

1-27-03
WORKSHOP IN POLITICAL THEORY
AND POLICY ANALYSIS
513 NORTH PARK
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA 47405-3186
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The Art of Association in Senegal: Tocquevillian Analytics in an African Setting

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Presented at the Institutional Analysis and Development Mini-Conference and
TransCoop Meeting Humboldt University/Indiana University,
December 13th, 14th, and 16th, 2002, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis,
Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA

CHAPTER VII

THE ART OF ASSOCIATION

"In all the countries where political associations are prohibited, civil associations are rare."¹

"If men are to remain civilized or to become civilized, the art of association must develop and improve among them at the same speed as equality of conditions."²

Tocqueville underscored the strong connections between political and civil associations. When governments banned political associations and political life, they also discouraged citizens from organizing civil associations.

"When some types of associations are forbidden and others allowed, it is hard to tell in advance the difference between the former and the latter. Being in doubt, people steer clear of them altogether, and in some vague way public opinion tends to consider any association as a rash and almost illicit enterprise."³

The existence of associations depended on the right to create associations and the willingness of rulers and governments to recognize them. Their patterns of leadership and initiative, however, reflected the kind of society in which they functioned.

Tocqueville noted that the dynamics of association differed in aristocratic societies where wealth, power, and high social status rested in the hands of a few individuals. In aristocratic societies, people had no need to come together and unite for action since they were already united under the leadership of the aristocrat. The wealthy aristocrat was usually the only person other than the monarch with the means and authority to initiate new undertakings and to lead what was, in effect, a permanent and enforced association.⁴ Thus it was not surprising that in aristocratic societies, horizontally based voluntary associations were likely to be rare.

In democratic/egalitarian societies, however, individuals were relatively weak and isolated and had neither the means to carry out major undertakings by themselves nor the power to force their fellow citizens to participate. As a result, citizens in democratic

societies had to learn how to join together voluntarily and to help each other in order to achieve common goals.

In modern democratic societies, government was the functional equivalent of the powerful aristocrat capable of undertaking great enterprises and forcing the people to follow. Tocqueville warned of the dangers of letting the government assume the responsibility for launching and controlling every new initiative.⁵ To do so would ultimately undermine the people's independence and lead to an intolerable tyranny. In France, government had taken most of the initiative to provide public goods and services, thereby dampening local initiatives and discouraging the development of associational life. In egalitarian America, associational life flourished because individuals were left free to band together to build schools, hospitals, churches, and commercial and industrial enterprises.

Tocqueville also maintained that the absence of political associations would adversely affect the number and quality of civil associations. Thus, while recognizing that some civil associations would arise even in countries in which political associations were forbidden, he maintained that these would be "few, feebly conceived, and unskillfully managed."⁶

Skills learned in participating in political associations could also be used in civil associations. Conversely, participation in civil associations provided individuals with experience in learning how to work together and skills which could be used in political associations. For many politicians, their membership and leadership positions in civil associations provided a base and served as a training ground for their political aspirations.

Although Tocqueville referred to civil associations as "associations in civil life which have no political objective,"⁷ he sometimes described associations as articulating and aggregating the interests of its members:

"When some view is represented by an association, it must take clearer and more precise shape. It counts on its supporters and involves them in its cause; these supporters get to know one another, and numbers increase zeal. An association unites the energies of divergent minds and vigorously directs them toward a more clearly indicated activity."⁸

Some associations could thus act as interest groups. When they did, they often combined the attributes of both political and civil associations. Interest groups were political when they engaged in political life by lobbying the government to enact policies that promoted their members' interests and supported political parties and politicians who did the same. Interest groups acted like civil associations to the extent that they pursued common non-political goals and interests held by its members and made no effort to seize power or alter the nature of the political system. While Tocqueville did not refer specifically to employers' groups, trade unions, or farmers associations in his discussion of associations, these kinds of large-scale interest group could be considered bulwarks against tyranny

when they maintained their autonomy in the face of government efforts to bring them under its control.

Tocqueville classified commercial and industrial enterprises in which individuals combined to undertake major economic activities together as civil associations. Civil associations also included a vast range and variety of groups, great and small, engaged in a myriad of religious⁹, moral, social, cultural, intellectual and recreational activities.

In tracing the evolution of associational life in Senegal, this chapter builds upon Tocqueville's insights and offers evidence to validate some of his propositions concerning the relationships between freedom of association, political and civil associations, and the quality of associational life.

Associational Life in Pre-Colonial Senegal

The aristocratic organization of most pre-colonial Senegalese societies sharply reduced the possibility of different groups in Senegalese society forming horizontal voluntary associations. Patron-client, master-slave, and marabout-talibe relationships were all built on asymmetrical power and status relationships. These relationships and the ideologies supporting an aristocratic order shaped mores and what Tocqueville called "habits of the heart." Cheikh Anta Diop, one of Senegal's most influential historians, insisted that aristocratic pre-colonial Africa had created mores and patterns of thinking which, despite years of republican colonial rule had persisted right up to independence:

"Rich and poor, peasant and city-dweller dream more of becoming a small or great lord rather than a petty or grand bourgeois. Whatever the caste, the kinds of gestures and attitudes and the manner of tackling problems are lordly and aristocratic as opposed to bourgeois "stinginess."¹⁰

While pre-colonial Senegal had a rich associational life, it had few voluntary associations in which membership was open and involved a certain degree of individual choice. Group membership revolved primarily around ascriptive criteria such as age, gender, kinship, lineage, and caste. Locality and religion were also important sources of group identity.

Divided into groups based on gender, age-grade associations included all males and females born within a given period and were one of the few institutions to cut across caste, kinship, and descent in initiating all members of the same age grade into adulthood at the same time.¹¹ The horizontally-based, age-grade groups were not voluntary associations. Membership was compulsory for all members of the community. Although age-grade associations could be found everywhere, they were more organized and important in acephalous societies which had relatively egalitarian social structures were

governed by the elders and among the Mandinka. Young males and females within the same age-grade often formed work parties which were paid in kind by the sponsor.¹³ As we shall see, groups like these were the forerunners of the dynamic youth and women's associations that emerged in Senegal after independence.

In pre-colonial Senegal, caste artisans had no craft guilds as in medieval Europe or in parts of Nigeria. In pre-industrial societies, craft guilds seemed to emerge primarily in urbanized areas with relatively high populations. In Senegal, which had no developed urban traditions before colonial rule, goldsmiths, silversmiths, and other highly skilled artisans tended to be linked more closely with their aristocratic patrons as were the griots who served as family historians and entertainers.

With the exception of the inhabitants of Futa Toro, the majority of Senegal's pre-colonial populations practiced traditional African religions at least until the middle of the nineteenth century. The spread of Islam and Christianity reduced the importance of kinship, lineage, ethnic ties and other ascriptive criteria in determining group membership and identity and introduced a greater element of individual choice in determining one's religious identity. People could choose to become Muslims or Christians, to change their membership from one Sufi Brotherhood to another, or to leave one marabout to follow another.¹⁴

Long-distance African traders constituted an important group organized primarily around their economic occupation rather than their ascriptive status. The vast majority of long-distance traders were Muslims, many of whom were clerics. Muslim identity and a common way of life helped build solidarity among themselves that gave them a separate identity from that of their kinsmen. Although kinship played an important role in establishing Dioula trading dynasties, Dioula traders often helped each other even when coming from different ethnic groups—e.g. Soninke, Mandinka, Halpulaar. The clerical Dioula¹⁶ commercial communities that emerged in pre-colonial Senegal were part of a wider trade network spread all over West Africa that emerged when the Mali Empire controlled most of West Africa above the tropics and the trade routes between North and West Africa. In addition to slaves, the Dioula long-distance traders also dealt in the exchange of African products—e.g. kola nuts, salt, animals, cloth, and gold. A class of Afro-European traders tied to the French chartered trading companies emerged with the rise of the Atlantic slave trade and continued to function after the abolition of the monopolies granted to the Crown-chartered trading companies following the fall of the monarchy in France during the French Revolution.

Associational Life in Colonial Senegal 1885-1945

During the colonial era, civil associations as well as political associations and parties were largely concentrated within the urban "Four Communes. Voluntary associations did not develop outside the Four Communes and in the countryside until the extension of the privileges of French citizenship to all Senegalese in 1946.

