

NOTE: This bibliography appears as it was published in the Fall 1995 issue of the WIF Newsletter. However, we have since realized that Marie NDiaye is a French writer and should not therefore have been included in this listing. That realization has been indicated by a lining through the entries, which remain legible.
Annabelle Rea, March 2012

SENEGALESE WOMEN WRITERS

A COLLABORATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following bibliography comes out of the three-week seminar on Senegalese culture, sponsored by the Services Culturels of the French Embassy in the U.S., held in July, 1994, at the Université Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar. Four of the participants: Deirdre Bucher Heistad of the University of Illinois/Urbana (DBH), Thérèse O'Connell of Jacksonville University (TOC), Annabelle Rea of Occidental College (AMR), and Judy Schaneman of Earlham College (JS) share with you their appreciations of the works read. In addition, although not a seminar participant, Frances Novack of Ursinus College (FN), who taught as a Fulbright scholar at the Université de Saint Louis in the north of Senegal in the Spring of 1994, offered her expertise to the bibliographic team. We wish to thank Professor Adama Dieye Sow of the Département de Lettres Modernes of Cheikh Anta Diop for reviewing our list of works for accuracy before the annotations were begun. And, finally, thanks to Nicole Meyer at the Women's Studies Research Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison (EMN) for her last-minute help with one elusive item.

The list of primary works is as complete as we have been able to make it. We include some items without annotation, either because no one volunteered to review them or because we had no luck in obtaining the texts (or because one of our bibliographers pulled out at the last minute!). According to our various searches, only five or six titles of our list are not available in North American libraries, but we had considerable difficulty purchasing some of these works, even within Senegal. The *WIF Newsletter* would be pleased to publish an update if someone can help complete any of the missing items. And we would very much like to see this work expanded to other Francophone African countries in a future issue. Thérèse O'Connell of Jacksonville University (toconne@junix.ju.edu) is planning to work on Cameroon and would like to hear from other volunteers interested in pursuing the African project.

One practical recommendation: even though a number of these works contain lexical notes, we have found extremely useful the *Lexique du français du Sénégal* edited by Jacques Blondé, Pierre Dumont and Dominique Gontier (Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines/EDICEF, 1979). And a warning: there doesn't appear to be any rule for the alphabetization of names for those who use two family names. If you don't find an author, do keep looking for her.

Senegalese women have created a rich literature over the past twenty years (only "the past twenty years," however, if one doesn't begin with the eighteenth-century Senegalese slave, Phillis Wheatley, known as an American poet!). It is our hope that our collaborative effort will encourage more of you to read and teach texts from this fascinating culture. (AMR)

Senegalese Women Writers

Abdoulaye, Maimouna (1949 -) [Fatou Binetou Kane Fall]. *Un Cri du coeur*. Dakar-Yoff: F.B. Kane-Fall, 1990.

Although the author claims that this novel is not autobiographical, she acknowledges that it is a "conciliation du réel et de l'imaginaire." The news that her daughter suffers from a heart condition leads the narrator to reflect on the meaning of life. As she experiences difficult times, she learns how to make the distinction between self-serving people and those who practice the values they profess. This distinction is symbolized by a comparison between her first husband who, in spite of being a religious leader, lacked spirituality and was a bad husband and father, and her second husband, a true believer, who is responsible, considerate and loving. Although not easily available, this book, despite a sometimes weak plot, constitutes interesting reading in that the narrator is the embodiment of a virtuous woman who tries to reconcile modern life with the traditions of Islam, which she accepts without question. (TOC)

Bâ, Mariama (1929-1981). *Une si longue lettre*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1979. *So Long a Letter*. Trans. Modupé Bodé-Thomas. London: Heinemann, 1982.

Bâ's first novel has become a well-loved classic for many, both in Africa and elsewhere. It remains controversial, however, for its discussion of male-female relationships in particular and Senegalese traditions in general. Unlike many other texts in this bibliography, *Une si longue lettre* must also be analyzed for the beauty of its lyrical style and its formal innovations. Within the time frame of the widows' seclusion of four months and ten days imposed by Islamic law (to ascertain that they aren't pregnant before they remarry), the protagonist communicates by letter, the narrative form closest to the oral, with her oldest friend. The letter directly implicates the reader through the informal address of the "tu" in this ode to friendship. Bâ

has examined a generation of "pioneers," those women who came to adulthood with Senegal's independence, and their personal and professional "recherche d'une voie [voix]," with a sensitivity that will long continue to touch readers. (AMR)

—. *Un Chant écarlate*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1981. *Scarlet Song*. Trans. Dorothy S. Blair. Harlow, Gt. Brit.: Longman, 1986.

