

Casamancais versus S n galaise: Migration and the Indigene-Settler Conflict in Post-Independence Senegal

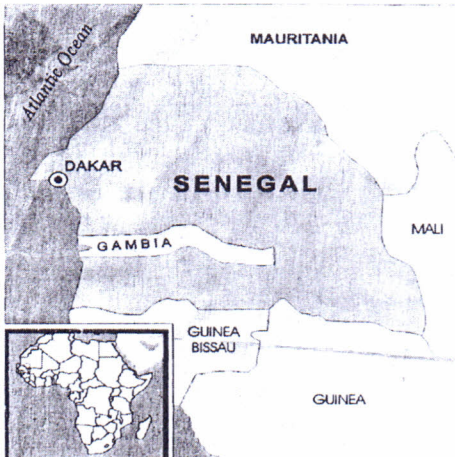
Irene N. Osemeka

Abstract

The distinction between indigenes and settlers is often related to their histories of migration and this has always been a part of the conflict rhetoric in Africa and elsewhere. This paper brings the discussion on migration into the indigene-settler debate in Senegal. It traces the evolution of Casamancais and Senegalese identities, identifying their distinguishing features and examines the factors and effects of migration patterns on the indigene-settler crisis in post independence Senegal. The paper argues that the presence of northern migrants in Casamance increased the consciousness of Casamancais identity but the evolution is attributable to the isolated nature of the Casamance territory as well as the discriminatory policies by the colonial and post-colonial administrations. Consequently, the search for durable peace in Casamance must include efforts that aim at the reconstruction of the Senegalese national identity to reflect local cultures and languages in Casamance.

Keywords: Migration, Indigene, Settler, Identity

Introduction



Accounts of migration had always been used to explain the origin of communities in pre-colonial Africa and they remain as in the past vital determinants of inter-group relations. In almost all cases traditions of migration was a factor for peaceful coexistence and integration but also a cause for conflicts between indigenes (earliest migrants) and the more recent migrants who are regarded as settlers or strangers. This is because there are

rights and privileges attached to indigenes of a given territory. The identity of a group is not merely for differentiation but often it is a basis for exclusion and inclusion in relation to the allocation resources. As Gaya rightly asserted, "indigeneship is not a mere status but a status that begets specific political, economic and psychological benefits"¹ Gaya's assertion is an illustration that migration and conflicts are inextricably linked. Traditions of migration are major components of group identity while identity-based conflicts are often compounded by the inflow of migrants with a distinct social identity. Much as migration and identity crisis were long established trends in Africa, the dimension intensified with the arrival of Europeans and the subsequent establishment of colonial rule. This was more so with the creation of new territorial boundaries and the adoption of diverse administrative policies. For instance, before the establishment of French colonial rule, the Tokolor and Wolof did not regard themselves as Senegalese, nor was the common use of French language a feature of group identity. As an example, the creation of administrative divisions under the colonial period led to the evolution of Nordiste and Sudiste identities for the inhabitants of the northern and southern parts of the country respectively.² Therefore, French colonialism produced new sources for the construction of identities among Senegalese ethnic groups. Despite the multiplication of identity traits, a general Senegalese identity is discernible and it is stronger in northern Senegal. However, Casamancais identity is associated with inhabitants of Casamance territory and is based on a shared feeling of isolation and exclusion from the northern region of Senegal where the capital city Dakar, is located.

The pattern in southern Senegal is replicated in other parts of West Africa where migration has also been a key factor in the construction of social group identity as well as conflicts. The conflict in Cote d'Ivoire between 2002 and 2003 was indirectly a consequence of the indigene-settler dichotomy between the Baoule who regard themselves as the autochthons (Ivorite) and the predominantly Muslim Dioula in the northern region. This was a major factor in the conflict between Laurent Gbagbo who is regarded as an Ivorite and Al Hassane Quattara, a Muslim Dioula.³ The indigene-settler dichotomy has been an important factor for conflicts in English speaking West African territories. According to Gaya, the Tiv-Fulani conflicts in Nigeria are couched in claims of autochthony by indigenous groups and their refusal to accept the status of settlers, which denies them rights and privileges as well as access to the resources of the land.

