On the eve of President Leopold Senghor’s retirement, the Senegalese state appeared to be ‘a quite remarkable success story’. This success was attributed to the emergence of an authentic national political culture, to relatively viable linkages between the communities (local, religious or ethnic) and the state. The success was manifest in the capacity of the governmental party as an effective political machine. The quality of political leadership made the Senegalese state a ‘uniquely effective political apparatus’, and an instrument of stability although still unable to initiate an effective development policy. The state in Senegal at least was not a political ‘artifact’ working in a void, without effective links with society at large.

Today the problem is to know if the success continues, in a new context of political transformation, with a very precarious economic and social situation. Can the ‘democratisation’ initiated by Senghor, and pursued with still more determination by his successor Abdou Diouf, respond to the rise of a militant Islam, to the development of a regionalist movement in the Casamance, to the discontent provoked by austerity measures under the guidance of the International Monetary Fund?

Starting from these questions, we must first examine the mechanics of the democratic renewal, and then look to the changes that have occurred in the relation between the state and society, the changing forms of hegemony. In a third section we deal with the very serious problems that the state must confront. Finally, we attempt to explain why the crisis in Senegal has not overwhelmed the regime (even if the outlook is not reassuring). In order to grasp the impact of the recent democratisation, one must place it in the broader context of the transformation of the state.

Democracy in Senegal

Leopold Senghor’s retirement from the Senegalese presidency at the end of 1980, entailing the succession of Abdou Diouf (prime minister since 1971), has introduced a further constitutional liberalisation in Senegal. Where three political parties had been constitutionally allowed since 1976, with their stipulated ideological positions to left and right, President Diouf was to
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oversee a measure allowing the legalisation of ‘all’ political parties, without ideological stipulation or restriction. The principal significance of this measure (April 1981) has been its allowance for the emergence to legality of the numerous clandestine parties (the groupuscules) of the more or less extreme left in Dakar. Thus fourteen political parties had been legally recognised by 1983, including five of the far left. Communist-style opposition (three of the Third International, two of the Fourth) could apparently be greeted with some equanimity by the government, although constitutional restriction was still applied in other areas. Thus it was stipulated that the parties in applying for legal status must reject affiliation to ‘race, ethnic group, sex, religion, sect, language or region’. The politically most significant categories in this list are three: religion, region and language; and the ‘liberalisation’ of April 1981 is to be understood in the light of these exclusions. These items are apparently not negotiable: the initiative of April 1981 demanded of the new political parties that they swear to respect the constitution, while the new president spoke of this liberalisation as ‘L’ouverture, mais dans la fermeté’ (‘An opening up, but with firmness’).

Political parties based on religion, region, or language will still be firmly banned, while parties based on Western ideology will be openly welcomed. Marxism in particular appears to be greeted as politically innocuous, a harmless distraction for the over-educated young.

The general elections of 1983, for the legislature and the presidency, were the first electoral test of the Diouf regime and of the new constitutional openness. The eight parties contesting the parliamentary election were indeed allowed a substantial freedom in campaigning. The press was largely unrestricted, as were public meetings of the various parties: only money and organisational means placed limits on the public expression of party views. On the state-run media of radio and television, the arrangement was to allow the governing Parti Socialiste ‘equal’ time with the totality of the opposition. The opposition understandably complained that this division gave unfair advantage to the governing party, seven times as much media exposure as any of the campaigning opposition parties (excluding the ordinary news items, which gave even more single-minded attention to the government candidates). But with other West African comparisons in mind, one is perhaps more impressed with the allowance of any official time to parties of opposition. The campaign was more seriously distorted by electoral regulations which ruled out coalitions of parties, either for legislative or presidential elections: thus the opposition went into battle in dispersed order against the might of the government machine. And the preponderant patronage resources of government were demonstrated during the campaign in the declarations of electoral support from the leaders of the Sufi Muslim brotherhoods: given the fulsome terms of Sufi allegiance to a spiritual guide, these maraboutic declarations for the president and the government party may have guaranteed the delivery of hundreds of thousands of votes—
Senegal

enough apparently to put the election in the bank for Abdou Diouf and the Parti Socialiste.

