# Chapter 9
# The Politics of Absence: The Longue Durée of State–Peasant Interactions in the Siin (Senegal), 1850s–1930s

**François G. Richard**

## Postcolonial Preamble: Peasants, State, and Society in Senegal

In a recent study of community-based development in West Africa, Dennis Galvan (2007) examined the conditions that favored effective grassroots mobilization in the Siin, a small rural region in west-central Senegal (Fig. 9.1). In charting the rise and fall of the *Association des Paysans de Toukar,* a farmer's association in the village of Toukar, deep into the Siin heartland, Galvan explains that the success of its initiatives depended in some measure on its founders' capacities: an enterprising group of young men, with university educations, who were able to use their village background, technocratic skills, and urban contacts to attract funding for local development projects, which included the establishment of a cholera prevention program, a water-retention basin for garden irrigation, a revolving credit fund for cattle husbandry, and a general goods store. Yet, if visionary leadership and funding connections gave continued lift to the association, Galvan also underscores the central importance of two other factors: The Senegalese state's "benevolent neglect" of the region (which shielded the association from the potential squandering of resources and knowledge via political patronage networks) and a willingness to recycle elements of "traditional social relations" (such as kinship and age-group cohorts) in the name of community development.

As Galvan aptly notes, the recombinant use of "tradition" and ambivalent relations between society and state structures are not new phenomena in Siin's peasant world. Their specific expressions today may be original, but they rest on a deeper historical stratum, stretching back to the colonial era (and probably earlier), where

F. G. Richard (✉)
Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, 1126 E. 59th Street,
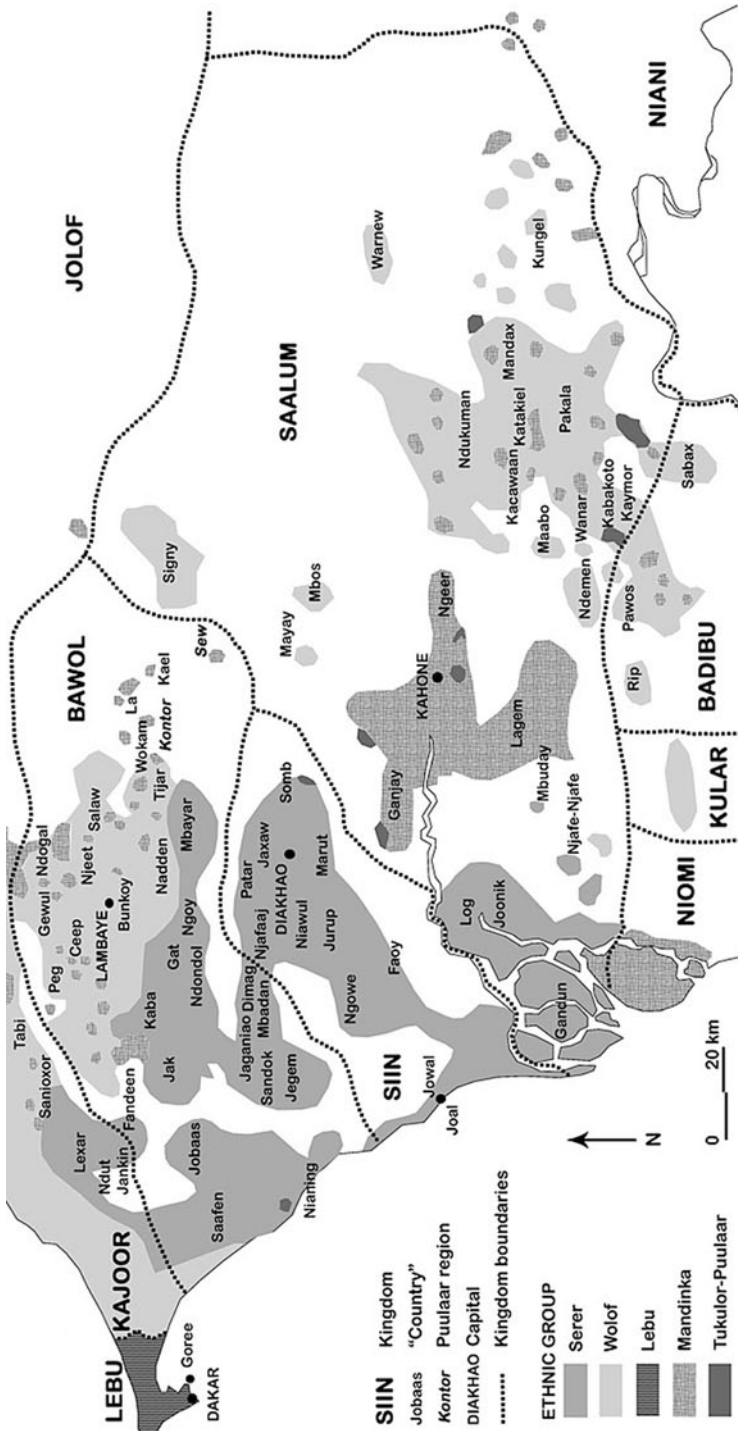Chicago, IL 60637, USA
e-mail: fgrichard@uchicago.edu

Fig. 9.1 Kingdoms and ethnic groups, west-central Senegal, nineteenth century

the roots of Siin's marginalization from state-assisted development can be found, and during which hybrid repertoires of practices, combining past and present, became a legitimate form of mediation between state and community. Two elements are interesting here. First, contemporary modes of being and acting in Siin are infused with social orientations that were shaped in relation to colonial authority. Second, Siin's relationships to state power (both past and present) have been paradoxical: On the one hand, they have turned the region into a political backwater insulated from the sphere of clout, influence, and favor, in a rapidly modernizing Senegal where national politics seem increasingly coterminous with large urban agglomerations—and where the countryside seems to amount to a little more than an afterthought. On the other hand, this peripheralization has also proved productive, affording certain political possibilities for community empowerment in the present. To be sure, state and society have been imbricated differently at different moments of the past, but the point is that the history of their interplay binds political trajectories between colony and postcolony, and that the social worlds that African peasants have built over time are outcomes of that history.

My concern in this chapter is with the colonial phase of this long story of interactions in Siin, specifically, what we might call "colonial *government*"—the character of colonial rule, the efficacy and derailments of its technologies of power, how its projects affected African villagers and were reframed by them—between 1850 and 1960, the 100 years or so of French occupation in Senegal. The account I propose, draws on historical evidence gleaned in various archives and the evolving results of several campaigns of archaeological research conducted in the Siin since 2003. It lends special attention to the political history of Seereer communities, Siin's largest ethnicity, as they grew entangled with the sticky webs of imperialism and learned to navigate, with various degrees of success, the new worlds of power unloosed by colonialism.[1] As one of the top producers of commercial peanuts in West Africa, the Siin-Saalum region was a critical piece of Senegal's colonial economy, and the Seereer, who have long been imagined as the textbook African peasants, were important objects of colonial attention.

What particularly moves my analysis is the seeming paradox between common perceptions of colonial power as invasive and statements like those of Biram Thiam, a farmer interviewed by historian Martin Klein in 1975 in the Saalum region, who recollected that, during the colonial era, "the peasant could never see the white man" (Klein 1979, p. 73)—an impression that has been echoed in my conversations with Seereer elders who were children during the fading decades of colonialism. In

---

[1] The term "Seereer" is an umbrella term, which encompasses seven different ethnolinguistic groups thought to share cultural roots stretching into the distant past. This designation, however, becomes far more ambiguous as an identity construct when we take into account the fact that some of the "Seereer" groups do not speak mutually intelligible languages, have different kinship structures, and boast different sociopolitical organizations. I have tried to address some of these ambiguities elsewhere, by charting key moments in the historical, political, and representational construction of Seereer ethnicity since the fifteenth century (Richard 2015). For the immediate purpose of this article, and since my analysis will concern only the Siin region, I will employ the term "Seereer" in the rest of the essay as a shorthand for "Seereer Sinig," or those Seereer populations historically inhabiting the Siin.

many ways, this disjunction reposes a critical problem identified long ago by Karen Fields (1985, pp. 30–31), when she asked "[h]ow did a notoriously small handful of white men rule gigantic territories"—a relevant predicament of *history,* which summons pointed *theoretical* questions about the nature of colonial power and thresholds of its limits. My interest, then, is to interrogate Siin's rural landscapes to develop a historical anthropology of political life that elucidates the workings of colonial rule, and how we might go about conceptualizing its materiality. Forging a dialogue between Galvan's idea of "benevolent state neglect" and local commentaries about the invisibility of colonial rulers on the ground, I propose that a key modality of colonial governance in the Siin was a "politics of absence." Absence here does not mean vacuum or nothingness; rather it evokes a material register of power that did not require direct physical intervention, but rather worked obliquely through a variety of non-state or para-statal actors, media, and institutions. This politics of absence braided with more frontal state strategies to organize the quotidian of peasant populations, though its results did not always play out as predicted. Much of this essay will take up these ambiguities of government—where efficacy met incertitude, and where the two could not always be differentiated—and explore how they reverberated across the Seereer milieu.

## Anatomies of Colonial States: History, Anthropology, Archaeology

Scholarship on the nature of "colonial government" in Africa has been somewhat bifurcated. In the broadest of brushstrokes, one strand of literature has portrayed colonial rule as despotic and oppressive, emphasizing its vocation for domination and sovereign violence (e.g., Mamdani 1996; Suret-Canale 1971; Young 1994). Other studies have adopted a more skeptical tone, pointing out the limitations and internal contradictions of colonial regimes (most notably their reliance on precolonial institutions) and their inability to monitor African labor and agricultural economy, and downplaying their transformational effect on African societies (Berman and Lonsdale 1992; Roberts 1996). While both view capture salient aspects of colonial rule, there is danger for slippage into an "all-or-nothing" understanding of power and its capacity to alter the social relations of colonized peoples. This split has not escaped more recent research (Comaroff 1998; Cooper 2005; Mbembe 2001), which has adopted a more temperate perspective: One recognizing that colonial governments varied considerably in time, space, and over the course of their existence and that some administrations were strong and intrusive (and meted out power instrumentally), while others were weak and indifferent (allowing power to dissipate along many channels), and that others still were sometimes both at once! In the face of these textured political worlds, the venerable category of "The Colonial State" as an integrated entity and definitive political type appears somewhat chimerical. Collapsing under its own unwieldy weight, "the state" has given way to more pliant definitions: A variably coordinated ensemble of institutions, loci, programs, and discourses, held together by legal frameworks, and broadly working (through

cadres, agents, bureaucrats) to define a political community, administer rights and resources, legitimize a regime of order, institute cultural conventions fostering acquiescence to rule, and regulate the behavior of different political actors (Comaroff 1998, pp. 341–342; also Bayart 1993).