Perspectives on Migration and Indigene-Settler Relations

An understanding of the key terms, migration, indigene, settler and identity is necessary to place the discourse in a proper perspective. Migration involves the periodic change in location, which could be temporary, or permanent such that migrants could lay claim to indigeneship of a place.⁴ The definition reveals a

thin line between an indigene and a settler. In one study, an indigene was described as the earlier settlers in a given territory but not the creators or natural owners so that as J. H. Pongri put it, no society can lay claim to "absolute autotchotny."⁵ Similarly, Shedrack Gaya quoting the definition of the term indigene by a representative of the Tiv community in Jos, states thus, "an indigene is one whose ancestors were natives of a place beyond living memory."⁶ These definitions do not clearly rule out the fact that indigenes are somewhat migrants of a remote past. The term settler is used to describe the more recent migrant groups located in a territory where an earlier set of migrants already exist. It can be deduced from both explanations that the major distinction between the indigene and the settler is based on the duration that each category of migrants has lived in a given location.

Apart from the question of duration, the nature of relationship between indigenes and settlers is often compounded by differences in religion, language and other traits, which make each group recognizable to others and to themselves. According to Eghosa and Suberu, identity, refers to any group attribute that provides recognition or definition, references to affinity coherence and meaning. These attributes include ethnic origin, religion, class and interest groups.⁷ In the case of Senegal, the construction of regional identities has been shaped primarily by the question of territoriality while issues such as colonial history, ethnic origin and religion have been secondary.

There are inferences that can be made from existing works on the interface between migration and indigene-settler relations. Adepoju submitted that intra-regional migration is high in Africa and the fact that a majority of Africans do not migrate from their rural communities has been obscured in many studies. To some extent, the pattern of migration in Senegal validates Adepoju's view.⁸ Locations within Senegal were at various times the source and receiving regions for Senegalese migrants. Senegalese migrants also sought other destinations within Africa for many reasons. These include population growth, dwindling economy, the weakness of the private sector and a low demand for labour. These conditions combined as push factors for Senegalese emigration particularly in the 1960s and 1970s to countries like Ghana, Gabon and Cote D'Ivoire where labour demands were high. The lucrative diamond trade also lured many Senegalese to Cameroun, Zaire and the two Congos (Brazzaville and DRC).⁹ Senegalese migrants also sought destinations in Europe owing to economic crisis and political instability in the neighboring African states. Apart from France, which had been the traditional destination for Senegalese migrants since the colonial period, Italy and Spain became additional destinations. However, with the adoption of strict immigration laws in Europe and the United States of America, Senegalese migrants have been relatively restricted to Senegal and other African countries as in the past.¹⁰

Depicting the close link between migration and civil wars, Fearon and Laitin, asserted that conflicts often occur between earlier migrants whom they

tagged 'sons of the soil' and more recent migrants from another part of the country.¹¹ Both scholars stated that dominant groups are lured to areas inhabited by minority groups in search of land and government jobs. The pattern of migration in Senegal shows that relations between indigene and settlers is circumstantial and does not result in a strict pattern per se. In the 1970's the migration flow in Senegal was mainly from Casamance, which is inhabited by Senegal's minorities to the northern region, home to the country's majority groups. Rather than land and government jobs, the Casamancais migrants were content with menial jobs not necessarily as a matter of choice but the inability to access high paying jobs as members of a minority group in the section of the country dominated by the majority Wolof. Besides, employment opportunities in the public service, which is Senegal's largest employer of labour, had been restricted owing to the country's dwindling economy. Thus, Casamance migrants were mainly construction workers, bricklayers, carpenters, petty traders and factory workers.

