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Land-Related Tensions and Women's Empowerment in Rural Senegal

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I. INTRODUCTION

In spite of the sharpness of constitutional and legislative reforms that guarantee equality of rights in many domains between men and women, customs and religious realities hinder the way bendind to economic empowerment of senegalese women. The latter are put on the receiving side of social unfairness that takes them away from any possibilities to be full land owwners. Indeed, inspite of the meaningful figure of 52% (Department of Forecasting Statistics, Senegal, 2013) they represent in the Senegalese population, women are lapsed into their mere expression of a vulnerable group. As such, in the name of customs and traditional religions, they are denied any right to have access to land and generate profit making activities. Senegalese women, who are iliterate in their vast majority, grind their way through and stomach the injustices they are victim of, soothing their voices into an acceptance of their degrading social status. In the Senegalese society, land is a part and parcel of power; it has to be owned and managed by men.

In so being, it will be interesting to browse through the pages of social obstacles that torn apart the Senegalese women's elan toward empowerment. An in-depth analysis of land issue will lead to put on surface the real and various obstacles that give ground to women's disability to free themeselves from traditional barriers.

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This article, focuses on three ethnic groups; the Sereer, the Diola and the Peulh. The choice of this approach is premised on the fact that these communities share strong similarities in their cultural realities, inspite of some dissimilarities in their points of law that define the relationship between women and land.

The Sereer,14 % (Department of Forecasting Statistics, Senegal, 2013) of the population live, in their vast majority, in the Center of Senegal and the Atlantic Ocean Islands. They are subdivided into four main groups ; the Sereer Siin, the Sereer Ndout, the Seerer Safène and the Sereer Niominka (in this study, much more attention will be put on Seerer Siin who still are very rooted in their traditions). Except the Sereer Niominka who live in islands and who are fishers by profession, the others are famers. Their traditional society is organized into a matrilineage that does not paradoxically grant rights of landownership to women. Ngoné Diop Tine and Mohamadou Sy confirm : '' it must be noted that even though Seerer tradition grants importance to the maternal line, Seerer women do not have right to own land'' (Ngoné Diop Tine and Mohamadou Sy 2003 : 208)

The Peulh or Halpular, 23% of the population (Department of Forecasting Statistics, Senegal, 2013) are mainly located in the North of Senegal. Even if their main activity remains cattle breeding, they deal as well with agriculture in The Senegal Valley. They evolve in a coercive patriachal society that is divided into two main social groups : noble men (the *Torodo*) ; they are the ones who are atoped at the sheer rank of born to lead community, and the casted ones (The *Mathioudo*), who are men and women at service. Muslisms in their over whelming majority, (Islam does not deny land access and ownership to women), Peulh remain attached to their customary values in terms of land issues. As it is highlighted in the following : '' Here land belongs to men. In term of land distribution and ownership, women belonging to the nobility are in the same boat as casted men'' (Tine and Sy 2003 : 208)

The Diola, 5 % of the population, (Department of Forecasting Statistics, Senegal, 2013), they are located in the southern region of Senegal. Contrary to the Seerer and the Peulh, the Diola society does not go through a scaled stratification. It is organized into a horizontal community in which rights are played equal.

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In this article, we examine the above mentioned ethnic groups to highlight the challenges that block women emancipation and empowerment in some Senegalese communities.

a) Conceptual and Methodological Frameworks

This article is an untying result of an in-depth reflection on women's existence in three ethnic groups in Senegal. It is grounded on the theory of masculinism as it it defined by Ferell Christensen and Georgia Duerst-Lahti. According to them, masculinism, which is different from musculism, is a stand from which a promotion of manliness is done. It is based on a patritriachal system which grants men political, economic and social powers to dominate women. In articulation with such a viewpoint on the relationship between men and women, this study targets to denounce the economic and social flat broke situation in which Sereer, Diola, and Peulh women have collapsed inward, loosing willpower to stand strong and fight for a social status change. The patriachal society in which they evolve, have shaped their mind into a belief according to which to empower a woman means to go against traditional values. In the purpose to stand for female interest and denounce the verticality of traditional societies, which indeed believe themeselves to be as clean as a whistle, we call for a rallying elan around the life and limb of a balanced and equity society in Senegal.

