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The Problem with Eating Money: Remittances and Development within Senegal's Muridiyya

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The Problem with Eating Money:
Remittances and Development within Senegal's Muridiyya

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary development theory is poorly equipped to understand remittance-based development occurring in transnational spaces that partially escape the control of the state. An extended case study of the Muridiyya, a Sufi brotherhood in Senegal, reveals how collective remittances from Mouride transmigrants become tools for community-level development when channeled through transnational religious associations. I argue that remittance-based development projects transform the political, economic, and social contexts in which they are embedded, including the relationship between the Muridiyya and the state. Development theory must be reconceptualized to account for how remittance-based development defies conventional understandings of the scales of economic and social activity.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GLOSSARY

Amal	Labor
Baraka	Blessing; gift of grace; divinely derived power
Cheikh	A master or Muslim religious leader
Dahira	Association (urban or transnational) of disciples
Dara	Collective work group in the service of a marabout
Hadiyya	Financial contribution of a *talibé* to his marabout
Jebëlu	Submission to a marabout
Khalifa-General	Supreme head of the Mouride brotherhood
Marabout	French word for religious notable
Modou Modou	Senegalese transmigrant
Mouride	Aspirant
Sadaqa	Charity
Sufism	Islamic mysticism; emphasizes use of esoteric means to get closer to God
Talibé	Disciple of a marabout
Tarbiyya	Education of the soul
Tariqa	Brotherhood; path for bringing oneself closer to God
Xidma	Religiously-oriented work; being at the service of somebody

(Cruise O'Brien 1971; Babou 2002a)

INTRODUCTION

"When Senegalese go abroad, it's just so they can work and earn money and send it home, so they can develop their own country. They don't waste money." So insists a Mouride migrant whom I interviewed while studying in Senegal in the spring of 2008. This migrant is a member of a Sufi Muslim brotherhood called the Muridiyya, which is one of the most powerful political and economic entities in contemporary Senegal (Cruise O'Brien 1983:133; Riccio 2000:73; Babou 2003:331). The brotherhood currently claims more than one-third of the population of Senegal as its followers (Babou 2003:311-312). For the past several decades, Mourides have migrated in large numbers to European and American cities and formed transnational associations which serve multiple functions, including creating development projects providing infrastructure, health care, and social services in Senegal. I worked with one such association that conducted development projects in and around the city of Touba in Senegal. There, I noticed a particular disdain common among returning migrants for those who "waste" their earnings on non-essential goods and activities.

In Senegal, excessive consumption is spoken of through the metaphor of eating; "eating money" is the common expression for wasting resources. The migrants with whom I spoke were, for the most part, quick to insist that they used their remittances in a responsible and productive manner and that their primary commitments were to care for their families and their communities. I sought to know more about the extent to which Mouride migrants' enduring orientation toward their places of origin is driven by their religious convictions, and with what economic and political impacts. I wanted to understand what factors enable the brotherhood to both assist its followers in migrating abroad and also retain their loyalty, such that Mouride migrants remain committed to developing their communities in Senegal and particularly in

Touba. Using the Muridiyya as a case study, this paper examines how remittances become tools for community-level development when channeled through transnational religious associations.

While Dakar is the official capital of Senegal, Touba is the religious capital of the Muridiyya and therefore critical to this analysis as the site at which much of the brotherhood's remittance-based development takes place. In selecting Touba's location, just over one hundred miles inland from Dakar (see http://bbsnews.net/bbsn_photos/topics/Maps-and-Charts/senegal pop.sized.jpg), Cheikh Amadou Bamba (the founder of the Muridiyya) sought to isolate his disciples from the distractions of the world as they pursued a pure lifestyle guaranteeing them entry to paradise in the afterlife. Touba therefore represents Cheikh Amadou Bamba's vision of creating an ideal society on earth (see http://www.assemblee-martinique.com/joomla/images/ stories/news/cheikh_amadou _bamba.jpg). The city has gained such symbolism that it is often called the *capitale du mouridisme*. Mourides both in Senegal and abroad consider Touba to be their spiritual center, their source of guidance and inspiration. Touba has become "essentially the locus and fulfillment of eschatological desire" for Mourides (Ross 1995:230). For that reason, the holy city has become the focus of many Mouride migrants' community-level development projects; as one of my informants noted, "It is the immigrants who build the city."[1]

Gueye (2001:107) accurately identifies Touba as "a conglomerate of paradoxes that spell out the complexity of the relationship between the state and a Muslim brotherhood." Touba essentially exists as a state within a state. The population of Touba is second only to that of Dakar yet the city continues to enjoy the legal status of a village rather than a municipality (Gueye 2001:107). In 1928, the French colonial administration signed a fifty-year lease on

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[1] In this paper, I am examining the Muridiyya and not the other brotherhoods in Senegal (e.g. the Tijaniyya or Qadiriyya) for their political and economic impact on state-society relations is not as significant. Thus, when discussing transmigration and remittance-based development, I focus exclusively on Mouride migrants and not migrants of other faiths from Senegal.

Touba as a private domain controlled by the Khalifa-General (the head of the brotherhood). The city thus escaped the control and regulation of the colonial authorities. Then, in 1976, only two years before its lease was set to expire, the brotherhood integrated itself into the independent state's administrative structure by securing legal recognition as a *communauté rurale autonome* (autonomous rural community) (Ross 1995:245). Touba is the only entity in Senegal with this particular legal status. The national government has also demonstrated a consistent willingness to exempt Touba from certain national laws. Instead, the Khalifa-General, as the voice of customary authority, issues his own directives, which his followers accept as law (Beck 2001:603).[2]

Touba's autonomy enables the leaders of the brotherhood to establish what amounts to an "alternative society" in which the control of the secular state is significantly circumscribed (Diagne, in Diop 1993:279). Fundamentally, the city of Touba represents the limits of state control over the brotherhood. Because the brotherhood constitutes such a powerful segment of Senegal's population, the state is obliged to negotiate with its leaders, resulting in an informal power-sharing arrangement between the religious and political elite. Thus in Senegal the "relationship between religion and politics… is dialectical and interactive; each shapes and influences the other" (Villalón 1995:7). Paradoxically, the brotherhood enjoys a close relationship with the state yet challenges its sovereignty within its own borders.

In this paper, I assess the developmental impact of remittances in Senegal, including individual livelihoods and physical and social infrastructure. In addition to examining these narrower developmental impacts, I explore how the growth of wealth in Touba, stimulated as it

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[2] Most forms of secular entertainment are banned in Touba, including sports, hotels, clubs, bars, prostitution (which is legal in the rest of Senegal), cigarettes, and alcohol (Cruise O'Brien 1983:134; Ross 1995:245; Rosander and Westerlund 1997:249). No foreigners or non-Mouride Senegalese live in the holy city, unless invited to stay temporarily in a private home.

is from the in-flow of remittances, affects the brotherhood's relationship with the state. I argue that remittance-based development projects transform the political, economic and social contexts in which they are embedded, including the relationship between the Muridiyya and the state. Riccio (2001:588) quotes a Mouride migrant as saying, "[W]ithout *modou modou* [Senegalese migrants], Senegal will be on its knees. Remittances are the real source of development of the country." Remittances, when channeled through Mouride migrants' transnational associations, certainly have development potential. Yet looking solely at the economic aspects of remittances tells only part of the story. The "historical… and political situatedness" of Mouride migrants influences their goals, trajectories, and decisions regarding whether and how to invest their remittances in development projects in their places of origin (Appadurai [1996] 2008:52). A strict economic perspective, which has been favored by much of the extant literature on remittances and development, overlooks the "multiple embeddings that characterize people's lives" (McAdam and Paulsen 1993:645). The transnational spaces which Mouride migrants occupy are "fluid, irregular shapes" that partially defy any attempts at control on the part of either the religious or political elite (Appadurai [1996] 2008:52). My analysis builds on the idea that Mouride migrants are more than merely economic beings; this case permits me to examine the complex political, social *and* economic networks within which these migrants circulate in order to better understand the impacts of remittance-based development.

I begin by comparing the remittances-and-development literature and the transmigration literature (Chapter 1). Studies on the development potential of remittances often fail to account for how remittances are not only economically significant, but also politically and socially contingent. The transmigration literature constitutes one response to the question of how to study remittance-based development in a way that incorporates the political and social contexts

in which migrants operate. Included in this chapter is a brief description of how I use the extended case method to assess remittance-based development within the Muridiyya. In Chapter 2, I present the internal logic of the relationship between the brotherhood's leaders and their disciples. The Muridiyya's complex networks of patronage facilitate the concentration of wealth in figures of authority, which is justified in part by the brotherhood's emphasis on religiously-oriented work. This arrangement seems unjust, in that it empowers religious leaders and exploits their disciples. Religious leaders occupy a much more tenuous position than may initially be apparent, however. In Chapter 3, I identify the macro-historical shifts that stimulated, first, urbanization and, then, transmigration within the brotherhood. I then discuss how the brotherhood's followers adapted to this change in context by transforming their rural associations into urban and, finally, transnational associations. In Chapter 4, I analyze the remittance-based development projects created by Mourides' transnational religious associations. Using two associations as examples, I show how these projects, far from existing in a vacuum, are shaped and constrained by their political and social contexts. Chapter 5 discusses how Mouride transmigration is transforming the brotherhood and its relationship to the state. Transmigration weakens the brotherhood's networks of patronage, as transmigrants begin to accumulate and distribute resources independently of the religious elite. In addition, religious leaders, who historically have been intermediaries between disciples and the state, are partially replaced by transmigrants who negotiate directly with state officials. I conclude by arguing that development theory must be reconceptualized to account for how remittance-based development defies conventional understandings of the scales of economic and social activity. Because communities of migrants are translocal, it is necessary to examine multiple scales in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the impacts of remittance-based development.

CHAPTER 1

Remittances and Transmigration

In this review of the literature, I will argue that the development potential of remittances should be conceptualized not only as economically significant, but also as politically and socially contingent. To do so, I will compare the remittances-and-development literature with the literature on transmigration. The remittances-and-development literature, focusing on household-level analysis, fails to provide analytical space for studying how remittances are embedded in social and political spheres. Transmigration studies, by giving primacy to community-level analysis, offer fresh insights on remittances that may be obscured at other levels of analysis.

I will address three key issues in the extant literature on migration, remittances and development. First, debates on remittance use and remittances' effects on inequality have, for the most part, occurred separately from debates on how migrants use transnational social spaces to create remittance-based development projects. I seek to draw these two sides together in this study. Second, much of the extant literature on migration has privileged the receiving context over the sending context. I seek to counter that trend by focusing on the sending context in my analysis. (In this text I use the term "sending" to indicate the migrant-sending state, which is also the remittances-receiving state, not to be confused with the migrant-receiving or "host" state.) Third, studies in the remittances-and-development literature *and* the transmigration literature partially shift the burden of development from the state onto migrants and their

families.[3] On this subject, I will offer a short case study on remittance-based development in Mexico as a benchmark for my own study of Senegal.

Bringing together discussions of migration, remittances, and development introduces a particular de-centering of the state. Development discourse has been characterized by extreme state-centeredness in the past (Ferguson 1990), yet migrants operate in spaces that partially escape the control of the state. Some scholars, particularly in the remittances-and-development literature, express a certain optimism about how remittances could offer an "out" from the failures of state-based development (Ferguson 1990). Where the state has failed to achieve meaningful and sustainable development, perhaps migrants could – or should – mobilize their remittances to fill in the gaps. To the extent that such claims are put forth, we may be witnessing the most recent advancement in the de-politicization of development.[4] However, I will argue that both sending and receiving states still shape migration and remittances; the state remains a significant category of analysis.

But conducting an assessment solely at the level of the state or the individual will not suffice. It is necessary to look at intermediate levels at which social and economic interactions take place as well. How must development theory be reconceptualized to accommodate the political, economic, and social aspects of remittance-based development? I offer one response to this question by contrasting the remittances-and-development literature with the transmigration literature. Analyzing migration at the level of the community is an exciting and relatively

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[3] However, a portion of the literature suggests that remittances' development potential is minimal if not complemented by proper governmental economic policies (de Haan 1999; Taylor 1999).

[4] There is an ongoing need for clarity within the remittances-and-development literature on the definition and purposes of "development." As Ferguson (1990) observes, development is commonly ascribed one of two broad meanings: movement toward a capitalist economy, or poverty reduction. In this text I discuss development primarily in the frame of poverty reduction. The authors in this field are divided on whether states should promote remittances as a sustainable source of economic development, or whether states should strive to create economic growth which is progressively less and less reliant on remittances. Moreover, the lack of consensus in the remittances-and-development literature on which combination of indicators should measure the impact of remittances on development makes it nearly impossible to assess "positive development outcomes" (Taylor 1999).

unexplored avenue for revealing the complexities and potentialities of remittance-based development.

Viability of Remittances as a Tool of Economic Development

The remittances-and-development literature positions remittances as a potential yet problematic source of economic development. Debates in this field revolve around two themes: (1) how remittances are invested in migrants' places of origin; and (2) whether remittances reduce or exacerbate inequality. Researchers have sought to better understand who promotes, pursues, and benefits from remittances. Asking why one group benefits more from remittances than another could open up a more political discussion of the relationship between remittances and development, yet studies rarely move in that direction. One of the primary weaknesses of the remittances-and-development literature is that it focuses nearly exclusively on economic impacts of remittances while questions of politics, society, religion, and culture are relegated to the margins.

The remittances-and-development literature frequently blames migrants for failing to make rational, productive decisions about their remittances (Taylor et al. 1996:411). Most researchers observe that remittances are spent primarily on consumption – on day-to-day needs – while only a small portion is invested (de Haan 1999). Some express concern that remittances lose their power as a tool of development if they are "wasted" on consumption.[5] However, clearly normative claims like these spark sharp responses. Migrants may not be "the most

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[5] Still, remittance-use studies have demonstrated that a portion of remittances is in fact devoted to productive activities (Taylor et al. 1996:402; Russell et al. 1990, in Massey et al. 1998). Remittances used for consumption may also have positive economic impacts.[5] In fact, the commonly accepted definition of "productive investments" may be overly narrow in that the cost of education, for instance, may not be included as an investment (Taylor 1999). Other purchases, such as land, occupy an ambiguous space; they often function more as markers of prestige than as investments (Massey et al. 1998:47).

appropriate agents for contending… with underdevelopment" (Van Dijk 1978:9, in Taylor et al. 1996). Expecting migrants to develop their places of origin may also mask the state's incompetence. It may be unreasonable to hold migrants accountable for development when conditions in the sending context are so far from being conducive to investment (de la Garza and Lowell 2002). Indeed, individuals often seek out migration as a survival strategy since their places of origin "lack… meaningful development in the first place" (Georges 1990:170, in Taylor et al. 1996).

Others take issue with this debate in its entirety. In order to visualize the impacts of remittances on development more completely, it may be necessary to assess social, political, and personal conditions as well as economic constraints (de la Garza and Lowell 2002:61). Grillo (2002:139) puts forth the remarkable suggestion that migrants' choices to use remittances for consumption may not be as "irrational" as they appear. Migrants' intentions regarding the purposes of their remittances may have an internal logic that is consistent and coherent, despite deviating from capitalist expectations of rational investment. The remittances-and-development literature leaves little space for considering this possibility. As Karl Polyani argues, economic behavior must be considered in historical and social contexts, for it may be driven by motives other than the search for profit (Trigilia 2002). In this text, I will search for the internal logic of remittance-based development within the Muridiyya of Senegal.

Effects of Migration and Remittances on Inequality

The impact of remittances on inequality is of primary concern in the remittances-and-development literature. De Haan (1999) highlights the exacerbation of inequality as one of the most negative effects of remittances; he discourages any "celebration of migration" as the

solution to development (King 1996, in de Haan 1999). He is dissatisfied with how, in many cases, remittances actually increase inequality in the sending context, thereby failing to contribute positively to poverty alleviation. Other authors do not draw the same pessimistic conclusions, instead noting that changes in income inequality may depend on the initial levels of inequality and development (Fajnzylber and Lopez 2008:128). Migration may either equalize incomes by raising the incomes of the poor, or increase inequality by raising the incomes of the rich – depending on who is capable of migrating. These authors agree that the most pertinent measurement is not changes in absolute income, but "*ratios of relative income*" (Cohen, Jones, and Conway 2005:91).

Studies on relative income inequality show how the remittances-and-development literature has shifted away from analysis of the individual to household-level analysis. Initially, modernization theorists including Todaro (1969) assumed rational individuals whose decisions to migrate (or not) are driven by the goal of maximizing income.[6] As the concept emerged that the world market inhibited development in the global South, dependency theorists suggested that push-pull factors may determine migration between core, periphery, and semi-peripheral areas (Kearney 1986). They proposed that harsh conditions compel migrants to leave their places of origin in the periphery, while favorable conditions elsewhere draw them to particular locales. However, both of these early models assume away non-economic factors of, and barriers to, migration (Massey et al. 1998:8). They also fail to incorporate remittances in their analyses (Taylor 1999).

The "new economics" of labor migration, which Stark and Bloom (1985) identified in the mid-1980s, incorporates remittances by locating decision-making at the level of the household,

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[6] Todaro's (1969) model is well-recognized for explaining why rural-to-urban labor migration persists in the face of growing urban unemployment.

not the individual. From their perspective, migration serves as a household-level strategy to diversify income and minimize risk (Massey et al. 1998:17). With this shift in focus came a corresponding methodological transformation in the late 1980s and 1990s, namely a rise in "household surveys, life histories, and in-depth community studies" (Massey et al. 1998:15). The field became more oriented toward migrants as semi-autonomous actors, embedded in social networks including familial ties. Today, theories operating at the individual, household, community, national, and international level are still in play, with certain sub-fields of the remittances-and-development literature favoring a focus on one level over another. Theories at different scales are not necessarily incompatible and may in fact serve as useful complements by illuminating one another (Massey et al. 1998).

Among the more recent models of remittances and development, the theory of relative deprivation provides useful insights on how relative income inequality influences household decision-making about migration (Stark 1991, in de Haan 1999). This theory states that the greater the difference in income between a particular household and those above it in the reference group, the more likely that household is to send a migrant abroad (Massey et al. 1998:53). Thus, relative deprivation prompts relatively poor households to seek out remittances as a way to reduce income disparities.

For those who seek to migrate in order to improve socioeconomic status, the primary barrier to this impulse is the high threshold of migration. Migration requires a certain prior level of information, wealth, and access which the most poor and marginalized members of society cannot obtain (de Haan 1999; Cotula and Toulmin 2004). Because the costs of becoming a migrant often exceed what poor households can bear, migrants begin with greater advantages. Thus, the threshold of migration causes income inequalities to be exacerbated. Combining the

theory of relative deprivation and the concept of the threshold of migration, it becomes clear that, rather than reducing income inequalities, remittances cause lower-to-middle-income households to rise while more impoverished others lag behind.

Some hope lies in the fact that the threshold of migration becomes lower over time. Researchers have observed that pioneer migrants (those who emigrate first) tend to be relatively wealthy. Crossing the threshold of migration requires significant initial wealth because the risks and costs associated with migration are high. As pioneer migrants remit their earnings, income inequality in the sending context will rise. But, as these pioneer migrants establish themselves in the receiving context, they create support networks for one another, thereby lowering the costs associated with migration. At this point, relatively deprived households will be able to afford to send family members abroad. Income inequality should then decline (Massey et al. 1998; Taylor 1999). Some scholars see this trend as reaching equilibrium when a sending area "specializes" in migration, in that nearly all the households participate (Massey et al. 1998; Taylor 1999). In sum, this model predicts that income inequality will first rise and then decline as people from different income brackets migrate. This theory illustrates well the progression in Touba where the threshold of migration was lowered over time. However, migration and remittances are highly context-dependent and changing conditions for migration may disrupt the progression outlined here (de Haan 1999).