Marriage is again the central issue in Bâ's second, and final, novel. This time she explores a biracial, bicultural union within a context of racism, both African and European, and post-colonial xenophobia. She examines the adjustment difficulties inherent in the institution of marriage as well as the cultural misunderstandings exacerbated by the husband's inflexibility and lack of support during his wife's adaptation to conjugal life in Senegal. Bâ also explores the Senegalese mother-in-law's disappointed ambition, her feeling of having been deprived of her "rights" by her son's choice of a French wife, and her encouragement of his secret second marriage so she may attain her deserved "glory" through a traditional daughter-in-law. Even though it fails to attain the perfection of its predecessor, the novel nonetheless provides an important examination of Senegalese culture. (AMR)

Bâ. Oumar. "Mon Afrique," "Courage," "Sécheresse," *Présence Africaine* 57 (1966): 128-29. "Drought," *Penguin Book of Women Poets*. New York: Penguin, 1978.

Benga, Sokhna (1967 -). *Le Dard du secret*. Dakar: Khoudia, 1990.

Bugul, Ken (1948 -) [Mariétou M'Baye] *Le Baobab fou*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1984. *The Abandoned Baobab: The Autobiography of a Senegalese Woman*. Trans. Marjolign de Jager. New York: Lawrence Hill Books, 1991.

A poignant warning against the assimilation of false values, this autobiographical novel poses the problem of multicultural identity. Under the pseudonym Ken Bugul (a pejorative Wolof expression meaning "the person no one wants"), the narrator depicts her "descente aux enfers" when she goes to Brussels to study. The alienation that she experienced as a child after having been abandoned by her mother becomes the symbol of the alienation of Africa from its traditional values. Ken becomes estranged from her roots and takes refuge in Occidentalization. Her stay in Belgium, which represented a "terre promise," leads her to drugs, alcohol, and prostitution. She finally finds some kind of peace when she goes back to Africa. As the first African novel to break sexual taboos, it may not be appropriate for the classroom but should be of

great interest to anyone studying African women's history. (TOC)

—. *Cendres et braises*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994. This second autobiographical text by the lyrical Ken Bugul takes her from a passionate and violent five-year affair with her married white French lover Y., to self-acceptance and appreciation of the flavors of her life. While very much a personal story, it still provides a social commentary on woman's role, on differing perceptions of polygamy, on the importance of the mother-daughter bond, and on the postcolonial difficulties of finding one's identity. The book would also provide ample material for class discussion on the role of love (and a man) in a woman's life as well as how cultural differences affect each person's choices. The text's resolution — she happily becomes one of the Marabout's several wives — is thought-provoking. The book pairs well pedagogically with its predecessor, *Le Baobab fou*, and would blend easily into a course on Francophone literature or culture, women's studies or autobiography. But the former treats many additional themes relevant to students' lives and illustrates more fully the effects of colonization on the colonized. (EMN) (For further details, see Nicole Meyer's forthcoming review: *World Literature Today* 70.1 [Winter 1996].)

Cissokho, Aïssatou. *Dakar: La Touriste autochtone*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1986.

Diakhaté, Ndeye Coumba. *Filles du soleil*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1979.

Diallo, Nafissatou Niang (1941-1982). *De Tilène au Plateau: Une Enfance dakaroise*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1975. *A Dakar Childhood*. Trans. Dorothy S. Blair. Harlow, Gt. Brit.: Longman, 1982.

In this sentimental retelling of her life, Diallo focuses on the importance of family, recalling with nostalgia the father and grandmother who shaped her childhood and the values of solidarity, respect and piety which they incarnated. Spanning a period from the author's birth in 1941 until her departure for France with her husband in 1967, the text centers on everyday life in a traditional Islamic household, while at the same time revealing the spirited, often mischievous, child whom Diallo once was. A thoroughly enjoyable text to read in its entirety, this autobiography also contains numerous vignettes which could be excerpted to provide interesting reading passages on a variety of topics. (JS)

—. *Le Fort maudit*. Paris: Hatier, 1980.

