

Ndigël: Murid Newspaper in Wolof Ajami 1

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Who is a real servant of God? You can recognize the genuine servants of God through their humility. Even when someone asks them a question in a disrespectful manner, they always respond politely. This is reflected in a debate we had in Paris, France. It was planned by an organization called Islam and the People of Europe. The debate centered around the following question: Can Islam be useful for Europeans? Our response was affirmative, for Allah is The Almighty. He is the Almighty, the Creator of everything and all races, and Islam is a universal religion. It is not enough to only use Arabic or the languages of the Black people to converse about Islam. What we, the family of the Prophet [Muslims], ought to do is to unite and share ideas. Every group counts. This is because

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Allah said in the Quran the following: "I created you in different groups so that you may know each other."¹ It is a lesson that we can use to educate those who do not know Islam. And Allah added: "But most of the people do not know."² This means that many people are uninformed. Therefore, we must return together to the teachings of the Quran, which distinguish for us truth from untruth. May peace and blessings be upon you. Shaykh Abdullaahi Jeey

The annual Great Mâggal of Tuubaa, which was recommended by the Servant of the Prophet [Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba], makes every Murid, wherever they may be, think about the city of

¹ This refers to the Quran 49:13: "O mankind! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and We made you nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you near Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knower, All-Aware" (Sahih International translation).

² The following Quranic quotation is used here: "*Wa lâkin akthara l-nâsi lâ ya'lamûna.*" This phrase is repeated many times in the Quran. See Q 28:13; 34:28; and Q 45:25.

Tuubaa. This is particularly true for this year's edition which lasted for three days on Shaykh Abdul Ahad Mbakke's recommendation. His remarks at the closing ceremony are below.

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Shaykh Abdul Ahad Mbakke

**Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad's address to the Muslim community, the Murid community,
national religious leaders, and government officials**

“May peace, mercy, and blessings of God be upon you. Prime Minister Habib Caam, greetings to you and the officials who accompany you, including the nationals and foreigners. I extend my greetings and gratitude to you all for your presence on this very special day for us. If only one of you

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attended, it would have been appropriate. However, you came with a significant delegation to honor the Murids. So, we thank you! I send greetings to the person on behalf of whom you are here today [President Abdu Juuf].³ Please, allow me to give you a message to pass along to him. I will send a clear message with recommendation to him, and make remarks to the religious leaders who are present here before speaking to my fellow Murid disciples who came to take care of the celebrations.” At this point, he delivers a message to the President of the Republic [Abdu Juuf].

“Tell him that we are Murids who rely exclusively on Sëriñ Tuubaa, [The Master of Tuubaa, Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba] today, and he is our only hope for tomorrow.⁴ 1) We trust no one else, 2) we

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believe in no one else, and are afraid of no one else, and 3) we rely on no one else, 4) except on Sëriñ Tuubaa. There is a reason for this. The reason is that when Sëriñ Tuubaa emerged, he started by disclosing his thoughts. He laid out his objective and destination clearly, and the first statement he made is: “I bear witness that Allah is the Lord of all creatures, and that Muhammad is the Prophet of truth.”⁵ He also added: “Allah has pointed me towards Prophet Muhammad, and he led me towards God, The Eternal refuge.”⁶ This shows that his only preoccupation was God and the Prophet. He did not have any other preoccupation.

³ Abdu Juuf (Abdou Diouf in the French-based spelling) served as the second president of Senegal from 1981 to 2000.

⁴ For Murids, this means exclusive reliance on Bamba in their worldly affairs and for his intercession in the Hereafter.

⁵ The Arabic quotation used here is: “*shahidtu anna l-Laha Rabbu l-Khalqi, wa anna Ahmada Rasulu l-haqqi.*”

⁶ The Arabic quotation used here is: “*dalanija l-Lahu ‘ala Muḥammadin, wa qādali Muḥammadin li ṣamadi.*”

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He later reached a point [in his spiritual journey] when he stated the following: "I have forever given Him [God] my intent, my knowledge, my service, my soul, my body, and everything I have, without any reservation."⁷ This shows you that Bamba did not keep anything for himself as he was completely devoted to God. He did not prioritize anything else, including his kinship. He gave everything to God. When he fully devoted his life to God until he obtained divine rewards that surpass his expectations, he stated the following: "My love, my inward and outward affection,

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my gratitude, and my praises go to God, the One who has offered me favors that surpass my expectations!"⁸ So, we are Murids, and the reason why we are Murids is the following: [Metaphorically], when you choose someone as your adoptive father and he accepts, you must adopt his name. Bamba gave up the name he was given at birth and chose *Xaadimu Rasuul*.⁹ He also adopted the name *Murīdu l-Lābi*.¹⁰ Whoever follows Sērīñ Tuubaa has adopted the name of *Murīdu l-Lābi*. In other words, it could be said that there is no Murid per se, and that there is only Sērīñ Tuubaa. We, Murids, hold close to our hearts anyone who is pleased with the distinction that God has given to Sērīñ Tuubaa, regardless of who you are. Similarly, we will distance ourselves from anyone who is displeased with the favors that God has given to Sērīñ Tuubaa. It is in this regard that I would like to talk about President Abdu Juuf today,

⁷ For the Arabic verses, see Bamba's poem, *Muqadimatu l-adāh* (The Beginning of Praises), Initial Lām Section. <https://euhloutaysir.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Moukhadimatoul-Amdah-AS.pdf>

⁸ For the Arabic verses, see Bamba's poem, *Rummā Shakūr* (We Long for Giving Thanks), couplet 89. <https://euhloutaysir.com/xassidas-pdf/>.

⁹ From Arabic *Khādim al-Rasūl* (Servant of the Prophet).

¹⁰ The one aspiring to unite with Allah.

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and ask you to transmit my message to him concerning what I know about him based on his actions. I am convinced that he values Sëriñ Tuubaa. I also know that he holds Sëriñ Tuubaa in high esteem. This is because, despite his status as President, he comes to spend a whole day here [in Tuubaa] every three months. We all know that Sëriñ Tuubaa is the only reason one would visit Tuubaa. All of us who stay here do so because we exclusively rely on Sëriñ Tuubaa. And when one's actions are solely motivated by their love for Sëriñ Tuubaa, they will achieve their goals." This is what Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad said about Abdu Juuf for the latter's work for the Muslim community in the country, the peasants, and the city of Tuubaa, which is our only preoccupation as Murids. This is the reason why Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad stated the following: "Whoever provides a service to a Murid, it is Sëriñ Tuubaa who will reward you; and whoever provides a service to Sëriñ Tuubaa, it is the Murids who will reward you!"