While household-level analysis has its benefits, community-level studies (which give primacy to associations, collectives, and other intermediaries) offer more nuanced insights on how remittances impact development in the sending context. For example, remittances may have increased development potential when channeled through informal and formal institutions (Grillo 2002). (In this text, I will refer to migrants' monetary contributions to transnational

associations for community development projects as "collective remittances.") Some researchers

are optimistic that collective remittances enable communities to invest in public infrastructure

projects or open micro-enterprises (Taylor 1999). Others argue that community-level

organizations – when communities are conceptualized as "more than aggregations of individuals

and households" – offer fresh explanations for variations in remittances' impact on development

(VanWey, Tucker, and McConnell 2005:84-85). However, it is challenging, as Kearney (1986)

warns, to bring together community-level studies and macro-level analyses.[7] It may be

necessary, then, to move across scales in order to obtain a comprehensive vision of any one

level. My study will attempt to follow this approach.

Transmigration as an Opening for Community-Level Analysis

The literature on transmigration offers an alternative conceptual framework for assessing

migration, remittances and development. Glick Schiller, Basch, and Szanton-Blanc (1992:1, in

Grillo et al. 2000) provide the most commonly accepted definition of transmigrants as:

> A new kind of migrating population… composed of those whose networks, activities and
> patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies. Their lives cut across
> national boundaries and bring two societies into a single social field.

Transmigration thus challenges more classic representations of migration as a one-directional

transition from one's place of origin to a host country. Transmigrants live their lives across

borders; they are both "here" and "there" simultaneously (Grillo et al. 2000). In transmigration

studies, borders "gain a paradoxical centrality," which cannot be addressed in strictly economic

terms; to understand the impacts of remittances as tools of development, studies must trace the

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[7] Some development scholars, even in welcoming this rise in community-level analyses, fear that local strategies
will be romanticized; they note the risk of losing sight of "the contextuality of place" (Mohan and Stokke 2000:249).

"complex maps and histories" that transmigrants live out in their daily activities (Clifford 1997:7).

What is so new about transmigration? I adopt Guarnizo and Smith's (1998:4, in Grillo 2002:136) claim that transmigration is not new, but "reached particular intensity" in recent phases of globalization. The literature on transnational social spaces often embraces expansive and optimistic claims of how globalization shrinks distance and increases connectivity. In attempts to determine what is qualitatively different or new about contemporary migration patterns, scholars point to the intensification of exchange via communication and transportation technologies (specifically, the cell phone and the airplane) which facilitates the emergence of transnational movement and spaces (Kivisto 2003; Faist 2000). However, empirical examples indicate that technologies have not eliminated distance for migrants. Technologies may play a significant role in determining both the nature and frequency of actual travel patterns (Kivisto 2003) and in facilitating or challenging relationships of reciprocity and trust (Riccio 2000). Migrants cross tremendous spatial distances in their transnational travels while remaining connected to their places of origin; the increasingly dense connections facilitated by emerging technologies shrink that distance and partially explain migrants' continued orientation to the sending context. Thus, it is important to recognize, but not over-privilege, the role of globalization in shaping transmigration.

The transmigration literature draws heavily on network analysis, in that researchers in this field often employ the language of networks to explain migration patterns. Migrants' transnational social networks may be seen as "sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin" (Massey et al. 1998:42). As alluded to earlier,

transnational social networks provide an informal form of social security to migrants; this kind of support reduces the costs and risks associated with migration and therefore lowers the threshold of migration in the sending context (Cotula and Toulmin 2004). As migration accelerates, transmigrants' networks grow and become self-reinforcing in a virtuous cycle (Kearney 1986; Faist 2000). Most transmigration researchers prefer, however, to conceptualize networks not as reified entities but as active practices, such that one may speak not of networks but of migrants networking within transnational social spaces (Riccio 2001).

Through this networking, transmigrants develop "multiple and border-transgressing familial, economic, social, religious, cultural and political relationships" which facilitate "the circuitous movement of goods, ideas, information, symbols, and persons" (Faist 2000:13). By approaching the question of remittances from a community perspective, researchers may look at how individual transmigrants are embedded in this multi-scale social sphere. Community-level analysis provides opportunities to assess these social relationships in a way that household- or state-level analysis could not. These studies also encourage researchers to think through the heterogeneity of migrants' experiences and the interconnection of scales that they network across. Transmigrants maintain complex agendas, such that "internal tensions and pluralities of trajectory" within transnational social spaces must be taken into account (Grillo 2002:137).

Researchers rely on such community-level analysis to trace how transmigrants accumulate and use social capital to create remittance-based development projects in the sending context. Social capital is an intangible resource that may be thought of as engendering reciprocity, trust, solidarity, and obligations, the accumulation of which is generally seen as positive (Massey et al. 1998; Faist 2000). Social capital facilitates collective action by enabling people to cooperate and achieve their goals, even in the context of scarce resources (Putnam

1993; Faist 2000; Grillo 2002). Social capital also reduces the transaction costs of making, monitoring, and enforcing agreements (Faist 2000). Transmigrants access social capital by actively networking to form relationships of trust with one another in transnational social spaces. They may then be able to draw on the strength of their social ties when implementing remittance-based development projects in the sending context.

If transmigration strengthens migrants' abilities to develop ties with one another and to mobilize remittances to effect change in the sending context, then transmigrants' activities become of interest to states. The transmigration literature explores the relations between migrants and states in greater complexity than the remittances-and-development literature. The issues examined in this field go far beyond questioning whether remittances comprise a significant portion of a state's GDP or contribute to economic growth. Transmigrants who, by definition, live "across and between" two or more states, pose a challenge to both sending and receiving states seeking to regulate them (Grillo et al. 2000:8).

Still, to say "transnational" is not to say "postnational." To approach this issue, I adopt Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Gökçe's (2008) conceptual framework of border-crossing citizenships. Transmigrants' social spaces are transnational in the sense that they span multiple nation-states, not that they transcend the nation-state as a category of analysis. Transmigration remains "profoundly anchored in the material, legal, and cultural constraints and possibilities that grow out of the local and national places migrants inhabit" (Grillo 2002:137). Far from disintegrating, states remain significant actors in the field of transmigration even as migrants challenge their sovereignty, power, and relevance (Riccio 2000; Goldring 2002).

There is an abundance of scholarship on the tensions between migrants and states in the receiving context, including issues of citizenship, national identity, human rights, assimilation,

multiculturalism, racism, and more (Brubaker [1990] 1998; Soysal 2000; Kivisto 2003; Brysk and Shafir 2004; Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Gökçe 2008). These subjects, *as conceived of in the receiving context*, will only be addressed peripherally here, as I will focus predominantly on Senegal as a sending context. Some authors have, either explicitly or implicitly, sought to bridge the sending and receiving context in their analyses of migrants and states (Riccio 2000; Goldring 2002; Grillo 2002; Spiro 2004; Dahlin and Hironaka 2008). Such efforts may yield a more coherent and accurate picture of transmigration. It is critical to examine both the sending context and the receiving context in order to understand transmigration more fully (Grillo 2002). The literature on how migrants interact with sending states is relatively impoverished when compared to the literature on receiving states. This is a gap which this paper attempts to fill.

Given that remittance-based development may be politically charged, it is worthwhile to briefly detour into an exploration of the extent to which social activism shades into political activism. I recognize that transmigrants may not intend to act politically when creating remittance-based development projects, yet their actions may, "individually and cumulatively, actually influence the political order [and] the distribution and redistribution of public goods and services" (Singerman 1995:7). I therefore partially dissociate the political effects of remittances from the intentions of transmigrants and other social actors. The literature on Islamic social movements, although not directly focused on questions of transmigration, contributes to this discussion.

Social and Political Effects of Development Projects

Within the literature on social movements, Clark's (2004) study of Islamic social institutions in Egypt may serve as a clarifying example of politically-inflected community

development work. Clark (2004) examines whether social services provided to the poor by middle-class Islamist groups lead to more widespread support for the Islamist movement. She frames her study in terms of horizontal and vertical networks. Horizontal networks create ties among people of similar socioeconomic backgrounds, while vertical networks cut across classes and link unequal social actors to one another (Putnam 1993; Clark 2004). In this case, Clark finds that vertical ties that might link people across classes are relatively weaker than horizontal ties within Islamic social institutions, which has direct implications for how these institutions impact the political sphere.

The kind of horizontal networking that prevails within Islamic social institutions undercuts the possibility that providing social services could enhance political activism among the lower classes.[8] The directors of Islamic social institutions are typically middle-class individuals who develop close ties with others of similar socioeconomic status and not the more impoverished service recipients (Clark 2004:28). The poor receive health care and other services yet remain excluded from the social networks that manage these institutions. This situation inhibits the creation of bonds of trust between the poor and the middle class; it thereby eliminates any possibility of religiously-motivated political activism across social classes.

Moreover, the location of Islamic social institutions and the cost of services often make them less accessible to the poor. Middle-class individuals become not only the primary organizers of these institutions but also the primary recipients of their services (Clark 2004).

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[8] One complementary example to Clark's study is Brown and Brown's (2003) analysis of social and political activism in black churches in the United States. They review the extent to which participation in churches influences social and political activism within African-American communities. Their findings indicate that churches are fertile ground for political and social activism when they are able to train their congregants in civic skills and mobilize social networks. However, black churches tend to attract members of similar socioeconomic backgrounds, and those with middle-class members appear to be more politically active than those with predominantly poor congregants. Since the interests of middle- and upper-class families diverge from those of poor families, the grievances these congregations articulate are unlikely to be pro-poor. This study is another instance of de facto exclusion of the poor from securing political and economic gains.

Thus, not only do Islamic social institutions appear less threatening to the state, but they may not even fulfill their ostensibly pro-poor social and economic development functions.

Clark (1995) suggests that if Islamic social institutions do not directly include or benefit the poor, then they may not have such "tremendous potential" as tools of development. An important question on transmigration may be extrapolated from this study: Must remittance-based community projects be pro-poor in order to be considered part of "development"? Contrary to Clark's study, I will argue that community development projects in Senegal still have important political implications even if they are not pro-poor. Nonetheless, if transmigrants are predominantly middle class, then *de facto* exclusion of the poor may mean that remittance-based development exacerbates inequality in the sending context.

Hometown Associations and the (De)Politicization of Remittance-Based Development

Before turning to my case, I offer the hometown associations of Mexican transmigrants in the United States as a benchmark for my own analysis. Hometown associations are perhaps the most clear-cut instance in which the two literatures presented here – the remittances-and-development literature and the transmigration literature – can be joined together to analyze a single case study. Mexican transmigrants' hometown associations, whose remittances and collective development projects have received much attention relative to Mouride associations, serve as a useful comparison.

Although migrants of diverse origins have established hometown associations (HTAs) around the world, I focus on Mexican transmigrants because their HTAs are among the most well-developed and extensively researched. These hometown associations comprise Mexican transmigrants living in the United States who come from a common place of origin. Such

organizations have existed for decades in U.S. cities (such as Los Angeles, where the oldest HTA

dates back to the 1930s) and they experienced tremendous expansion in the 1990s (Goldring

2002:62). Their activities include organizing social, sporting, religious, educational, and cultural

events as well as securing voluntary donations from transmigrants for community projects in

Mexico (de la Garza and Lowell 2002; Goldring 2002).[9] Because they channel collective

remittances from transmigrants living abroad to Mexico, HTAs play a significant role in linking

transmigrants to their places of origin (Goldring 2002:64).

The Mexican government has become interested in capturing or collaborating with

HTAs, in large part because of the state's ongoing economic dependence on remittances.[10] As

HTAs expanded and multiplied in the 1990s and beyond, the Mexican state came to view

collective remittances as a potential tool of development (de la Garza and Lowell 2002). State-

sponsored programs emerged that were designed to encourage remittances and channel them

toward productive uses. The Two-for-One (and now Three-for-One) matching fund project that

the Zacatecan government first adopted in 1992 has been among the most successful of these

state-based efforts. In this program, each dollar remitted in the participating region is matched

threefold by the federal, state, and municipal governments (de la Garza and Lowell 2002). The

funds thus accumulated are put toward community-level development projects such as building

schools and churches, paving streets, and providing drinking water (de la Garza and Lowell

2002:14).[11]

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[9] I privilege an analysis of the sending context, Mexico, although HTAs also directly benefit transmigrants residing in the U.S. (de la Garza and Lowell 2002:6). HTAs provide a support system, which often includes rudimentary social services for individual transmigrants and in particular new arrivals (Grillo 2002).

[10] Some authors are concerned that collective remittances constitute a small portion of the total remittances sent to Mexico; states may still be unable to access the bulk of individual remittances (de la Garza and Lowell 2002).

[11] One unintended consequence of government involvement in HTAs is that clunky bureaucratic programs may push migrants away from formal channels of remitting their earnings toward more informal, less regulated channels (Briquets and Lopez 1997, in de la Garza and Lowell 2002:68).

The growth and expansion of HTAs has had not only economic but also political ramifications, in that transmigrants living in the United States gained the right to vote prior to the Mexican presidential election of 2006 (Smith 2007). This politicization of transnational social spaces represents a particular convergence of the agendas of the Mexican state and transmigrants' associations. It also indicates the ability of transmigrants to leverage the sending state according to their interests. Mexican transmigrants have successfully argued that their positive contributions to their places of origin, through remittance-based development projects, justify increased political rights (Goldring 2002).

On the one hand, this achievement can be seen as a migrant-driven initiative. In demanding the right to vote, transmigrants demanded substantive political rights and power, not merely "thin" or "symbolic and cultural" inclusion in the Mexican state at the federal level (Smith 2007:1-4). Interestingly, Mexican transmigrants seem to have gained leverage from their remittance-based community development projects. They claimed that, regardless of their level of integration in U.S. society, their development initiatives in their places of origin proved that they were still contributing citizens and deserved full political participation (Smith 2007; Goldring 2004).

For transmigrants, membership in the nation and participation in remittance-based development projects also constitutes an opportunity to jockey for social status (Goldring 1998; VanWey, Tucker, and McConnell 2005; Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Gökçe 2008). Status claims could be as diverse as building a health clinic, hosting a costly wedding, obtaining a degree, or making donations to religious leaders. Transmigrants may be particularly interested in making status claims in their places of origin if they plan on eventually returning and settling in the sending state. Generally speaking, increases in status bring dividends in terms of wealth, power,

and prestige. In specific cases, remittance-based development may give transmigrants more leverage over local and regional authorities (Goldring 1998:173; Goldring 2004:834). Transmigrants' associations may even function as political trampolines for individual leaders. Thus, collective remittances as a tool of development have the potential to transform hierarchies of power at local, regional, and national levels in the sending context.

On the contrary, the right to vote may be seen as an instance of the Mexican state seeking to manage or contain its transmigrants, who often evade the regulatory powers of the state by virtue of their border-crossing existence. Transmigration causes Mexico's political community to extend beyond the conventional borders of the state, indicating the emergence of an "extraterritorial state" and a progressive redefinition of citizenship (Smith 2007:4; Bloemraad, Korteweg, and Gökçe 2008). By granting transmigrants the right to vote, the state opened up limited channels for its citizens living abroad to voice their interests and grievances (Smith 2007:1).[12] The vote could be merely part of a larger state project to "redefine and reincorporate" Mexican transmigrants into the nation and secure increased access to their remittances (Goldring 2002:56).

This case demonstrates how remittances are embedded in the political sphere, yet the relationship between the state and Mexican transmigrants is far from simple. Some authors see the state's interactions with transmigrants as "top-down, centralized, hegemonic, and co-optive" while others see transmigration as weakening the state and enhancing migrants' autonomy (Goldring 2002:58). Diverse interactions with the state may occur at local, regional, and national levels. I side with Goldring (2002:70), who conceives of the relationship between transmigrant-

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[12] Smith (2007) argues that securing the right to vote may have actually curtailed transmigrants' political participation, more broadly defined. The law permitting the vote from abroad also prohibited candidates from campaigning in the U.S. and did not allow transmigrants to provide material or financial support to candidates. In the years prior to the 2006 election, Mexican transmigrants had been politically active and vocal with considerable influence at the federal, state, and local levels of the Mexican government.

led and state-led initiatives as "dynamic" and best viewed at a subnational level. It is virtually impossible for states and transmigrants to operate entirely independently of each other; theirs is a dialectical relationship. A "state-in-society" perspective reveals how social actors, such as transmigrants, negotiate certain agendas in politicized spaces while enjoying some measure of political autonomy from the sending state (Mohan and Stokke 2000:264). In securing the right to vote and other political issues, states and transmigrants strategically choose when to engage one another, whether in collaboration or confrontation, and when to draw back and partially disengage (Villalón 1995; Mohan and Stokke 2000).

The case of Mexican hometown associations provides an opening for considering how transmigrants' development projects may affect state-society relations elsewhere. The literature commonly assumes that Senegalese transmigrants' associations are not nearly as well-developed as Mexican hometown associations (Riccio 2000; Grillo 2002). Mexico's politicized experience of remittance-based development then becomes an instructive model for assessing other sending states such as Senegal. I agree with Goldring (2002:92) that "most transmigrant organizations do not operate in a vacuum," yet I propose that this perspective is valuable not only for locating the state but also for identifying how remittance-based development affects the (re)distribution of political and economic power in the sending context.

In sum, the remittances-and-development literature has established that remittances function as an imperfect tool of development. From the perspective of most scholars in this field, remittances, often devoted to consumption rather than productive uses, fall short of their full potential. Remittances also have varying impacts on the economic situation of their recipients and sometimes exacerbate inequality in the sending context rather than alleviating poverty. Yet the extant literature in this field rarely asks about migrants' motivations for sending

remittances in the first place. Studies on transmigration suggest that social ties help to explain why and how migrants devote their remittances to development projects. Community-level analysis, and particularly a consideration of associational life, yields a more nuanced understanding of the economic, political, and social ramifications of remittance-based development. Having established the hometown associations of Mexico as a benchmark for my own case, I turn now to a brief explanation of how I will conduct a community-level study of remittance-based development within Senegal's Muridiyya.

Methodology

To approach the question of how remittances, as a tool of development, impact state-society relations in Senegal, I collected qualitative evidence through a combination of participant observation, interviews, and secondary sources. While living in Senegal during the spring of 2008, I spent six weeks in Touba working as an intern with a Mouride transmigrants' association and conducting a series of eight two-hour interviews in French and Wolof with transmigrants and their families. My findings from this time as a participant observer are woven into the present text. Excerpts from the interviews in this text have been translated into English. These primary sources are complemented with secondary materials including ethnographic studies of Mouride transmigrants; studies of democratization and corruption in Senegal in the twentieth century; and politico-religious studies of the Muridiyya as a Sufi brotherhood, among others. As an aside, I recognize that, as a white Jewish-American woman, my own positionality necessarily comes into play when collecting information on the Muridiyya as a participant observer. The knowledge I have thus accumulated is situated and partial, rather that objective or absolute (Rose 1997).

I use the extended case method to analyze my findings. The extended case method uses a single case study to "look for specific macro determination[s] in the micro world," situating specific social situations in broader structures and themes (Burawoy 1991:279). The purpose of the extended case method is not to draw up universal laws of social order, but rather to explain society more completely by examining why particular events and processes resolve themselves in certain ways. The goal is to establish "historically specific causality" rather than "invariant laws" (Burawoy 1991:280-281). Studies conducted in this manner take some pre-existing theory, present the case under consideration as unusual with regard to the theory, and then use their findings to reconstruct and advance the theory (Burawoy 1991:279).