Set in the nineteenth century, Diallo's novel tells the story of Thiane, favorite daughter of Ibra Deguène Fall, grandson of the founder of Keur

Fallène, a village in Cayor. The first section highlights scenes of daily life, often involving rivalries between her father's co-wives. Submission to patriarchal authority maintains an atmosphere of calm which is shattered in the second section when an invading army from neighboring Baol destroys the village. After witnessing the rape of her mother and the murder of many family members, Thiane, herself a prisoner, determines to avenge their deaths. (JS)

—. *Awa la petite marchande*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines/EDICEF, 1981.

Written as part of a collection which targets young readers (eleven years and older), this short novel recounts the childhood of Awa, a young Senegalese girl from Rufisque. Because her father refused the fisherman's life traditional in his family, Awa experiences the alienation of an outcast at the fishmarket, at school and even in the family compound. Given its didactic nature and the age of its proposed audience, this text is probably of limited value for the language classroom although several chapters offer useful insights into the caste system and passages describing the fish market or Muslim ceremonies provide informative and easily accessible reading. (JS)

—. *La Princesse de Tiali*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1987. *Fary, Princess of Tiali*. Trans. Ann Woolcombe. Washington, DC: Three Continents, 1987.

Born into the griot caste, Fary becomes the fourth wife of Bocar, the Prince of Tiali, in defiance of customs forbidding such misalliances. Although the misshapen grotesque features of Fary's husband repulse her, she accepts the marriage, using her new-found power as princess to right injustices done to her caste and particularly, to overturn the practice of burying griots in the trunks of baobabs in violation of Islamic precepts. Interwoven throughout the story of segregation and inequality of a caste, observations of women's lives suggest another group which suffers unequal treatment in a patriarchal and hierarchical society. (JS)

Diam, Aïssatou. *Méllissa mon amour*. Dakar: Africa Édition, 1991.

Diouri, Aïcha. *La Mauvaise passe*. Dakar: Khoudia, 1990.

Dogbe, Anne. *Afi à la campagne*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1976.

Fall, Khadi. (1948 -) *Mademba*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1989.

Awaiting an operation which may permanently rob him of his voice, Mademba records the events of his life on cassettes, starting with his father's deci-

sion to place him, at the age of five, as a talibé (or disciple) under the tutelage of the family's marabout. The text raises questions about the practice of entrusting young boys to Koranic schools where they are often neglected and mistreated. When Mademba escapes to the streets of Dakar, both the powerlessness and the resourcefulness of the child mirror that of the women who involve themselves in his life so that their stories become intertwined with his. (JS)

—. *Senteurs d'hivernage*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993.

A fifty-five-year-old lawyer, Anita Tembi Mkwanzazi, remembers her childhood in South Africa and the circumstances which brought her to Dakar. Having escaped apartheid in her native country, she remains an outsider in Senegalese society where her foreign birth makes her an unacceptable first wife for the man she loves. The novel explores the consequences of polygamous marriages for women and the tensions they experience as they confront — and, at times, defy — traditional expectations and values in a rapidly evolving society. (JS)

Fall, Kiné Kirama. *Chants de la rivière fraîche: poèmes*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1975.

The poet, writing under the pseudonym of Kiné Kirama Fall, was born in Rufisque, a town whose name derives from the Portuguese "rio fresco" or "rivière fraîche," thus explaining the title. In his preface, Léopold Senghor suggests that, because Fall left school at age fourteen, she was little influenced by European literature or culture and that she therefore presents an authentically Senegalese voice as she writes about nature, God and human experience. As Senghor remarks, no matter what theme she treats, "Tout est amour dans ces poèmes, tout, objet d'amour." (JS)

—. *Les Elans de grâce*. Yaoundé: Clé, 1979.

In this collection of lyric — and often mystical — poetry, love of nature and of humanity ultimately lead to communion with God. (JS)

Ka, Aminata Maïga (1940 -). *La Voie du salut, suivi de Le Miroir de la vie*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1985.

