

**A PROPOSAL TO THE OURC/BAKER COMMITTEE**

TITLE OF PROJECT: *Islam in the Southern Fulbe Heartland: Fula Itinerant Clerics in the Gambia, Upper Casamance and Guinea-Bissau Region c. 1803-1996*

NAME OF APPLICANT: Assan Sarr

STATUS: \_\_\_\_\_ Asst. Prof. \_\_\_X\_\_\_ Assoc. Prof. \_\_\_\_\_ Prof. \_\_\_\_\_ Administrator

DEPARTMENT: History

E-MAIL ADDRESS: [sarr@ohio.edu](mailto:sarr@ohio.edu)

RE-SUBMISSION: \_\_\_X\_\_\_ YES (Original Submission Date 9/30/2021 )  
 \_\_\_ NO

BUDGET: Total Request \_\_\_\_\_ \$15,000 \_\_\_\_\_  
 (May not exceed \$15,000)

**IRB AND IACUC APPROVAL:**

To ensure that the University is in compliance with all federal regulations, complete the checklist below. Note: your proposal can be approved prior to IRB or IACUC approval, but funding will be withheld until notification of approval or exemption.

Yes	No	Office of Research Compliance	Policy #
	X	Human Subjects in Research (including surveys, interviews, educational interventions): Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval #: Expiration Date:	19.052
	X	Animal Species: Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) Approval #: Expiration Date:	19.049

**SIGNATURES**

Applicant's Signature		Chair/Director's Signature	
Signature	<i>Assan Sarr</i>	Signature	<i>Brian Schoen</i>
Name	Assan Sarr	Name	Dr. Brian Schoen
Dept/School	History, CAS	Unit	History
Date	9/28/2022	Date	9/29/2022
Dean's Signature			
Name	Sarah Poggione	Signature	<i>Sarah Poggione</i>
College	Arts & Sciences	Date	9-29-2022

**Optional:**

If selected for funding, I give permission to the Office of the Vice President for Research and Creative Activity to use my proposal as an example during training and workshop exercises.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ *Assan Sarr* \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 9/28/2022 \_\_\_\_\_

## OURC/Baker Fund Proposal Checklist

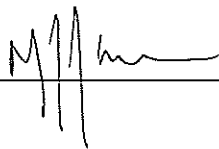
Applicants **must** complete and sign the checklist. The checklist should be included as the second page of the application (following the cover page).

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Checklist	use Baker form
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abstract*	1 double-spaced page
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduction ( <i>for continuations or resubmissions only</i> )*	1 double-spaced page
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion	10 double-spaced pages
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Durable Impacts & Sustainability*	1 double-spaced page
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Glossary/Definition of Terms* ( <i>not required</i> )	2 double-spaced pages
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bibliography ( <i>not required</i> )	3 pages
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biographical Information ( <i>applicant(s) and key personnel</i> )	3 pages per person
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Support ( <i>applicant(s) and key personnel</i> )	1 page per person
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Budget and Justification	no limit specified
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Appended Materials	10 pages; no more than 10 minutes of footage
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recommended Reviewers	5 required
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Electronic copy of proposal	Single Acrobat file, containing entire proposal and required signatures

\* These sections should be written in language understandable by an informed layperson to assist the committee in its review.

**\*\*Please note: The committee has the right to return without review any proposals that do not conform to these format requirements.\*\***

Applicant signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## ABSTRACT

In the last two centuries, Fula Muslim clerics played a huge role in changing the social and religious landscape of the Senegambia region. Using a variety of archival and African oral history sources, this proposed study seeks to examine three generations of Fula Muslim clerics belonging to the same family established a vast network of small but important clerical villages in the remote corners of the Senegambia region. These villages came to be recognized as important centers of Islamic learning and teaching, attracting many disciples and students.

The project is an examination of how a network of itinerant Muslim clerics contributed to the expansion of the Tijaniyya order (Sufi order) into the politically and economically marginalized areas of the Gambia, Upper Casamance and Guinea-Bissau. It focuses on Cherno Muhammadu Jallow (1803-1883) and his disciples. As reformers, these Fula Muslim clerics recognized the power of using communal, ethnic and familial ties to spread Islam among the Fulbe Firdu, who before the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were mostly non-Muslims.

As teacher and a spiritual leader, Cherno Muhammadu Jallow began building a network of muhaddams (disciples) during the second half of the nineteenth century. In so doing, he promoted clerical solidarity as a way to avoid community fragmentation. With his army of disciples, he helped transform the entire Upper Casamance and the Gabu districts of Guinea-Bissau as a Tijaniyya stronghold though there is not a single book about him. This lack of scholarly attention on his story has obscured the remarkable ways in which the movements of the Fulbe clerics had in creating a network of Tijaniyya communities across the region. This project therefore addresses a problematic gap in the historiography of West Africa by recovering the historical relevance of this Muslim clerical family and its disciples.

**Introduction:** I am indebted to the OURC/Baker Committee and the readers for their careful reading of my Fall 2021 proposal. Addressing the comments will strengthen the study by bringing out its originality more resolutely. The following are the changes I made and their significance in terms of style and content. First, the Committee indicated that that more editorial work was needed to improve the quality of the proposal. In addition to soliciting help from one of my OU colleagues, I gave the document another round of careful editing and proofreading.