Part of the instability of colonial rule stemmed from the fact that these different projects did not always converge toward a coherent vision. The cracks between them nurtured sizable dysfunctions, contradictions, and shortcomings. Nor were colonial designs always synchronized with the cultural terrains they attempted to police and reform. While colonial authorities at times managed to align reality with the representations churned up by colonial knowledge mills, their political initiatives were often out of joint with Africa that European bureaucrats failed to grasp in full. Another source of imbalance flowed from the cohabitation of colonial administrations with other assemblages of power (which frequently enjoyed more legitimacy in the eyes of Africans) (Lan 1985; Moore 2005; Obarrio 2010); at various points in time, these other spheres of power may have been combated (say, precolonial aristocracies, Islamic brotherhoods, or labor unions), actively cultivated (such as traditional ruling elites repurposed as "chiefs"), or actually manufactured (one example being African clerks and interpreters, who were pivotal cogs in the machinery of colonial affairs) (Lawrance et al. 2006). More ambivalence accrued from the fact that colonial policies did not always elicit anticipated responses from subject populations or meet their consent. Africans openly resisted, subverted, and appropriated colonial idioms, rituals, and other trappings of power for their own devices (Berry 2000; Saul and Royer 2001; Stoller 1995). Additionally, the goal of subjecting Africans to colonial law sometimes backfired and opened new avenues of native agency (Roberts 2005). In rural Senegal, for instance, after the 1900s, "indigenous tribunals" rapidly worked their way into peasants' daily life, and villagers increasingly used legal recourse to adjudicate matters of land rights, inheritance, marriage, family dispute, and theft, turning a "modern" institution into the arbiter of social "tradition," and transforming both in the same breath (Galvan 2004). Likewise, in urban areas, educated mixed-race and black Africans frequently used the law to magnify contradictions in colonial ideology, contest state power, and carve out a space for the expression of the rights of the colonized (Johnson 1971).

The take-home message is that colonies were not absolute systems of order, but "twilight zone[s] of multiple indeterminate configurations of power and authority" (Hansen and Stepputat 2006, p. 302; Stoler 2006). To properly grasp the nature of colonial sovereignty, then, requires an understanding of the different registers of power at play in given territories, how they articulated with each other, the uncertainties permeating the attempt to govern subject populations, and the ambiguous responses to which they gave rise. In other words, the key to unpacking the metaphysics of colonial rule lies in the microphysics of its functioning (Cooper and Stoler 1997; Stoler 2002).

A relatively recent interlocutor in cross-disciplinary conversations about colonialism, archaeology stands to make pointed contributions to our comprehension of colonial statecraft. In the past two decades, historical archaeology has been particularly active in writing counter-histories of colonialism that eschew totalizing portrayals to focus on the microdynamics of colonial world-making (see volume

introduction for an overview of this literature). Drawing on the material refuse of colonial encounters, the debris generated in the routine interfaces of colonizers and colonized, archaeology has advanced a ground-level view of colonialism distilling the lived substance of history rather than its organizational structure; it has foregrounded the ordeals and resilience of native peoples where earlier annals had placed the onus on European achievements; it has underscored daily practice rather than discourse through theoretical gamut of postcolonial thinking: hybridity, alterity, difference, agency, resistance….

Power permeated colonial situations in profound ways, and historical archaeologists have been keenly attentive to its asymmetries and fluidity. This effort has resulted in thoughtful examinations of power relations across colonial settings, focusing on the capacity of indigenous actors to negotiate, subvert, or bypass the diktat of colonial prescriptions, and engage in meaningful social action. By contrast, archaeological energies have been less readily directed toward an analysis of colonial states and their material forms. And yet, as a number of recent studies would suggest (Dawdy 2008; Hall 2000; Leone 2005; Matthews et al. 2002; see also Buchli 1998), archaeological evidence seems poised to shed empirical light on imperial governance, its working contradictions, and manifestations in the material world. To make a finer point, actually, it can be argued, given the fact that many archaeologists labor at the "contact zones" (Linke 2006) between people and the state—where people lived, worked, resided—that the discipline has much to say not only about the tangle of relations binding "regimes" and "subjects" but also about the shadowy horizon of power that stands past coercion and confrontation, and strives to configure comportment through the mundane ether of social practice. In other words, I would suggest that archaeologists are ideally positioned to examine the mechanics of colonial "government" (see Richard 2013a, for a version of this argument). I take "government" here in its Foucaultian inflection to refer to a mode of power in which people are the bearers of their subjection to a political order (Burchell et al. 1991).[2]

One of the epistemological appeals of government as an archaeological field of study lies in its fundamental embeddedness in materiality. Much like Jacques Rancière (2001) stresses that politics is about struggles over the configuration of the sensible world and the signs through which it is made legible, speakable, and navigable—to whom, for whom, and more importantly, by whom—, Foucault (2007, p. 98) reminds us that government is about the "right disposition of things," about their proper arrangement in pursuit of the effective management of people. In light

---

[2] In his analysis of the modern state in the *Collège de France* lectures, Foucault (2007, pp. 87–114, 115–134) distinguishes three intersecting modalities of state power. *Sovereignty* refers to the theory and practice associated with the exercise of political rule over a territory and its subject populations, for which law, obedience, and policy are the primary instruments. *Discipline* denotes the application of power over/through bodies with the aim of surveilling, correcting, and ordering individuals within particular institutions. Last, *government* (or *governmentality*) entails a regime of power concerned with "the population" and its optimization; it seeks to shape the conduct of people by mobilizing their desires, aspirations, habits, and interests (through a wide array of techniques and discourses) to enlist them in the project of their own rule (Mitchell 1999). Rather than operating independently, these modes of power act as each other's conditions.

of this observation, we can argue that the material patterns that form the backbone of archaeological studies of colonial settings provide a ready-made window into the logics and techniques of colonial government. While distorted by formation processes, material assemblages compose a piecemeal portrait of human activities shaped in colonial power fields, in contexts that were often deliberately targeted by colonial programs. Colonial state operations, in other words, can be read aslant, through the "effects" (e.g., Foucault 1994; Trouillot 2003) that they left on the indigenous worlds we so frequently study.

In addition to capitalizing on materiality, and the types of information encoded in archaeological data, the study of governance underscores the dense linkages connecting states and subjects, and invites us to examine their co-constitution. Foucault (1994, pp. 326–348) remarked that in becoming subjected to regimes of authority, individuals interiorize certain predicates of order and dispositions that orient their deeds and decisions. These sensibilities are thus folded into the subjectivities of social actors, and partake in the construction of who they are (van Dijk 1994).[3] Thus, rather than cleaving power and people, or treating sovereigns and subjects as separate existential realms, we need to view state power as a diverse spectrum of designs, whose effects scatter widely between the poles of negation and possibility. In addition to condemning the repressive dimensions of power and revealing ways in which colonized people sought to avert them, we also need to heed power's *productive* side and how it (purposely or not) helped to configure native actions (for literature on the productivity of power, see Scott 1999; Scott and Hirschkind 2006). My intent here is not to paint a roseate picture of colonialism and deny its infrastructure of domination, exploitation, alienation, and violence. Surely, force and discipline centrally featured into the colonial equation of power, but so did government. My point, rather, is that power and agency are intertwined: Institutions of power create conditions in which people can act in certain ways, but not in others in which they recognize certain choices as feasible, tricky, or impossible, in which they perceive certain regulations as desirable or illegitimate…. Matrices of power *both* constrain *and* authorize certain kinds of projects. But note the flipside of that

---

[3] I use "subjectivity" here, following Foucault (1994, p. 331), to denote two facets of identity construction in a given power formation: (1) the process of subjugation (to be made amenable to control and governance), and (2) the forms of consciousness and self-knowledge that orient people's courses of action. In becoming subjects to particular regimes of authority or social institutions, individuals internalize certain identities, sensibilities, and affects that influence their deeds, dealings, and decisions—to paraphrase Foucault (1980, p. 98), they are constituted by power situations of which they are the bearers. While the full spectrum of subjective expressions stretches beyond archaeological evidence (since, after all, subjectivity involves matters of psyche, self-perception, and feelings), it can be argued that subject positions also have *material* dimensions: certain sets of practical dispositions, with archaeological traces, that may have promoted self-understanding. The material subjectivities I evoke in this essay, broadly capture what Siin villagers in the colonial period would have collectively perceived as meaningful and legitimate modes of being. As such, inevitably perhaps, the "subjects" of this essay refer to a somewhat normative "peasant community," made up of "peasant actors" (adult male stakeholders, generally), at the expense of more a patchwork of positions structured along the lines of gender, age, occupation, wealth, kinship, lineage, pedigree, ethnicity, religion, etc…. Unfortunately, available sources afford limited information about these social axes, though I try to consider them when possible to insert nuance into my portrayal of peasants.

dialectics: As colonized people blazed new territories of practice around, through, or against colonial policies, they also (again, not always consciously) reframed the terms of power and conditions of its applicability. Taking account of government, along with other aspects of colonial state-making, enables us to interrogate the various reasons, processes, and institutions of rule at play in colonies, and determine precisely how they intersected with native lifeworlds and political experiences. In Senegal, I suspect other colonial settings, colonial administrations variably ignored, restrained, or coerced colonized subjects, but in doing so they also offered a certain freedom to act, which became part of Africans' evolving social traditions.

## Materialities of Government in Rural Senegal: Toward a "Politics of Absence"?

Conversations about colonialism have taken a sinuous path into Senegalese historical scholarship (e.g., Becker et al. 1997). Surely, much pivotal work has attended to the political storyline of colonialism: its battles, events, and great men. Likewise, important studies have analyzed official policies and programs, and unpacked the logics of decision-making, administration, bureaucracy, and justice in French West Africa (Hesseling 1985). These facets of colonialism all involve power in some capacity, but its mechanisms, material conduits, and human effects have not always been analyzed—let alone theorized. Work on specific applications of colonial power *has* been carried out, but often in urban environments, where archives supply more abundant and detailed information. By contrast, in more poorly documented rural regions like the Siin, while research has elegantly dissected the *structural* properties of colonial rule (Klein 1971, 1979), it has lent less attention to its microphysics and intersections with African actors (but see Donneuil 1999; Galvan 2004, for important exceptions). Given the highly uneven topography of governance in colonies like Senegal, where the colonial state wore very different faces between town and country, these imbalances have produced an incomplete map of colonial statecraft.

Reviewing the question of modernity and power in French and British West Africa, Frederick Cooper (2005, pp. 142–148) has critiqued the urge to indiscriminately associate colonial regimes with the all-out implementation of "modern governmentality," as is sometimes seen in postcolonial scholarship. As Cooper points out, a major difference separating European governments from colonial states was that the latter did not focus their efforts much on the production of individual subjects as on governing through collectivities, and developing institutions designed to keep them in check. And even there, colonial regimes in Africa provided notoriously "unable to routinize and normalize their exercise of power, and they were equally incoherent in their efforts to harness "tradition" and "traditional rulers" to a stable pattern of governance" (Cooper 2005, 143). Instead, he discerns periods of mutual adjustment between colonial policy and the initiatives of colonized peoples: An early and euphoric imperial agenda of reform, improvement, and rationalization (1850–1914); a more sobering period of rule through indigenous institutions until the late 1930s,

followed by a decade of social and economic tensions which colonial ideologies could no longer rein in; and, by the late 1940s, the implementation of programs of modernization and development targeting African workers, which African political organizations recuperated as a claims-making device (Cooper 1996; also Conklin 1997).

This periodization is heuristically useful, and it matches quite well the terrain of colonial Senegal, which Cooper has studied for many years. That said, its broad lines do not completely account for the idiosyncrasies of colonial governance as it was translated to different regions. In the Siin, for instance, direct intervention and indirect rule cohabited on the ground very early on. More generally, Cooper's periods are also crosscut by certain rationalities of rule, such as the idea that subject populations can be managed both through and in conformity with the progressive laws of commerce and the economy. In Siin, then, state institutions, market forces, and social forms combined and recombined to shape each other and how rural people understood their circumstances, constructed their choices, and imagined the broader world (Coronil 2001). This, in turn, imparted particular shape to the institutions of rule in the province, the materiality of colonial state projects, and the tensions generated by their implementation.

