

THE MURIDS: SURVEILLANCE AND COLLABORATION*

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AT the beginning of the twentieth century Muslim societies of northern Senegal and southern Mauritania moved slowly but surely into relations of accommodation with the French colonial regime. The process was led by marabouts, persons who combined various forms of Islamic learning and saintliness. It took the form of Sufi orders, often called ‘brotherhoods’, that became anchored in the emerging economy of the peanut basin in central Senegal. The accommodation permitted the marabouts and brotherhoods to develop considerable autonomy in the religious, economic and social spheres while surrendering the political and administrative domain to the French.

Of all these ‘paths to accommodation’¹ between Muslim societies and French colonial authorities, the one followed by Amadu Bamba Mbacke and the Murid movement is ostensibly the longest, the hardest, the most complete, and the most enduring. For these reasons the Murid movement has been much more fully studied – by Paul Marty of the colonial Muslim Affairs Bureau in the early twentieth century and by social scientists in recent decades.²

The Murid trajectory was not different, in the most fundamental sense, from its less dramatic predecessors. For this reason it needs to be considered in conjunction with broad developments in the Senegalo – Mauritanian zone in which Muslim leaders acquired considerable constituencies, wealth and economic insertion in the new French colonial order. But it deserves to be placed last for two reasons: it was completed after the processes led by

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¹ The tentative title of my forthcoming manuscript, *Paths to accommodation: Muslim communities, colonial authorities and civil society in Senegal and Mauritania*.

² The social scientists have tended to repeat the capsule history of Marty, but no historian has yet explored or interpreted the path to accommodation in the early decades of the movement. Cheikh Anta Mbacké Babou, a doctoral student in history at Michigan State, is doing this exploration now, as the subject of his dissertation. The most important treatments of the Muridiyya are Christian Coulon, *Le Marabout et le Prince* (Paris, 1981); Jean Copans, *Les Marabouts de l'Arachide* (Paris, 1980); Lucy Creevey, ‘Ahmad Bamba, 1850–1927’, in J. R. Willis (ed.), *Studies on the History of Islam in West Africa*, 1 (London, 1979); Donal Cruise O’Brien, *The Mourides of Senegal* (Oxford, 1971) and *Saints and Politicians* (Cambridge, 1975); Momar Coumba Diop, ‘La littérature mouride. Essai d’analyse thématique’, *Bulletin de l’Institut Fondamental d’Afrique Noire* (BIFAN), Séries B, 1979; Cheikh Tidiane Sy, *La confrérie sénégalaise des Mourides* (Paris, 1969). All of these scholars go back to the work of Paul Marty (especially ‘Les Mourides d’Amadou Bamba’, 1, 217–332, in *Etudes sur l’Islam au Sénégal*, 2 vols., Paris, 1917). Marty was a French Islamicist who gained his experience in North Africa before coming to the Government General in Dakar a few years before World War I.

Bamba's contemporaries³ and it put the seal on a new practice,⁴ a new pattern of relations between Muslims and colonial authorities, more fully than any of its predecessors.

The French created much of the conflict with the Murids and made the process of accommodation longer and more complex. At a time when their control of the peanut basin was still fragile, Amadu Bamba developed a growing reputation as teacher, saint and rallying point among a large number of displaced persons. That reputation included an attitude of opposition to the practices and agents of power, whether they were members of the *anciens régimes* of the Wolof and Serer states, those who had attempted to put 'Islamic' governments in their place, or the emerging colonial order.

When the French completed their conquest and developed their rationale for colonial rule of Senegal in the 1890s, they were still highly suspicious of Muslim leaders and of Islam itself.⁵ Their first approach to the administration of territories was a modified system of chieftaincy. For Bamba and his followers, the methods of rule employed by these chiefs were not significantly different from their pre-colonial predecessors. The Murids sought to retain social and geographical distance from the centers of power.⁶ This attitude, combined with French fear about controlling the critical peanut basin, go a long way to explaining the exile of Bamba in 1895.

In this paper I suggest that the path to accommodation may have been less long and tortuous than the standard literature suggests. The conventional historiography makes the entire period (1895–1912) of Bamba's exile, in three different locations, into a time of opposition, followed by a rather intensive collaboration (1912–27) from the founder's return to Baol until his death.⁷ I argue that the pattern of relationship – a *simultaneous* combination of close surveillance by the French, constant communication between the

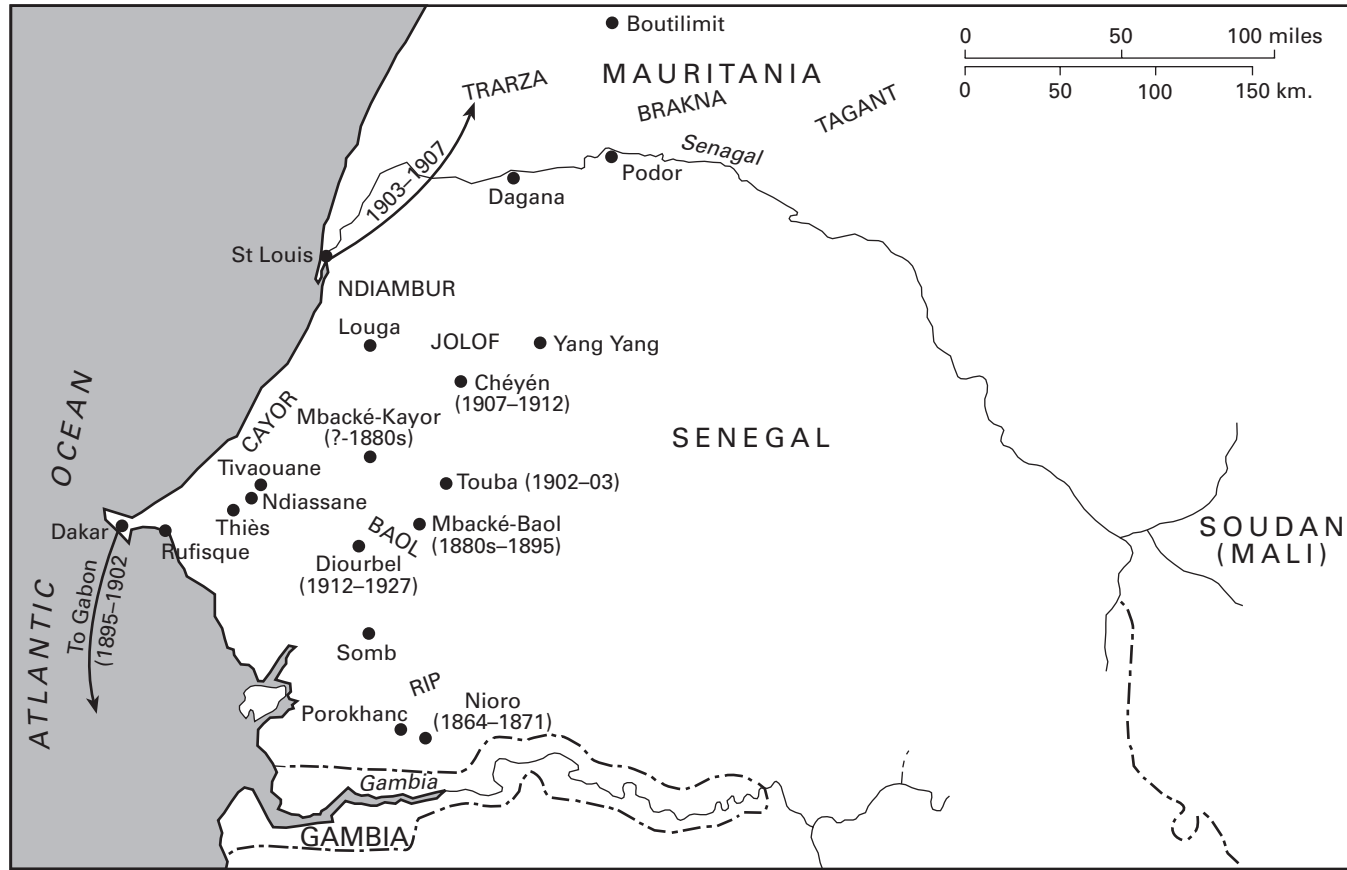
³ I compare Bamba and the Murid trajectory to Saad Buh, the champion of a Fadiliyya group based in southwestern Mauritania, Sidiyya Baba, the patron of the Sidiyya order based in Butilimit, and Malik Sy, the architect of a Tijaniyya brotherhood that operated out of Tivaouane in Cayor. See my articles, 'Saad Buh, the Fadiliyya and French colonial authorities', *Islam et Sociétés au Sud du Sahara* 11 (1997), 129–48. 'Shaikh Sidiyya Baba: co-architect of colonial Mauritania', *Islam et Sociétés au Sud du Sahara*, forthcoming in 13 (1999), and 'Malik Sy, teacher in the new colonial order', in Triaud and Robinson (eds.), *L'ascension d'une confrérie musulmane: La Tijaniyya en Afrique de l'Ouest et du Nord (XIXe–XXe siècles)*, manuscript under preparation.