The Committee also wondered why the documents I am seeking are essential to the book project. This is another good point. Accessing the documents will be hugely beneficial in that the French records contain relevant information necessary for completing chapter 4. No biographical account of Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow (1890-1996) will be complete without an understanding of the broader societal shifts that occurred in the Upper Casamance region where he spent much of his childhood as a Quranic student. Similarly, the British records are equally essential because they can shed light on agriculture in Madina Bafuloto and latter's growing reputation for scholarship. Examining these records will also allow me to discuss the areas where many of the students and disciples of Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow came from.

Third, the Committee wanted me to provide sample questions that will be asked during interviews with community members about Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow. I am interested in learning about what Jallow's story reveals about the link between agriculture, spirituality and politics in the Senegambia region. How was Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow able to expand his following? How he managed his relationship with the local political elites and chiefs who increasingly tried to court him? Lastly, I am willing to adjust my COVID protocol as needed while conducting your research. I am fully vaccinated and boosted twice. I also plan to follow all COVID protocols including wearing mask.

## Discussion

### A) Specific aims

In 1917, Paul Marty, a French colonial officer and a specialist of Islam, wrote that the celebrated Senegalese Tijaniyya cleric, Shaykh Abdoulaye Niasse (1848-1922), was a disciple (*muhaddam*) of Cherno Muhammadu Jallow (1803- 1883).<sup>1</sup> According to Marty, Niasse was initiated into the Tijaniyya order by Cherno Muhammadu Jallow in 1875 in the small Senegalese Fula village of Keur Mamadou Néné located in the region known in French records as Oualo du Rip (Upper Saloum).<sup>2</sup> While the scholarship on Shaykh Abdoulaye Niasse and his son Shaykh al-Hajj Ibrahim Niasse (1900-1975), as well as other Tijaniyya clerics of northern Senegal is extensive, there is not a single book on Cherno Muhammadu Jallow, his disciples or family. There is a critical need for a study of how the activities of this family of itinerant Muslim clerics helped to transform the spiritual landscape of nineteenth and twentieth centuries southern Senegambia.

I am therefore applying for an OURC/Baker funding to complete the research for my book project, *Islam in the Southern Fulbe Heartland: Fula Itinerant Clerics in the Gambia, Upper Casamance and Guinea-Bissau Region c. 1803-1996*. Using documentary evidence from a variety of archives in the region and oral interviews in Fula and Wolof, this project examines how three generations of Fulbe Muslim clerics belonging to the same family established a wide network of small but important clerical villages during a very tumultuous period in the region's history. Through these networks, the Tijaniyya *tariqa* (order) spread across within the Gambia, Upper Casamance and northeastern Guinea-Bissau. These clerics created new religious communities that

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Marty, *Études Sur L'Islam Au Sénégal*, Vol. 1 (Paris, 1917), p. 137

<sup>2</sup> Marty's claim is also consistent with information I gathered from interviews gathered in a variety of places in Senegal and The Gambia.

were ethnically Fulbe and whose familial, ethnic, and religious affinities facilitated both regional migration and the spread of Islam.

The rapidly changing religious landscape of the Senegambia has been a source of great contestation since the nineteenth century. In the middle of this ideological, and even political, contest is the Tijaniyya. The Tijaniyya takes its name from its founder, Shaykh Ahmed al-Tijan. A late eighteenth-century cleric of southern Algerian origin, al-Tijan gathered a large following in his adopted city of Fez, Morocco, using teachings he claimed were revealed to him directly by Allah (God) and Prophet Muhammad. The noted Senegalese Islamic reformer Al-Hajj Umar Taal (1797- 1864) brought the order to Senegambia. In the decades immediately following the 1840s, Tijani ideas and teachings – distinguished by their unique learning and recitation of the litany of prayers called *wird* – were not yet widespread in the region outside of northern Senegambia. The Tijaniyya faced serious doctrinal opposition, especially from spiritual leaders of the long established and eminent Qadiriyya Sufi order. Moreover, a large number of the Fulbe Firdu, and the Mandinka ruling class had yet to accept Islam.

The transformation began around the 1870s following the arrival of Cherno Muhammadu Jallow in the southern provinces. During this time, Islam and its Tijaniyya doctrine began to spread, attracting followers from the Fulbe Firdu and other groups. With a research grant from the Gerda Henkel Stiftung and a Faculty Fellowship Leave from Ohio University, I spent eight months in 2020-2021 in Upper Casamance (Senegal) and Guinea-Bissau conducting archival and oral history interviews for this project. I have completed nearly 80% of the research for this book as well as first drafts of the introduction, chapter 1, 2, 3 and 5. I am seeking funding to complete the research for chapters 4 and 6. I intend to spend a month in Dakar (Senegal) at the National Archives (Archives Nationales du Sénégal in Summer 2023 and almost two months in The Gambia working

at The Gambia National Archives and interviewing descendants of Cherno Muhammadu Jallow in Madina Bafuloto. I will also work with the *nayib* (deputy imam) of the Pipeline Mosque (Serrekunda, The Gambia) to translate an Arabic monograph on the history of this family written by Alhaji Mbacke Kah in 1956.<sup>3</sup> Fluent in both Fula and Wolof, two of the widely spoken languages among members of this Tijaniyya community, I am well-equipped to carry out this project. An OUR/Baker support for this research project will ensure completion of a book that will correct a major gap in the current historiography on the Senegambia and reshape scholarly conversation in the history of West Africa.