In his thought-provoking study of Catholic evangelization in Waluguru (Tanzania), Peter Pels (1999, p. 43 ff) has argued that colonial missionizing—and the colonial enterprise, more generally—did not just consist in forging a new representational order (e.g., Mitchell 1991) but also involved a "politics of presence." By this, he means that colonial transactions were mediated through matter and physicality that colonial contact was a profoundly tactile, embodied, and sensuous tale of encounters. While colonial world-building often evokes metaphors of language and vision, the "long conversation" between colonizers and colonized, the yearning to sway native consciousness, and the rearrangement of signifiers triggered by imperial ventures (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991) also implicated arguments of gestures, practices, customs, and things.

Pels's point about the materiality of empire-making is very well taken. However, in advancing the idea of physical *presence,* he seems to consider only one aspect of the materialness of colonial power plays, at the expense of a more diverse palette of media for exercising rule. Not only does materiality, surely, works through propinquity and sustained contact but it also operates through absence, invisibility, deferral, infrequency, ephemera, and sidelong mediations (e.g., Bille et al. 2010; Engelke 2007; Munn 1996). What happens, then, when political projects leave few material residues of their passage or when they may not have rested on the production of new social geographies per se? By extension, how do we study processes that have limited archaeological visibility? When it comes to the state, for instance, archaeologists have often underscored the bold, in-your-face character of power, materialized in its capacity to reconstruct landscapes in its own image (Monroe 2010; Smith 2003). By contrast, when peered through an archaeological lens, one of the most curious aspects of Siin's countryside is the relative mutedness of colonialism, the faintness of its material traces, and the seeming absence of overt state signatures…. Surely, a few grand old buildings survive, though those are overwhelm-

ingly confined to urban settings. In the countryside, other than the occasional fort, dispensary, or school, few built structures appear to have been erected, and the ones that exist stand few and far between. Likewise, other than the contemporary road grid, railway system, and a handful of towns, which follow the footprints of colonial penetration, Siin's rural milieu contains limited evidence of colonial infrastructure building. Concurrently, there is a little hint of systematic attempts to synthesize a new order into the landscape or reform local practices by realigning their material referents. Instead, the panorama of rural life over the past 200 years, outwardly at least, remains crisscrossed by material continuities: Village arrangements owe more to local cultural histories than modernist planning, building technologies are firmly rooted in local savoir faire, the bocage is underwritten by local kinship solidarities, ancestral shrines stand as testimonies to a vibrant sacred geography, local ceramic traditions dominate local assemblages…. And yet, colonial influences stain, with variable intensity, the fabric of local livelihoods. Historically, they surface in the ubiquity of peanut crops, in the growing incursion of mass-produced commodities, or in the establishment of settlements of seasonal workers.

How must we account for these hybrid political landscapes that weld old and new elements without overhanded attempts by colonial authorities to dominate social space? Playing on Pels, I would suggest that, in Siin, weaknesses inherent in the structure of colonial rule imposed the deployment of a "politics of absence:" Because French authorities never had the resources to infiltrate and remake the livelihoods of African peasants, they often settled for more offhand modes of governance—that is, delegating the business of government to institutions that were *not* under direct control of the state. "Absence," defined in this broad sense, was an important register of colonial statecraft, which joined more vigorous forms of power and interventionist technologies as primary avenues through which colonial rule was meted out. The inability to consistently engage in a politics of presence, one mobilizing permanent personnel and markers of sovereignty on the ground, laced the management of peasant populations with contradictions. By extension, the gap between colonial intentions and the actual effects of policies on rural communities introduced systemic unpredictability into the exercise of rule.

Having spent a fair amount of time on theoretical considerations, let me devote the remainder of this chapter to an examination of Siin's hesitant terrain of governance and how it conditioned the contours of Seereer existence. While these intersections took place in more ways than can be reviewed here, I would like to explore two interlinked horizons of colonial power, which, with Trouillot (2003, pp. 7–28), we might call the "geography of imagination" and the "geography of management." The first domain relied on "colonial science" and entailed the production of knowledge about colonized others. These representations, in turn, informed the second domain, which encompassed mechanisms of control on the ground. In the Siin, colonial strategies, the physical milieu of Seereer villages, and the ethnographic images that developed about them converged in tense ways, and became locked into a process of mutual adjustment and constitution.

These histories of power find partial expressions in Siin's rural landscape, which I seek to unlock through the combined lens of archaeology, ethnohistory, and
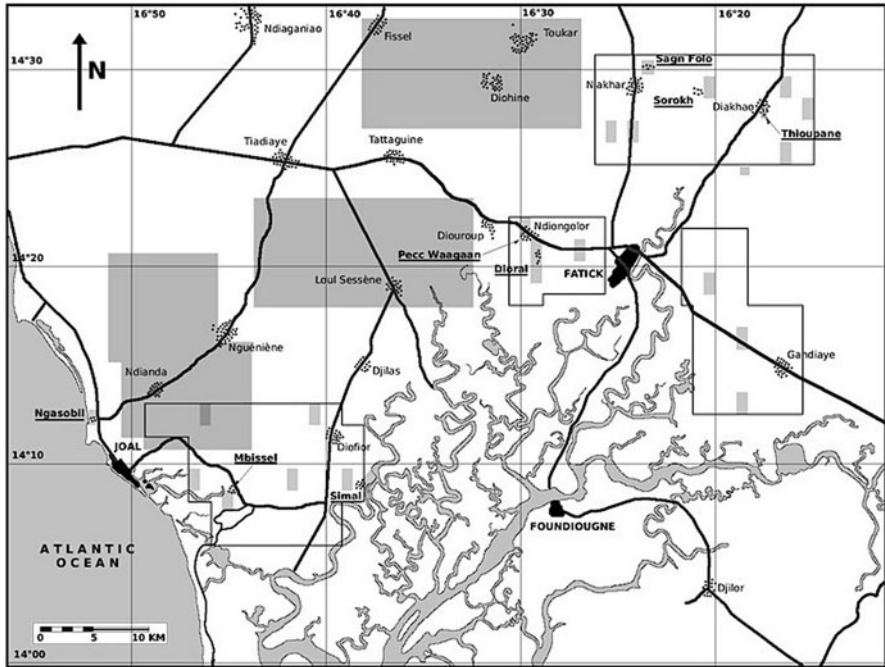
**Fig. 9.2** Archaeological Survey in Siin, 2003–2011: The empty polygons and small light *gray* rectangles represent the 2003 survey regions and quadrats, respectively. The boldface fonts mark the sites excavated in 2003. The large *gray* polygons indicate the 2011 survey regions

ethnography. The archaeological evidence mobilized here derives from a campaign of large-scale survey conducted in 2003 centered on the villages of Mbissel, Fatick, and Diakhao (Fig. 9.2). This work identified 180 occupations, over 90 of which fell into the eighteenth- to twentieth-century range. Many of these sites span Phase Vb (eighteenth to nineteenth century) and Phase Vc (late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century) of our regional chronology. Because these ceramic phases overlap to a considerable degree, and because of chronic problems of surface admixture (in the absence of surface excavations), it is often difficult to tie occupations to a definitive period. To remedy these problems, I have included preliminary materials from additional survey work carried out in 2011, which targeted previously unexamined areas near the villages of Ngéniène, Loul Sessène, and Diohine. While these data are in the initial stages of analysis, they provide greater resolution in the chronology of recent settlements. In effect, of the 215 occupational contexts retrieved during the survey, 78 were conclusively ascribed to Phase Vb and 77 fell squarely into Phase Vc. These archaeological pictures are important historical transcripts, in that they get at changing trends and departures in human mobility, residential logics, community-making, and use of object tying together before, during, and after of colonialism—the kinds of stories faintly impressed, if at all, in the forgotten margins of official annals. However, because they derive from large-scale surface observations,

these archaeological frames tend to confine our observations to a regional scope, which sacrifices a certain amount of interpretive resolution. I try to introduce some attention to such micro-historical details—the realm of rationales, intentions, and ideologies that underlay the actions of colonizer and colonized alike—by picking up narrative threads present in archival and oral evidence gathered between 2002 and 2011. I also attend to contemporary features of the Seereer milieu, which, in some sense, is a cumulative product of long-term cultural histories, and contain important clues about the transformations spurred by the colonial conquest.

My view of "archaeological landscapes" is thus an expansive one, which does not just boil things down to classic archaeological evidence (like settlement vestiges, earthenware pottery, ceramic plates and bowls, bottleglass, etc.), but recognizes that rural milieux are palimpsests in three dimensions, made up of complexly intertwined temporalities. While they coexist in the present, not all elements of a landscape have the same history, longevity, or pull on social action. Some were fashioned earlier or later, others were altered, and still others destroyed or replaced. In this light, contemporary social topographies can be just as archaeological as buried ones, and revelatory of deeper histories (even as they sometimes entail a measure of historical flattening). As mentioned above, certain material networks like roads are colonial inheritances that have become integral parts of present-day geographies. Likewise with Siin's system of agricultural fields, which preserves a concrete, multigenerational record of landed patrimony, lineage ownership, and occupational history. In some sense, the juxtaposition of different sources, each calibrated to certain scales of social change and speaking to different histories, offers critical vistas into the slow-moving and faster-clipped processes that shaped political landscapes over time. If similarities among different sources bring a level of assurance to our recounting of the past, disjunctures between them are equally valuable, as they invite new questions and positions about our rendering of historical process (Stahl 2001).

## Ethnographic Encounters: Finding the Archetypal Peasant

While ostensibly a process of territorial and political domination, colonization in Senegal has its origins in the agricultural programs put in place by the French in the 1820s. Having lost its New World possessions and exhausted by Napoleonic wars, France looked to experiments with cash crops as sources of alternative revenue. The colony first latched onto the gum trade, which dominated the economy of northern Senegal for four decades, but after gum production began to wane in the 1840s, it found an export substitute in peanuts (Brooks 1975). This unassuming crop paved the way to colonization by engineering a recentering of political and economic gravity from northern to west-central Senegal (the region known as the "peanut basin"), dragging local societies into global markets, and locking African communities into a relationship of dependence on outside economic forces. It also proved meddlesome politically, by promoting peasants as the new beneficiaries of external commerce, a privilege once reserved to regional rulers and aristocracies. The 1850s

was a period of instability and violence, as embittered elites sought to tap the new-found peanut wealth by sending their armies to raid farming villages and by imposing tributes on French merchants, and as Senegal began to be swept by massive Muslim revolutionary movements (Klein 1968). To curb these perceived threats, French governors launched a series of military expeditions aiming to suppress defiant coastal polities and craft a sphere of commercial exchange under France's legal jurisdiction. While the "conquest" dragged well into the 1860s in Northern Senegal, local kingdoms eventually capitulated, though not without some foot dragging. If local rulers officially assented to peace treaties that put an end to the "customs" payments they formerly enjoyed and imposed a 3 % tax on all exported goods, they often ignored or temporarily revoked these agreements during the first two decades of rule (Klein 1968).

By the late 1870s, stability had been restored over most of Northern Senegal, and local polities were by and large operating in the orbit of France's dominion. Military surrender, however, did not necessarily mean political overtake. In effect, many of the provinces pacified by France were administered as "protectorates" that kept traditional elites in place and granted them continued power, authority, and influence. For example, after first being invaded in 1859, the Siin did not become a protectorate until in 1887. It took 11 additional years for its monarchy to be dissolved, and 20 more, in 1920, for the region to be finally incorporated into the colony. The turn to a system of partial or graduated sovereignties was in part a financial decision. Relatively cash-poor, the French government was a miserly sovereign, unwilling (and unable) to disburse the colossal sums required for development and modernization in the colonies, and thus reliant on political and economic infrastructures already existing in subjected territories. In this light, France's reluctant accommodation of other spheres of authority also reflected limitations intrinsic to the colonial state and the complex political geographies in which it was interpolated. The logistics of imperialism were simply too taxing for the French colony's modest human, military, and economic resources, thus confining its effective reach to a handful of coastal enclaves. Elsewhere, the political institutions that organized peasant life were too historically entrenched in rural milieux to be bypassed, which made conciliation a cornerstone of the business of rule (e.g., Moore 2005); in fact, the accommodation of local structures of power by state projects is a symptomatic feature of Siin's long-term political history (Richard 2012).