⁴ In the sense employed by Pierre Bourdieu in *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford, 1990), esp. 80ff.

⁵ They had obviously had to work with Muslim authorities of some kind over the years, and Faïdherbe had helped put in place a set of learned and respected Muslims in St Louis who were of inestimable value of the colonial regime. But they were deeply suspicious of most of the Muslim leaders of the interior, often with good reason, since these leaders expressed hostility to the extension of French and hence 'infidel' authority over land and people who belonged to the *Dar al-Islam*. See Robinson, 'French "Islamic" policy and practice in late nineteenth-century Senegal', *Journal of African History*, 29 (1988), 415–35.

⁶ Like the generation of Muslim reformers of an earlier generation. See Martin Klein, 'Social and economic factors in the Muslim revolution in Senegambia', *Journal of African History*, 13 (1972), 419–41.

⁷ I tended to use the conventional periodization in my previous article on Bamba. See Robinson, 'Beyond resistance and collaboration: Amadu Bamba and the Muridiyya of Senegal', *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 21 (1991), 149–71.



Map 1. The Senegalo-Mauritanian region and locations of Amadu Bamba. Adapted from D. Cruise O'Brien, *The Mourides of Senegal* (Oxford, 1971), 36.

two sides, and collaboration in the economic development of the peanut basin – was established by the early twentieth century and remained consistent for the rest of Bamba's life. The pattern was already manifest when Bamba returned from his first exile in 1902.

I suggest that this pattern was also applied to the other marabouts and brotherhoods, and that it originated to a large extent in changes in practice and perspective in the colonial administration. The Government General of French West Africa that was established at the beginning of the twentieth century had more resources, confidence and knowledge than its predecessors. It also developed, in the form of its plan to take over Mauritania, a new model of relations between Muslim authorities and European rule.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE MURIDIYYA: THE CRITIQUE OF THE
EXERCISE OF POWER

To ground the Murid 'path' to accommodation, one must go back to the formative years of the founder. The biography of Amadu Bamba, in its broad outlines, is relatively well known. He was born at mid-century, grew up in the turbulence of the late nineteenth century, and developed a following, a pedagogy and a place in the new colonial economy by the early twentieth century.

Bamba, by virtue of the importance of his family – his father was a leading Muslim authority of his day – had a particularly intimate experience with the power brokers of central Senegal in his formative years. The most important were with Ma Ba Diakhu in Rip, the Madiyanke of Jolof and Cayor, and Damel Lat Dior. I review briefly each of those experiences and suggest their meaning for Bamba and his emerging following.⁸

Martin Klein and Boubacar Barry have portrayed Ma Ba as providing the most fundamental critique and the most challenging Islamic resistance to the *anciens régimes* and the embryonic colonial order.⁹ Certainly Ma Ba attracted a large following, including such ambitious political leaders as Lat Dior of Cayor and Albury Ndiaye of Jolof, and developed a severe critique of social relations.

But the movement had serious weaknesses. First, the haste. Ma Ba took little time to prepare his teaching or following, much less to formulate a program to replace the practices of those he was criticizing.¹⁰ Second, his willingness to coerce Muslims into participation. Coercion was the experience of the young Bamba and his father, who were forced to migrate from Baol to the Rip in about 1865 and to support the cause. Third, Ma Ba's own strong political ambitions, even while he was delivering the traditional Muslim critique of political power. These dimensions may help to explain the defeat at the battle of Somb in 1867, when Ma Ba was killed and Lat Dior returned to Cayor. They certainly go a long way to explaining the struggle among his successors, a struggle which has gone down in the traditions of

⁸ I elaborate on this in somewhat greater detail in 'Beyond resistance and collaboration', 150–160.

⁹ Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge 1998, English edition from 1988 French edition), 196ff.; he relies heavily on Klein, *Islam and Imperialism in Senegal. Sine-Saloum, 1847–1914* (Edinburgh, 1968), 63ff.

¹⁰ Even less than Al Hajj Umar. See Robinson, *Holy War*, ch. 9. For Bamba's implicit criticisms of Ma Ba and his movement, see Babou, 'Autour de la genèse du Mouridisme', *Islam et Sociétés au Sud du Sahara*, 11 (1997), 5–38.

Senegambia as an example of *fitna*, internecine strife which weakens the fabric of Islam.¹¹

Bamba was in his teen years during this time. After Ma Ba's death, he and his father joined Lat Dior in Cayor and lived there during the 1870s and early 1880s. As king or Damel, Lat Dior was struggling with the growing French presence and a variety of critiques of his power. The fundamental contradiction was between his agents of power at the court and his constituents in the countryside.¹²

One important critique came from a group called the Madiyanke.¹³ Amadu Madiyu and his brothers emerged on the Senegalese stage in the late 1860s, in the midst of a devastating cholera epidemic. They formulated a commentary on contemporary society, the exploitation of the royal courts, and the close relations of certain chiefs with the French administration in St Louis. They pushed this critique further than Ma Ba, and won a considerable following in northwestern Senegal.

The Madiyanke forced Lat Dior into closer ties with St Louis, and he in turn helped persuade Governor Valière to intervene with colonial troops in 1875.¹⁴ The combined army routed the 'Muslim' forces at Samba Sadio. The Madiyanke leaders and most of the followers were killed, whereupon the victors confiscated their possessions, as was the custom. The confiscation provoked controversy in the debates of Muslim scholars in Cayor.¹⁵

On one side of the debate was Ma Diakhate Kala, a well-known cleric and author serving as the main *qadi* of Lat Dior. For him, the Madiyanke, by their 'Messianic' claims, had forfeited their status as Muslims; their possessions were fair game.¹⁶ On the other side was Amadu Bamba, who was coming into his own as a Muslim authority. While he had little patience with

¹¹ See Mbacke, *Les bienfaits de l'éternel ou la biographie de Cheikh Amadou Bamba Mbacké* (translation of Khadim Mbacke) (Dakar, 1995), especially 28–30. Abdullay Niassé, the founder of the Niassé order based in Kaolack, apparently came to the same critique after some time spent in the entourage of Saër Maty, Ma Ba's son. See Christopher Gray, 'The rise of the Niassene Tijaniyya, 1875 to the present', *Islam et Sociétés au Sud du Sahara*, 2 (1988), 35–6.

¹² See Mamadou Diouf, *Le Kajoor au XIXe siècle: Pouvoir cédde et conquête coloniale* (Paris, 1990), ch. 16ff. Bamba and his followers certainly played up the traditional Islamic leader's aversion to official power and his distance from the courts, but there is no reason to doubt that he developed a negative experience of the exercise of power.

¹³ Perhaps the most neglected of the important Islamic movements of this time and place. Hamme Ba, a scholar and Sufi who grew up near Podor in the early nineteenth century, formulated a critique of the Islamic regime of Futa Toro in the 1820s. He took the name of Mahdi, the 'rightly guided one' who comes at the end of time, and actually carried through with the sacrifice of his son in imitation of the act which Ibrahim was willing to perform with Ishaq. He was banished from Futa, lived in exile in western Senegal, and established close ties with the family of the Serigne Coki in Ndiambur. One treatment, of the father and sons, is Robinson, *Chiefs and Clerics: Abdul Bokar Kan and the History of Futa Toro, 1853 to 1891* (Oxford, 1975), ch. 4–5.

¹⁴ During this same period Lat Dior handed over a dissident chief, Sidia of Walo, to the governor, signalling his willingness to work with the administration in St Louis. Diouf, *Kajoor*, 253–4.

¹⁵ See Martin Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa* (Cambridge, 1998); and Amar Samb, *Essai sur la contribution du Sénégal à la littérature d'expression arabe* (Dakar, IFAN, 1972), 427–30.