**B) Significance:**

When complete, this project will fill an important void the existing scholarship on Islam in West Africa in general and the Senegambia region in particular. Whereas the development of the Tijaniyya occupies an important place in the historiography of Sufism in West Africa,<sup>4</sup> the southern Senegambia region remains overlooked in the current historiography. Similarly, Cherno Muhammadu Jallow and his disciples' ability to attract people to Islam and the Tijaniyya order is a crucial yet underexamined aspect of the religious and political history of the greater Senegambia. The book shows that Islamic clericalism formed a bedrock of southern Senegambian culture during the turbulent colonial and post-colonial eras beginning in the 1890s, when Great Britain, France, and Portugal vied for control of the region. The historical neglect of this region has obscured the remarkable ways in which the movements of Fulbe itinerant clerics such as Cherno Muhammadu Jallow and his disciples created a network of Fulbe communities whose influences extended to the

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<sup>3</sup> This deputy Imam hails from the Jallow family and is a graduate of Al Imam Muhammad Ibn Saoud Islamic University in Riyadh.

<sup>4</sup> See Rüdiger Seesemann, *The Divine Flood: Ibrâhim Niasse and the Roots of a Twentieth –Century Sufi Revival* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); David Robinson and Jean-Louis Triaud (eds.), *La Tijâniyya: Une Confrérie Musulmane à la Conquête de l’Afrique* (Paris: Karthala, 2000) ; Zachary V. Wright, *Living Knowledge in West African Islam: The Sufi Community of Ibrahim Niasse* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2015)

most famous Islamic centers of Fuuta Toro and Fuuta Jallon. These clerics used their ethnic identities and familial ties to ensure clerical solidarity, which in turn helped to avoid community fragmentation.<sup>5</sup> They also took advantage of their pan- Fulbe identity to deepen their ties with the Fulbe Firdu -who predominantly occupied the Upper Casamnce and Gabu districts of Guinea-Bissau during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This book will also give a more accurate account of the conversion of the Fula into Islam. The Fulbe who have been incorrectly portrayed as overwhelmingly Muslim since before the nineteenth century were not all Muslims until the mid-twentieth century. My project hopes to provide evidence showing that many of the Fulbe Firdu were converted into Islam by members of the Jallow clerical family and their network of disciples.

In addition, the focus on the role that itinerant Fulbe clerics who operated in these politically and economically marginal areas is new. The expansion of the *tariqa* in the northern Senegambia region is often associated with the famous Tijaniyya clerics such as Malick Sy (1855-1922), Shaykh Abdoulaye Niasse and his son Shaykh al- Hajj Ibrahim Niasse. There is currently some dispute over this history. In their competition for followers, Tijani clerical families used their varied histories to demonstrate their demographic strength and bolster their image and significance as a religious community. My work will add clarity to this history by showing that most of the earliest converts to the Tijaniyya order received the teachings of the brotherhood directly from Cherno Muhammadu Jallow.

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<sup>5</sup> Lamin Sanneh, "The Origins of Clericalism in West African Islam," *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (1976), 63; David Glovsky, "Medina Gounass: Constructing Extra-National Space in a West African Borderland," *African Studies Review*, Vol. 0, Number 0 (2021), pp.3-6



Another potential contribution of my work is its focus on networks of Islamic education. The descendants of Cherno Muhammadu Jallow and those of his disciples followed the tradition of sending their children to obtain *tarbiyya* (Arabic: religious apprenticeship or ethical and spiritual training) from the offspring of their spiritual guides and leaders. These clerics also sent their children to Kaédi, Bokidiawé (near Matam, Fuuta Toro) or Saint-Louis to further their studies. Kaédi, which played an important role in the history of the Tijaniyya order, was a thriving religious center in southern Mauritania since at least the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> The town had a number of Tukolor scholarly lineages who trained many Muslims across the region. Around the same time, Bokidiawé's Islamic scholars had also earned a reputation as gifted teachers. Saint-Louis (locally known as Ndar) was “a center of Islamic learning and Sufi affiliation” since the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Highlighting the connections that these Fulbe clerics created with these Islamic centers of learning and scholarship demonstrates that studying regional figures sheds light on the complex nature of Sufi networks in West Africa. By following this educational tradition, the Fulbe clerics were engaging in mapping the religious landscape and knowledge bequeathed to them by their forebears.

Structure of the project: The study will be divided into six chapters, four of which are completed. The first, “Cherno Muhammadu Jallow, 1803-1883,” provides a biographical account of the life of Cherno Muhammadu Jallow, situating him within the broad societal shifts that took place before and during his lifetime. Jallow came from an important religious family in Fuuta Jallon (Guinea). At a young age, he left Guinea for Fuuta Toro to further his education. He later

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<sup>6</sup> Sean Hanretta, *Islam and Social Change in French West Africa: History of an Emancipatory Community* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 48

<sup>7</sup> David Robinson, *Paths of Accommodation: Muslim Societies and French Authorities in Senegal and Mauritania, 1880-1920* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000), 230

moved to Saint-Louis where he spent twelve years before eventually heading south to Saloum and the Firdu country.