These two short texts are rich in details on the difficult lives of women. Both contain suicides, for example. The plots focus on marriage — polygamy, marriage allowing social and material promotion, the dangers of misalliance, male freedom/women's housebound state, the need to produce children. Ka also analyzes various African traditions, including ceremonies and excessive gift-giving. A former midwife and a doctor criticize organized medicine and the tradition of female cir-

cumcision. A member of a political opposition party points out socio-economic inequities and the need to change mentalities in order to change society. Strongly recommended, despite certain weaknesses (in character development, for example), if not to teach, at least as excellent background reading. (AMR)

— . *En Votre nom et au mien*. Abidjan: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1989.

Centered around the question of marriage and its effect on both extended families, the text continues and expands many of the ideas of the two earlier narratives. It illustrates the pressures on men as well as women to marry, and to re-marry after the shame of divorce. The primary theme, "Qu'il est difficile d'être Africain, car il faut savoir jongler entre la tradition et la modernité," is further underscored by a sub-plot concerning drug use. (AMR)

Mandeleau, Tita. (1937 -) [Danièle Saint-Prix] (Sénégal/Martinique) *Signare Anna ou le voyage aux escales*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1991.

The life and times of a Signare, those noblewomen of Saint-Louis who married Europeans, at the time of the English invasion of French-run West Africa in the eighteenth century. Because the range of characters includes people from various classes and nationalities, we get a broad panorama of the society of the time. The style is easily accessible and the characters often compelling, so the book lends itself to undergraduate assignments. (FN)

Mbacke, Mame Seck. *Le Froid et le piment*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1983.

Mbaye, Annette d'Erneville (1926 -). *Poèmes africains*. Dakar: Centre d'Art National Français, 1965.

— . *Kaddu*. Dakar: A. Diop, 1966.

— . *Chansons pour Laïty*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1976.

This beautiful little book of nursery rhymes showing Africa as "le cœur du monde" might be used with language students. The lovely illustrations, by Cheikh Ndime, and the text present a tender side of Senegalese life: love of family, school, nature and traditions. (AMR)

— . *Le Noël du vieux chasseur*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1983.

— . *La Bague de cuivre et d'argent*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1983.

Mordasini, Diana (Sénégal/Suisse). *Le Botillon perdu*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1990.

Ndiaye, Adja Ndeye Boury. (1936 -) *Collier de cheville*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1984.

The story of Tante Lika exposes the reader to numerous Senegalese and West African traditions. The author details many aspects of daily life, including the art of food preparation, the importance of dress and hair styles for different occasions, and the role of the family in a marriage proposal and ceremony. Lika, Pa Idrissa, Mamadou, Rokhaya, Alphonse, Jean and the others serve as pretexts and create an environment which enables the author to take the reader on a voyage through Senegalese culture. (DBH)

N'Diaye, Catherine. (1952 -) *Gens de sable*. Paris: P.O.L., 1984.

An analysis of various components of Senegalese cultural identity by a well-read and sensitive insider/outsider (insider by her family roots, outsider by her country of residence and her poor command of Wolof). In brief vignettes, the author brushes portraits — such as that of a spiritual guide, or marabout — and describes places — a night club, "le summum de la grégarité vitale" and a place of collective freedom "où tout est permis sous le regard des autres." She also examines, for example, the body, the gaze, and the re-importation of African traditions from North America and the Caribbean. However much one might wonder about the author's ability to analyze something like Wolof rhetoric, this is, nonetheless, an exciting and thought-provoking study. (AMR)

NDiaye, Marie (1967 -) (Sénégal/France). *Quant au riche avenir*. Paris: Minuit, 1985.

A non-African novel written by an African woman. In very classical French (lots of *imparfaits du subjonctif*), this novel is the journal of the coming of age of a young Frenchman. As an orphan raised by his aunt (a situation perhaps symbolic of the author's own alienation from her roots), he reflects on his future and his relationships with other people: his girl-friend, his aunt and his schoolmates. Unable to be close to anyone, he writes his journal in the third person. The analysis of his own feelings and his *états d'âme* sometimes has a Proustian flavor. (TOC)

— . *Comédie classique*. Paris: P.O.L., 1986. Paris: Gallimard, 1988.

This "comédie" defies genre classification. It is made up of one long, rambling sentence, without any dialogue, in a style again reminiscent of Proust. The language is brilliant, the plot (the imminent visit of a cousin, a visit that will end tragically), extremely difficult to follow because of the lack of formal structure. *Un exercice de style*. (TOC)

— . *La Femme changée en bûche*. Paris: Minuit, 1989.