The migration pattern was reversed from the 1980s following the drought years in the northern parts of Senegal and Casamance became the receiving region for many northern migrants. It was during the period; the trend in Senegal's migration replicated Fearon and Laitin's north Indian model. Migrants from the north of Senegal acquired land in Casamance for various economic activities including farming, commerce and competed for political positions in government with the indigenes.¹¹

With a specific focus on Senegal, Ernest Harsch linked migration patterns to the conflict dynamics in Casamance. He concluded that the Casamance rebellion is a consequence of, "demographic pressure of increased migration to the more fertile Casamance region by loads of more privileged northern Wolof and alienation of traditional peasant cultivators based on pro-capitalist states agrarian reform policies."¹² The review of literature has shown the nature of the intersection between migration and the indigene-settler dichotomy in Senegal. Based on the patterns in Senegal, it can be argued that economic motives were the primary push and pull factors for migration, while competition over resources gave rise to conflicts between indigenes and settler groups. Furthermore, the presence of Casamance migrants in northern Senegal did not lead to conflict because for the most part such migrants had limited access to the region's resources and government jobs, which were already filled by northerners.

It has been claimed that, "few would argue that the Casamancais do not have a valid claim to a distinct identity within the Senegalese nation"¹³ Lambert's assertion clearly justifies the existence of Casamancais identity alongside the Senegalese national identity and to some extent the phenomenon continues to undermine Senegal's efforts at national integration. The evolution of regional identities in Senegal is closely related to the territorial structure of the state. The northern region is located north of Gambia and is inhabited by

Senegal's major ethnic groups. They include the Serer, Tokolor, Lebou and Fula and the Wolof who are the dominant group in Senegal. Together these groups are referred to as the Nordistes and the northern identity is fostered by their closely related language and more importantly traditions of origin, which link many of the groups to the Tokolor and Wolof. The southern region is the region located south of the Gambia. The western part of the southern region is referred to as the Casamance territory. The region is inhabited by the Fulakhunda, Mandingo and the Joola who together make up Senegal's minorities. In the context of Senegal's geography, the Joola are the most excluded as they inhabit the western part of the Casamance, which is completely, separated from the Senegalese mainland by the Gambia. The separateness of the western part of Casamance explains the specificity of the Joola within the Casamance identity discourse.¹⁴

The detached nature of Casamance territory is partly tied to the rivalry over territorial acquisition by France, Britain and the Portuguese. The Portuguese had been on the Senegambia Coast from about the 15th Century but by the end of the 19th century, they were only able to retain the present Casamance and the state of Guinea-Bissau. The French remained in northern Senegal and other parts of West Africa but only acquired the Casamance in 1886 when the Portuguese relinquished control over the territory.¹⁵ The French continued to grapple with the territorial isolation of Casamance as it was cut off from other French territories by Portuguese Guinea to the south and British Gambia to the north. It was the refusal by British to cede the Gambia to the French in return for another colony that explains the detached nature of the Casamance territory.

Owing to the long duration of Portuguese presence in the southern Senegambian region, the western Casamance is Lusophone. The Joola who constitute the majority in the western part of Casamance, speak indigenous Jola fogny and Criulo, a corruption of the Portuguese language. They are also mainly Catholics. On the other hand, northern Senegal was under French influence from about the 17th century and the inhabitants of the coastal towns acquired French language and culture. Although the Casamance came under French rule in 1886, Portuguese influence endured among the inhabitants of the region.¹⁶ Despite the differences in their colonial backgrounds and the position of the Gambia, the Casamance was merged with northern Senegal to form the independent state of Senegal in 1960.¹⁷ Thus, the Casamance remains separated from Senegal and that feeling of separation has become one of the components of Casamance identity, particularly among the Joola.

Aside from the diverse influence of different colonial cultures, Islam and the Wolof language constitute the major markers of the Senegalese identity, which is more pronounced in northern Senegal. The Islam-Wolofization phenomenon was largely a product of French colonial rule. Although Islam was introduced to northern Senegalese groups from about the 11th Century, the

religion gained ascendancy under the French colonial rule and for several reasons¹⁸

One was the decision by the French colonial administration to rely on Muslim leaders (Marabouts) as agents of social control. The decision was influenced by the recognition of the centrality of Islam in daily social life and the enormous loyalty that Marabouts enjoyed from the indigenous population.¹⁹ Such a policy increased the Marabout's sphere of authority and allowed Islam to become the dominant influence in an administration that was initially constructed on French language and education.