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"Therefore, I thank him [President Juuf] for his admiration of Sëriñ Tuubaa and the way he has shown it. I thank him on behalf of the Murid community because he has done tangible things for the city of Tuubaa over the last two years he has been in power. These are things that add prestige to the city and are useful for the residents, and he did not wait until I requested them. I thank him on behalf of all the Murids and on behalf of Sëriñ Tuubaa who told us that when someone does good to you, show appreciation on the spot and publicly. He [President Juuf] did what he could for Sëriñ Tuubaa, and all one can do for Sëriñ Tuubaa is to have good intentions and act upon them. And God said the following: "Every nice act should be rewarded by a nicer act." This being said, I would like to give him a piece of advice on the character he has shown

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to the country, which led people to place their hope and trust in him. Let him not change this character trait. Worldly affairs should not make him change his character. I advise him not to let people change his character either. In every moment, let him remember that it is God who created everyone, the Lord, who is the one who chose him to lead the people. Therefore, let him deal with people [righteously] on behalf of God, the Lord. If he does this, he will not regret it, because if you don't change the good approach that has brought you success repeatedly, you will certainly continue to be successful. The country is peaceful because he has shown care for the peasants. Let him cultivate good relationships between citizens. I convey the gratitude of the Murid community to him for his service for Sëriñ Tuubaa, and I urge the Murids to support him. Let me now turn to my fellow religious leaders. There is a representative of each religious leader here today. This is a sign that God has answered our prayers.

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Since our events were organized for the sake of God and Islam, and all the Muslims [in the country] have attended, we can be hopeful that God has approved our endeavors. Thus, I thank all the religious leaders who are present or whose representatives are with us. I pray that God, whose riches are boundless, reward you beyond your expectations in this life and the afterlife. My fellow Murid disciples, I extend my greetings to you. I thank you very much. We bear witness to your high esteem for Sëriñ Tuubaa and the sacrifices you are prepared to make for his sake, as the three days you have spent here demonstrate, leaving aside all your other preoccupations. But there is something that Sëriñ Tuubaa once said. He stated the following: "Those who have entrusted me with everything they have, I will take good care of it and enhance it for them. Similarly, those who have entrusted me with a part of themselves, I will take good care of that part, enhance it, and return it to them." And you have entrusted everything you have to Sëriñ Tuubaa. So rest assured that he has accepted

your entrustment. Therefore, make sure you comply with his injunctions. I urge you all to comply with God's injunctions, care for one another, and avoid hostility among you. May peace be with you.

[Reported by] Alhaaji Bamba.

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Shaykhu Ture, President of the Republic of Guinea:¹¹

His Speech on The Servant of the Prophet, Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba

Every year in the Republic of Guinea, the university has a graduating class consisting of the best-educated students. Shaykhu Ture named this year's class, which is the 17th to graduate from the University of Conakry, the Class of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba. Why did this authority, Shaykhu Ture, have the idea? Shaykhu Ture decided to name the class of the young and best-educated students who were being honored after The Servant of the Prophet [Bamba] because he was different

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from local anti-colonial leaders. He surpassed them because he was exclusively focused on the Prophet. He achieved his goal, and there is no doubt about it. However, the French colonial authorities did whatever they could to conceal the truth about him, because they did not want people to know who The Servant of the Prophet really was. But across Africa, people have resisted their efforts and continue to celebrate the great achievements of The Servant of the Prophet. This is a source of pride for every African, man or woman, and a major tangible and symbolic blow to the colonizers. Why did Sëriñ Tuubaa surpass all his contemporaries? Armed struggle was common during his time, and most anti-colonial leaders ended up being killed as a result. Despite their military power, colonial authorities were unable to change Sëriñ Tuubaa's

¹¹ Shaykhu Ture, also known as Ahmed Sékou Touré (1922-1984) or Sékou Touré, served as the first president of the Republic of Guinea from its independence in 1958 to his death in 1984.

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determination to serve God, The Most Glorified. The Muridiyya way he founded served as a shield for many people during that time. This was a source pride for Islam. It was for this reason that the colonizers began to make false allegations against The Servant of the Prophet. They arrested him on August 10, 1895. You, the reader, if you pay attention, you will realize that [President Shaykhu Ture] knew very well the history of Sëriñ Tuubaa and his writings, because he has revealed many aspects of the life of our leader, including his erudition, virtues, and his companions. Sëriñ Tuubaa educated his first followers so well that anyone who followed them was filled with wisdom! Shaykhu Ture noted that Sëriñ Tuubaa was also different from the religious leaders who used to worship God for their own sake. In contrast, Sëriñ Tuubaa used to worship God by benefiting and protecting people in everything. He comforted those who were afraid, assisted the poor,

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and educated the uneducated. This was why the French colonizers arrested The Servant of the Prophet and exiled him from the country from 1895 to 1902. During all this period, there was nothing they could do about him. William Ponty's strategy at the time was to find ways to make Sëriñ Tuubaa uncomfortable in the country.¹² But Sëriñ Tuubaa did not care about all this. He was fully focused on serving God and the Prophet Muhammad in order benefit all those who believe in God and His prophet. This was in 1902. He wrote many books that were read in the country. For this reason, his return home [from exile] was beneficial to the Muslims. It is in 1923 that he enjoined people to settle in Tuubaa so that it could become the city of the Muridiyya way. He passed away in 1927 in Njaaréem (present-day Diourbel) and rests in Tuubaa. People from around the world have mourned him due to his relentless commitment to the Prophet. This is where Ahmadu Shaykhu

¹² William Merlaud-Ponty (February 4, 1866 –June 13, 1915) was a French colonial administrator. He served as Governor General of French West Africa between 1908 and 1915.