¹⁶ Bamba did not break off relations with Ma Diakhate, it would seem; the archives report his amicable contact with the old *qadi* in Ndiambur in 1889. See Archives Nationales du Sénégal (hereafter ANS), 1G 136.

the grandiose claims, he did not feel that the Madiyanke had committed apostasy; the victors consequently had no right to the booty. This debate sharpened Bamba's criticism of the practice of power.¹⁷

The third important relationship was between Bamba and Lat Dior himself. During the last years of his life the Cayor leader vacillated among a number of positions in relation to his court, his constituents and the French presence. The French were in the process of consolidating their control of Cayor by the construction of a railroad. The rail linked the emerging port of Dakar with the older capital of St Louis, and provided accessible and relatively inexpensive transportation for the bulky peanut crop, which the French had designed as the economic backbone for this region. Its completion precipitated dramatic increases in production and exportation.¹⁸

Lat Dior realized the implications of the railroad for the independence and future of Cayor and opposed it. Some of his contemporaries took the opposite position and were rewarded with positions as colonial chiefs. Murid sources and their Western interpreters have often portrayed an encounter between Bamba and Lat Dior, not long before the latter's death in his last confrontation with the French in October 1886. According to this view, Lat Dior came to Bamba for advice. In the traditional accounts, Bamba supplied the blessing, but no support for Lat Dior's cause.¹⁹ The effect of these versions is to link Bamba to the tradition of Cayorian resistance, which is the best known strand of Senegalese opposition to French rule.

While these accounts are not inconsistent with Bamba's attitude towards the political realm, it appears likely that the marabout was not even in Cayor at the time of the final encounters of 1886. He kept his distance from Lat Dior, the other Damels, and the court during the 1870s and 1880s. It is probable that Bamba had returned to Baol or was traveling in the wider region at the time of Lat Dior's death.²⁰

Bamba undoubtedly attracted a number of the survivors from the court entourage to his base in eastern Baol. There he had the opportunity to

¹⁷ The debate probably increased his criticism of his father, who appears to have been more compromised in the matter. His father served as counselor to Lat Dior during much of the 1870s, and Bamba apparently persuaded him to leave the court for the village of Mbacke Cayor before Momar's death in 1883. A. B. Diop, 'Lat Dior', 525-6; Samb, *Essai*, 429. Bamba took a position in many ways similar to that of al-Kanemi in the much better known debate between the Sokoto leaders and Bornu about the legitimacy of *jihād* east of Hausaland. He esteemed that the Madiyanke had sinned but not lost their identity as Muslims. See Louis Brenner, 'The *jihād* debate between Sokoto and Borno: an historical analysis of Islamic political discourse in Nigeria', in J. F. Ade Ajayi and J. D. Y. Peel (eds.), *Peoples and Empires in African History: Essays in Memory of Michael Crowder* (London, 1992), 21-43.

¹⁸ Klein, *Slavery*, ch. 4.

¹⁹ According to these sources, Lat Dior may have come for an endorsement, that would help him rally a credible following in what would undoubtedly be his last stand, or he may have simply sought a blessing, in thinking of the possibility of an after-life after his 'checkered' career. See, for example, A. Marokhaya Samb, *Cadior Demb* (Dakar, 1964), 54. Cruise O'Brien (*Mourides*, 11-13, 37ff.) relies on Marokhaya Samb in his account. Marty considered Bamba to be a part of the entourage of Lat Dior ('Mourides d'Amadou Bamba', 223-4).

²⁰ See Babou, 'Genèse'. According to A. B. Diop, Lat Dior had offered slaves to Bamba in the early 1880s in exchange for a blessing for a male heir. Bamba refused the slaves but made the invocation, and the next year a son, Mbakhane (the father of A. B. Diop), was born. 'Lat Dior', 526.

develop his teaching and train his following for the next several years. Certainly his experience with the traditional courts, and with those who wished to reform those courts, had been discouraging. It is small wonder that this long-developing and deeply-lived attitude would carry over to the colonial regime and its minions. Bamba may have erred in his judgement of the capacity of the French compared to their predecessors in central Senegal. Where it was possible to escape from the reach of a *Damel* of Cyor, it would become much more difficult to avoid the clutches of St Louis or Dakar.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE MURIDIYYA: BAMBA'S SEARCH FOR A
WAY

At the same time that he was dealing with these practitioners of power, Bamba was engaged in his own search for vocation and meaning. He followed the traditional peripatetic pattern of scholarship and Sufi affiliation. Gradually the student gave way to the teacher, but in the early twentieth century Bamba was still studying and learning, at the feet of those who had some dimension of understanding that he did not yet possess.²¹

The tremendous outpouring of Murid literature in the twentieth century makes it difficult to illuminate the pattern of Bamba's search across the last three decades of the nineteenth century. We hear that he affiliated to the Shadhiliyya and Tijaniyya Sufi orders as well as the Qadiriyya. He traveled around western or Wolof Senegal, to St Louis, and into the Trarza region of southwestern Mauritania, known as an important centre of Islamic scholarship. In each of these places he sought out the most enlightened scholars and Sufis of his day. He was certainly acquainted with the Bu-El-Mogdad family of St Louis, the prestigious scholars associated with the French regime. He spent some time with the Sidiyya family of Trarza. At the time they had a tradition of keeping their distance from the colonial authorities.²²

Bamba developed his own teaching and framework for a Muslim community by the 1880s, after his return to eastern Baol. He established the leadership core of the community. His foremost confidante was his brother, Ibra Fati, who was born during the period of residence with Ma Ba and educated to a similar level. Shaikh Ibra Fall, a disciple from Cayor, appears in the traditional sources at this time as the central symbol of submission to Bamba and the apostle of hard work.²³ With these supporters Bamba forged

²¹ This dimension is especially stressed by Babou in 'Genèse'. Said Bousbina has made the same observation about Malik Sy, who sought enlightenment throughout his life but primarily within the framework of the Tijaniyya. See his article, 'Al-Hajj Malik Sy: sa chaîne spirituelle dans la Tijaniyya et sa position à l'égard de la présence française au Sénégal', in Robinson and Triaud (eds.), *Le Temps des Marabouts* (Paris, 1997).

²² In the 1880s, the most likely time for his travel(s) to Trarza, he undoubtedly met Sidiyya Baba, who did not establish his intimate relationship with the French until the turn of the century. He was not able to meet Sidi Muhammad (d. 1869), Baba's father and the son of Sidiyya al-Kabir, the founder of the Sidiyya lineage, despite the affirmation of some sources.

²³ Another brother, Shaikh Anta, may have begun at this time to establish the network of relationships across western Senegal which would allow him to be an effective ambassador for the new order. For Ibra Fati and Ibra Fall, see Cruise O'Brien, *Mourides*, 43, 52-5, 141-8, and Robinson, 'Beyond resistance', 158-9.

an economic and religious community. It included peasants, *ceddo* or crown soldiers from the *anciens régimes*,²⁴ and slaves or former slaves who would transform their bondage into religious loyalty.²⁵

The economic dimensions of the community were quite possibly based on the patterns of millet and peanut cultivation practiced in Cayor by Bu Kunta. He was the son of a cleric from the prestigious Kunta clan who had settled in Cayor in the early nineteenth century and developed close relations with the court. Bu Kunta himself had little Islamic education, but he used his genealogical and marital ties to build a community, obtain land and develop a productive agriculture from his base at Ndiassane, near Tivaouane. He also engaged in commerce across the whole Senegalo–Mauritanian zone and purchased property in the Niayes, St Louis, Dakar and Rufisque.²⁶

It was during this period of time, in the late 1880s and early 1890s, that Bamba wrote much of his poetry in praise of the Prophet, odes recited by disciples today. He wrote often about the *murid*, the ‘seeker after God’, and began to cast himself as the *khadim Rasul Allah*, the ‘servant of the envoy of God’. Bamba claimed a revelation from Gabriel when he reached the same age as the Prophet at the time of his initial revelations, and established the new village of Touba on the site.²⁷

Cheikh Babou has outlined the pedagogy which Bamba developed at this time.²⁸ Bamba retained the more traditional practice of *ta’lim* or learning, built around the Qur’an. He also proposed *tarbiyya*, an adult learning that was linked to action, work and loyalty. Finally, he developed *tarqiyya*, a kind of apprenticeship of student to teacher, to prepare the next generation of leadership. Bamba put a premium on autonomous Muslim communities that would live, work and reproduce themselves in conditions of stability. Perhaps the most important dimension of his pedagogy was the diversity of options. Bamba recognized the variety of backgrounds of his constituents, their different needs and the importance of forming a new and durable social order.