In applying the extended case method, this study presents Mouride transmigrants' community development projects (the "social situation" under consideration) as "anomalous" with regard to remittances-and-development theory, "which is then reconstructed" (Burawoy 1991:280). The starting point for this study is to construct a rich, grounded account of Mouride transmigration and remittance-based development, whose depth may reveal complexities that statistical methods do not permit (Odell 2001). I draw on Geertz's (1973) practice of "thick description" in order to describe and interpret social actions in the context of transmigration.[13] Then, I use the extended case method to explain how these micro events and processes are shaped by broader contexts and forces, in order to understand particular outcomes. The reason that the micro can speak to the macro is that the "indivisible connectedness of elements" ties "the social situation to its context of determination" (Burawoy 1991:281). By envisioning how

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[13] Thick description is the ethnographer's interpretation of what is "being said" by social actions, which is achieved by deducing the multiple layers of meaning "superimposed upon or knotted into one another" in a particular society or culture (Geertz 1973:10). In one example, Geertz argues that a good ethnography will make clear the differences between eye twitches, winks, parodies of winks, rehearsals of parodies of winks, and so on. Such analyses are typically notable, according to Geertz, more for their nuance than their orderly coherence.

Mouride transmigration is embedded in social and political contexts, I can draw nuanced conclusions about how remittance-based development functions.

A single case study, drawing in part on participant observation, confronts two particular criticisms: that it is "incapable of generalization" and "inherently 'micro' and ahistorical" (Burawoy 1991:271). But a single case, although potentially atypical and of limited power for generalization, can apply a theory to new terrain and its qualified conclusions suggest specific improvements or modifications for that theory. As a detailed study of the political and social impacts of remittance-based development within the Muridiyya, this paper's narrow focus precludes immediate application to other geographic spaces. However, the lessons drawn from this case provide useful insights for how to study cases of migration and development in a way that incorporates the embeddedness of remittances in political and social contexts.

CHAPTER 2

The Internal Logic of the Muridiyya

In order to arrive at a nuanced understanding of the impacts of remittance-based development in Senegal, it is necessary to start by considering the Muridiyya on its own terms. The development projects pursued by Mouride transmigrants are shaped in part by the internal logic that drives the circulation of wealth within the brotherhood. This chapter will demonstrate how the relationships between religious leaders and their disciples constitute networks of patronage. Within these networks, disciples actively concentrate wealth in figures of authority despite the inequalities thus created. Although the disciples' actions initially appear to be against their self-interest, they are in fact justified on both economic and religious levels. Only by understanding the rationale behind these relationships is it possible to recognize how transmigration and remittance-based development are transforming the brotherhood.

In Senegal, nearly all Muslims belong to a Sufi brotherhood, or *tariqa*, which in Arabic means a path for bringing one closer to God (Cruise O'Brien 1983:122; Babou 2002a:1). The Muridiyya has the distinction of being the only brotherhood founded in Senegal. The two other prominent brotherhoods in Senegal, the Qadiriyya and the Tijaniyya, were founded in the Middle East and North Africa respectively and spread to Senegal by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Cheikh Amadou Bamba branched off from the Qadiriyya in the late nineteenth century, at the height of French colonial rule, and founded the Muridiyya as an autonomous brotherhood (Babou 2002a:1). The Muridiyya rapidly increased in popularity as the twentieth century progressed, boasting over 100,000 followers by 1927 (the year that marked the death of its founder), more than 300,000 followers by the 1950s, and well over three million followers today (Babou 2002b:153; Babou 2003:312). More superlatives have been attributed to the

Muridiyya than nearly any other entity in Senegal. It is commonly represented as more cohesive, organizationally coherent, politically influential, and economically successful than any other brotherhood in Senegal (Cruise O'Brien 1983:123; Villalón 1995:75).[14] So many studies of African Sufism have focused on the Muridiyya that some researchers critique the field's "*mouridocentrisme*" (Villalón 1995:68).

The roots of the Muridiyya's exceptionalism lie in its founder, Cheikh Amadou Bamba, whose insightful teachings, charisma, and arguably revolutionary spirit continue to inspire the devotion of millions of followers to this day. Cheikh Amadou Bamba emphasized *tarbiyya* (the education of the soul) as the path to bring followers closer to God.[15] To achieve *tarbiyya*, a *Mouride* (aspirant) must surrender himself to a marabout (religious notable) for spiritual teaching and guidance (Babou 2002a:170). Cheikh Amadou Bamba's spiritual teachings appealed strongly to people of lower social status, for his was a meritocratic system of sorts. He taught that a follower could become closer to God based on worship practices and devotion to one's marabout, which appealed to those who sought to defy their ascribed social status (Babou 2002a:245). Early adherents to the Muridiyya thus included many of the casted and enslaved (Cruise O'Brien 1975:64).[16] In contemporary times, many followers identify as Wolof, which is numerically the dominant ethnic group in Senegal at 44% of the population (Villalón 1995:49).[17] While the Muridiyya did not overturn the hierarchy of Wolof society, and in fact partially

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[14] However, the Tijaniyya, not the Muridiyya, is the largest brotherhood in terms of membership.

[15] One researcher also portrays *tarbiyya* as the founder's strategy for creating social change in Senegalese society during and after colonization (Babou 2002a:195).

[16] Wolof society partially follows a caste system. Persons working in certain trades, such as blacksmithing or praise-singing, or those descended from persons in those trades, are casted and thus restricted from marrying outside of their caste. Slavery was also common to Wolof society in Cheikh Amadou Bamba's time.

[17] However, the blurred boundary of Wolof identity challenges such concrete statistics. At least 70% of the population of Senegal speaks Wolof, which has become the *de facto* national language. Members of other ethnic groups commonly rely on Wolof to communicate across linguistic barriers (Riccio 2000:73).

reproduced it,[18] the brotherhood was still remarkably successful in attracting a large following from its inception.

Cheikh Amadou Bamba's success attracted negative attention from the French colonial authorities, who feared that the religious leader's influence over such a significant segment of the population threatened their control. French authorities exiled Cheikh Amadou Bamba to Gabon from 1885 to 1902, and again to Mauritania from 1903 to 1907.[19] Cheikh Amadou Bamba's hardships during his exile have become the stuff of legend; tales of miracles abound from this time period, contributing to his larger-than-life, nearly messianic personality. Although his followers refute the notion that he may be perceived as the messiah, his role in Senegalese history points to that possibility. Indeed, as the story goes, when Cheikh Amadou Bamba returned from exile, his followers cried, "*Yalla ñów-na!*" (God has arrived!) (Rosander and Westerlund 1997:220-221).

The most fundamental element of the Muridiyya's organizational structure is the relationship between a marabout and his *talibés* (disciples). Marabouts serve as intermediaries for *talibés* seeking divine grace (Cruise O'Brien 1983:122; Rosander and Westerlund 1997:4). These religious leaders bestow *baraka* (blessing) upon their *talibés*, who submit themselves to their marabout's teachings and offer devotion in return.[20] Submission to a marabout is a familiar component of Sufi Islam yet the extent to which Cheikh Amadou Bamba promoted this practice exceeded the norm (Villalón 1995:69; Babou 2002a:223). Still, much of the extant literature on

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[18] Followers from non-casted families became religious leaders within the brotherhood more frequently than casted individuals, and they enjoyed greater levels of success in recruiting others (Babou 2002a:245).

[19] Following his return to Senegal, Cheikh Amadou Bamba established relatively amicable relations with the colonial authorities, who realized that peaceful collaboration, rather than ongoing hostility and contestation, with the Muridiyya would better serve their economic interests in groundnut cultivation (Babou 2003:312).

[20] Marabouts are not creators but merely transmitters of *baraka*, which they access or inherit access to either from their personal traits or heritage (Rosander and Westerlund 1997:217). There is no specific set of conditions or qualifications by which one ascends to the status of a marabout. Rather, the power to transmit *baraka* is contingent upon popular recognition: "A marabout is simply one if people say he is" (Villalón 1995:129).

the Muridiyya wrongly depicts *talibés* as passive and exploited, not as actors but as unthinking beings acted upon by marabouts. The most popular phrase to denote such obedience is "blind submission" (Behrman 1970). This is an exaggeration. Ironically, the root of the notion that *talibés* are incapable of autonomous thought and blindly submit themselves to their marabouts lies in Cheikh Amadou Bamba's teachings.

The founder of the Muridiyya, aspiring to set disciples on the correct path to paradise, emphasized *jebëlu* (submission to a marabout) as a fundamental component of his teachings. There would be no exceptions, he wrote: "The *talibé* must be like a corpse in the hands of the mortician" (Diouf 2000:686). As the Muridiyya grew and developed, the concept of submission expanded to include not only spiritual but also earthly guidance (Babou 2002a:224). *Talibés* consult with their marabouts regularly on a wide variety of personal, social, economic, and political matters. They seek advice about marriage, business, family disputes, health, and more (Babou 2002a:224). Disciples also embrace submission as their ultimate demonstration of love and devotion to Cheikh Amadou Bamba as their spiritual leader.

While *talibés* emphatically narrate their own submission,[21] their daily routines embody a wide variety of stances. In fact, most disciples selectively follow or ignore the commands of their marabouts. When a *talibé* chooses to selectively or minimally respect the guidance of his marabout, his marabout no longer wields total control over his thoughts and actions (Villalón 1995:193). While on the surface the marabout-*talibé* relationship is maintained, the term "blind

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[21] A clear understanding of submission in the Muridiyya requires disentangling how *talibés* express submission from how they practice it (Villalón 1995:119-120). Wolof discourse includes symbolic language and imagery which, when taken at face value, appears to reaffirm the submission of *talibés* (Rosander and Westerlund 1997:219). Although *talibés* act with partial autonomy, they commonly speak in hyperbole as they narrate their devotion to their marabout, in order to underscore the depth of their religious commitment. They occasionally even compete with one another to see who can portray himself as more obedient (Rosander and Westerlund 1997:245). Paradoxically, when a *talibé* announces his blind submission, "he is in fact boasting" (Cruise O'Brien 1975:62-63)

submission" no longer fits. Chapter 3 will address how Mouride transmigration pushes the boundaries of this concept of semi-autonomous *talibés* even further.

Moreover, an individual's identity as a marabout is only as stable as his group of disciples (Cruise O'Brien 1971:107). The Muridiyya is quite hierarchical in that the Khalifa-General (the head of the brotherhood) and Cheikh Amadou Bamba's descendants rank first, the families of his original disciples rank second, and other marabouts of varying rank and importance follow (Babou 2002a:239-240).[22] *Talibés* form the base of the Muridiyya's hierarchy because, having no disciples of their own, they cannot claim authority over others. However, there is no set order in which the hierarchy arranges itself; all relations within the Muridiyya are somewhat tenuous. Ongoing competition for disciples occurs among all marabouts. In general, marabouts must at least maintain, if not expand, their base of *talibés* in order to continue enjoying their elevated social status (Villalón 1995:123). For this reason, marabouts find the partial autonomy of *talibés* unsettling.

Each *talibé* freely chooses his marabout and this choice, small though it may be, empowers the *talibé* to decide at any given moment whether to support or abandon his marabout.[23] In fact, marabouts tread carefully when giving commands, lest an unfavorable prescription conflict with a *talibé*'s own opinions or interests, potentially leading to discontent, disobedience, or abandonment (Villalón 1995:147; Babou 2002a:224). For *talibés*, the social transition costs of revoking a connection with a particular marabout are high enough that these

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[22] The highest tiers of the religious leadership within the Muridiyya are dynastic. The position of Khalifa-General (the highest authority in the brotherhood) is inherited by Cheikh Amadou Bamba's descendants, known as the Mbacké family. The right to claim the position of Khalifa-General is circumscribed by blood, yet it is passed not from father to son but laterally, across the brothers in one generation, before descending to the next (Villalón 1995:138; Rosander and Westerlund 1997:244). Serigne Mouhamadou Moustapha Mbacké, Cheikh Amadou Bamba's eldest son, became the Khalifa-General in 1927 when his father passed. Each of his surviving brothers took up the position in turn, according to age (Riccio 2001:586).

[23] Families usually affiliate themselves with a certain maraboutic lineage and women typically adopt the marabout of their husbands, yet these historical attachments do not prevent a dissatisfied member of the family from breaking the connection (Babou 2002a:240).

relationships remain fairly stable, yet some shifting of alliances occurs. There is no formal contract to annul; a *talibé* must simply declare allegiance to another marabout. Moreover, a marabout cannot punish a *talibé* for changing his stripes (Cruise O'Brien 1971:88, 97). It is not the fact of abandonment but rather the potential for abandonment which gives disciples a certain measure of power over their marabouts (Villalón 1995:115).

Threatened with abandonment and the corresponding loss of social status, marabouts employ a number of strategies to satisfy their current disciples and, if possible, to expand their following. Otherwise, they risk ceding their place in the religious hierarchy to a more ambitious upstart. Marabouts compete with one another to secure the loyalty of their *talibés* primarily by providing them with material benefits. As part of their strategy to increase their following, most religious leaders cultivate relationships with state officials in order to glean preferential treatment, business contacts, goods and services for their *talibés*. Alliances then shift as disciples abandon weak marabouts for those who more successfully extract resources from the state (Cruise O'Brien 1975:177). Maraboutic competition thereby yields dense networks of patronage within the Mouride brotherhood. Within these networks, marabouts provide *talibés* not only with spiritual blessings but also with access to political, economic, and social benefits which disciples would otherwise be unable to accrue. The implications that this relationship holds for the interactions among marabouts, *talibés*, and the state will be addressed in detail in Chapter 5.

Interestingly, the personal wealth of marabouts has become a powerful measure of social status by which religious leaders symbolically assure *talibés* of their capacity to access economic resources for them.[24] A marabout seeking to accumulate more disciples and elevate his position

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[24] A partial explanation for the roots of such ostentatious maraboutic wealth lies in how Sufism is practiced in West Africa. In this religious ideology, a marabout's material possessions and conspicuous consumption, even

in the religious hierarchy would do well to flaunt his wealth. The extant literature on the Muridiyya often appears filled with Orientalist imagery of absurdly wealthy Islamic rulers surrounded by luxurious possessions and beautiful women, taking advantage of the ignorant masses of disciples who toil on their behalf. Such imagery inappropriately suggests total exploitation and dominance, and it misses the internal logic of the marabout-*talibé* relationship that explains and sustains such inequality. Despite controlling tremendous amounts of wealth, marabouts occupy a much more precarious position than may be readily apparent.

The literature's imagery of maraboutic extravagance does reflect certain economic realities of the brotherhood. Marabouts are exceptionally prosperous relative to their disciples and they often display their riches in a highly visible manner. Cruise O'Brien (1975:59) lists the material benefits that marabouts accrue as including: large tracts of land, luxurious homes, fine clothes, and expensive cars. The Khalifa-General, at the pinnacle of the religious hierarchy, amasses considerable personal wealth yet the sources of his wealth are hard to characterize. Research indicates that he receives profits from his land holdings as well as cash and other resources from his *talibés*, their transnational associations, governmental authorities and individual politicians (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5) (Cruise O'Brien 1971:124). Most of these contributions are made informally, so measuring the wealth of the Khalifa-General presents a considerable challenge. No researcher to date, in my findings, has successfully pinned a numerical value on any marabout's wealth in the Muridiyya.

Talibés reinforce this centralization of wealth; they have a clear rationale for providing material and financial contributions to their marabouts despite the apparent inequalities thus created. A disciple only benefits economically from his relationship with his marabout to the

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extravagance, do not contradict his spirituality (Cruise O'Brien 1975:79). In fact, a marabout's holiness may even be measured by his material wealth (Rosander and Westerlund 1997:219).

extent that his marabout is powerful, prestigious, and well-connected (Rosander and Westerlund 1997:322). By enriching their marabouts, *talibés* gain greater access to the resources the marabouts command. In the context of scarce resources, *talibés* frequently rely on maintaining connections with *some* member of the religious hierarchy in order to meet their basic needs (Villalón 1995:121). At times, their very survival depends on the power of their marabout.

In sum, because wealth is accumulated and then redistributed within the brotherhood, *talibés* invest in a relatively secure and prosperous future for themselves and their families by investing in their marabouts (Villalón 1995:187).

A rumor that circulated Senegal in 1996 may serve as an example (Riccio 2004:931-932). As the story goes, a Mouride transmigrant presented the Khalifa-General with an expensive car. After having made the gift, he continued to demand the use of his brother's car each time he returned to Senegal, lacking one of his own. From an outsider's perspective, such generosity may appear as extravagance or "waste" of an individual's earnings. His actions seem irrational in that he apparently values the ostentation of his religious leader more highly than the well-being of his own family. Indeed, European and North American researchers often condemn systems of patronage within Africa as manifestations of corruption (Cruise O'Brien 1975). However, by investing in the Khalifa-General, the Mouride transmigrant in this story was actually investing in his family's future. Within the context of the Muridiyya, his actions made sense; they could yield significant religious, economic, social, or political benefits for him and his family in the future. For instance, having received the gift, the Khalifa-General may be more inclined to assist this transmigrant in future business opportunities. It is important to note that *talibes'* contributions to their marabouts are typically proportional to their own income and that the amount they give rarely constitutes a serious economic hardship (Villalón 1995:187).

Situations such as this one clarify the internal logic of networks of patronage within the Muridiyya. Riccio (2000:87), drawing on Bourdieu, observes that the marabout-*talibé* relationship has "'a logic which is not that of a logician,' [in that] it is partially 'coherent' and partially 'practical' or 'convenient'." The actions of individual marabouts and *talibés* support and reinforce the brotherhood's networks of patronage – even when they seem, on the surface, to be acting against their own interests. In Senegal, concentrations of wealth generate power for high-ranking individuals but also create concomitant responsibilities to provide for those in more dependent positions. These obligations may entail providing nourishment, financial support, or even employment. Villalón (1995:58) writes on the social acceptability of concentrations of wealth:

> Rather than being perceived as inequitable and therefore unjust, concentrations of wealth are actually desirable for everyone concerned – as long as the holder of wealth recognizes and acts on his (rarely her) obligations to those in dependent positions.

Networks of patronage and expectations of generosity within the Muridiyya facilitate the redistribution of wealth (Cruise O'Brien 1975:61). Thus, the unequal distribution of wealth in the Muridiyya, concentrated in marabouts as authority figures, may also be viewed as a form of social and economic interdependence which guarantees the well-being of all, regardless of one's personal wealth (Villalón 1995:59). Individuals of lower status benefit from the authority, wealth, and power accumulated by their patrons. Marabouts, by maintaining a reputation for generosity, fulfill cultural expectations and ensure their own religious and economic power.

Religiously-Oriented Work

To this point, I have addressed how marabouts accumulate wealth from their *talibés* from a predominantly economic standpoint. A brief detour into the religious justifications for

maraboutic accumulation of wealth may provide additional insights into how deeply interwoven the economic and the religious spheres are within the Muridiyya.

The primary sources of maraboutic wealth in the Muridiyya are financial contributions (*hadiyya*) and religiously-oriented work (*xidma*). I will address each in turn. First, *talibés* make regular financial contributions to their marabouts to affirm their devotion, and these contributions are known as *hadiyya*.[25] Individual *talibés* give *hadiyya* (in cash or in kind) to their marabouts for the duration of their relationship: at the moment they declare submission, upon visiting their spiritual teacher for guidance, and during religious holidays (Babou 2002a:234). It may be in the disciples' self-interest to give generously:

> Every disciple contributes in accordance with his wealth and generosity, and theoretically, it is the symbolism of the gesture and intention that are more important than the amount given. However, rich and generous disciples have come to occupy privileged positions in the organization (Babou 2002a:234).