Ture concluded his remarks,¹³

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and then advised the graduating class named in honor of The Servant of the Prophet to always remember the Shaykh because we owe him the peace in which we live today. People in each country throughout Africa must hold Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba in high esteem because he represented the Prophet with determination, which earned him an unmatched success. He is a source of pride for Black people and Islam. Let me tell you that Sëriñ Tuubaa is still with us, even though we cannot see him. The proof is that, even if there were only one single Murid, Sëriñ Tuubaa – the Servant of the Prophet – would still be with them, let alone now that the whole world follows his teachings. You are the future leaders of this country. Take Sëriñ Tuubaa as your role model. Thank you, Sëriñ Tuubaa! Thank you, the people of Senegal. May our solidarity endure. May Africa go forward!

[Reported by] Alhaaj Bamba Juuf

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Discussion of Sëriñ Muhammad Maamuun Ñañ,

Personal Secretary of Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad Mbakke

When Sëriñ Muhammad Maamuun Ñañ stopped by Paris, France, after his trip to Cairo, he gave various talks on The Servant of the Prophet. He gave this one to the Islamic Movement of the Murids in Europe. He answered the interesting questions people asked. Sëriñ Momar Cuun was the first to ask him a question on the significance of the Great Mâggal of Tuubaa, its purpose, and how it should be celebrated. Here is the answer that Sëriñ Maamuun gave: “God has rewarded every person who has worked for Him with a special day, a day of celebration. If you look into it carefully, you will notice that each of the special days has a specific origin and is dedicated to a person. For

¹³ It is impossible to tell from the original whether the reporter was quoting verbatim or paraphrasing.

example, Tabaski¹⁴ is when Prophet Abraham agreed to sacrifice Ismail,

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but our Creator sent a sheep to be sacrificed instead. Tabaski became a day of blessing for all human beings, and a day of joy for Muslims. The same is true for our Grandfather Adam or prophets such as Jesus, Moses, and others. Each of them has a special day. Tamxarit is equally a special day.¹⁵

Someone like the Prophet Noah also had a special day that marks the moment he was on the arch along with his followers and had asked God to save them from the flood, and they were saved. In return, he expressed gratitude to God as follows: "Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds."¹⁶ It is a day of celebration. It is the same for the day that the Prophet Moses drowned Pharaoh, and other important days that punctuate the lives of the saints and prophets. Each of them has a day in their honor. It is the same way that Sëriñ Tuubaa also has a special day. But the special day of Sëriñ Tuubaa is unlike the special days of the others. What is the difference?

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The difference is that while the prophets and their families praised God in their hearts and in words for having been saved, Sëriñ Tuubaa chose to praise God for the suffering He brought onto him, which he embraced because he saw in it hidden blessings. He preferred to praise God on the day he began to suffer for His sake, which is why he is different from other saints. He specifically celebrates the day he was expelled from the country (to be exiled to Gabon by the French colonial administration in 1895) to endure painful hardships. And prior to his departure, he knew the personal suffering that awaited him. However, he accepted enduring all the suffering that awaited him because he knew that, if he did not personally take it on, other [innocent] human beings would

¹⁴ This is the Wolof name for *‘Id al-‘adḥā* (the Feast of the Sacrifice).

¹⁵ *Tamxarit* is the Wolof name for *‘Ashūra* in Arabic, which is celebrated on the 10th day of the month of *Mubarram* in the Muslim lunar calendar, especially among *Shi‘a* Muslims. *‘Ashūra* is a solemn day of mourning the martyrdom of Hussayn in 680 A.D. in Karbala in modern-day Iraq.

¹⁶ In Arabic: *alḥamdu li l-Lābi rabbi l-‘ālamina*.

suffer. Upon his return from exile, he never ceased to express his gratitude to his Creator for the day on which He began to test him with suffering. Why is the day called the Great Mànggal? This is because it is a day of gratitude, remembrance of God, recitation of the Quran, and a day of celebrating the oneness of God. On that day, the number of times the Quran and devotional poems [of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba] are recited is countless.

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On that day, people recite the Quran countless times, and spend the night praising the Prophet. The Shaykh intended these events to be acts of gratitude to God for the test He put him through, and that he endured courageously. This is the origin of the Mànggal of Tuubaa.” The second question is related to the rules that govern the celebration. [The response]: Tuubaa receives a huge number of visitors during the Mànggal. People come from everywhere. We consider that the Mànggal lasts for three days. During the last day, religious singers spend the whole night chanting. During the day, people pay pious visits to the Great Place,¹⁷ the notables, family members of Sëriñ Tuubaa, religious leaders, and sacred places. You heard that the elders called the Mànggal their second Tabaski. The reason for this is that during the Mànggal, people would sacrifice various kinds of animals, from camels to chicken, each person according to their means. All these efforts are meant to welcome the disciples.

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You have seen how Sëriñ Abdullaahi Ahad celebrates it. He welcomes, greets, and honors the disciples on that day. He greets everyone, regardless of how large the crowd is. In addition to all this, he never misses a prayer or performs it late in the day. He sacrifices animals from camels and cows to chickens to feed the guests. This is where we will stop the report on Sëriñ Muhammad Maamuun Ñañ’s discussion. We will publish the remaining questions in the next issue of *Ndigël*, God willing.

¹⁷ The tomb of Sëriñ Tuubaa, which is located inside the mosque.

These were the questions and answers during the talk that Sëriñ Muhammad Maamuun Ñaŋ, the personal assistant of the Caliph of the Muridiyya, gave to the Islamic Movement of the Murids in Europe. May peace be upon you! *Ndigël is the Murid way*.¹⁸

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The following discussion is about how to think in Islam. It was led by Sëriñ Ahmadu Darame, the Secretary General of the Islamic Movement of the Murids in Europe based here in France. Part 1: What is the origin of Islam? Part 2: When did it start, how does it work, and what is its scope? Part 3: What are its foundations? Part 4: the life of Muhammad, may peace be upon him. Part 5: the caliphs and the caliphates (the first Umayyad caliphate, the second Abbasid caliphate, and the third Fatimid caliphate). Part 6: the schools of thoughts that developed within Islam. Part seven: The school of thought of Tuubaa and its scholarly contribution on the life of the one who is the focus of today's conversation: The Prophet, may peace and blessings be upon him.