Since Jallow and his network of disciples concentrated their efforts on bringing a diverse group of Fulbe into the Tijaniyya order, Chapter 2, “The Fulbe,” shifts the focus by examining the local intra-community interactions that shaped Fulbe society for over a century. Chapter 3, “Cherno Omar Jallow, 1862-1940,” focuses on Jallow’s eldest son, whom a British colonial officer recognized as one of the leading teachers of the Gambian Muslim community during the latter part of the colonial period.<sup>8</sup> Cherno Omar Jallow founded Madina Bafuloto and transformed it into a center of Islamic learning and scholarship.

Chapter 4, “Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow,” details the life history of Cherno Muhammadu’s oldest grandson, who also acquired the reputation of being a great marabout (cleric). Born in 1890 in Keur Mamadou Néné, Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow studied under one of his grandfather’s closest disciples in Djanget (a village in upper Casamance). After spending many years traveling and studying, he decided to return to his father, who at the time was living with one of Cherno Muhammadu’s disciples, Serigne Mass Kah.<sup>9</sup> After his father died in 1940, Cherno Muhammadu Baba became the spiritual leader of this regional Tijaniyya community. Under his leadership, the community underwent significant transformations with its influence growing at a spectacular rate.

Chapter 5, “Educational Networks,” analyzes the regional and transnational networks that shaped this regional Tijaniyya community in the second half of the twentieth century. Although relatively isolated in a rural landscape, Madina Bafuloto was in close economic and cultural

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<sup>8</sup> National Records Service (NRS), ARP 29/8 Annual Report North Bank Province, 1940, p. 21

<sup>9</sup> For more on Serigne Mass Kah, see Bala Saho, “Appropriation of Islam in a Gambian Village: Life and Times of Shaykh Mass Kah, 1827-1936,” *African Studies Quarterly*, Volume 12, Issue 4, (2011), pp. 1-21

connection with Islamic centers in Mauritania and Senegal, and from the 1950s forward, with the Middle East. Many from the village acquired scholarly credentials and intellectual prestige in educational institutions in Kuwait, Sudan, Libya, Morocco, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. After returning home, many of these graduates embraced farming, teaching, and rural life.

For Sufi Muslim clerics in the region, the twentieth-century religious landscape was very competitive as there emerged several sources of Muslim authority that competed for followers. However, Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow was able to grow the membership of his religious community in many important ways. Chapter 6, “Agriculture, Spirituality and Politics, c. 1950s-1996,” examines how Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow is believed to have used spiritual powers to heal the sick, free lands occupied by evil spirits and established major agricultural schemes in Niumi. Because of his success, the village’s religious and economic influence increased and he began to attract the attention of the local chiefs and politicians. As such, this chapter concludes with a discussion of Cherno Baba’s approach to politics, and his subsequent recognition as a national figure.

### **C) Preliminary Studies of Applicant:**

I am a historian of The Gambia with expertise on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition to publishing several peer-reviewed articles and book chapters on aspects of Gambian history, I also authored a book on Islam in the Gambia River region entitled *Islam, Power, and Dependency in the Gambia River Basin: The Politics of Land Control, 1790-1940* with the University of Rochester Press. Actually, I first discovered the story of Cherno Muhammadu Jallow and his descendants when I started researching this book. I have also published essays on other West African Muslim scholars, namely Shaykh Saad Bouh and Fodi Kabba Dumbuya. Moreover, folks

at the University of Pennsylvania and Michigan State University invited me to present aspects of my current project to their African Studies Centers.

Research accomplished: I have made tremendous progress on this project already. The project started in summer 2016 after my first book was published. Since then, I conducted research at the National Archives in Banjul, the Gambian Oral History Archives in Fajara, and the IFAN Library in Dakar. I also spent the period from December 2020 to August 2021 in Upper Casamance (Senegal) and Guinea-Bissau conducting interviews and collecting local documentary sources for this study. The bulk of the research for this book has been completed and four chapters of the manuscript including the introduction has been drafted.

#### **D) Sources and Methods:**

As with many Africanist projects dealing with the African past, my work relies heavily on the use of both African oral histories and European documentary sources. My methodological approach is in fact guided by two interrelated principles: 1) the premise that incorporating the voices of people who are often silenced is crucial and 2) writing African history *from an African perspective* is also important. (I would not “do history” any other way). If funded, I plan to interview key individuals in Madina Bafuloto members of the family, disciples and students of Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow. I am especially interested in learning about what Jallow’s story reveals about the link between agriculture, spirituality and politics in the Senegambia region. How was Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow able to expand his following? How did he manage his relationship with the local political elites and chiefs who increasingly tried to court him?

To be sure, the use of oral history as evidence has received its share of criticism with scholars pointing to numerous distortions and highly selective memories.<sup>10</sup> To compensate for the

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<sup>10</sup> See Martin A. Klein, “Studying the History of Those Who Would Rather Forget: Oral History and the Experience of Slavery,” *History in Africa* 16 (1989): 209-17; Jan Jansen, *The Griot’s Craft: An Essay on Oral Tradition and*

above limitations, I have and will continue to consult a variety of documentary sources to piece together this story. Nearly sixteen (16) years of active research in Senegal and The Gambia has familiarized me with the region's archives. In the Archives Nationales du Sénégal (ANS), I plan to consult the 1934 report entitled 10DA/0015 Territoires de la Casamance, Cercle de Kolda and the 1936 2G36/79 titled Kolda, rapport politique annuel. These files contain relevant information that would help me complete chapter 4 of the book. No biographical account of Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow (1890-1996) will be complete without an understanding of the broader societal shifts that were taking place in Upper Casamance where he spent much of his childhood as a Quranic student.