Talibés thus have multiple incentives to give *hadiyya*; they may receive *baraka*, gain prestige, and access economic resources by giving generously. Additionally, even though marabouts accumulate significant wealth through *hadiyya*, they must also give *hadiyya* annually to the Khalifa-General.

Second, a significant portion of the brotherhood's wealth stems from Cheikh Amadou Bamba's unusually strong emphasis on work as a critical piece of one's spiritual education. In his writings and poems, the founder of the brotherhood instructed, "Work is part of religion" (Diop 1981:281, author's translation). My informants frequently invoked popular expressions of this command, including "One enters into the Muridiyya by the sweat of one's brow." However, Cheikh Amadou Bamba did not mean work in the conventional sense; he encouraged his *talibés* to pursue *xidma* rather than *amal*. In Arabic, *xidma* means "being at the service of somebody,"

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[25] While all forms of Islam require some kind of *sadaqa* (charity), *hadiyya* is specific to Sufi Islam.

whereas *amal* signifies "labor" (Babou 2002a:228). He intended work within the Muridiyya to have a powerful religious dimension. *Xidma* (which I will hereafter refer to as religiously-oriented work) could even be a spiritual endeavor, akin to prayer.

For *talibés*, religiously-oriented work (which is distinct from *hadiyya*) constitutes an essential component of piety. Perhaps the best example of religiously-oriented work is the *dara*. Beginning in colonial times, rural *talibés* who were all affiliated to the same marabout would gather together on a weekly basis in associations known as *daras*. Within these associations, *talibés* would cultivate their marabouts' groundnut fields and also participate in other kinds of religiously-oriented work. The forms that *daras*' religiously-oriented work took were quite flexible and included not only physical labor but also reading and chanting Cheikh Amadou Bamba's writings and poems as well as assisting the Khalifa-General in communal projects (Babou 2002a:232). For their efforts the *talibés* received *baraka* from their marabouts, thereby securing their own entry to paradise (Babou 2002a:230). These rural associations thus provided opportunities for *talibés* to express, in community and cooperation with one another, a shared devotion to Cheikh Amadou Bamba and a personal commitment to advancing the brotherhood (Bava 2002:51).

As the institutions through which *talibés* participate in religiously-oriented work, *daras* have been identified as "the Mouride brotherhood's major organizational innovation" and that "which has most contributed to the brotherhood's success" (Cruise O'Brien 1971:163). First, from a more macro perspective, *daras* enabled the brotherhood to solidify its grasp over the mono-crop economy, which strengthened marabouts both economically and politically in the context of French colonization (Villalón 1995:118). Second, *daras* enabled marabouts to accumulate significant personal wealth, which they could then redistribute in order to win the

devotion of large numbers of new *talibés*. *Daras* thus reinforced the internal hierarchy of the brotherhood and helped to expand its following. Third, *daras* reinforced the Muridiyya's networks of patronage. By contributing to the brotherhood through *daras*, disciples traded work for blessings and material support. In sum, these innovative associations allowed marabouts to secure their own positions as key intermediaries between farmer-disciples and the Khalifa-General, as well as between farmer-disciples and state officials.

Since religiously-oriented work lies at the core of Mouride doctrine, marabouts are also required to practice it, although their responsibilities differ somewhat from those of *talibés* (Babou 2002a:231).[26] Marabouts participate in religiously-oriented work precisely by practicing generosity – that is, by redistributing wealth among their *talibés* through patronage, as described above. Marabouts also practice religiously-oriented work by advancing the brotherhood's communal projects. Therefore, *xidma* creates religiously-grounded obligations for marabouts to share their wealth, which they have accumulated in part through *hadiyya*.

The Khalifa-General also participates in religiously-oriented work. He strengthens the brotherhood by regularly designing communal projects: building or expanding mosques; building religious schools; improving living conditions in villages; or increasing agricultural productivity on his farms. He may designate certain marabouts to ensure that his projects are brought to completion (Babou 2002a:235). These projects serve both to increase the Khalifa-General's prestige and to redistribute the wealth he accumulates through *xidma* and *hadiyya*. As will be described in subsequent chapters, Mouride transmigrants' community development projects in Senegal may encroach on the role of the Khalifa-General as the primary and most powerful redistributor of wealth within the Muridiyya.

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[26] Even Cheikh Amadou Bamba considered himself a practitioner of *xidma*, as evidenced by the popular name he coined for himself: *Xadim U Rasul* ("Servant of the Prophet") (Babou 2002a:228).

In sum, the vertical ties between marabouts and *talibés* facilitate the circulation of wealth within the brotherhood. Religious, economic, and social factors promote the accumulation of maraboutic wealth, so long as a portion of that wealth is redistributed to disciples. Although *talibés* may appear to be subservient and exploited, in that by supporting their marabouts they appear to act against their own interests, they actually enjoy a measure of autonomy. The position of marabouts within the brotherhood is less stable than may be readily apparent. The next chapter will address how factors both internal and external to the brotherhood caused a rise in Mouride transmigration in the second half of the twentieth century. The marabout-*talibé* relationships discussed here undergoes significant transformations as disciples enter into transnational social spheres.

CHAPTER 3

Urbanization, Transmigration and Associational Life

The brotherhood's networks of patronage have undergone a significant transformation in the second half of the twentieth century. Senegal's declining agricultural sector, among other factors, prompted *talibés* to migrate in large numbers from rural villages to, first, urban and, then, transnational locales. Mouride transmigration challenged the coherence of the brotherhood, yet the strength of the brotherhood's associational life permitted it to adapt to the new context thrust upon it. This chapter will discuss the origins of Mouride transmigration, the complex identities and agendas of transmigrant *talibés*, and the emergence of transnational religious associations. Mouride transmigration, far from existing in isolation as an economic phenomenon, is embedded in complex, dynamic, and border-crossing political and social spheres.

Rural-Urban Migration within Senegal

Senegal gained independence in 1960 under President Léopold Sédar Senghor who, in pursuing an agenda of African Socialism, retained the mono-crop economy for several decades. The mono-crop economy proved itself to be rather vulnerable to fluctuations in prices on the world markets, but it was a series of droughts in the late 1960s and continuing through the 1970s, combined with accumulating national debt and the worldwide oil crisis of 1973, that resulted in an economic crisis in Senegal and the collapse of the agriculture-based economy (Diouf 2000:691; Bava 2004:135). President Abdou Diouf was elected in 1981 and began capitalist reforms which, along with the IMF's structural adjustment programs in Senegal, foreshadowed the end of the mono-crop economy.

During this time, rural farmers, among them large numbers of Mouride *talibés*, migrated to the cities. Rural *talibés* flocked particularly to the holy site of Touba, seeking salvation as well as earthly benefits. The city's population swelled from 2,666 in 1961 to more than 300,000 today; some estimate the current population to be closer to one million (Gueye 2001:107). The rate of urbanization in the region in which Touba is located has been remarkable; it was estimated to be 26% in 1976, rising to 38% by 1988. This region is now more urbanized than any other area of the country except for the Dakar region, making Touba the second-largest city in Senegal (Mbow, in Diop 1993:196). Other regional centers such as Thiès, Kaolack, and Tambacounda also saw tremendous population influxes. The rural exodus stimulated speculation among researchers that the Muridiyya, until that point a rural organization dependent on groundnut agriculture, would not survive (Babou 2002a:4-5; Babou 2002b:152-153).

In this context, rural-urban migration may be seen as an economic necessity separate from any considerations internal to the Mouride brotherhood. As one Mouride who left his village for the city of Diourbel stated, "[I]f someone does not emigrate, it is because he has no legs to do it" (Riccio 2000:77). A rural livelihood centered on agriculture no longer appeared feasible to the *talibés*. Young Senegalese, in particular, felt abandoned by their government (Riccio 2001:589). They became disillusioned by the prospect of remaining in rural Senegal and attempting to eke out a livelihood from the land. Increasing numbers of them saw rural-urban migration as their most viable option.

The migration stimulated by economic and political shifts in the mid-twentieth century did not halt at the level of Senegalese cities. As early as the 1960s, *talibés* were migrating from rural areas to Senegal's cities and then on to major cities in Africa, Europe, North America, and elsewhere (Diouf 2000:691). Thus, far from a new phenomenon tied to the most recent phase of

globalization, Mouride transmigration has been ongoing for at least half a century (Grillo 2002:137).

Mouride Transmigration and Globalization

For the most part, researchers agree that Senegalese migrants create connections, exchanges, and lives that defy traditional conceptions of migration. Their movement is more appropriately termed transmigration (Riccio 2000:16; Salzbrunn 2002:219). Mouride *talibés* have been among the most numerous and most successful of all Senegalese migrants. As described in the review of the literature, success among pioneer migrants has led to the creation of networks that fuel great movements of *talibés* into border-crossing spaces. As Mouride migrants network, they create transnational social spaces within which goods, symbols, money, and ideas circulate. Each year, through brothers, uncles, neighbors, or other associates, thousands of potential transmigrants in Senegal overcome the threshold of migration and begin to participate in these transnational social spaces.[27]

Mouride transmigration to France, the former colonial power in Senegal, commenced in the 1960s (Babou 2002b:158). By the 1980s, Italy had become a popular alternative, in no small part because its regulatory policies were less stringent than those of its neighbors (Mung 1996:55). By the mid-1990s, official counts indicated between 40,000 and 80,000 Senegalese living in France, 35,000 in Italy, and between 10,000 and 20,000 in the United States (Mung 1996:55; Riccio 2001:584; Babou 2002b:158; N'Diaye and N'Diaye 2006:97). These figures exclude illegal immigrants; the real number of Senegalese living in Europe and the United States is likely much higher than the official counts. Abdou Malal Diop, the Minister of Senegalese

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[27] Sporadic accounts exist of marabouts who directly assisted *talibés* in becoming transmigrants, most notably by obtaining visas for them in exchange for a portion of their economic profits. However, such actions are extremely rare (Riccio 2000:88; Riccio 2001:586).

Living Abroad, estimated in 2006 that as many as 3 million Senegalese (out of a total population of almost 12 million) live outside the country, both legally and illegally. By official estimates, these migrants send back more than 300 billion CFA ($600 million) per year, while accounting for informal remittances would make that number much higher (Tattersall 2006).

Creating lives that are simultaneously "here" and "there," Mouride transmigrants typically travel back and forth between Senegal and numerous receiving contexts. The geographic paths they take are not characterized by two opposing poles – Senegal at one end and France, for instance, on the other. Individual transmigrants are often highly mobile and may move back and forth between Senegal and multiple other destinations, even across several continents. The destinations they frequent include Europe (particularly France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Portugal and Belgium), the Americas (particularly the United States and Canada), other regions of Africa, and, more recently, Asia and Australia (Mung 1996:57; Diouf 2000:692; Babou 2003:311). In the United States, Mouride transmigrants have concentrated in New York City's Harlem, a portion of which is now referred to as "Little Senegal," as well as other major cities including Chicago, Cincinnati, Atlanta, and Philadelphia (N'Diaye and N'Diaye 2006:97). In this way, Mouride transmigrants demonstrate well the "multipolarization" of Senegalese migration (Riccio 2000:70).

Mouride transmigrants' primary economic pursuits are in commerce and trade, although this characterization fails to capture the diversity of their transnational activities (Cruise O'Brien 1983:133; Villalón 1995:69). The kind of work they pursue in the receiving context varies depending on the demand for skilled and unskilled labor. Migrants are often self-employed.[28]

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[28] Mouride transmigrants tend to work alone rather than in collaboration with one another, and they often prefer self-employment to salaried work (Riccio 2001:591). Tired of the exploitation of migrant workers, Mourides working abroad often choose to remove themselves from such abusive environments. One of my informants expressed anger and dismay that bosses in Italy live "on the backs" of Senegalese transmigrants, and often pit them against migrant

Mouride transmigrants also come from a plurality of socio-economic, cultural, educational, and professional backgrounds (Riccio 2001:589-590). They migrate at different ages and in different politico-historical contexts. They enter into a wide variety of receiving contexts with varying degrees and kinds of informal support networks. Accordingly, the aspirations, worldviews, and motivations of Mouride transmigrants are by no means unitary.

The characteristics of Mouride transmigrants are becoming, if anything, more diverse as time goes on. From a relatively small number of pioneer migrants, often uneducated, the pool of Mouride transmigrants has expanded to include educated youth, functionaries, and salaried workers (Riccio 2001:589).[29] Moreover, any given individual transmigrant may embody multiple identities. Mouride transmigrants studying at universities or holding white-collar jobs may also participate in trade at times (Riccio 2001:592). For instance, one of my informants, a youthful *talibé*, studies in France to be an electrical engineer while working part-time in a supermarket and assisting his father (also a Mouride transmigrant) in selling imported Senegalese goods.

A brief profile of several Mouride transmigrants whom I interviewed in Touba illustrates the diverse trajectories of these extremely mobile *talibés*. One informant works independently as a merchant in France, trucking imported Senegalese goods such as wax tissue (high-quality fabric) and boubous (tailored tunics) to markets. Having begun migrating in 1978, he counts himself among the first Mouride transmigrants to make a living in his particular region of France. He maintains one home in France for his first wife and three children, but has

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workers from other countries. Yet not all transmigrants are content with self-employment; one of my informants admitted that he would prefer that some of the twenty Senegalese businessmen in his city in France work together or share strategies to reduce risks.

[29] Another notable characteristic of Mouride transmigration is that female transmigrants are in the extreme minority, although some women have recently begun to migrate independently and others are joining through family reunions (Riccio 2001:584).

constructed another in Senegal for his second wife.[30] Another transmigrant is employed as a

baggage handler at the airport in Milan, a destination to which he has returned multiple times

since he began migrating in 1988. His previous work has included traveling as a merchant, a

photographer at Senegalese weddings and baptisms, and a truck driver. He revealed that he

found the latter to be distasteful, yet he pursued it regardless because he needed the income.

Now suffering from health troubles, he is taking several months to recuperate in Touba while

living in the large home he has constructed for his three wives. Like these two men, many

Mouride transmigrants are engaged in commerce and manual labor, trades that do not necessarily

require a high level of education.

Yet another informant has been migrating to and from Madrid since 1983, while his work

in imports and exports occasionally takes him to the United States. Aspiring to settle

permanently in Europe with his family, he gained Spanish citizenship and brought his wife and

two children to Madrid. He soon found, however, that while his earnings could have met his

family's daily expenses in Senegal, the cost of living in Spain proved overwhelming. After five

years, his family returned to Senegal where he now visits them once or twice a year. He has

since taken two more wives and built a remarkably large house for them in Touba. His first wife,

having finished her degree in business administration while in Spain, has used her own earnings

to open a dress-making shop in Senegal that employs three tailors.

Remarkably, most Mouride transmigrants remain oriented toward Senegal throughout

their travels. They return to Senegal periodically as their finances, employment contracts, and

legal status permit. The duration of their visits ranges from a few weeks to several months, even

years. My informants reported that they return for two to nine months per year. Moreover, all

the Mouride transmigrants I interviewed, without exception, expressed aspirations to return

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[30] Mourides, as Muslims, are permitted up to four wives.

permanently to Senegal. Several were in the process of constructing houses in Touba in anticipation of their retirement. However, even though they openly state plans to return to Senegal, transmigrants' aspirations to return occasionally go unrealized. Legal status or work contracts inhibit some from returning, while others choose to settle abroad.

Mourides' views of transmigration vary considerably; some transmigrants, depending in part on their socioeconomic status and age, maintain a significantly more positive opinion than others. Several of my informants stressed the positive economic and educational aspects of transmigration. One stated, "Young people should travel and see other countries because now we live in a global village." Another claimed, "Immigrant families are much better off than non-immigrant families… You'll see non-immigrant men [in Touba] with their belongings on their back going through the neighborhood begging for work." However, not all Mouride transmigrants view transmigration favorably; one aging informant recommended that young men should seek professional training, employment, and investment opportunities in Senegal, rather than working low-paying or menial jobs abroad.

Ndofor-Tah (2000, in Grillo 2002:144) calls for recognition of how transmigrants maintain "complex agendas" and respond to multiple audiences in both sending and receiving contexts. While remaining cognizant of their responsibilities for their families and communities in Senegal, transmigrants also actively participate in their host societies in the receiving context. A range of factors influences how Mouride transmigrants make decisions, not only about practical matters in their daily activities, but also how they engage with other transmigrants as members of the Muridiyya. This ambivalence – in the sense of being pulled in multiple

directions – creates transnational social spaces at the same time unitary and fragmented, coherent and incoherent. [31]

Still, nearly all studies of Mouride transmigrants identify this group as remarkably cohesive relative to migrant groups from other countries (Riccio 2001:584). In my interviews, informants tended to emphasize solidarity when narrating their own experiences of transmigration. Living abroad, they may feel more comfortable interacting with fellow transmigrants even across class, caste, language, region of origin, and so on. In the unfamiliarity of the receiving context, they may transcend socioeconomic or cultural barriers that would appear more pronounced in Senegal (Riccio 2000:26). Their shared commitment to the teachings of Cheikh Amadou Bamba unquestionably assists in this process. Their narratives of solidarity also reinforce a shared cultural code that valorizes interdependence and generosity.[32]

As the next section will demonstrate, these sentiments of solidarity enable Mourides' transnational associations to more effectively mobilize remittances for community development projects. In most literature on the subject, remittances are typically conceived of as strictly individual yet, in the Muridiyya, collective remittances are also the norm.

From Rural Daras to Transnational Dahiras

The economic upheavals and migratory movements of the mid-twentieth century eroded the rural base of *talibés* that constituted the basic supports of the Mouride brotherhood. Yet far from disappearing (as was predicted), the Muridiyya adapted to the new contexts thrust upon it. *Daras* were instrumental to the Mourides' success in adapting to rural-urban migration and then

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[31] Some authors see this ambivalence as evidence of a gap between Mouride transmigrants' expressed ideal and grounded practice. For these researchers, the complex agendas of transmigrants reveal the disjuncture between the "migratory legend" and "individual migration narratives" (Sorensen 1998, in Riccio 2000:247).

[32] Yet some of my informants lamented that they felt burdened and exploited by the economic expectations of their dependents in Senegal. Their comments indicated that expectations of generosity, at times, felt suffocating.

transmigration. As mentioned above, rural *daras* in Senegal had been extraordinarily successful from religious, economic, and political standpoints; they drew together *talibés* seeking *baraka* and enabled the religious elite to participate in networks of patronage. *Talibés* recreated these associations in urban and transnational spaces while retaining the elements that had given rural *daras* their strength – namely, a focus on religiously-oriented work and an interest in bolstering networks of patronage. However, many *talibés* now circulated between Senegal's cities and transnational locales, so the brotherhood's associations adjusted accordingly. Out of the rural *dara*, the transnational *dahira* was born.[33]

While the rural *dara* was a collective work group in which *talibés* could pursue religiously-oriented work together in exchange for *baraka*, the *dahira* is an association gathering together transmigrant *talibés*. Transnational *dahiras* enable individual Mouride transmigrants to maintain their dual orientation toward both Senegal and the receiving context. With urbanization and transmigration, the Muridiyya faced the threat of "de-territorialization," drifting apart in an uncontrolled manner (Diagne, in Diop 1993:280). *Dahiras* are the primary element contributing to the "re-territorialization" of the brotherhood. In this way, *dahiras* have been integral to the ongoing success of the Mouride brotherhood as a coherent, politically influential, and economically powerful organization. *Dahiras* recreate the values of Mouride identity in transnational social spaces, thereby grounding transmigrant *talibés* in their connections to Senegal as well as to the receiving contexts (Villalón 1995:158; Babou 2002b:156; Bava 2004:135). By actively participating in *dahiras*' activities, Mouride transmigrants continually renew their commitment to the brotherhood and affirm their connections to other *talibés* in

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[33] Initially, the urban *dahira* was not a Mouride innovation, having been invented first by the Qadiriyya (another Sufi brotherhood in Senegal), yet the Muridiyya adapted this innovative associational structure and shaped it for their own religious and economic purposes (Cruise O'Brien 1971:251).