During the colonial era, the French dominated Senegal's modern economic institutions and employers' associations. The first Chambers of Commerce were established in Dakar, Rufisque, and Saint-Louis in 1883 to represent the colony's economic interests. An electoral college consisting of French and African merchants meeting certain financial conditions chose the members. Although privately managed, the Chambers of Commerce were quasi-public institutions that worked closely with the colonial administration to promote trade and the expansion of the peanut export economy.

Before the Great Depression and the advent of the Popular Front in the 1930s, the French business community saw no reason to organize formal employer associations in Senegal.¹⁷ Most of their organizational efforts and lobbying activities took place in France. In 1931, the major colonial trading companies operating in Senegal and other French West African colonies established the Syndicat de defense des Interets de la Cote Occidentale (SYNDICOA) whose seat was in Bordeaux. The Syndicat patronal et artisanal de l'Ouest africain (SYPAO) which consisted of small and medium-sized enterprises was the first employer association registered in Senegal (1937).

Although Senegalese citizens had the right to form political associations, they did not enjoy the right to organize or join trade unions until 1920.¹⁸ The 1884 metropolitan law that authorized the establishment of trade unions was not applied in Senegal and other parts of French West Africa. Instead the colonial administration applied provisions of the French penal code that banned professional associations with more than 20 members.¹⁹ Workers got around this by organizing amicales that provided assistance for its members but did not have trade union status. The amicales engaged in mutual aid activities for their members. But they also provided the organizational base for unauthorized strikes during the 1920s that sought higher wages. Employees of the Dakar-Niger Railroad organized the first workers associations recognized by the colonial authorities after the end of World War I. The railway workers association eventually evolved into the largest and one of the most militant trade unions operating in Senegal.

In 1936, the Popular Front government in France pushed through legislation that recognized the legality of trade unions in French West Africa. However, membership was restricted to Frenchmen and Senegalese citizens literate in French. These restrictions did not prevent a rapid expansion in the number of trade unions and professional associations. By the end of 1937, Senegal had 42 registered trade unions and 16 professional workers associations.²⁰ Civil servants, railway workers, sailors, and employees working for French trading companies were the most active in the trade union movement. During the late 1930s, trade union activity was marked by frequent strikes, violence, and brutal repression by the colonial authorities. Having no traditions or experience in collective bargaining with either the colonial state or the French private sector, trade unions sought to defend their interests through strikes rather than negotiations.

Western-educated Senegalese also organized cultural and alumni associations. One of the most prominent was the Association des Anciens Eleves de l'Ecole William

Ponty, the elite teacher training school which produced many of Senegal's and French West Africa's political leaders including Mamadou Dia, Modibo Keita (Mali), and Saifoulaye Diallo (Guinea).²¹ Senegalese citizens had much more leeway in starting voluntary associations than French-educated Africans in other French African colonies who rarely enjoyed citizen status. In those colonies, liberal Frenchmen generally initiated the cultural associations under the watchful eye of the colonial administration.

Soccer associations sponsored by the French emerged in Senegal as another important voluntary association for Senegalese youth who had attended French schools before World War II. Boxing also became popular and a Senegalese known as Battling Siki won the world light heavyweight title in the 1920s. During the interwar-period, traditional Senegalese wrestling (la lutte) became organized as a commercial enterprise in Dakar as entrepreneurs organized stables of wrestlers that represented ethnic and regional

²²

groups.

Dakar and other large urban towns in Senegal also had many informal voluntary associations which organized dancing, drumming, and other recreational activities for youth; groups (mbotaay) that brought women together to socialize; rotating credit associations (tontines) for men and women, and hometown (ressortisanf) and regional associations that provided advice on how to get employment, housing, and financial assistance for life cycle events—e.g. marriages, baptisms, and burials.²³ Unlike British West Africa, detribalized Senegal had no tribal unions. The Catholic church organized a wide range of cultural, sports, and recreational associations while different branches of Muslim brotherhoods established various urban neighborhood-based associations that brought the faithful together to sing and pray and to provide mutual assistance and charity. These traditionally-based forms of associational life had more vitality in the Four Communes than in urban centers in the interior where the "Subjects" remained under the tutelage and close surveillance of the colonial administration. These informal voluntary associations operating at the grassroots level did not necessarily involve western-educated Senegalese.

In contrast with the relative dynamism of modern associational life in the Four Communes, the rural populations in the interior had little freedom to organize their own forms of modern voluntary associations. The few modern associations that functioned in the countryside were creations of the colonial state. A French commandant de cercle established the first Senegalese rural cooperative organization in Sine-Saloum in 1907.²⁴ The name of the association, Native Provident Society (Societe Indigene de Prevovance-SIP.) reflected both the paternalism of the French colonial administration and the stereotype of the African as lazy and lacking foresight, hence the need to provide an organization to protect the peasants from themselves and to insure that they had enough seeds to cultivate the next year's peanut crop. Although supposedly modeled on French cooperatives, the Provident Societies had little in common with their metropolitan counterparts. First of all, the SIPS were not voluntary associations; membership was compulsory. All adult males living within the cercle had to pay dues. The commandant de cercle formally headed the organization and set its agenda and program. Moreover, the size of the SIP which could encompass over 200,000 members precluded grassroots

participation. In effect, the SIPS were essentially administrative bodies as reflected in the fact that the colonial administration often delegated SIP powers to canton and village chiefs who were charged with collecting dues and distributing and collecting seed.

An indigenous rural institution which blossomed in a new form during the colonial era that was managed by Africans themselves were the special work villages (daras) organized by the Mourides to bring unutilized or underutilized lands under cultivation.²⁵ In the pre-colonial era, marabouts had set up daras primarily as places of religious education. Pupils worked to feed themselves and their teacher, and also to give some return to the teacher for the education they received. Parents rarely paid. Pupils were treated much like domestic slaves and required to do menial chores for the marabout. With the development of the commercial peanut economy, daras, while remaining places for religious education, also became more geared towards producing food and peanuts for the market economy. Proceeds from peanut commercialization provided the marabout who organized the dara with large amounts of cash much of which was redistributed within the Brotherhood to the marabout's followers. The major innovation was that daras became primarily devoted to work and producing peanuts and less involved in providing a religious education. The first Mouride daras were set up in the late 1880s by Cheikh Ibra Fall. As the Mouride Brotherhood attracted more followers, the number of daras increased. The French supported the creation of daras by offering marabouts large tracts of land in previously uncultivated areas because the daras made a major contribution to the rapid expansion of peanut production.

In Tocquevillian terms, the daras organized by the marabouts had more in common with the enterprises started by aristocrats than with the civil associations he referred to in America.:

"When aristocrats adopt a new idea or conceive a new sentiment, they lend it something of the conspicuous station they themselves occupy, and so the mass is bound to take notice of them, and they easily influence the minds and hearts of all around.

The expansion of the peanut economy and the imposition of head taxes in colonies bordering Senegal stimulated a large flow of seasonal migrant workers (navetanes)²⁷ from French Soudan, French Guinea, Portuguese Guinea and Senegalese coming from areas outside the peanut basin during the inter-war period.²⁸ The new institutional arrangements facilitating the expansion of peanut production were based on contractual relationships between the migrant workers and their sponsors. The Chamber of Commerce in Sine-Saloum, the region which constituted the heart of the peanut basin, supported the establishment of navetane villages and advanced money, food, seed, and other necessities which were paid back when the peanut crop was harvested and marketed. The ties established between the seasonal migrant workers and the Senegalese families for whom they worked were a mixture of patron-client and employer-employee relationships. Most of the seasonal migrant workers came from the slave caste and had limited access to land at home. The head of the extended family (chef de carre) offered navetanes lodging, sustenance, and land of their own to cultivate on their days off in

exchange for three or four days of work each week in his own fields. As patron, the head of the household negotiated an oral contract with the seasonal migrant worker based on customary rules governing relationships between property owners and dependents. However, as "employer," the head of the household didn't have the same kinds of social obligations to the navetane as he owed to members of his extended family and other dependents working for him in the community. The navetane system was most developed in the Sine-Saloum where seasonal migrant workers constituted as much as one-quarter of the total population and half of the active population during the inter-war period.

