Sewing machines and computers? Seeing gender in institutional and intellectual cultures at the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar, Senegal[1]

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Introduction

The Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar *(l'Université Cheikh Anta Diop* or UCAD) has a trajectory linked to the colonial history of Senegal, the vicissitudes of the construction of the independent nation, the decrees of the Bretton Woods Institutions during the socio-economic crisis of the "lost decades", and the opportunities and uncertainties of globalisation. Bathily, Diouf and Mobdj (1998) have described these historical periods in Senegal as the assimilationist years (1918-57), the nationalist years (1946-60), the anti-imperialist years (1960-75), and the resurgence of capitalism and corporations, judged to be ongoing to this day.

UCAD is one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in francophone West Africa, and was the University of Dakar until 30 March 1986.

There is an existing literature on the contribution of the Cheikh Anta Diop University to the formation of Senegalese and African intellectuals, the struggle for democracy and liberty, and the respect for academic freedom and university autonomy (principles referred to in French as *les franchises universitaires*). As Sawyerr (2004) explains, the university was an essential part of the post-colonial project to develop the nation, hence its public status. However, it was to become a site of resistance to development policies. The economic crisis of the 1980s seriously eroded the financial resources of UCAD, which came primarily from the state; it destroyed the quality of teaching and research, and negatively affected the living standards of teachers, students and administrative and service personnel, at the same time that liberalisation and globalisation posed new challenges to development and higher education.

The crisis, not restricted to the university but affecting all of society,

shed light on the place and role of women in development, as indicated in studies such as *Senegal 2015* and *Femmes Senegalaises à l'horizon 2015*. The objective of this research has been to better understand the relationship between gender and the institutional and intellectual culture of UCAD. On 20 April 1996, the Senegalese Association of University Graduates held a conference entitled "Discrimination against women in the workforce", during which Professor Souleymane Niang, the former vice-chancellor (recteur) of UCAD, deplored the under-representation of women at faculty and university assemblies. He warned, however, against positive discrimination, describing it as an "Anglo-Saxon" concept. For him, "the university [is] a non-discriminatory space" (UCAD: 1998).

But does this official notion of academic neutrality, as put forth in discourses of science and knowledge, match the institutional reality of the university? During an African regional consultation preceding a global conference on higher education, Professor L. P. Makhubu insisted on the converse. She wrote:

> For those women who have been recruited to the staff of universities, there are still numerous hurdles to overcome in order to rise to higher academic and administrative echelons. Some of these are occasioned by social and cultural demands on their time, making it extremely difficult for them to devote the kind of time required for excellence in research and scholarship. For many it becomes a choice between family and career. This, in the main, explains the inability of women to satisfy the promotions criteria of universities, many of which are based on strong research (Makhubu: 1998).

Such questions will be explored here: that is, how are men and women affected by the institutional and intellectual culture of UCAD, and how do they, in turn, shape it?

Conceptual framework of this study

Institutions, Gilles Ferreol asserts, are "marked by the seal of temporality and respond to the imperatives of socialisation, control and regulation. Institutions are manifest... as rules of action and aim to establish discipline [in life], based on stable and reciprocal anticipations" (1995, 70). The university, like all institutions, is a site of cultural production, reproduction and transformation and, as such, is profoundly marked by gender.

The institutional and intellectual cultures of UCAD have not shattered inequitable gender relations or smashed policies and practices that exclude

women, despite the fact that the university has always championed democracy. As in Senegalese society, masculine and feminine identities in the university institution are circumscribed and non-egalitarian, again despite the prevailing global discourses on gender equity and democracy. But due to the interaction between local and global sites, these gendered identities are increasingly being negotiated and contested, with impact upon the institutional and intellectual cultures of the university. The question is, how does knowledge transform into power, and institute a logic of exclusion which informs the very production of knowledge? In other words, what is the connection between the institutional and intellectual cultures of the university, and what is the place and impact of gender within them?

In the larger study that I conducted for the Gender and Institutional Culture project of the African Gender Institute[2] my main research questions were:

- What is the nature of the institutional culture of UCAD?
- What is the link between the institutional and intellectual cultures at UCAD? What is the nature of academic neutrality? How is the intellectual activity of women constructed?