But if the government held most of the cards, the conduct of the 1983 elections certainly did not suggest Socialist over-confidence. The Supreme Court ruled some days before the election that the secret ballot would be ‘optional’: this was to mean that a booth would be available (perhaps at the far end of a hall) for those who expressed a wish to vote secretly, while others would vote openly using the coloured slip of their candidate. Anyone voting for the government would wish to vote openly, in the hope perhaps of some future reward, and only a very few opposition supporters thus voted ‘secretly’. The Supreme Court, overseer for the elections, also ruled that an identity card (bearing a photo) would not be required at the polling station, only a polling card (no photo). The result of this latter dispensation, together with a ruling that transport facilities were to be unrestricted within each of the country’s eight regions, brings to mind the injunction of early machine politics in the United States – ‘Vote early and often’. Opposition party observers were on occasion expelled from the polling stations, and there were rumours of ballot stuffing – this latter a traditional feature of elections in Senegal. These irregularities may furthermore seem redundant when one remembers that it is the government which counts all the votes, in Dakar and behind closed doors: no question of opposition party observers in the central counting house. Those who counted the votes have been civil servants, and it is remarkable that the opposition parties have not made this a major public issue, although the partisan neutrality of the state bureaucracy is the thinnest of legal fictions. President Diouf states the matter bluntly: ‘The government is indissolubly linked to the Socialist Party, to which it owes everything.”

The declared result of the 1983 elections was an even more overwhelming triumph for the governing party than that of the previous general elections (1978): Parti Socialiste, 111; Parti Démocratique Sénégalais 8; and Rassemblement National Démocratique, 1 (1978 result: PS 82 seats, PDS 18). Voting had been by proportional representation, on a single national list, for one half of the parliamentary seats; by majority vote in separate constituencies for the other half of the seats. The opposition won none of the constituencies, and was represented in the national assembly thanks to the element of national proportional representation. The national counting house could declare parliamentary results for the opposition which would be virtually impossible to test. The simultaneously held presidential election gave the expected approbation for Abdou Diouf (82 per cent). But where such a presidential result had been expected by most commentators and probably by all politicians other than the defeated candidate, Abdoulaye Wade, the scale of the Socialist Party’s victory was greeted with howls of protest from the opposition: ‘fraud’; ‘electoral masquerade’. Where Diouf’s election could be seen as understandable acclaim for a young, dynamic and reputedly honest candidate with some important recent initiatives to his
credit, the Socialist Party’s victory was seen as containing an important element of sharp electoral practice.

Fraud there very probably had been, but the opposition was to fail signal in its attempts to mobilise popular protest against these declared results: the opposition protest began well, with the formation of a Front du Refus by eleven political parties, with an agreed statement in March calling for new elections. But these new elections failed to materialise, and the Front slowly disintegrated (down to eight parties in April, to six parties in May 1983, as the Senegalese political logic of splitting and factionalism took hold). The protesters were almost exclusively city people and their protests appear to have aroused little interest outside the cities: perhaps one may see in this urban/rural political division some continuity from the historical division between the coastal communes and the hinterland (la brousse). An attempt was made in 1985 to revive the opposition forces, as the Parti Démocratique Sénégalais joined with five other parties in the new Alliance Démocratique Sénégalaise. These allies were soon in confrontation with the law, involved in a banned anti-apartheid demonstration (August 1985), as a result of which the leaders (Abdoulaye Wade and Abdoulaye Bathily) were to spend several days in jail. But Wade’s new alliances, with parties of the far left, were to cost him in desertions from his own PDS as a further three of his parliamentary contingent left the party (down to nine in 1987).

The general elections of 28 February 1988 then conformed to the 1983 precedent in most respects (optional secret ballot, polling card with no photograph, notably) but the verdict of the Dakar crowd on the declared result was of an unprecedented violence. The official result gave Abdou Diouf 73.7 per cent of the presidential vote, against 25.8 per cent for Abdoulaye Wade; in the legislative election 103 seats went to the Parti Socialiste, 17 seats to the Parti Démocratique Sénégalais. The serious rioting in Dakar which followed the declaration included the burning of cars and buildings by young PDS supporters. Abdoulaye Wade and some associates were then to spend some time in jail during a state of emergency. A notable feature of the result was that the PDS did well in the Casamance (winning both seats for example in Bignona) thus providing some outlet for regional political frustration. Electoral malpractices were apparently particularly flagrant (or more closely observed) in the capital city: Dakar thus remains the centre of Senegalese disaffection as well as of government.

