidan or Moor (Maure) tribes. These peoples were predominantly herders of camels, goats and sheep, as well as cattle in the more southern areas. However, in addition to their pastoral activities they routinely exploited various geographically limited and isolated resource opportunities such as fish on the coast, salt deposits in the north, and various scattered oases and recession agriculture areas in the interior. In this latter case, their recession agriculture followed the same agronomic principles as those practiced on the coast but the source of water was the occasional desert rains which, because of lack of vegetation, result in sudden desert floods that can gather appreciable cumulative quantities of water either in depressed areas or *wadi* (watercourse channels that are dry except after rains).⁸

⁶In the westernmost area near the mouth of the river, some Wolof and Moor groups are found and in the easternmost area (near Mali) the Soninke replace the Toucouleur as the predominant group. However, in both these areas there are found less of the usable flood recession land (*walo*) that characterizes the unique traditional production and land tenure systems of the Toucouleur areas.

⁷Estimates of agricultural production per hectare tend to be highly speculative and in fact production varies tremendously from plot to plot based on rainfall, soil, and weeding. In general, estimates for sorghum production per hectare on *walo* are between 300 and 500 kilos. (cf. Rural Assessment Manpower Survey [RAMS Project], *Statistical Annex II*, p. 66, Islamic Republic of Mauritania / U.S.A.I.D., 1982). Estimates for millet production on *dieri* land vary from an average of 350-450 kilos to 1000 kilos (*Ibid.*; Abdoulaye Bara Diop, *Societe Toucouleur et Migration*, IFAN #XVIII [Dakar, 1965] p. 38).

⁸Oasis agriculture also relies on the collection of large quantities of water from scattered occasional rain over large areas. In the case of oases, however, the principle in effect is the rapid penetration of water through sand that then collects in an underground depression from which water must be lifted. Charles Toupet, *La Sédentarisation des Nomades en Mauritanie Centrale Sahellene* (Paris, 1977) presents much interesting information on life and environment in this area.

In the case of the Bidan survival of the production unit depended on their herds, which not only provided the major source of food (milk and meat), but also the requisite number of camels necessary for both transportation of trade goods (including foodstuffs) in and out of the area, and for rapid military mobility that permitted protection of tribal properties and the domination of weaker groups. In fact, labor for agriculture, fishing, and herding was generally supplied by slaves or tributaries. In this sense, the scarce resource was not land but control over people and alliances, such control being acquired through a combination of military and religious coercion.⁹

The third zone is found in an area on the southeastern border of Mauritania, Mali and Senegal. This region is called the Guidimaka and is an area of predominance of the Soninke (Sarakolle) peoples. The term "Guidimaka" traditionally refers to the entire Soninke-dominated area that extends into all three countries. The Soninke are the northernmost fringe of those Mande-speaking peoples whose agricultural complex is characterized by the extensive cultivation of rainfed lands and crops, especially sorghum and millet.¹⁰

With generally enough rainfall (600mm/yr plus) and generally more than enough land, the most common constraint to production is sufficient labor for land preparation, weeding and harvest, a problem solved only through extensive collaboration between extended family and community members (supplemented in the past with slave labor and increasingly at present with hired labor, generally Bambara, from Mali).¹¹ The ability to mobilize such labor becomes the crucial resource and is effected largely through the controlled distribution of village and family lands and specifically the more fertile parcels therein. However, given the overall surplus of land in the region, the task is basically one of competent administration by extended family and village leaders, since undue alienation of others could result in their leaving the group and taking their labor elsewhere.

Social Structure and Land Tenure Practices

The Moors, Toucouleur, and Soninke all share a basic hierarchical social structure found throughout much of West Africa. It is characterized by a ruling warrior and/or religious aristocracy, followed by free people who are neither noble

⁹ Sources on past traditional Bidan Mauritanian life are few. They include Francis Chessey, *L'Etrier, la houe et le livre* (Paris, 1977), and C.C. Stewart and E.K. Stewart, *Islam and Social Order in Mauritania* (Oxford, 1973).

¹⁰ My use of the term "mande" follows that of George Murdock, *Africa* (New York, 1959), and is used for the sake of placing the Soninke in the larger West African context and contrasting their origins and cultural links to that of the other two groups. It is not meant as an unqualified endorsement of Murdock's overall distributional scheme. As regards the Soninke of the Guidimaka, little specific in-depth published information exists besides the interesting but dated work of L. Saint-Pere *Les Sarakolle du Guidimaka* (Paris, 1925) and a more recent good but limited overview by P. Bradley, et al. *The Guidimaka Region of Mauritania* (London, 1977). An in-depth ethnography of Soninke in Mali by F. Pollet and G. Winters, *La Societe Soninke* (Brussels, 1971), contains much relevant but also some significantly inapplicable data for Mauritania.

¹¹ The need for the Soninke to hire migrant Bambara at the same time as their own youth migrate for wage employment outside the region is an example of the need for the constant reintroduction and circulation of money within these production systems. For an in-depth understanding of the historic role of imports, exports, and capital among the Moors, see James Webb, "Shifting Sands: An Economic History of the Mauritanian Sahara 1500-1850" (Ph.D. thesis, Johns Hopkins University, 1983).

nor powerful, followed by casted peoples (such as artisans and entertainers), serf-like tributaries or freed slaves, and finally slaves per se. The different ways this general framework was and remains modified and qualified by each group is to a significant extent both determined and determinative of rights to land and resources. For purposes of this paper, only the briefest and most general variations need be considered.

Among the Arab-Berber Moors, the basic living, travel and production unit was the nomadic/pastoral encampment (*frig*) which could be composed of single family or extended family and attached groups such as slaves and artisans. Each family belonged to a fraction (*fakhdh*) of a tribe with whom it clearly identified and allied itself. In contrast, the larger tribal identity (*qabila*) played a much less significant role in everyday life.

Often attached to particularly powerful fractions and families were the "*Haratin*" - freed slaves/serfs, usually assumed to be descendants of black sub-Saharan people from surrounding areas. The *Haratin* are agriculturalists and live in their own agricultural communities. Traditionally, they were free in the sense that they owned their own possessions, in contrast to slaves for whom everything they possess - at least in theory - belongs to their master.

Within the context of the prevailing warrior-ruled desert society, the *Haratin* were forced to attach themselves to a protecting fraction to which they paid tribute in the form of a large percentage of their agricultural production. Inland rainfed and flood recession areas, especially those in the south nearer the river, were generally worked by the *Haratin* who paid the prevailing power what they had to in order to be left in peace. In contrast, more remote oasis areas were worked by actual slaves. Oasis land was considered the property of the fraction, in contrast to the date trees themselves, which were considered the property of the person who planted them or of his master, if the actual cultivator were a slave. In terms of control, in the oasis areas the Moors basically controlled both the land and its use, giving their slaves the minimum necessary subsistence. In the non-oasis areas, the Moors generally only controlled the population, leaving the question of actual daily agricultural management of the land to the users.