A mixed method approach was used. Four wise men and women (it is difficult to find out enough living old persons who are knowledgeable about their ethinic group's history and social stratification), who cross their heart on their communities's history, belonging to the three above mentioned ethnic groups, were selected to, through leadind oral questions, inform in detail how function their societies when it comes to deal with women's status. Their information were then closely confronted with some researchers's works on similar subjects to determine what has not been highlighted so far in the cut and dried fate of women in the north, the south and the west-centered regions of Senegal.

Data inquiries started on July 2016 and ended in September 2016. Besides, important research institutes like the West African Research Center (Dakar), the National Agency of Statistics and Demongraphy (Senegal), Cheikh Anta Diop University's main library, Fondamental Instuitute of Africa (Dakar), etc, were visited and eureka moments of unexpected discoveries pinpointed our underpined resourceful activities in such temples of knowledge.

II. Customary and Traditional Barriers

Located in the West headland of Africa, Senegal is a country that numbers, officially, 13 millions inhabitants (the National Agency of Statistics and Demongraphy, 2014). Its geographical position has granted to its populations a climate of diversity that favors a variousness of agricultural activities. Indeed, the North which is passed through Senegal River is the Senegalese rice granary. The center is the groundnutch pool and the south, which is the most watered area, polarizes the market vegetables and the various commercial products. This agricultural map kindles strong relishes of land control and exploitation.

Indeed, sahelian in its geography, senegal overturns in a severe ruralism with more than 70% (Department of Forecasting Statistics, Senegal, 2013) of its population who evolve in penurious countrysides, living on agricultural activities. Land appears then as an indispensible livelihood that goes hand in glove with cultural conception of dignity and manhood. Deductive arguments sew a grain of manhood that finds expresion into gender repression. In so being, a sociological, political and spiritual domination sprout out to rankle the female gender to the sheer line of yes-women. Its cardinal dimension jostles the already cracking aspect of the social system so as to disorganize the established arragement of moral and ethic ell of rural societies.

Land of culture and traditions, ***Suniugal*** is a country where male domination is still noticeable in various social domains, specially in the field of land ownership. Regarded as the feeble sex, women, in any Sereer, Peulh or Diola ethnic group, have gone through social prejusdices that, in the name of male supremacy, have been deprived of any right of proprietary on land. In the above mentioned communities, the mother of the living gush forth of its innards to live on its open handedness.

Furthermore, customs and traditions potray land as the female sex organ that cannot but be under the control of men without whom it cannot be fertile and productive. The land is viewed as a place where conversations and reflections of what life is all about take place. It is the measure of the gap between the past, the present and the future, death and life being both grounded on the sol of the living. Therefore, it stands as a witness of genesis time and fulfils an anthropological role. It embodies, henceforthe, in the eyes of traditions, the wiseness and the vision through which a direction is defined, a philosophy produced and a social structure designed. Moustapha Sourang, the president of the Commission of Land Reform in Senegal, highlights this situation through these terms : ''There are some sociological obstacles that hinder acces and control of land for Senegalese women.'' (Zakaria Sambakhé 2015 : 5).

Land exploitation vulgarizes men's aptitude to affirm their manhood, their capacities to lay down a legitimate domination on women. Indeed, playground of the masculinity force, land is regarded as an expression of a woman's body who, having laid on her back,

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welcome the male performance to procreate. So it is possesed and cannot possess. It goes through, but cannot make undergo. Such a situation has given rise to an African Network for Integrated Development (ANID) to vocalize a defense throug these terms : ''since 1995 we have been voicing arguments to favor land acces and control to women in Dagana''. (Marame Coumba. Seck 2015).