Multi-party politics in Senegal, with the openings created by the Diouf regime in April 1981, has thus not resulted in any dramatic realignment of political forces. The governing party continues to hold its monopoly in the dispensation of patronage, continues to operate through a network of urban and rural influentials. In the countryside the only opposition party with an effective presence remains Abdoulaye Wade’s Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (which did relatively well for example in the heartlands of the Mouride brotherhood in the 1983 elections). The numerous other parties have failed to reach beyond an urban constituency. The leftist groupuscules have
developments have worked in the sense of a more direct mode of incorporating society into the state, with a redefinition of the role of the party and the ruling class in the political system.

A more direct incorporation

The evolution of the Senegalese state tends to more direct intervention in society, moving from a feeble state to a 'complete' state. The incorporation of society into the space of state control is at the expense of the groups and 'hegemonic apparatus' that traditionally provided communication between the state on one hand and the communities on the other. A quasi-indirect mode of administration (very close to that favoured by colonial rule, notably in the rural areas) gives way to a state of a more clearly Jacobin type. Without overtly seeking to eliminate intermediaries, this new state seeks to develop its own instruments of domination and to create a more homogeneous and malleable political and economic space, which is to be more closely controlled.19

A few qualifications are required to complete this overall analysis. First, this tendency does not simply mean that the patrimonial and clientelist state has disappeared. The Jacobin logic is a project which can be discerned, but which tends to remain unrealised because the state does not have the necessary means, and because it meets with resistance or diversionary tactics which limit the impact of its initiatives. The state must act prudently, and despite its proclaimed intentions it is also still impregnated with patrimonial and clientelist practices.

This new mode of incorporation is thus rather less than a full state control. It can be reconciled with democratisation of political life and a liberalisation of the economy, as paradoxically has occurred in Senegal. The return to a multi-party system thus denotes a concern to legitimise and channel political initiatives which otherwise might escape the government's control or act against it. The liberalisation of the economy can also be seen to indicate an official intent to create a space in which the old modes of production (associated with the Islamic brotherhoods and local communities) give way to an economic order inspired by capitalist and 'modernising' rationality. The official project thus works in the direction of breaking up the old, particular modes of organisation and constructing a more coherent and uniform framework.

This tendency, which we have termed 'Jacobin', is not however new in Senegal, even if it is now more pronounced. Since the 1960s, and especially in the 1970s, a whole arsenal of ambitious judicial reforms has set up the rules for the penetration of the 'periphery' by the 'centre'. The law on the national domain (1964) thus unified land legislation and enabled the state to intervene in a particularly sensitive sphere, even if the management of these lands was entrusted to rural communities which have been described by one observer as 'simple play things in the hands of the préfet and the Trésor (Exchequer), virtually non-existent'.20 The same logic was also at work through the new
Family Code (1972), which provoked the opposition of many Muslim leaders, and which endowed the state with a direct arm of intervention in what had been hitherto the concern of ‘custom’.21

In the urban milieu, the policy of *déguerpissement* (chasing away) and the battle against those who in administrative vocabulary are referred to as ‘human congestion’, beggars, street-hawkers, the handicapped, the mentally ill, has been the subject of an impressive judicial pronouncement that can be seen as indicative of an official intent to the control, segregation, and locking up of hitherto uncontrollable ‘marginal’ or ‘abnormal’ people.22

Another manifestation of this new hegemonic policy can be seen in the government’s major economic projects. Henceforth, the state and the multinationals are to act jointly to develop the country. In this perspective the groundnut basin, with its marabouts and its particular modes of production, is no longer the priority. ‘The state’, writes J. Copans, ‘will thus only have a declining need for its “groundnut industry clientele”’.23 These changes are most apparent in the Casamance and now especially in the Senegal River region. The development of the Senegal River Valley involves a direct training of peasants without working through the intermediary structures and groups on which the groundnut industry depends. This type of development has been confided notably to SAED (Société d’aménagement et d’exploitation des terres du delta du fleuve Sénégal or Company for the Administration and Exploitation of the Senegal River Delta Lands), with a technological sophistication that is resisted by the local peasantry. The latter mark their independence by creating very active village associations and groups.24