Senegal and abroad. *Dahiras* are a critical component of how the brotherhood has adapted to urbanization and transmigration (Villalón 1995:158).

Dahiras expanded from Senegalese cities to the European and American sites frequented by Mouride transmigrants. Throughout this transition, the basic structure of the disciples' associations remained fairly informal, which permitted a measure of institutional flexibility in adapting to particular receiving contexts (Niang 2000:137). Transnational *dahiras* vary widely in size, although a typical *dahira* may have between thirty and fifty active members out of a total membership of one or two hundred *talibés* (Villalón 1995:154).[34] Some are much larger; one in Spain, of which one of my informants is the current president, counts more than seven thousand members. *Dahiras* may meet once a week or once a month (Cruise O'Brien 1971:255). Their leadership is not dictated by marabouts or the Khalifa-General. Rather, the *talibés* belonging to the *dahira* select certain members as leaders, usually through a discussion rather than a vote. If the members become discontent with the leadership, they may elect to replace officials as they see fit (Villalón 1995:161).

Initially, the strength of the marabout-*talibé* bond enabled the brotherhood to retain its coherence while reforming its institutions and its economic base (Babou 2002a:4-5). A number of transnational *dahiras* are intended only for transmigrant *talibés* who have declared submission to a particular marabout.[35] In this way, the structure of *dahiras* directly reflects that of rural *daras*. In New York, one researcher counted fourteen *dahiras* affiliated with specific marabouts

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[34] It is remarkably difficult to quantify the number of transmigrants participating in *dahiras*. This challenge is due to the informal nature of these associations, as well as the unstable legal status of many migrants.

[35] These marabouts occasionally travel abroad in order to visit their transnational *dahiras* and reinforce their ties to their transmigrant disciples. They gain tremendous wealth, prestige and power from the financial contributions they receive from their *dahiras*, so it is in their own interest to ensure these connections remain strong (Babou 2002b:165; Grillo 2002:140). Riccio (2001:594) refers to these circulating marabouts as "keep[ing] alive the ethno-religious-scape (to paraphrase Appadurai 1996) from an organizational as well as a spiritual point of view." Marabouts' visits to transnational *dahiras* constitute an inversion of traditional practices in Senegal, in which *talibés* are typically the ones who travel to visit their marabouts (Bava 2003:152).

in 1996, which had expanded to at least thirty by 2001 (Babou 2002b:164-165). In some places, these *dahiras* have formed federations (Villalón 1995:155; Babou 2002b:165-166).

However, the largest transnational *dahiras* typically draw together transmigrant *talibés* affiliated with different marabouts on the basis of other common identities, such as profession or place of residence (Babou 2002b:153).[36] These *dahiras* are not affiliated to any particular marabout and instead declare their allegiance directly to the Khalifa-General. These larger associations often model their structures on international nongovernmental organizations (Babou 2002b:155; Dieng 2002:149).[37] One such organization in New York is called the Senegalese Murid Community of Khadimul Rasul Society (Villalón 1995:69).[38] Another, called Matlaboul Fawzayni, now claims more than 70,000 members in branches across Europe and North America (Babou 2002b:155). It is in my estimation the largest of all Mouride nongovernmental associations. I will discuss Matlaboul Fawzayni in greater detail below.

Talibés accumulate social capital by participating in transnational *dahiras*, which can provide them with distinct social and economic advantages. Members come together to celebrate life-cycle events including births, baptisms, marriages, and deaths, in which the deceased's body is repatriated to Senegal for burial (Babou 2002b:157). They also gather to chant prayers, sing the poems of Cheikh Amadou Bamba and celebrate religious holidays (Diop 1981:87; Babou 2002b:154). Through such activities, participants in the same *dahira* build relationships of trust with one another. The solidarity that membership in a *dahira* facilitates often applies directly to

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[36] The structures and functions of *dahiras* may vary across receiving contexts; one researcher observes that *dahiras* are more common, and serve more diverse purposes, in France than Italy (Riccio 2000:25).

[37] In Touba, transnational *dahiras* are not required to register with the state even if they are registered as nongovernmental organizations elsewhere. Due to Touba's special relationship to the state, associations based in the holy city are exempt from the 1901 law requiring all associations to register with the state (Gueye 2001:110). This legal structure encourages the formation of transnational *dahiras* that are capable of acting without any restriction or regulation except for that of the Khalifa-General. It becomes extremely difficult to assess the activities of informal, unregistered *dahiras*, whether for the purpose of research or political control.

[38] *Khadimul Rasul*, a popular nickname for Cheikh Amadou Bamba, roughly translates as "Friend of the Prophet" (Villalón 1995:69).

economic success for transmigrants developing their own professions and trades (Babou

2002b:151; Dieng 2002:148).[39] Most Mouride transmigrants view betrayal of a fellow member

of a *dahira* in economic matters as disrespecting the ideals of the community (Babou

2002b:168). Individual Mouride transmigrants thus have strong incentives to join transnational

dahiras, through which they may reap material and spiritual rewards that they could not

otherwise access (Babou 2002b:166).[40] The success of transnational *dahiras* thus builds on

itself; as transmigrants create increasingly dense connections with one another, they establish

social support networks that enable more potential migrants to overcome the threshold of

migration and enter transnational social spaces.[41]

In the case of Mouride transmigration, social capital extends beyond advancing the

individual to advancing the group. Social capital, as conceived of by Bourdieu, constitutes a

form of social power (Babou 2002b:166-170). The solidarity generated by *dahiras* assists

Mouride transmigrants in attaining personal as well as collective goals. One of the primary

functions of transnational *dahiras* is to collect financial contributions, in the form of weekly or

monthly dues, from their members. Members are only expected to contribute what they are able

and willing to give, which makes collective remittances voluntary, at least in principle (Dieng

2002:147). But an individual transmigrant's level of participation in his *dahira*, as measured by

the regularity of his financial contributions, is directly related to the extent to which he benefits

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[39] One informant reports that his *dahira* in Spain even provides a lawyer to assist Mouride transmigrants in knowing their rights, particularly regarding employment.

[40] The economic success of Mouride transmigrants has led other migrants and marginalized populations to join the brotherhood through conversion. These populations include African-Americans in the United States, particularly in New York, as well as West Indians in France (Diagne, in Diop 1993:280). Some of the brotherhood's associations actively encourage conversion, creating centers geared toward educating non-Mourides and attracting converts.

[41] One product of Mouride transmigration has been the creation of a Mouride radio station, Radio Lamp Fall FM, which broadcasts from Senegal yet has correspondents in many receiving contexts with high concentrations of Mouride transmigrants. Their programs cover religious events and teachings, messages from the Khalifa-General, and secular news in Senegal. They also cover transnational Mouride gatherings and broadcast a special weekly program for Mouride transmigrants (Kaag 2008:283).

from his membership in that association. Dieng (2002:147, author's translation) describes collective remittances as "entry ticket[s] permitting each member to benefit fully from all the advantages of the group." The money thus collected is devoted to two purposes: first, to aid members who have encountered difficulties in their work or health, and second, to send back to Senegal as collective remittances (Babou 2002b:154).

When transferring collective remittances to Senegal, *dahiras* use complex and typically informal channels.[42] These collective remittances are sent in one of three directions. First, if a *dahira* aligns itself with a certain marabout, then that marabout receives the *dahira*'s collective remittances and redistributes them as he sees fit. Second, if a *dahira* affiliates itself with the Khalifa-General, then its collective remittances may go directly to the head of the brotherhood (Cruise O'Brien 1988:139). Third, transnational *dahiras* may choose to bypass the religious elite and invest their collective remittances directly in community-based development projects in Senegal which they themselves have designed.

By sending collective remittances to Senegal through transnational religious associations, transmigrant *talibés* simultaneously demonstrate their own devotion and emphasize their *dahiras*' importance to the brotherhood. As with *daras* in an earlier era, *dahiras*' collective remittances become a form of investment in the brotherhood (Bava 2004:138). In fact, Mouride transmigrants contribute as much as five times more money to the brotherhood than their non-migrant counterparts (Bava and Gueye 2001:430). Without such investment, Mouride transmigrants otherwise risk losing their relevance. Their physical distance from their own

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[42] Mung (1996) assesses the various channels through which money is remitted from Senegalese migrants abroad to their dependents in Senegal. He analyzes the amount, the path, the destination, the frequency, and the use of different kinds of remittances. In general, there are four kinds of paths that remittances may take (sending cash through an informal network, transport of cash by the migrant himself, money order, bank transfer), and the path a transmigrant chooses to use depends in part on the sum being transferred. By money order alone, Senegalese living abroad transfer an estimated 85 billion CFA (more than $170 million) annually.

marabouts could erode their positions in the brotherhood's networks of patronage. Collective remittances constitute a strong reminder that not only are they still present, but they are a nearly indispensable asset for the brotherhood. For Mouride transmigrants, collective remittances become a substitute for their physical presence at the heart of the religious hierarchy (Bava and Gueye 2001:430).

To conclude, the brotherhood has maintained its coherence despite transmigration yet transmigrant *talibés* are becoming increasingly independent from their marabouts as they gather together in transnational *dahiras*. The social support afforded by membership in a *dahira* creates incentives for individuals to make regular financial contributions, some of which are used as collective remittances for development projects in Senegal. In the case of the Mouride brotherhood, not only individual but also collective remittances are the norm.[43] The economic, religious, and social impacts of collective remittances sent through transnational *dahiras* for community development projects will be the focus of the next chapter.

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[43] Individual Mouride transmigrants do send a portion of their earnings to their families and other dependents.

CHAPTER 4

Dahiras and Remittance-Based Development

By using their collective remittances for community development projects in Senegal,

Mouride transmigrants remain connected to their places of origin and support their communities.

Their development projects also provide them with opportunities to receive *baraka* (divine

blessings) by participating in religiously-oriented work and thereby advancing the brotherhood,

as discussed in Chapter 2. In this chapter, I will first discuss how Mouride transmigration has

altered the character of religiously-oriented work within the brotherhood. Instead of sending

remittances directly to marabouts, transmigrants' *dahiras* often focus their efforts on their own

projects for developing Touba as part of their religious devotion. I then examine the community

development projects of two transnational migrants' associations, Matlaboul Fawzayni and the

Association for Co-Development.[44] I have selected these two associations for comparison

because the first, an extremely large transnational *dahira* focusing primarily on infrastructural

projects, takes a different approach to remittance-based development and thus faces different

challenges than the second, a smaller association committed to improving the well-being of the

poor and marginalized. These institutions' projects serve as specific examples of how

remittance-based development operates within existing political, social, economic, and religious

constraints. Finally, I will analyze how remittance-based development projects constitute status

claims made by transmigrant *talibés* to diverse audiences in their places of origin. Due to all of

the factors assessed here, the impact of transmigrants' remittance-based development projects in

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[44] My information for these two cases comes predominantly from a series of interviews I conducted in Touba: two
with the director of Matlaboul Fawzayni, four with the national director of the Association for Co-Development, and
six with the regional director of the Touba branch of the Association for Co-Development. In addition, my
information comes from participant observation during my time living in Touba in the spring of 2008.

Senegal is quite uneven, in that that these projects primarily benefit transmigrants' communities, which tend to be marginally wealthier than non-migrant communities in the first place.

With the shift from *daras* to *dahiras*, the meaning of religiously-oriented work has been transformed to include not only chanting Cheikh Amadou Bamba's poems or harvesting groundnuts, but also participating in remittance-based development projects. While labor in the fields used to be the currency by which most *talibés* secured their access to *baraka*, cash offerings are now the norm (Babou 2002a:262; Bava 2002:52). Most transmigrants point to the brotherhood's ethic of hard work as critical to their own economic success, yet the significance of religiously-oriented work goes deeper:

> The *dahira* affirms itself more and more in Senegal as an instrument of financial and political mobilization but also as the site of religious invention in terms of ritual practices and organization. (Bava 2004:142, author's translation)

Transmigrant *talibés* appear to be motivated to participate in community development projects in part by the desire to strive toward Cheikh Amadou Bamba's vision of constructing Touba as a perfect society (Gueye 2001:110-111). When transmigrant *talibés* work together to improve Touba, they are also engaging in religiously-oriented work from which they derive *baraka*.

For this reason, transnational *dahiras* frequently devote their collective remittances to community development projects in and around the holy city. Mouride transmigrants have financed Touba's infrastructure, mosques, hospitals, and Koranic schools (Bava and Gueye 2001:430; Kaag 2008:275). They also pursue small-scale projects in and around Touba, such as bringing electricity to a village, creating a public well or a community center, and constructing micro-enterprises (Riccio 2000:79; Riccio 2001:585).[45] While these projects may have economic components, they are driven also by religious motivations.

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[45] Transnational *dahiras* also design and implement community-level development projects in receiving contexts. Mouride transmigrants in New York, for instance, have constructed a center that includes a mosque, a school, a

Thus Mouride transmigrants' "new culture of mobility and networking" has caused "a veritable mutation of the Mouride *ethos* of work" (Bava 2002:50, author's translation). *Talibés*' re-creations and reinterpretations of the brotherhood in transnational social spaces are simultaneously expanding and transforming the Muridiyya, both religiously and economically. This expansion of the scope of religiously-oriented work directly impacts the development potential of transmigrants' remittances.

Two transmigrants' associations, Matlaboul Fawzayni and the Association for Co-Development, provide interesting examples of this developmental potential. Both associations focus much of their work on Touba. These associations exemplify how remittance-based development projects do not exist in a vacuum; they are constrained by the religious, economic, and political spheres in which they take shape.

Case Study of Matlaboul Fawzayni

Matlaboul Fawzayni is one of the largest transnational *dahiras* that actively participates in remittance-based community development projects in Senegal.[46] It currently recognizes more than 70,000 members and is registered as a nonprofit organization. The *dahira* does not affiliate itself with any particular marabout; rather, it gathers its members according to place of residence. The association has regional offices around the world, including the United States, Europe, and Africa. Its headquarters in the United States are in New York City. Each branch has its own leadership, including an Executive Committee, an Advisory Council, and a General Assembly.

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library, and offices targeting potential converts (Babou 2002b:161). The center, which was constructed in 2001, also includes a living space for visiting marabouts (N'Diaye and N'Diaye 2006:102). Another association in Madrid built a cultural center costing hundreds of thousands of euros, according to my interview with the association's current president. Mouride transmigrants also invest in enterprises intended to meet the needs of current and potential transmigrants, such as providing informal international money transfers (Riccio 2000:25). Projects that focus on the receiving context, although interesting and important, are not the focus of this paper.

[46] Upon founding Touba, Cheikh Amadou Bamba wrote a poem titled "Matlaboul Fawzayni" ("Happiness in this world and in the hereafter"), from which this transnational *dahira* derives its name (Babou 2002a:187).

Its members pursue work in agriculture, industry, or commerce, depending on the receiving context. Officially it is registered as a non-discriminatory organization accepting members of different faiths and backgrounds, but it is unquestionably a Mouride organization; the association connects Mouride transmigrants to Senegal and specializes in raising money for specific brotherhood projects (Babou 2002b:166).[47] Matlaboul Fawzayni is a nearly ideal case of both the strengths of and challenges facing transnational *dahiras*. It demonstrates the power of Mouride transmigrants to develop Senegal yet also the ease with which their development projects may be constrained by the political and religious elite.

The founder and current director has been a transmigrant since 1974, making him one of the pioneer migrants of the brotherhood. After obtaining a university-level degree in Senegal, he traveled to several countries in West Africa and migrated illegally across the Sahara to Libya, where he organized factory workers for some time. Next, he traveled to Spain and assisted Mouride transmigrants in forming associations. These associations collectively came to be known as Matlaboul Fawzayni. The organization's primary function at the time was providing social security for its members.[48] The founder then traveled to France and inquired about whether Mouride transmigrants there would be interested in joining. From that point on, the organization spread around the world.

Matlaboul Fawzayni has overseen multiple large-scale community development projects in Senegal, funded exclusively by remittances. Its most widely recognized achievement is the construction of a well-equipped hospital in Touba (see http://www.aui.ma/personal/~E.Ross/

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[47] To become a member, a transmigrant *talibé* must pay 10,000 CFA (or $15, or 15 euros). However, the membership fee operates on a sliding scale so anyone who wishes to become a member may do so; those with higher incomes pay a higher fee, which then subsidizes those who cannot pay. Internationally, the majority of its members are men, yet in Senegal most of its members are women.

[48] Services differ across countries according to the members' interests and needs, but they typically include caring for a member's family in the case of illness, repatriating the deceased, and discouraging drug trafficking.

touba5.htm) (Riccio 2000:230; Babou 2002b:166; Salzbrunn 2002:219).[49] Between 1992 and

1994, the organization raised 6 billion CFA ($12 million) in collective remittances from Mouride

transmigrants around the world to build the hospital.[50] Rather than working with international

contractors, the director trained Mouride young men in construction and charged them with

building the hospital. They laid the first stone on March 2, 1994. Upon completion, Matlaboul

Fawzayni transferred control of the hospital to the Khalifa-General, who demanded that the state

(specifically, the regional government of Diourbel) provide supplies and personnel (Riccio

2000:230). The hospital is remarkably well-equipped and provides a wide range of treatments

including intensive care, radiology, and maternal health.[51] It now serves Touba and the

surrounding region, which has a population of more than one million residents.

While the creation of the hospital constitutes a tremendous achievement on the part of

transmigrant *talibés*, the hospital's head physician (with whom I toured the facilities) detailed

several challenges that the institution seems unable to surmount. Although the state has devoted

approximately 500 million CFA ($1 million) to equipping the hospital, it remains underfunded.

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[49] The center of the city of Touba is the mosque at which Cheikh Amadou Bamba is buried, said to be the largest in sub-Saharan Africa. Matlaboul Fawzayni's hospital is located in a less densely populated neighborhood to the east, while its headquarters are on the edge of the city. The city has undergone tremendous expansion in recent decades and the neighborhoods at its periphery are composed predominantly of half-built and vacant houses. The reason for this is twofold. First, in 1973 the Khalifa-General announced that all Mourides were required to have a house in Touba in order to guarantee access to paradise in the afterlife (Riccio 2000:91). Second, transmigrants often choose to construct houses in Touba as markers of social status; my interviews indicate they send remittances periodically for this purpose and designate a relative or neighbor in Touba to monitor phases of construction as money allows.

[50] The transnational *dahira* has also constructed a morgue for those who wish to be buried in Touba's holy cemetery; trained young Mourides in metalworking and woodworking; donated a variety of supplies to nearby villages; organized a nutrition program for women and children in cooperation with the World Bank; and facilitated a series of city-wide sanitation campaigns (Babou 2002b:166).

[51] The hospital's divisions include: emergency, surgery, cardiac, and intensive care; radiology; a blood bank and a well-equipped laboratory; in-patient care; internist, pediatric, and prenatal care; ear, nose, and throat; ophthalmology and dermatology; and rehabilitation. Other facilities include laundry, maintenance, kitchens, administration, emergency vehicles, a mosque, and a morgue. The hospital is equipped with internet and is self-sufficient in terms of water, electricity, cooking gas, waste disposal, and oxygen, so it can survive any unexpected shortages. Because water drawn from the aquifer is extremely salty, it also has its own water purifier. During religious events the state supplies the hospital with two helicopters for transferring severely ill patients to state-of-the-art hospitals in Dakar. In general, the hospital refers patients to Dakar or Thiès (a nearby city, the third largest in Senegal after Dakar and Touba) if it lacks the appropriate equipment or capacity to treat them.