In the case of the Toucouleur, one finds a sedentary population strung out along two sides of a river that both provides relatively easy mobility and, as described above, the basis of a somewhat unique recession agriculture system. The valuable flood basin land, *walo*, was limited in terms of total available acreage and size of individual parcels and did not require large labor input for either land preparation or weeding. This resulted in the nuclear family sufficing as the basic labor group for work on small scattered parcels, often on both sides of the river.

The generalized hierarchical structure of West Africa expressed itself in the form of an Islamic religious elite exacting tribute as a percentage of production tax. Generally this was 10 percent of production, called the *assakale*. This right to a percentage could not, however, be defined as absolute ownership. The person owning the land in terms of the right of distribution for use was called the *dyom leydi*, or "master of the bush." The *dyom leydi* was usually a powerful member of a prominent clan in the area. People of such status collected fees that included a "yearly entry fee" (*ndioli*), and a payment to compensate the descendants of the *dyom leydi* for loss of use (*riotigu*). This last fee is evidence of the generally held belief that land should, but need not necessarily, be kept within the family and clan. However, even the right to these payments and initial distribution was not

necessarily the same as a right of control or usage. This belonged to the *dyom dyengol* or "master of the fire," meaning the first person to clear the land for use. In fact he actually controlled the land and, if he chose not to use it, he could lease it to another, generally for a specific number of good flood years or a share of the crops. The lessee would then be responsible for paying both the *dyom dyengol* and the *dyom leydi*.¹² In terms of control, therefore, it was usually the "master of the bush" who determined who would farm, while it was the actual cultivator who decided how to farm it.

Among the Soninke, yet a third, quite different variant existed, also closely aligned to environmental realities. In contrast to both the Toucouleur situation, dominated by a scarcity of indispensable flood land that engendered a situation of buying of land rights, and the Moorish situation that was dominated by the "buying" of protection, the Soninke need for labor and the relative abundance of land, though of differing qualities, resulted in a converse situation - namely, the use of land rights to purchase allegiance, affiliation, and cooperation.

According to the predominant Soninke practice, usufruct to land was parceled out both as reward and *raison d'être* of group membership. The parceling began historically by two competing clans who dominated the area. Distribution was to founding families of villages, their kin, or allies. From that point on, it remained the prerogative of the village chief to distribute it to families with whom the land remained as long as they stayed attached to the community. Were they to leave, usufruct reverted to the village chief for redistribution. Within the family the land remained under the authority of the extended family head, with the majority of the land farmed in common except for small parcels distributed to individual family members (and slaves)¹³ for their own "side" use. Thus, it was the head of family that controlled most of the land in terms of both ongoing distribution and daily management. If the extended family split, the land was divided among the heads of the new units.

Changing Circumstances; Colonialism, Independence, and Development

France asserted her sovereignty over Mauritania during the colonial era because the land lay between Morocco and Senegal, which were her major concerns. For a significant time a good deal of the area in the north was considered a protectorate rather than a colony. The aim was pacification, not

¹²The situation as to any particular piece of land could be quite complex. Sometimes the religious leader was also the "master of the fire." Additional groups with special privileges existed such as the *Sebe* (ancients rulers and warriors). The purpose here is not to unravel all these relations but to give a feel for the ability of the traditional system to handle complex issues. Specific accounts of practices often differ in some particulars at the same time as relying upon each other and common third party sources. The account I provide is basically gleaned from my own research. Other accounts include J.L. Boutillier, *et al.*, *La Moyenne Vallée du Senegal* (Paris, 1982) and the RAMS reports by Dr. Mona Fikry, *Social Change and Social Organization of Agricultural Production A.S. 8-2* and *Sociological Profiles: Black Africans A.S. 7-1*.

¹³Consistent with their need for labor, the Soninke had the largest proportion of slaves of the three groups under study. While there were (and continue to be) many levels of discrimination against those of slave status among the Soninke, consistent with the Soninke stress on group unity, slaves were relatively far more integrated into the community and family among them than among the Moors. For example, I witnessed a situation where all the adult males of a free family had died and an older male slave was acting as *de facto* head of an extended family, something inconceivable among either the Moors or Toucouleur.

development. Except for few military outposts, the country was left to itself, its colonial capital actually situated across the river at Saint Louis, Senegal. At the time of independence in the 1960s, there was still not a single paved road, secondary school, or hospital in the entire country.

The overall effect of the colonial era was largely to freeze and reinforce the existing social structure. The French formalized existing claims through administrative recognition of fraction or clan areas and leadership, while removing from the system the mobility that was formally provided by armed conflict.¹⁴

This situation did not dramatically change after independence when the new government had to concern itself primarily with establishing the fundamental framework of a modern nation-state, beginning with the creation of an urban capital and an elementary administrative structure. From the inception of nationhood and the introduction of concomitant administrative practices, such as the establishment of a national party (the PPM), the supposed replacement of traditional tribal authorities by modern assembly representatives (in fact just a conversion of roles) and the encouragement of sedentarization, some new direction to socio-economic change in Mauritania was, of course, engendered. However, in reality much of this early change was cosmetic, as demonstrated by the rapid disappearance of the PPM with the overthrow of President Ould Daddah in 1978, the reappearance and recognition of traditional tribal authorities with the abolition of the national assembly and the abandonment of quickly constructed new "permanent" settlements now found scattered throughout the country.

The conflict between ideal and real was reflected in the RIM (Republique Islamique de Mauritanie) law pertaining to land ownership, No. 60-139 of August, 1960. This stated that all vacant and unowned land belongs to the state (article 1), but also recognized traditional claims to land (article 4) and that such claims could be group as well as individual in nature (article 9). Given the fluidity of the claims of nomadic groups and the extent of their movements, together with the fact that most land in Mauritania is vacant at any one time, most land can be claimed by some group based on some repetitive occasional use. The ambiguity inherent in the law in question was probably not due to poor draftsmanship but was rather in response to a combination of political and social realities, indecision and a cultural

¹⁴It should be noted that most traditional "armed conflict" was relatively mild. The generally accepted rule of raiding was to leave a raided group with minimally sufficient animals and goods to survive. One practice was to take all of a group's herds. Then the other group's leader would come requesting the return of some of the animals which, when provided, became a ceremonial recognition of the superior authority, at least momentarily, of the raiding group. Saint-Exupery gives a dramatic feel for the realities of this period in his book *Wind, Sand and Stars*, where he describes his experiences as a mail pilot between France and St. Louis, Senegal. Noting the pilot's dependence on the good will of the Moors for help in cases of emergency landings in the desert, he relates the personal experience on one such occasion of being approached by a slave asking his assistance to escape. Unable to intervene in this fashion but feeling morally compelled to assist, he ended up, over a period of a year, negotiating for the purchase of the slave, whom he then flew to freedom. A. Saint Exupery, *Wind, Sand and Stars*, (New York, 1967), pp 89-128.