²⁴ In 1890, the French invaded Jolof, drove Albury Ndiaye into exile, and ended the last viable and independent *ancien régime* of the Wolof region. Many of the Jolof who did not emigrate to the east with Albury moved into Bamba’s circle.

²⁵ This is suggested in Klein, *Slavery*, ch. 12, especially 200–02.

²⁶ What is not clear is when the ‘Bu Kunta model’ of insertion into the colonial economy was adopted by the Murids and the Tijaniyya community of Malik Sy, who settled in Tivaouane in 1902, very close to the Bu Kunta capital of Ndiassane. In 1913, Bu Kunta gave one of his daughters in marriage to Mamadu Mustapha, the oldest son of Bamba, and many of the Bu Kunta community moved into the Murid community on the death of their leader in 1913. See Toba Haidara/Diagne, ‘Contribution à l’étude de l’Islam au Sénégal: la confrérie Kuntiyu de Njaasaan, 1884–1914’ (Mémoire de maîtrise, Université de Dakar, 1984–5). See also Marty, *Sénégal*, Vol. 1, 333–64. I would like to thank Mohamed Mbodj of Columbia University for drawing my attention to the Bu Kunta example.

²⁷ Muhammad began receiving his revelations from God in 610CE, when he was 40 years old. If Bamba was born in 1853, he would have had the same age in the early 1890s. Touba is usually correlated with the Arabic *tauba*, ‘repentance’. Touba became the location of Bamba’s tomb and the towering Murid mosque in the twentieth century. For the works created during this period, see Dumont, *Pensée*, 1–50, and Samb, *Essai*, 421–82. See also Cruise O’Brien, *Mourides*, 41.

²⁸ In fact, Babou puts it even earlier, in the mid-1880s, after Bamba’s departure from Cayor for Baol. ‘Genèse’, 10ff.

The French were not well informed about these developments. They operated at a distance, in geographical and social terms, from the Murid milieu. They heard more about the external trappings, the Sufi affiliations, or about the former *ceddo* who had gravitated into his circle. When they arrested and exiled Bamba a few years later, they apparently thought that they could disperse his community – or at least restrain its growth.

EARLY CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FRENCH COLONIAL AUTHORITIES
AND BAMBA

During the 1880s, the French colonial regime of Senegal was very ineffectual. A number of epidemics struck the colony. The turnover in leadership was rapid. The Ministry of Colonies was critical of its representatives and had to recall one of the most forceful governors for ‘excessive’ use of authority.²⁹

The most intractable problem which the French faced came from the diverse electorate of St Louis. These citizens – French, *métis* and African – took advantage of republican institutions to exercise considerable influence and provide alternative sources of information to the metropole on developments in the Senegalo–Mauritanian zone. Through the offices of deputy, mayor, city council and the General Council, as well as through newspapers, the church and other institutions, they provided a continuing commentary on the actions of the administration and its military units. They were often supportive of administrative action, but they were also shrewd observers and potential critics of the local scene.³⁰

At the end of the 1880s the French government began to assert its authority and to diminish the influence of the local republican interests. The initiative for this effort came from Governors Clément-Thomas and de Lamothe. With strong support from Paris,³¹ the governors removed areas from the purview of the General Council and diminished that body’s budgetary authority. They prepared the way for a more elaborate colonial regime, which in 1895 took the name of Government General. It now included the territories of Soudan, Guinea and Ivory Coast as well as Senegal. In 1902, the Government General moved to Dakar under the leadership of the innovative and centralizing Ernest Roume – about whom more later.

As the key to the administration of Senegal the French put in place a more systematic version of an old policy: a set of chiefs who were strongly

²⁹ The governor in question was Genouille. See Diouf, *Kajoor*, 275. For the medical problems of the 1880s, see Kalala Ngalamulume, ‘Urban growth and health problems, St Louis from the mid-nineteenth century to World War I’ (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1995), ch. 5.

³⁰ The Devès clan in particular embarrassed the administration on numerous occasions, including the elimination of Lat Dior and the Cayorian opposition in 1886. See Diouf, *Kajoor*, ch. 19.

³¹ The best example of this occurred in 1890–1, when Paris gave unstinting support to both governors when they were challenged by the Devès and other Saint Louisians about the summary executions on French territory of the alleged assassins of administrator Abel Jeandet. François Manchuelle, ‘*Métis* et colons: la famille Devès et l’émergence politique des Africains au Sénégal’, *Cahiers d’Etudes Africaines*, 24 (1984), 477–504. The papers of Governor Henri de Lamothe, deposited at the Centre des Archives d’Outre-Mer (hereafter CAOM), in Aix-en-Provence, bear this out as well.

influenced by the colonial administration and in many cases trained by colonial schools. Demba War Sall represents one example. He was the chief of the *ceddo* or crown soldiers of Cayor who realized the inevitability of the completion of the railway and abandoned Lat Dior well before 1886. Sall acquired a large salary and many perquisites upon his accession to the new position of President of the Confederation of Cayor, including the ability to retain his own slaves and acquire new ones who were coming in from the east.³²

More frequently, the French looked to the old royal lineages themselves to find their chiefs in the 1890s. This occurred even with the descendants of the 'resistance' heroes. The French brought Buna and Sidi Ndiaye, the sons of Albury, and Mbakhane Diop, the son of Lat Dior, to St Louis for training. Several of these young men, all in their teen years, were escorted to Tunis for special training in a 'franco-arabic' institute. With proper preparation, they would be ready to bring leadership to the new colonial order of the peanut basin.

The man who escorted these teenagers to Tunis was Martial Merlin, perhaps the most important single French colonial official in West Africa at the turn of the century. Merlin started his service in Senegal in the Political Affairs Bureau under Governor de Lamothe. He quickly demonstrated his intelligence, decisiveness and loyalty, and rose to be director of the bureau in the early 1890s. With de Lamothe he designed the new system of colonial chieftaincy and committed himself to its protection over the next decade. In 1895, Merlin was acting governor and took the key decisions in arresting, trying and deporting Bamba to Gabon.

But this is to get ahead of the story. The centralizing French administration gathered its first direct information about Bamba and his following in 1889, on the eve of the conquest of the Jolof region which had been controlled by Albury Ndiaye. The Political Affairs Bureau, which controlled relations with the interior and functioned directly under the governor, tried to expel some Murids from Ndiambur, the heavily Muslim area between Jolof and St Louis. In 1891, the bureau apparently summoned Bamba to the capital. The best evidence suggests that the marabout sent his brother Ibra Fati in his place.³³

St Louis did not become overly alarmed about Bamba at this time. The developments which led to his arrest actually occurred in 1895, when the marabout moved his core following from Baol to Jolof and acquired significant influence over the chief appointed by the administration in the

³² Especially from the areas under Samori's influence in the Upper Niger and Senegal valleys. Bernard Moitt has chronicled this in 'Peanut production and social change in the Dakar hinterland: Kajoor and Baol, 1840-1940' (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1984), especially 238-43. Demba War served as President of the Confederation of Cayor from 1886 until his death in 1902; he had some of his sons recruited into the colonial training institute, the *Ecole des Fils de Chefs et Interprètes*, in St Louis, where they were prepared to become colonial chiefs in their own right. For this and the following paragraph, see Robinson, 'Brokers and hegemony in Senegal', paper given to the symposium on 'New perspectives on colonial Africa', held at the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, in 1987.