On the eve of World War II, Senegalese civil associations remained largely confined to the Four Communes where Senegalese citizens could invoke the freedom to associate. Upon taking power after the fall of France, the Vichy government abolished trade unions and employer associations at the same time that they dissolved political parties and associations and eliminated the press. Vichy proposed to replace voluntary associations with corporate structures under the authority of a paternalistic state. The Vichy government, however, maintained the Native Provident Societies which were not voluntary associations but institutions set up and run by the colonial administration. As an antidote to democratic ideologies and institutions, Vichy encouraged Senegalese intellectuals to explore their own traditions and culture, organized sports activities for Senegalese youth, and solicited the support of Senegalese religious leaders and rural notables by handing out medals and other honors to those who swore fidelity to Marshall Petain and France.

Civil Associations in the Post-war Era (1945-1960)

The ousting of the Vichy administration in November 1942 eventually sparked a revival of associational life. Most of the major specialized French employer associations like the Syndicat des commercants importateurs et exportateurs de l'Ouest africain (SCMPEX) and the Union syndicale des industries (UNISYNDI) were started during the war years as was the Syndicat du petit commerce(SYPECO) an organization to defend the interests of merchants and traders with a membership that was overwhelmingly African.²⁹

Political party and trade union activity revived shortly after the war. The 1946 French Constitution extended the rights to organize political parties and trade unions to all of its overseas populations. The 1952 Labor Code spelled out the ground rules for collective bargaining, strikes, and social benefits for workers. One of the most striking characteristics of Senegalese political parties was their affiliation and close ties with metropolitan political parties. Senegalese trade unions also showed an affinity for affiliating with metropolitan trade union movements like the communist-dominated Confederation Generale des Travailleurs (CGT), the SFIO-dominated CGT-Force Ouvriere and the Confederation Francaise des Travailleurs Crovants(CFGT) linked with the French Catholic Left. The Railway Workers Union, that launched the famous Dakar-Niger strike in 1947, remained one of the few major trade unions in Senegal to remain

independent. Like their metropolitan counterparts, Senegalese trade unions were highly politicized and militant.

The trade union movement in Senegal had more members than any other francophone territory. Senegal's radical trade union leaders, many of whom had been trained by the CGT and indoctrinated in Marxist ideologies, had little enthusiasm for the BDS or the Senegalese socialists. An effort to run Abbas Gueye, a prominent Lebu Dakar CGT trade unionist on the BDS ticket for deputy in 1951 failed to draw many votes from CGT union members. The powerful and independent Railway Workers' Union was the only major trade union in Senegal to support the BDS. Trade unions formerly affiliated with the CGT and the CFTC joined forces in 1957 to create the L'Union Generale des Travailleurs d'Afrique Noire (UGTAN), an autonomous all African trade union and elected Sekou Toure from Guinea as its leader. UGTAN launched a major strike in the public sector in 1959 which precipitated a harsh response from the now Senegalese-led government.

The rise and expansion of radical student associations coincided with post-war French educational policies that sharply increased the number of scholarships for African students to study in French universities. With no universities in Senegal or in other francophone African colonies, Senegalese students were obliged to go to France for higher education. Their stay in France put them in contact with other African students as well as students from North Africa and Indo-China and other parts of the French Empire which became the French Union in 1946 when overseas colonies became overseas territories. With the discrediting of fascism and right-wing nationalist ideologies, the professorial corps in France had moved to the left with the majority of professors espousing various forms of Marxist, democratic socialist and Christian socialist ideologies. The emergence of new independent states in Asia after the war spurred anti-colonial sentiments among Senegalese and other francophone Africans. By the 1950s, these anti-colonial feelings had become translated into demands for independence.

Senegalese students played a major role in establishing the Federation des Etudiants d'Afrique Noire en France (FEANF) in 1950 which brought together students from all over Africa.³¹ Their association purported to defend the moral and material interests of students, study the political, economic, and social problems confronting Africa, and to represent students in dealing with French administrative and university authorities. Although Article 4 of its statutes proclaimed that FEANF would not join any political party or participate in any demonstration organized by a political party, FEANF became politically active and made pronouncements on a wide range of political issues which included demands for independence and support of national liberation movements in North Africa and Indo-China.³ FEANF also published L'Etudiant Noir, which became the official organ of the student movement.

Francophone African students also organized territorial student associations like the Association des Etudiants Senegalais en France (CAESF) that affiliated with FEANF. Set up in 1952, the AESF had approximately 300 members and was very active in student politics. Many Senegalese student activists in France, like Mahjemout Diop, founder of

the PAL and Abdoulaye Wade, became prominent political figures after independence. Most students at this time held Pan-African, anti-colonial, and nationalist views that emphasized liberation more than democracy.

In 1950, the French established the Institut des Hautes Etudes de Dakar which brought together secondary school graduates from all over French and Equatorial Africa to continue their studies. This institution eventually evolved into a full-fledged university, the first and only university operating in Francophone Black Africa before independence. Founded in 1954, the Union Générale des Etudiants d'Afrique Occidentale (UGEAO) had close ties with FEANF and demanded that Senegalese students studying in Dakar be sent to France to complete their studies. On the eve of independence, Senegalese comprised only a third of the thousand students enrolled at the embryonic University of Dakar.³³ The radical student movements in France and Senegal regarded the leaders of Senegal's two major political parties as collaborators of the colonial administration and supported the UDS which had close ties with the French Communist Party and radical trade unions affiliated with the CGT. Many also supported the PAI after its founding in 1957.

During the period leading up to independence, the rapid expansion of all types of civil associations in Dakar reflected both the growing heterogeneity of the city's booming population and the high degree of freedom of association allowed in Senegal. Dakar's population increased from 132,000 in 1945 to over 350,000 in 1960. Griots and caste artisans formed their own associations as did migrants from different regions and ethnic groups. Civil servants, government employees, municipal workers, and teachers joined trade unions along with factory workers and employees in the commercial and construction sectors. The Muslim Brotherhoods organized urban religious associations known as dahiras which brought the faithful together to sing and pray together, dispense charity and mutual aid, and collect money for the marabouts. Catholic church groups organized bazaars (kermesses) to raise money for church activities and charity. Social and sports associations also flourished at the neighborhood level. The myriad of urban voluntary associations that emerged in Dakar could also be found in other major towns in colonial Africa during the post-war era. Thomas Hodgkin's astute observations about the democratic nature of the new associations in many parts of Africa towards the end of the colonial era also applied to Senegal:

'The associations of contemporary Africa are democratic, not in the sense that they can serve as models of democratic organization; but in the older sense, that they have been constructed by a *demos* which is slowly discovering, by trial and error, the institutions which it requires in order to live humanly and sociably in the urban world into which it has been thrust.'³⁵

The large French and Lebanese communities in Dakar had their own self-contained networks of voluntary associations which focused primarily on social, cultural and recreational activities. In Senegal's major towns outside of Dakar, the number and

density of associations were not as great as in the federal capital because of smaller populations and less differentiated social structures and economic activities..

In the towns of the interior, new forms of associational life developed after the war once the restrictions on the former subjects were lifted. Senegalese traders and transporters formed their own associations to defend their interests. Following the passage of a cooperative law in the metropole in 1947, agricultural cooperatives began to be formed in Senegal.³⁶ The first four agricultural cooperatives in Senegal were created by influential religious and political leaders with close ties to the Senegalese Socialist party, the dominant political party in the territory at the time. Most cooperatives did not respect the spirit of the cooperative law which called for internal democracy based on one man, one vote rules and the open election of officers. Marabouts, politicians, and even merchants controlled the new cooperatives which were set up primarily in the peanut basin to market peanuts. Cooperatives became highly politicized. The number of BDS-sponsored cooperatives grew rapidly when the BDS became Senegal's majority political party. Corruption was rampant as directors diverted coop funds to their pockets. Indebtedness grew because members refused to pay back the large debts contracted in their name. By the mid-1950s, it was clear that the cooperative movement was not working very well. In 1955, the Societes Mutuelles de Developpement Rural (SMDR) replaced the old Native Provident Societies. Although the SMDRs were more democratic than their predecessors in having two thirds of the officers elected by the members, dues and membership remained compulsory.

The elimination of distinctions between citizens and subjects after the war had a leveling impact on Senegalese society and affected associational life accordingly. The resident French community dropped out of Senegalese politics and formed more specialized and professional associations to defend their interests behind the scenes. The leadership of Senegal's newly created radical political parties, trade unions, and university students associations adopted the rhetoric and ideologies of their metropolitan counterparts, a decision which separated them from most of the Senegalese population who were simplistically labeled peasants, workers, and intellectuals. The BDS became Senegal's majority party by winning the support of many of the new associations that had sprung up in Senegal, especially the larger regional and ethnic associations and the Sufi Brotherhoods.