modus operandi of maintaining open situations, susceptible to opportunistic manipulation. As a result, a *de facto* continuation of the traditional systems was tolerated if not encouraged.¹⁵

Dramatic change really began in Mauritania in the 1970s with the beginning of the prolonged, repetitive drought that has plagued the Sahel to this date. Marginal agricultural activity became progressively worthless. At the same time, the dynamics of nationhood, especially new opportunities for escape, work, and investment in the new capital of Nouakchott, resulted in significant displacement of rural labor and capital out of agriculture. Under such circumstances, little attention was paid to asserting rights to agricultural land. In some cases dependent peoples left their traditional settings. In other cases, former elites purposely severed the bonds between themselves and dependent groups to be relieved of their obligations to assure them the minimal wherewithall to live, which now outweighed any surplus value that could be extracted from their production. This situation continues to this day in many areas. However, in other areas a dramatic change has occurred, almost exclusively propelled by donor-financed development activities.

As regards development, Mauritania is not a country that has been saturated by donor activities. Relatively speaking, however, donor-financed development dominates the scene. The country's few paved roads and hospitals, as well as most of its urban and rural infrastructure, are donor-financed. However, to attribute causality to donor activities is not to deny the Mauritanian element in the equation. In fact, in the area of agricultural development, the Mauritanian governmental elite, through governmental or parastatal organizations,¹⁶ has maintained a preponderance of ultimate decision-making power, though in fact it is surrogate expatriate managers who make many of the daily decisions.

The particular area of interest for this paper concerns development activities in those areas traditionally devoted to the recession agriculture already discussed - along the river and in wadi or depression areas in the interior. Such development activities have four forms:

1) Large-scale irrigation schemes along the river

These are projects where a modern infrastructure of dikes, canals, and pumping stations has been built by the Mauritania parastatal SONADER. Because of its proximity to the river, the land chosen for such schemes is mostly *walo* land over which the assorted traditional Toucouleur property rights applied. In executing such projects, the government, through SONADER, exercised its right of eminent domain and informed people that it was going to establish an irrigated

¹⁵An extreme example of this *modus operandi* is seen in an incident related to me by one highly reliable informant who claimed to have seen, shortly after independence, a communication sent by President Ould Daddah the country's first, and then only French-trained lawyer, to his regional governors clarifying for them that slavery was no longer to be legally recognized in Mauritania. The communication was stamped "Confidential."

¹⁶Parastatals are organizations created by government which, though under the tutelage of some government ministry (in this case the Ministry of Agriculture) operate as if they were independent private organizations. The major advantage of such a system is supposedly in the nature of daily operations that follow business practices and, especially, in the recruitment of personnel who sign contracts and can be paid according to private sector salary scales.

perimeter. "Compensation" in the form of a modest amount of grain, supposedly to replace lost production, was given to the owners (*dyom dyngol*). When the land was divided up, priority in the distribution of a percentage of the parcels was made to these owners and other claimants, including powerful figures who were traditional overlords, the *dyom leydi*. To these were added some outsiders. Theoretically, each individual got the same size parcel, but in fact land is found registered in the name of several family members and plot size does vary, often according to social and former land-holding status.

In terms of investment, the perimeter was built and the pumps were installed and maintained by SONADER, with government funds obtained largely from donor grants. SONADER technicians generally determine what is to be planted and when, a situation that has resulted in an emphasis on rice cultivation, though many farmers would rather plant sorghum and corn.¹⁷ Likewise SONADER purchases the crop at prices it sets (below market) and charges the farmers a fee at the end of each season for inputs such as fertilizer and pump fuel.

2) Small-scale irrigation perimeters along the river

These are found in several areas, but especially along the far eastern portion of the river in the Guidimaka. There the topography differs from the more western areas in having less recession land (*walo*). As a result, high land bordering the river (called *fonde*) is more important. In general, such land is not amenable to large perimeters and relatively small amounts are cleared: 50-100 hectares. Canals are dug by hand by the people involved, though in some cases the initial leveling is done by a bulldozer owned by SONADER. SONADER also supplies the basic inputs such as pumps, fertilizer, seed (rice) and technical advice in the form of occasional visits (in contrast to daily supervision on large perimeters). As with large perimeters, SONADER charges the farmers for inputs made during the growing season. The particular choice of land is made through mutual agreement between the technicians and the community leaders and the distribution of parcels is decided by the community itself.

3) Small-scale water retention dams in the interior in depression areas and along small wadi

These are generally earthen structures with a metal, wood, or concrete gate to block and release water at the exit point of the depression. The water contained by them generally covers from 50 to 200 hectares of land. Government (and some donor) funds and services are provided to build the initial structure with the community members providing labor of their own (if *Harain*) or a monetary contribution to hire someone to replace them (if *Bidan*). Once built the entire management and maintenance of the structure and flooded land is left to the community. The distribution of land is also the responsibility of the community, one standard being to allot shares based on each individual's contribution in time or money to construction.

¹⁷Such expressed farmer preference for sorghum and corn rather than rice is attributable to a combination of factors including perceived lower costs, less rigid and disciplined labor needs and a desire to avoid the requirement of marketing rice through the parastatal at a fixed, below-market price.

4) Large-scale dams on large wadi

On the Gorgol Noir, a major drainage outlet from central Mauritania into the Senegal River, at an area known as Fom Guelta, SONADER has built, with donor funding, a large dam that is slated eventually to provide water for thousands of hectares of irrigated agriculture. The actual project, with the extensive infrastructure planned, will take years to build, at an estimated cost of from \$20,000 to \$50,000 a hectare. The area in question was previously farmed by assorted communities of *Haratin*, freed slaves and former slaves still traditionally attached to the communities of their past masters.¹⁸ How to divide up the land was a subject of intense study in 1985.¹⁹

Conflicts and Consequences

All of the above projects were designed and implemented on the assumption that they would greatly increase the productivity of the land and people involved. In some circumstances this has already occurred; in others it has not. However, in all cases the prospect that this would occur gave the land in question immediate new value. This resulted in producing varieties of reactive behavior that engendered some severe setbacks to the successful implementation of the projects and the land reorganizations planned around them.

1) The Irrigated Perimeter at Kaedi (zone 1)

Since its inception the perimeter has suffered from severe constraints on production. Many plots are left barely planted or so poorly cared for that production is far below expectation. Much of this is ascribed by project personnel to a purposeful intent not to cooperate and a *de facto* boycott by former land owners, both *dyom leydi* and *dyon djengol*. To some extent this is probably true. Also true, however, is that cultivation of the perimeters involves calculated trade-offs between conflicting demands for labor, time and monetary investments in both dryland and remaining traditional flood recession agriculture, as well as alternative wage labor. The one certain fact is that the project has expropriated rights on all levels: from the clans that had limited control of the alienation of the land to outsiders, from the *dyom leydis* who had primary distribution rights, and from the *dyom djengols* and actual cultivators who had seasonal management control.