"Le Diable m'avait, autrefois, promis son aide. L'heure venue, j'allai le trouver, ayant puni mon mari d'une terrible façon, et définitivement perdue

~~pour le monde." a modern version of the pact-with-the-devil. A stream-of-consciousness novel where language becomes the plot. The thoughts of the woman who burns her child to punish her husband for his supposed infidelities (but are they perhaps hers?) become more irrational as the story unfolds. In the end, the narrative reaches the point of self-destruction, as chronology, events, and even the roles and the essence of the various characters mix and tangle. In this novel, the author definitely finds her own style. A cleverly brilliant text that should be of more interest for those studying the theory of the novel than for people concerned with African studies. (TOC)~~

—, *En famille*. Paris: Minuit, 1990.

—, *Un Temps de saison*. Paris: Minuit, 1994.

Ndiaye Sow, Fatou. *Takam-Takam*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1981.

—, *Fleurs du Sahel*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1990.

Ndoye Mbengue, Mariama. (1953 -) *Soeurs dans le souvenir*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1984.

—, *De Vous à moi*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1990.

The sixteen texts in this collection reveal the complexity of contemporary Senegalese society with its multiplicity of languages, ethnic groups and cultures. By placing modern and traditional perspectives in juxtaposition with one another, the author questions "notre avancée suicidaire, à pas de géants, vers la Civilisation." In the struggle born of conflicting values in European and African cultures, these texts suggest the importance of being grounded in one's heritage as "le salut des nouvelles générations." Written with grace and humour, several of the shortest texts would be accessible to intermediate students while at the same time providing interesting material for discussion and reflection. (JS)

—, *Sur des chemins pavés*. Abidjan: CEDA, 1993.

When Yaye Gnagna gives birth to twin daughters, fathered by a French soldier whom she is prevented from marrying, they decide that one infant, Awa or Eve Ursule, will go to France with her father while the other, Ada, will remain in Senegal with her mother. Their parallel lives permit a sustained comparison of European and Senegalese culture which focuses on the roles and expectations of women in each society. (JS)

Niane, Anne-Marie (1950 -) (Sénégal/Vietnam) et al. *L'Étrangère et douze autres nouvelles*. Paris: Hatier, 1985.

The foreigner in this short story is a sixty-six-year-

old Vietnamese woman who married a Senegalese serving in the French army during the war in Indochina. After the French defeat at Diên Biên Phu, the narrator, her husband and their eight children leave Saigon for Dakar where she will spend the rest of her life. The text raises questions about the possibility of cultural assimilation, the complicity of colonized people in the French colonial project and the intervention of History in the daily lives of ordinary men and women. (Although the other short stories in this collection lie outside the parameters of this bibliography in that they are by non-Senegalese male and female writers, many treat themes which could lead to interesting class discussion.) (JS)

Sow, Amina Mbaye (1937 -). *Mademoiselle*. Abidjan: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines/EDICEF, 1984.

As a novel for older adolescents, the text is particularly interesting for the message it conveys to young people: women can succeed in their studies, play sports, perform in the theatre. Mentalities can be transformed. Unlike many others, the story takes place in a sleepy small town, not the heroine's native village, nor a major city. The book provides insight into ordinary meals, daily school routine, as well as the challenges of educators. It also contains humorous incidents, a rarity among works in this bibliography. A fascinating example of African heroinism, because the eighteen-year-old protagonist embarking upon a teaching career is presented as a young "Superwoman." (AMR)

Sow Fall, Aminata (1941-). *Le Revenant*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1976.

Senegalese tradition dictates that Bakar Diop, an ordinary civil servant, has certain social and monetary obligations that he must fulfill. Marriage, Death, Baptism, and various other ceremonies demand that money be given and received, regardless of one's income. For Bakar this obligation leads to corruption. He is arrested and sentenced to five years in jail for embezzlement. During his imprisonment, some stand by him, while others, such as his sister and wife, abandon him. Once out of jail, Bakar realizes that his crime will not be forgotten, thus preventing him from leading an honest life. (DBH)

—, *La Grève des Battù ou les Déchets humains*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1979. *The Beggars' Strike, or the Dregs of Society*. Trans. Dorothy S. Blair. London: Longman; Washington, DC: Three Continents, 1981.