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The Prophet was not just a courageous person or a military leader with strategies to attract followers as Europeans think. History teaches that he brought something that was nurturing for all his followers. As a child, in the physical sense, he endured all kinds of hardships. He was an orphan, and he did not have anyone to care for him. He was poor and used to have needs he could not address. The Prophet went through a lot. All these were divine trials for what he was going to become. May Allah send prayers to Our Master Muhammad.¹⁹ Even before he passed away, Islam was a religion that had opponents where he lived in Mecca and Medina. Throughout his life, his preoccupation was

¹⁸ The motto, "*Ndigël is the Murid way*," is written in both Wolof and French. However, there is a mismatch between the two. The Wolof version says: *Ndigël mooy yoonu Muriidu l-Lābi!* Here *yoon* means "way/path." The French motto says: *Ndigël la voix du Mouride* ("*Ndigël*, the voice of the Murid"). The mismatch may be due to a spelling error in the French version, because *voix* means "voice" and *voie* means "path, way" in French. Here we have chosen to translate the Wolof version: "*Ndigël is the Murid way*."

¹⁹ In Arabic: "*Allāhuma ṣalli 'alā Sayyidina Muḥammadin.*"

transmitting the message Our Creator gave him to people. He identified people he trusted with whom he could live the faith so that they could spread it around the world on his behalf. What the Prophet, may peace and blessings be upon him,

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brought, which is Islam, is a complete faith in all aspects. He and his followers firmly believed in spreading it. This was a difficult period, and because of the troubles of the time the faith had not been widespread by the time the Prophet passed away. The difficulties were also the reasons why the detailed explanation of the message of the faith happened after him, that is, after he was laid to rest in Medina when he died. The main people who spread the faith were his closest companions.²⁰ This was a challenging task, because they had to spread the message of the faith to all corners of the world primarily through dialogue, though from time to time it required war. This was how his companions, especially those who were closest to the Prophet, sorted out the rules of the Islamic faith. As a result, some tensions emerged within the Muslim community. It became clear that people had put aside most of what Muhammad left them in terms of rules and recommendations, and they started to act based upon their own opinions. Even the succession of the Prophet generated a lot of controversy, especially surrounding the issues

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of whether his successor should be a closest [spiritual] companion or a blood relative. The most serious tensions occurred during the time when Ali served as Caliph. The second topic of discussion is about the origin of Islam, its scope, and spiritual dimension and purity: The faith was born in

²⁰ These were the four closest companions of the Prophet who became Caliphs: Abu Bakr (reigned 632–634 CE), Umar (reigned 634–644 CE), Uthman (reigned 644–656 CE), and 'Ali (reigned 656–661 CE). They are commonly referred to as "The Rightly-Guided caliphs."

Yaşru (Yathrib), the name of the city of Medina during the time of the Prophet.²¹ After the Prophet, other Muslim polities emerged starting with the caliphates of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. The latter experienced a lot of challenges because he had to face Mu'awiya, a very influential figure.²² The latter proclaimed himself Caliph one day in Damascus. Thus, he challenged the authority of Muhammad's successor, 'Alī. During this time, Mu'awiya sought to move the center of Islam to Damascus, away from Mecca and Medina.

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Upon Mu'awiya's death, his son Yazid succeeded him. He gathered a large army and traveled to other countries to fight for the spread of Islam. After Yazid, it was Mukhtaar who emerged as a leading military figure for the spread of Islam. He was the one who developed some useful knowledge that continues to benefit the world today. During the reign of Mukhtaar, the third Caliph after Mu'awiya, violence erupted. Some supporters of 'Alī attacked Mukhtaar because they believed that 'Alī was the rightful successor of Muhammad. The accusations against the camp of Mu'awiya were that they applied the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad only superficially, and that they were driven by their own desires and not by a sincere faith in God. This is the reason why the camp of 'Alī attacked them. The partisans of 'Alī decided, after the death of Prophet Muhammad, that they would not accept any other leader. They would simply apply the Sunna, the traditions of the Prophet. These divergences gave birth to schools of thought from which Sufism, which strengthened the camp of 'Alī against Mu'awiya, emerged. The supporters of 'Alī were new converts

²¹ Although the first revelations occurred in Mecca, the Prophet and his earliest followers had to move to Medina where they set the first Muslim political structure that allowed Islam to flourish. The author used the Wolofization of *civilization* (*sijlisaasiyoo*) to refer to this the early Muslim polity.

²² When Uthman, the third Caliph to succeed the Prophet, was assassinated, 'Alī became Caliph. However, a strong disagreement emerged between him and Mu'awiya, a relative of Uthman. Mu'awiya called for the death of Uthman to be avenged first before the succession could be settled. However, 'Alī thought that such a move was not politically savvy, which cost him accusation of being behind the elimination of Uthman. The disagreement led to the Battle of Siffin in 657 AD between the camp of Mu'awiya and that of 'Alī. For more on this, see Reza Shah Kazemi, *Justice and Remembrance: Introducing the Spirituality of Imam 'Alī* (I. B. Tauris and The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2006).

who hailed especially from Persia (contemporary Iran).

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They supported ‘Alī and fought Mu’awiya until the latter lost his power; then they moved the center to Bagdad, Iraq, marking the downfall of Mu’awiya’s caliphate. At that time, Iraq was the epicenter of the emerging Abbasid caliphate which spread across many regions. Later, people from Iran and Iraq united their forces and the knowledge they received from Syria to establish Islam in the region. This is how they extended their influence into Egypt and Turkey. This was the apogee of the Islamic civilization, a period of advancement in philosophy, architecture, and a lot more that Islam produced, which continue to benefit us today. Philosophy, which is called *Falsafa*, began with the Umayyad caliphate, and there were many discoveries in Mathematics, among other contributions of Islam to human knowledge. Many other caliphates emerged later. But we will come back to this in the next issue of *Ndigël*. Sëriñ Ahmadu Daraame authored this article. In the next issue of *Ndigël*, we will bring more information [on the genealogy of the saints] that will lead us to the Servant of the Prophet. Thank you, Servant of the Prophet, Shaykh Ahmadu Mbakke of Tuubaa, Senegal!