At the National Records Service in The Gambia, I hope to consult the Traveling Commissioner W. B. Stanley's 1920-23 Travelling Commissioner's Report-South Bank and the 1923-32 Traveling Commissioner's report for North Bank Province. I will also seek the 1940s and 1950s Commissioner's reports for the North Bank Province. These documents are essential to the book project because they contain crucial information about agriculture in Madina Bafuloto and the village's reputation as a center of Islamic education. Examining these records will also allow me to discuss the areas where many of the students and disciples of Cherno Muhammadu Baba Jallow came from.

In conducting these interviews and archival research, I will follow safe COVID-19 protocols including masking. I am happy to report that I am fully vaccinated and boosted twice. Besides, there are currently no travel restrictions or access to archives in The Gambia and Senegal. As such, I do not envision facing difficulty executing this project.

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Dipomacy (London & Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2000), 9; Donald R. Wright, "Beyond Migration and Conquest: Oral Traditions and Mandinka Ethnicity in Senegambia," *History in Africa* 12 (1985): 335-48

**Timeline:** I plan to do this research in summer 2023 (i.e., May 10 to August 10 2023).

With an OURC/Baker award, I will be able to travel during this time. This will be my travel schedule and research activity:

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Proposed Activity</b>
May 10 2023	Depart for Dakar, Senegal
May 11-June 11 2023	Research at the National Archives in Dakar, Senegal
June 12 2023	Depart for Madina Bafuloto, The Gambia
June 13-July 13 2023	Research in Madina Bafuloto and its surroundings
July 14 2023	Depart for Banjul, The Gambia
July 15 -August 10 2023	Research at the National Archives in Banjul
August 16 2023	Depart for Athens, OH

E) Collaboration: NA

F) Confidentiality: NA

## **6. Durable impact and Sustainability**

As an Associate professor in the Department of History, the most immediate and practical impact that the publication of this book would have on my career is that it would enable me to fulfill the research requirements for promotion to the rank of Full Professor. Furthermore, maintaining an active and relevant research agenda is crucial for augmenting my scholarly reputation as a professor.

Publishing the book also enhances the profile of my academic department and the African Studies Program where I also have an academic affiliation. A strong record of monograph publication by current faculty provides an important tool in recruiting and retaining outstanding candidates and graduate students (the History department and African Studies both offer MA degrees. History also is a PhD. granting department).

This project is in its completion phase. It previously received support from the Ohio University College of Arts and Sciences' Humanities Research Fund and a major grant from the Gerda Henkel Stiftung foundation. With your support, I hope to finish the research component of this project within the timeline given and have a complete draft of the whole manuscript no later than Spring 2024. I then plan on submitting the complete manuscript for review to a major university press. Publishing this book will enable me to shift attention to my project on the West African Aku diaspora and their entangled history with the Methodist missionaries of Colonial Bathurst (The Gambia).

## 7. Glossary/Definition of Terms:

**ANS:** refers to Archives Nationales du Sénégal –the main national archives in Senegal.

**Fula/Fulbe:** these words refer to the Fulani ethno-linguistic group who are scattered throughout many parts of West Africa including Senegal, The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau.

**IFAN:** refers to the Institut Fondamental d'Afrique Noire—a research center in Dakar established by the French during the colonial period.

**NRS:** refers to the National Records Service of the Republic of The Gambia. It is the country's main national archives.

**Sufism:** this word refers to Islamic mysticism.

**Sufi orders:** there are three types of Sufi orders in West Africa's Senegambian region. These are the Tijaniyya, the Qadriyya and the Muridiyya Sufi orders.

**Tarbiyya**—is an Arabic word for religious apprenticeship. Tarbiyya also refers ethical and spiritual training.

**Tariqa:** ('path,' religious Sufi 'order' or 'brotherhood') is a school or order of Sufism. It is a concept for the mystical teaching and spiritual practices of such an order.

**Tukolor:** Fula natives of the Fuuta Toro region of Senegal and southern Mauritania.

**Wird:** is an Arabic word referring to the litany of prayers that distinguish Sufi orders.



## 8. Bibliography

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## **9. Biographical Information**

Assan Sarr, Associate Professor of History  
Phone; 740.593.4355; Email: [sarr@ohio.edu](mailto:sarr@ohio.edu)

### **EMPLOYMENT:**

Aug. 2018 to date: Associate Professor, Department of History, Ohio University  
July 2018-June 2022: Director of Graduate Studies, Department of History, Ohio University  
Aug. 2013 –July 2018: Assistant Professor, Department of History, Ohio University  
Aug. 2010 –May 2013: Assistant Professor, History, College of Charleston, SC.

