

## NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION AND ORTHOGRAPHY

The system of transcription adopted in the text follows the conventions of the international system of Bamako, a slight variant on the official Senegalese transcription in which ‘ñ’ replaces ‘ny’.

### TRANSCRIPTION OF SOUNDS IN PULAAR

#### Vowels

Short vowel sounds are transcribed as single vowels – a, e, i, o, u.

Long vowel sounds are transcribed by a doubling of the letter, such as ‘aa’, ‘ee’, ‘ii’, ‘oo’, ‘uu’.

The last ‘e’ of a word is always sounded, and resembles an ‘é’ in French.

#### Consonants

c – as in ‘church’

g – as in ‘garage’

j – as in ‘jam’

k – as in ‘cat’

ŋ – as in ‘song’

ny – as in the Spanish ‘mañana’

b, d and y – are glottalised consonants

Transcription of Arabic words has followed a simplified system and attempts not to overcomplicate spellings by the strict or exact use of all diacritical marks etc.

### ORTHOGRAPHY OF PLACE AND PERSONAL NAMES

The orthography of place names in Senegal varies according to author, as well as with respect to the historical period in which they were recorded, and to the spelling conventions of the language in which they are transcribed. Not only are there French and English spellings, but more recently orthographic systems have been developed that reflect more closely the specifics of local vernaculars, in particular Pulaar in this case. I have often used the most common forms of spelling, although on close inspection they are not necessarily consistent with the demands of the new orthographic

systems. I often note in brackets alternative spellings widespread throughout the literature in the hope that this may help comprehension.

One particularly problematic area is personal names, many of which are now inscribed in a specific form through the procedures of the Senegalese state with respect to birth, marriage and death certificates, and so forth. However, the transcription of personal and place names in the French literature is often not consistent from one author to another. For example, the patronym 'Cam' or 'Caam' in Pulaar is rendered as Thiam, Tyam and even Chiam in French orthography. I have adopted where possible spellings that follow the vernacular systems, although in the case of many well-established names or names of contemporary persons I have also noted the conventions set by French spelling, for to do otherwise would be to introduce confusion at the expense of orthographic exactitude. To avoid confusion in certain cases, I indicate in parentheses alternative spellings according to different orthographic systems.