It is mainly on the level of on-going control of management that the "battle" is occurring. In fact, in looking over past Toucouleur practices, it becomes evident that what users always obtained and wanted was control over the land in terms of its precise application to their needs. "Ownership" either in the abstract

¹⁸The situation is given an added dimension of complexity since the major community of Mbout, a former colonial administrative area, was one of the few settlements during colonial time where slaves could obtain refuge under French protection. Such people socially are not considered by Moor society as "freed," since to be "freed" means to be released by one's owner, not to have escaped.

¹⁹Most of the information for this article was collected in the years 1979-1983 while I was working in Mauritania. One practical outcome of those studies was the design of an AID-funded project for the University of Wisconsin Land Tenure Center to conduct a training/research program to create a new cadre of land tenure specialists in the Ministries of Agriculture or Planning. These trainees have since been asked to focus specifically on the problems at Fom Guelta, which, it is hoped, will result in a more profound treatment of the situation.

sense of land actually belonging to them or having an ultimate right to alienate it, was relatively insignificant. What users wanted, and still want, is to be able to integrate their use of this land to their entire portfolio of economic activities. This, however, is precisely contrary to the arrangements sought by the parastatal. SONADER wishes to redistribute ownership to a larger number of actual users, thereby holding them ultimately responsible for the land and assorted costs and risks while denying them the right to determine its seasonal use. The parastatal's management/technical cadre's ultimate concern is not only to have a fairly consistent supply of labor, but one that it can train and retain in more complex agriculture practices. This is why they favor the idea of ownership or lifetime tenancy for cultivators. In this sense the fight is not so much over land as over technology, and who will determine which technology is used and how.²⁰

2) The Case of Small Recession Dams (zone 2)

The situation with the small interior dams is quite different. Here the technology is simple. The main need for assistance is in the initial financing of construction or loan of a bulldozer, since the construction technology is less a case of engineering skill than one of possessing adequate equipment. Cultivation techniques remain the same as before. The major changes are in having the assurance of additional, though very limited, flood land, and reduced seasonal need for labor in reconstruction of the dam.

In fact, the government has little interest in getting directly involved in the production of these areas. Assistance is provided largely as a political act of service to the community. The problem that arises involves the question of who constitutes that community. The land is inevitably registered administratively, from the time of colonization, in the name of a particular fraction. The *Haratin* who have actually been cultivating in the area assert that the land is theirs in either the direct sense of ownership or usufruct rights. They support this by claiming they are the *Haratin* "members" of the fraction whose *Bidan* elite used to control the area in the sense of authority and tribute. The *Bidan* members of the fraction, many of whom are former pastoralists now sedentarizing and therefore in search of land for use, residence, or income, claim that it belongs to them. Their argument is that the *Haratin* were tributaries rather than members of the fraction, and that *Haratin* only cultivated land by permission of the possessing fraction. In some areas various *modi operandi* have been worked out, but in many the outcome has been significant conflict, often resulting in the suspension of everyone's right or ability to use the area.

3) Small River Perimeters in the Guidimake (zone 3)

Production on these has been somewhat disappointing, but the majority of problems concern complaints by the users as to the quality and costs of the technical services provided. Among themselves little apparent conflict exists between users or over rights to land. This is understandable, as a relatively small

²⁰The presumption that owner-operators are probably more efficient producers than tenants is found in much of the present-day literature. (For example, "The conversion of tenants into owner operators generally leads to a more efficient and more equitable form of production organization than tenancy," World Bank *Land Reform Sector Policy Paper*, May 1975, p. 34) Other, less noble or seemingly value-free motives for favoring owner-operators over sharecropping or direct employment by the controlling agency, such as the desire to pass off costs, are not generally expressed in the literature but can be extrapolated from common practice.

quantity of land is involved in terms of actual size and percentage of the ongoing production system (both for the Soninke themselves and for the parastatal). The land in question, whether *fonde* (high river bank land) or even small areas of *walo*, is not the crucial element in the production system, and the applicable annual distribution of rights and cooperative labor is a variant of the established Soninke system for land distribution.

4) Large Interior Irrigation Dams (zone 2)

The case of the large new dam on the Gorgol Noir represents a potential example of the worst of all possible worlds. There is no organized single community; much of the area is claimed by *Bidan* fractions, the actual cultivators are mainly *Harain* and former slaves, and the investment is so great and the area so extensive that the government will at some point find itself committed to getting it to work, meaning probably that SONADER will have to assume the major responsibility for its ongoing management. Exactly how things will turn out is not clear, but significant problems are anticipated by all parties concerned.

Possible Solutions:

The differences regarding land tenure practices and policies between the government and local communities, between and within communities themselves, and between various traditional modern, urban, and rural populations at the time most of the data for this paper was collected (1983) were often described by both government officials and donors as intractable. The then-prevailing system might best be described as mixture of "state (prevailing power) arbitraryism" and "personal opportunism." Since this has been the prevailing reality of most of Mauritania from time immemorial, at least the Moorish population felt quite at home with it, despite occasional protestations. Probably more than anything else, those pushing for action in the form of "land reform" were donor and donor project representatives and technicians, who met resistance, however, from system inertia and political realities.

Various suggestions have periodically been made for addressing land tenure problems in Mauritania. These largely parallel those offered throughout the developing world, each with its own constituencies, beneficiaries, adversaries, and drawbacks:

1) Recognizing the rights of present and traditional holders

This suggestion finds its supporters in those now in clear possession of land or in positions of influence to put themselves in that situation, such as the *Bidan* elites in the interior and *Toucouleur* elites along the river. That it should be favored by the haves is self-evident. What is crucial to understand is that the operative definition of rights holders is quite superficial and almost always refers to the idea of vesting complete ownership or usufruct rights in the existing traditional party with dominant rights, while totally ignoring the possible multiplicity of collateral rights held by other parties, such as access, selective exploitation, grazing rights or passage. Given the complex nature of land use in most of African, the existence of such collateral rights is almost always the case. In this sense, whether the party arguing for recognition of traditional rights to complete control of the land is a rich leader or a poor farmer, they are almost always asking for the divestiture of the collateral rights of others.

Opposition to such a policy naturally comes from have-nots, such as former slaves and tributaries and social reformers, but also, most importantly, often from technical cadre in general, and, in the case of donor projects, from large project administration and donor policy-making personnel.