Just like other Africans, the Senegalese groups exhibit a syncretistic approach to religion. However, most northerners have incorporated many aspects of indigenous religion into Islam so that the lines of difference are blurred. The approach to religion among the Joola differs in that indigenous religious practices remain distinct. Spirit shrines such as Bukut for initiated male, Ehugna limited to women who are mothers, and rituals that revolve around agriculture are still practiced among the Joola and related groups like the Bainouk and Balante.²⁰

Apart from religious differences between the inhabitants of the separate regions, French colonial policies also intensified regional distinctions. The concentration on groundnut as Senegal's major cash crop during the colonial period encouraged the spread of Islam in Senegal. While the Bordeaux, Marseille and Creole merchants controlled Senegal's economy, the French encouraged Marabouts to establish large groundnut farms.²¹ Groundnut plantations depended on labourers from the rural areas of Senegal and migrants from Mali and Guinea. Marabouts, especially of the Mouridde brotherhood were mainly in charge of labour mobilization and marketing to European firms. Marabouts thus occupied a privileged position in the colonial economy and used this to exercise religious authority over labourers. This paved the way for the conversion of a majority of the labourers and where they had been converted to Islam working under Marabouts increased their identification to the religion and their religious leaders.²²

Another major aspect of the Senegalese identity, which is more pronounced among the Nordistes, is the use of Wolof language. The adoption of Wolof language by other ethnic groups is often referred to as Wolofization in Senegalese literature. The phenomenon was aided by many factors. One was the location of French settlements in the coastal region close to Wolof homelands of Baol, Cayor, Walo and Djolof. Aside from this, the Wolof who were great merchants of old naturally flocked to the coastal centres to participate in European trade. The large population of Wolof in the coastal cities afforded them the access to jobs in the civil service as messengers and clerks.²³ Over time, Wolof became the language of administration and commerce and the indigenous lingua-franca in colonial Senegal.

The centrality of Wolof homelands in relation to other ethnic groups also facilitated the Wolofisation process. A look at the map of Senegal shows that the Wolof homeland is enveloped by the Tokolor and Fula to the north, the Serer to the south and the Mandinka to the east. Even more to the advantage of the Wolof is that in this territorial placement, they also enjoyed a numerical superiority. On the contrary, the Casamance and in particular the Joola, were shielded from acquiring such traits owing to the barrier posed by the Gambia.²⁴

A major feature of the French colonial administration that helped to foster distinct regional identities was the pattern of separate administrative policies for the colonies including Senegal. In Senegal, the four communes of Dakar, Goree St Louis and Rufisque were under direct administration and were governed directly by French officials. On the other hand, Casamance and other rural areas constituted the protectorate and were administered through Africans particularly from northern Senegal who acted as agents of the French. The discriminatory policy of French administration had the effect of reducing direct interaction between the French and the Casamance population and more importantly, it allowed northern Senegalese to play prominent roles in the colonial government.²⁵ Cities like Dakar, St. Louis, Goree and to a lesser extent Rufisque located in the northern region emerged as colonial metropolis and were the choice destination of many hinterland dwellers. The migrants came from the immediate precincts to the urban centers and the remote areas of the extreme northern and southern parts of Senegal, as well as the Casamance. Like their counterparts, migrants from Casamance came in search of jobs, which the new economy provided. Many women worked as housemaids and engaged in petty trading while a majority of the men sought employment in factories located in Dakar and St. Louis.²⁶

With the French policy of assimilation migrants to the colonial metropolis fell into the category of inassimilable Africans and were, therefore largely excluded from the colonial administration. The policy of assimilation therefore, produced two categories of Senegalese, the assimilated who were citizens (Citoyens) and unassimilated or non-citizens (Sujets). Thus, even after the adoption of the laws of 1946 and Loi Cadre of 1956 which gave the rights of citizenship to all Africans and extended voting rights outside the four communes, social stratification of the local population endured.²⁷ The urban Senegalese dwellers continued to enjoy privileges which placed them in advantaged positions in Senegalese politics and economy and this became another source of animosity among rural dwellers in the Casamancais.