This new political and economic order tends to the erosion and marginalisation of local networks of authority, and in the end creates an increased dependence of peasants and city-dwellers upon the state. Despite the difficulty that the state experiences in the management of its programme, its effects do make themselves felt.25 The changing relations between the Senegalese state and society are then to be seen in terms of several factors. There is the logic or rather the ideology of the nation–state; especially that of the French tradition working to ‘civilise’ society. This logic and ideology are also sustained by particular situations. In Senegal, the peasant malaise at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s (drought, poor peanut price) revealed the limits of clientelism and offered the state a chance to intervene in new ways, the more so since this crisis sapped the resources of the local bosses (marabouts excepted) or transformed patrimonial practices into corruption scandals, as was the case with ONCAD. The dislocation of the urban milieu under the impact of the rural exodus engendered a more interventionist urban policy. Finally, there has been the arrival of a new generation of leaders or ‘managers’ in the public or para-public sectors, more ‘technocrats’ than politicians: these new leaders tend to be hostile to machine politics, in their preference for the organisational machine of
bureaucracy. The rise of Abdou Diouf to supreme power is the symbol of this movement.

The reformism of Abdou Diouf

As we have already indicated, two opposing tendencies may be distinguished in the ruling elite. The first originated in the patrimonial and clientelist state, which it virtually controlled; Barker properly labels this as the ‘adaptive-manipulative tendency’. The other tendency is that of the technocrats and entrepreneurs, who wish to embark upon the modernisation of the state.

Young technocrats, with responsibility in government or in managing state companies before they entered politics, have enjoyed a growing influence over the years. They were already numerous in government during the 1970s. Diouf is both the symbol and the champion of this new political generation, and by becoming the head of state (1981) he gave this generation a remarkable impetus, even if he did have to humour the old political bosses (‘barons’).

President Diouf’s policy of renewal consists of appealing to the energies of the country, of extolling ‘transparency’ in political and administrative action, and democratising the Parti Socialiste. In this policy, the priority is to finish with the clientelist networks and practices which had penetrated the party and even the institutions and organisms of the state; to the point (as happened with ONCAD) that the national leaders no longer even had control of these structures.

This policy of renewal was thus a scarcely veiled attack on the ‘old guard’. ‘Democratic openness’, ‘national consensus’, ‘total multi-partyism’, these are some of the themes and slogans which were intended to shake up the party, to invite it to go beyond factional quarrels in order to become a parti animateur or a party with a driving force, and to give the initiative to a technically competent cadre.

This will to renewal gave the new president a positive image in Senegalese public opinion. His policy of rigour and openness earned him wide support, at least at the level of grand principles, for at the level of immediate local reality this Dioufist political generation lacks a very solid social base.

As technocrats spending most of their time running the state bureaucracy, they had few close ties with the party faithful at the grassroots levels. The lack of contact with the less educated and more traditionalist rank and file members of the party was largely due to the fact that Diouf and the relatively young, well-educated, cosmopolitan group around him defined themselves as members of a national intellectual elite rather than the representative of local, regional, and ethnic constituencies.

If one bears in mind the strength of the local bosses and the shortcomings of the technocrats, one can understand why Diouf has still not gained control over his own party; and this situation does not seem to have improved over the years for Diouf and his supporters. The government party has never been
in such a state of confusion and division. Diouf has certainly succeeded in eliminating some senior officials of the party and the state: old hands from the Senghor era like Adrien Senghor or L. Alexandrenne, political stars in decline; but other strong men of the regime, like the ex-prime minister Habib Thiam or the ex-foreign minister Moustapha Niasse, suffered the same fate. Far from being strengthened, Diouf’s team has become more isolated by these moves, and Diouf himself is more and more dependent upon his advisors, particularly Jean Collin, Secretary General at the presidency and éminence grise of the regime. The influence of these ‘modernist technocrats’ appears to be preponderant in the government and in the ruling circles of the Parti Socialiste, but it is much weaker in the party machine where men like Clédor Sall, Alioune Badara M’Bengue, or Amadou Cissé Dia, well-informed politicians, keep their ascendancy; it is thus outside party structures, through personalised committees of support, that Diouf and Collin mobilise their partisans.\(^{31}\)

The new state thus lacks the social basis and the local entrenchment of the patrimonial and clientelist state, which has assured the stability of the country; the regime now is confronted with serious challenges, which accentuate its isolation; the state lacks the resources which might allow it to resolve these challenges or escape from its isolation.

