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Josef Gugler and William G. Flanagan
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Urbanization in Developing Countries

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Urbanization in Developing Countries

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Urbanization and Social Change in West Africa

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**To the men and women who successfully fought
to end colonialism in West Africa,
to the future of Guinea-Bissau**

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Preface

By now, the literature on urbanization in Subsaharan Africa in general, and West Africa in particular, is substantial, both in volume and in the richness of observation and analysis it contains. We have chosen to review this literature and to interpret its disparate findings, focussing on a number of key issues in the urbanization process and on change in several particularly important social contexts. The issues involved lie within the domain of no single discipline. Of necessity, we have not limited ourselves to the writings of fellow sociologists and social anthropologists but have drawn heavily on work conventionally labeled political science, economics, demography, geography, history, and social psychology. Not surprisingly, we found some of the most penetrating observations in the writings of West African novelists and playwrights who have given vigorous expression to the experiences of people living in a period of rapid change.

So that this reality may come to life for our readers, we have let a number of its observers speak for themselves. Most of them are foreigners with considerable research experience in West Africa, a couple are distinguished Nigerian social scientists, and one is a prominent Nigerian novelist. We are grateful for their permission to reprint from their works.

We are sensitive to the argument as to whether it is proper for outsiders like us to comment on the policy issues facing West Africans today. However, we hold that it is incumbent upon social scientists to address these issues and reject the facile pose of foreigners who prefer to take a "neutral" stance and thus endorse the status quo, whatever the implications for the lives of those they write about. Concern with the outcomes of the pattern of urbanization we studied led us to take positions on what are indeed controversial matters.

This study is one outcome of the authors' association over a number of years. Its general framework originated in a graduate seminar that Josef Gugler first taught at what was then Makerere University College, Uganda. It is informed by research he carried out in Nigeria, under the auspices of the German Research Foundation, and in East Africa, when on the staff of the Makerere Institute of Social Research. The authors met, and their interests fused in the analysis of a survey of urbanization and social change in Dar es Salaam, Kampala, and Nairobi, which was sponsored by the Makerere Institute of Social Research and The University of Connecticut Research Foundation. Their joint endeavor drew heavily on William G. Flanagan's Ph.D. thesis on the role of the extended family in urbanization.

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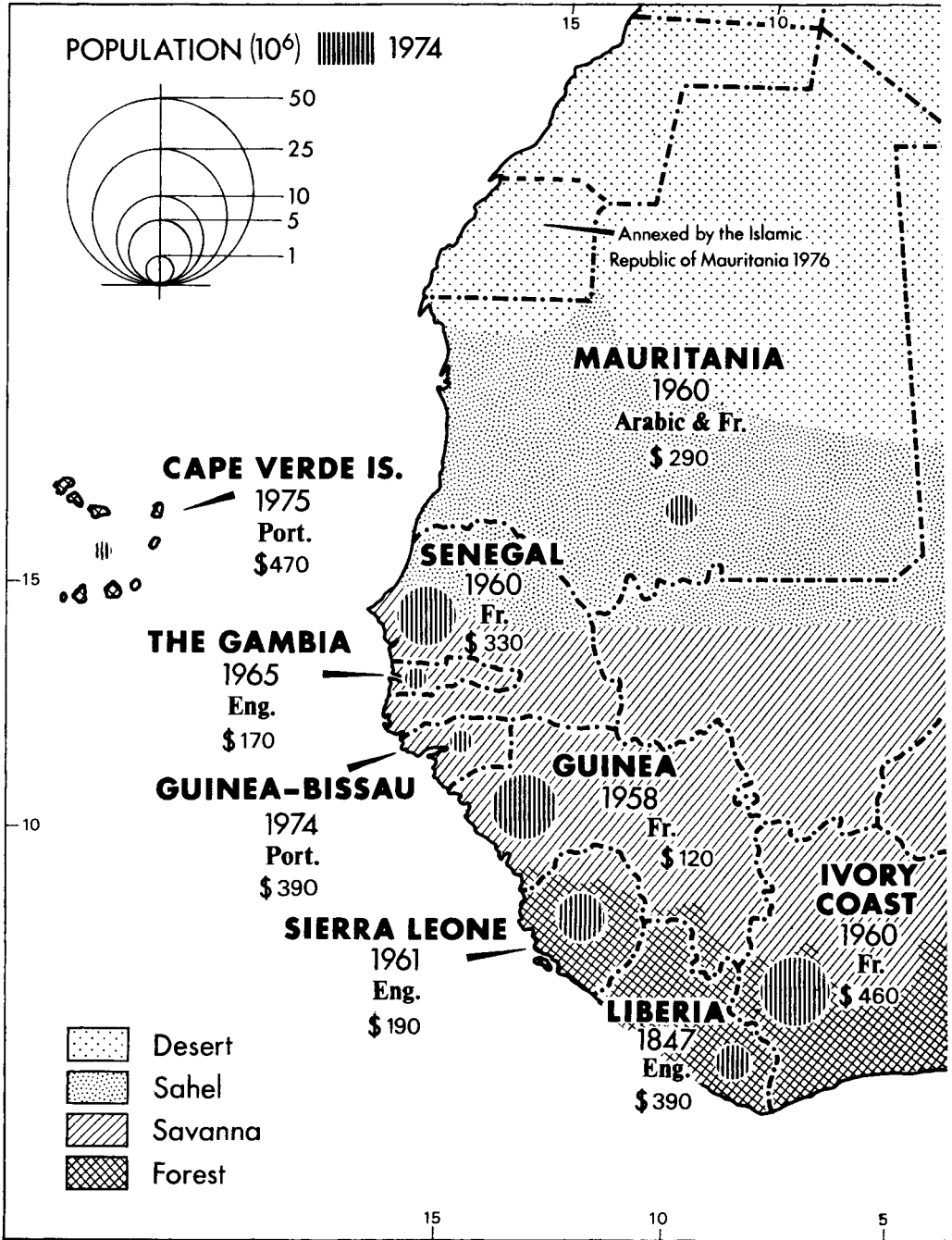
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Our work is indebted to numerous people. The help we received along the way is immense and we are unable to acknowledge individually the warm hospitality extended by Nigerians in their village homes, the criticisms of our students, and the lively exchange among faculty and visitors that made work on Makerere Hill a stimulating experience. Our profound intellectual debt to a great many students of social life in West Africa and beyond will be readily apparent to the reader. Here we wish to thank Raymond Apthorpe, who gave this study vital encouragement in its early stages, and Floyd Dotson, who commented in great detail on portions of the manuscript. Both shall be absolved from our errors of commission and omission. Alick Newman drew the maps, and Dorothy McDonald applied her remarkable skills to the index. We also thank Betty G. Seaver and Patricia Murray, editors whose changes and observations went beyond recasting our prose to making us rethink some of our arguments, and Selma Wollman, who carried the main burden of impeccably typing more drafts than we care to remember.

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