Women are good for working out and dealing with products of the land, but not for becoming land owners. However great they are in number, (they represent 52% of the population), they only posses 4% (National Agency for Statistics and Demography, 2015) of the cultivated land:

> Women are more than 51% of the senegalese population but that control 4% of the landed ressources. Such an enequality in the acces to landed ressources is more visible in rural area where traditions, religions and customs constitute strong barriers for women to have acces to landed ressources (Mame Woury Thioub 2015).

The feudal nature of social organization and the swaging of a surviving economy give ciment to landed orientation that, in fact, on the one hand, deposseses women, and on the other, waves them aside from any possibility to be landowners. Traditions rank them into the world of moving 'objets', for they are to be married, to be devorced, and to become widows. In consequence, to stabilize the issue of land ownership, they must be crossed off from land matters of any kind:

> Marriage deprive very often the young girl from land acces in her own family ; devorce or wedowing period are also source of land depossession in family-in-laws for the young girls whereas, when a boy takes a wife land redistribution is automatical executed in his favor and to the detriment of her sister. (Fatou Diop Fall 2012 : 1)

a) The Case Study on the Sereer Group

In the Sereer ethnic group women are under the permanent veil of silence and submissiveness. The social stratification put foward two social groups : Men who have the obligation to exploit the land and women who have the duty to transform the harvests into consuming products. Women are used as labour force in land exploitation, but are excluded, in the name of traditions, from any possibilities to become land proprietaries. In their diagnostic on the Seerer Siin group society, Tine and Sy state the following : '' women cultivate about 70% (National Agency for statistics and Demography, 2013) to subsistence crops but are also responsible for the whole food chain from production to consomption, including transformation''. (Tine & Sy 2015: 208).

In the Sereer society, a married women is doomed to join his husband's fatherly lineage and house as an epouse. So she leaves her dwelling house as a daughter and a sister and offloads in her husband place as a wife. She is then regarded, in her family-in-law, as *OTew/Yaaye* (a servent and a mother) and *Ombiye Wala o Thiguène* (a daughter or a sister) in her family of origin. This double status of a servent without rights and a daughter ''given'' to another person as a wife, weakens her position as a heir apparent. In her virilocal house, she is allowed to exploit just small pieces of land for market vegetables, or give a leg up in land farming, but she is not and cannot be allowed to become a land owner. Rochegude pinpoints:

> Daughter and sister in her own lineage, she is wife and mother in her husband's. Without ceasing to belong to his lineage as a sister she enters her husband's as a housewife. This double qualification is a motive that prevents her from being in a position of a landed heir. This situation is more due to the exogamic rule that demands the transmission of land to men than to her incapacity related to her sex. (Verdier Rochegude 1986 :13).

Men are then, thanks to customs and traditions, the priviledged ones who control and exploit land in both fatherly and motherly lineages. And Fatou Sow furthers the verso side of Verdier's point through this piece of information : '' contrary to what affirms Verdier, it is rightly the belonging to the female sex that impedes and alienates women from land control and land inheritance''. (Fatou Sow 2004 : 254)

Among the Sereer the landed anthropology establishes a socio-spatial system that requires an adequate diplomatic management that excludes any form of passion and unfaireness. Different forms of land ownership are then put in execution among Sereer Siin. *O doxo niaye*, *O foxos*, *Bax*. Each of these forms acquires and affects plots acording to customs and traditional laws. Brigitte Guigou et *al* explain:

- The right of Fire, *O niaye* which is the most ancient one help to manage land acquisition and tranfer in the uterine lineage.
- The right of Hoof , *O foxos*, is generally granted by political local power to foreigners the *ceedo* and the kingdoms collaborators.
- The right of Ax, *Bax* which is related to forest clearing, is handed down into and by the paternal lineage. (Brigitte Guigou 1999 :191)

These rights that stand as laws are articulated through alegorical symbols of force and violence.

Fire is regarded as a symbol of destruction that necessitates dexterity, sleight of hand, alertness and watchfulness. Fire destroys. It cannot then be left into female hands that are considered by men to be *par exellence* hands of passion and thoughtlessness. Its maneuverability goes, therefore, beyond female adroitness.