Without hesitation, Director of Public Health Mour Ndiaye orders that the streets be cleared of beggars. Fearing for their lives, the beggars organize themselves and decide to strike. Later, when Mour is

instructed by his marabout to make a sacrifice to the striking beggars, he begins to understand the problematic situation he has created. As the lives of Mour Ndiaye and the beggars become interwoven, Sow Fall invites the reader to imagine the possible outcomes. Although the feminine condition is not a central theme in the works of Aminata Sow Fall, here she does approach the question through three female characters: Salla Niang, leader of the strike, Lolli, obedient, submissive victim of polygamy, and, finally, Raabi, a new generation feminist. It is interesting to compare these three women to those found in the work of Mariama Bâ. (DBH)

—. *L'Appel des arènes*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1982.

Nalla, who isn't doing well in school, finds himself trapped between modern and traditional education. When given the choice, he seems to excel in the traditional educational setting. As the book progresses, the symbolic dichotomy between traditional and modern becomes the central theme. All of the primary characters take sides. Nalla's parents have chosen to abandon their community and origins, while Mama Fari, Malaw Lô, André and Niang struggle to keep traditional culture alive. This book could well be considered for an introductory course. (DBH)

—. *L'Ex-père de la nation*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987.

Aminata Sow Fall encourages the reader to look beyond government as a whole in order to witness the trials and tribulations of one politician. Madiama becomes president of an unnamed independent African nation and writes about it in his journal. Through flashbacks, we learn about his past, including his origins, his loves, his career, and, in the end, we understand his fall from power. He has succumbed to his own power and authority. As the situation deteriorates, it quickly becomes too late for him to escape. Madiama begins to falter and then struggles to maintain his dignity, in spite of the turmoil surrounding himself and his family. (DBH)

—. *Le Jjubier du patriarche*. Dakar: Khoudia, 1993.

Family structure and its relationship to the caste system are the focus of this book. The author uses a married couple, Yelli and Tacko, to illustrate the complexities of life in a community-based society. Their story points out the mutations that have occurred in the caste system and the difficulties faced by the characters who must bridge the past and present. The style of writing reflects the oral tradition and includes a number of epic poems which recount the family history. This book should be reserved for more advanced students who have some background in African Studies. (DBH)

Sylla, Khady. *Le Jeu de la mer*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993.

Thiam, Awa. *La Parole aux négresses*. Paris: Denoël/Gonthier, 1978. *Speak Out, Black Sisters: Feminism and Oppression in Black Africa*. Trans. Dorothy S. Blair. London: Pluto, 1986.

A militant presentation whose purpose is to "dénoncer les crimes dont les femmes sont l'objet." Thiam interviews primarily women, but also some men, in both French- and English-speaking African countries, about polygamy, the dowry system, forced marriage, economic dependency, divorce, skin whitening, and, especially, female circumcision. The author/interviewer sees improving women's lot as requiring changes in the structure of society. She envisions these changes as collective and international but, necessarily, not as a simple copy of European feminist proposals. An important book, even if one might suspect Thiam of editing the interviews to support her platform. (AMR)

—. *Continents noirs*. Paris: [Deuxtemps] Tierce, 1987.

This philosophy thesis offers reflections on Blacks, Black women and "Black Africa." Thiam examines many documents, including Greco-Roman literature, French texts from colonial and neo-colonial racist to abolitionist, French feminism, religious texts, works of the *négritude* movement, as well as of Cheikh Anta Diop and Frantz Fanon. Thiam analyzes the universalizing tendency of psychoanalysis and shows how African cultures, with their extended families and arranged marriages, do not fit into Freudian paradigms — she sees Freud as a mutilator of women: "Freud n'était-il pas un 'exciseur'?" Thiam concludes that anti-White racism is an inappropriate response to anti-Black ideology. She proposes instead a broadened international cultural understanding as the only possible solution. Although the book attempts to cover too much and important arguments are underdeveloped, nonetheless Thiam warns of applying one culture's analytical tools to another's issues, gives useful background for the study of African literature and culture, and stimulates further thinking on the questions she raises. (AMR)

Turpin, Marie-Rose. (1957 -) *H.L.M./P*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1982.