2) Giving land rights to a parcel of land to those who are actually making, or are willing to make, productive use of it

The most prevalent suggestion under this rubric is generally to tie land rights to possession and use. Those who put the land to use by working it, or building on it, should be given the rights to it, thereby doing away with both more expansive and more limited claims of other individuals or groups. As noted above, major support for this approach is found among the technical cadre and development personnel who see the private owner/producer as a desirable instrument for introducing new techniques. Their belief is that the most productive individuals are those who work for themselves. They see such a resolution as in harmony with the need to provide sustained training to the worker/producer, and the belief that necessary long-term investment of labor and resources by a producer requires a long-term interest in the land.

The last two reasons, however, are two-edged swords. They imply that the producers must undergo substantial new learning and make substantial new investments of time, labor, and money before the new technologies will pay off. This requires a leap of faith that many producers lack. As a result, the very exercise of the discretion that usually accompanies private ownership, such as was the essence of the rights held by the traditional Toucouleur "master of the bush" is seen as a major hindrance to change. The result is that the new rights that are often created do not include fundamental control over determining land use, which was what traditional rights were largely about. Instead, the new rights guarantee access to use only as the prevailing sovereign power, the state or its parastatal surrogate, decrees appropriate.

3) Vesting ownership of productive land in the State, and either giving private usufruct rights to those able to put it into immediate production, or establishing a non-private production system on it, such as a cooperative or state operation

This formula, ideologically so popular for the first years of development in many Third World countries is, in its more radical forms, increasingly out of favor because of the disastrous economic results experienced. In Mauritania local cooperatives are in reality usually marketing/purchasing associations of private individuals assembled under a new title that facilitates interaction with the state and its representatives. However, a large gray area exists in a new form of government redistribution of rights that links ownership of land parcels to cooperation with a centrally determined utilization and authority. Here producers have a mixed bag of shared and individual responsibilities for cost and risks, but generally only individual claims to benefits. Both the state and donors like to term such situations as "cooperatives," but what seems to distinguish them above all else is the lack of cooperation that exists, especially between officialdom and the producers.

4) Community ownership

Under the community ownership schemata, the land belongs to the community and it is the community, through its representatives, which determines use and internal distribution. In many ways this is the Soninke production system universalized. As an in-depth look at the Soninke system would reveal, though often quite effective, it is not necessarily egalitarian or equitable. It has been repeatedly proposed, however, by numerous researchers and development consultants, who usually share the distinction of having no permanent work relation with either the government or parastatal. The problem is that the government and parastatals wish to use community organization and leadership as an entry point for their own agenda and not as the springboard for rejection of their plans, or new demands on them, which is what real community ownership could lead to.

As can be seen, all possibilities are imperfect, as seems inherent in human situations. However, all are possible, as shown by the fact that all can be found operating to some degree. The fact that as of 1983 none could become the accepted standard or practice was not because of their imperfections but because within the national pluralistic context no single proposal could gain national consensus because no single solution could be imposed without seeming to favor one constituency so much as to raise powerful opposition from another.

Basically, the need for donor assistance and the pressures of donor policy have made purposeful maintenance of the traditional "feudalistic" system unacceptable. This is accompanied by a rejection of these traditional systems by technical cadre who see the most desirable relation as that of state/project technician to farmer/producer, with the technician the dominant party. Partially this is tied to the type of technology to be introduced, partially to a belief that the traditional system is inefficient, and partially because modern educated technicians tend to have little sympathy for the role of traditional absentee owners, especially those whose political power could challenge their own authority.

Given the limited number of opportunities for substantial investment in modern agriculture in Mauritania, the pressure to impose a modern donor-financed large-scale irrigation system along the Senegal River is almost irresistible. Since this did not seemingly interfere with the Moor power base, such an imposition on a limited number of minority Toucouleur was already possible at Kaedi. This was made even easier by the fact that many of these people had land on both sides of the river and that Senegal had effected a land reform expropriating the parcels of

the large traditional owners several years before.²¹ At the same time, the interest of the Moors in maintaining their own rights as overlords blocked pressures to make such a redistribution into national policy.

Conversely, however, the expropriation of the rights of the Toucouleur made it impossible to consider formalizing the traditional rights of the *Bidan* in a new legal structure. While the Toucouleur may not have been powerful enough to resist modernization of their rights, the justification of modernization would be difficult to maintain if feudal rights in Moor-dominated areas were newly affirmed at the same time. The result was the selective application of new standards only as economically necessary and politically possible. Within this framework it is the Soninke, at least for the moment, who seem best able to maintain their status quo. Joining so in the guise of cooperative community ventures. Their traditional system is sufficiently similar on an operational basis to the desires of the technical/developmental cadre as to conform to them without major changes in established rights. Their deeper social structure is sufficiently authoritarian and hierarchical as to see its advantage in continuation of the old ways and to contain any pressures for support of a real land reform.²² The ability of the Soninke to maintain such an equilibrium between the other disputing parties in the country is related to another adaptation of their traditional structure to modern national life. The two original settling clans have translated their ongoing competition into taking opposite sides from each other in national politics. As a result one group is generally "in" with the present powers, while the other will be "in" if and when power shifts.

The end result is the morass of gray area practices that pits central power against community interests against private ambition in what I have termed "state arbitrariness vs. individual opportunism."

A Change of Heart?

In 1983, however, after years of apparent indecision, a proclamation was made, vesting land rights in those who put the land into productive use. Ordinance

²¹ Senegal Law No. 6446 of June 17, 1964, article 15, states that "those persons personally occupying and exploiting the lands of the National domain at the effective date of the present law will continue to so occupy and exploit them." The intent of the law was to create a usufruct in the land. Thus, Article 19, Chapter IV of the Decree of Application 64/573 states that "The conferring [of the land] is personally to the individual or group in question. It cannot be made the object of any transactions. It is decreed for an indeterminate duration. It confers to the benefiting party a right of usage of the land in question."

In reality, the result was a transfer of rights to a lower level. Over time many new rights-holders have entered into arrangements with others ceding use of their parcels under the same conditions which they once held them under the tutelage of the previous traditional rights holders. (See John Grayzel, "Cultural Background and Social Soundness Analysis for Proposed Irrigation Project at Matam, Senegal," U.S.A.I.D./Bechtel Corporation, 1976).

²² A dramatic example of this was a situation in France where problems arose when young men of slave status decided that the cleanup work in their migrant worker dormitory should be shared by all the men who were both co-workers and from the same village. The dispute was resolved when a group of the elder village leadership took a plane to France and explained that of course those of slave status were free in the sense that they could go where they wished, but that their parents had obtained and still farmed land in the village because they were slaves of a family. If they lost this status, they would also have to give up the land obtained because of it (personal communication).