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Hoof flashes out the image of the horse which, to a certain extent, is the animal of war, competition and a drudge that assists man in all his harsh tasks. It implicates force of conquest in time and space. Such a 'suit of armour', according to customary rules, is not to be abandonned to the hands of weekness and febris.

Ax sprouts the face of brutality and strong envy to overcome, and overpower. And according to the Sereer traditions, its existence must be ignored by the 'sex of ficklessnes'.

Symbols through which is done the controle of landed management, in their nature and social meanings, exclude women from plots possesion and land acquisition. Her status grounded on weekness and lack of control, condemned her to make do with menial and housewife works. They are, in so being, block at the doorsteps of entrepreunership and therefore at the threshold of financial emancipation. Submissive they are, dog eared remains their fate in the Sereer male-dominated society.

Indeed, the sacredness of the land is warmly linked to the people settlement. Each land is said to have a spirit as a first-hand owner. When a family settles in an area by vertue of the law of **Ax** or **Hoe**, they are expected to sign an alliance as a symbol of covenant and commitment with the spirit of the occupied land. The goddess remains then the first-hand owner and the the occupier becomes the second-hand proprietary who has the obligation to honor the goddess' spirit through ceremonial acts that find basis on customs and traditions. Then emerges a protective body suit of unallowable measures of does and don'ts. In the prohibitive points appears the one that forbides women to be first-hand owner of plots of land. Their place is at home, hence the domesticity of their social status.

Men are then priviledged and women inroaded in their Human Rights and weakened into a social vulnerability. They are therefore flabbergasted in their lonely world of gender discrimination and exclusion, becoming recipients of the breadwinner's services who controls land and landed ressources. The opportunities they have to toil on their husband's, father's or brother's lands do not guanrantee them the right of ownership. Their beings are more an expression of ''maternalization (and sexualization)'' (Silvia Tamale 1994 : 23) than the presence of human beings who should claim for joint land ownership. They evolve in a top-down society that gives no margin to the female sex who, in fact, staggers under the backbreaking workloads she is condemned to deal with. By so doing, the Sereer woman works double-shifs inside the house on domestic and menial works, and ouside the house on field tasks. (Tamale 1994 : 25). Such a paternalist and inhibitive society brings Salvia Tamal to tell apart male and female status quo in Africa in these terms: Women are property of men, and since property is the mark of collective relation, then there cannot have been a time when women were not subordinate to men'' (Tamale 1994 : 185)

b) A Case Study on Peulh

In the North region of Senegal, the monopolization and single land ownership have widely moved women away from opportunities of land property. Among the Peulh, the situation of women is not much different from that of the Sereer. Their patriachal society stands as a gloomy curtail between men and women. It agonizes women and organizes men into a commode framework that gives them margin to maintain their viewpoint on traditions, browsing away any idea of women empowerment. Such a skittish egocentrism pulls efficiently up female advancement in social and economic fields. Women then fall down below the surface and stretch empty hands that customs and traditions ruch to fill with victuals of silence and lullaby. Male power is the center of authority that reigns on land ownership in a male-dominating society which reveals itself to be ruinous for women's existence. This mystification of male domination tends to convince that the social structure on which finds ground stratification and property-ownership distribution is the most apt and most suitable to promote development and living standards improvement. Thierry Michalon confirms this idea in the following : ''tradtional societies' structures are enough perennial and find basis on a strong coherence of familial activities (agriculture, commerce, handworking, etc) and social values''. (Thierry Michalon 1984 : 86)

Similarly to the Sereer community, the Peulh group in Senegal is organized through customary laws that define land ownership through tellurian laws like that of **Ax** and **Hoe**. In their society, the law of **Ax** or that of the first reclaimer establishes a power of control on occupied lands which is conserved as a property to be handed down to male lineages. Furthermore, with the law of **Hoe** the land is by farmers and for farmers. And given that Halpular women in Senegal are excluded from land acquisition, even if they are associated in faming activities, they cannot, by any means, be or become landowners.