### **EDUCATION:**

Aug. 2010: Ph.D., History, Michigan State University  
Aug. 2005: M.A., International Studies/African Studies, Ohio University  
2004: B.A., History (Honors) & Development Studies, University of The Gambia

**LANGUAGES:** Wolof (fluent), Fula/Pularr/Fulfulde (fluent), Mandinka (fluent)

### **FELLOWSHIPS AND/GRANTS (selected):**

August 2022: Visiting Research Scholar, the Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa, the University of Ghana, Legon-Campus, Accra  
May 2022-August 2022: Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Kumasi-Ghana)  
April 2022: West African Research Association (WARA) Postdoctoral Fellowship  
Nov. 2020: Gerda Henkel Stiftung 8-Months Research Grant to The Gambia  
2019: Humanities Research Fund, Co. of Arts and Sciences, Ohio University  
2018: Baker Award, Office of the Vice President for Research, Ohio University  
2017: Humanities Research Fund, Co. of Arts and Sciences, Ohio University  
2016: 1804 Library Endowment & Arts and Humanities Junior Faculty Endowment Award 2015: Ohio University Research Committee (OURC) award  
2014–2017: Fellow, Charles Ping Institute for the Teaching of the Humanities, Ohio U.

### **AWARDS AND/RECOGNITION:**

Spring 2021: CIS Excellence in Teaching Award, Center for International Studies  
2019-20 Outstanding Faculty Research, Scholarship & Creative Activity Award  
2016-17 Jeanette G. Grasselli Brown Faculty Teaching Award in the Humanities

### **PUBLICATIONS:**

#### Book:

2016: *Islam, Power and Dependency in the Gambia River Basin: The Politics of Land Control, 1790-1940*. Rochester, NY: The University of Rochester Press

Peer-Reviewed scholarly journals and book chapters:

- “Political Cultures” in Mariana P. Candido (ed.) *A Cultural History of Slavery and Human Trafficking in the Age of Empire* (Bloomsbury Publishing PLC), forthcoming
- 2020: “Islamic Philosophy in Africa” *Handbook of Islam in Africa* (eds.) Fallou Ngom, Mustapha H. Kurfi & Toyin Falola. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 267-77
- 2019: “Women, Land and Power in the Late Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Gambia River Region” in *African Women and the Atlantic World: Power, Labour, and Mobility* (eds.) Adam Jones and Mariana Candido. Suffolk, GB: James Currey, pp. 38-54
- 2017: “Gender, Spirituality and Economic Change in Rural Gambia: Agricultural Production in the Lower Gambia Region, Eighteenth through the Twentieth Centuries,” *African Economic History*, Volume 45 (2), pp. 1-26
- 2017: “Sir Samuel John Forster, 1873-1940” in *Profiles of Gambian Political Leaders in the Decolonisation Era* (ed.) Jeggan C. Senghor. Leicester, UK: Global Hands Publishing, pp. 18-46
- 2014: “Land, Power and Dependency along the Gambia River, Late Eighteenth to Early Nineteenth Centuries,” *African Studies Review*, Vol. 57 (Issue 03), pp. 101-121
- 2013: “A Story of Bathurst’s (Gambia) Black-Coated Workers, c1929-1941,” *Childhood in Africa: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. 3 (1), pp.1-15
- 2009: “Fighting Over the Swamps: Conflict and Community across the Gambia River Basin, Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries,” *Mande Studies*. 11, pp.135-153

Co-authored articles & essays:

- 2019: “Gambia” with Donald R. Wright in *Oxford Bibliographies in African Studies*. Ed. Paul Zeleza. New York: Oxford University Press
- 2017: “Briefing: Autocracy, Migration, and The Gambia’s ‘Unprecedented’ 2016 Election” with Niklas Hultin, Baba Jallow & Benjamin Lawrance in *African Affairs, (Lond)* Volume 116, Issue 463, 1, pp. 321-340
- 2017: “The Ambiguity of Gender: Ifi Amadiume and The Writing of Gender History in Igboland” with Marion G. Mendy in *Journal of West African History*, Volume 3, issue 2, pp. 109-116

Encyclopedia Entries:

- 2017: “The Intellectual World System of the Senegal River Basin: Saint-Louis (Ndar), the Gambia River Basin, and the Work of Sheikh Saad Bouh” in *Le Cheikh Des Deux Rives: Actes du Colloque International Centenaire Cheikhna Cheikh Saad Bouh 1917-2017*. Dakar, Presses Universitaires De Dakar, pp. 63-77
- 2013: “Fodi Kabba Dumbuya” in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Three, edited by Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer and e-tal. Leiden and Boston: Brill, pp. 112-113
- 2012: “Fenda Lawrence” in Henry Louis Gates and Emmanuel K. Akyeampong (editors) *Dictionary of African Biography*, Vol. 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 474-476

Book Reviews:

- 2019: Review of John H. Hanson, *The Ahmadiyya in the Gold Coast: Muslim Cosmopolitans in the British Empire*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press in *American Historical Review*, pp. 1186-1187
- 2017: Review of Michael F. Robinson, *The Lost White Tribe: Explorers, Scientists, and the Theory That Changed a Continent*. New York, Oxford University Press in *Journal of Historical Geography* 58, pp. 116-117
- 2015: Review of Carola Lentz, *Land, Mobility and Belonging in West Africa*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press in *Journal of West African History*, 1.1, pp. 179-81
- 2013: Review of Nwando Achebe, *The Female King of Colonial Nigeria: Ahebi Ugbabe*. Bloomington, Indiana University Press in *Journal of World History* 24:2, pp. 485-87
- 2012: Review of K. Cuno and T. Walz, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: Histories of Trans-Saharan Africans in the Nineteenth-Century Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Mediterranean*. Cairo, New York: The American University in Cairo Press in *Journal of Northeast African Studies*, Volume 12, Issue 1, pp. 313-15
- 2009: Review of A. E. Afigbo, *The Abolition of the Slave Trade in Southeastern Nigeria, 1885-1950*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press in *African Studies Quarterly*, Volume 10, Issue 4, pp. 92-94