³³ See CAOM SEN IV 127, reports of 10 Jul., 15 and 29 Aug. 1895; Marty, 'Mourides d'Amadou Bamba', 225-7; Sy, *Confrérie*, 111. Marty says that Bamba went to St Louis and gave the governor a list of his most 'compromised' disciples ('Mourides', 224-5).

wake of the exile of Albury. Jolof bordered on the peanut basin and was not yet under effective French control. It was in this context that St Louis sent the column which arrested Bamba in August 1895.³⁴

Bamba put up no resistance.³⁵ As far as we know, he did not speak up in his own defense in the procedure which the French organized in St Louis. Merlin, then Director of Political Affairs and acting governor, was in charge.³⁶ He brought the case not before the General Council, where he would have been closely questioned, but to the *Conseil privé*, which the administration dominated. He marshalled his case in terms of the 'warrior' following of the marabout, the flow of arms into the peanut basin, and the high level of agitation which made the task of the colonial chiefs impossible. It was this level of 'agitation' which motivated the administration and threatened the apparatus which they had set so carefully in place.³⁷

Soon Bamba was en route by train to Dakar and then by ship to Gabon. This first exile was undoubtedly a frightening trial. The visions and revelations recorded by Bamba confirm the efforts of the administration to undermine the mission and confidence of this man whom they had translated into a threat. At some point Bamba gained access to books, pen and paper. He corresponded with members of his family. He received some visits. While he never expressed open resistance to his treatment by the French, he apparently never gave them the affirmation of colonial rule which they sought.

The most lasting contribution of this seven-year exile was Bamba's writing about the trials and how he survived them. This material in turn spawned a hagiographic literature from his followers and a set of images which have inspired Murids throughout the twentieth century: Bamba was Daniel in the lion's den, Bamba prayed on the ocean to the consternation of the French authorities, Bamba could never be reduced to a state of submission. It is obvious that some of this reputation and 'cultural' resistance was known in 1902, when Bamba was greeted as a hero at the docks of Dakar.³⁸

³⁴ They also arrested the Burba, Samba Laobe Penda, who had been put in place of Albury in 1890. They had been preparing the young son of Albury, Buna, to take over as chief of Jolof and put him in place in 1895. See n. 33.

³⁵ It is impossible to know whether Bamba thought of the exercise of French colonial power, as exemplified in the column which arrested him, in the same way that he conceived of the coercion of Ma Ba, the Madiyanke, or the court of Cayor.

³⁶ Merlin was interim governor between de Lamothe and Chaudié, who came in as the first governor-general. See James Searing, 'Accommodation and resistance: chiefs, Muslim leaders and politicians in colonial Senegal, 1890-1934' (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1985). Searing makes a good case for the assertion of central administration control of affairs in Senegal, beginning with Governor Clément-Thomas in 1889.

³⁷ CAOM SEN IV 127, minutes of the Conseil Privé of 16 Sept. 1895. All of the documents in the SEN IV 127 file, relative to Amadu Bamba and sent by the governor to the ministry to justify his actions, can be found in Oumar Bâ, *Ahmadou Bamba face aux autorités coloniales* (Dakar, 1982), 29-71. See also Robinson, 'French "Islamic" policy'. For Bamba's version of his arrest, see Vincent Monteil, *Esquisses sénégalaises*, 164. It is not surprising that Merlin invoked Ma Ba and the Madiyanke, as leaders of 'similar' movements, to make his case against Bamba.

³⁸ For example, see Cruise O'Brien, *Mourides, passim*; and [no author listed], *L'exile au Gabon, période coloniale, 1895-1902: Sur les traces de Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba* (Dakar, 1985). Bamba had a few visits during the exile in Gabon. His brother Balla came in 1899,

What tends to be forgotten in treatments of the exile is the survival and growth of the community during his absence. Ibra Fati remained in epistolary contact with Bamba and gave spiritual and educational direction to the community. Another brother, Shaikh Anta, developed his competence in the economic and political fortunes of the order. Ibra Fall nurtured his own following, the Baye Fall, and a network of contacts throughout the peanut basin and the coastal cities. The ability of the French to work with this core leadership certainly added to their willingness to bring Bamba back from his first exile.

CHANGING RELATIONS WITH THE FRENCH

Up to this point I have given a rather standard synthesis of Bamba, his followers and his relations with the French. I suggest now that 1902, the year of Bamba's return from Gabon, marks a significant shift in colonial strategies and in French–Murid relations. The normal explanation of the return puts the emphasis on Bamba's popularity and the intervention of Deputy François Carpot and personalities of 'republican' Senegal. It suggests that his second exile, beginning in 1903, demonstrates that French practice had not significantly changed.³⁹

In my judgement, the most important cause of Bamba's return was a change in attitude and policy on the part of the administration; the exile which he subsequently endured presupposed an eventual return to the peanut basin. 1902 is the year when Ernest Roume ascended to the position of Governor General and moved the headquarters from St Louis to Dakar.⁴⁰ Roume enjoyed the confidence of the Ministry of Colonies and a considerable increment in resources over his predecessors. He set out to hierarchize and rationalize the administration, both at the federal level and through his lieutenant governors in the various territories, including Senegal. He created a Secretary General, to administer in his absence, and appointed none other than Martial Merlin. He created a Muslim Affairs service, modeled on North African precedents and directed by a French *algérien* named Robert Arnaud. The bureau provided a much greater flow of information about the 'situation of Islam' in French West Africa.⁴¹

while Blaise Diagne, the future deputy of Senegal, attended to his needs during a stint in Gabon as customs officer in 1897–8. Bamba corresponded with Ibra Fati and other members of his family. Ba, *Ahmadou Bamba*, 90–1; Coulon, *Marabout*, 86; Marty, *Sénégal*, Vol. 1, p. 227; Samb, *Essai*, 457–60. For a study of the aura surrounding Bamba and his exile, see Allen Roberts and Mary Nooter Roberts, 'L'aura d'Amadou Bamba: photographie et fabulation dans le Sénégal urbain', *Anthropologie et Sociétés*, 22 (1998).

³⁹ See, for example, Cruise O'Brien, *Mourides*, 43–4.

⁴⁰ The headquarters were temporarily on Gorée Island while administrative buildings were being constructed in Dakar. Government offices in Dakar were completed by 1904. For the argument that follows, I rely to a considerable degree on Searing, 'Accommodation and resistance', ch. 2–4, and Alice Conklin, 'A mission to civilize: ideology and imperialism in French West Africa, 1895–1930' (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, 1989), ch. 1.

⁴¹ The Muslim Affairs service was created in 1906, when Arnaud was 'freed' up by the assassination of his colleague Coppolani in 1905 and the halt in the French advance into Mauritania. He began to conduct research and missions for the Government General, including one to Morocco in 1906–7. Arnaud wrote a biography of Coppolani (*Un Corse*

Roume also supported a controversial program of ‘pacification’ of Mauritania⁴² developed by Xavier Coppolani. This *algérien* had come to West Africa in the late 1890s as an authority on Muslim and nomadic societies. He formulated the term Mauritania to describe the space between Senegal and Morocco. He analyzed the traditional vocational division in *bidan* society between warriors (*hassan*) and clerics (*zwaya*) and designed a process of collaboration with the clerics. An alliance with pacifists, i.e. groups responsible for trade and arbitration on the basis of their knowledge of Islamic law, would by definition be a process of ‘pacification’. With a relatively small deployment of French and African troops, and with a judicious application of the military resources of the supposed ‘pacifists’ themselves, Coppolani came close to achieving his plan in the southern tier of today’s Mauritania (Trarza, Brakna and Tagant) before his assassination in 1905.⁴³

The more important legacy of Coppolani was the creation of enduring alliances with Muslim leaders.⁴⁴ French authorities in North Africa had already created institutions, such as Muslim Affairs bureaux and ‘franco-arabic’ schools, to reinforce relations. While Governor Louis Faidherbe and his successors had always sought Muslim advisors,⁴⁵ they retained a strong suspicion of Islam and resisted the critique which Muslim reformers brought to bear on the traditional *anciens régimes*. When de Lamothe and Merlin sought indigenous collaborators in the 1890s, they looked to the traditional dynasties to recruit colonial chiefs, not to the marabouts. This was not hard to understand, given the relations between the French and the partisans of the most notable reformers: Ma Ba Diakhu, the Madiyanke, and the others.⁴⁶ But this bias prevented them from seeing, during the 1890s, the advantages of enduring collaboration with Muslim leaders for the reconstruction of the old society along new social and economic lines.

Prevented them, that is, until 1902. Then Coppolani – with Roume’s critical support – created a distinctly different pattern in Mauritania. He

d’Algérie chez les hommes bleus : Xavier Coppolani, le pacificateur [Algiers, 1939]), under the pseudonym Robert Randau. For the bureau, see Coulon, *Marabout*, 160–1, and Christopher Harrison, *France and Islam in West Africa, 1860–1960* (Cambridge, 1988), especially 42 ff.