If the Siin province had long been known to European merchants and served as a key supplier of foodstuffs to Gorée in the eighteenth century, French administrators rediscovered its agricultural proclivities in the 1850s (Boilat 1853; Pinet-Laprade 1865). Unsurprisingly, given the colonial penchant for metonymy, Siin's Seereer people came to embody the region's farming potential. Colonization set in train a cottage industry of ethnographic reporting, which gradually solidified the Seereer into one of the most traditional peasantries in Africa (Galvan 2004) (Fig. 9.3)—a population of conservative folk living outside of history: prone to autarky, shrouded in the fog of tradition, and suspicious of the new (Aujas 1931; Bourgeau 1933; Carlus 1880; also Pélissier 1966). The myth of the typical Seereer peasant enjoyed a thriving cultural career during the colonial period, which, depending on the author

**Fig. 9.3** Postcard, "Cérère family," early 1900s (ANS, Iconographie, #0802) <http://www.archives-dusenegal.gouv.sn/cartes/0802.JPG>

and situation, served a multiplicity of purposes—sometimes to decry the apparent Seereer resistance to technological progress, modernization, and civilization, at other times, to underscore their unique suitability to France's economic projects in Africa (ANS 1G26/104, 2G33/70; Bérenger-Féraud 1879; see Richard 2011). Indeed, the Siin became a strategic piece in the economic apparatus of France's colonial empire, which by the end of the nineteenth century, churned out some of the highest yields of commercial peanuts in French West Africa (Klein 1979; Mbodj 1978, 1980).

The definition of a peasant archetype was part and parcel of colonial France's *politique indigène* ("indigenous policy") (Labouret 1930)—the philosophy and set of policies developed to manage the subject populations that occupied the vast colonial hinterland unfurling beyond Senegal's four major coastal cities: Saint-Louis, Gorée, Dakar, and Rufisque. These urban communities belonged to a separate legal sphere, where white and mixed-race inhabitants were accorded the same rights as French citizens (Diouf 1998; Schnapper 1961). By contrast, the populations of protectorate lands qualified as "French subjects" and fell under the legal framework of the Native Code. The immensity and cultural diversity of subject territories demanded the construction of forms of knowledge and classification—through ethnography, census data, statistics, and so forth—to record, police, and order African cultural forms, that is, to render them intelligible to colonial authorities (Robinson 1992). Once codified, these "customs" would guide the development of appropriate regulations that would enforce social stability, native compliance with colonial authority and economic requirements, and the proper administration of justice, while assisting Africans on their paths to "Civilization." Historically, peasants have often been constituted as objects of state management, to be improved by state policy

(e.g., Scott 1998; Mitchell 2002). Similarly, under French rule, as for other "ethnographic" or "taxonomic" states (Dirks 2001, Chap. 3), the definition of "custom" and "tradition" became an instrument of administration designed to both frame and reshape the existence of African cultivators. It also became an object of contentious debates.

Despite the growing availability of information, the ethnographic production of a type of Seereer subject—the docile peasant—was complicated by a number of factors. First, the "ethnographic Seereer" could be not created *ex nihilo*. Colonial rule did not encounter an empty human terrain to be molded at will, but a milieu fashioned by culture, history, and power (Spear 2003). Given its inadequacies, the French administration remained perplexed by the reluctance of cultural practice; it also was forced to half-heartedly concede the influence of other configurations of authority competing over resources, territory, labor, as well as people. Thus, for much of the colonial era, social power was the object of a tug of war between the remnants of African monarchies, a small cadre of French officials, commercial houses and their interests, Catholic missionaries were often uneasily caught between colonial and precolonial authorities, a network of traditional grassroots elites, and Islam's rapidly growing presence after the 1920s. These political projects formed the slippery foundations onto which ethnographic research sought to erect a corpus of "customs"—one of their bridges to the management of Seereer villagers.

The second difficulty is that colonial images of African traditions were often carved out of a complex social world to suit the demands of governance. Attempts to codify the subtleties of African kinship, marriage, land tenure, ownership, inheritance, and fell well short of seizing the essence of Seereer culture. Rather, they painted an orderly façade of normative rules, structures, and categories recorded in ponderous tomes (e.g., ANS 1G30; Geismar 1933; Maupoil 1939), which allowed cultural effervescence to proceed unabated, and actually fostered new practices that creatively usurped "customs" in the service of personal or collective ends. For example, while the Seereer were often officially depicted as a matrilineal society, they in fact reckoned kinship both through paternal and maternal lines. Thus, strategically claiming rights of inheritance through one or the other line often enabled those whose deceased relatives had defaulted on their debt to ignore the demands of merchants seeking reimbursement for unpaid loans or goods bought on credit. Likewise, Seereer individuals who had converted to Islam often decided to claim the latter's mode of patrilateral succession to avoid taking on the arrears of maternal relatives (Bourgeau 1933, pp. 47–51; Dulphy 1939, pp. 293–298). Of course, instances of conversion to Islam or Catholicism also generated considerable intra-familial tension, as inheritance came to be disputed among relatives of different confession, each claiming allegiance to a different system of rights. Given these social acrobatics, it is little wonder that colonial sovereignty remained a tentative project, and that, correlatively, colonial policies inadvertently fashioned different kinds of *sujets* from the reliable small-holding farmers they had hoped to cultivate out the Seereer.

## Representing Space: Logics and Practices of French Colonial Rule

While considerations of length preclude a detailed engagement with the intricacies of colonial discourse, I will suggest that the construction of a peasant archetype in Siin partly rested on inscribing the Seereer into a space of premodernity iconic of the region's rural backwardness (Moore et al. 2003)—a landscape of constelled settlements, dispersed and anarchic, redolent of savage logic, yet a landscape also frozen by the weight of tradition, a strong aversion for movement, and deep attachment to the matrilineal soil and land of ancestors (Fig. 9.4). Although this "identity package" has a complicated history (Richard 2015), after the 1890s, it increasingly hinged on stressing the Seereer rootedness in the land, as a concrete symbol of the *ethnie*'s agricultural vocation, cultural fixity, and religious animism, and marking their contrast to the Wolof, Senegal's majority ethnic group, held to represent the best example of native capacity for "progress." For instance, reporting on Siin's rural habitat, administrator Reynier (ANS 2G33/70, p. 2) averred that "[t]he aspect of a Sérère village and its arrangement are curiously revealing of the taste and mood of the race: the habitations are as dispersed are they are grouped in Ouoloff villages," an aesthetics reminiscent of the peasant communities scattered across the French countryside. In other words, the Seereer farmer joined the Wolof trader, Puular herder, and Laobe woodworker (Guy 1908, p. 304) in an orderly tableau of ethno-racial vocations, where each native group occupied a fixed, predictable position, and where form was in some respect reflective of content.

Of course, this ethnographic optic was not entirely baseless. In all evidence, the Seereer *were* primarily cultivators (and adept ones at that), with an acutely cultural



**Fig. 9.4** Postcard, "Inside a Cérère village," early 1900s (ANS, Iconographie, #0357) <http://www.archivesdusenegal.gouv.sn/cartes/0357.JPG>. This image is representative of the aesthetics of colonial photography in the Siin, whose depictions folded culture into nature by merging Seereer lifestyles into their geographic surroundings. Photographs, here, were mobilized to create "visual proofs" of Seereer primitiveness

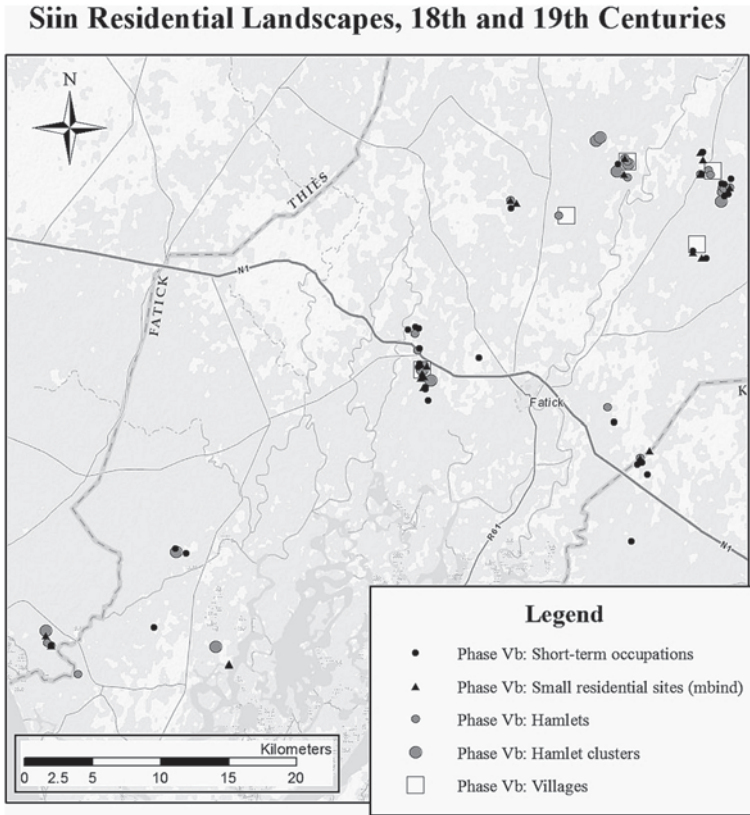**Siin Residential Landscapes, 18th and 19th Centuries**



**Fig. 9.5** Map of archaeological settlements, Siin province, eighteenth to nineteenth century

sense of their milieu and strong connections to their land and lineage. Rather, the main difficulty with these portrayals lies in the fact that they viewed Seereer social landscapes at the time of colonial expansion as the precipitate of a timeless cultural essence. Archaeological materials provide helpful clarification of ethnographic visions and the physical milieu that propped them (Figs. 9.5, 9.6). As the 2003 survey data reveal, Siin's residential landscape *was* mostly dispersed during the past 300 years, and consisted of a mosaic of small, scattered settlements. More than 80% of the Phase Vb-Vc sites were smaller than 2 ha in size. A majority (62%) consisted of sparse remains probably corresponding to individual concessions, while others (30%) contained a few trash/habitation mounds likely representing the vestiges of small residential clusters and hamlets. These sites were inhabited for fewer than 150–200 years. They also tend to spread widely across the landscape, rather than converge into concentrated settlements. A few exceptions stand out from the site inventory in the form of small and large villages made up of extensive networks of mounds organized around "plaza-like" open spaces. They tend to concentrate in Siin's interior regions, and seem to have been fairly short-lived as well. Survey
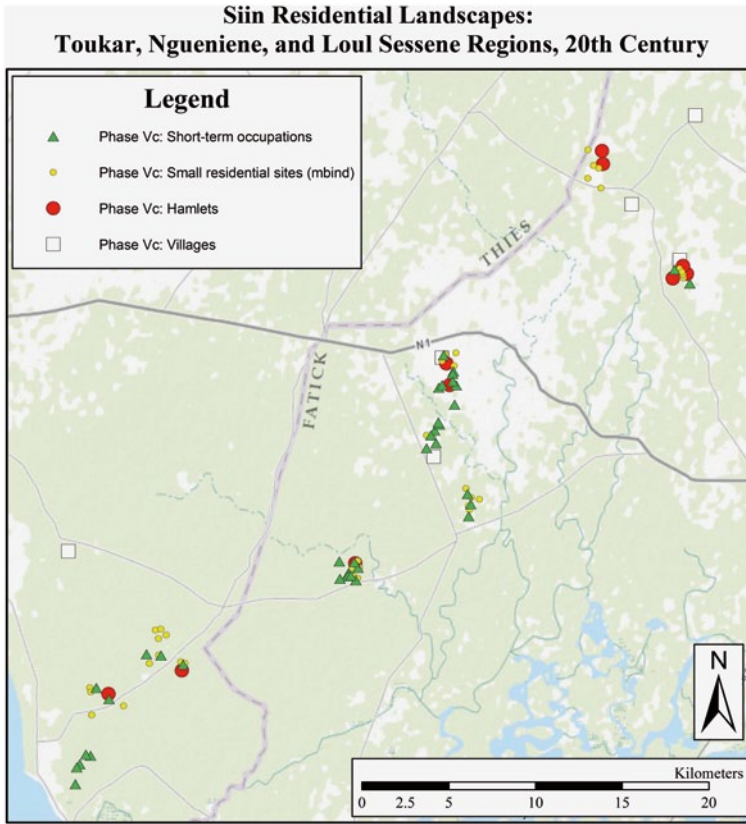
**Fig. 9.6** Map of archaeological settlements, Siin province, late nineteenth to early twentieth century