This article will explore the second set of questions by examining two initiatives at UCAD: the initiative of women's leadership for development and democracy, and the programme for teaching, research and documentation of women's studies and the analysis of gender relations in the social sciences in Africa.

Methodology

It was imperative to develop a methodological approach for my research that incorporated archival research, interviews and observation. The objective of such a multi-faceted approach was to bring the marginal to the centre of analysis. Thus, if knowledge gives access to decision-making positions in the university (as vice-chancellor, dean, or director of college or institute), and if in addition it is produced not by insubstantial individuals but by men and women with socially and culturally constructed identities, doesn't academic neutrality become a façade for the inequality that determines gender relations?

The archival component of the research initially focused on two types of documents. The first were official documents concerning the university crisis, with a focus on the relationship between state power and the university, and between the state and the students. Secondly, documentation produced by trade unions, the university administration and the students was also used to trace the history of the institution. I also read policy documents on higher

education and UCAD (e.g. seminars, reports from the vice-chancellor, minutes from faculty meetings [specifically the Faculty of Science and Technology and the Faculty of Humanities], trade union and student documents).

These documents revealed the invisibility of women at the heart of UCAD. This compelled me to also conduct interviews, so as to find traces of women at the university. The interviews especially made it possible to discuss with women their personal experience as women, to know whether being a woman has been an impediment to their academic career path and especially, at a more fundamental level, how this aspect has been mainstreamed in the knowledge they produced themselves to change the intellectual and institutional cultures of their university. In this part of the research, I prioritised conducting interviews with women who had been at the university for a relatively long time, and those who occupied strategic positions in the university hierarchy and union movements. I interviewed:

- the woman responsible for the leadership initiative (*l´initiative leadership*), who is also one of the women in charge of the Association of Senegalese Women University Graduates (*l´Association Sénégalaise des Femmes diplômées de l´Université*);[3]
- the author of the programme entitled "The teaching, research and documentation of women's studies and the analysis of gender relations in the social sciences in Africa";
- three women trade unionists;
- three administrative directors of the university (two of whom are women), in charge of university housing, juridical affairs, teaching and reform;
- the dean of the Faculty of Sciences and the registrar of the Faculty of Arts, who provided the minutes of their faculty assemblies; and
- a director of a school and a faculty institute.

I then interviewed students on the basis of a predetermined profile, including:
- members of student societies;
- members of the "leadership initiative" programme; and
- members of religious associations.

In addition, I interviewed two other students: a former member of the Student Society of the Faculty of Arts and a member of the General Union of Students of Dakar (*l´Union Générale des Étudiants de Dakar*, UGED). Following the state-university crisis of February 2006, I continued my investigation with a

discussion with two students who were living on campus, in the areas which were most affected by the intervention of law enforcement agents. A female master's student who was finishing her course in the Faculty of Humanities assisted me in my research. Other students helped to transcribe interviews and carry out archival research.

Ethical and socio-cultural considerations were an important dimension of this research process. Interviewees, both teachers and students, were very sensitive over what would become of our discussions. For example, they were concerned about the things they said referring to their colleagues, and about their personal privacy, while also being conscious of institutional considerations. One of the interviewees, speaking of her own career and domestic constraints, explicitly stated the limits of what she was willing to share, saying: "I will not say that because of the microphone. If we had been alone, I would have told you, I lived this history." This censoring and self-censoring by the interviewee demonstrates that socio-cultural considerations interfere with the research process and can thus constitute a limiting factor. As long as there is a relationship of identification of roles, status, and thus of equality, establishing confidence between researcher and interviewee, there can be freedom of expression within the interview. The relationship between researcher and interviewee is often linked to that which can exist between different age classes, which is a common feature of West African societies. The researcher thus has to be conscious of the ways in which the research dynamic can be disturbed: for instance, the presence of my young research assistant was not always appropriate during interviews, especially when private subjects were tackled, or when examples implicating other faculty members were given. A colleague confirmed this tension: "I first started [working here] in 1971 – I won't say my age, because that does not concern young students." I therefore re-adjusted my approach for interviews with female colleagues to stress our proximity and intimacy, leaving out my research assistant.