⁴² Roume helped Coppolani obtain and retain the necessary support from the Ministry of Colonies, against considerable opposition in the metropole and in the old colonial center of St Louis. See Cécile Frébourg, ‘Le Corse en Mauritanie. Xavier Coppolani (1866–1905). L’Islam au Service de la France’ (Mémoire de maîtrise d’histoire, Université de Paris VII, Sept. 1990).

⁴³ In 1908–9, the French renewed their commitment to his plan, but this time with closer relations to the emiral or warrior families, and took the central tier of today’s Mauritania. This provided a somewhat stable territory which was integrated into French West Africa.

⁴⁴ I explore this briefly in ‘An emerging pattern of cooperation’ in Robinson and Triaud (eds.), *Le Temps des Marabouts*, 1997. In making this argument I am acknowledging the emphasis of Donal Cruise O’Brien, ‘Towards an “Islamic policy” in French West Africa’, in the *Journal of African History*, 8 (1967), 303–16, which I criticized in my own article, ‘French “Islamic” policy’.

⁴⁵ See Robinson, ‘French “Islamic” policy’.

⁴⁶ The list would include Almamy Abdul Kader of Futa Tota, al-hajj Umar of Futa and Mamadu Lamine Drame of the Upper Senegal, all of whom tend to be treated as heroes in Barry, *Senegambia*, and other works of some Senegalese historians.

forged strong bonds with two *bidan* marabouts: Saad Buh and Sidiyya Baba. The relationship with Saad Buh was an old one. He had been in close relations with St Louis since the 1870s and performed many services for the colonial regime; now he was called into much closer and more visible collaboration. The ties with Baba were very recent, and borne of the desperate situation in which the Sidiyya lineage found itself at the turn of the century. The prestige of Baba and his family, in scholarship, arbitration and Sufi identity, would affect the ways in which St Louis and Dakar related to the Muslim authorities of Senegal.⁴⁷

It is no coincidence, then, that 1902 marked a significant change in policy and practice. With a stronger administration, centred on Dakar, with less opposition from the republican interests of St Louis, with the strong example of relations from French North Africa, the administration saw the value in enduring links with marabouts in Senegal – without abandoning the colonial chiefs.⁴⁸ One example of ‘maraboutic bond’ was Malik Sy, who in 1902 settled in Tivaouane, along the rail line in the old peanut zone.⁴⁹

Another was Bamba. Indeed, for some years, the administration had developed closer relations with the Murids. It is likely, in my judgement, that they brought Bamba back in 1902 in the hope that he would be able to strengthen that bond and live collaboratively – albeit with close supervision – in the peanut basin. They were encouraged by their new ally, Sidiyya Baba, who interceded strongly for Bamba’s return and vouched for his cooperation. Baba assigned his disciple and son-in-law, Shaikhuna, to remain with the marabout during most of his stay in Cayor and Baol in 1902–3.⁵⁰

The apparatus of surveillance remained operative. It was, after all, part of North African and Senegalo–Mauritanian practice. Merlin, now Secretary General to Roume, retained all of his experience and instincts from the first arrest and exile of Bamba. One of his closest collaborators was Victor Allys, an old colonial hand with a penchant for difficult assignments, who was placed in Tivaouane with significant military resources.⁵¹ The monitors were

⁴⁷ On these two men and their constituencies, see Robinson, ‘Saad Buh’ and ‘Shaikh Sidiyya Baba’.

⁴⁸ There was, however, a considerable shift away from exclusive reliance on the chiefs during this period. Demba War Sall, President of the Confederation of Cayor, died in 1902 and was not replaced; his subordinates, at the canton level, continued to function. The same was true for the Bur Sin and other ‘super’ chiefs of considerable sway during the 1890s. This was because the French had greater knowledge and control of the situation and the chiefs, having exercised considerable authority during a time of ‘transition’, had become less popular. But it was also because the chiefs were less able to incorporate the lower strata of pre-colonial Senegalese society than were the marabouts, who were not in the direct chain of command and who were thereby less subject to blame for the demands of the new colonial order. For reflections on this process, see Robinson, ‘Brokers and hegemony’; and Searing, ‘Accommodation’, especially 549–57.

⁴⁹ See Robinson, ‘Malik Sy’, a forthcoming article cited in n. 4.

⁵⁰ Bâ, *Ahmadou Bamba*, 119–22; Dumont, *Pensée*, 57–8; Mbacké, *Bienfaits*, 87–8. Marty puts great emphasis on the intercession of Baba in the return of Bamba, and of the role of Baba’s son-in-law in the second arrest (‘Mourides d’Amadou Bamba’, 227).

⁵¹ Allys, born in 1849, served in the French colonial administration of Senegal for most of the years from 1867 to his retirement in 1907. He spoke fluent Wolof and probably some Pular, and was often found in difficult ‘frontier’ situations as the French established their new regime. See CAOM EEII 721 (personnel record) and Oumar Bâ, *La pénétration française au Cayor*, Vol. 1 (Dakar, 1976), 166–70.

in place when Bamba returned to a tumultuous welcome in Dakar in November. He spent about a month in St Louis, and then was allowed to travel in Cayor and Baol.

In June of 1903, Bamba submitted to a new arrest and a second deportation – this time to nearby Trarza and the care of Sidiyya Baba. The cause of the second arrest and exile was similar: the excitement of the former crown soldiers, slaves and others in the peanut basin, the disruption of tax payments and the general difficulty experienced by the new generation of colonial chiefs.⁵² But the intention and solution were quite different, and the impact on Murid hagiography was much less substantial.

Roume acknowledged that the 1903 measure was motivated by the ‘turbulence of fanatic disciples of the marabout rather than by his personal hostility’.⁵³ In his second exile Bamba would not be far away; indeed he would be accessible to his own followers. Baba could provide Bamba with an example of the kind of benefits of collaboration with French authorities.

But quite apart from the second exile and the patronage of Baba, it was clear that the Murids were already a necessary part of the infrastructure of central Senegal. They helped to solve significant problems of agricultural production, labor supply and social control. They produced growing quantities of peanuts. The economic contribution was recognized in a 1904 report written by Allys, the man who had organized the arrest of Bamba the year before:

At this moment they [the Murid farmers] concentrate only on their fields which are immense and magnificent. These natives do not work the soil in the same way as other cultivators. For example, working by the light of the moon, they stay in their fields until eleven o'clock in the evening, then go to pray at the mosque, and only then eat their meals.⁵⁴

The movement also solved a social problem in ways that the chiefs could not: it transformed the slaves and former slaves, who supplied so much of the agricultural labor of Senegal, into followers. As disciples, or clients of the marabouts, the former slaves would be free but contained within a structure; they were much less likely to attract the attention of humanitarians or anti-slavery interests.⁵⁵

During Bamba's absence the core leadership remained in place. The French authorities did not expect the community to collapse, nor did they anticipate a prolonged exile of the founder. Indeed, they hoped that he would return to the peanut basin, more aware than ever of the bonds of cooperation.

⁵² Mbakhane Diop was one of the chiefs who complained. For Mbakhane's career, see ANS 2 G 1 122 (January 1901); Bâ, *Ahmadou Bamba*, 188–90; Cruise O'Brien, *Mourides*, 67–8; Sy, *Confrérie*, 118–9. For the 1903 situation in general, see ANS 2D 14, 5 and 2G4, 49, and Bâ, *Ahmadou Bamba*, 97–122.

⁵³ ANS Mauritanie IV 2bis, Gouverneur Général aux Colonies, Rapport 1^{er} trimestre 1907.

⁵⁴ Allys' next sentence, 'It's an indication that their marabouts demand a lot of money', reflected a widespread French assumption about marabouts and brotherhoods in general. This comes from ANS 2G 4, 49, report of 4 July 1904. On attitudes towards Murid farmers in general, see Sy, *Confrérie*, 122–3.

⁵⁵ Klein, *Slavery*, ch. 12.

Just before his departure for Trarza, they permitted Bamba to write a letter to Ibra Fati with four commissions for his followers.⁵⁶

THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP

I argue, then, that the accommodation of colonial regime and Murid movement was in place by the time of Bamba's return from his first exile. This is not to say that there were no turns in the path in subsequent years, nor that events, communications and relations over the next 25 years were not highly significant in consolidating the tentative, exploratory bond established at the turn of the century. It is to this sequence of events in the developing relationship that I wish now to turn.