The state under stress

Problems have accumulated over these last few years. Abdou Diouf, without being quite discredited, is now threatened on several fronts: an economic and social crisis, with the readjustment that this involves; the rise of a militant Islam; the development of a regionalist movement in the Casamance; the urban crisis.

The crisis

Senegal like many African countries is in a state of economic crisis bringing it under the control of the International Monetary Fund, while the prospect of recovery remains distant. The economic predicament of the country is highly alarming; if one is to believe recent statistics from the World Bank, real per capita GNP has decreased 0.5 per cent between 1965 and 1984; the balance of payments deficit has increased from $16 million in 1970 to $274 million in 1984, and the foreign debt which was $131 million in 1970 increased to $1,565 million in 1984.\(^{32}\)

Senegalese agriculture is in a state of near collapse. Groundnuts, which remain the basic product of the agricultural sector and which are crucial to budgetary and external revenue, no longer ‘nourish’ either the peasant or the state. Due to drought and/or farmer disaffection, production is chronically irregular: 1,450,000 tons of groundnuts in 1975; 508,000 in 1978; 521,000 in 1980; 1,145,000 in 1982; 559,000 in 1983; 700,000 in 1984; 590,000 in 1985.\(^{33}\)

A very considerable portion of this harvest furthermore escapes the official
marketing network, and is smuggled (in the direction of the Gambia), or transformed by the peasants themselves for their personal consumption or for sale on the informal market. Of an estimated harvest of 700,000 tons in 1984, only 150,000 appears to have been sold through the official network.\textsuperscript{34} The low prices paid to the producer, as well as the ponderousness, inefficiency, and corruption of the state marketing board, explain these peasant strategies of evasion. But one should also note that neither the dissolution of ONCAD nor a rise in the groundnut buying price to the producer have modified this behaviour. The peasants have learned to do without the state, and the oil pressing factories work at 25 per cent of their capacity. The decline in state revenue is considerable.

Rice production on the other hand has regularly increased, but with consumption having almost doubled in twenty years (rice is the staple food in the towns and is tending to become a staple in some rural areas), Senegal must import more of it every year. Major government agricultural projects, intended to give a decisive impetus to the country's economy, are not yet operational and are in any case controversial. The failure of SAED in the Senegal River Valley, which did not succeed either in mobilising the peasants or in balancing its own books, does not augur well for the future of these initiatives.

Major industrial projects, such as the Dakar zone libre or Dakar-Marine (ship repair), have turned out to be costly failures. The production of phosphates is stagnant. Only fishing and tourism are promising sectors, although in the latter case the foreign firms involved repatriate an important part of the profits. Public finance is thus in a worrying state of deficit. State revenue has suffered the ups and downs of the production and marketing of groundnuts, whereas public spending has steadily increased due to a public sector of 70,000 bureaucrats (1985).

Faced with this situation, an economic and financial adjustment plan was launched in 1981, supported by special drawing rights accorded by the IMF and by financial aid from France and the USA. The Senegalese government declared its commitment to a policy of market prices and a limit on wages. But the financial imbalance was accentuated anew in 1985 (a deficit of close to 100 billion CFA francs), showing the difficulty of efforts to bring things under control. The 'New Agricultural Policy' has not yet proved itself, with its plan for a relaxation of official supervision, making the peasant responsible as well as in profit (particularly in the case of groundnuts). The 'New Industrial Policy' to reduce customs protection and barriers, to relaunch private initiative (privatisation of a portion of the public sector), and to oversee salaries, has yet to be effective. Rigour and economic and financial stabilisation mean that times are hard for many Senegalese: within the pro-government union, the CNTS (Confédération nationale des travailleurs sénégalais or National Confederation of Senegalese Workers), revolt is brewing: factions openly opposed to IMF policy (notably the 'union renewal' tendency of Secretary General Madia Diop) have been organised.
relatively moderate verdicts handed down from the courts to imprisoned leaders and demonstrators.