State subsidies barely cover the doctors' salaries, much less any other costs. The hospital has accumulated such tremendous debt that its sponsors periodically "shut off the tap" and block incoming medical supplies, forcing doctors to send their patients off-site to obtain necessary prescriptions. Moreover, some of the hospital's divisions lack sufficient space to operate. For instance, the ear, nose, and throat division is housed in the blood bank and opens infrequently, while physical therapy takes place in a back room of the laundry facilities.

In addition, the hospital is less accessible than it appears. The director of Matlaboul Fawzayni declares, "The hospital is meant for all of humanity, not just Mourides, not just residents of Touba." However, in a country where GDP per capita is merely $1700 (Central Intelligence Agency 2009), all patients at the hospital must pay a ticket of 5000 CFA ($10) for a consultation as well as additional fees for any care or prescriptions. For a private room as an in-patient, the cost is the equivalent of $17 per day. The only exceptions are for seniors over the age of 65 and women receiving Cesarean sections, neither of whom the state requires to pay for medical care. This system restricts access to the hospital's services to only those who can afford to pay such fees. The head physician related that the poor periodically arrive seeking urgent care only to find that they cannot afford the necessary ticket; some pass away on the steps at the hospital gate.[52] Even with these high prices, patient fees still do not nearly cover the actual costs of providing care, so the hospital continues to sink into debt.

Constructing the hospital represents one way in which Matlaboul Fawzayni has strived to create opportunities for Mouride transmigrants to use their skills, finances, and connections to create jobs in Senegal. As the director of Matlaboul Fawzayni told me, he is proud that the hospital, despite all of its challenges, supports the local population in ways that extend beyond

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[52] Others turn to local healers but, in the head physician's experiences, some of the concoctions and infusions they receive are in fact toxic. Since the hospital cannot afford a dialysis machine, such unintentional poisoning results in even more patient deaths.

providing health care. He recounted how the young men who built the hospital now have

adequate technical skills to find employment without emigrating. The hospital's two hundred

and sixty-three employees use their salaries to support their families and other dependents. In

addition, small entrepreneurs such as fruit vendors, taxi drivers, and pharmacy owners have

congregated around the hospital, forming secondary and tertiary economies.

Apart from implementing remittance-based development projects like the hospital in and

around Touba, the *dahira* also calls on its network of Mouride transmigrants to connect small

associations in Senegal with sponsors abroad. The director envisions blending formal education

with technical training in order to provide the younger generation with the knowledge and tools

necessary to sustain themselves in Senegal. The director insists:

> Development in Africa has to be done by Africans. You can't develop from the outside,
> and you can't get the kind of education where you'll just sit in the office all day and
> manage things. You have to go out in the field and know the terrain, and that's kind of
> an education too.

The imperative is to ensure that Senegal becomes self-reliant. Young Mouride men are often

driven to migrate by a sense of hopelessness. The director explains that they prefer to "go and

die at sea" attempting to reach "Fortress Europe," as it is called in Senegal, rather than "staying

and dying in front of their parents." By channeling transmigrant *talibés*' collective remittances

toward productive uses, rather than consumption, the director hopes to counter the desperation

building in potential transmigrants. Thus while Matlaboul Fawzayni as an organization works to

sustain itself and support its members, it also strives to reduce transmigration and relieve Senegal

of its dependence on external support, including remittances.

Still, Matlaboul Fawzayni is constrained by and partially dependent on the state. Since

the *dahira* neglected to account for the hospital's operating costs in its plans, the institution's

positive impact on the population is limited by the state's ability to ensure that it is properly

equipped and functional. Similarly, in various regions of Senegal, Matlaboul Fawzayni seeks to exploit the country's natural resources more effectively in order to cultivate crops for both sustenance and commercial use, but even this extremely large transnational *dahira* lacks the resources to irrigate the land. Large-scale irrigation thus becomes the responsibility of the state yet the state often fails to take initiative in this domain. The director expresses frustration that "people just sit there with their arms crossed about these problems" when the *dahira* desperately "needs people in high places to speak out." In the absence of such direct advocacy, the state fails to meet the most essential needs of the people. He continues:

> You can build a road and that's important, but what use is a road if you have no cars or nothing to eat? And you can give someone a brand new refrigerator but it's useless if he has no water to drink. He'd even prefer a piece of bread to that refrigerator.

While Matlaboul Fawzayni designs ambitious projects aimed to contribute significantly to job creation, the director expresses concern that any attempt to realize these projects on a large scale would be futile without the support of the state. Fundamentally, the association is unable to achieve its vision of national self-reliance without state support.

Matlaboul Fawzayni's activities in Touba are also constrained by the *dahira*'s relationship to the Khalifa-General. As of late, the head of the brotherhood has virtually compelled the *dahira* to abandon its plans for community development projects in the city. In 1996, the association had just completed the hospital and was drafting blueprints to install canals for potable water in Touba, since the high salinity of the ground water causes severe hypertension in the population. At that point, the Khalifa-General approached the director and asked him to build an elaborate residence that would host guests who wish to learn about Cheikh Amadou Bamba and the Muridiyya.[53] He further instructed that this residence should have air-

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[53] The Khalifa-General had decreed that Touba, as a religious site, should have no hotels (which could encourage prostitution) and so the city lacks appropriate places to welcome guests other than people's personal homes.

conditioned guest rooms, a library, a conference room, and a mosque. The director complied.

He set aside his blueprints, redirected the funds he had gathered from Mouride transmigrants,

and began to work on the residence. At the time of our interviews, in the spring of 2008, the

Khalifa-General's residence has yet to be completed although construction is ongoing.

The Khalifa-General's ability to curtail the activities of transnational *dahiras*, even those

with significant clout such as Matlaboul Fawzayni, indicates that Mouride transmigrants are not

completely autonomous. It appears that Matlaboul Fawzayni must maintain good relations with

the head of the brotherhood in order to operate in Touba. The director's decision to comply with

the Khalifa-General's request was likely strategic; by constructing the residence now, he may

have greater latitude in the future to pursue remittance-based development projects of his

choosing. However, this situation also indicates that the Khalifa-General's goals for the

brotherhood are not always congruent with the goals of transmigrant *talibés*. Collective

remittances are resources which diverse actors seek to control. A large part of Touba's wealth is

derived from remittances, to the extent that some Mourides attribute the brotherhood's strength

not to its leaders but to its transmigrants. One observed, "Touba is growing thanks to the *talibé*

migrants, for example, look at the program of construction of a hospital by migrants'

associations" (Riccio 2000:92). Neither the Khalifa-General nor Mouride transmigrants

maintain absolute control over the city, yet theirs may be a fragile interdependence.

Certainly, with a membership of more than seventy thousand transmigrant *talibés* and the

capacity to raise tremendous sums at short notice, Matlaboul Fawzayni's impact on Senegal's

development is noteworthy. But Matlaboul Fawzayni's remittance-based development projects

"do not develop in a smooth and free way" (Riccio 2000:254); the *dahira* remains partially

dependent on both the state and the brotherhood's leaders.

Case Study of the Association for Co-Development

Perhaps seeking to avoid similar constraints, some Mouride transmigrants have sought alternate avenues for engaging in remittance-based development. They have chosen to create secular associations in the place of transnational *dahiras*, although their functions are often quite similar. L'Association pour le codéveloppement (The Association for Co-Development, ASCODE) is one such organization.[54] Founded in Dakar in November 2002 by a Mouride transmigrant returning from Spain, the association has grown to include hundreds of members in Senegal as well as Europe, the United States, and other African countries. The association's initial success in Dakar allowed it to open satellite offices in Touba in 2004 and Louga, another city in the north of Senegal, in 2006. ASCODE's primary objective is to make Senegalese transmigrants conscious actors in Senegal's development.[55]

ASCODE's national director insisted in each of our interviews that Senegalese transmigrants must take charge of developing their country in a sustainable manner. He maintains that remittances can be used not only to meet daily needs but also for savings and investment. In keeping with that goal, ASCODE's activities fall into three categories: assisting Mouride transmigrants to invest their remittances in small businesses in Senegal; implementing participatory development projects that provide essential social services to rural populations; and establishing revenue-generating activities for marginalized and disadvantaged persons (Association pour le codéveloppement 2003). These activities aim to improve the lives of non-migrant Senegalese, in order to discourage them from migrating illegally. In this way, ASCODE

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[54] Although its director and most of its staff are Mouride transmigrants, ASCODE is technically secular and nonpartisan (Association pour le codéveloppement 2002).

[55] Co-development "permits the transformation of classical relations of cooperation marked by a certain measure of unilateralism toward dynamic relations of concerted exchange aiming at durable development in the global South" (Association pour le codéveloppement 2006:4, author's translation).

differentiates itself from transnational *dahiras* like Matlaboul Fawzayni, in that it intentionally targets the poor in its development projects and programs.

For instance, ASCODE's satellite office in Touba assists young women in opening their own micro-enterprises by training them in sewing, French literacy, and organizational management. The association then selects the most qualified graduates from the program and assists them in opening their own micro-enterprises in Touba. ASCODE provides an initial loan to be repaid without interest and offers trouble-shooting assistance for the first several years. The regional director hopes that by providing young women with revenue-generating activities, the association is simultaneously discouraging transmigration and elevating the status of women in their households.[56] The program's popularity may be one indicator of its success; in an interview, the regional director explained that it was full to capacity with one hundred participants and still more applicants were arriving each week.

According to the regional director, ASCODE's office in Touba is also in the process of executing its second "projet integré" (literally, integrated project) in a rural village outside the holy city. The Sub-Prefect of the region recommended that ASCODE look into working in the village because it was suffering from a severe lack of potable water, its agriculture and stockbreeding activities were crumbling, and its residents were experiencing malnutrition. The association's initial assessment revealed that poverty had driven three-quarters of the village's population to migrate either to Touba or elsewhere, leaving only 300 villagers to eke out a living from the land. In discussion with the village chief and focus groups, ASCODE designed and implemented a multifaceted project in collaboration with the villagers. The project's components include: installing a hydraulic system to draw potable water from the ground table;

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[56] The Touba office also directs a microfinance institution, teaches computer literacy programs, donates school supplies to local primary schools, and collaborates with youth associations to do awareness-raising campaigns on sanitation and health.

establishing a community garden; constructing latrines for each of the village's twenty-seven families; and doing cadastral planning to facilitate future growth. The village chief aspires to use some of the funds generated by the community garden to hire a schoolteacher and provide technical training to the village's youth. This program has been recognized by its sponsor (a Spanish foundation working with migrants and refugees in West Africa) as an effective and relatively inexpensive model of intervention for its success at creating employment opportunities and encouraging potential transmigrants to remain in-country; it will likely be replicated in the near future in other regions of Senegal with high levels of unemployment and transmigration.

Because ASCODE is not a transnational *dahira*, its members lack religiously-based incentives to contribute to its development projects. For this reason, the association has had little success in mobilizing collective remittances for its activities. Unlike Matlaboul Fawzayni, ASCODE's members' contributions do not constitute the association's donor base; members pay annual dues which the staff devotes to the general operating budget but the amount of money thus gathered is nominal. To finance its projects and programs, ASCODE instead relies on grants and service fees. The association has formed partnerships with foundations, other associations, and other groups in Spain, Italy, France, and Belgium. In Senegal, it collaborates with the Ministry of Senegalese Living Abroad, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of National Education. These partnerships afford the association opportunities to exchange information, advice, and support. The association also charges small fees for its courses in micro-enterprise and computer literacy, which help defray the cost of materials for such activities (Association pour le codéveloppement 2004). For ASCODE, the primary challenge is not negotiating with the state or the religious elite but mobilizing resources for its projects.

In order to maintain its autonomy, the association declines to use any funds from the Senegalese government. It guards its independence jealously, paradoxically not by isolating itself but by conducting open conversations with the religious and political elite. The regional director in Touba makes regular visits to local state officials. He explains, "The state has ears everywhere and it would find out about ASCODE's activities anyway, but this way we are open with them and everything goes normally." Civil servants then demonstrate their appreciation of such transparency by including ASCODE's activities in their reports, which improves the association's visibility. In a series of interviews, the regional and national directors of ASCODE described how they have intentionally diversified the association's connections so that its activities cannot be co-opted by any particular outside actor. In their words, ASCODE "talks to everyone and doesn't disregard state authorities," thereby encouraging a spirit of cooperation, not competition, with each of its partners.

In addition, and in parallel to most transnational *dahiras*, ASCODE strives to maintain good relations with the religious leaders in the regions in which it operates. The staff pays special visits to marabouts and keeps them informed of the association's activities. For instance, while returning from a site visit to one of its rural development projects, the regional director in Touba took lunch with a powerful marabout in a nearby village, recounting his conversations with the village chief about various components of the project and expressing gratitude for the marabout's support. However, ASCODE chooses not to partner with *dahiras* like Matlaboul Fawzayni, even though their activities periodically overlap. This decision is due in part to ASCODE's perception that Matlaboul Fawzayni does more infrastructural work while ASCODE focuses on training and capacity-building. A lack of communication between the two organizations contributes to the situation. It is also possible that ASCODE's directors would

rather maintain their autonomy than involve themselves directly with the transnational *dahira*, even though they themselves are also Mouride transmigrants.

Although ASCODE is a much smaller organization than Matlaboul Fawzayni, it may be able to operate more independently than the *dahira* reviewed above. Its activities in and around Touba demonstrate a high level of responsiveness to the needs of the local population. It effectively negotiates with the religious and political elite while retaining its ability to work in a flexible manner. As a secular association, it represents an alternative way in which Mouride transmigrants engage in community development projects in their places of origin.

Remittance-Based Development Projects as Status Claims

Transmigrant *talibés*' solidarity, social capital, and enduring orientation toward the sending context have taken concrete form as remittance-based development projects. Still, as the cases of Matlaboul Fawzayni and the Association for Co-Development indicate, transmigrants' contributions to the brotherhood are diverse. In order to understand the effects of remittance-based development in Senegal, it is necessary to account for transnational *dahiras*, large and small, as well as migrants' secular transnational associations. By examining each association's relationship to the brotherhood and the state, it is possible to construct a picture of the context in which their development work occurs. However, the impact of collective remittances on development is shaped by one additional factor, apart from the religious and political considerations described above: how Mouride transmigrants seek to make status claims in their places of origin.

Mouride transmigrants' remittance-based development projects must be considered not only in economic terms but also as claims of social status. I take Grillo and Riccio's (2004:108)

statement that "there are many different actors with mixed interests and motives" in Mouride

transmigration as my starting point in this analysis. I propose that it is necessary to explore the

question of motivations in order to better understand the political and economic effects of

remittance-based development in Senegal.

Frequently, the remittances-and-development literature promotes the notion that

researchers should evaluate the success of development projects according to quantitative criteria

such as growth, productivity, or poverty alleviation as measured by income levels. Researchers

often impose their own (or commonly accepted) notions of what remittance-based development

"should" be onto their subjects. However, transmigrants do not necessarily prioritize reducing

poverty or inequality; they may not be inspired by an abstracted sense of responsibility for

improving the quality of life in Senegal. Instead, transmigrants' associations tend to direct their

development projects toward their dependents as well as people or communities whose respect,

admiration, and support they wish to earn. Ndione and Broekhuis (2006:15, author's translation)

write:

> Regrouped in associations by village or urban neighborhood, or within ethnic or religious
> organizations, migrants mobilize funds for the development of their territory and their
> spaces of reference. These are generally social, cultural, and symbolic investments
> (schools, health centers, drilling for potable water, cultural centers) and more rarely
> economic investments (creation of micro-projects).

Thus, remittance-based development must be assessed by a broader and more qualitative set of

criteria. When favoring a narrow economic approach, researchers may miss the ways in which

remittance-based community development projects are in fact also symbolic actions.

Remittance-based development projects must be considered not only in terms of economic

productivity, but also as status claims directed at a multiple audiences both in transnational social

spaces and in Senegal.

A few researchers studying transmigration have pointed to this possibility. In reviewing a compilation of essays on transmigration, Jones (in Glick Schiller et al. 1992:217) notes that "another important theme that appears in all of these papers is that… people who are migrating and working in Western cities are doing so to improve their status in their home country." These status claims can be both individual and collective. While most researchers focus on the former, I will address individual status claims only briefly before moving on to collective claims since this paper focuses predominantly on Mouride transmigrants' associations and community-level development.

On an individual level, transmigrants improve their social status in Senegal by improving their own standard of living and that of their dependents. They display their wealth in an ostentatious manner to emphasize to the community that they have succeeded as transmigrants; their flamboyant behavior may even rival that of their marabouts. Non-Mouride researchers often decry such ostentatious displays as an unproductive use of remittances and therefore a waste. However, individual transmigrants are actually striving to "maintain [their] place and social status at the heart of a community network" by "invest[ing] in symbolic capital" (Dieng 2002:146, author's translation). For transmigrants, physically distanced from their places of origin, the use of remittances to reclaim and advance their place within their community is especially important. The physical forms that their status claims take may vary. Common to Mouride transmigrants are large houses with rare commodities such as formal living rooms and air conditioning; extraordinarily costly weddings and baptisms; satellite television; and fashionable clothing or jewelry worn on a daily basis. Riccio (1999:78, in Grillo 2002:138) offers the example of a transmigrant who, while boarding a flight to return to Senegal, introduced himself by saying, "My name is Mamadou Lo, and I have built a house with three

floors." The physical dimensions of transmigrants' successes become an integral part of their identity, both how they perceive themselves and how they present themselves to others.[57] The primary beneficiaries of this kind of investment are individual transmigrants themselves and their dependents.

Similarly, on a collective level, transnational *dahiras*' remittance-based development projects constitute symbols of transmigrants' rising social status (Gardner and Grillo 2002). For this reason, transmigrants' associations often create development projects that are highly visible. "Visibility," Riccio (2000:82) writes, "is a sign of success." This collective desire for public recognition partially explains why so many transnational *dahiras*, such as Matlaboul Fawzayni, are drawn more to infrastructural projects than social services; the results are generally more tangible and thus more immediately noticeable. Riccio (2000:79) quotes a Senegalese transmigrant: "Associations however do not produce development, they rather invest in mainly infrastructural work; sometimes not functional but very visible with the label." At the farthest end of the spectrum, transmigrants may selfishly create community development projects that present well on the surface yet, in reality, merely sink money into their own pockets. As one of Riccio's (2000:229-30) informants cautions, "[A]id projects can hide corrupted moves… We use the excuse of poverty for personal gain." It is unlikely that many projects exist purely in this form, yet boosting one's personal wealth and prestige seems never to be far from the surface.

Gardner and Grillo (2002:185) describe transmigrants' household and family rituals, such as weddings and funerals, as "important 'performances' that… are multifaceted and multivocal."

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[57] Transmigrants' ostentatious displays of wealth spark sentiments of jealousy among members of their "audience," particularly those who are non-migrants. Riccio (2001:585) calls these status claims a "symbolic push factor" that encourages others to become transmigrants. However, some potential transmigrants I interviewed in Touba indicate a measure of ambivalence; they desire the material benefits of transmigration, which they see their neighbors consuming, yet they remain concerned that Senegalese transmigrants may be unable to secure salaried or high-level work abroad.

I argue that transmigrants' development projects must be understood in similar terms. By devoting their collective remittances to development projects, particularly in and around Touba, Mouride transmigrants may intend to send a message – or, rather, multiple messages simultaneously to diverse audiences. Among transnational *dahiras* one finds considerable diversity in terms of the kinds of community development projects pursued; thus the effects of remittance-based development in Senegal on social and economic inequality are by no means uniform. Any narrow reading of transmigration and development, making sweeping generalizations that all remittance-based development means only one thing or another, is thus false. Analytical space must be created for a plurality of meanings and impacts to be recognized.