The period of residence in Trarza (1903–7) played a key role in that consolidation. Baba himself was very preoccupied by the 'pacification' of Mauritania, especially after Coppolani's assassination,⁵⁷ but members of his family and entourage interacted a great deal with their guest. Relations between Baba and Bamba and their respective cohorts remained cordial, and would endure long after Bamba's return to Baol. Bamba remained in correspondence with his followers and received many of them in Trarza. Murid sources are careful to indicate that Bamba made a strong impression of learning and saintliness on his hosts, and was not the rapt pupil that the colonial authorities might have wished him to be,⁵⁸ but this should not obscure the 'lessons' that were undoubtedly absorbed – including the determination of the French to control Mauritania, the last 'frontier' of West Africa.

In 1907, at his own request, Bamba was allowed to move to Jolof, under the surveillance of at least two loyal administrators: the French Commandant at Louga and the Senegalese chief Buna Ndiaye, based in the traditional capital of Yang-Yang. The stream of followers who visited the marabout at the new site persuaded the authorities, if persuasion were still needed, of the continuing and multi-faceted charisma of their detainee.

It was in late 1910, during this third exile, that Bamba wrote a long letter to his followers. The context was Ma El Ainin's struggle against the French in Mauritania and Morocco.⁵⁹ It is likely that the administration suggested to Bamba that he make the declaration, and it may have been part of an arrangement for the eventual return to Baol. In any case Bamba agreed for

⁵⁶ The four commissions were first, to consult Ibra Fati if they wished to learn; second, to see Shaikh Anta if they wished to work without learning; third, to see Ibra Fati if they wished to do both; finally, to leave the community if they wished to do neither. I am citing the French translation of 23 June 1903, from the Dossier Amadou Bamba, contained in Bâ, *Ahmadou Bamba*, 123–4. Bâ claims that the letter never reached Bamba's brother. This may be the case, but Murid traditions suggest that Bamba communicated this counsel many times during his months in the peanut basin in 1902–3. The six months which Bamba spent in Senegal demonstrated to him that his movement could survive and indeed thrive under French control, and thereby prepared him for the close surveillance which would characterize the rest of his life. Personal observation from Cheikh Babou, 28 Dec. 1998.

⁵⁷ After the assassination of Coppolani in 1905, the French did not resume their advance into Mauritania until 1909. ⁵⁸ For example, Mbacke, *Les bienfaits*, 82–9.

⁵⁹ The best English language treatment of Ma El Ainin is still B. G. Martin, *Muslim Brotherhoods in Nineteenth-Century Africa* (Cambridge, 1976), ch. 5.

the first time to express public praise for the French and their attitude towards the practice of Islam.⁶⁰

His letter picked up on the main themes already articulated in the letters and declarations of his *zwaya* contemporaries, Saad Buh and Sidiyya Baba.⁶¹ He began as follows:

After realizing the situation of the French Government and what it comports of justice, benevolence and power...and convinced that no people, however, powerful, can rival the French Government or oppose it, unless they be blinded by their ignorance...and unable] to distinguish between the smallest ant and the elephant, between night and day, I have decided to give...some advice to my Muslim brothers in order that they not be drawn into wars.

He went on to say that, since Muslims were not in a position of strength and since no universally recognized Muslim leader existed to declare *jihad*, the believer should reject that course of action. Muhammad had lived in peace with Christians and other non-believers, made pacts with them and exhorted his followers to have patience.

The Murid founder then moved to an even more positive affirmation of the colonial regime:

The French Government, thanks to God, has not opposed the profession of faith but on the contrary has been friendly towards Muslims and encouraged them to practice (their religion). We have noted that in many of the lands of the blacks that, thanks to French occupation, the inhabitants who, far from being Muslim were pillagers, living at the expense of travellers and the weak, have changed to become calm and peaceful and that now, among them, the sheep and the jackals march together.

Bamba mentioned the improved communications that had allowed Islam to spread. He declared, perhaps tongue-in-cheek, that throughout his ordeal of exile he could not complain of French conduct toward him: 'The truth is that I am sincerely attached to the French and always satisfied to live in the place in their land which they will designate for me, knowing how happy are those that live with them and in peace'. Bamba concluded with a special exhortation to his Saharan brothers to reject the violence that had characterized their land and submit to the French.⁶²

1912 marked the return of Bamba to his native Baol. This time the surveillance was even closer – a kind of house arrest in Diourbel, the headquarters of French administration in Baol province. His keeper was now Jean-Baptiste Théveniaut. Théveniaut had served in French Soudan at the turn of the century, participated in defining the border between Soudan and Algeria in 1904, and then became a member of the Coppolani team in

⁶⁰ What follows is based on the French translation by Doudou Seck and found in ANS, Dossier Amadou Bamba, treatise of 29 Dec. 1910. Another copy can be found in CAOM AP 15 (Papiers Gaden), carton 1, no. 128. I have not been able to find the Arabic original. It is interesting to note that Oumar Ba, who created the Dossier Amadou Bamba and used it to construct his volume, *Ahmadou Bamba*, does not include this piece. I have no reason to doubt the authenticity of the document nor its representation of Bamba's public view. Marty, writing in 1913, gave no credence to the rumor that Bamba was assisting resistance in Morocco to the French takeover ('Mourides d'Amadou Bamba', 274–6).

⁶¹ See Robinson, 'Saad Buh' and 'Sidiyya Baba'.

⁶² Although Ma-El-Ainin died in 1910, some of his sons continued to resist the French intrusions into Morocco and the Sahara.

southern Mauritania. He served in the critical post of Administrator of Eastern Trarza, based at Boutilimit, and became a confidante of Sidiyya Baba and Saad Buh.⁶³ At this point he obviously came into contact with Amadu Bamba. In 1908, one year after the marabout moved to Jolof, Théveniaut was named Administrator in Baol, quite probably to assess the situation and prepare Bamba's return. This suggests, along the lines of my general argument, that the French had long anticipated the return of the Murid founder to the peanut basin and wanted to assure proper conditions of surveillance, by a trusted official, when that time came. Who better than a former military officer, member of the Coppolani team, and confidante of the *zwaya* marabouts?

By 1913 the French were prepared to acknowledge the positive relations between movement and government, and between Bamba and the administrators. In that year the Governor of Senegal could write:

Our relations with Amadu Bamba have entered a normal path, and the attitude of the Murids has in general been very proper. One can therefore hope that the chiefs of this powerful organism, who are already waiting for the division [of the estate] at the death of Bamba, will not attempt to stray from the economic path in which they certainly make their contribution to the development of the country.⁶⁴

The Murids paid their taxes on time and provided recruits for the colonial army. Mamadu Mustapha, the oldest son of Bamba, visited St Louis in the company of the Baol Administrator. These observations come from Paul Marty, another Islamic 'expert' from North Africa in the tradition of Coppolani and Arnaud; he had completed the draft of his study of the order.⁶⁵ The increased knowledge of leaders and followers which he provided gave the regime greater confidence than ever before.

An episode occurred in 1914 that showed how well the links between Muridiyya and government had been consolidated. A smallpox epidemic broke out in the territory, including the central peanut basin where the Murids were so dominant. The Administrator at Diourbel and the local health official recommended the standard steps of quarantine to deal with the situation. Their order was countermanded, however, by the Lieutenant Governor in St Louis; intervention was limited to vaccination, some isolation of particular cases and one instance of burning an 'infected' hut. The colonial authorities did not wish to intervene that sharply in an area dominated by the brotherhood.⁶⁶

⁶³ On Théveniaut, the most convenient summary is by Jean d'Arbaumont in *Hommes et Destins*, Vol. 8, 398–405. For his appointment to Diourbel, see Bâ, *Ahmadou Bamba*, 139. For his entry into Senegalese commune politics and the election of 1914, see G. Wesley Johnson, *The Emergence of Black Politics in Senegal* (Stanford, 1971), 160–76. Théveniaut received manuscripts from Saad Buh which were subsequently published by Ismaël Hamet as *Chroniques de la Mauritanie sénégalaise: Nacer Eddine* (Paris, 1911), see 13 ff.

⁶⁴ ANS 2G 13, 7(1), in Coulon, *Marabout*, 78. See also Marty, *Sénégal*, Vol. 1, 277.