My relationship with my assistant was instructive in another way: having participated in a number of interviews and worked on transcription, she was able to identify with some of the themes that arose, as she herself is a female student and teacher at the university. I explained the sense and objective of the research to her but deliberately chose not to interview her at the beginning or during the research, in order to see how she would respond to the research material, and what issues she would choose to raise with me, perhaps in confidence. As she came to understand the objectives of the research, she became more involved. For example, she chose to broach a subject which was often avoided by students,

namely that of sexuality. She told me of the so-called "right" of teachers to have sexual access to students (*le droit de cuissage*), and of sexual harassment. One of her teachers had wanted to start an unwelcome relationship with her, perhaps playing on her naivety. She also shared the difficulty she faced in speaking to other students about this issue, and confirmed that her case was not unique, suggesting the reality of such practices at UCAD.

Her experience foregrounds the question of how such issues can be brought to the surface, especially in a society in which virginity is still upheld as a cardinal virtue for girls, and in which they are still subject to a great deal of social control. Claudel Hall, the campus residence hall for female students, has a negative image linked to the fancy cars one sees parked outside it at certain hours of the day. This reveals, in my opinion, that where female students live automatically becomes a site for complex social debate and contestation about issues of social and behavioural control. Many female students spoke of their parents' opposition to them living in Claudel Hall, and explained that their parents were resigned to it because of the difficulty of finding alternative lodging in Dakar. My research assistant's experience suggests that the university has not escaped the patriarchal values that dominate society. Values concerning modesty and dignity, described as *kersa* and *soutoura* in the Wolof language, preclude the public discussion of subjects such as sexuality and sexual harassment. At the heart of the university are men and women who uphold such values, which in turn structure their imaginations and generate the institutional and intellectual cultures of the university.

Women's intellectual agency

My research suggests the need for gender to be taken into account at both the individual and institutional levels so that equity and equality between the sexes are placed at the heart of the university's vision and policy. I will not discuss the question of taking up of gender issues at the individual level here, in part because this can be facilitated by institutional change. At present, the university finds itself embroiled in a certain dynamic created by its interactions with its own local society as well as with global forces. Academic neutrality is belied by the under-representation of women in decision-making structures in the university, as well as among students, showing that ultimately the university remains a place for men.

Although this institution resists local and global discourses on gender,[4]

there have been advances in democratisation and the incorporation of gender issues. Two such experiences will be considered here:

• an initiative on female leadership for development and democracy; and
• a project entitled "The teaching, research and documentation of women's studies and the analysis of gender relations in the social sciences in Africa."

These two initiatives reveal the limitations and paradoxes of efforts to take gender seriously within the institutional and intellectual cultures of the university.

1. *Leadership Initiative of Women for Development and Democracy*

UCAD is a masculine space[5] in terms of its deliberative and representational structures, its decision-making procedures, and also the culture of its members. In addition, democracy and academic "neutrality" do not in fact reinforce equality, but rather consolidate the exclusion of women (Diaw: 2006). It was in this context that the project, the Leadership Initiative of Women for Development and Democracy (hereafter referred to as the leadership project) was conceived. This initiative was the fruit of cooperation between UCAD and the University of Kansas, and has three components:

• Leadership development based on the Virginia Tech model, which aims to enhance the leadership skills of women.
• Professional development, which stresses women's access to technology, internet research methods, subsidies to participate in conferences, and the setting up of computer laboratories for women academics and students.[6]
• Sensitisation on gender issues, targeting the university community. To this end, a University Committee on Equity was set up. Among its other duties, the committee meets the vice-chancellor and his staff every term to discuss gender issues.

This sensitisation project includes addressing the need to highlight the work of women academics, and organising a banquet to honour the woman of the year. The project is undoubtedly opportune, all the more so as it is the first of its kind on gender.

Yet it is important to consider if the leadership project has taken the most appropriate steps to ensure its establishment and durability at UCAD. The Faculty of Humanities at UCAD is an integral part of the project, together with the Faculty of Science and Technology, so as to be on par with the

structure used at the American institution. However, that Humanities did not effectively participate in the project is linked to the non-indigenous nature of the initiative.[7] Many humanities colleagues working on gender and seeking to connect the academy with gender activism were not involved in the project.