83.127 of June 5, 1983, states that "land belongs to the nation and every Mauritanian, without discrimination of any kind, can, in conformity with the law, own land [Article 1]; that the state recognizes and guarantees private property . . . [Article 2]; and that the traditional land tenure system is abolished [Article 3]"²³

Several questions immediately arise. Is the policy to be taken seriously in light of the past history of ineffective promulgations of new legal standards (as well as the subsequent overthrow of the governments making them)?²⁴ Will it really be applied nationally or only selectively in continuation of the overriding *modus operandi* of "state arbitraryism"? Can it even be applied, since Articles 2, 11, and 13 of the law specifically state that the new law will be in conformity with the Shari'a, which sets up an inherent conflict between traditional rights under Islamic law and those under this new civil legislation? Is it not largely an attempt to satisfy donor demands and, as such, will it at best become a new member of the pluralistic system in *de facto* operation?

Only time will tell how this new policy will really operate. I suspect that to some extent all the above factors are at work and that the arrival of the crisis of land distribution at the new Fom Guelta recession dam on the Gorgol Noir will help bring these factors to a head. Any resolution will still take years, with much interim inconsistency in application. However, I also believe that an additional factor has been crucial to breaking the previous paralysis for any such official declaration at all and will be a major determinant of how this policy will alter the concentration of land ownership in Mauritania over time. In this sense, I am consciously making a leap from analysis to prediction.²⁵

The qualitative change that has occurred is due to a combination of the continuing drought in the Sahel and the actual beginning of the construction of a long-awaited series of dams on the Senegal River. Basically the Moors (specifically the desert *Bidans*) have psychologically begun to give up on their own traditional territory. Their long-evincen tenacity in holding on to this heritage can only be termed courageous, if reactionary. They insisted on the construction of the country's only paved east-west link, passing through the country's interior, over 2000 kilometers of often shifting dunes, rather than along the river, precisely because, if it did not, they feared the total desertion of the interior regions.²⁶ Similarly they have resisted much actual collaboration on river development plans because unofficially they saw it as a social/cultural/ economic and eventually political invasion of their region by the sub-Saharan agricultural way of life. I have actually heard Moors express the hope that the desert would bloom, rather

²³Translation done and provided by Dr. Thomas Part, Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

²⁴The most extreme example of this has been the proclamations ending slavery, which have been made at least four times since independence, the last three because of pressures to do so in light of the lack of adequate progress in implementing the previous proclamations. The government making the new land policy proclamation was overthrown in 1985, but officially the policy is still in effect.

²⁵The process will, I suspect, take at least ten to twenty years, with much national vacillation in policy enforcement along the way. The first indications will be the access of *Haratin* cultivators to traditional Toucouleur lands, followed by poor Moors, and then alienation of parcels to richer parties.

²⁶This project was financed largely through Arab and French assistance, while various other donors, including the World Bank and A.I.D., refused to contribute because of the lack of economic justification.

than that things should bloom in the desert, as they see desert aridity as a most effective barrier to non-Moor penetration.

The fact is, however, that they have now begun to resign themselves to an apparent new reality. Years of loss of livestock by the majority of herders, massive rural exodus to the capital, sedentarization, and, concomitantly, an escalating rise in urban land values, have begun to convince them that they must move south or perish. In terms of land tenure policy, both *Bidan* and *Haratin* are beginning to be less concerned with maintaining their traditional footholds than with establishing new ones. To do this along the river requires a "de-communitarianization" of land and a new individualistic distribution of land parcels. This must be accompanied by sufficient privatization of rights so that these can be distributed to outsiders and, subsequently, be bought, sold, or leased from rights-holders and (especially important for the *Bidan*) then exploited through paid labor.

The eventual results of such a policy will be, I believe, the evolution of a significant concentration of land rights in the south (with the possible exception of traditionally Soninke areas) in the hands of Moors, beginning with *Haratin* cultivators, but eventually including *Bidan* investors who were never before present in the river agricultural production system. The Moors will not overwhelm the situation, but will become an important presence in it. Also present will be non-*Bidan* investors, including traditional Toucouleur elites, religious leaders, and urban bureaucrats.²⁷

A significant number of traditional Toucouleur and *Haratin* small-holders will always be present. In this sense, the system will be self-limiting because of the need of non-farming rights-holders for paid labor. The only way to guarantee such a labor force is to provide them with land sufficient to entice them to stay but inadequate to meet their full needs for case. The situation actually sounds more diabolical than it is. The reality of production in such marginal areas as Mauritania is that there is almost always a need for outside capital to pay for needed imports of food, cloth, rare woods and metals and so on. Since to obtain such goods and capital requires prolonged absences for both work and trade during agriculturally productive periods, some alliance and exchange is needed between local producer/laborers and absentee capitalists.²⁸

Legalization and the Deprivation of Rights

The propensity of established social systems to reproduce themselves under the guise of modernity should not shock anyone who has studied the problem in any depth. If there is anything that is problematic, it is not that there will be displacements but exactly who will be displaced and at what price. It is this last problem that raises new questions of equity and, perhaps, some specific new possibilities for influencing the process.

Regardless of who ultimately does win out, the fundamental nature of the operative process, which is driven by emergent nationhood and integration into a modern worldwide economic and political system, will remain the same. In trying

²⁷ Loss of land rights by poor to richer investors as a result of the destruction of community ownership is a well known phenomenon. See Joel Migdal, *Peasants, Politics and Revolution* (Princeton, 1977), 134-138.

²⁸ See footnote 11, above.

to understand this process, the first thing to point out is the shared characteristics both of the various noted solutions that have been proposed and the evolving circumstances themselves. These may be outlined as follows:

- 1) Everyone but the immediate traditional rights-holders either advocates or tacitly supports the establishment of a new system. The past and present system is seen as not able to continue and evolve as is.
- 2) The final determination of what the new system will be is to be made by a chosen group and not the rights-holders or recipients themselves. This chosen group, whether indigenous or foreign, whether government officials or technical experts, is basically going to impose their decision on the majority (presumably for their own or the national good).
- 3) The new system will be effected and embodied in a modern legal structure adaptive to the modern (especially the urban) sector.
- 4) In designing the new system, the prior existence of extensive traditional rights is recognized, but the new system itself will involve only a very selective incorporation or conversion of such rights into the new order.
- 5) Regardless of which variation of incorporating traditional rights is chosen, the basic process will be one of the gross simplification, for the sake of national application, of very complex, locally adaptive existing situations.
- 6) The simplification of existing rights will increasingly take the form of the reduction of the vast gamut of present practices into a handful of more conceptually constricted categories such as private ownership and usufruct.

In all, a major political exercise is in process which is reputedly justified as a response to an overwhelming need to vest rights in appropriate productive parties. As a final result to this process, more individuals may or may not end up with some new entitlements to land use than was previously the case. However, in reality the very means being used to establish such new rights is simultaneously functioning as a *de facto* mechanism for the expropriation of a much wider range of presently vested interests than any that will be conveyed or created. As such, it is open to condemnation on the grounds of equity alone. However, equity aside, such expropriation can be criticized for creating a situation unacceptable to the majority of the people, for its poor adaptation to local environmental realities, for its disruption of present production systems and paralysis of new ones, for its excessive simplicity in terms of legal characterization, and for the unnecessary and excessive inflexibility it imposes on the creative exploitation of local resources.