Because remittance-based development projects often constitute status claims, they do not improve the well-being of all members of the sending context equally. Cruise O'Brien (1975:193), in a discussion of Senegal's clientelist politics, encourages researchers to "begin by remembering the victims."[58] Similarly, in assessing the impact of transnational *dahiras*' projects in Senegal, it is necessary to ask who benefits most from such development. Because of its particular religious significance and history of political exceptionalism, Touba's experience of remittance-based development is distinct from other regions of Senegal. Due to transmigration, Touba is rapidly becoming more built up than the surrounding region, and certainly more so than much of Senegal. In this respect, Mouride transmigration has not altered the economic and political landscape of Senegal: "Wealth and power are [still] concentrated in the urban areas" (Cruise O'Brien 1975:162).

Ross (1995:256) therefore is quick to remind us that "the same glaring social inequalities" that persist elsewhere also exist within Touba. Transmigrants, who seek to elevate

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[58] His research indicates that resources such as agricultural development, food distribution, and infrastructure projects are unevenly allocated by state actors seeking to build political support (Cruise O'Brien 1975:175-176).

their social status through remittance-based development projects, typically do not come from the poorest sectors of society. As mentioned earlier, individuals must surpass a certain threshold of migration in terms of resources and connections in order to become transmigrants (Cotula and Toulmin 2004). Since the poorest sectors of the population lack access to transmigration, *talibés* who migrate are likely already marginally wealthier than those who do not. It follows that their community development projects, as status claims with particular audiences, will often reach members of their own, relatively well-to-do communities before reaching more impoverished sectors of the population, if they reach them at all. Transnational *dahiras*' activities in Senegal, Niang (2000:138, author's translation) writes, "only definitively concern a minority of people: the members of the association and their close contacts of the same religion; they lead to selective gratification." Frequently, those with the closest connections to transmigrant *talibés* benefit most from their remittance-based development projects. This situation concentrates wealth in those who already enjoy a relatively high level of education, wealth, information, and access.

In sum, transnational *dahiras* enable transmigrants to receive *baraka*, achieve economic gain, and improve their own social status in their place of origin. Therefore, remittance-based development projects make statements about both continuity and change. Transmigration has transformed the meaning of religiously-oriented work and the structure of associational life within the brotherhood. But *dahiras*' development projects allow Mouride transmigrants to make "claims to ongoing membership in the community of origin" which have "both symbolic and practical significance" (Gardner and Grillo 2002:186). By investing their remittances in development projects in and around Touba, members of transnational *dahiras* demonstrate their enduring commitment to the brotherhood.

This is the point at which the remittances-and-development literature would end the argument. A close examination of the Muridiyya has revealed the political and social contexts in which remittance-based development projects are embedded. However, the story of Mouride transmigration pushes us further. If "development" projects are effectively status claims, then these projects may become a vehicle by which Mouride transmigrants gain autonomy and disrupt the dense systems of patronage on which the religious and political elite rely. By participating in remittance-based development projects, transmigrant *talibés* establish themselves in the brotherhood as redistributors of resources, rather than mere recipients.[59] *Talibés* are gaining the power to impact their societies directly, without working through their marabouts. (Still, the disruption of the old hierarchies is only partial in that transmigrants are not fully independent of the Khalifa-General.) Their remittance-based development projects may be seen as "arenas of contestation about wider issues: power, status, and boundaries of 'community', history and identity" (Gardner and Grillo 2002:187).

Transmigrants' remittance-based development projects transform not only the economic landscape of Senegal but also the religious, social, and political aspects of the Mouride brotherhood. Prior to transmigration, *talibés* found spiritual meaning in their connections to Touba as a sacred space, to Cheikh Amadou Bamba as their guide to salvation, and to their marabouts as their source of blessings. These three kinds of religious ties constituted the fabric of the brotherhood. Mouride transmigration has added a fourth tie, the connection among *talibés* who create community in transnational social spaces by participating in transnational *dahiras*. The three other ties – to Touba, Cheikh Amadou Bamba, and marabouts – are maintained, although transformed, in the context of Mouride transmigration. Transmigrants recreate Touba

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[59] *Talibés* seeking to improve their social status within the brotherhood would do better to migrate than to remain in Senegal for this reason (Cruise O'Brien 1975:73-74; Villalón 1995:189).

in their religious practice, remake their ties to Cheikh Amadou Bamba by redefining the meaning

of religiously-oriented work, and transform the city itself with their development projects. Thus,

the center of power in the brotherhood may be shifting. Mouride transmigrants have become

"the entrepreneurs of their religion" in transnational social spaces (Bava 2003:162-163, author's

translation). They play a critical transformative role in the brotherhood. Chapter 5 will focus on

how transmigrants' remittance-based development projects alter the brotherhood's

networks of patronage and its relationship to the state.

CHAPTER 5

Marabouts, Politicians and the Rise of Disciple Power

The Muridiyya may have inadvertently weakened its foundational structure, the marabout-*talibé* relationship, by adopting the *dahira* as its archetypal urban association. I adopt Villalón's (1995) "triangle" as an analytical tool with which to assess this claim. The sets of actors situated in each corner of Villalón's triangle are the state, the marabouts, and the "citizen-disciples" of Senegal.[60] Villalón (1995:244) argues that "any two of the three sets of actors… can only be understood in the context of relations with the third."[61] In order to assess the political impact of Mouride transmigration, I will first discuss how close ties between marabouts and the state have endured over time. The interrelated questions of political leverage and resource distribution will figure prominently in this portion of the text. I will then turn to how Mouride transmigration may constitute a disruption in the relationship between marabouts and the state. I will use the Touba tax rebellion of 1997 and the presidential election of 2000 as two examples of the emerging relationship between transmigrant citizen-disciples and the state.[62] This section will culminate in a discussion of the totality of the triangle, in which I will analyze how transmigration increases the autonomy of transmigrant *talibés* and bolsters their power to negotiate with both the religious and political elite in Senegal.

Skocpol (1985:8) conceptualizes the state as "more than a mere arena in which social groups make demands and engage in political struggles or compromises." She argues that the

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[60] I include Mouride transmigrants as well as all other *talibés* in the category of citizen-disciples. I include the Khalifa-General in the category of marabouts.

[61] This device may serve as a response to the challenge of "grasping the totality" that Lauria-Perricelli (in Glick Schiller et al. 1992:254-255) has identified as characteristic of migration-centered studies.

[62] As an aside, I recognize that the boundary of where the state ends and society begins is somewhat arbitrary. At times, individuals transgress these boundaries by acting as both state and non-state actors (Villalón 1995:78). For instance, one of my informants identified as both an employee at the Minister of the Interior and the president of a transnational *dahira*.

state must be considered a potentially autonomous actor. In Senegal, the state does not function simply as a space within which marabouts convene, debate, and compete; state officials interact with members of the brotherhood at national, regional, and local levels (Salzbrunn 2002:218). However, the state and the brotherhood are also dynamic entities whose internal hierarchies are by no means stable. Each is, in a sense, merely a composite of individuals with their own personal interests and agendas. (Skocpol [1985:15] acknowledges this issue by recognizing that state officials, in creating state policies, will typically also "reinforce the authority, political longevity, and social control" of the state agencies to which they belong.) Neither religious nor political actors in Senegal present a unified front (Grillo et al. 2000:20). Rather, they embody a multiplicity of intentions and worldviews, which may yield internal contradictions within both the state and the brotherhood. Nevertheless, I align myself with Villalón (1995:23) in maintaining that it is still valuable and reasonable to distinguish among politicians, marabouts, and citizen-disciples as broad categories of analysis.

The Muridiyya has consistently played a major role in Senegalese politics since the state achieved independence in 1960. The relatively weak state, lacking alternative avenues for governing its rural citizen-disciples, has relied on marabouts as intermediaries (Behrman 1970:154). Babou (2002a:2) describes the relationship as a form of "power sharing" in which the Khalifa-General's support of the government constitutes "a major guarantee of political stability." Neither side can rely on this stability to last, however. Political and religious elites constantly renegotiate the balance of power (Villalón 1995:3). Villalón (1995:26) identifies three possible kinds of interaction between marabouts and the state: engagement, disengagement, and confrontation. Historically, the dominant strategy of each set of actors has been engagement, although dissatisfaction periodically drives one subset or another to pursue alternate

tactics. In general, neither marabouts nor politicians can afford to fully disengage from one another because neither is strong enough to govern Senegal independently.

In simplified terms, marabouts serve as intermediaries between the state and citizen-disciples in two ways. First, by endorsing certain political parties, marabouts confer legitimacy on parties and individual politicians. Second, by agreeing to support certain policy goals and transmit information to their followers, marabouts extend the state's reach (Villalón 1995:209). The religious elite are thus most useful to the state for their ability to influence their *talibés*' political orientation and to ensure their *talibés*' compliance with state directives.

By virtue of their position as intermediaries, marabouts are able to leverage the state to respond to their interests. Politicians, like marabouts, accumulate resources and redistribute them to their constituents in exchange for loyalty.[63] Marabouts recognize their power to elevate certain politicians over others by being selective in their endorsements; they readily use their bargaining power to demand great sums for such support (Behrman 1970:9). A portion of the gifts they receive then trickles down to their *talibés* through networks of patronage (Cruise O'Brien 1975:151-152). Marabouts may also periodically disengage from or confront the state in order to challenge undesirable policies, thereby proving the inability of the state to control its own citizens without their support (Villalón 1995:201).[64]

The state, in turn, provides economic incentives for marabouts to fulfill their role as intermediaries. At the apex of the hierarchy, the President of the Republic and the Khalifa-General generally enjoy a close relationship, in part because the former recognizes that

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[63] Senegal's politics are part and product of an extensive clientelist system which has become, if not acceptable, then certainly expected (Behrman 1970:8). Diop (1993:12) states it more simply: "The Senegalese state is addicted to a style of patron-client relationships." Some researchers even argue that the clientelist system indicates a tacit support of corruption on the part of the state (Cruise O'Brien 1975).

[64] To a certain extent, marabouts function as "advocates of the people," or transmitters of popular opinion, when articulating discontent if the state imposes itself too strongly or pulls back too far (Mbodj, in Diop 1993:102). However, they typically refrain from confrontation with the state, which would disrupt their networks of patronage.

displeasing the latter could negatively affect the outcome of the next presidential election. The president demonstrates his willingness to engage with the brotherhood through public statements, visits to Touba, and financial contributions (Behrman 1970:2; Diagne, in Diop 1993:287). Members of opposition parties, cognizant of the voting power of the Muridiyya and seeking endorsement, also pay special visits to marabouts while campaigning for election. On a regular basis, politicians offer cash gifts to marabouts, implement development projects in regions where they seek support, and assist marabouts in cutting through red tape for compliant *talibés'* business endeavors. In this way, the state is only able to "govern" its citizen-disciples indirectly, by catering to the religious elite's economic interests in exchange for political compliance.

The state may also leverage the religious elite by strategically providing or withholding resources. Persistent conditions of scarcity in Senegal make marabouts partially reliant on the state's resources to fuel the networks of patronage by which they retain followers and secure their own social status. If marabouts overstep their bounds, the state may remind them of their dependence by selectively redistributing resources away from antagonistic factions (Villalón 1995:78). In sum, marabouts and politicians are interdependent; they are compelled to engage one another in negotiations in order to strike a balance of power.

This balance of power is dynamic and constantly renegotiated, precluding political take-over by either set of actors. Senegal remains exceptional among African countries for its ongoing stability, having never endured a coup d'état.[65] One informant in Touba puts it more strongly: "It is only religion that has maintained stability and hope in Senegal, and I thank Allah and Serigne Touba [Cheikh Amadou Bamba] for that, not the President." Villalón (1995:261) also attributes the strength of state-society relations to the political role of the Muridiyya;

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[65] However, Senegal has effectively been a one-party democracy for much of its existence. Due to the persistence of the clientelist system and the issue of partially free elections, some argue that the country may only be considered a "semidemocracy" (Villalón 1994:163).

because the brotherhood controls vast networks of patronage, the state is not the only entity

directing the distribution of resources. However, the existence of a clientelist system does not

guarantee political stability, as any number of case studies will demonstrate (Villalón 1995:13).

Rather, maraboutic competition for resources and *talibés*, aggravated by the government's

practice of playing one religious leader off another, renders toothless any attempt by the

brotherhood either to take control of or fully disengage from the state (Cruise O'Brien 1983:136;

Riccio 2000:75).

The consolidation of power has eluded marabouts and politicians alike, producing a

remarkably stable state, yet Mouride transmigration may be incrementally shifting the balance.[66]

Villalón (1995:261) observes how the religious and political leaders' informal power-sharing

arrangement allays fears that either set of actors may establish a "hegemonic monopoly of

political control." He argues that this case defies the typical image of the powerful state

dominating a weak civil society.[67] I acknowledge that the brotherhood has historically stabilized

the state, yet I propose that Mouride transmigration may increase the negotiating power of

citizen-disciples relative to both the religious and political elite in Senegal.

I will offer two brief examples to illustrate how Mouride transmigration alters the

relationship between marabouts and citizen-disciples, which in turn affects the relationship

between marabouts and the state. The first example will demonstrate how relationships of power

are shifting within the brotherhood, while the second will indicate how relationships of power

are changing between the brotherhood and the state.

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[66] Another factor influencing this shift may be the political and economic liberalization of Senegal in the 1980s and 1990s, which rendered the state less capable of controlling its citizenry through clientelism. New centers of economic and political power began to develop independently of the state (Hedin 2007).

[67] Villalón (1995:25) writes: "[T]he weakness of one side does not always imply the strength of the other… Weak civil societies, in fact, are likely to coexist with weak states. Where social groups are amorphous and ill-formed, states are unlikely to be able to institute binding rules for their interaction." He also notes that this case deviates from assumptions that contestation is the standard kind of relationship between Islam and the state (Villalón 1995:13).

First, I will present the tax rebellion of 1997 in Touba as an example of how maraboutic authority, while far from obsolete, may be somewhat weakened nonetheless in the face of rising disciple power due to transmigration. I have selected this political event for detailed study because it constitutes an interesting dialogue among Mouride transmigrants, the religious elite, and state officials. This event will demonstrate one way in which Mouride transmigration has altered the internal hierarchy of the brotherhood. While the religious elite had previously consisted of the Khalifa-General and lesser marabouts, it now also includes the presidents of *dahiras* and powerful transmigrant *talibé*-businessmen (Bava 2003:153). The vertical ties between marabouts and *talibés* now coexist with strong horizontal ties among transmigrant *talibés*. Solidarity among transmigrant *talibés* calls into question the strength of the marabout-*talibé* relationship. If marabouts are progressively losing their ability to secure their followers' obedience, then their authority over disciples may be somewhat reduced.

Second, I will discuss the Senegalese presidential elections of 2000 as an instance of the state bypassing marabouts in order to interact directly with citizen-disciples. The presidential election of 2000, as a watershed election, is qualitatively different than previous elections and thus a worthwhile subject of consideration. If marabouts cannot guarantee with some certainty that their followers will respect their directives regarding how to cast their votes, then they may become increasingly irrelevant as intermediaries between the state and citizen-disciples. So, the autonomy of transmigrant *talibés* may also pose a challenge to the synergy of the state-marabout relationship.

Touba's Tax Rebellion of 1997

Mouride transmigrants seem to be gaining enough power, collectively, to occasionally voice their displeasure with maraboutic authority in Senegal. The controversy over the implementation of new taxes in Touba in 1997 is perhaps the most striking example of their boldness.

Even before the dispute over taxes, researchers observed stirrings among Mouride businessmen in Touba that suggested some level of distance was forming between them and the marabouts.[68] Their findings pertain directly to the present study because many businessmen in the holy city are also transmigrants, pursuing imports and exports trade and operating in spaces that partially escape the control of the marabouts. Cruise O'Brien (1988:143, 154) refers to them as "a powerful counter-elite within the brotherhood" with "a disturbing inclination to make up their own minds."

The tax rebellion of 1997 began when Béthio Thioune, the newly elected president of the rural council,[69] proposed to raise taxes in Touba in order to fund extensive development projects in the city.[70] Thioune justified his demands by arguing that business owners were wealthy enough to shoulder the burden of higher taxes. Additionally, ongoing urbanization was straining Touba's capacity to accommodate new arrivals. With low levels of governmental support for Touba's infrastructure (especially following decentralization in 1996), large-scale projects

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[68] For instance, the merchants collectively resisted the Khalifa-General's efforts in the 1970s to eradicate the trade of weapons and other contraband in Touba (which had been remarkably easy up to that point, given the lack of police presence) (Cruise O'Brien 1988:143).

[69] The rural council is an administrative body of the decentralized state; each council is charged with governing one of Senegal's *communautés rurales*.

[70] The proposal included increasing business licenses from 15,000 to 350,000 CFA (from approximately $30 to $700) and increasing the cost of renting a stall in the market from 750 CFA ($1.50) to 4,500 CFA ($9) per month. In sum, the new taxes would increase the local government's budget from 180 million CFA ($360,000) to 810 million CFA ($1,620,000) (Beck 2001:615).

addressing transportation, sanitation, and water supply had become necessary (Beck 2001:615).

Clientelism would not suffice. However, the transmigrant businessmen of Touba refused to

comply and threatened violence (Beck 2001:601-602).

What makes this disagreement particularly surprising is that opposing the president of

Touba's rural council constitutes a thinly veiled critique of the brotherhood's most powerful

leader. At the local level, state officials in the region in which Touba is located are essentially

appointed by the Khalifa-General (Ross 1995:246).[71] When the merchants raised their voices in

protest – and even the director of Matlaboul Fawzayni himself argued passionately on their

behalf – they were in fact speaking out against a figure who represents the authority and interests

of the head of the brotherhood (Beck 2001:618). Beck (2001:613) observes that "challenging the

authority of the local government may ironically be more audacious than challenging that of the

central state." Since several of my informants admitted that they would rather exile themselves

than openly contradict the Khalifa-General, such brashness is extraordinary. Recall also that

most *talibés* rely on the brotherhood's networks of patronage for their survival and success; their

decision to challenge the highest authority of the brotherhood must not be taken lightly.

The transmigrant *talibés* were hardly the only ones displeased by Thioune's

announcement of the new tax policy. The most powerful marabouts in the brotherhood, apart

from the Khalifa-General, were also concerned but for quite different reasons. They felt that the

president of the rural council was challenging their authority by directing resources away from

their networks of patronage. Thioune's motto was "efficiency, expediency, and *talibéité*

(disciple power)," which hardly boded well for the religious elite seeking to control the

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[71] The leaders of the Muridiyya successfully select local officials who are either too weak to pose a challenge to their authority or are willing to represent the brotherhood's interests. Even the Sub-Prefect of the region in which Touba is located has very little ability to direct the activities of the religious leadership; rather, he relays communications between the government in Dakar and the Khalifa-General (Ross 1995:246).

population (Beck 2001:615). The Khalifa-General, however, openly supported the tax increase, thereby highlighting the fragmentation within the brotherhood's leadership.

Why, then, did the Khalifa-General prompt the president of the rural council to present the plan to increase taxes, rather than issuing an order himself? It is quite possible that the transmigrant *talibés* would have been more hesitant to speak out directly against his commands. Beck (2001:620) claims the Khalifa-General's actions indicate his "reluctance to order the merchants as disciples to pay the taxes." If this is so, then disciple power may be solidifying. Transmigrant *talibés*, having already proved their unwillingness to be blindly submissive to their own marabouts, may now compel the Khalifa-General to proceed with greater caution than usual in issuing directives. Moreover, the *talibés*' protests achieved some concrete results – ten days after the initial announcement, Thioune reduced the increases in taxes by 50 percent (Beck 2001:618). My research indicates that there have been no further outcries in Touba about the issue of taxes, so the window for overt resistance to maraboutic authority in that domain may have closed for now. Less visible forms of resistance, such as neglecting to pay taxes or intentionally delaying the process, still occur (Beck 2001:618). This sort of resistance to the political and religious elite may be seen as akin to the "everyday forms of peasant resistance" – foot-dragging, false compliance, feigned ignorance, and so on – documented in Scott's (1985:29) study of political resistance in Malaysia.