In fact, the reception of the leadership project was linked to prior factors that prevented actors at UCAD from truly initiating it. For instance, the official statement of the leadership project speaks of the need for it at UCAD, but does not state how these needs were identified and by whom they were formulated. This tension is clear in the unequivocal judgement of a female colleague, speaking about the project:

> It is the equivalent of the famous development projects that were designed in favour of women […] They call it leadership, they provide the instruments, naturally, since they speak of machines, sewing machines [in the past] and now of computers. It is simply a transposition but what is the qualitative change? Because when we speak about relationships between men and women, of gender, and of feminism, we make a transformation in the environment in which we live […] they do not build on the existing potential that we have.

The main problem identified concerns the unequal relations between Northern and Southern universities. The institutional logic of incorporating gender at UCAD is inscribed in this macro-economy, but in such a way that it leaves little room for initiative in southern universities because funding comes from the North. One of the female students from the Faculty of Sciences who participated in the leadership project described the situation with precision:

> If I had to change something in the project, it would be to review the hierarchy, because we are not very autonomous, often we are trapped by the hierarchy… often we cannot take important decisions immediately, we have to wait for the opinion of (the Senegalese co-director); she also has to consult M. (the American co-director). The course is to give us a certain degree of responsibility to take decisions which are important for us to progress [but] we are forced to bend to their opinion, to their decisions because they provided the material that we could have obtained here.

Over and above such comments on the inequalities built into the project, the institutional approach of the leadership initiative is technocratic. It seems to take on gender in a way that cannot transform the institutional reality or culture of UCAD. It is not linked to research, to curricular design, or to the management and decision-making structures that exclude women at the

university. The institutional approach of the project is limited because it does not define any real transformative strategy.

Some female students in the project unwittingly confirmed these limitations. In response to the question of why they had become involved in the leadership project, they replied that they were leaders or called to become leaders, and thus they were taking the project as a means to being able to assume their future responsibilities. This individualistic and careerist perspective does not seek to deconstruct "the complex dynamics of injustice and postcolonial inequality" (Mama, 2003); it consists rather of "climbing the ladder" in a world dominated by markets and competition. This is undoubtedly a manifestation of the impact of liberalism.

It is important at this stage to emphasize the disconnect which exists in this regard between the university and its society: the discourse of women in political parties and civil society criticises the patriarchal nature of society, deconstructs patriarchal power relations in both the private and public spheres, and advocates women's access to decision-making fora and political parity between men and women (*la parité*). The autonomy which marks the status of the university and its academic neutrality function, by contrast, to strengthen and consolidate conservatism; they render the institution impermeable to the debates surrounding gender relations in society.

Here it is also important to emphasize the limits of the institutional incorporation of gender at UCAD by considering in what ways this actually affects relationships between men and women. Because it was administered from the top, the leadership project has been very limited in its impact. Despite its achievements – organising two end-of-year banquets and designating a woman academic of the year, creating computer labs at the women's hall of residence, providing scholarships for women, teaching and sensitising young women to gender and leadership issues – it cannot be said that the project is equal to its task. It suffers from a top-down administration that limits its appeal among the members of its target group.

2. *The teaching, research and documentation of women's studies and the analysis of gender relations in the social sciences in Africa*

There is a need to discuss the paradoxes of the institutional incorporation of gender at UCAD. If the institution has been receptive to the leadership initiative discussed above, which was the fruit of Senegalese-American cooperation, it has

been less open to a project which was first proposed by Professor Fatou Sow of UCAD in October 2000. This project is entitled "The teaching, research and documentation of women's studies and the analysis of gender relations in the social sciences in Africa." Its development was motivated by two experiences:

- The difficulty experienced by Sow in giving a class on gender. She said: "As soon as I announced the class at UCAD on Women in African Culture, my colleagues accepted it graciously, even though they had difficulty placing it in the curriculum. When the title changed to Women and Gender Relations, they were perplexed. As for the concept of anthropology of the sexes, it shocked their sensibilities, even though I explained that it was to be a reflection on social relations between the sexes, not on copulation" (Imam *et al*, 2004: 47). The hostility of the institution towards the concept of gender can be linked to its institutional and intellectual cultures. This experience shows how the institutional culture can actually be anti-intellectual, upholding the notion that knowledge and the mode of production of knowledge are not gendered.