Having described the existing situation, I feel compelled to note the lack, among the competing "solutions" offered, of any that really places a significant degree of decision-making or control over future allocations in the hands of those most directly affected. Therefore, I will suggest one.

Instead of approaching the problem as one of establishing a new land tenure system from scratch, as indicated by Article 3 of Law 83.127 of June 5, 1983, an alternative approach could be to synthesize existing rights into newly created ones equally operative in the modern legal system. This would mean, for example, recognizing the century-old pastoral right of a group to passage over rural land as being legally equal to a modern urban easement across someone else's property to

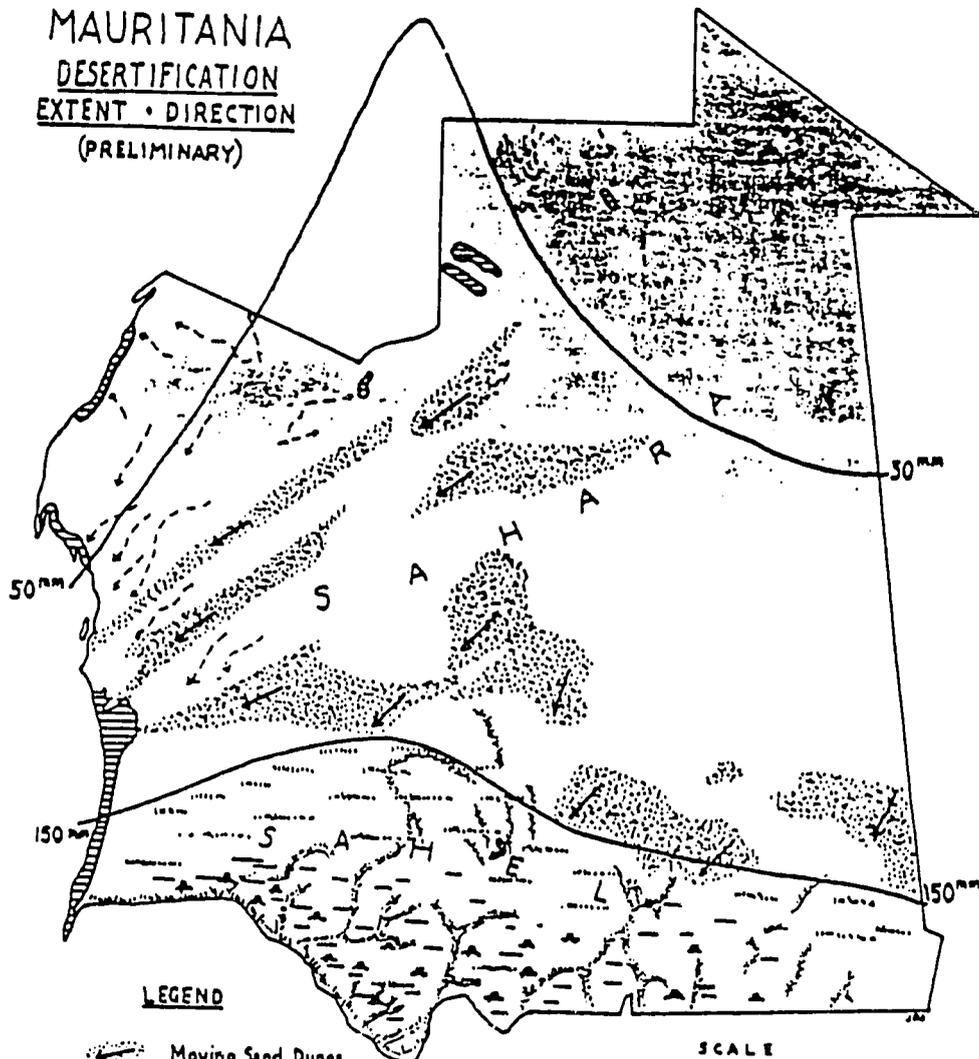
reach one's garage. It would mean recognizing that land is owned in many communities as a corporate or joint resource with assorted rights accruing to various members. It would also mean that alternative arrangements developed in different areas would be acceptable unless contrary to an overriding national policy or principle (such as the end of slavery or serfdom).

The difference between this and present practice would not prevent the state from altering rights or taking land as it deems appropriate under established legal processes and authorities. The difference would be that it would change the status of so called "traditional" or "customary" rights from extra-legal phenomena that are considered open to selective recognition for incorporation into law as technical experts judge appropriate, to empowerments giving rural peoples and communities access to the modern legal system at least equal to that of modern urban populations.

Conclusion

It would be naive to think that such a precarious balance of opposing factors as exist in Mauritania will lend itself in the near future to an easily implemented, rational and consistent land reform. However, land reform in Mauritania, as in much of the world, is one of the difficult long-term social reforms that will have to be effected if meaningful development, let alone distributive justice, is ever to become generalized. As an interim step, numerous rural populations are in immediate need of some institutionalized protection from modern economic and political hypotheses that get tested at their expense without their consent. One small but totally plausible first step is for the concerned technical and political parties to obtain a more profound understanding of both their local and generic realities. Another is for analytical studies of such situations to be conducted and presented in ways responsive to such needs. A third is for the solutions, however interim, to be embodied in actions that not only concern themselves with the welfare of the concerned populations, but allow those populations a reasonable modicum of control over the determination of their own and their communities' lives and futures.

MAURITANIA
DESERTIFICATION
EXTENT • DIRECTION
 (PRELIMINARY)



LEGEND

- Moving Sand Dunes
(Arrow Indicates Direction of Movement)
- Salt Flats + Dunes
- Intermittent Streams - Lowered Water Tables Commonplace
- Soil Erosion: [Gully Erosion Along Intermittent Streams
Sheet Erosion by Water and Wind
- Pasture Deterioration by Drouth + Overgrazing
- Trees Cut, Burned, Grazed, or Dying
- Shaded Areas are Deserts:
 - Darker Shading represents Desert Heartland
 - Lighter Shading of Sahel represents invasion of Drouth + Desert.

SCALE
 0 100 200 300 KMS.