These Diola revolts have a marked traditionalist side: meetings in the sacred wood, the presence of women who have an important social and religious role in animist society, use of rudimentary arms, etc. But this ethnic spontaneity is also structured and organized by the Mouvement des forces démocratiques de Casamance (MFDC or Movement of Casamance Democratic Forces), which has reclaimed the name of a former regional party. The latter joined Leopold Senghor’s Bloc Démocratique Sénégalais before independence. The members of the present MFDC are for the most part men of humble origin, strongly attached to their ancestral traditions, whereas the local leaders of the Parti Socialiste are for the most part bureaucrats. The local Catholic clergy does not control the movement, but several Diola priests champion a Christianity adapted to Diola culture and are generally thought of as defenders and spokesmen of the people. The movement has some real support in Guinea-Bissau, where several ethnic groups are culturally close to the Diola, who in turn helped the Guinean groups during their struggle for national liberation.

The Senegalese government has certainly tried to propose reform; by dividing the Casamance into two administrative regions, by setting up a development plan, and by increasing the number of Casamance natives in the state and party leadership (at the moment there are five ministers from the Casamance in the government). But this reform has done nothing to calm spirits. Certain administrative cadres from the Casamance have demanded, in a memorandum on the events in Ziguinchor (1984), that a more innovative programme be adopted (nomination of a governor coming from the region, change in land policy, promotion of local languages, development of social services). But nothing so far suggests that the government intends to modify its approach to the problem in any fundamental way.

Casamance particularism is explained by the geographic isolation of the region, the poor quality of its infrastructure, and more generally by the neglect of the region from Dakar. It also stems from the growing presence of merchants and bureaucrats from the ‘north’ who tend to impose their language and their religion (the Diola remain profoundly animist even when they convert to Catholicism or Islam) as the only legitimate ones. Faced with this ‘internal colonialism’, a strong sentiment of frustration produces the search for a distinctive identity.

But the heart of the Casamance question is in what D. Darbon has termed ‘a general incapacity for communication’ between a hierarchical and centralised state, and acephalous and egalitarian societies used to village-level self-rule. This structural difference is enormous, although it can be tempered through intermediary authorities which modulate and adjust these contradictions. Such was indeed the case for a long time: the state did not seek directly to penetrate Diola society, and ethnic and regional entities remained within the government party. But in the Casamance, as elsewhere,
‘modernisation’ of the state moves in the opposite direction and thus confrontation is inevitable. One example here is the law on the national domain, whose application is felt by the Diola to be an assault. Seeking at all costs to assure its direct social control, the state loses all sense of communication and encourages political adventurism, as we have already noted in the area of Islam and in the urban field.

To live in a Senegalese fashion (vivre sénégalaisement) ...without a state

The expression *vivre sénégalaisement* is currently employed to refer to the day to day difficulties inherent in poverty, but also to the ways of getting by, the art of making do without the situation being fundamentally modified. *Vivre sénégalaisement* consists then of ‘struggling along’ in precarious circumstances. The Senegalese thus have a whole panoply of practices to employ, where they cannot count on the state; they find their own recipes for survival.

The ‘informal’ economy (in reality much more structured than the so-called ‘formal’ economy), smuggling, or the switch to subsistence crops (millet, beans, etc.) represent a first type of response, through short-circuiting or ignoring the economic institutions and legislation by which the state defines a space of its own. It is a question of avoiding the state, from which one expects nothing good, or of acting as if it did not exist.

Senegalese peasants have become experts here either by limiting their groundnut production and favouring crops that can feed them (this to the great panic of the state which does not conceive of ‘food self-sufficiency’ in this way); or by pressing the groundnuts themselves in order to sell the oil on a clandestine basis; or by routing their harvest towards the Gambia or Mauritania and leaving the oil mills of the state groundnut industry without groundnuts. We have seen that these phenomena have grown considerably over the last few years. ‘What Has Become of the Seeds?’ lamented *Le Soleil* of 9 April 1986, stigmatising the bad faith and low sense of civic duty of certain peasants.