#### **Ohio University service (selected)**

- September 2021: member, Search Committee for the Ohio University Press Director
- Spring 2020: Chair, African Studies Graduate Admission Committee
- Fall 2019 to date: University Standing Committee: Graduate Council
- Sept. 1 2018-to date: Member of The Ohio University Press (OUP) Editorial Board
- Spring 2017 (3-year term): Member of Robert and Rene Glidden Visiting Professorship Selection Committee (Faculty Senate Executive Committee)
- Fall 2016- Spring 2017: National Resource Center (NRC Grant) Committee, African Studies
- Fall 2016 –to date Advisory Board, African Studies Program
- Fall 2015: Committee Member, Search for Director of African Studies
- Fall 2014-to date: Member of the Executive Committee, Contemporary History Institute

#### **Service to the profession and community (selected)**

- June 2022: External Reviewer, promotion to the rank of associate professor, University of Sierra Leone
- June 2022: Higher Education Advisory Committee, Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science & Technology, The Gambia
- Spring 2022: Editorial Board, the Carolina Lowcountry and Atlantic World series with the University of South Carolina Press
- September 2021-to date: Editorial board of the Journal for Slavery and Data Preservation
- November 2020 -October 2021: elected Vice Chair, Islam in Africa Studies Group
- Fall 2019 –to date: Editorial Board Member, *Enslaved Publishing Platform* [www.enslaved.org](http://www.enslaved.org)
- January 2019: External reviewer, tenure track faculty, Pomona College, CA
- Dec. 2017- April 24, 2018: Associate Editor (manuscript), *Journal of West African History*
- Dec. 2017–to date: Consultant, International African-American Museum, Charleston SC

## 10. Other Support

### A. Previous University Funding.

Spring 2020: College of Arts and sciences' Humanities Research Fund \$2,000

Project title: "History of the Tijaniyya in southern Senegambia"

Spring 2019: CAS Humanities Research Fund \$2,500

Project title: "History of the Tijaniyya in southern Senegambia"

### B. External Funding.

In November 2020: Gerda Henkel Stiftung foundation €38, 000

Project title: "Cherno Jallow's Calling and the Founding of a Regional Tijaniyya Community: Madina Bafuloto, Gambia, Through Two Centuries, 1803-1996"

## 11. Budget and justification for this project:

The sources required to complete this project cannot be conducted online or in more easily accessible archives in the US or Europe. Thus, I must travel to two archives in Senegal and The Gambia to consult these files. I would like to conduct some interviews in and around Madina Bafuloto (the spiritual center of this religious organization).

I am requesting \$15,000 from your committee in order to purchase roundtrip tickets, pay for lodgings, meals and domestic transportation. The bulk of the expenses will be on meals, domestic transportation in West Africa and lodgings for almost three months. I have no matching funds to support this project. Below is the breakdown of the proposed budget:

### Estimates for Senegal-The Gambia Trip

**A. Consumable Supplies. None.**

**B. Travel**

Itemized Expense	Amount
Airfare: Round-trip ticket (CMH- DAKAR)	\$1,730 <sup>1</sup>
Travel overland from Senegal to The Gambia: Public Transportation (Round trip) \$400 X 2	\$800
<b>Lodging and domestic transportation:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Airbnb/cheap hotel in Dakar (30 nights X \$110) = \$3,300.00</i></li> <li>• <i>Domestic transportation in Dakar = \$650.00</i></li> <li>• <i>Domestic transportation in The Gambia (62 days X \$24.19) = \$1,500</i></li> <li>• <i>Lodging in Banjul (32 days X \$75) = \$2,400.00</i></li> <li>• <i>Lodging Madina Bafuloto (30 days X \$25) = \$750</i></li> </ul>	\$8,600
<b>Meals:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 nights in Dakar (\$45X30 days) = \$1,350</li> <li>• Meals while in Gambia (62 days X \$30) = \$1,860</li> </ul>	\$3,210
Travel from Athens to CMH (roundtrip)	\$60
Translation of an Arabic manuscript	\$600
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> The current quote on Concur is \$1,318.37. From experience, this price will increase dramatically in the coming months. Thus, I am budgeting \$1,700 for airfare (economy class).