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September 5th, the day when people celebrate the two-raka ‘a prayers in Ndar, reminds Senegalese people of Sëriñ Tuubaa.²³ They celebrate the day in honor of the Master of Tuubaa. They know the important days in history, days that require people to get together and celebrate [their heroes]. The people of Ndar chose September 5th because they know that it is the day Sëriñ Tuubaa was

²³ *Saint-Louis* is the colonial name of the city of *Ndar* in Wolof. It served as the first capital of colonial French West Africa. Suspecting him of preparing an armed struggle, colonial authorities arrested and exiled Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba to Gabon (1895–1902) and to Mauritania (1903–1907). On Thursday, September 5, 1895, when he appeared before the Privy Council (*Conseil d'État*) of Saint-Louis that was to rule on his case, Bamba performed two *raka‘as* (a *raka‘a* is a series of prescribed movements and supplications performed by Muslims as part of a ritual prayer) in praise of the oneness of God and in defiance of colonial authorities. The Two Raka ‘as of Ndar, known as *Ñaari Ràkkay Ndar yi* in Wolof, are commemorated yearly. For more on the context and their significance, see Ngom, *Muslims Beyond the Arab World* (2016), 122.

summoned to the colonial office in Ndar [the Privy Council] by the French authorities whose goal was to suppress Islam. By this time, the French colonial authorities had defeated all those who had led armed resistance against colonization, and they had turned to the Muslim leaders with the intent of replacing Islam with their religion [Christianity]. They knew that, as long as Islam thrives [in the country], they would not achieve their goal [of control and cultural assimilation]. It is on that day [September 5, 1895] that Sëriñ Tuubaa strengthened the faith of the believers and gave faith to those who did not have faith [in God]. He had entrusted everything he had to God and the Prophet. It is on that day that Sëriñ Tuubaa demonstrated that God did not attribute mental and intellectual capacities, reasonable judgment, and blessings to White people only and ignore Black people.

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God has given these abilities to every human being. On that day Islam was victorious and the French colonizers were humiliated. The reason is that when Bamba arrived at the Privy Council where he was summoned, the first thing he did was to pronounce the greatness of God and to perform two raka'as, before asking the colonial authorities why he was summoned. It is these two raka'as that we celebrate in Ndar. This is the day that the people of Ndar celebrate every year by discussing some of Bamba's writings and reciting the Quran. This is a Muslim holiday, and for this reason they invite all Muslims in Senegal and abroad. Everyone's presence is solicited. People hail from Dakaar, Cees, Kawlax, and all the regions of Senegal.²⁴ Similarly, people from Risaatool, Dagana and Daara, especially those affiliated with daa'iras (religious and social organizations), stand out for their actions. The Daa'ira Xidmatul Xadiim of Cees was the highlight [of the previous edition] in terms of technological innovations and photo exhibitions. The night was dedicated to the

²⁴ Dakaar, Cees, and Kawlax are commonly spelled as Dakar, Thiès, and Kaolack in the French-based spelling. They are administrative regions of Senegal. Risaatool, Dagana, and Daara are spelled as Richard Toll, Dagana, and Dara [Jollof] or Dara [Diolof] in the French-based spelling. Daara [Jollof] or Dara [Diolof] is a department in the region of Luga (Louga), and the rest are departments in the administrative region of Ndar (Saint-Louis).

honor of Maam Shaykh Ibraahiima, Sëriñ Tuubaa's brother.²⁵ This is why Shaykh Awa Balla Mbakke sent a delegation led by his oldest son [Maam Cerno Mbakke].²⁶ Sëriñ Murtalaa Mbakke, a teacher of Arabic from the city of Cees gave a talk. Sëriñ Murtalaa Mbakke, son of The Servant of the Prophet, attended the events.²⁷ In his speech, he thanked the attendees. We would like to let the whole world know that we plan on holding the celebration every year, and we invite all Muslims, particularly Murid disciples. The leader of the organizing committee, Sëriñ Madike Wad, and his collaborators, pray that God gives a long life to our spiritual guide, Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad. May prayers and peace be upon the Prophet!

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Mouvement Islamique des Mourides d'Europe (MIME)

Islamic Movement of the Murids in Europe

We had sent a group of people to Morocco to meet the Cultural Union that is based there. The purpose was to discuss how we could extend the work we do there. Sëriñ Ahmadu Daraame and Sëriñ Shaykh Sall were our envoys. They came back with the hope that we will reach our objective and our counterparts in Morocco were honored. We hope that we will have a branch in Morocco

²⁵ Maam Shaykh Ibraahiima Mbakke (1862-1943) or Mame Cheikh Ibrahima Mbacké in the French-based spelling is most known as Maam Cerno Biraahim (Mame Thierno Birahim). He was Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba's younger paternal half-brother. He was a Quranic teacher and a farmer who led the budding Murid community during Bamba's exile to Gabon. For a full biography, see Ousseynou Cissé, Mame Thierno Birahim (1862-1943): *Frère et disciple de Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba* (L' Harmatan, 2001).

²⁶ Sëriñ Shaykh Awa Balla Mbakke or Serigne Cheikh Awa Balla Mbacké in the French-based spelling (1900-1976) was the youngest of Maam Shaykh Ibraahiima Mbakke's male children. The others were Sëriñ Moodu Awa Balla Mbakke (Serigne Modou Awa Balla Mbacké (1896-1982) Sëriñ Fallu Mbakke (Serigne Fallou Mbacké), and Sëriñ Basiiru Mbakke (Serigne Bassirou Mbacké). For more on the oldest son of Maam Shaykh Ibraahiima Mbakke and his siblings, see Cheikh Ndiaye Djolof, *Cheikh Modou Awa Balla Mbacké: Soldat de L'islam et du Mouridisme* (Le Nègre International Éditions, 2010).