evidence suggests considerable dynamism and movement in Siin's archaeological settlements, with interesting patterns emerging: After their foundation and being inhabited for several generations, sites follow a number of trajectories: (1) They move elsewhere, though never more than several 100 m from the originary settlement, (2) they hive off, and parts of the settlement relocate a short distance away, or (3) some occupations merge with nearby sites to form larger residential units. Contemporary settlements are often found in the vicinity of archaeological sites, or partially overlap with them, and seem to represent the most recent episode in this history of village mobility. It is also worth noting that, by and large, the geography of eighteenth- to nineteenth-century deposits maps quite well with the present-day distribution of spirit shrines *(pangool)*; in fact, many of them contain such shrines or have become sacred places themselves.

Archaeological portraits are thus in partial agreement with ethnographic sketches of Seereer lifeworlds; they depict Siin's village communities as dispersed clouds of habitations, which were variably integrated into larger ensembles. Likewise, the

**Fig. 9.7** Postcard, "Lacustrine village [Fadiouth]," early 1900s (ANS, Iconographie, #0207) <http://www.archivesdusenegal.gouv.sn/cartes/0207.JPG>



pattern of village (re)settlement around founding sites, contemporary villages, and *pangool* bespeak a certain attachment to "place" and lineage-managed land. Having said that, other aspects of colonial imagery are invalidated by our survey evidence, which reveals that the Seereer cultural landscape during the colonial era was a relatively recent phenomenon indebted to reconfigurations associated with Atlantic exchanges (Richard 2012). The constellated milieu that so fascinated French observers actually took shape during the eighteenth and nineteenth century in response to the political turbulences generated by the oceanic commerce and transition to the post-abolition era. By extension, archaeological formations also signal considerable diversity in rural materialities: Coastal settlements are much more nucleated than their counterparts in the hinterland (Fig. 9.7), supposedly "Seereer" material assemblages are broadly shared with other ethnic groups in border areas, while the presence of myriad imported objects suggest the region's long-term involvement with external market forces (Richard 2010). Confining Seereer communities to the immutability the ethnographic present caused colonial observers to miss the stories of change, continuity, movement, and variability woven into Siin's rural landscapes. As a consequence, the ethnic portrayals supposed to guide colonial policy actually failed to explain why the Seereer refused to mirror their Wolof neighbors and "modernize" their rural habitat—beyond the circular rhetoric that the Seereer were innately backward and the Wolof instinctually entrepreneurial (e.g., ANS 1G26/104, p. 39; ANS 2G33/70, pp. 13–14; Gastellu 1981, pp. 25–26; Geismar 1933, p. 23).

At a more general level, these vexations flowed from the uneasy fit between the logics and logistics of colonial rule in Senegal (Richard 2011).[4] Because France's

---

[4] Part of this precariousness stemmed from the not-always-stable relations of collusion and tension between capitalism and colonialism at the heart of French imperialism. During the twentieth century, some of these contradictions became visible at the level of the metropole—between the political costs and economic returns of the colonies (Marseille 1984), or between small French firms advocating economic protectionism and strong companies favoring more open markets (Boone 1992)—and in Senegal, between the interests of business/commerce and desiderata of political administration (Klein 1968).

African empire was to be built on the continent's labor, savoir faire, and resources, rather than costly investments, the quest for hegemony "on a shoestring" (Berry 1992) was quixotic best: While the success of colonial governance was in part predicated on the development of new forms of African civility, the colonial economy largely rested on the maintenance of traditional social relations, thus implying minimal political reform of local lifeworlds. This situation laid out the groundwork for the politics of absence that steered colonial governance in the Siin countryside.

Another reason of power underlying the idea of rule through absence was the broad belief that the laws of economic liberalism were critical motors of governmentality (see Foucault 2010 on this relationship; Lemke 2001). To many French bureaucrats and technocrats, "Commerce" was a civilizing force, which would convert "natives" to the cult of colonial modernity (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). It was believed that participation in colonial markets would free peasants from their perceived isolation, inward-gazing economy, and communal *zeitgeist,* by encouraging them to operate in a cash system, consume manufactured goods, and develop a taste for private property. To trigger these changes, taxation, money, and cash-cropping would work in tandem (Galvan 1997). Originally introduced in 1891, the head tax was payable in kind for a few years because of lack of money in the countryside, but it rapidly commanded payments in currency. As the colonial rationale went, the obligation to pay the head tax would force households to grow peanuts, and use the proceeds of agricultural sales to obtain the cash needed to cover the tax. The combined increase of cash cropping and use of money would compel peasants to cultivate subsistence crops and thus turn to the markets to acquire basic goods and services. In time, peasants would be irreversibly plugged into a world of market exchange, debt and credit, commodities, and cash, a world that would regulate the collective conduct of rural masses and instill the virtues of industry, property, and individual responsibility among them (Richard 2011).

As might be expected, the Seereer did not take to the seductions of commercial crops, cash, and commodities as readily as expected. As Roitman (2005, pp. 6–9 ff) reminds us, colonial truth regimes could not just be forced on colonial subjects; rather, colonial visions of social order and "appropriate comportment" generated both acquiescence and disputes over the legitimacy, intelligibility, and signs of regulatory authority. Thus, in the early days of the protectorate, sections of the peasant body in Siin and neighboring Saalum responded to French taxation through defiance rather than compliance. Colonial archives document episodes of tax evasion, the exploitation of loopholes in the tax system (mostly by migrating from high-tax to low-tax areas), and refusal to pay, as residents from the village of Diohine reportedly did in 1891 and 1892 (ANS 13G322a, 13G322b; Klein 1968, pp. 162–163). In subsequent decades, villagers gradually surrendered to the inescapability of the *impôt* (head tax), though not without questioning the legitimacy of colonial fiscality. Thus, Siin farmers chronically underreported household members and heads of cattle in their herds, which were the bases on which personal wealth was determined. Likewise, if, after 1900, the Seereer gradually accepted the realities of cash cropping, they often produced just enough peanuts to meet tax requirements and acquire consumption of goods. Indeed, until the early 1930s, most Seereer villages were not only economically self-sufficient but also the families continued to

produce enough millet to feed themselves, while avoiding the strangulation of debt (Reinwald 1997b).

When political technologies designed to regulate the actions of colonized farmers was proved ineffective, colonial power showed a more repressive side, sanctioned under the auspices of the *Indigénat* regime (Asiwaju 1979). The latter was an ensemble of provisions derived from the French criminal code that authorized the summary use of force and penalty (imprisonment, deportation, fines, and forced labor) without recourse to judicial courts, to ensure abidance to the law. In these instances, colonial authority was less grounded in the African adoption of self-policing or participation in their own rule, than in the public enactment of violence, punishment, and exploitation on the bodies of rural dwellers (Hansen and Stepputat 2005). These performances of sovereignty complemented France's politics of absence. They were predicated on a muscular kind of presence, a politics of concrete and visceral visibility, which camouflaged under displays of brutal force the failures of subjectivation, government, and rule by consent.

## Governing Space and the Challenges of Milieu

Until the late 1920s, lack of personnel and resources confined the colony's dealings with indigenous spheres of power to a dual strategy of conciliation and outsourcing. It is also effectively located colonial authority in a restricted number of places and bodies (those of administrators, soldiers, merchants, and indigenous clerks), thus limiting its intrusion in the daily life of Seereer villagers. While colonial forms of control could be more successfully deployed in urban settings, "the state" often had a patchy physical presence in rural areas. Until the late nineteenth century, for example, complaints from missionaries and merchants about bands of thieves roving the countryside often elicited the contrite admission that colonial protection did not radiate far beyond the perimeter of military posts (e.g., ANS 13G318).

While its power of police increased over time, prior to the 1930s, the colonial state achieved concrete expression in largely episodic and punctual ways, its trappings glimpsed in military forts and expeditions, administrative delegations, medical campaigns, school creation, or the building and inauguration of infrastructure. However, their limited visibility notwithstanding, state institutions were palpable through the effects they left in the landscapes. For instance, public construction projects (roads, wells, bridges) showcased the arbitrary face of colonial power, built as they were on brutal *corvée* labor requirements. While much has been made, drawing on the early Foucault, of the capillary extension of power, Frederick Cooper (1994, p. 1533) argues that the colonial state asserted its presence in more "arterial" fashion, that it was *channeled* through a system of disciplinary techniques—tax collection, fining, policing, labor recruitment, imprisonment, native courts—themselves mediated by a network of native administrators and collaborators often handpicked from precolonial elites. The reliance on African employees created intermediaries nodes of personal and charismatic power, which unlocked new opportunities for illicit personal accumulation. Colonial correspondence is littered with the testimonies

of simple villagers condemning the brutality of village and district chiefs, and the rapacity of aristocratic elites, over whom colonial authorities had the most nominal of influence (e.g., Searing 2002). During the 1860s and 1870s, for instance, entire villages sought to escape their rulers by relocating to territories under colonial jurisdiction, only to be sent back by French military authorities (ANS 4B51, 13G314a). France tolerated these necessary evils, as evidenced in classified assessments of African intermediaries from the late 1800s, which reported instances of petty crimes and power abuses committed by district chiefs, but proposed a few corrective measures (ANS 13G52).

By and large, however, most Seereer villagers remain estranged from sites of colonial spatiality—administrative towns, commercial centers, ports…. Prior to the 1930s, the scattering of these sites and porousness of colonial sovereignty opened vast spaces of autonomy, where the Seereer continued to practice old and new spatial forms away from the watchful eyes of colonial law, even as the latter increasingly redefined the conditions of local subjectivities. Galvan (2004, Chap. 4) has provided a powerful illustration of these dynamics in his discussion of the institution of pawnship *(taile)*. *Taile* emerged in response to colonial attempts to reform rural landholding and institute new regimes of individual land ownership. Instead of selling land considered inalienable under Seereer principles of collective custodianship, a farmer could pawn his use-rights to a land plot to another peasant as collateral for a cash loan. The money would enable the first peasant to pay off his taxes or debts (as often was the case), while the land parcel would enable the second peasant to extend his cultivated acreage or pasture for cattle herds. This system, in other words, allowed the temporary conversion of unsellable resources into cash without compromising their inalienability; it performed an illusion of commodification that actually upheld traditional conceptions of landholding. Another example of Seereer tactical deployment of the social can be found in the skillful use of bilineal descent (as mentioned above) to evade "customary law" in matters of taxation, debt, resource management, and inheritance (Galvan 2004; Reinwald 1997a).