- This can be contrasted with the involvement of Sow in research and activist networks in Senegal and elsewhere, in the new epistemological and theoretical field of gender, as described in the book which she edited with Ayesha Imam and Amina Mama at Codesria (Imam *et al*, 2004). These experiences led her to realise the extent to which the need for research on women was being ignored at African universities in general and at UCAD in particular. At a time when African social sciences were being revisited because of the crisis of development, and as gender was being proposed as a new paradigm, it was necessary for these new, gender-sensitive approaches, debates and research to be diffused and discussed. This required a defined teaching programme. The delay in recognising this at UCAD can be considered relative to the intellectual challenge theorised by Jane Bennett (2002); this challenge constituted a central platform of militant activism in the 1980s for the creation of independent research and advocacy networks (cf. AFARD), stressing the absence of gender in teaching and research. Compounding the problem were the various crises facing the university at this time: a socio-economic crisis following structural adjustment threatening its very survival; and the rise of religious fundamentalism. These factors did not help preoccupations with gender matters on campus. Paradoxically, the increasingly important impact of gender in the Senegalese public sphere and the role that certain university

activists played in this development did not combine to challenge the intellectual and institutional cultures at UCAD.

It is as part of this context that the project on women's studies must be considered. The project had eight specific objectives, meant to contribute to "enlarging intellectual space and promoting academic liberty, as well as the social responsibility of academics" (Imam and Mama, 1994: 97):

1. Promote reflection on and teaching of gender.
2. Discuss and promote research methodologies on gender in the social sciences.
3. Encourage and seek rigorous academic work considering the realities and the debates on women and gender relations in Africa.
4. Have appropriate documentation on women at the disposal of researchers, students and the public at large (e.g. women's associations, NGOs, etc.).
5. Organise a space for debates and training on women and gender relations, using existing paradigms and creating new ones through local, national and international seminars.
6. Consolidate the teachings and research by the creation of research groups and reflection on these questions.
7. Promote inter-university cooperation.
8. Open the university space to other national structures such as specialised administrative services, local societies, NGOs, international organisations.

The project statement demonstrates that the timid initiatives that already existed – such as the Sociology Department's courses, including "Sociology of the Family and Social Relations of the Sexes" or the Philosophy Department's course in "Gender and Philosophy" – had nothing in common with the number of academics and researchers who are seriously working with gender. Many of these are activists in social movements.

The lack of continuity between teaching and research and activism shows that on this issue, UCAD and Senegalese society are out of sync. The resistance to the women's studies project, most notably from the university-wide Faculty Assembly, which disapproved of it, can be attributed to male domination in the supposedly gender-blind space of the university and to the innate conservatism of the institution.[8] Mkandawire's words at the closing of the seminar, "Engendering Social Sciences", suggest how much territory must be breached, epistemologically, to create the intellectual revolution that will allow for the adoption of gender. As he says, "I am now convinced there is a

corpus of methodologies, approaches and empirical studies based on gender analysis awaiting to be appropriated by a newly converted social science community" (Imam *et al*, 2004). The necessary epistemological rupture is linked to the social responsibility of intellectuals, and asks fundamental questions: who produces knowledge, for whom and for what purpose?

Through these questions it is possible to see the ideological bias of knowledge that can be conservative by refusing to go "beyond the masks",[9] and to see the unequal power relations between men and women in a given community such as the university. It is also possible to see alternatives that can be revolutionary in seeking to change these power relations, by considering them in a critical manner. How can such conservative knowledge claim to be scientific when it silences a part of our social reality, ignoring one of the most important social dynamics? This state of affairs violates the principle of equality between men and women and thereby produces injustice.

The decision of the Faculty Assembly clearly shows the ideological position that sustains the institutional and intellectual cultures of UCAD as it continues to subscribe to supposed academic neutrality. This is what I called "The Laziness of the Academy" in a contribution to a feminist colloquium in Dakar (UCAD, 1999). It is indisputably linked to that which Collin, Pisier and Varikas called the:

> French singularity which is explained perhaps by the effects of an ideological conception of universalism which covers and hides a double particularism: on the one hand, the particularism of a national tradition [i.e. French] which has been historically identified with the universal and, on the other hand, the particularism of a discipline which has long masked the sex of the knowing-subject (Collin *et al*, 2000: 9).