The concentration of developmental efforts in the four communes also led to the absence of infrastructural development in many parts of Senegal's rural area. Initially the Casamance attracted some agricultural developmental efforts with the establishment of La Compagnie Générale des Oléagineux Tropicaux (GCOT), an extension of the groundnut scheme. Nevertheless, in comparison to the north, the Casamance did not attract the developmental efforts

on the same scale as the northern groundnut basin.²⁸ Hence the Casamance economy was under-developed in spite of its rich agricultural resources. The neglect of crops such as rice, cashew nuts maize and fruits that are grown in abundance deprived the Casamance region of the infrastructure that would have accompanied their development.

Poor agricultural policy combined with the lack of government investment became one of the push factors for emigration from Casamance to northern cities. The migrants were only able to secure menial jobs and as low paid workers, they could only afford the shanty areas of the cities. Many such migrants were aware of their low-social ranking, and they tended to live in isolated quarters. The emergence of such ethnic communities, located in the shanty areas, such as Grand-Yoff in the city of Dakar, is an indication that they were less able to access the political and socio-economic resources of the state. Migrants from Casamance were generally perceived by northerners as the 'Niaks' (Bush people). Such negative group perceptions were legacies that contributed to antagonistic relations between the Casamançais and the northern settlers in the post-independence period.²⁹

Migration and the Crisis of Identity in Post-Colonial Senegal

The construction of regional identities in Senegal is largely a consequence of colonial policies and the developmental disparities between the north and southern regions. These factors continued to determine relations between northerners and southerners in the post-colonial period. A reversal in migration patterns from the north to Casamance were although mainly occasioned by climatic changes, the large presence of northerners in western Casamance was to exacerbate age-old perceptions and latent grievances nurtured against Nordistes.

The crisis of identity became most glaring from 1982 when the Mouvement des Forces Democratique de la Casamance (MFDC), resorted to armed campaign against the Senegalese government forces demanding independence for Casamance.³⁰ Several reasons have been stated by the MFDC to justify demand for Casamance independence from the Senegalese state. These include differences in language and culture between the Casamance and the Nordistes, differences in colonial history and the marginalization of Casamançais from Senegalese national politics, which is dominated by the Nordistes.

Many steps were taken by successive post-colonial governments to address the territorial exclusion of the Casamance since this was the major factor that constrained the efforts to integrate the inhabitants to the northern region. There were several efforts by the post-colonial governments to address the isolation of the Casamance. One notable effort was the Rural Animation Programme (Animation Rurale), under the administration of Leopold Senghor, the first president of Senegal at independence³¹ that focused on the development of infrastructure and provision of social services in health and the education

sectors. The programme, itself was not designed exclusively for the Casamance territory but was a rural-based programme that aimed to facilitate infrastructural development in Senegal's rural areas. The major focus of the programme was the construction of roads, provision of medical and educational facilities utilizing labour from the rural communities. The Senghor administration was, however unable to achieve the desired objectives owing to the lack of funding and the dwindling financial assistance from France, Senegal's major source of funding.

The failure of the programme deprived the region of the needed infrastructure for socio-economic growth and this translated to fewer opportunities for employment. In practice, Casamance inhabitants had to migrate to the northern cities of Dakar in search of jobs as in the past. The Casamance region alone accounted for about 30% of migrants to Dakar in the seventies.³² Emigration was a matter of survival for many in Casamance as O'Brien put it, "Trop de villages joola, trop d'homme et de femmes dépendent de la migration au nord pour survivre ou deviennent des Sénégalais, peut-être San enthousiasme" (Men and women from several Joola villages migrated to northern Senegal and were enthusiastic about being Senegalese).³³

The establishment of the Senegambian Federation in 1982 was another avenue through which the Senegalese government hoped to address the Casamance question. Although the federation was resented in Casamance as the MFDC desire the creation of Gabour republic that will replicate the Gabour Empire. The Gabour republic collapsed at the end of the nineteenth century but its boundaries encompassed northern parts of Guinea Bissau, southern Gambia the Casamance region, inhabited by the Jola, Bainouk and Balante who are closely related in language and culture. Despite resentment in Casamance, the federation bore great prospects for the integration of the Casamance since it would provide unhindered access through the Gambia to northern Senegal. The federation was also likely to increase economic interaction between the Casamance, Gambia and Senegal. With the collapse of the federation in 1989, one avenue through which the Casamance could be integrated into the Senegalese state was stalled.³⁴