²⁷ Sëriñ Murtalaa Mbakke or Serigne Mourtala Mbacké in the French-based spelling (1921-2004) was the youngest of Bamba's children. He was most known for his contribution to the internationalization of the Muridiyya and the promotion of Quranic education through the foundation of a school network named Al-Azhar. For more on this, see Cheikh Anta Babou, "The Al-Azhar School Network: A Murid Experiment in Islamic Modernism," in *Islamic Education in Africa: Writing Boards and Blackboards*, edited by Launay Robert (Indiana University Press, 2016).

soon. Our envoys' visit there coincided with Sëriñ Mustafaa Basiiru Mbakke's visit.²⁸ They had an interview with him. The first question they asked him was who started the celebration of the Great Mànggal. Sëriñ Mustafaa Basiiru answered the following: "Sëriñ Muhammadu Mustafaa, son of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba, was the first to convene the Mànggal. Afterwards, Sëriñ Muhammadu Faliilu Mbakke did the same.²⁹ However, when Sëriñ Muhammadu Mustafaa served as Caliph of the Muridiyya, the Mànggal marked Sëriñ Tuubaa's death. When Sëriñ Muhammadu Mustafaa passed away,

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and Sëriñ Fallu became caliph, he held the Mànggal to celebrate Bamba's departure to exile [in Gabon in 1895] to serve the Prophet. This was also what Sëriñ Muhammadu Mustafaa had intended, but it was Sëriñ Fallu who fulfilled the wish. The day of the departure to exile³⁰ is the day God ordered Sëriñ Tuubaa to leave his country and go complete his service. The exile is the source of all his blessings. Sëriñ Tuubaa recommended the disciples to celebrate the day like Tabaski, whenever it comes. You will notice how Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad makes radio announcements, reminding everyone about the Mànggal. Whenever the exact day [in the lunar calendar] is known, he calls upon Sëriñ Mustafaa Basiiru and asks him to oversee all the activities related to the celebration. Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad will speak on the radio to give advice regarding the transportation of disciples and explain the merits and the purpose of the Mànggal. Our envoys also asked [Sëriñ Mustafaa Basiiru] a question regarding reception for we notice that a huge number of guests come to Tuubaa during the

²⁸ Sëriñ Mustafaa Bassiru Mbakke (1928- 2007) or Serigne Moustapha Bachir Mbacké in the French-based spelling is a grandson of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba. His father was Shaykh Muhammadul Basiiru Mbakke ((1895–1966) also spelled as Cheikh Mouhamadou Bachir Mbacké in French. He was Bamba's fourth son. Sëriñ Mustafaa was the right-hand man of Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad (or Shaykh Abdul Ahad) when the latter served as Caliph of the Muridiyya.

²⁹ Sëriñ Muhammadu Mustafaa Mbakke (1888-1945) or Serigne Mouhammadou Moustapha Mbacké in the French-based spelling and Sëriñ Muhammadu Faliilu (1888-1968), also known as Sëriñ Fállu, Fallu, Fadal, Serigne Mouhamadou Falilou, Fadel, or Fallou Mbacké are respectively the oldest and second oldest children of Bamba. They were the first two caliphs of the Muridiyya.

³⁰ The 18th day of Safar in the Islamic lunar calendar in 1895.

events. They also wanted to know how the housing of numerous guests who come to celebrate the event is organized and whether it is discussed among the leadership or left at the discretion of the residents [of Tuubaa] to ensure that the guests have everything they need. There was also a question regarding tasks: how are they assigned? How does Tuubaa get cleaned after the Màggal?

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Sëriñ Mustafaa Basiiru Mbakke answered the question. He said that he has received instructions from Sëriñ Abdullaahi Ahad Mbakke to lead the organization of the Màggal for years now. He is thankful that God has helped him to successfully complete his mission. Every year, he and his collaborators take a lot of time to plan the event. The Murid disciples who come to attend bring with them whatever they can afford. This is part of what makes things easy. Besides, Tuubaa is an African city, and everyone knows that Africans value treating their guests well. This is the reason why the residents of Tuubaa welcome everyone so that visitors do not lack food or a place to stay. Many do not wait to be asked to help. They help because they know it is a good thing and they do it for the sake of Sëriñ Tuubaa. Sëriñ Abdullaahi Ahad Mbakke usually makes a radio announcement to urge the residents [of Tuubaa] to be welcoming. Disciples come in large numbers, and everyone wants to make pious visits [to different sites]. Among the visitors, there are some people who dress [in patchwork clothing] like the Baay Faal (followers of Shaykh Ibraahiima Faal, Bamba's closest and most loyal disciple), but they are not true Baay Faal, and they have their own [mischievous] goals.³¹ This is why Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad has issued an order against these people.

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When Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad needed the real Baay faal, he spoke to their leader, Sëriñ Asan Faal, whose successor today is Shaykh Abdu Sàkkóor Faal. These are the genuine followers of Maam

³¹ Here the reference is to the thieves and other criminals who mix with the crowds and pretend to be members of the Baay Faal group, the followers of Shaykh Ibraahiima Faal who dress up in patchwork clothing and wear dreadlocks.

Shaykh Ibraahiima Faal. They are people who stand out and cannot be confused with criminals. They respect religious orders. They value their discipleship and know what it really entails. Their sole preoccupation is to serve the Muridiyya. They provide an invaluable service to the order. There are also other members of the Baay Faal community who receive assignments in the households of religious leaders. They spend the Mâggal there to take care of the cooking, fetch water, and ensure that guests are comfortable. There are other questions that Sëriñ Mustafaa Basiiru Mbakke has answered. We will publish them in the next issue of *Ndigël*. By Sëriñ Basiiru and the Islamic Movement of the Murids in Europe. May prayers and peace be upon the Prophet!

The Daa'iratu Mubaaraka in Ndar,³² led by Shaykh Abdullahi Saar, started in 1974 a yearly celebration in honor of Shaykh Abdul Kariim Samba Jaara Mbay, a renowned disciple of Sëriñ Tuubaa. He was one the great Shaykhs and great Muslim poets.

