It is not easy to say exactly when Islam first established itself in our region. On the other hand, one can be sure that this religion infiltrated progressively from the central valley of Senegal, from the empire of Tékrour. To understand the influence of Islam in Senegambian societies, one must first trace its complete history of Tékrour. To understand the influence of Islam in Senegal, it is not easy to say exactly when Islam first established itself on the black slave trade. The impact of Islam was profound and its establishment was not without the violent upheavals resulting from the slave trade. The victory of Islam over the black slave trade is the basis for our research of its impact.

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The Mouride Brotherhood

Demographically speaking, the mourdie brotherhood has fewer followers than the jnane brotherhood but, in terms of organization, discipline, and capacity for mobilization and economic entrepreneurship, it has the most influence. In spite of critical episodes and serious oscillations in the colonial administration, by directing the development of the groundnut industry (the product of colonial exploitation) it was able to interfere in political affairs by very quietly gaining itself a privileged position.

Today, the economic, social, and religious network of Mouride extend throughout the world, most notably in the marketplaces of Senegalese origin. This ‘spider web’ already constitutes an essential element of the international commerce. This ‘spider web’ is woven by the followers of Mouride (‘Mouride marabouts’), not only in Senegal and Senegalese communities in the diaspora but also between different Senegalese communities which, at the same time, have been especially woven dense networks of solidarity and source of inspiration: Mourideism, the cen-

The other great figure of the saga of this first Mouride period was the faithful disciple (the main to do and undertake everything) of the great marabout, Cheikh Ibaal, called Lamou Faye (1910-1931), who founded the sub-brotherhood of the Bajo Fail. His name is closely associated with that of the Bajo Fail sub-branch he created, the Casamance and even more the Jebel. The Bajo Fail branch of Mouride retained the clothing and customs of the petty world of long life: high grass, wide leather belts encircling their loins, multi-coloured gowns, a pestle to use as a club, a drum music and religious chants deeply influenced by the Wolof ‘peasant’ rhythm and beat and an expression of the emotions which is now found in contemporary mbal-ee (dance music). Of the totality of the teaching which issued from Ahmadou Bamba – the piety, obedience, discipline and work – Bajo Fail have retained only the last element. Their devotion, dedication and commitment to the quest to and work in the service of the brotherhood and of the marabouts have assured the primitive accumu-

In this case, the urban crises were now combined with the intensification of social movements, increasing their frequency and becoming more frequent recourse to brutal meth-

The death of the Mouride marabout coincid-

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On the death of the founder of Mouridism, a controversy arose regarding the succession between his brothers, Cheikh Anta Mbacke (1778-1930), a prosperous businessman, also known as ‘the brotherhood’s banker’, and his eldest son Cheikh Mamboudou Mbacke (1884-1945). The colonial administration preferred the latter who was the real organizer of the brotherhood. He maintained the structure of the mosque, the Islamic center, the network of marabouts and the territorial expansion of Mouridism which extended beyond the Wolof groundnut basin to reach the seer and the city dwellers of the colony of Senegal.

The succession to Mamadou Mbacke was the prayer on the carpet held up by the waves of the ocean, his resis-

The Brazilian scholar Dr. Mamadou Diouf's work at Cheikh Anta Diop University/CODESRIA, Dakar.

Notes


The secular marabout, Abdou Lahat, was suc-

deciding to enlarge the mosque and complete the

deciding to enlarge the mosque and complete the

construction of an Islamic university begun in the capital. In Touba, his followers have left more room for the activities of different branches of Mouride, notably the young marabouts looking for economic and financial opportunities and for lucrative political patron-

The organization of the brotherhood is hierar-

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