The sustenance of colonial policies by post-independence governments also dimmed the opportunities to integrate the Casamance population effectively into the Senegalese state. A fundamental aspect of colonial legacy that had far-reaching effects on relations between the north and southern regions of Senegal was the continued reliance on Muslim leaders as agents of administration by the post-independence governments. For instance, Marabouts continued to determine the outcome of elections at all levels of governance and although Senghor was a Christian (Christians are an insignificant minority in Senegal), he depended largely on the Muslim leadership to sustain his administration. Furthermore, the nature of administration after independence did not alter colonial patterns as northerners continued to enjoy privileged positions in

government and commerce. The composition of Senghor's cabinet demonstrated the inequalities inherited from the colonial period as nine of the fourteen members were Wolof.³⁵ The northern ethnic groups continued to dominate the political axis to the exclusion of the southern minorities.

There were efforts at infrastructural development under Diouf's administration but these were limited giving the guidelines that accompanied the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) from 1983. There were restriction on public service expenditure and concentration on tradable goods.³⁶ In addition, the drought in northern region worsened economic conditions given the implementation of SAP regime in Senegal. Besides, Diouf continued to sustain colonial patterns like Senghor and Marabouts remained dominant in Senegal's politics. The failure to invest adequately in rural areas meant that rural-urban migration continued.

All of these conditions combined to attract northern migrants to Casamance. Unlike the arid northern region, the Casamance is choice destination for northern migrants. The Casamance is suitable for farming, and fishing with its hospitable climate, a swamp and rain forest vegetation and numerous waterways provided by the River Casamance and its tributaries. It is important to point out that there were northern migrants in the Casamance but the drought years increased their numbers and this meant that northerners had to access resources such as land for habitation, agriculture and other commercial purpose. However, land use among the Joola is central to indigenous religion apart from other economic activities such as farming and fishing. The nature of land use is an additional attribute of Joola identity construct. This explains why grievance pertaining to land has generated fury among the Casamancais.³⁷

Grievance relating to land allocation in Casamance is traceable to the adoption of the *Sur la Domain* of 1964 (Land Act of 1964), which came into effect in 1972.³⁸ The land law increased the possibility of northerners acquiring land for farming and other commercial purposes. It was opinion among Casamancais that the land allocation scheme was a ploy by the Senegalese government to allocate arable land to northerners from the drought prone northern region.³⁹ This is because large parcels of arable land were allocated to northerners for the cultivation of groundnuts and other crops such as cotton, maize and millets. The fishing industry was also affected. A majority of Tokolor and Serer fishermen migrated to the Casamance region and have constituted themselves into fishing communities along the waterways that the Joola traditionally regard as part of their homeland.⁴⁰ The nature of land acquisition intensified animosity between Casamance indigenes and northern settlers but also increased the awareness of social group identity among the Joola.

There is no doubt that land was a major cause for friction between northern settlers and indigenes but the tourist industry was another major attraction. To understand the viability of the sector to Senegal's economy, the tourism industry is second to the fishing industry as the country's source of

foreign exchange earnings. The Casamance contributes over 30% to the tourism sector in earnings with the hospitable Casamance weather and its numerous beaches including the Cape Skirring, which has always attracted a large number of tourists from Europe.⁴¹ Many northern migrants, invested in hotels and other support services such as catering and entertainment. Therefore, the presence of northerners meant competition with indigènes over jobs in the tourist industry.⁴²

There were other effects that northern emigration had on the Casamançais. Apart from pressure on economic resources, migrants also competed for elective political positions and assumed prominence in Casamance politics. Although northerners did not alter existing demographic patterns since the Joola have remained the majority in towns like Ziguinchor and Bigogna, northerners have been able to wield considerable influence in the local Casamance politics, especially because of their ties to the northern dominated government in Dakar. For instance, political positions that were reserved for the Casamançais at the local government level came under threat with the large influx of influential northerners into the Casamance region. The election of Mamadou Abdoulaye Sy, as the Mayor of the city of Ziguinchor in 1977, became an additional reason for resentment in the Casamance. The Casamançais resented Sy's election on the grounds that although his mother is Joola his father is Tokolor. And because of the patriarchal structure of traditional society, he came to be associated more with his father's ethnic group, the Tokolor who belong to the group categorised as Nordistes and are generally resented in Casamance. Resentment against Abdoulaye Sy's election was a manifestation of the growing consciousness of disparities in regional identities and the need to protect spaces previously occupied by the indigènes.⁴³