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[Shaykh Abdul Kariim Samba Jaara Mbay] was one of those people of value who never let Islam be stained. There were many such people among the followers of The Servant of the Prophet; Shaykh Abdul Kariim was one of them. He is unmatched in his service for and commitment to Sëriñ Tuubaa in the country, at a time when Islam was not in good shape. During this time, the Muridiyya was tangibly small. His writings were of the highest quality. His poetic works contain useful knowledge that everyone in the country should know in order to benefit from them. Examples of his works include *Gànnar [Mauritania]* and *Jaazbu l-Majdhūb [The Attraction of the Illuminated]*. He excelled in both Wolof Ajami and Arabic poetry. He said that, in his poems, he is not the one speaking, but rather it is Bamba speaking [through him], because "he is just a trunk that is closed

³² A *daa'ira* is a religious and social organization that unites disciples of the same area or of the same professional occupation. There are numerous such Murid organizations around the world.

and therefore cannot speak on its own, except when it is open, and he becomes the tongue [of Bamba]”! This is how the celebration is held. After the Tisbaar prayer,³³ all the *daa'iras* meet to recite Bamba’s devotional Sufi poems and *dhikr*.³⁴ After that, people visit the cemeteries to pay homage to Shaykh Abdul Kariim. This is followed by lectures and prayers. Shaykh Abdullaay Saar makes the opening remarks, and the family of Shaykh Samba Jaara makes the closing remarks. The events end with Shaykh Mbakke, the oldest son of Shaykh Samba Jaara, praying for the audience.

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This evening celebration is held every year. We invite all the disciples to attend. We thank those who honored us with their presence last year. We pray for the longevity of Sëriñ Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad in his capacity as our leader. May peace be upon you. Thank you, Sëriñ Tuubaa!

Shaykh Abdullaahi Jeey³⁵

By the light of Ahmadu Bamba who left people to commit exclusively to God until He made him the Master of People (in Arabic)! Shaykh Abdullaahi Jeey says that he dedicates this praise poem to Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba who turned his back to people to dedicate himself to God until He [God] made him the Master of People. Shaykh Abdullaahi Jeey wrote the text in honor of Sëriñ Tuubaa in reference to the conversation between Maajor and Majaxate Kala. After his father, Maam Moor Anta Sali Mbakke, died, Sëriñ Tuubaa founded the village of Daaru Salaam and later the city of

³³ This is the Wolof for the *Dhubr* prayer, the second of the five daily prayers.

³⁴ *Dhikr* is the practice of praising the oneness of God by chanting “there is no God but Allah,” among other formulas.

³⁵ Shaykh Abdullaahi Jeey or Cheikh Abdoulaye Dièye in the French-based spelling (1938-2002) was a Senegalese Sufi scholar and political figure. He served as mayor of the city of Ndar (Saint-Louis) and as a candidate in the Senegalese presidential elections of 2000. He founded the International Sufi School, an organization dedicated to Quranic education and spreading Bamba’s teachings outside of Senegal, including England, Mauritius, South Africa, India, and the USA. See Cheikh Anta Babou, “A West African Sufi Master on the Global Stage: Cheikh Abdoulaye Dièye and the Khidmatul Khadim International Sufi School in France and the United States,” in *African Diaspora*, Vol. 4. 2011.

Tuubaa following the injunction of the Prophet. He also founded the village of Mbakke-Baari where he spent six months before he left to serve the holy Prophet [in his exile] in 1895.

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His frequent mobility in the country worried the French colonial authorities because they knew that he was a true saint. Additionally, his ability to address the distress and pain of human beings attracted large crowds to him from all corners. This also worried colonial authorities, because what they wanted was to make the people adopt a religion whose values matched those of the colonial project. This is why they plotted against him and removed him from the country. They intended to eliminate him. Following are the two letters that officially sent Sëriñ Tuubaa to exile after the colonial council met on September 5th, 1895.

“Dear Minister of Foreign Affairs, I am informing you that we have met to discuss the activities of Sëriñ Tuubaa in the country. His movements extend to Kajoor, Bawol, Njaambur, and Waalo.” All this happened after Sëriñ Tuubaa was summoned and asked about the allegations leveraged against him. The chief administrator asked all the officers their opinions and they all agreed with him.³⁶

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This is what the chief said: “Dear Minister of the Colonies, we met on September 5th regarding the activism of Muhammadul Mbakkiyyu and his disciples, as reported by Leclerc who traveled to Jolof and Njambur. He noted the actions of Mamadu Mbakke there. All the local authorities have tried to stop him, and they think that the only solution is now to exile this religious leader. After they all listened to what Merlin said, the council decided Bamba would be sent to exile in Gabon until calm

³⁶ For the exact titles of the officers involved in this episode of Bamba’s life and for original copies of these correspondences in French, see Oumar Ba, *Ahmadou Bamba face aux autorités coloniales, 1889-1927* (Abbeville: Imprimerie F. Paillart 1982).

returns [to the country]. They took Ahmadu Bamba to Libreville. The boat that will take him will stop by Dakar on September 11th, and he will be given fifty francs every month. Minister, in my capacity as Governor General, I am sending you the report of the council meeting held on September 5, 1895." This is the content of the two letters. It is important to revisit the places where they took The Leader (Bamba) because the events match or remind us of what happened in Baghdad, when Muslims united to resist the Christians who were there and wanted to subjugate the Muslim community. This is the reason why Sëriñ Muusaa Ka noted that when The Leader was in Ndar, the city was like Tuubaa for him.

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This is because of the way his disciples mobilized to support him. Sëriñ Ahmadu Njaay Maabeey, a renowned religious leader, and other personalities met to write a letter to the colonial governor. When he saw that it was a letter that was pleading for The Leader, the governor declined. In the letter, the religious leaders noted that Bamba was only interested in God and the Prophet, and that he was not motivated by worldly affairs. They argued that there was a misunderstanding and that Sëriñ Bamba was only a man of God. However, the Governor told them that he was not convinced, because the one for whom they were pleading did not attend the meeting. However, this was a mere pretext not to approve the request. Sëriñ Ahmadu Njaay Maabeey and his companions went to see Sëriñ Tuubaa. The Leader told them the following: "When there is a dispute between two people, it does not make sense to ask the one who has been wronged to go apologize. Do not worry. I am going to work [for God]. I will be back soon. You, Sëriñ Ahmadu Njaay Maabeey, will be my witness, God willing. I will go in peace and come back in peace." But why did the French colonial authorities choose Gabon as a place of exile for The Leader? To answer this question, we refer to a book called *Tambali Gëstu lu Jëm ci Tukkiib Sëriñ Tuubaa [Beginning of a Study on Sëriñ Tuubaa's Exile]* which discusses how the French authorities eliminated those who opposed their colonial agenda.

The French authorities found strength in the fact that they had conquered many different parts of Africa, including places with hot weather and difficult ecological conditions.