From my own experience and my own discipline, philosophy, I argue that an approach that takes gender into account can alter the meaning of a philosophical text. One of the main lessons learned is that the invisibility of the woman in philosophy is an ideological construct, which we as academics continue to perpetuate by reproducing exactly what we have learned and, more than anything else, the way in which we learned it. A colleague in the Philosophy Department confided how the same feminist colloquium opened new perspectives to her, allowing her to initiate a course entitled "Gender and Philosophy" in 1999-2000. This suggests the pertinence of Charmaine Pereira's interrogation, in asking, "How do we produce knowledge about social realities, past or present, which will further our quest for African societies free of all forms of violence and social injustice, and where gendered relations as

well as institutions are transformed? This project is as much political as it is intellectual" (FA1, 2004: 12).

Penda Mbow has also highlighted these intellectual and political dimensions (Sall, 2000) in pointing out the slow progress of Senegalese women academics that do not have newspapers, magazines, or seminars on subjects that are of concern to them. Mbow also stresses the necessity for them to establish links with institutions such as trade unions, women's movements and associations. We may share Mbow's appeal when she affirms "that it is urgent to change social relations in university institutions, research centres, research and publications, as well as in civil society." But it is more difficult to agree with her when she asserts that women do not always perceive the importance of these issues, which causes them to have very little consideration for feminist research. It must be stressed that, on the one hand, women make up the structural minority in the university institution and, on the other, their fragmentation has not yet allowed them to organise and mobilise regarding the issues that preoccupy them. They presently handle such issues individually and outside the institution.

Conclusion

More research is required, but my work so far has shown the nature of the relationship between gender and the institutional and intellectual cultures of the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar. The academy is not an abstract carrier of a totally neutral knowledge, but houses men and women marked by cultures and specific memories which lead them to define their identity, to create relationships, to break or consolidate prejudices, and to transact so as to acquire power or exclude others. These factors give a particular shape or configuration to the institutional and intellectual culture at UCAD and show that social instability in Senegal has reinforced the masculinisation of the institution. This masculinisation is particularly apparent in the decision-making and representational structures in the university (Diaw, 2006).

These restrictive conditions have an important impact on the production and reproduction of knowledge: under these conditions, who produces knowledge, why and for whom? The intellectual and political dimensions of gender proposed by Charmaine Pereira call into question the scientific nature of the knowledge that we produce, and especially the ideological character of such knowledge, as this knowledge renders certain actors and social dynamics invisible. Can we really speak of science when we perpetuate limited knowledge by failing to break with dominant paradigms marked by a certain ideology? In

response, it is sufficient to restate that the institutional and intellectual cultures of UCAD shape the trajectory of its actors and vice versa.

A last point to consider is that of the relationship between gender and democracy and between political culture and economic context: the reflections in this work have shown that democracy can also be non-inclusive in practice. If the gender relations of women using computers remain the same as when they were confined to using sewing machines, what has changed? If the university is a microcosm, it should not just be a reflection of the weaknesses of a society, but rather a model for improvements. It is a matter of perspective to inscribe gender in a progressive manner at the heart of the institutional and intellectual culture of UCAD, in reworking the curricula, and to proceed, from the political perspective, with an institutional incorporation of gender that in its conception involves both actors and beneficiaries of the university. Things are changing, albeit slowly, with the new reform in curricular structure (Licence-Master-Doctorate) that gives space to women in their faculties and departments to take their interests into account. The challenge UCAD is facing now is to develop reforms that bring about more profound transformations in gender relations.

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Endnotes

1   This article was translated from the French by Simidele Dosekun.

2   Please see description of this project in the Editorial of *Feminist Africa 8*.

3   Note that this is not an association of women academics, but rather of women with university degrees.

4   UCAD is not very responsive to gender issues because of its francophone heritage. As with many African francophone universities of the sub-region, there is no women's studies or gender studies department.

5   The research carried out for this study on representative student organisations and the relations existing between men and women within the latter, on the one hand, and on decision-making bodies of the university on the other, leaves no room for a statement other than from a male-dominated space.

6   This project set up two Internet laboratories in the girls' residence.

7   Academics did not participate much.

8   Since 2006–7, the university has had two unconnected gender programmes, one in the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences (*Laboratoire Femmes, Société et Culture*) and another in the Research Institute IFAN Cheikh Anta Diop (*Laboratoire Genre*). The programme of the Faculty of Letters will commence in January 2008. Awa Thiam proposed in 1987 – in vain – the creation of a department of anthropology of the sexes.

9   I am borrowing this expression from the title of Amina Mama's 1995 book.