The indigène-settler crisis was inflamed by the fact that the Joola are the dominant group in the Ziguinchor area where they constitute over 60% of the population.⁴⁴ The Joola ascribe to themselves the status of indigènes in Casamance and have often justified their indigeneity using the theory of autochthony. According to one source of the Joola tradition of origin, they evolved from their present homeland and exclude references to migration from other locations. In the light of these arguments, it was generally felt that the position of Mayor should be reserved for Ziguinchorois (inhabitants of Ziguinchor).⁴⁵

Northern migrants also extended their influence beyond Casamance politics and made their presence felt in the economic and religious spheres. The presence of northern migrants led to the transformation of major components of the Casamançais identity and by extension Joola identity. The transformation was such that it appeared the northern migrants were subtly 'northernising' the people of Casamance. As an example, the Wolof language became frequently spoken in the western Casamance region, submerging the predominance of the local languages such as the Jola Fogny and Criulo. The large presence of

northern migrants also increased Islamic religious influence particularly in western Casamance, which has a significant minority of Catholics.

There has also been the issue of monopoly of trade and other commercial activities in Casamance by the Baol-Baol traders who are mainly Muslims of Tokolor and Fula extraction. The Baol-Baol traders have been able to control local commerce and in so doing, deprived indigenous groups of the dominant position they previously occupied. Besides, many of the business owners from the north prefer to employ members of their ethnic groups. The discriminatory pattern of employment intensified friction between indigènes and settlers in Casamance.⁴⁶ However, the Joola has been the worst hit because their traditional homeland has been the target destination for northern migrants. As inhabitants in the receiving region, they have been the most aggrieved and this explains the debate on whether to categorise MFDC resistance as Casamance revolt or a Joola rebellion. Clearly, the Joola are a majority in the MFDC. Besides, Joola indigenous religious including sacrifices offered by priestesses and priests of spirit shrines such as the Ukine and Boukine, have featured prominently in the course of mobilization by MFDC members for protest and armed violence against the GOS.⁴⁷

It is also important to explore external factors that influenced internal migration in Senegal. Generally, migration of northerners to the Casamance tends to be tied to the existence of ample economic opportunities and the hospitable climate of the region. Yet, the feeling of common citizenship must also be considered as a significant factor. The choice of Casamance by many northerners is expectedly predicated on the feeling that Casamance is a part of the Senegalese territory and as Senegalese citizens, they have the right to settle in any part of the country that offered opportunities for better life. For northerners, living in Casamance would not require any form of documentation, such as passports upon entry nor work permits to gain employment or the restriction to specific duration of stay. This is important, considering that many African immigrants are subjected to humiliating treatment even in the efforts to secure traveling permits and visas to foreign countries such as the USA, Britain and France.⁴⁸ Upon entry to the host countries, some African immigrants are able to acquire the status of permanent residents. Others constitute the population of illegal immigrants who are low wage earners and are constantly harassed and deported to their home countries once they are discovered.

Even within the states of the Economic Community West African States (ECOWAS), which allows free movement of nationalities of member states, there is still need to present some form of identification and time restraints.⁴⁹ The choice of Casamance as the destination of northern Senegalese migrants, can therefore, be seen in part, as a way of avoiding the bureaucracy that often accompanies cross-border migration.

The indigene-settler crisis represents one dimension of a three-decade old Casamance rebellion in Senegal. The rebellion has so far claimed over a

ousand lives and generated over 5000 refugees and internally displaced persons.⁵⁰ With the war, migration patterns have again been altered in Senegal inhabitants of Casamance and especially the worst hit regions of Oussouye, pack and Ziguinchor have been forced to emigrate.⁵¹ The incidence of armed violence, landmine explosions and human rights violation by the GOS and IFDC have forced inhabitants of the region to migrate to parts of northern Senegal, Gambia and Guinea Bissau. With the trend in Senegal, it can be argued that migration and conflicts are both pull and push factors.