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For example, if a horse is brought from Luga to Kaasamaas, it will probably die, let alone if this was your intention. This is because there are flies there that the animal will not be able to deal with.³⁷ The French authorities treated the people in the same way during the colonial era, and in so doing, the people of the African countries would not know what was happening. There were many African leaders that the colonial authorities killed using this strategy. This was the case of Sharif Amala from Ñooro.³⁸ They took him to Ndar [Saint-Louis, Senegal], then to Bamako, Mali, and to Algeria and finally to France in 1945. He died at Montluçon hospital [in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region in France]. The same policy was applied to Samoori Ture, his four wives, and seven servants. The French authorities took Samoori's brother, Bakari Ture, to Madagascar where he died in 1896. There is a Gabonese leader called Waama who was taken to Senegal, in Ndar [Saint-Louis] more precisely. Behansee [Behanzin], the King of Dahomey, was also taken to Algeria. As for Demba Araa and Muhammadu Abdu, the French colonial authorities took them all to Gabon where they died. The list is long. We will bring more details in the next issue of *Ndigël*, God willing. Sëriñ Tuubaa is the greatest!

³⁷ The author is referring to the movement from the Sahelian weather to the more humid tropical climate. The hot and dry weather in *Luga* (Louga) in northcentral Senegal differs considerably from the climate in the southern region of *Kaasamaas* (Casamance), which is more humid and wet. The presence of Tsetse flies in the south makes the region inhospitable for horses.

³⁸ Sharif or Shaykh Amala (Cherif or Cheikh Amala) also known in French literature as Ahmedou Hamahoullah or Cheikh Hamallah (1881-1943). He was a Tijani religious leader in Nioro, Mali. He founded the branch of the Tijaniyya known as Hamawiyya. This French policy was also applied to the Joola heroine, Aline Siteo Diatta (1920-1944) who opposed the French colonial agenda in her native lush region of Casamance and was deported to the dry and hot city of Timbuktu, Mali where she died from scurvy.

Death announcement: The Islamic Movement of [the Murids] in Europe are saddened by and inform you of the death of a good fellow disciple, Masira Joob. He died in Troyes and his body was repatriated to Senegal. We present our condolences to all his family members, male and female.

There was a conference at the UNESCO organized by the Islam and the People of Europe Group. Our organization attended the event and went there with Shaykh Abdullaahi Jeey. He gave a talk there that interested the many Europeans in Sëriñ Tuubaa.

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Praise be to Sëriñ Tuubaa! A Text by Sëriñ Yunus Joob, a Student in France

Sëriñ Tuubaa said that he never extended and will never extend his hand to request anything from the French colonial authorities, who are nothing but worshipers of water and mud. Praise be to Sëriñ Tuubaa, the one who brought the servants of God out of darkness and led them to light! He educated people until they became knowledgeable. He did what pleased God and the Prophet at a time when the colonizers wanted to eradicate Islam to implement their agenda. If you look carefully at everything Sëriñ Tuubaa did, you will find that there is something to celebrate, a victory for Black people and a victory for Islam that bring shame to the colonizers. Praise be to Sëriñ Tuubaa! He was born in a country that was under colonial domination. But he fulfilled his obligations toward the people, counseling them, acting in their interest, assisting them, and entertaining good relations with them, in addition to strengthening Islam in the country by training people who were completely committed to Islam. Praise be to Sëriñ Tuubaa! He used to say the following: "I will rejuvenate a large land. I will sow seeds whose crops will benefit every single human being, by the grace of Prophet Muhammad! I will enhance the people, educate them about difficult things, and I will make easy whatever is difficult for them to achieve." As an example, he used to draw from the work of

Muhammadu Yadali what is pertinent to the people and educate them about it until they fully grasped the significance both in Arabic and excellent Wolof. There was a colonial officer called Commandant Lasal, a physician, who used to be critical of The Leader initially. But later, he ended up showering Sëriñ Tuubaa with praises. In short, Sëriñ Tuubaa is the greatest!

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**The Islamic Movement of the Murids of Europe sent the following letter
to President Abdu Juuf via the [Senegalese] ambassador [in France]**

We began the letter by stating that we are behind Shaykh Abdullaahi Ahad Mbakke, our leader. We are committed to following his instructions scrupulously. We express our unwavering support to President Abdu Juuf following the instructions of our hope for today and tomorrow.³⁹ May Senegal prosper! Ambassador, please receive our greetings on behalf of our organization. May peace be upon you.

There have been changes in the bylaws of the association. Formerly called the Association of the Students, the name has been changed to accommodate a wide range of members. It is now called MIME (in French), which stands for the Islamic Movement of the Murids of Europe.⁴⁰ We would like to inform everyone that the organization is open to all Muslims and Murids, male and female.

Mouvement Islamique des Mourides d'Europe (MIME)

What follows is a discussion by two authorities. The entire content does not fit in this issue of the newspaper. But, we will summarize the content of the discussions in the next issue of *Ndigël*. One of the authorities is Sëriñ Saar Joob, President of the Islamic Movement of the Murids in Europe who

³⁹ This is a common Murid expression that refers to their religious leader, Bamba, or his representative who is entrusted with their worldly affairs and their intercession in the hereafter.

⁴⁰ MIME (Mouvement Islamique des Mourides d'Europe) is the French acronym for the Islamic Movement of the Murids of Europe.

interviewed Francis Lama, a European whose activities revolve around Islam.

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Francis Lama is the president of the European Muslim Association. The first question that Sëriñ Duudu Saar Joob asked him was the following: "Why are Europeans always talking around Islam, especially prominent people like you? We would love to know why." Francis Lama answered the following: "Islam is a global religion that enlightens human life, including the relationships between individuals and their fellow human beings, and between individuals and God. Islam is a civilization. Therefore, it is comparable to the European civilization because Europe also has its own civilization that has contributed to work, knowledge, and all aspects of human life. And world civilizations must be in dialogue because that is what enriches them. There are some critics who claim that our approval of Islam is motivated by the current popularity of Islam and the oil wealth of Arab countries, among other accusations. But this is not important because there have always been critics in the world." Afterwards, they discussed many issues pertaining to Islam. He showed his admiration for Sëriñ Tuubaa [The Master of Tuubaa].