Urbanization also sparked a sharp rise in associational life in Dakar and other towns that reflected an effort on the part of individuals to retain traditional communitarian values and social capital while adapting to a new environment. Generally small in size and localized in neighborhoods, these associations emphasized social and recreational activities, the provision of mutual assistance and credit to finance important life cycle events, and a social safety net to help the needy. These urban associations were not organized as interest groups. Instead they had more in common with the associations described by Tocqueville whose members came together to work for common purposes and community needs.

The countryside had fewer dynamic associations. The acceleration of the rural exodus contributed to the transformation of traditional village associations by linking them to regional and ethnic hometown associations in the cities. The *daras* continued to expand and play a major role in peanut production while the number of seasonal agricultural workers declined as uncultivated land became scarcer. During the post-war years, the French provided agricultural extension services in the countryside and some technical assistance to marabouts seeking to mechanize their peanut production.

Associational Life in Independent Senegal

State tutelage and Associational Life

During the early years of independence, the trend toward a single party system also generated a parallel movement toward a single trade-union, youth, women's, and cooperative structure.³⁷ In many African countries the quest for national unity led to the politicization of voluntary associations and their integration into the structures of the party-state. Autonomous development of associations was often regarded as a threat to national unity and political stability. As one-party states became consolidated, they often dissolved existing voluntary associations or integrated them into the structures of the party-state. Unlike one-party regimes in Mali and Guinea, where membership in the party and in state-sponsored associations was compulsory, the *de facto* party-state in Senegal did not impose compulsory membership in the ruling party and its affiliated associations. Instead it chose to closely regulate, supervise, and domesticate associational life rather than eliminating it. Like the colonial administration, the regime insisted that voluntary associations had to remain apolitical and not get involved in political action, or more accurately, political activities hostile to the party and government in power. As a result, one saw the repression and banning of militant trade unions and student associations during the 1960s.

After smashing the radical UGTAN following a major strike in 1959 and dissolving the union in December 1960, the emergent Senegalese party-state promoted the creation of a UPS-dominated trade union movement, the Union Nationale des Travailleurs Senegalais(UNTS) which by the end of 1963 had unified most of Senegal's trade unions under its banner.³ In May 1968, however, the UNTS launched a national strike to protest government austerity policies which had frozen wages and depressed the living standards of public and private sector employees. The government responded by arresting the union leaders leading the strike and instigating the establishment of a new trade union in 1969 led by UPS loyalists, the Confederation Nationale des Travailleurs Senegalais (CNTS) that could be counted on not to openly oppose the government's economic policies. The creation of the CNTS was accompanied by its integration into the structures of the party-state. Seats were set aside for CNTS leaders in party councils, the National Assembly, and the government. While all UPS members were obliged to join the CNTS, CNTS members were free to adhere to the party of their choice. With the dissolution of the UNTS in 1969, the CNTS became Senegal's only comprehensive national trade union. Although most workers retained their affiliation with UNTS, the

government withdrew its legal recognition of the union and transferred its property and funds to the CNTS. In 1971, the government changed the Labor Code and amended the 1961 Civil Servant Statutes to place more restrictions on public sector employees' right to strike and to insure that government would have the last word in arbitrating disputes between employers and workers.

Although the Senghor regime suppressed all national-level confederations of trade unions with the exception of the pro-governmental CNTS, it permitted sectoral trade unions to function. During the 1970s, teachers unions like the Syndicat des Enseignants du Senegal (SES)³⁹ and its successor, the Syndicat Unique et Democratique des Enseignants (SUDES) remained hotbeds of political agitation. ⁰ The political liberalization that resulted in the return to a multiparty system in the mid-1970s also saw the re-emergence of independent trade union activity. In 1975, the government recognized the Union des Travailleurs Libres de Senegal (UTLS) which had close links with the PDS as a national trade union confederation. A year later, when the UPS changed its name to PS, it abolished the rule that all members had to join the CNTS whose status changed from a trade union fully integrated into the party to one merely affiliated with the party. Other autonomous trade unions emerged during the last years of the Senghor regime. Many of them were controlled by leaders from still underground political movements.

The radicalism of student associations continued after independence. Efforts to domesticate university and second school student associations and to restrict their political activism failed. Despite laws banning students from participating in political activities, students played a major role in the political and social crisis that shook the stability of the regime in May 1968 by launching a strike which purportedly sought to reverse a government decision to reduce the number of monthly payments and the stipend paid to university students. In cracking down on dissident student groups, the government invoked anti-sedition laws and laws defining associations as apolitical. When the government dissolved a hostile student association, students would regroup and create a new student association under a new name whose bylaws would assert its apolitical objectives and vocation as an apolitical organization in order to conform to the law. The rapid expansion of the number of university and secondary school students studying in Senegal after independence increased the relative importance of this group in politics while the absence of legal political parties reflecting their views stoked their militancy which was expressed in strikes, demonstrations, and destruction of university property.

The struggle between the embryonic UPS party-state and radical political movements, trade unions, and student associations also involved efforts to politicize and capture various youth associations involved in sports, cultural and recreational activities. In 1970, radical student leaders established a national youth movement, the Mouvement Democratique de la Jeunesse Senegalaise(MDJS) which sought to "regroup all the Clubs and Associations into a broad and democratic national union..." under its banner.⁴¹ The MDJS fell apart after the government refused to recognize the movement as a legal association and dissolved the UDES which had been one of the founders and instigators of the movement.

Like many ruling parties in Africa, the UPS had its own youth wing which recruited young males between the ages of 18 and 35. Leaders of UPS youth groups could be as old as 40 years. Youth movements did not include young women. Unlike integral party-states like those in Guinea and Mali, the government in Senegal did not require all young people to join the party youth group. Senegal, thus had no equivalent of Mali's Pionniers which took control over all of the youth associations in the country.⁴²

Although the Senghor regime permitted various youth groups to organize, it sought to control them and carefully regulate their activities. For example, during the 1960s, schoolteachers, students, and youth groups took the lead in organizing soccer and other sports activities during the long summer vacations which corresponded with the rainy season in the country, hence the name navetane movement to describe the clubs and associations involved in these activities. Fearful that the movement would become politicized and taken over by the political opposition, the government introduced legislation in 1969 to regulate and supervise sports activities during the summer vacations which placed the diverse branches of the Organisme National de Coordination des Activites de Vacances (ONCAV) under the tutelage of regional and departmental inspectors from the Youth and Sports Ministry.

Sports activities were not the only area in which the state exercised its tutelage during the Senghor era. State ministries regulated associational life in their respective spheres of competence. Thus, the Ministry of Labor supervised trade union activities; the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Artisanat regulated the activities of employer, merchant, and artisan associations; and the Ministry of Agriculture or Rural Development regulated associations organized around farming, herding, and natural resource management.

The regime also sought to create a single pro-governmental national organization to represent the totality of associations involved in a particular activity. During the early years of independence, the government did little to promote or encourage the development of an independent Senegalese business class. In 1968, a group of Senegalese businessmen created L'Union des Groupements Economiques du Senegalais (UNIGES), which bitterly criticized the government's economic policies and French and Lebanese domination of the economy. The regime immediately backed the creation of a rival organization which supported the government. After much coaxing by the government, the two groups merged to form the Groupement Economiques du Senegal (GES). Like most of the national level associations, the GES was highly politicized and its leadership closely allied to the ruling party. When the state began nationalizing and Africanizing various sectors of the economy, firms and entrepreneurs aligned with the party in power depended heavily upon government contracts.