TRIP SUMMARY

**Select Flights or Trains**

Round Trip  
 CMH - DSS  
 Depart: Wed, 05/10/2023  
 Return: Wed, 08/16/2023

**Finalize Trip**

[Change Search](#)

**Depart - Wed, May 10**

Depart 06:35 A - 12:55 P

**Return - Wed, Aug 16**

Arrive 11:50 A - 11:08 P

**Price**

Price \$1,318.37 - \$1,325.75

**Display Settings**

- Hide flights without refundable fares
- Hide Propeller Planes
- Depart/Return Same Airport Only

**Airport Filters**

- Depart**
- Departure**
- CMH - Columbus, OH (0.00)
- Arrival**
- DSS - Ndiass, Senegal (0.00)
- Return**
- Departure**
- DSS - Ndiass, Senegal (0.00)
- Arrival**
- CMH - Columbus, OH (0.00)

[Connecting Airport Filters](#)

COLUMBUS, OH TO NDIASS, SENEGAL  
 WED, MAY 10 - WED, AUG 16

Show as **USD**

[Hide matrix](#) [Print / Email](#)

All 6 results	Delta
	Preferred
1 stop 6 results	1,318.37 6 results

[Shop by Fares](#) [Shop by Schedule](#)

Please note: search results are based on your selected criteria and other factors including company policies. Fare, schedule or availability information may not be complete or in neutral order.

**BASIC ECONOMY FARES** include the following restrictions: No seat assignment until check-in, No same-day confirmed or same-day standby travel changes, No refunds, No paid or complimentary upgrades, No ticket changes, No Priority Boarding for purchase.

To view and book different fare options offered, please click on "Show All Details" and then "View More Fares".

Flight Number Search  Sorted By: **Lowest / Earliest** Displaying: 6 out of 6 results.

- Delta 06:35a CMH 07:00a DSS 1 stop JFK 20h 25m **\$1,318.37**

02:00a DSS → 11:50a CMH 1 stop JFK 13h 50m [View Fares](#)

Preferred Airline for Ohio University / Least Cost Logical Fare [Show all details](#)
- Delta 06:35a CMH 07:00a DSS 1 stop JFK 20h 25m **\$1,318.37**

02:00a DSS → 05:03p CMH 1 stop JFK 19h 03m [View Fares](#)

Preferred Airline for Ohio University / Least Cost Logical Fare [Show all details](#)
- Delta 12:55p CMH 07:00a DSS 1 stop JFK 14h 05m **\$1,318.37**

02:00a DSS → 11:50a CMH 1 stop JFK 13h 50m [View Fares](#)

Preferred Airline for Ohio University / Least Cost Logical Fare [Show all details](#)
- Delta 12:55p CMH 07:00a DSS 1 stop JFK 14h 05m **\$1,318.37**

02:00a DSS → 05:03p CMH 1 stop JFK 19h 03m [View Fares](#)

Preferred Airline for Ohio University / Least Cost Logical Fare [Show all details](#)
- Delta 06:35a CMH 07:00a DSS 1 stop JFK 20h 25m **\$1,325.75**

02:00a DSS → 11:08p CMH 1 stop JFK 25h 08m [View Fares](#)

Preferred Airline for Ohio University [Show all details](#)
- Delta 12:55p CMH 07:00a DSS 1 stop JFK 14h 05m **\$1,325.75**

02:00a DSS → 11:08p CMH 1 stop JFK 25h 08m [View Fares](#)

Preferred Airline for Ohio University [Show all details](#)

Displaying: 6 out of 6 results.

**Subject:** Re: Mise en relation (voyage d'étude aux Archives du Sénégal)  
**Date:** Monday, September 27, 2021 at 2:04:03 PM Eastern Daylight Time  
**From:** Ibra Sene  
**To:** Sarr, Assan, CHEIKHOU OUMAR Tall, Pam, Adama  
**Attachments:** image001.png

Bonjour Dr. Pam,

Merci beaucoup de nous avoir mis en contact avec M. Tall. M. Tall, merci beaucoup pour la disponibilité. Je ne manquerai pas de me signaler lors de ma prochaine descente aux Archives. Mon collègue Dr. Sarr est un frère de la Gambie qui enseigne à Ohio University. Il t'enverra un message certainement.

Bien cordialement,  
IS

---

**Ibra Sene, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor  
Department of History &  
Global and International Studies Program  
400 E. University Street  
Wooster, OH 44691 USA  
P: (330) 263-2622  
F: (330) 263-2614  
E-mail: [isene@wooster.edu](mailto:isene@wooster.edu)



---

**From:** "Sarr, Assan" <sarr@ohio.edu>  
**Date:** Monday, September 27, 2021 at 12:04 PM  
**To:** CHEIKHOU OUMAR Tall <cheikhoumartall@gmail.com>, "Pam, Adama" <a.pam@unesco.org>  
**Cc:** Ibra Sene <ISene@wooster.edu>  
**Subject:** Re: Mise en relation (voyage d'étude aux Archives du Sénégal)

Merci beaucoup Dr. Pam et M. Tall. À bientôt. Serigne Ibra –jaajeffate.

Cordialement,

Assan

---

**From:** CHEIKHOU OUMAR Tall <cheikhoumartall@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Monday, September 27, 2021 at 11:54 AM  
**To:** "Pam, Adama" <a.pam@unesco.org>

**Cc:** "isene@wooster.edu" <isene@wooster.edu>, "Sarr, Assan" <sarr@ohio.edu>

**Subject:** Re: Mise en relation (voyage d'étude aux Archives du Sénégal)

Bonjour Pam

J'espère que tu vas bien aussi.

Que puis-je faire pour ce système de parrainage ?

Je serai ravi d'accueillir M. Sarr aux archives du Sénégal et l'assister dans ses recherches inchallah.

Salutations à M. Sene et M. sarr en copie.

Bien cordialement.