The aftermath of the world economic crisis of 1929 saw a consolidation of colonial governance and a shift in state materiality from a mode of sporadic presence, and arterial intervention to a regime of present absence working primarily through the channels of political economy to refashion the field of local possibilities. Archaeological landscapes offer useful clues of these transitions and how they were internalized into Seereer livelihoods. I will briefly examine their manifestations in material culture inventories and settlement logics.

One unquestionable archaeological trend in Siin involves the explosive increase of imported artifacts over the past 200 years. While trade goods are negligible in pre-1700 surface and excavated contexts, and while foreign manufactures (glass objects, especially) become essential components of site assemblages (even as local ceramics continue to dominate), one sees a marked expansion in the quantity and diversity of imported objects in post-1850s occupations. Although village communities in the region had long been engaged with Atlantic commerce and have a long history of making foreign objects and ideas their own (Richard 2010, 2013b), the colonial moment ushered new worlds of peasant consumption, and, over time, cemented farmers' dependence on commodity circuits and cash exchanges. However,

Seereer relations with the global "empire of things" (Myers 2001) were by no means unilateral, and different classes of artifacts reveal different histories of appropriation.

Glass assemblages, for instance, contain an overwhelming proportion of gin and schnapps bottles, a preference that appears to have been driven by consumer choice. It was also fueled by the commercial availability of *alcool de traite* (trade liquor), which was an essential component of economic transactions and often served as currency in the early decades of colonial exchange. While many colonial administrators lamented the socially destructive effects of alcohol and its hand in propagating violence in Senegalese provinces, liquor also became an intrinsic part of certain Seereer practices of social reproduction—as commensal gift to reward workers in labor parties, as libation to honor spirits and ancestors, as ritual substance to assist rites of passage and agricultural ceremonies…. The increasing availability of trade alcohol also appears to have motivated the construction of new forms of aristocratic distinction at the end of the nineteenth century. One episode of feasting documented in a royal capital's public plaza suggests that elites may have sought to countervail the democratization of gin consumption by controlling the circulation of wine, and reserving this product as a marker of aristocratic status (Richard 2010). If archaeological assemblages inform us about broad categories of "elite" and "commoner" practices, they also chronicle the development of finer-grained social stories. For instance, a number of French documents from the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century note, with amused condescension, the emergence of a Muslim taste for *alcool de menthe* ("peppermint water"). While technically an all-purpose medicinal drug, peppermint water contained moderate amounts of ethanol, and would have enabled Muslim enthusiasts to partially reconcile religious restrictions on alcohol with the satisfaction of recreational drinking. The recovery of *alcool de menthe* bottle fragments on Vc residential sites might index the presence of such consumptive syntheses tied to the expansion of Muslim modernities in the Seereer countryside. In another example, the discovery of Vichy water bottles in the village of Ndianda, on an early twentieth-century site identified as the residence of a colonial district chief, seems to signal the development of yet other registers of distinction, no longer predicated on inherited status but on social occupation. Vichy water, by no means a cheap good (ANS 13G325), perhaps serves as an unassuming testament to the new forms of wealth, disposable income, and purchasing power accrued by certain colonial employees, and to the rise of Seereer subjectivities merging the desire for material icons of taste with the aspiration for certain ideas of colonial civility.

Glass containers in Siin embody something of the successful side of colonial commerce, and its program of "subjection through consumption." Other artifacts, however, document the failure of colonial commodities to capture the practical imaginations of Seereer peasants. The contrast between the omnipresence of locally produced pottery on colonial sites and the sparse numbers of imported ceramics indicates both the absence of popular demand for mass-produced vessels as well as the inability to foster new needs for these goods in local foodways. Glazed individual plates and bowls were simply poorly adapted to local communal modes of food preparation and consumption, which involved large containers capable of

accommodating several people. The bulk of imported ceramics consists of utilitarian stonewares, which were probably acquired for what they contained, rather than the function fulfilled by the containers themselves. Note that culinary traditions did not remain stagnant during the colonial era; in fact, they changed fairly dramatically, most notably through the incorporation of vegetables (peanuts, tomatoes) and condiments. Likewise, we also note the increase of metal cauldron parts in the archaeological record, which points to the adoption of new cooking technologies over time. Finally, while whitewares and porcellaneous ceramics never quite fully made it into colonial assemblages, they did increase after the 1930s in archaeological inventories, just as locally made ceramics have, since, mostly been replaced by China-made plasticware or enamel-tinware (although, there remains a market for large water jars). What these objects trajectories indicate is that as the Seereer struggled to accommodate change while remaining the same, the new things they used joined old ones to reconfigure the sensible world in which rural folks acquired a sense of personal and collective identities. In short timespans, goods that had little currency a few decades earlier became the stuff of familiar sights, sounds, tastes, and smells. Along with the cash they commanded for sale or purchase, imported goods became dyed into the fabric of everyday interactions and social reproduction (marriage payments, inheritance, loans, barter, debt repayment…). That said, while the spell of commodities was quite successful in binding the Seereer to market conditions they could not control, they came short of conjuring the types of submissive farmers adapted to the demands of colonial accumulation.

The remodeling of Seereer modes of consumption also parallels broader reorganizations in Siin's social space. These are manifested archaeologically in the form of changes in settlement structure and larger-scale transformations in village location regionally. One of the most palpable trends coming out of the 2011 survey is the fragmentation of the village landscape after the late 1800s. While the eighteenth century inaugurated an increase in settlement numbers but decrease in average size and occupation, Phase Vc sites are generally smaller, more ephemeral, materially poor, and dispersed than their predecessors. Many of these sites, moreover, are located in previously empty areas lying between well-established villages. This atomization of the social environment points right back to colonial political economy, and some of the processes unleashed by the normalization of cash crops, commodities, and currency in the countryside.

First, the fragmentation of Siin's habitat is connected to the massive conversion to peanut farming after the 1920s, which triggered a growing individualization of property relations and dissolution of matrilineal holdings. Part of the loose network of Phase Vc habitations orbiting in the periphery of large villages reflects the multiplication of interstitial agricultural concessions, as peanut farmers broke off from familial units, claimed their own fields to cultivate, and moved to the fringes of existing settlements. This trend also intensified the fuzziness of settlement boundaries which colonial observers took to be an ancestral expression of Seereerness, and which rural geographers documented in the 1950s (Pélissier 1966).

Second, the mobile geographies outlined by archaeology were a product of the new organization of labor accompanying the shift from subsistence farming

to commercial cultivation. Peanut cultivation in high-yield areas like the Siin necessitated voluminous manual labor and attracted migrant workers who came to assist with agricultural tasks. While labor movements were often seasonal, some non-Seereer migrants established hamlets in the vicinity of existing villages (David 1980); indeed, some of archaeological occupations surveyed in 2003 were identified by nearby residents as having been founded by migrants coming from Wolof regions to the north, and The Gambia and Guinea to the south. Confronted with the pressures of land, labor, and drought, Seereer residents themselves were also prone to population movements, as they left crowded *terroirs* and increasingly small parcels of land to look for cultivable soil, accessible water, or pasture for their herds. A number of sites documented in 2011 in the region of Nguéniène traced original settlers to inland areas near the villages of Fissel, Toukar, and Diouroup, according to descendants we interviewed. Their stories recoup the testimonies of peasants interviewed by Guigou (1992, pp. 77–78):

> Some men, who resided in villages of the Ndiafadj country and lacked land, left to settle in villages of Hiréna, in the Diakhao zone or that of the Gandiaye *arrondissement* [county], so they could benefit from more abundant and fertile lands. Some went to rejoin a maternal relative, others who left were attracted by land tenure opportunities. These movements took diverse shapes, ranging from the seasonal agricultural migrations of young men to the temporary or definitive migrations of adult men accompanied by their families…

In some instances, these displacements afforded new economic opportunities, avenues of accumulation, and forms of social advancement that had been proscribed under customary arrangements. They also engineered less felicitous effects. Most frequently, the arrival of newcomers sparked off disputes over land, resources, and identity, which are prominently recounted in village traditions (Becker et al. 1991). Relocation also sometimes failed to deliver the promises of economic betterment. In effect, the lands on which the new settlers established their homes were often marginal, and their fragile, ferruginous, and often poorly watered soils were not always able to support a comfortable living. Many migrants, in other words, faced a future of poverty, one that was accelerated over time by overcultivation and drought cycles, a situation visible today in many parts of the Siin. Last, on a more experiential plane, regional movements may have unsettled the horizon of Seereer migrants, whose identities were solidly anchored to soil, place, and spiritual forces rooted in lineage estates (Dubois 1975). To palliate the effects of dislocation, peasant migrants may have improvised strategies like those of Seereer seasonal workers in the eastern Saalum during the 1960s and 1970s, who incorporated soil from their homeland into their spiritual altars (Trincaz 1979, p. 34; see also Kus and Raharijaona, this volume).[5]

---

[5] In Seereer traditional cosmology, for instance, the deceased *always* must find a way back to their place of birth, no matter where or how far they died, so they can aspire to eternal rest (Gravrand 1990). More generally, the symbolism of the earth for the Seereer, as a metonym for land, and thus a substance materializing one's attachment to the ancestors, cultural identity, and the protection of the lineage, has been reported in other contexts. Writing in the Siin of the 1950s, Gravrand (1965, p. 292; 1973), for example, mentions that a pregnant woman, when visiting nonrelatives, would discreetly scatter a bit of soil from her home over her host's bed before sitting on it, so as to shield herself and her baby from potential dangers, spells, and mystical malevolence.

**Fig. 9.8** Postcard, "Purchase and weighing of peanuts in a trading house," early 1900s (ANS, Iconographie, #0585) <http://www.archivesdusenegal.gouv.sn/cartes/0585.JPG>

Archaeology suggests other—structural—reorientations in Siin's residential landscape, apparently set off by the French bureaucratic and commercial presence (Aujas 1929; Klein 1968). While we have noted a certain fragmentation of the Seereer habitat during the colonial era, settlement maps also document the parallel emergence of unprecedentedly large villages. Some of the largest residential sites recorded in Siin emerged in the nineteenth century, with 6 of the 9 villages larger than 7 ha dating to that period. These sites frequently contain well over 50 mounds, with distinct *quartiers* (neighborhoods) clearly identifiable in surface remains. Why this size increase took place is not entirely clear, though it can probably be related to the "relative" political stability created by colonialism and the demographic increases spurred by export agriculture.

Residential sites of the colonial period also appear to converge toward administrative and economic centers, as well as commercial axes and major roads. Closer proximity to colonial infrastructure would have been desirable for logistical and economic reasons. In towns, peasants would find weighing stations and points of collection for peanut harvests, where selling prices were better than those practiced by merchants servicing the countryside (ANS 13G314b, 13G314c; Mbodj 1978) (Fig. 9.8). Towns also hosted regional markets where surplus food and crafts could be exchanged for valued commodities (Aujas 1931, p. 331; Corre 1883, p. 4; Mbodj 1978, p. 336; Reinwald 1997b, pp. 150–151). Being near roads and bridges would have considerably eased the transportation of peanut harvests and reduced traveling times, which could be extensive. Over time, the development of commercial axes appears to have influenced settlement layouts. Today, many villages are wound about major roads, as residential quarters agglutinate in ribbons along each side of the axis. This clearly is a departure from the more dispersed modes of occupation

discussed above and reported in the hinterland in the early decades of colonial rule (Martin et al. 1980) (Fig. 9.6). In this process of community reconfiguration, settlements have gradually dislocated from matrilineal landholdings, and today, original lineage estates and the boundaries of contemporary villages no longer really overlap (Lericollais 1999). As noticed earlier, these alterations of the Seereer milieu should be read as spatial symptoms of a broader process of transformation toward individual ownership, free-holding, and the loosening of matrilineal allegiances. These features, in turn, have intensified to an even greater degree since 1960, after Senegal gained its independence, and national political directions in the past 50 years have followed a path of land reforms, economic austerity, liberal governance, and the promotion of Islamic modernity (Diop and Diouf 1990; Gellar 1995, 2005). Particularly injurious to Seereer peasants was the nationalization of agricultural lands in the 1960s, which completely upset the subtle architecture of traditional land management and gravely affected many communities (Abelin 1979). Later, in the 1980s, programs of structural adjustment initiated a gradual withdrawal of the state from rural life, which continues to fuel local animus toward sovereign authority and suspicious toward state centralization.