Conclusion

The foregoing analysis has demonstrated that the indigene-settler dichotomy is a consequence of the peculiar structure of the Senegalese state, French colonial policies and the adoption of such policies in the post-independence period. Factors that motivated migration and relations with host communities were highlighted and there were attempts to show how regional identities influenced relations between migrants and the host communities especially in Casamance. In particular, the construction of Joola identity within the context of Casamancais regional identity was highlighted. The analysis pointed out that the evolution of Casamancais identity is partly related to the choice of western Casamance region as a destination of migrants because of its fertile land, hospitable climate and beaches, which supports Senegal's thriving tourist industry.

There were also other noticeable trends in Senegal's post-independence migration patterns. Whereas in the past, Senegal was the destination of migrants from the neighboring states, the war in Casamance increased the incidence of external migration so that the country has become a source rather than a receiving region for migrants.

Another suggestion that is likely to stem the spate of violence in Casamance is a territorial adjustment that could provide a contiguous belt between the Casamance, Gambia and northern Senegal. But this is hardly feasible given the position of the African Union (AU) on the sanctity of post-colonial borders.⁵² A more workable option is to seek avenues to foster closer ties between Senegal and the Gambia. The viability lies in the fact that the groups in the region are closely related in language and culture. Furthermore, the protracted conflict in Casamance has had adverse effects on Senegal's neighbours including Gambia and Guinea Bissau. Although the Gambia is understandably reluctant on establishing a political association with Senegal in view of its small-sized territory and population, stability in the region must be focused on strengthening bilateral relations between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau on the one hand and Senegal and Gambia on the other hand, even within the present ECOWAS structure. The involvement of the border populations in Gambia and Guinea Bissau has contributed to the protracted nature of the conflict. Apart from providing safe havens for Casamance rebels, they have also

aided illegal trade in arms, lumber and cannabis while the countries have severed diplomatic relations at various times.⁵³

There is no doubt that the presence of northern migrants in Casamance is an important aspect of the conflict dynamics in Casamance but a review of the national land policy is necessary given the relevance of land to indigenous religious practices. Land allocation to northerners must be such that does not encroach on worship sites including areas reserved as sacred groves. This would mean government officials working closely with traditional office holders who still enjoy the patronage of both Muslim and Christian Joola.

The conflict in the Casamance has created a greater awareness of the regions rich agricultural potentials, which presents opportunity for investment in the agro-sector. Many international organization such United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Red Cross working for peace in the Casamance have been involved in agricultural development projects but their efforts are too minimal as to raise the developmental index of the region. In particular, France as the former colonial master of Senegal must consider a general policy of redirection of expenditure from armed intervention to expenditure on infrastructural development and provision of social services in its former African colonies. To a large extent, France and members of the European Union cannot totally insulate themselves from the adverse effects of conflicts in Africa. The intervention of French forces in the northern Mali conflict has cost the French about 7 million Euro.⁵⁴ Apart from the cost on human and material resources incurred on conflict resolution in Africa, they have had to accommodate African immigrants whose presence is a strain on their social services in health, education and housing.

External support is desirable but the position by donor countries in Europe and the United States of America has been that, African problems should be solved by Africans. While this position negates the fact that external actors contributes significantly to Africa's problems including conflicts, it is indicative that Africans must assume greater responsibility in addressing their problems. To this end, Senegal must intensify aforestation programmes in the drought-prone northern and eastern regions. Efforts in this direction will contribute to the regions' agricultural potentials and deter emigration to other parts of Senegal. Apart from aforestation programmes, measures that seek to foster a national Senegalese identity in Casamance are necessary. Although, Joola is one of Senegal's national languages, the policy must be intensified particularly in northern Senegal to reflect the cultures of the groups in Casamance. There is also a need for decentralization of government institutions with the rural areas including Casamance as the focus. This will enhance rural development and strengthen government-people relations needed to foster a common Senegalese identity.

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