Senegalese smuggling involves more than groundnuts. Sugar, cooking oil, electric batteries, cloth, cans of tomato paste, for example, are traded vigorously across the Senegal-Gambian frontiers. One must also point out the development of the extraordinary parallel market in Touba, the capital of the Mourides and a veritable clandestine Harrods, Senegalese style, which the state cannot keep under control without angering the heads of the brotherhood. The informal activities are not all illegal, but one of their salient characteristics is that they are in general little in step with the law, and that the merchants who go in for these activities tend to be ‘irregulars’ pursued by the police. The state and the ‘informal’ sector rarely make a good couple.41

Mutual aid associations and institutions are the social side of these informal initiatives. In many respects they function as a social security system. Without the assistance of the state it is in these relational networks

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that one can find the necessary resources and support for survival. Relations of personal dependence added to a deeply rooted associative tradition explain the importance and development of these ‘assistance’ structures during difficult situations, especially in a context of crisis. The aid of marabouts to their talibés is part of the duties of religious leaders, even if it does maintain inequality. And during periods of drought many peasants set this maraboutic solicitude against the powerlessness or indifference of the state. In the urban milieu the success of maraboutic associations, the dâ’iras, owes much to the uncertainties of the city and to the need for welcome, protection, and warmth that migrants from the hinterland experience in Dakar.

Savings associations or tontines are also support groups as well as having some ‘informal’ commercial aspects. The nût for example are groups of women of the same profession, for mutual aid. The tekk are groups organised around a social event (baptism, death) in order to help those who have to pay for it. The informal sector operates in teaching by the opening of unofficial Arabic schools, with students who have failed in the official educational system. On this point as on so many others, Islam offers recourse and an alternative solution.

Islamic ambiguity

The Islamic dynamics that we have described do not necessarily transform the political scene. The Islamic breakthrough does bear upon the state, and even obliges it to redefine or renegotiate its relations with Islamic actors who have become more demanding and audacious. But Islamic mobilisation also has political limits that we must briefly explain. Social reconstruction in this Islamic movement firstly fills a void and tempers the risks of anomic and explosion to which the state might be victim. In this way in the towns the social control assured by the brotherhoods ultimately constitutes an important element of stability, and thus tends to avoid the riots that have occurred in some Islamic countries in crisis situations. For if state urban policy (or the shortcomings thereof) neglect the social (re)organisation of the most powerless groups, the development of Muslim sociability, thanks to the actions of the brotherhoods, compensates for these deficiencies and, to a certain extent, allows people to ward off the dangers of the city.

The Tijaniyya brotherhood already had a solid urban tradition and also a faithful clientele amongst the elites and merchants. It has continued this movement. On the other hand, the Mourides were originally a typically rural organisation, but they also have followed the roads to the city, accompanying the peasant exodus. Quite at ease in the culture of ‘ordinary’ people, and tightly grouped around its marabouts, the Mouride brotherhood offers a training and solidarity system well-adapted to situations of change and crisis. At the beginning of this century the Muridiyya had such a role in social reconstruction for Wolof peasants faced with the upheavals brought about
‘Senegal is being kept afloat by Western aid, the IMF and Middle Eastern largesses’, noted *Africa Confidential* in 1985. But since then the ‘largesses’ of the Arab countries have been reduced and those of the West made more conditional. Senegal’s external image no doubt permits it to get the support indispensable to its survival: but the weapon is double-edged, for this aid implies reforms which limit the distributive capabilities of the state and thus risk making it the target of every malcontent.

**Conclusion**

The Senegalese state thus appears more and more dislocated and fragile. Within the state and party apparatus the divisions are sharp and the *malaise* has even reached the forces of order and no doubt the army. Moreover, state relations with society are problematic when they are not actually conflictual. Some sectors of society place themselves on the margins of the state, while others seek to redefine the nature of the state itself (as in the Casamance and certain Muslim milieux). Only external aid and what remains of patrimonialism and clientelism appear to allow the state to subsist. However, the powerlessness of the opposition and the ambiguity of the Islamic movement restrict the capacities for change and give the regime a sort of legitimacy by default that assures its durability, at least for the time being. We seem to be far from the ‘remarkable success story’ of ten years ago; even if in the circumstances that now obtain, the survival of the regime is to be seen as a substantial achievement.