Warner Vieyra, Myriam (1939 -) (Sénégal/Guadeloupe). *Le Quimboiseur l'avait dit*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1980. *As the Sorcerer Said*. Trans. Dorothy S. Blair. London: Longman, 1982.

Zétou, raised in Cocotier (Antilles), finds herself in a Paris mental hospital for "maladaptation." Condemned there by her mother, who had long ago abandoned the family to live with the mysterious Roger in Paris, Zétou mixes accounts of her alien-

ation in France with flashbacks to happier times in her native land. She thus reveals the familial and cultural disasters that have brought her to her hospital bed. (FN)

—. *Juletane*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1982. *Juletane*. Trans. Betty Wilson. Oxford: Heinemann, 1987.

The diary of one woman's despair over the limits placed on her as a co-wife to a westernized African, as read by a self-controlled fortyish psychologist hesitant to risk marriage but wanting a child of her own. This journal raises questions about cross-cultural understanding, dreams and madness. (FN)

—. *Femmes échouées*. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1988.

A series of nine *nouvelles*, about the disappointments and hidden strengths in the lives of women from various cultures and social classes. Offers good choices for accessible classroom reading. (FN)

Selected Secondary Sources

Assiba d'Almeida, Irène, *Francophone African Women Writers: Destroying the Emptiness of Silence*. Gainesville: Florida UP, 1994.

The first in-depth study in English devoted to Francophone African women, the book examines novels and autobiographies of nine writers published after 1975. Among them are works of four Senegalese women: *De Tilène au Plateau: Une Enfance dakaroise* by Nafissatou Diallo, *Le Baobab fou* by Ken Bugul, *Un Chant écarlate* by Mariama Bâ, and *L'Ex-père de la nation* by Aminata Sow Fall. In the words of Mariama Bâ, "Books are a weapon, a peaceful weapon perhaps, but they are a weapon." For d'Almeida, while using writing to criticize the patriarchal order, women also use it to preserve positive aspects of tradition. A must for anyone interested in African literature, written from an "insider-outsider" position by a critic born and raised in Africa and now living in the United States. (TOC)

Borgomano, Madeleine. *Voix et visages de femmes dans les livres écrits par des femmes en Afrique francophone*. Abidjan: CEDA, 1989.

Borgomano has authored a very useful survey of African women writers in which Senegalese women play a dominant role. She analyzes what she terms the "surprising number" of autobiographies, which, in their African variant, stress family and communal life rather than individual actions. She examines three categories of the realistic novel, the most characteristic form of the writers: (1) those that present no direct women's voices, no women as major characters, such as Aminata Sow Fall's; (2) others, like Myriam Warner Vieyra's

Juletane, where the masculine point of view is entirely absent; and (3) Mariama Bâ's *Une si longue lettre*, which gives us the most direct access to the female voice via the technique of indirect free discourse. In the final section, Borgomano looks at portraits of women by age. An excellent introduction to the subject. (AMR)

Bruner, Charlotte. *Unwinding Threads: Writing by Women in Africa*. London: Heinemann, 1983.

Chemain-Degrange, Arlette. *Émancipation féminine et roman africain*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1980.

An interesting study of the image of women in Francophone African literature, but the book is seriously outdated because it makes no mention of women writers. According to the author, "Il n'existe pas de femme, à l'heure actuelle, qui ait pensé sa propre condition et donné à sa réflexion la forme d'une fiction romanesque ou poétique." (TOC)

Coquery-Vidrovitch, Catherine. *Les Africaines: Histoire des femmes d'Afrique noire*. Paris: Desjonquières, 1994.

Davies, Carole Boyce and Anne Adams Graves, eds. *Studies of Women in African Literature*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 1986.

Diop, Abdoulaye-Bara. *La Société wolof*. Paris: Karthala, 1981.

The author shows that traditional society had a double hierarchical system: one based on castes, determined by function (blacksmith, griot, etc.) and one based on orders (i.e. political power). With the destruction of traditional monarchical powers by colonialism, a new hierarchy has appeared, based on ideological values, mainly those of religion, as manifested by the influence of the marabouts and religious *confréries*. Although the author focuses on Wolof society, this work allows the reader to understand many facets of African culture in general since Wolof culture has been assimilated by many other ethnic groups. A thorough study that should be read by any serious scholar of African culture. (TOC)

—. *La Famille wolof*. Paris: Karthala, 1985.