## Conclusion: Colonial Postscripts and Futures' Pasts

This essay began with a story of absence, a contemporary vignette evoking the relative disengagement of the Senegalese state from the dealings of Siin's peasant communities. I have suggested that this state of affairs and the political experiences flowing from it are indebted to a much longer history of interactions between peasants and centralized authority. The elusiveness of the postcolonial state and the productive gaps it has created for Seereer farmers are connected to many earlier narratives of absence. Working back from the present and forward from past settings, I have attempted to expose some of the historical threads bridging the today and yesterday of power in the Siin countryside. Because these political genealogies are messy, deep, and tangled up, much of my attention has been focused on the *colonial prehistory* of present-day formations of power and the modes of action, political possibilities, and subjective understandings they have configured. Landscape here has worked as a hyphen between history and ethnography: A dialectical image (Benjamin 2002) juxtaposing different political times and temporalities of power, an archive of the ruptures and continuities that have made and redefined Seereer modernities over the past 200 years—just as the cluster of Seereer practices and sensibilities came to be depicted as a cultural standstill by the discourse of tradition.

Throughout this chapter, my goals have been multiple. First, I have sought to show that archaeological settings, materials, and perspectives can be used to study motifs of colonial statecraft, practices of colonial government, in particular. In this context, archaeology permits reflections about the materiality of the state and its mediations of power. It is thus in a position to contribute to anthropological and historical conversations about the problematization of the colonialism and theori-

zation of its operations, in Africa and beyond. Second, archaeological landscapes offer prime evidence of how colonial programs were translated to rural Africa and traces they left on peasant lifeworlds. In this way, engaging with colonial governance helps us to elucidate the milieux of power in which African forms of agency, identity, and social practice were molded. It also lends insights about the material conditions and dispositions that oriented native modes of subjective understanding.

In addition to these general considerations, this chapter has also sought to think through the possibilities created by the problem of absence in archaeological and historical settings. Epistemologically, I have tried to show that archaeological reasoning can be sparked as much by what is there as by what is not there—absence of evidence here does not necessarily imply evidence of absence. Failing to find certain expected signatures of colonial power can reveal limitations in one's data, but it can also trigger new ways of approaching historical questions. In this instance, material "resistances" provoked fresh questions about the nature of state power and its mediations (rather than endorsing certain *a priori* notions about how states become substantiated in the world). Conceptually, I have tried to examine how absence might feature as a technology and logic of rule, and thus this essay joins a growing body of archaeological writings on emptiness, invisibility, and immateriality as they relate to matters of power (Crossland 2003; Smith 2008; also Miller 2005).

Finally, and to return to contemporary times, I find value in the fact that archaeologies of colonialism can help to write better histories of the present. The entwined temporalities permeating the archaeological record indicate that historical processes set in motion during colonialism (and quite clearly before) have deep resonances in the Siin today. Past, present, and future are not self-confined horizons. Instead, they bleed profusely into each other, and are traversed by processes of different durations, effectiveness, and predictability, which combine to alter the field of historical possibility (Obarrio 2010, 2011). This does not mean, as colonial writers imagined about the Seereer, that the past is the mirror of the present or that traditions have gone unchanged for centuries. Quite differently, it means that adjusting to new situations is intrinsic to the making of tradition and that slow and fast changes are continually absorbed into configurations of identity deemed stable (Weiss 2004). It implies that the ways in which today's peasants go about crafting sustainable futures in uncertain times have antecedents, and that the ways they face problems forged by centralized authority have been anticipated historically. It indicates, finally, that the orientations to the past, present, and future contained in archaeological landscapes have relevance to how time and memory are mobilized in the present to negotiate the future, and thus that archaeology may have something to say about social and political experiences sometimes held to be the exclusive province of postcolonial modernity.

# References

## Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS)

ANS 4B51 (No. 69): Galet, Lettre au Chef de Poste de Joal (26 mai 1877).

ANS 1G26/104: Rousseau, R., Notes sur l'habitat rural au Sénégal (en 1928).

ANS 1G30: Coutumes du Sénégal (1907).

ANS 2G33/70: Reynier, M., Cercle du Sine-Saloum (Kaolack)—Subdivision du Sine (Fatick): Rapport politique annuel (1933).

ANS 13G52: Chefs indigènes. Bulletins individuels de Notes. Sine-Saloum (Fin XIXe siècle).

ANS 13G314a: Commandant de Poste de Joal, Lettre au Commandant Supérieur à Gorée (8 février 1868).

ANS 13G314b: Genèbre, Rapport sur la situation politique et commerciale du Cercle du Sine-Saloum (17 janvier 1889).

ANS 13G314c: Rabourdin, Rapport politique sur le Cercle du Sine-Saloum (10 mai 1888).

ANS 13G318: Canard, Cdt, Lettre à Mr. Clermont (8 décembre 1877).

ANS 13G322a: Noirot, E., Lettre au Directeur des Affaires Politiques (25 Mai 1892).

ANS 13G322b: Noirot, E., Lettre au Directeur des Affaires Politiques (24 juin 1892).

ANS 13G325: Noirot, E., Lettre au Directeur des Affaires Politiques (8 novembre 1895).

## Others

Abelin, P. (1979). Domaine national et développement au Sénégal. *Bulletin de l'IFAN (Série B), 41*(3), 508–538.

Asiwaju, A. I. (1979). Control through coercion: A study of the indigenat regime in French West Africa, 1887–1946. *Bulletin de l'IFAN (Série B), 41*(1), 35–71.

Aujas, L. (1929). La région du Sine-Saloum: Le port de Kaolack. *Bulletin du Comité d'Études Historiques et Scientifiques de l'A.O.F., 12,* 92–132.

Aujas, L. (1931). Les Sérères du Sénégal (moeurs et coutumes de droit privé). *Bulletin du Comité d'Études Historiques et Scientifiques de l'A.O.F., 14,* 293–333.

Bayart, J.-F. (1993). *The state in Africa: The politics of the belly*. New York: Longman.

Becker, C., Martin, V., & Ndène, A. (1991). Traditions Villageoises du Sine. Arrondissements de Diakhao, Fimela, Niakhar, et Tatagin. Unpublished manuscript. Dakar.

Becker, C., Mbaye, S., & Thioub, I. (Eds.) (1997). *AOF: Réalités et héritages. Sociétés ouest-africaines et ordre colonial, 1895–1960* (2 vols.). Dakar: Archives du Sénégal.

Benjamin, W. (2002). *The arcades project.* R. Tiedemann (Ed.). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bérenger-Féraud, L.-J.-B. (1879). *Les peuplades de la Sénégambie: Histoire—ethnographie—moeurs et coutumes—légendes, etc*. Paris: Ernest Leroux.

Berman, B., & Lonsdale, J. (1992). *Unhappy valley*: *Conflict in Kenya and Africa. Book one: State and class*. London: James Currey.

Berry, S. (1992). Hegemony on a shoestring: Indirect rule and access to agricultural land. *Africa, 62*(3), 327–355.

Berry, S. (2000). *Chiefs know their boundaries*: *Essays on property, power and the past in Asante, 1896–1996*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Bille, M., Hastrup, F., & Sørensen, T. (Eds.) (2010). *An anthropology of absence*. New York: Springer.

Boilat, P.-D. (1853). *Esquisses sénégalaises, physionomie du pays—peuplades—commerce—religions—passé et avenir—récits et légendes*. Paris: Bertrand.

Boone, C. (1992). *Merchant capital and the roots of state power in Senegal, 1930–1985*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Bourgeau, J. (1933). Note sur la coutume des Sérères du Sine et du Saloum. *Bulletin du Comité d'Études Historiques et Scientifiques de l'A.O.F., 16,* 1–65.

Brooks, G. E. (1975). Peanuts and colonialism: Consequences of the commercialization of peanuts in West Africa, 1830–70. *Journal of African History, 16*(1), 29–54.

Buchli, V. (1998). *An archaeology of Socialism*. London: Berg.

Burchell, G., Gordon, C., & Miller, P. (1991). *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Carlus, J. (1880). Les Sérères de la Sénégambie. *Revue de Géographie, 6, 7,* 409–420,30–37, 98–105.

Comaroff, J. L. (1998). Reflections on the colonial state, in South Africa and elsewhere: Factions, fragments, facts, and fictions. *Social Identities, 4*(3), 321–361.

Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, J. L. (1991). *Of revelation and revolution: Christianity, colonialism, and consciousness on South Africa, Volume One*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, J. L., & Comaroff, J. (1997). *Of revelation and revolution: The dialectics of modernity on a South African rrontier, Volume Two*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Conklin, A. L. (1997). *A mission to civilize: The Republican idea of the Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Cooper, F. (1994). Conflict and connection: Rethinking colonial African history. *American Historical Review, 99,* 1516–1545.

Cooper, F. (1996). *Decolonization and African society: The labor question in French and British Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper, F. (2005). *Colonialism in question: Theory, knowledge, history*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Cooper, F., & Stoler, A. L. (Eds.) (1997). *Tensions of empire: Colonial cultures in a Bourgeois world*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Coronil, F. (2001). Smelling like a market. *American Historical Review, 106*(1), 119–129.

Corre, A. (1883). Les Sérères de Joal et de Portudal (côte occidentale d'Afrique): Esquisse ethnographique. *Revue d'Ethnographie, 2,* 1–20.

Crossland, Z. (2003). Towards an archaeology of "empty" space. The Efitra of the Middle West of Madagascar. *Michigan Discussions in Anthropology, 14,* 18–36.

David, P. (1980). *Les navétanes: Histoire des migrants saisonniers de l'arachide en Sénégambie des origines à nos jours*. Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines.

Dawdy, S. (2008). *Building the Devil's empire: French colonial New Orleans*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Diop, M.-C., & Diouf, M. (1990). *Le Sénégal sous Abdou Diouf. État et société*. Paris: Karthala.

Diouf, M. (1998). The French colonial policy of assimilation and the civility of the originaires of the four communes (Senegal): A nineteenth century globalization project. *Development and Change, 29,* 671–696.

Dirks, N. (2001). *Castes of mind: Colonialism and the making of modern India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Donneuil, C. (1999). Penetrating the natives: Peanut breeding, peasants and the colonial state in Senegal (1900–1950). *Science Technology Society, 4,* 273–302.

Dubois, J.-P. (1975). Les Serer et la question des Terres Neuves au Sénégal. *Cahiers ORSTOM (Série Sciences Humaines), 12*(1), 81–120.

Dulphy, M. (1939). Coutumes sérères de la Petite Côte (1936). In B. Maupoil (Ed.), *Coutumiers juridiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française, Tome I (Sénégal)* (pp. 237–321). Paris: Librairie Larose.

Engelke, M. (2007). *A problem of presence: Beyond scripture in an African church*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fields, K. (1985). *Revival and rebellion in colonial Central Africa*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972–1977*. C. Gordon (Ed.). New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1994) *Power. Essential works of Michel Foucault, 1954–1984* (Vol. 3). J. D. Faubion (Ed.). New York: The New Press.