Vehiculed as a socio-cultural meaning that sounds to be the helen of an endegenous vision on gender relations, the Halpular's traditions shape social status for men and women, condemning the latter in a position of biological machine. At the image of the land, women flourish to produce nourrishing fruits to their owners. Fatou Sow highlights : ''People assimilate the fostering of the mother to that of the land'' (Fatou Sow 2004 : 253). Such a burlesque image puts in a showcase the cultural load that hinders women's agrarian capacities.

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Men are actors of history and producers of richness. As for women, they display their efficiency in what they are believed to be good for : sameness with the world of smoothness and delicacy. In the same line of thought, an ecofeminist movement writes up to amend female status in traditional society:

> The masculine relational sphere of public life, production, social and cultural life and rational justice is thus contrasted with the feminine sphere of private, domestic and reproductive life. (ValPlumwood 1992 : 8)

Ducts of social ascension shuff of for women who are obliged to support, on their shoulders, the load of the male gentry that pretend to work for an improvement of a communal destiny. At the image of the sereer community, in the group of Peulh the moral familial authority is embodied by the *Mawdo gallé* who have a yes and-no power on the family welfare. Women fall in the line marked out by men who in fact enslave the female gentry in an endless landless actress' position. The following data talk in the saddle:

Table 1: Land ownership and manner of acquisition (Peuhl)

Marital Status	Inheritance Acwuisition	RC Deliberation	Gifts
Married Women	0	3	0
Divorced Women	0	0	0
Widowed Women	0	1	0
Total	0	4	0

Source : Ngoné Diop Tine & Mouhamadou Sy in Women and Land in Africa
RC : Rural Council

In the North and the West-center areas customs know no law. Women are disbanded into male authority on landed management. They participate in the productive process, but are excuded from the power of property. Their fate is all the more isolated as men reinforce the mercantil landed economy ; giving much attention to commercial farming to the detriment of subsistence crops. Fatou Sow illustrate : ''Men are the managers *par excellence* of the land'' (Sow 2004 : 254). As a consequence, the food crops are widely derelict in favor of the products of annuity. Famine, therefore, gets close and breaks through the ambition of food self sufficiency. Alimentary insecurity unlatches itself in quite the whole national territory, thretening the social fabric and comunities's stability. The following data board is illustrative:

Table 2

Erea	Food Insecurity
Niayes	**27,08**
Bassin arrachidier	47,98
Fleuve	30,32
Casamance	51,89
Sénégal oriental	39,58
Zone Sylvo-pastorale	12,50
Dakar	3,46
Other urban ereas	9,01
Sénégal	20,87

Source : From ESAM-I calculations

Food insequrity in Senegal, specially in the Nothern area (Peulh's area), and the central region, is much linked to women exclusion from land contol and exploitation. The missing of the female input in food and cash crops puts women out of the scale of entrepreneurship, and therefore condemns the female social class, in the Peulh community, to go through poverty in high-numbers.

c) A Case Study on Diola

In the southern part of Senegal, casamance area, the Diola women enjoy a more signifant social margin. Being organized into a horizontal line, the Diola society bestows rights to women who transcend customary barriers and find full expression on land ownership. In that feudal society, traditions make no bones about the spirit of ownership and women empowerment. However, it is important to underline that even if Diola women have access to land, the superficies they are granted to exploite are, as the rule, shrunken at a point they cannot produce enough to nourish themeselves and commercialize. They inhance their exploitation just to cover their day-in-day out food uptake. So if traditions have opened them the door of land property, they have not succeeded in freeing themeselves from their traditional mind-shape. Their elementary working tools and smallness of their cultivated plots make null and void any possibility of entrepreneurship. They exploit land, but they remain at the doorsteps of agrarian ventures. As a consequence, at the image of what happens in the other regions in Senegal, food insecurity emerges and settles as mushrooms that taint life in that zone which, in bygone days, was to be viewed as a potential rice granary. The stifling of women in land exploitation and ownership has deepened the thorny question of food insecurity in Senegal, indeed. To men, belongs the land. To men, amounts power. And inspite of that superpower status, Senegal is still confronted with the headstrong problem of nutrition insecurity. The following data are much telling:

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Table 3: Food insecurity according to the sex of heads of families

Head of Family	Incidence
Male	22,82
Female	13,91
National	20,87

Source : From ESAM-I calculations

In the Diola society, men are born equal in Rights, but not imperatively in facts. Despite of its horizontal organization, social determinisms grounded on sex and physical value 'classify' and divvy up men from women. The latter, who do their darnedest to build a strong image of womanhood are, far and wide, enclosed in insignificant paddy fields superficies. This situation of the fair sex that rules great in this region of Senegal, doesn't give a fighting chance to gender development agents, who seemingly, have fallen down the way side of combat for female headship in less Developed countries like Senegal.

III. Flings of Land- Reforms

In 17th of june 1964 a national law was voted in to organize the matter of land issue in Senegal. Decades after its promulgation, the 1964 law melted into the deciduous nature of the negro-african philosophy in which theories speak louder than acts. Forthwith voted in, right away ranked into the cupboard of *oubliettes*, pushing the renowed Professor Kanté to interrogate political decision-makers in the following : ''If the 1964 law does not come to force, is it because it is not enough young and enough modern to raise enthusiasm or it is because it is not enough old and enough wise to be honored and venerated'' (Babacar Kanté 1994 : 7). Such a situation characterized by a strong juridical sleepness, will be hustled into awakeness in 2012 with the second democratic alternation in Senegal. A new regim settled down to put on focus a new vision on land policy. The reorganization of land management was then put on the shoulders of a National Commission for Land Reforms, which was created by the decree n° 2012-1320 (Official Journal, 16 March 2012). That commission was assigned the errand to ''analyse legislative texts, identify the institutional duresses for an optimal management of land issues, to propose adequate measures that take into account modern economic realities to help Senegal to become an emerging power that will be able to satisfy the vital needs of her population'' (Ibrahima Ka 2015 : 7).

The Commission pursuits a waybill that enhances justice and good governance on public affairs. It helps to sort out land conflicts and right the wrong in land retribution. In the same guidance, Michel Pescay informs as follows : ''the customary law legitimized by the collective conscience is being fought out by the state to establish a crossbred law'' (Michel Pescay 1998, 131-132.) that improves and furthers traditional values criteria into a gender-balanced orientation.

However, it is important to underscore that the elan of land reorganization drops out in the tricky smash between the modern policy and the archaic vision on land management. The rural population who find it benefic to reserve land control to men, in their male dominating position, brush aside any projet aiming at balancing male and female opportunity and power to exploit and possess land. The government proposal are ignored and specifically rejected in rural areas. The policephalic direction pointed by the decision-makers is regarded as a vision that put traditions into question. What motivates Carbonnier to speak his mind in these terms : ''you have to legiferate in trembling'' (Carbonnier quoted by Ibrahima Ka 2015 : 10). This legiferation is all the more important as in '' 2014 80 % of women in Senegal do not have access to land exploitation'' (Sambakhé 2015 : 6)

The commendable work of the National Commission and the significant other measures put forward in the field of land preocupation have come out with some non-negligent results. However, that close watch on the isue doesn't keep the reformists's stay out of troubles related to tellurian twinge. Zakaria Sambakhé furthers the point : ''land governance has brought positive changes in Senegal, nevertherless, it is undeniable to state that the access of land for women and young people remain problematical'' (Sambakhé 2015 : 6). To overturn the reek, some Senegalese thinkers around the Mouvement Tellurian Rights and Evennes of Opportunity fiercely mobilize themeselves against the socio-cultural attrative forces that hinder women advancement. They bolster women's applications for land possession in the top qualified authorities. Besides, given that women are not well represented in the distribute administrative local powers, they, as well, condemn egotist attitude of male decision-makers, who are overly preocupied with thmeselves and their needs only. Ndeye Coumba Diouf highlights: ''customary beliefs even perpetuate themeselves in municipal of local authorities brushing off women interess'' (Ndeye Coumba Diouf 2015 : 4).