In the countryside, the state intervened to organize the rural populations in cooperatives and producers' groups. During the early years of independence, the government encouraged the growth of private sector marketing agencies known as Organismes Stockeurs (OSs) comprising small groups of Senegalese traders and

transporters to replace the French trading companies that had dominated peanut marketing in the past. The OSs found it increasingly difficult to compete with the state-sponsored cooperatives which received subsidies from the state. The number of OSs fell sharply from 3,000 in 1960/1961 to 510 by 1965-66 while the number of peanut cooperatives more than doubled from 668 to 1,467 during the same period as the percentage of peanuts marketed by the cooperatives jumped from 20% to 75%.⁴³

The establishment of the Office National de Cooperation et d'Assistance au Developpement (ONCAD) in 1966, the same year that Senegal became a de facto one-party state was accompanied by the suppression of the OSs and rules that required all peanuts be marketed through the cooperatives which sold the peanut crop to the government. State tutelage over the cooperative movement increased sharply as ONCAD agents took control over financial management of the cooperatives whose, size, location, and operating rules were determined by the state. The formal organization of the cooperatives, which reflected the Rochdale model in which individual farmers banded together to pool their resources to improve their bargaining position in the market-place, did not fit the situation in Senegal where farmers operated on different principles and where the state set producer prices. The fact that the rules were written in French and interpreted and enforced by state agents excluded most members from participating in the governance of the cooperatives which quickly became dominated by local party officials, rural notables, and marabouts. Youth and women were largely excluded from cooperative membership because cooperative membership was attained through family heads rather than on an individual basis. By the end of the 1960s, the state-initiated cooperative movement, concentrated primarily in the peanut basin,⁴⁴ had become very unpopular and saddled with large debts due to declining peanut prices, drought, poor loan repayment rates, and widespread corruption

Despite extensive technical assistance provided by a French development agency and its Senegalese successor, peanut productivity and production declined. The new agricultural technology introduced by the French contributed to the deterioration of the environment. Though the introduction of plow culture permitted individual farmers to cultivate more land, it also eliminated the fallows and grazing lands for cattle that had previously provided manure to fertilize the soils. The French recommended cutting down trees to provide a more level field to facilitate plow culture. This practice accelerated soil erosion because trees retained water, held the soils together, and provided shade and organic matter. Farmers in the peanut basin were more or less obliged to follow the advice of the "experts."

During the 1970s, the government with the encouragement and financial support of the international donor community set up Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) outside the peanut basin to develop rice, cotton, and other cash crops. The RDAs promoted the establishment of village-based farmer producer associations who aligned themselves with the RDA in their area in order to gain access to credit for seeds, fertilizers, and other inputs provided by the RDA. Producer groups of groupements de producteurs (GPs) came under the tutelage of the RDAs who unilaterally imposed the terms on which the farmers could get credit. The contracts binding the GPs to the RDA

contained penalties for farmer groups not fulfilling all the conditions mentioned in the contract. On the other hand, farmers had no recourse in the event that the RDA did not meet its obligations to deliver seeds and other inputs on time and to make timely payments when purchasing crops. In time, the government also promoted the establishment of more specialized cooperatives revolving around the production and marketing of meat, fish, fruits, and vegetables.

Most of the rural producers associations initiated by the state in the first two decades of independence failed to achieve the ambitious objectives laid down by the state. These associations had few of the characteristics of self-governing voluntary associations consisting of people who came together to solve common problems. State tutelage imposed unsuitable organizational modes, governance rules, and regulations on largely unwilling or passive populations who came to become increasingly dependent upon the state for their salvation. Every few years, the state would declare a moratorium on cooperative debt, thus rewarding the bad payers who had declined to pay back their loans and punishing those who did. The rural populations also became increasingly dependent upon food aid supplied by the donor community and distributed by the state during drought years. Having stifled initiative and forced large numbers of farmers into debt, state officials then complained about the peasant's dependency complex (*mentalite d'assiste*).

During the 1970s, the government also promoted the establishment of village-level adult women's associations (*Groupements Feminins* (GFsY) to participate in development projects and economic activities. The village level GFs belonged to a National Federation of Women's Groups (FNGF) under the tutelage of the Ministry of Women's Affairs.⁴⁵ Women closely affiliated with the ruling party and wives of local notables tended to dominate the regional and departmental level GFs. Beyond the village level, the GFs were essentially vehicles for distributing patronage on behalf of the party-state and development projects financed by the international donor community.⁴⁶ The highly politicized GFs had little in common with other women's groups initiated at the grassroots levels to deal with everyday problems.

Like its colonial predecessor, the Senegalese state geared its rural development policy towards male heads of households. Although young unmarried males provided much of the labor for agriculture, the cooperatives and producers' groups initiated by the state excluded youth from membership and participation in decision-making. As a result, unmarried males had no direct access to land and credit provided by the state and remained dependent upon their elders.

With the growing commercialization of the rural economy, traditional age grades organized themselves into work parties to earn money. These work groups eventually became transformed into more formal organizations with numerous officers and a wider membership due to the merging of two or more ward associations or the creation of a village-level youth association that incorporated all members of the same age-grade or several age-grades.⁴⁷ These groups often took French names which reflected the fact that the youth group included literate youth who had attended schools. Village-level youth

groups in many parts of Senegal eventually evolved into some of the most dynamic and effective associations in the country.

The story of the youth group established in the village of Ronkh, a village located in the Senegal River Delta where the government promoted irrigated agriculture illustrates the resiliency and adaptive capacity of pre-colonial Senegalese institutions.⁴⁸ In 1963, a group of 200 young people encompassing five age grades decided to create a cultural, educational and sports association. The Foyer des Jeunes de Ronkh registered with the Ministry of Youth. Led by a young schoolteacher, the Foyer eventually won the support of the village elders, who had originally opposed the group, by contributing labor to build a mosque which had been the community's top priority. During its early years, the association engaged primarily in non-economic activities which were financed by revenues generated by collective fields organized by its members.

By the end of the 1960s, the Foyer was openly criticizing the policies of SAED, the state water and irrigation agency which allocated land on the irrigated perimeters, for overcharging the village and for its heavy-handed tactics in organizing agricultural activities. Although the Foyer originally had no land of its own, it refused to join the state cooperatives in order to gain access to land. Eventually, its members acquired land during the early 1970s with the support of the area's traditional landholders. The example of the Foyer des Jeunes de Ronkh sparked the creation in 1976 of a regional association, L'Association Socio-Educative Sportive et Culturelle. L'Amicale du Walo (ASESCAW). By the mid-1980s, ASESCAW had access to over 3,000 hectares of land, much of which had been acquired from the Rural Councils which had denied them access to land during the early 1980s.

ASESCAW not only acquired land; it managed land much more efficiently than SAED whose costs were 4 times higher per hectare. As an association, ASESCAW also transformed itself into a community organization that brought together young men and women and gave village elders and other traditional decision-makers an important role in decision-making. Unlike the rural cooperatives and producers groups initiated by the state, ASESCAW was a grassroots movement which first emerged to meet the needs of young people for land. And unlike the farmers groups organized under the tutelage of the central government as instruments of national economic policies, ASESCAW engaged in a wide range of economic, social, and cultural activities of interest to its members and to their community at large.

The government's approach to rural development during the first two decades of independence had a striking resemblance with the efforts of the ancien regime in France to foster agricultural development described by Tocqueville:

...the central government did not limit itself to coming to the rescue of the peasantry when times were hard; it aspired to teach them how to become rich and to help them make their land pay, even if this meant using what was little short of compulsion. Pamphlets on agricultural science were issued periodically by the Intendants and their sub-delegates; farmers' associations were founded and prizes awarded; moreover,

nurseries whose seed grains were available to all, were maintained at considerable expense. In short, the central power had taken to playing the part of an indefatigable mentor and keeping the nation in quasi-paternal tutelage.⁴⁹

Over the years, ONCAD became increasingly unpopular. Mismanagement and widespread corruption undermined its credibility with the Senegalese public and foreign donors. In 1980, the National Assembly voted to abolish ONCAD. The liquidation of ONCAD in 1980 which had saddled the state with a debt of over 100 billion CFA marked a new phase in government policy and the beginning of its disengagement from the countryside.

The Flowering of Voluntary Associations: 1981-2000

The political and economic liberalization policies of the 1980s that followed Abdou Diouf's accession to the presidency in 1981 contributed to the revitalization of political life in Senegal and facilitated the development of a wide variety and range of civil associations.

During the 1980s and 1990s, autonomous business associations, trade unions, and peasant organizations emerged in Senegal that articulated the interests of their members and showed a willingness to take on the government. Thus, Senegalese employers' associations like the Conseil National des Employeurs Senegalais (CNES) which represented newer Senegalese-controlled formal sector firms and the Union des Commerçants et Industriels du Senegal (UNACOIS) which represented the burgeoning "informal sector" criticized the government's preferential treatment to older firms and monopoly privileges and tax benefits granted to a sugar company. At the same time, a new generation of Senegalese businessmen took control over the Dakar Chamber of Commerce which had been previously dominated by the French business community and later by Senegalese businessmen with close ties to the regime.