SOURCES

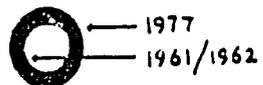
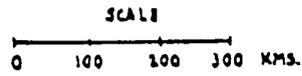
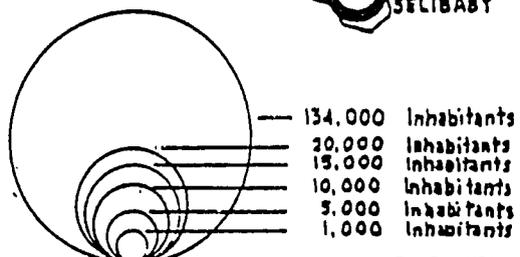
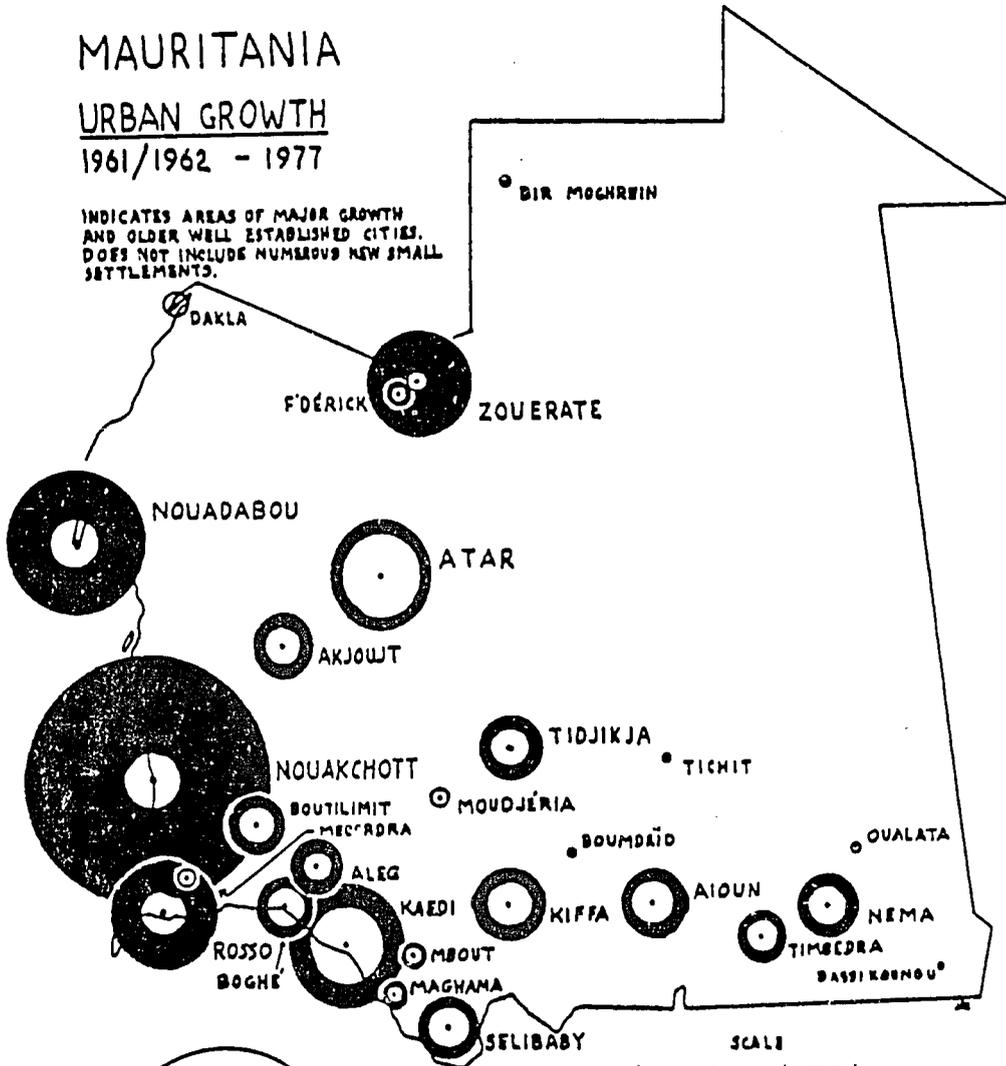
Staff Field Observations
 Selected Physical Maps
 R+D USAID NOUAKCHOTT 1979

MAURITANIA

URBAN GROWTH

1961/1962 - 1977

INDICATES AREAS OF MAJOR GROWTH AND OLDER WELL ESTABLISHED CITIES. DOES NOT INCLUDE NUMEROUS NEW SMALL SETTLEMENTS.



SOURCE: DIRECTION DE LA STATISTIQUE 1977

R - D USAID NOUAKCHOTT 1979

Bibliography

- Allott, A.N. "Law and Social Anthropology," *Sociologus*, vol. 17, No 1 (1963.)
- Bohannan, Paul. "Ethnography and Comparison in Legal Anthropology," in L. Nader, ed. *Law in Culture and Society* (Chicago, 1969).
- Boutillier, J.L. et al. *La Moyenne Vallee du Senegal* (Paris, 1982).
- Bradley, P. et al. *The Gidimaka Region of Mauritania* (London, 1977).
- Chassey, Francis. *L'Etrier, la houe et le livre* (Paris, 1977).
- Diop, Abdoulay Bara. *Societe Toucouleur et migration*, IFAN #XVIII (Dakar, 1965).
- Grayzel, John. "Cultural Background and Social Soundness Analysis for Proposed Irrigation Project at Matam, Senegal," U.S.A.I.D./Bechtel Corporation, 1976.
- Kowal, J.M., and A.H. Kassam. *Agricultural Ecology of Savanna: A Study of West Africa* (Oxford, 1978).
- Manzardo, Andrew. *Land Tenure and Community Development in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania*, University of Wisconsin Land Tenure Center Paper, 1981.
- Migdal, Joel. *Peasants, Politics and Revolution* (Princeton, 1977).
- Murdock, George. *Africa* (New York, 1959).
- O'Keefe, Phil, and Ben Wisner. *Land Use and Development*, IAI African Environment Special Report 5 (London, 1977).
- Pollet, E., and G. Winters. *La Societe Soninke* (Brussels, 1971).
- Riley, J. *Sufferings in Africa: Captain Riley's Narrative* (New York, 1965; originally published 1817).
- Saint-Exupery, A. *Wind, Sand and Stars* (New York, 1967).
- Saint-Pere, L. *Les Sarakolle du Guidimaka*. CEHSA-AOF (Paris, 1925).
- Stewart, C.C., and E.K. Stewart. *Islam and Social Order in Mauritania* (Oxford, 1973).
- Toupet, Charles. *La Sedentarisation des nomades en Mauritanie centrale sahelienne* (Paris, 1977).
- U.S.A.I.D./Islamic Republic of Mauritania. *Rural Assessment Manpower Survey* (RAMS Project, 1982).

Statistical Annex II

Social Change and Social Organization of Agricultural Production A.S. 8-2 (Dr. Mona Fikry)

Sociological Profiles: Black Africans A.S. 7-1 (Dr. Mona Fikry)

Webb, James. "Shifting Sands: An Economic History of the Mauritanian Sahara 1500-1850" (Ph.D. thesis, Johns Hopkins University, 1983).

World Bank. *Land Reform Sector Policy Paper*, May 1975.