Foucault, M. (2007). *Security, territory, population. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–1978*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M. (2010). *The birth of biopolitics. Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–1979*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Galvan, D. C. (1997). The market meets sacred fire: Land pawning as institutional syncretism in inter-war Senegal. *African Economic History, 25,* 9–41.

Galvan, D. C. (2004). *The state must be our master of fire: How peasants craft culturally sustainable development*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Galvan, D. C. (2007). The social reproduction of community-based development: Syncretism and sustainability in a Senegalese farmers' association. *Journal of Modern African Studies, 45*(1), 61–88.

Gastellu, J.-M. (1981). *L'égalitarisme économique des Serer du Sénégal*. Paris: ORSTOM.

Geismar, L. (1933). *Recueil des coutumes civiles des races du Sénégal*. Saint-Louis: Imprimerie du Gouvernement.

Gellar, S. (1995). *Senegal: An African nation between Islam and the West* (2nd ed.). Boulder: Westview Press.

Gellar, S. (2005). *Democracy in Senegal: Tocquevillian analytics in Africa*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Gravrand, H. (1965). Aux sources de la vie humaine d'après les traditions Serer du Sine. *Psychopathologie Africaine, 1*(2), 286–303.

Gravrand, H. (1973). Le symbolisme serer. *Psychopathologie Africaine, 9*(2), 237–265.

Gravrand, H. (1990). *La civilisation sereer. 'Pangool', le génie religieux*. Dakar: Les Nouvelles Éditions Africaines.

Guigou, B. (1992). Les Changements du Système Familial et Matrimonial: Les Sérères du Sine (Sénégal). Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris.

Guy, C. (1908). Le Sine-Saloum. *La Géographie, 18,* 297–314.

Hall, M. (2000). *Archaeology and the modern world: Colonial transcripts in South Africa and the Chesapeake*. New York: Routledge.

Hansen, T. B., & Stepputat, F. (Eds.) (2005). *Sovereign bodies. Citizens, migrants and states in the postcolonial world*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hansen, T. B., & Stepputat, F. (2006). Sovereignty revisited. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 35,* 295–315.

Hesseling, G. (1985). *Histoire politique du Sénégal: Institutions, droit, et société*. Paris: Karthala.

Johnson, G. W. (1971). *The emergence of Black politics in Senegal: The struggle for power in the Four Communes, 1900–1920*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Klein, M. A. (1968). *Islam and imperialism in Senegal: The Sine-Saloum, 1847–1914*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Klein, M. A. (1971). Chiefship in Sine-Saloum, 1887–1914. In V. Turner (Ed.), *Colonialism in Africa, 1870–1960. Vol. 3* (pp. 49–73). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Klein, M. A. (1979). Colonial rule and structural change. In R. Cruise O'Brien (Ed.), *The political economy of underdevelopment: Dependence in Senegal* (pp. 65–99). Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, Inc.

Labouret, H. (1930). À la recherche d'une politique indigène dans l'ouest africain. *Bulletin du Comité de l'Afrique Française, 12,* 636–640.

Lan, D. (1985). *Guns and rain: Guerillas and spirit mediums in Zimbabwe*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lawrance, B., Osborn, E., & Roberts, R. (Eds.) (2006). *Intermediaries, interpreters, and clerks: African employees in the making of colonial Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Lemke, T. (2001). 'The birth of biopolitics': Michel Foucault's lecture at the Collège de France on neo-liberal governmentality. *Economy and Society, 30*(2), 190–207.

Leone, M. (2005). *An archaeology of liberty in an American capital: Excavations in Annapolis*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lericollais, A. (ed.) (1999). *Paysans sereer: Dynamiques agraires et mobilités au Sénégal*. Paris: Éditions de l'IRD.

Linke, U. (2006). Contact zones: Rethinking the sensual life of the state. *Anthropological Theory, 6*(2), 205–225.

Mamdani, M. (1996). *Citizen and subject: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of late colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Marseille, J. (1984). *Empire colonial et capitalisme français: Histoire d'un divorce*. Paris: Albin Michel.

Martin, V., Becker, C., & Mbodj, M. (1980). Trois documents d'Ernest Noirot sur l'histoire des royaumes du Siin et du Saloum. *Bulletin de l'IFAN (Série B), 42*(1), 37–85.

Matthews, C., Leone, M., & Jordan, K. (2002). The political economy of archaeological cultures: Marxism and American historical archaeology. *Journal of Social Archaeology, 2*(1), 109–134.

Maupoil, B. (Ed.) (1939). *Coutumiers juridiques de l'Afrique Occidentale Française, Tome I (Sénégal)*. Paris: Librairie Larose.

Mbembe, A. (2001). *On the postcolony*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mbodj, M. (1978). Un Exemple d'Économie Coloniale: Le Sine-Saloum et L'Arachide, 1887–1940. 2 vols. Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Université Paris VII.

Mbodj, M. (1980). Sénégal et dépendance: Le Sine-Saloum et l'arachide, 1887–1940. In C. Coquery-Vidrovitch (Ed.), *Sociétés paysannes du Tiers-Monde* (pp. 139–154). Lille: Presses Universitaires de Lille.

Miller, D. (Ed.) (2005). *Materiality*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Mitchell, T. (1991). *Colonizing Egypt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Mitchell, D. (1999). *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mitchell, T. (2002). *Rule of experts: Egypt, techno-politics, modernity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Monroe, J. C. (2010). Power by design: Architecture and politics in precolonial Dahomey. *Journal of Social Archaeology, 10,* 367–397.

Moore, D. (2005). *Suffering for territory: Race, place, and power in Zimbabwe*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Moore, D., Kosek, J., & Anand, P. (Eds.) (2003). *Race, nature, and the politics of difference.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Munn, N. (1996). Excluded spaces: The figure in the Australian Aboriginal landscape. *Critical Inquiry, 22,* 446–465.

Myers, F. (Ed.) (2001). *The empire of things: Regimes of value and material culture*. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press.

Obarrio, J. (2010). Remains to be seen. Third encounter between state and 'customary' in northern Mozambique. *Cultural Anthropology, 25*(2), 263–300.

Obarrio, J. (2011). Small leviathan: Genealogies of local sovereignty. Paper presented at the African Studies Workshop, University of Chicago, 19 May 2011.

Pélissier, P. (1966). *Paysans du Sénégal: Les civilisations agraires to Cayor Ã la Casamance*. Saint-Irieix: Imprimerie Fabrègue.

Pels, P. (1999). *A politics of presence*: *Contacts between missionaries and Waluguru in late colonial Tanganyika*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers.

Pinet-Laprade, É. (1865). Notice sur les Sérères, peuplade répandue sur la partie des côtes occidentales d'Afrique comprise entre le Cap Vert et la rivière de Saloum. *Annuaire du Sénégal et Dépendances, 1865,* 121–179.

Rancière, J. (2001). Ten theses on politics. *Theory and Event, 5*(3) (2001). Project MUSE. Web.

Reinwald, B. (1997a). Changing family strategies as a response to colonial challenge: Microanalytic observations on Siin/Senegal 1890–1960. *History of the Family, 2*(2), 183–195.

Reinwald, B. (1997b). 'Though the earth does not lie': Agriculture transitions in Siin (Senegal) during colonial rule. *Paideuma, 43,* 143–169.

Richard, F. G. (2010). Re-charting Atlantic encounters: Object trajectories and histories of value in the Siin (Senegal) and Senegambia. *Archaeological Dialogues, 17*(1), 1–27.

Richard, F. G. (2011). "In [them] we will find very desirable tributaries for our commerce": Cash crops, commodities, and subjectivities in Siin (Senegal) during the colonial era. In S. Croucher & L. Weiss (Eds.), *The archaeology of capitalism in colonial contexts* (pp. 193–218). New York: Plenum Press.

Richard, F. G. (2012). Atlantic transformations and cultural landscapes in the Senegambia: An alternative view from the Siin. In J. C. Monroe & A. Ogundiran (Eds.), *Power and landscape*

*in Atlantic West Africa: Archaeological perspectives* (pp. 78–114). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Richard, F. G. (2013a). Hesitant geographies of power: The materiality of colonial power in Siin (Senegal), 1850–1960. *Journal of Social Archaeology, 13*(1), 54–79.

Richard, F. G. (2013b). Thinking through 'vernacular cosmopolitanisms': Historical archaeology in Senegal and the material contours of the African Atlantic. *International Journal of Historical Archaeology, 17*(1), 40–71.

Richard, F. G. (2015). "The very embodiment of the Black peasant"? Archaeology, history, and the making of the Serer of Siin (Senegal). In F. G. Richard & K. C. MacDonald (Eds.), *Ethnic ambiguities in African archaeology: Materiality, history, and the shaping of cultural identities* (pp. 87–118). London: Left Coast Press.

Roberts, R. (1996). *The two worlds of cotton: Colonialism and the regional economy in the French Soudan, 1800–1946*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Roberts, R. (2005). *Litigants and households: African disputes and colonial courts in the French Soudan, 1895–1912*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Robinson, D. (1992). Ethnography and customary law in Senegal. *Cahiers d'Études Africaines, 32*(2), 221–237.

Roitman, J. (2005). *Fiscal disobedience: An anthropology of economic regulation in Central Africa*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Saul, M., & Royer, P. (2001). *West African challenge to empire: Culture and history in the Volta-Bani anticolonial war*. London: James Currey.

Schnapper, B. (1961). Les tribunaux musulmans et la politique coloniale au Sénégal (1830–1914). *Revue Historique de Droit Français, 39*(1), 90–128.

Scott, J. C. (1998). *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Scott, D. (1999). *Refashioning futures*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Scott, D., & Hirschkind, C. (Eds.) (2006). *Powers of the secular modern: Talal Asad and his interlocutors*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Searing, J. F. (2002). 'No kings, no lords, no slaves': Ethnicity and religion among the Sereer-Safèn of western Bawol, 1700–1914. *Journal of African History, 43,* 407–429.

Smith, A. (2003). *The political landscape: Constellations of authority in early complex polities*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Smith, M. L. (2008). Urban empty spaces: Contentious places for consensus-building. *Archaeological Dialogues, 15*(2), 216–231.

Spear, T. (2003). Neo-traditionalism and the limits of invention in British Africa. *Journal of African History, 44,* 3–27.

Stahl, A. B. (2001). *Making history in Banda: Anthropological visions of Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Stoler, A. L. (2002). *Carnal knowledge and imperial power: Race and the intimate in colonial rule*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Stoler, A. L. (2006). On degrees of imperial sovereignty. *Public Culture, 18*(1), 125–146.

Stoller, P. (1995). *Embodying colonial memories*: *Spirit possession, power, and the Hauka in West Africa*. New York: Routledge.

Suret-Canale, J. (1971). *French colonialism in tropical Africa, 1900–1945*. New York: Pica Press.

Trincaz, P.-X. (1979). Transformations sociales dans les zones nouvelles d'implantation rurales: Les Serer dans les Terres Neuves du Sénégal. *Cahiers ORSTOM (Série Sciences Humaines), 16*(1–2), 19–36.

Trouillot, M.-R. (2003). *Global transformations: Anthropology and the modern world*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Van Dijk, R. (1994). Foucault and the anti-witchcraft movement. *Critique of Anthropology, 14*(4), 429–435.

Weiss, B. (Ed.) (2004). *Producing African Futures: Ritual and Reproduction in a Neoliberal Age*. Leiden: Brill.

Young, C. (1994). *The African colonial state in comparative perspective*. New Haven: Yale University Press.