During the 1990s, independent trade unions like the Union Nationale des Syndicats Autonomes de Senegal (UNSAS) conducted strikes to protest government austerity measures and privatization of state-owned utilities companies. Even the CNTS, the national trade union formally aligned with the PS, showed more initiative and militancy in articulating the grievances of state and private sector workers concerning unpopular economic measures imposed by the government's structural adjustment programs. Teachers' Unions like SUDES, dominated by leaders and allies of the political opposition, continued to criticize government educational policies and to press for more teachers, higher salaries, and increased resources allocated to primary, secondary, and university education. Although the teachers unions maintained a high degree of militancy, they had become less radical and revolutionary following liberalization of the political system in the 1980s and the entry of former opposition parties into the government in the 1990s.

Expansion of the numbers of Senegal's western-educated elite was accompanied by the growth and strengthening of professional associations of journalists, lawyers, magistrates, engineers, doctors, pharmacists, communications specialists, and administrateurs civils. These associations established guidelines for their professions and defended the corporate interests of their members. Educated women in Dakar formed associations like the Conseil Senegalais des Femmes (COSEF) to promote the status of women in general while others groups formed specifically to fight violence against women, female genital mutilation, and AIDS. Other women's groups reflected specific professional, economic, and intellectual concerns which led to the creation of women's associations for judges, entrepreneurs, and development researchers.

Another major development in associational life during the 1980s and the 1990s was the regrouping of autonomous village-based peasant and grassroots rural youth associations that had sprung up during the 1970s into regional and national federations. Founded in 1978, the Federation des Organisations Non-Gouvernementales du Senegal (FONGS) acted as an umbrella group that brought together a wide variety of peasant associations operating throughout the country.⁵⁰ By the early 1990s, 23 peasant associations with 100,000 members in 850 villages had affiliated with FONGS.

FONGS sought to increase the autonomy of rural associations and increase the bargaining power of rural producers vis-a-vis the state. Groups like FONGS and its member organizations consciously sought to reverse the top-down approach to development and authoritarian modes of governance that characterized government efforts to control the countryside during the first two decades after independence. In 1993, FONGS brought together the leaders of seven national organizations representing farmers, women, herders, fishermen, and horticulturalists to discuss the possibility of creating a national committee that would articulate and defend the interests of rural producers organized in hundreds of cooperatives and other forms of peasant associations. The result was the creation of the Comite National de Concertation des Ruraux (CNCR) which aspired to become the sole spokesperson and representative of organized rural producers in their dealings with the government and the international donor community.

The Thies Declaration, which presented the objectives of the CNCR, acknowledged that political transformations over the past decade in the direction of greater democratization had facilitated the rise of the associative movement in Senegal and "provided opportunities for all segments of society to express themselves, to organize themselves, and to act so that the State would take into consideration their concerns and interests."⁵¹ Recognizing the great diversity of the groups it represented, the rules relating to the organization of the CNCR affirmed the autonomy and independence of its members who were not obliged to apply any decision taken by the CNCR contrary to their statutes and principles.

The rise of autonomous federations in rural Senegal coincided with the government's disengagement from the rural economy and the decline of associations initiated and organized by the RDAs and other state agencies.

Top down efforts to revitalize and democratize the cooperative movement by revising the Cooperative Statutes in 1983 to reduce state tutelage, granting legal status and financial autonomy to village-level cooperative groups (sections villageoises), and giving some voice to youth and women in cooperative decision-making failed to revive the movement.⁵² The politicization of the cooperative leadership and its capture by the ruling party had undermined the legitimacy of the cooperative movement with rural producers. Incentives for joining cooperatives had declined with the end of state subsidies for inputs, low producer prices, and high levels of debt. The 4200 village sections organized by the Cooperative Service to "decentralize" the movement were initiated by the state, indicating that cooperative structures continued to be shaped by government fiat rather than emanating from the grassroots. The revival of the cooperative movement also suffered from a law passed in 1984 which provided farmers with access to credit without having to be members of a cooperative.

The new law permitted two or more individuals to establish a Groupement d'Interet Economique (GIE) to pursue a common economic activity during a determinate period. GIEs had legal status, access to credit, and freedom to organize without interference from the state. The GIEs contributed to the further decline of the various producer groups directly linked to the RDAs⁵³ as farmers preferred to set up their own autonomous groups made up of friends and family rather than to stay in producers groups where their activities were closely controlled by the state. The GIEs were generally more manageable because of their smaller size. Two-thirds of the GIEs had less than 50 members. By 1990, Senegal had 4745 registered GIES with a third of them concentrated in the Senegal River Delta and Valley where previously autonomous peasant associations as well as producer groups formerly affiliated with SAED transformed themselves into GIEs.

Shifting donor preferences in the 1980s and 1990s contributed to the reduced role of the RDAs in organizing and controlling associational life in the countryside as donors preferred to channel funding through international and national Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) rather than state agencies to implement rural development projects. As a result, many development NGOS worked closely with grassroots peasant, youth, and women's associations.

Unlike the various peasant associations and federations which had their headquarters in rural Senegal, most Senegalese development NGOs had their headquarters in Dakar or in a regional capital. The legal status and organizational structure of development NGOs also differed from that of the grassroots peasant associations. NGOs registered as private non-profit apolitical associations engaged in social and economic development activities in a wide range of sectors that included agriculture, natural resource management, education, health, marketing, and credit and savings. NGOs were exonerated from paying customs duties on imported goods and equipment used in their development activities.⁵⁴ The Senegalese urban-based development NGOs had small salaried professional staffs funded largely by donor financing of their projects and operated primarily as non-profit economic firms providing development services rather than an association of individuals in a community combining

to pursue common developmental goals. Some national NGOs like FONGS had close ties with peasant associations throughout the country while some of the larger peasant and regional associations themselves had NGO legal status.

The NGO movement in Senegal began during the 1960s when international religious-based organizations like Catholic Relief, CARITAS, and Protestant missions came to Senegal to provide technical assistance to Senegal's rural populations. Their numbers expanded during the 1970s following the severe drought that hit Senegal and other Sahelian countries. International NGOs sought national partners in Senegal to help implement their projects. By 1988, Senegal had 69 international and 57 national NGOs. The number of national NGOs increased sharply during the 1990s as more and more NGOs became important sub-contractors in managing and implementing donor-financed projects. By the end of the millennium, Senegal had several hundred nationally-based NGOs.

The Conseil des Organizations Non-Gouvernement d'Appui au Developpement (CONGAD) was created in 1982 to coordinate the activities of the diverse international and national NGOs working in Senegal. CONGAD regarded itself as the voice of the national NGO movement and had close links with many of the peasant-based associations which had emerged during the 1970s and 1980s. At first, the government regarded the development NGOs as competitors for donor funds as well as hotbeds of political opposition. In fact, intellectuals in the opposition had founded some of the early NGOs and played important roles in the NGO movement.

During the 1980s and 1990s, CONGAD presented the NGO movement with its participatory development ideology as offering an alternative discourse to the top-down development approach adopted by the party-state. Tensions between the government and the NGO movement declined considerably in the 1990s as the government reduced its tutelage over associational life and accepted the fact that donors increasingly preferred to work through NGOs rather through state agencies.

One response of the ruling party to the emergence of the NGO movement was to encourage its militants to organize their own NGOs and to get involved in the governance of NGOs in their constituencies. The efforts of political parties to control development NGOs increased the danger of politicizing the NGO movement and undermining its autonomy. Some development NGOs had been set up by entrepreneurs whose democratic and participatory development discourse had little to do with their actual practices. CONGAD attempted to deal with politicization and corruption issues by instituting an ethical code for its members.