The Wolof family is hierarchical while retaining a great sense of the importance of community. The system of filiation and relationship in an extended family is extremely complex and follows very intricate rules. This in-depth study examines in particular the traditions regarding the choice of a spouse, the relationships among the various members of the family, polygamy, and divorce. A very objective study. For anyone wanting to understand the rationale behind traditions that keep recurring in Francophone African novels. (TOC)

Milolo, Kembe. *L'Image de la femme chez les romancières de l'Afrique noire francophone*. Fribourg, Switz.: Éditions Universitaires, 1986.

This dissertation offers essential background reading on Francophone African women writers, especially the Senegalese, who dominate the volume. Milolo situates the women within the history of all African oral and written literature (and she includes several interviews with male and female writers that show, for example, the Cameroonian Mongo Beti as considerably more feminist than Aminata Sow Fall). She does no formal, stylistic analysis, limiting her remarks to thematic issues. Through her years of experience in Africa (she was born and raised in Zaïre), Milolo provides much insight into the process of female socialization through tales about marriage told to adolescent girls. She also applies her expertise to the dowry system, the role of in-laws, and prostitution. (AMR)

Mortimer, Mildred, *Journeys Through the French African Novel*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1990.

Ndiaye, Raphaël. *La Place de la femme dans les rites au Sénégal*. Dakar: Nouvelles Éditions Africaines, 1986.

Based on data gathered in the Archives Culturelles du Sénégal, this study encompasses various ethnic groups, mainly in rural areas. It goes well beyond rites and describes many facets of traditional rural life, following women through the various periods of their lives marked by specific events, as well as the daily tasks that they accomplish. Although this study is non-exhaustive and one wishes at times that it showed more rigor and used a more scientific approach, it is nonetheless a fascinating source of information on traditional life. (TOC)

Ormerod, Beverley and Jean-Marie Volet. *Romancières africaines d'expression française: Le Sud du Sahara*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994.

An interesting survey that gives a short biography of the writers, a list (often annotated) of their works, and not only their novels, despite what the title indicates. Includes answers to interview questions and references to published interviews. An excellent place to begin one's study of these writers. (TOC)

La Femme africaine et malgache: éléments bibliographiques. Paris: Centre de Documentation du Ministère de la Coopération, 1978.

Littérature féminine francophone, numéro spécial de *Présence Francophone*: 36 (1990).

Notre Librairie. Paris: C.L.E.F.

—. "Femmes africaines: Femmes et société." Ed. Annette MBaye d'Erneville, 1981.

—. "La Littérature sénégalaise." 81 (Oct.-Dec. 1985).

Numerous essays on writers and language, orality, the major genres, and literary and publishing culture in Senegal. Includes an article on Mariama Bâ's works and interviews with Aminata Sow Fall and Ken Bugul, in the specific items devoted to women authors. Yet much of the rest of the collection is also of interest for the sense of Senegalese culture and writers' preoccupations that it gives us. (FN)

—. "Aminata Sow Fall." 82.

Nouvelles Ecritures Féminines: "La Parole aux femmes." 117 (1992). "Femmes d'ici et d'ailleurs: le monde postcolonial." 118 (1993).

Essays on history, such themes as the body, time and space, and relations between women and men, in addition to articles and interviews with individual writers. While Senegalese women do not have individual articles devoted to them, perhaps because the series focuses on less well-known figures, these two volumes are useful for understanding the general context of women's writing today. (FN)

"Senegalese Women by the Year 2015." Ed. Fatou Sow. Dakar: 1993.

Outlines women's current condition, with emphasis on the large numbers who receive little schooling and the poor health care available, especially in rural areas. At the same time, this report calls attention to the changes in women's status, their increasing public roles while they maintain their family connections. This is the abridged translation of the French document, written largely by Fatou Sow of IFAN, Senegal's first woman sociologist to receive a doctorate. (FN)

Forthcoming Bibliographies

Spring 1996: Québec Women Novelists of the Quiet Revolution (1960-1970) by Anne Brown, Université du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Fall 1996: Swiss Women Writers by Françoise Fornerod, Université de Lausanne, editor of the journal *Écriture*.

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