Land being a rare and non-renewable ressource, its access is becoming more and more problematical, specifically in African countries in which the rate grouth follows an ascending curl. In Senegal, the National Council of Concertation and Cooporation of Rural Population (NCCRP) develops a programme of national rounds to sensitize farmers' co-operative organizations on the necessity to abide by the 2012 land law, integrating women in landed owenership for successful achievements of Milenieum Objectives in the domain of food security. Their standpoint is backed up by the Kilimandjaro Initiative which places women at the center of all landed policies in Senegal. According to its

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initiators, through the voice of Ndiouk Lindor Mbaye the National Statistics reveals that in 2015 52% of the national population are women and 90% of domestic and social charges are supported by women. (…). Inspiste of this fact, they are still deprived of any rights to possess land and have a full right of exploitation and owenership'' (Ndiouk Lindor Mbaye 2015 :2)

In one of the incidences of women-led land reforms struggle, one of the most famous exemplified women, Marième Sow, moreover director of the NGO ENDA Pronat (Dakar), lauched in 2015 the famous and sticking slogan : ''All lands to all women''. This hearted gathering cry has not echoed, so far, in the deaf ears of the gatekeepers of traditions. Hence the necessity to deepen the intellectual debate and the juridical reflexion to come out with stronger and more efficient solutions.

IV. Resolving Land-Related Tensions

In many african countries agriculture is said to be the engine of the development process. It elevates land to the file of the mother of solutions to the evil wrongs that turn down urban and rural communities. So land is the backbone of the different steps of social and economic prosperity. However, women in Africa in general and in Senegal in particular sob out their difficulties to be part and parcel in the land exploitation and ownership. To put down such a situation, it appears necessary to think out some key measures that will open a new page in a new book for new women rights in the field of agriculture.

Every law has its meanings inside the intervals of expectations of citizens. The constitutional law that opens the world of possibilities and equality for men and women, in couple with the presidential decrees and definite supression of traditional law, may lead to a rising up of barricaded groups that will reject, in an unembellished manner, any modern law that will aim at organizing land management.

To avoid a bipolarization of the agrarian actors, it proves much important to work in a harmonous marriage between traditions and modernity. To achieve such an objective, it will be necessary to define a participative method that will combine actions of the different camps in order to produce a result stronger than the juridical initiatives of political powers. For the sake of complementary and synergy, the egotist side of the customs (men only), has to be amended so as to welcome women in its periphery. All the same, the authoritative side of the modern law (customs at the foot), has to be improved into an embrassement with the roots of traditional values. In so doing, contradiction will be turned into a body of law, making whole. Futhermore, the social rules that are shaped out to manage land property should be analysed and modernized to lift away constraints that unbalanced opportunities and right-owenerships between men and women. The latter should be protected juridically in their marital engagement by laws that guarantee their fruition of land possession inside and outside marital links.

In A world where complex phenomena impact on economic realities, to deal with landed question required a global approach that will center the point on women's issues in nation's preocupations. In Senegal, the fair attribution of land must bear political, social and economic strenches. Indeed, the notion of parity in professional fields and sphere of powers should be full applied ; what can free the female gentry and allows them to climb the stairs that lead to the circlet of the selected few of decision-makers. The government should bear the top hat of power, to play the lightening conductor's role, in proctecting undefenseless social groups. Its leardership and agenda in public policies should result to the suppression of leonine land shares and controls in rural Senegalese traditional societies.

A principal of equality and equity between male and female sexes must be harmonized with customs realities, strongly constitutionalized and be fully applied in all regions and among all ethnic groups. A new constitutionalization of sexospecifities would, as well, be a life buoy for women emancipation, indeed. To make this emancipation sustainable, women must organize themeselves into Associations of Economical Interests, strong and inclusive enough to buy or to lease lands for exploitation. In so doing, they will head foward agribusiness and develop industrial fabrics. What will give them opportunities to get micro-credits to further the funding of their communal projets. Such collective businesses will lay ground women's independence and therefore establish equality and jusce for the sake of women dignity. Such a standpoint must be fortified by a creation and enforcement of a female parliamentary network that will define and defend women empowerment projet.