Demokarassi, Grassroots Associational Life and Self-interest Properly Understood

Tocqueville underscored the importance of the concept of self-interest properly understood as a key factor explaining the vigor and dynamism of associational life in

America. For Tocqueville, the doctrine of self-interest properly understood as applied in America avoided the dangers of unbridled individualism and contributed to the sacrifice of private interests for the common good:

"The doctrine of self-interest properly understood does not inspire great sacrifices, but every day it prompts some small ones.... Every American has the sense to sacrifice some of his private interests to save the rest."⁵⁵

. Tocqueville marveled at how Americans "of all ages, all stations in life, and all types of dispositions are forever forming associations."⁵⁶ A combination of weakness and independence obliged individuals in democratic societies— i.e. societies with egalitarian social structures—to form voluntary associations:

'They can hardly do anything for themselves, and none of them is in a position to force his fellows to help him. They would all therefore find themselves helpless if they did not to learn to help each other voluntarily."⁵⁷

Tocqueville saw Americans as applying the concept of self-interest properly understood to build and strengthen social capital ~ i.e. trust, mutual reciprocity, and networks—that facilitated cooperation and the establishment of voluntary associations.⁵⁸ In an individualistic society, self-interest properly understood meant that individuals realized that everyone would be better off if they worked together to achieve common goals like building a church, putting up a house, celebrating an event, or repairing a local road

Tocqueville's concepts of self interest properly understood and how it fostered the creation of voluntary associations had much in common with Senegalese communitarian values. Ancient traditions of mutual reciprocity and solidarity became an integral part of the notion of Demokarassi, the newly coined Wolof word for democracy. Thus, a male Wolof head of household who had no formal schooling asserted that for him, Demokarassi was important because:

" what one person can do, two can do better. Twenty people can do more than five. That's how it is here in Thiourour. We have several associations. In each one the money is managed by all the members. We deliberate and make common decisions. Demokarassi means that the group is united in wanting good and refusing bad."⁵⁹

In western societies undergoing democratic transformation, Tocqueville argued, individuals had to learn the art of association in order to prosper and retain their liberty. The situation was somewhat different in Senegal where the art of association was not new. The huge stock of social capital inherent in Senegalese pre-colonial institutions had remained underutilized because of the stifling of associational life under the centralized and authoritarian colonial state and the post-colonial party-state. Greater freedom has

permitted the Senegalese people to reactivate and build on their old stock of social capital.

In Senegal, the problem is not how to foster the art of association among Senegalese⁶⁰, but how the Senegalese can use and adapt their already considerable skills in the art of association to cope with economic scarcity and move forward in the transformation from aristocracy to democracy in such a manner as to preserve their traditional communitarian values.

While self-interest properly understood was the main concept underlying the proliferation of voluntary associations in America, a somewhat different version of this concept prevailed in Senegal where the drive for participating in voluntary associations, especially in urban settings, was based on the belief that strengthening one's social relationships and networks was the key to individual security in a new environment. While some associations had primarily economic objectives, all associations had social objectives. Senegalese did not define poverty in terms of material assets but in terms of social relationships. Thus, the poor person was not someone without money but someone without social relationships- i.e., people in his life.⁶¹ Membership in associations widened the potential resources that individuals could tap when in need by expanding one's social network beyond friends, family, and neighbors.⁶² At the same time, reciprocity and solidarity norms obliged individuals to be prepared to contribute when others in their social networks expressed the need for assistance.

Rotation of resources, rather than accumulation of resources, was a major organizational principle of Senegalese social networks and organizations like the rotating credit associations (tontines). Mutual trust and reciprocity were important ingredients needed to insure the integrity and success of the tontines. Members trusted that everyone would make their contributions on time, wait their turn in making a claim on tontine resources, and not abandon the tontine after they got their sum of money. The rapid circulation of scarce resources enabled individuals to tap relatively large sums of money on a one-time basis to help them solve their immediate problems. While providing its members with a lump of money to pay for a life cycle event or to start a small business, membership in a tontine and other associations and networks reinforced social relationships which could be used in case of emergency. Women who joined tontines often participated in other associations such as mbootays whose members gathered on a regular basis to share meals, local religious associations (dahiras), market women's groups, and ethnic and hometown associations.

Because of the Senegalese version of self-interest rightly understood, the specter of the dangers of unbridled individualism in American and European societies evoked by Tocqueville does not appear to be as dangerous in Senegal. Massive rural exodus, rapid urbanization, and widespread poverty have not been accompanied by the atomization of Senegalese society. Most Senegalese still retain strong ties of solidarity with their villages and regions of origins regardless of where they live and work. Urbanized Senegalese have established new neighborhoods and community organizations. Rather than withdrawing into the nuclear family, Senegalese seem to be reaching out and broadening their membership in social networks and associations. While it is true that

crime, prostitution, drug use, and mendacity have increased markedly since independence, few homeless people haunt the streets of Dakar.

Unlike the Americans who rejected the aristocratic order in Europe and cut their ties with their ancestral roots to come to the New World, Senegalese have retained and adapted pre-colonial traditional organizational modes—e.g. division of labor by gender, age sets,-- and values —e.g. mutual reciprocity, redistribution, and solidarity - in their own version of Tocqueville's self-interest properly understood. In the next chapter, we shall turn to the spirit of religion and look at how religion has affected Senegal's political and social order and the march towards democracy.

¹ Democracy in America, p.520.

² Ibid, p. 517.

³ Ibid, p.522.

⁴ Ibid, p. 514.

⁵ Ibid. p. 516.

⁶ Ibid, o. 523.

⁷ Tocqueville, Tocqueville, Democracy in America, p. 513.

⁸ Cited by Robert D. Putnam, Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 90. Putnam makes the point that a dense network of secondary associations enhances interest articulation and interest aggregation. Interest groups like trade unions, and employers associations would fulfill these functions.

⁹ Religious associations are discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

¹⁰ Cheikh Anta Diop, L'Afrique Noire Pre-Coloniale (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1960), p.57. The translation is mine.

Age grades varied considerably from one society to another and could range anywhere from three years to twenty years. Initiation rites also differed in terms of the ages of those being initiated, the length of time devoted to initiation, the kinds of information transmitted during initiation and the extent of community celebration following the completion of the initiation.

¹² For a discussion of the nature and importance of age-grade associations in pre-colonial Senegal, see Philip D. Curtin, Economic Change in Precolonial Africa: Senecambia in the Era of the Slave Trade (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975), pp. 36-37.

¹³ Among the Diola, male work groups often prepared the land for cultivation and repaired the dikes protecting the rice fields while female work teams worked on transplanting and harvesting the rice crop. For a discussion of traditional Diola work groups and their evolution, see Francis G. Snyder, Capitalism and Legal Change: An African Transformation (New York: Academic Press, 1981), pp. 86-87 and 184-189.

¹⁴ The evolution and organization of Senegal's Sufi brotherhoods and the spread and impact of Islam are described in greater detail in Chapter VIII, "The Spirit of Religion."

¹⁵ For an extremely rich and detailed analysis of the long-distance traders operating in pre-colonial Senegal, see Curtin, Economic Change in Precolonial Africa, op. cit., pp. 59-91.

¹⁶ Dioula was the Mandinka word for merchant and eventually became a general term to describe a particular group of people and their way of life.

¹⁷ For a discussion of Senegal's professional employer organizations, see Laurence Marfaing and Mariam Sow, Les operateurs economiques au Senegal: Entre le formel et rinformel (1930-1996) (Paris: Karthala, 1999), pp.125-140.

¹⁸ For a detailed analysis of the origins of Senegalese trade unions, see Nicole Bernard-Duquent, Le Senegal et le Front Populaire (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1985), pp. 37-52.

¹⁹ This provision originated in Article 291 of the 1810 Napoleonic penal code which stated that no association of over twenty people could be formed without the authorization of the government. This provision remained in effect in France until 1901. For a discussion and list of the laws restricting associational life in France since the French Revolution see, Carol E. Harrison, The Bourgeois Citizen in Nineteenth Century France: Gender, Sociability, and the Uses of Emulation (Clarendon: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 24-33.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 142.

²¹ For a discussion of the impact of William Ponty graduates on post-war French West African politics, see Ruth Schachter-Morgenthau, Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp.18-19.

²² For the development of la lutte as an organized urban sport and its connection with politics and money, see Ousseynou Faye, port, argent et politique: la lutte libre a Dakar (1800-2000) in Momar-Coumba Diop(ed) Le S&nSgal Contemporain (Paris: Karthala, 2002), pp. 309-340.

²³ During the 1950s and early 1960s, the anthropological and sociological literature describing informal associations in African towns tended to look at them primarily as mechanisms for adjusting to urbanization. For example, see Kenneth Little, "The Role of Voluntary Associations in West African Urbanization," American Anthropologist, Vol. LIX (August 1957), pp. 590-599 (check pages. For an excellent survey of the literature on voluntary associations, see Immanuel Wallerstein, "Voluntary Associations," in

²⁴ For a detailed analysis of the Native Provident Societies, see Robert L. Tignor, "Senegal's Cooperative Experience, 1907-1960," in John Waterbury and Mark Gersovitz, The Political Economy of Risk and Choice in Senegal (London: Frank Cass, 1987), pp. 90-122)

²⁵ For a description of the origins of the Mouride work villages, see Donal Cruise O'Brien, The Mourides of Senegal: The Political and Economic Organization of an Islamic Brotherhood (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) pp. 163-166. Some of the religious leaders of the Tijani brotherhoods in the peanut basin emulated the example of the Mourides and established their own daras.