⁶⁵ The article, 'Mourides d'Amadou Bamba', referred to in n. 3. For the references to taxes, recruits and the trip to St. Louis, see 279, 294–5.

⁶⁶ See H12, correspondence of 1914. My thanks to Kalala Ngalamulume for calling this file to my attention. This instance in the health domain corresponds to the reluctance of the French to intervene in the area of education. See Cruise O'Brien, *Mourides*, ch. 10 and especially 232 ff.

World War I provided a unique opportunity for strengthening the relationship. The French needed all of the resources of the empire to survive the German offensive. They sought the support of Bamba to sustain their cause, and the Murid leader rose to the task. He continued his declarations of loyalty. Along with Shaikh Anta and Shaikh Ibra Fall, he encouraged Murids to enlist in the army, and he was even awarded the Cross of the Legion of Honor for his efforts. The valor of the Murid soldiers, and the inspiration which they received from Bamba's poetry, were visible in the terrible fighting in the Dardanelles campaign of 1915:

Several hundred Murids...assemble in the evening, pray or chant hymns to the accompaniment of the tam-tam, say their prayer and explode in frenetic dances. Despite the insistence on the 'fanaticism' and strange religious behaviour, these activities did not worry the officers in charge of the black units preparing for the Dardanelles campaign because these *tirailleurs* had demonstrated 'their discipline, intelligence, zeal, level-headedness and resistance to fatigue'.⁶⁷

By this time the administrators were attending Murid ceremonies and communicating with the Murid leadership on a more frequent and open basis.⁶⁸

Immediately after the war the order and the administration had another striking opportunity to seal the bond of collaboration. The railroad from Thiès to Bamako was completed, and it opened up a new area for peanut cultivation to the east. Bamba, his family and leading disciples encouraged Murids to spread in this direction. Many of the younger leaders took their followings, founded new villages and increased peanut production. In the process they often evicted the pastoralists who had dominated the region heretofore.⁶⁹

At the same time the surveillance continued. Bamba's requests to settle in Touba were refused. The monitoring became very active in Bamba's last years and around his succession.⁷⁰ But the founder's brother Shaikh Anta, his son Mamadu Mustapha, and the other core leadership were permitted to move around. The surveillance became a kind of colonial habit, the product of a very significant investment over the decades in the fortunes of the order – and the fortunes of the colonial economy itself.

CONCLUSION

The French administration helped to create an enduring and 'productive' colonial order in the Senegalo-Mauritanian zone by learning to work effectively with the Muslim authorities and their growing constituencies in the early twentieth century. The most important of these bonds with Muslim

⁶⁷ Marc Michel, *L'Appel à l'Afrique: Contributions et réactions à l'effort de guerre en A.O.F., 1914-1919* (Paris, 1982), 380-1. See also 58-61.

⁶⁸ ANS 2G 17, 5, quoted in Coulon, *Marabouts*, 177.

⁶⁹ See Cruise O'Brien, *Mourides*, 58-61, 194-5.

⁷⁰ See CAOM Affaires Politiques 518, which contains various reports of Baol administrators and Dakar officials on the Murids. For an account of the succession, see Cruise O'Brien, *Mourides*, 48-9, 61-3.

leaders was with the Murids, because of their cohesion and central location in the expanding peanut basin.

The relationships with the Muslim orders were not easy to establish. The suspicion of 'Islam' never disappeared. The habit of working with 'traditional' political authorities was deeply ingrained in the administration; if a Lat Dior or Albury Ndiaye expressed opposition, one found someone else in the royal family to take his place. Consequently, for at least a decade the French administrators of Senegal relied upon a network of chiefs, and a school to tutor them, for their control, revenues and information about the local scene. This practice was successful in the short-term, and it was perhaps necessary for the transition into a more permanent colonial order. But its limitations were increasingly evident by the twentieth century – in the abuse of power, the overt use of slave labor and declining legitimacy.

The convergence of new capacity, in the form of the Government General of Ernest Roume, and a new approach to conquest in the form of the 'pacification' of Mauritania around the *zwaya* allies of Coppolani, led to the development of a second and increasingly important form of control: through the new Muslim brotherhoods.

The example of less formal cooperation had been prepared with Saad Buh and Bu Kunta from the 1880s. The example of formal cooperation was provided in the tight bond with Sidiyya Baba, beginning with the arrival of Coppolani in 1902. Baba would intervene not only for the continued 'pacification' of Mauritania but in the efforts of the Senegalese administration to work out terms of accommodation with Amadu Bamba. With Bamba's return from Gabon, and then his nearby exiles to Trarza and Jolof, the administration developed a practice which combined close surveillance of the leader with intensive collaboration with his brothers and disciples.

Bamba and the other marabout leaders, born in the mid-nineteenth century, bore no stigma for the excesses of the *anciens régimes*, and they had no official role in the new colonial order. They could justify their cooperation in terms of those excesses of violence, which affected Muslims as much as non-Muslims, and in terms of the weakness of Muslim societies relative to the new colonial authorities. They saw the opportunity for islamization provided by the new conditions of relative stability when the colonial regime controlled the supply of firearms, clamped down on raiding, and reduced the resources on which traditional chiefs and warriors had relied for centuries. This new generation of marabouts realized that the administration would not interfere with the practice of Islam; indeed, the colonial authorities might even encourage it once they felt a stronger measure of control.

Bamba had a more difficult adaptation to this new reality than his maraboutic contemporaries. This was partly because of his constituency. His crown soldiers, slaves and former slaves required more adjustment and aroused more suspicion for the colonial authorities – in contrast, for example, to the trading community which loomed so large in the entourage of Malik Sy. It was also because Bamba was slower to realize the increased capacity of the emerging new regime. The colonial authorities were gathering strength, and were able to reach much further into the spaces where marabouts and their communities had found autonomy in the past. But Bamba had survived the harsh years of exile and the effort to break his spirit. He saw that his movement had survived in his absence. These realizations, along with the

pedagogy which he developed and refined over the years, gave him and his order a kind of protection from accusations of collaboration. His survival enabled the Murids to pursue accommodation with increasing intensity.⁷¹

For the administration the marabouts offered, above all, a major solution to the problem of social control. Former warriors could be demobilized, former slaves could be incorporated as followers and clients. The labor power of both groups could be turned to the growing of peanuts, millet and other work. Bu Kunta had shown the way. Malik Sy had expanded on his example in the older peanut basin. Saad Buh and Sidiyya Baba knew how to tap into the agricultural revenues of Senegal. But above all it was Bamba and the Murids who provided the translation of the old disintegrating regime into a viable new colonial order.

SUMMARY

In this paper I suggest that the path to accommodation of Amadu Bamba and the Murids may have been less long and tortuous than the standard literature suggests. The conventional historiography makes the entire period (1895–1912) of Bamba's exile, in three different locations, into a time of opposition, followed by a rather intensive collaboration (1912–27) from the founder's return to Baol until his death. I argue that the pattern of relationship – a *simultaneous* combination of close surveillance by the French, constant communication between the two sides, and collaboration in the economic development of the peanut basin – was established by the early twentieth century and remained consistent for the rest of Bamba's life. The pattern was already manifest when Bamba returned from his first exile in 1902.

I suggest that this pattern was also applied to the other marabouts and brotherhoods, and that it originated to a large extent in changes in practice and perspective in the colonial administration. The Government General of French West Africa had more resources, confidence and knowledge than its predecessor in Senegal. It also developed, in the form of its plan to take over Mauritania, a new model of relations between Muslim authorities and European rule.

Bamba's ability to survive the harsh years of exile and the effort to break his spirit, along with the pedagogy which he developed and refined over the years, gave him and his order a kind of protection from accusations of collaboration. His survival enabled the Murids to pursue accommodation with increasing intensity. The accommodation which he and his followers developed with the colonial administration put the seal on a new practice of relations between Muslim and colonial authorities.

⁷¹ Whereas the leaders of the Tijaniyya of Tivaouane and their interpreters have often felt a need to defend themselves and Malik Sy from accusations of collaboration. See, for example, El Hadji Ravane Mbaye, 'La Pensée et l'action d'El Hadji Malick Sy: un pôle d'attraction entre la Shari'a et la Tariqa. Vie et oeuvre de El Hadji Malick Sy' (Thèse de doctorat d'Etat en sciences humaines, Université de Paris IV, 1993), Vol. 1, ch. 15 and 16.