Civil societies and NGO should play a hiphen role between the government and the populations. That short line role may enable to facilitate experimentation of new laws and shed light on the entanglement between the local and the global, the political and the economic. Female forums and women's networks must be initiated and animated through the guide line and the leg up of civil societies that should organize and supervise women efforts in their field of emancipation. Besides, university researchers should better hit the nail on the matter to give women intellectual means and capacities to elaborate law advocacy in places like the Social and Economic Council, the High Council of Local Powers, The Commission of Territories Management, etc.

For a better access to land information, network of solidarity and sensitization are to be defined out to reinforce women's capacities to analyse and understand laws and legislation related to land issues and female empowerment. It is in this field that the literacy in local

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language and the vocational training of women appear as unaliable rights that are compulsory for habilitation of the female sex, who, furthermore, has to move from a yes-woman to a yes and no-woman decision-maker. Indeed, to stop any form of marginalization women are victim of, they must be educated and sensitized about their rights on land matters. The female gentry and educated few women, who are in the ringside seats of political and economic fields, must stand off the back foot to speak in the name of odds and sods that are ridden roughshod over by the too labour intensive rough-and-tumble activities.

Marabouts and cheftency, who control social, religious and traditional powers, must be invited and welcome in the decision process to modernize customary laws. They are hierach that benefit from people adherence, respect and consideration. Their recommandations are honorablly respected in every one centimer in their length and width. So, to get them give adhrerence to women's access to land, means to take advantage of a determing boost to purpose achievements.

Communication is uphill and downstream of any mainstream projet. To take the lead in female empowerment process, women must be in very close cooperation with media to ease gender promotion. The exemplified work that has been done by FEM FM, a radio channel which belongs to the famous female singer, Coumba Gawlo Seck, is a major step toward goals achievements. Indeed, senegalese women had been deprived of the right of mind-vocing for so long. Tradition stood as gags that muzzled female voices. ''the hen has no right to cackle and pluck in the cock's house'' ; ''public talk are by men and for men'' ; ''female loin cloth is just good for the marriage bed'' are some sayings that put on surface the masculine and repressive character of traditions towards women. Today, with the development of media (radio and Tv channels, internet and social networks), roles are being overturned and the bridle of silence brushed away to give women the opportunity to get educated so as to enclose hands in the combat against poverty.

V. Conclusion

Bygonedays values and achievement cannot, by no means, be the references for solutions. Today, it is clearly noticed that a fossilised society is a society condemned to degererate. Senegal is experiencing a radical change as witnessed by the manifold of ideas scattered around it, and the richness of its human ressources which constitute its greatest asset in the struggle against poverty and for the institution of a lasting development.[i] (The National Action Plan for Senegalese Women 1997 2000).

This assertion, full of insightfulness highlights enough the weightiness of time being in the combat against female discrimination. An ojective self examination of our cultural values and religious stands and belongings is beyond necessity. Social justice and economic progress ring the bells of modernity to appeal to women's emmancipation and empowerment throughout the world.

It is hightime that top political decision-makers, hand in hand, with local power authorities, NGOs, Civil societies, organizations of Human Rights defenses, Intellectuals, in a one and all position, stood up to vocalize and defend women's interests. Enough means are to be dedicated to the education and the training of women to lift, once for all, the sharp reefs that impede the fair sex to head along the road of progress and economic independense.

Holders of traditions and political powers are, in an action-oriented debate, to talk to each other into a collective solution that will keep communities rooted in their customs, but open to the new order of modernity and gender fairness. A common agenda has to be defined to winkle the hen out of the barnyard and shape an adequate and deserved seat for her on reception desk.

In a worldwide economic context dominated by the jungle law, the contribution of women in the developing process in African countries like Senegal should be furthered and valorized. And for that, we voice our mind through a deep and heatedly cry : one woman, one piece of land. They are and must remain citizens through and through and not just partially as they are oriented to be in some ethnic groups in Senegal.

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