²⁶ Democracy in America, p. 516.

²⁷ The term derived from the Wolof word *navet* which referred to the rainy season. Migrant workers came to Senegal during the rainy season to grow peanuts..

²⁸ For the most detailed account of this phenomenon in Senegal, see Philippe David, Les Navetanes: Histoire des migrants saisonniers de l'arachide en Seneceambie d l'arachide en Senegambie des origins a nos iours (Dakar: Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines, 1980).

²⁹ Laurence Marfaing and Mariam Sow, Les Operateurs economiques au S6negal. op.cit. pp. 125-126.

Senegal had some 55,700 trade union members in 1955. Ruth Schachter-Morgenthau, Political Parties in French-Speaking West Africa, op. cit, p. 157.

³¹ For the history of the student African student movement in France, see Charles Dian6, Les Grandes Heures de la F.E.A.N.F. (Paris: Editions Chaka, 1990).

³² Ibid, p.42.

³³ Abdoulaye Bathily, Mai 68 a Dakar ou la revolte universitaire et la democratic (Paris: Editions Chaka, 1992), p.44.

³⁴ For a detailed discussion of the basis for and types of associations in Dakar, see Michele O'Deye-Finzi, Les Associations en Villes Africaines. Dakar-Brazzaville (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1985).

³⁵ Thomas Hodgkin, Nationalism in Colonial Africa (New York: New York University Press, 1957) p.91. Hodgkin also suggests that burial societies, mutual aid organizations and other new associations emerging in post-war colonial Africa had much in common with the kinds of popular urban organizations, —e.g. Friendly Societies—that developed in England during the early days of the industrial revolution.

³⁶ For an analysis of Senegal's post-war cooperatives , see Robert Tignor, " Senegal's Cooperative Experience, 1907-1990," in John Waterbury and Mark Gersowitz (eds.) The Political Economy of Risk and Choice in Senegal (London: Frank Cass, 1987), pp. 114-122.

³⁷ Wallerstein, "Voluntary Associations," in Coleman and Rosberg, Political Parties and national Integration in Tropical Africa, pp. 337-338.

³⁸ For the evolution of Senegal's trade union movement during the Senghor era, see Magatte Lo, Syndicalisme et Participation Responsable (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987). Lo, a UPS party leader and former minister, defended Senghor's policies towards Senegalese trade unions. For a different interpretation of the significance of the "unification" of the trade union movement imposed by the state, see Abdoulaye Ly, Les regroupements politiques au Senegal(1956-1970) (Paris::Karthala, 1992), pp.308-333. Ly, a former PRA-Senegal leader who had rallied in 1966 resigned from the UPS in 1970.

³⁹ The government dissolved the SES in 1973 following an illegal strike.

⁴⁰ Senegalese teachers unions also demanded that the government Africanize the school curriculum and support the teaching of national languages.

⁴¹ Bathily, Mai 68 a Dakar, op.cit., pp.133. Abdoulaye Bathily became president of the MDJS which was organized primarily by the Union Democratique des Etudiants Senegalais (UDEs') and leaders of the youth wing of the UNTS. The names of some of the clubs and associations affiliating with the MDJS suggest that these groups engaged in different social, cultural, recreational and mutual aid activities~e.g. Les Copains de Hann. Les Soeurs Unies. Free Jazz. Le Fover de Dahra. Club Lumumba, les Jacobins, and l'Alliance Club.

⁴² For a description of how the party-state in Mali attempted to mobilize the population into a large and comprehensive network of official associations, see Claude Meillasoux, The Urbanization of an African Community () pp. 69-72. All children between 8 and 18 had to join the Pionniers which were sub-divided into three age groups.

⁴³ Sheldon Gellar, " Circulaire 32 Revisited: Prospects for Revitalizing the Senegalese Cooperative Movement in the 1980s," in John Waterbury and Mark Gersovitz (eds.), The Political Economy of Risk and Choice in Senegal (London: Frank Cass, 1987), p. 129.

⁴⁴ The four regions encompassing the peanut basin provided 85% of the total membership of the cooperative movement.

⁴⁵ The Ministry responsible for supervising women's groups was generally headed by a woman. Frequent changes in nomenclature also meant that the Ministry dealing with women's groups often underwent changes in name and attributes—e.g. Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry to Promote the Family and Women, etc.

⁴⁶ Thus, ministers would come and donate millet mills to rural GFs to reduce their workload by eliminating the need to pound millet into flour. The GFs also served to receive project resources when donors began to incorporate Women in Development (WID) components in their development assistance.

⁴⁷ For a description of this transformation from age grade work party to village-level youth association in among the Diola, see Francis F. Snyder, Capitalism and Legal Change: An African Transformation(New York: Academic Press, 1981), pp. 173-197.

⁴⁸ For the founder's personal account of the evolution of his association, see Abdoulaye Diop, "L'Expérience Associative du Foyer de Ronkh à l'Amicale Economique du Walo," Archives de Sciences Sociales de la Coopération et du Développement, No. 62 (Octobre-Décembre 1982), pp. 108-127. For discussions of the internal organization of the Foyer and the Foyer as a role model for other youth associations, see, Daniel Descendre, L'Autodetermination Paysanne en Afrique: Solidarité ou tutelle des O.N.G. partenaires? (Paris: Harmattan, 1991), pp. 37-77 and Dominique Gentil, Les Mouvements Cooperatifs en Afrique de l'Ouest (Paris: Harmattan, 1986), pp. 206-236.

⁴⁹ Alexis Tocqueville, The Old Regime and the French Revolution (Garden City: Doublday, 1955), pp.40-41.

⁵⁰ For a brief discussion of the impact of FONGS in the creation of a broad-based peasant movement see Gudrun Lachenmann, "Civil Society and Social Movements in Africa," in J.P. Jacob and Philippe Lavigne Delville (eds.). Les Associations paysannes en Afrique: Organisation et dynamiques (Paris: Karthala, 1994), pp.74-77.

⁵¹ CNCR, Declaration of Thies March 17, 1993, p.4.

⁵² Sheldon Gellar. Circulaire 32 Revisited: Prospects for Revitalizing the Cooperative Movement in the 1980s." op.cit., pp. 136-159.

⁵³ The decline of the state-initiated producer groups was especially strong in the Senegal River Delta and Valley when peasant associations and producers groups were able to gain access to land and credit without having to go through SAED, the state water and irrigation agency..

⁵⁴ The fact that federated peasant associations frequently registered as NGOs in order to gain the tax benefits enjoyed by the development has created some confusion in distinguishing between the urban-based development NGOs and the peasant-based associations in the countryside with whom they worked.

⁵⁵ Tocqueville, Democracy in America, p. 527.

Democracy on America p. 513.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 514.

⁵⁸ Robert Putnam, a neo-Tocquevillian, has effectively used the concept of social capital to examine the vitality of associational life and its impact on democracy in Italy and in America. See Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993) and Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

⁵⁹ Quoted in Frederick C. Schaeffer, Democracy in Translation: Understanding Politics in an Unfamiliar Culture (Ithaca, New York Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 55.

One of the major reasons underlying the failure of so many foreign aid projects in Senegal and other African countries is the assumption that one had to create new institutions and associations because the older ones were either undemocratic or ineffective. Scholars and development practitioners like Emmanuel Ndione have demonstrated that it is better to work with existing associations based on traditional modes of organization which reflect indigenous values and interests than to attempt to create new ones based on imported values. See, for example, Emmanuel S. Ndione, Dynamique Urbaine d'une Societe en Grappe: Un Cas. Dakar (Dakar: END A, 1987) and Le Don et le Recours: Ressorts d'une Economie Urbaine (Dakar: Enda, 1992).

⁶¹ Ndione. Dynamique urbaine d'Une Societ6 en Grappe. op.cit.. p. 154.

⁶² Ndione provides a very interesting metaphor to describe this process of circulation of resources. Individuals seek to create numerous "drawers" (tiroirs) based on social relationships. The more people in your network, the more "drawers" are available that one can tap when in need of resources to resolve a problem—e.g. paying for a wedding, providing a gift at some life cycle problem, repaying a debt, purchasing a stock of goods to sell in the market, etc. On the other hand, individuals have to dig into their own drawers to come up with money and other resources requested by others in the network.