In the end, the tax revolts of 1997 refute some researchers' earlier assertions that "it is… unlikely that members of a brotherhood would dictate to their leaders" (Behrman 1970:9). At least in that particular historical moment, on the narrow subject of taxes, the new position of *talibés* due to transmigration seems to have emboldened the disciples enough to defy the authority of the Khalifa-General and demand that their interests be met.

Presidential Elections of 2000

Mouride transmigrants, by distancing themselves from their marabouts, also open themselves to direct interactions with the state. In this respect, the Senegalese presidential election of 2000 deviated from the patterns that had characterized previous elections. Whereas politicians had previously campaigned exclusively in Senegal, candidate Abdoulaye Wade reached out to Senegalese transmigrants in France.[72] Wade spent a year in Versailles mapping out his campaign and capturing transmigrants' votes through multiple avenues of engagement (Salzbrunn 2002:226).[73] Their support became a critical component of his strategic plan to win the presidency. It worked. Wade, representing the Parti Démocratique Sénégalais (PDS), unseated the incumbent Abdou Diouf and took office in April 2000, effectively ending forty years of socialist rule in Senegal. Wade's success also constituted the first time in history that a follower of the Muridiyya would become the president of Senegal.[74]

Wade's campaign strategy and eventual win points to a distinct shift in the brotherhood's political position. This campaign was qualitatively different from previous ones in that Wade, instead of turning to the religious elite for endorsement, chose to bypass the marabouts and target the transmigrants directly (Riccio 2008:231). Transmigrant *talibés*, enjoying an unusual measure of independence from their marabouts, could no longer be relied on to vote in accordance with

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[72] Prior to the presidential elections of 1993, the electoral process of Senegal was reformed and a system of external voting designed for both presidential and legislative elections. External voting is only permitted in countries with at least 500 migrants registered to vote; in the 2000 election France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the United States and Canada all qualified, as well as nine African states (Vengroff 2007:104-105).
[73] He was later able to successfully justify this time spent outside the country as proof of his commitment to his constituents, and not as a lack of interest in social and economic issues within the bounds of the Senegalese state (Salzbrunn 2002:226).
[74] Senghor, the first president of Senegal, was Catholic and Diouf belonged to another brotherhood, the Tijaniyya.

the preferences of their religious leaders.[75] Many marabouts prudently chose to avoid giving

voting instructions in the 2000 presidential election, for endorsing Wade's opposition party

would jeopardize the stability of their ongoing relations with the Parti Socialiste. Some chose to

endorse Diouf, but their commands to their disciples were frequently ignored (Salzbrunn

2002:225). In this election, transmigrants interacted directly with Wade's political party, formed

politically-oriented associations of their own in transnational social spaces, and voted

independently of their marabouts' directives.

Media such as radio, television, and the Internet coalesced as vehicles for creatively

disseminating campaign themes and shaping popular opinion transnationally. The webpage of

the newspaper *Sud Quotidien*, among others, served as a clearinghouse for political debates

among transmigrants (Salzbrunn 2002:227). Wade's party produced a video, which was then

sold in France to raise money for the transnational campaign, announcing: "He has lived with us;

he came to the workers' homes in order to ask us about our everyday problems. He has even

produced a video especially for the migrants!" It continues: "Call your parents, your relatives,

and persuade them to vote for the opposition" (Salzbrunn 2002:226).

Undoubtedly, the PDS's capacity to take advantage of transmigration helped secure its

eventual win:

> The important role of the migrants in the Senegalese election campaign can be explained
> by their strong relationship with their families living in the home country. By planning
> and successfully leading his campaign from France, Wade not only reached migrants
> living in France, but much more importantly the rural population whose support finally
> determined his victory. A phone call from Paris or Washington or a visit by friends or

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[75] Even before transmigration accelerated in the mid-1980s, *talibés* would periodically disobey their marabouts
regarding presidential elections. Before the elections of 1983 and 1988, the Khalifa-General issued an order that all
Mourides should vote for the re-election of President Diouf. Those who desired to vote otherwise often chose not to
directly contradict the order; instead, they abstained from voting or denied their family members the ability to vote
(Schaffer 1998:111). Other *talibés* simply abandoned their marabouts and sought out those who endorsed
candidates from opposition parties (Schaffer 1998:112).

family members is much more effective than a direct campaign in the numerous villages that are not easy to reach. (Salzbrunn 2002:227)

The opposition party readily recognized ways to exploit the multipolarization of transnational social spaces for political gain. Migrants' votes alone account for between four and five percent of the total vote (Vengroff 2007:106). In addition, since Mouride transmigrants actively maintain connections to multiple locales in which they circulate goods and ideas, political messages vocalized in one segment of that network would echo far beyond their origins. By tapping into these vast networks outside the boundaries of the Senegalese state, these politicians were able to contact and mobilize a far greater number of potential supporters than they would have otherwise.

Senegalese transmigrants played a significant role in the presidential elections on their own initiative, as well. By forming transnational associations supporting Senegalese political parties (and presumably using some transnational *dahiras* for similar purposes), transmigrants from Marseille to New York spoke loudly and forcefully on behalf of one candidate or another. They funded their associations' political activities by organizing social events and requesting contributions. Salzbrunn (2002:223) recounts the story of one Senegalese woman living in France who organized food for both Christian and Muslim transmigrants who had to travel to Paris in order to vote.[76] He also describes how a member of the PDS living abroad boasted that he had persuaded his marabout to avoid endorsing the Parti Socialiste (Salzbrunn 2002:227). This role reversal should dispel any nagging illusions about the "blind submission" of transmigrant citizen-disciples to their religious leaders.

However, the transmigrants' political activism does not stem merely from the PDS's persuasive campaigning; their efforts may also be a manifestation of their tendency to support

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[76] Polling stations outside of Senegal are situated in locales with markedly high concentrations of Senegalese migrants. In France, 32 polling stations were established to accommodate registered voters (Vengroff 2007:106).

politicians who have provided them with significant economic support in the past. In choosing to re-elect President Diouf in 1983 and again in 1988, many Mourides viewed their vote as repayment for the infrastructure projects that the president had previously implemented in Touba (Schaffer 1998:112). But dissatisfaction with the state of the economy under Diouf in the late 1990s set the stage for Wade to successfully direct a campaign under the slogan of *sopi* (change). Part of the legitimacy of the president, in this framework, depends on his ability to provide economic benefits to the brotherhood – and now, also, to transmigrants in particular.

To successfully secure the trust and loyalty of the citizenry now, President Wade was careful to establish strong connections with both rural and urban citizen-disciples (Beck 2001:606). Within the Muridiyya, he catered both to transmigrants and to followers in and around Touba. His very first act as president was to pay a special visit to the Khalifa-General in Touba to publicly acknowledge the close ties between his administration and the Muridiyya (Salzbrunn 2002:227). During his visit, he unveiled plans to relocate the international airport from Dakar to the religious capital (Beck 2001:611). This audacious proposal was met with much enthusiasm on the part of Mourides, followed by heavy criticism from others who portrayed it as irrational and overly clientelistic, and it was eventually rescinded. The sentiment it represented, however, has inflected Wade's stance toward the Muridiyya throughout his presidency. During his first term, the president gained legitimacy in the eyes of Mouride citizen-disciples in part through his willingness to provide them with preferential economic treatment. For example, following the 2000 election, a heli-pad was constructed in Touba to more easily accommodate the presidential helicopter and, presumably, to encourage frequent visits. (Still, Wade shows no intention of transforming Senegal into an Islamic state.)

This case suggests that marabouts may no longer be able to state with certainty that they can influence the outcome of a political race. For decades, powerful marabouts enjoyed "a reputation as king-makers in Senegal" and each president to date has been careful to secure their support (Villalón 1994:180). Now, Mouride transmigrants are beginning to assert themselves by using transnational associations to disseminate information, mobilize the population, and secure support for political parties apart from marabouts. As transmigrants' autonomy expands, marabouts are encountering new limits to their political power (Villalón and Kane 1997:154).

Transmigration and 'Disciple Power'

Prior to the transmigration boom of the late twentieth century, studies on the Muridiyya emphasized the apolitical nature of *talibés*. Cruise O'Brien (1975:176-177) is exemplary: "The peasants who 'leave politics to their marabouts' are thus in effect making a very rational decision, as long as the allocation of government expenditure in rural areas follows such a pattern of political influence." In this chapter, I have demonstrated that such statements must be re-evaluated.

I want to briefly pause and offer an alternate reading of Mouride transmigration. Until now, I have argued that transmigration may weaken the Muridiyya by disrupting the marabout-*talibé* relationship. I propose that, paradoxically, it may also strengthen the Muridiyya by deepening the connection between *talibés* and the Khalifa-General. Thus Mouride transmigration seems to yields a contradiction, in that the brotherhood could be moving toward both centralization and fragmentation. This is not necessarily a paradox for both processes may be occurring, although one may be stronger than the other.

Mouride transmigration could reinforce the Khalifa-General's position of power by establishing him "at the center of well-organized [transnational] social networks" (Villalón and Kane 1997:153). More precisely, transnational *dahiras* may strengthen the Khalifa-General by declaring allegiance to him directly (thus bypassing other marabouts) and presenting him with financial contributions in the form of collective remittances. With money comes power, and Mouride transmigration could be providing the Khalifa-General with both. This would explain both the discontent of moderately powerful marabouts during the 1997 tax scandal and their apparent inaction. Transnational *dahiras* could simultaneously erode the marabout-*talibé* relationship and bring *talibés* closer to the Khalifa-General (which would give them greater power to negotiate with him).

However, Diagne (in Diop 1993:282-283) suggests that "the trend could cut both ways," in that Mouride transmigration could "degenerate into increasingly pronounced withdrawal into unconnected micro-cultures that would seriously threaten social cohesion." If the progressive breakdown of the marabout-*talibé* relationship continues, it could threaten the political and economic strength of the brotherhood and the stability of the Senegalese state. I do not think such extreme outcomes are likely in the near future, however. It is more likely that transmigrant *talibés* will choose not to dismantle Senegal's politico-religious clientelist system, instead adapting it to suit their interests. Remittance-based development projects, by redistributing wealth and making status claims, may be doing just that. Mouride transmigrants' ability to channel collective remittances toward community development projects in Senegal is perhaps the best indicator of their ongoing strength and cohesion.

If this debate can be reduced to one critical point, it is this: "[T]o maintain their positions of power governments need obedient citizens just as marabouts need faithful disciples" and

Mouride transmigration demands that each of these relationships be put into question (Villalón 1995:201). Although marabouts have always been compelled to negotiate their relationship with the state, they may now occupy a more precarious position than before. If they make a mis-step, they risk harming their relations not only with the state but also with transmigrant disciples (Villalón 1995:198). This increased level of risk might partially explain why the Khalifa-General distanced himself from the issue of taxes, and why marabouts seem increasingly reluctant to offer endorsements of any presidential candidates. Beck (2001:620) offers an appropriate summary of the emerging situation as it appears at this time:

> The political and economic project of '*talibéité*' [disciple power] appears to be growing in strength, generating an alternative set of power relations with which the marabouts as well as Senegalese politicians will be forced to contend.

Talibés have begun to recognize that transnational *dahiras* are useful tools with which to pressure both marabouts and the government to cater to their interests and respond to their demands (Babou 2002b:155). Marabouts can no longer feel secure in their command over Senegal's citizen-disciples; "The client is far from helpless before his holy patron" (Cruise O'Brien 1975:197). Embedded in transnational social spaces, transmigrant *talibés* use their remittance-based development projects to make status claims and establish themselves as redistributors of resources within the brotherhood's networks of patronage. Their activities transgress state boundaries, which enables them to partially escape the control of the state but also opens them up to direct interactions with the state, unmediated by their marabouts but still constrained by the Khalifa-General as previously shown. In sum, Mouride transmigrants are well-positioned to begin to re-negotiate the terms of their engagement with the religious and political elite.

CONCLUSION

Transnational *dahiras* not only represent an expansion of the Mouride brotherhood into transnational social spaces, but also constitute sites in which religious practices are reinterpreted, maraboutic authority is challenged, and the brotherhood's political position is restructured. Transmigration is dynamic, in that the Mouride brotherhood is "in the process of [re-]making itself" (Bava 2003:151, author's translation). By gathering collective remittances for community development projects in Senegal, Mouride transmigrants' associations are reshaping the hierarchy of ties within the brotherhood, with powerful ramifications for the political and economic landscape of Senegal.

In order to arrive at a nuanced understanding of the impacts of remittance-based development, it is necessary to start by considering transmigration on its own terms. As discussed in Chapter 2, the relationship between marabouts and *talibés* has an internal logic that partially defies the individualistic and profit-oriented logic of capitalism. From the perspective of an uninformed outsider, the relationship between marabouts and *talibés* could seem exploitative in that it provides marabouts with economic and political advantages, both as facilitators of vast networks of patronage and as intermediaries between disciples and the state. However, this arrangement also enables *talibés* to enjoy social protection and to receive *baraka* for participating in religiously-oriented work. This internal logic shapes the accumulation and redistribution of wealth within the Muridiyya; therefore, it is necessary to move beyond the narrow perspective of the remittances-and-development literature. Having established a deeper understanding of the religious and social justifications for the economic content of marabout-*talibé* ties, it is then possible to turn to a study of how transmigration alters these ties.

Chapter 3 addressed how factors external to the brotherhood triggered a rise in urbanization and then transmigration. A contracting agricultural sector, combined with a series of droughts and structural adjustment programs, created incentives for rural disciples to seek out alternative opportunities to earn a livelihood. The brotherhood adjusted to these shifts by transforming rural *daras* into urban and transnational *dahiras*, thus retaining its coherence despite the turbulence it encountered. Transnational *dahiras* nurture Mouride transmigrants' religious commitments, which enables disciples living abroad to remain oriented to the brotherhood. These associations provide opportunities for transmigrants to form relationships of trust with one another, to celebrate social events and enjoy a measure of social security, and to demonstrate their commitment to the brotherhood by financing community development projects in Senegal, particularly in Touba.

By designing remittance-based development projects, Mouride transmigrants carve out spaces in which they can participate in religiously-oriented work, support their communities, and make status claims. To implement these projects, however, they must still negotiate with the state and with the Khalifa-General, as the examples of Matlaboul Fawzayni and the Association for Co-Development indicate. Chapter 4 showed how Mouride transmigrants' political, religious, social, and economic interests coalesce to determine how they invest their remittances in development projects in their places of origin. A community-based analysis allows us to see how transmigrants' remittance-based development projects are embedded in and constrained by the political and social contexts in which they take place. Therefore, as Mouride transmigrants seek to make status claims, they tend to be drawn to more visible, infrastructural projects and they tend to focus their efforts on communities whose respect and admiration they wish to earn. In addition, to the extent that transmigrants' development projects have focused on Touba, they

have heightened the holy city's religious, political and economic exceptionalism. The impacts of remittance-based development projects within the Muridiyya are thus determined more by transmigrants' complex agendas than by narrower economic considerations.

Chapter 5 showed that Mouride transmigrants' remittance-based development projects are not only embedded in political, religious, and social contexts but also potentially transform those contexts. Transmigrant *talibés* pose a challenge to both the religious and political elite in Senegal. Touba's tax rebellion of 1997 is indicative of transmigrant disciples' rising power to contradict the Khalifa-General and demand that their grievances be accounted for. The presidential election of 2000 suggests that politicians, recognizing the increasing autonomy of transmigrant *talibés*, are choosing to bypass the religious elite and appeal directly to the disciples themselves. It is possible that transmigration and remittance-based development are disrupting the marabout-*talibé* relationship that has historically constituted the foundation of the Mouride brotherhood.

By using the extended case method, this paper demonstrates the utility of performing detailed examinations of transmigration and remittance-based development. In order to better understand the effects of remittance-based development projects, or to predict future trends in migration and remittances, it is necessary to look beyond the economic aspects of the situation. This lesson applies not only to the Muridiyya but to other societies that experience high levels of migration and remittances as well. A thick description of transnational organizations such as *dahiras* can reveal details that a broad quantitative study would overlook – and it is precisely that level of detail which reveals fundamental societal shifts, such as the erosion of the marabout-*talibé* relationship, which can have substantial ramifications in both political and economic spheres.

This study of remittance-based development within the Muridiyya indicates a number of ways that development theories and critiques might be modified to account for the political, economic, and social effects of remittances. Contemporary development theory, with its emphasis on states or households, is still poorly equipped to understand the political and social aspects of transmigration and remittance-based development. Therefore, a more creative application of development theories and critiques must be formulated to account for these transformations. I will offer four points on this subject.

First, and most importantly, this study indicates the necessity of reconceptualizing the spaces in which development takes place. Individual transmigrants are embedded in dense webs of relations that transcend the level of the household and partially escape the control of the state, as noted in the review of the literature by Grillo (2002). The transnational spaces in which they move bind together the local and the global, defying neat categorization or control by any single body, including the state. Assessing remittances and development at the level of the household, or of the nation, as in the remittances-and development literature, will not suffice. Examining merely the quantitative impact of remittance-based development in Senegal – on changes in income level among households in Touba for instance – would not have yielded the complex picture described here. While such analyses may reveal useful insights, they still yield a limited understanding of the effects of remittances on development in sending contexts. The work of transmigration scholars such as Grillo (2002) and Riccio (2001) introduces transnational social spheres as spaces in which remittance-based development occurs. By allowing space for analysis not only at the level of the household or the state, but also the transnational social sphere, it is possible to see how transmigrants' associations influence the development potential of remittances. Transnational *dahiras* engaging in community development projects in Senegal

operate across scales and thus challenge the notion that development efforts can be analyzed on any single scale. Still, transnational *dahiras* are embedded in the Muridiyya, albeit as a brotherhood in the process of transformation. They may transform the internal hierarchy of the brotherhood, yet they are not free from it. In order to account for the social, political, economic and religious complexities introduced by transmigration, then, it is necessary to move across scales. Applying this framework in other settings should allow additional insights and further extension of theories of transmigration and remittance-based development.

Second, researchers in the remittances-and-development field would benefit from conducting more ethnographic studies. Critically examining the embeddedness of remittance-based development may yield a clearer understanding of its potentialities. Such studies would allow for variation in the development impacts of remittances by recognizing the diverse contexts in which transmigration takes place as well as the diverse ways in which transmigrants make status claims in their places of origin. Ethnographic studies of remittance-based development would also clarify the relationship between social and political activism in the context of transmigration (Clark 2004) – which, in the case of the Muridiyya, appears to disrupt vertical ties between marabouts and their disciples while reinforcing horizontal ties among transmigrant *talibés*. Because of their border-crossing existence, transmigrants are uniquely positioned to negotiate with, protest, or isolate themselves from the state (Burawoy 1991:286-287). Conducting ethnographic studies of remittance-based development thus becomes an exercise not only in recognizing the social and political embeddedness of transnational economies but also in examining how transmigrants transform social hierarchies and potentially experience greater political empowerment. "Indeed, the most important sources of political change in Africa may be neither urban nor rural, but transnational… associations that regroup

Africans living abroad with those who remain in their country of origin" (Beck 2001:621). This study of the Muridiyya demonstrates that remittance-based development is always a politically charged endeavor; the political environment of the sending context both shapes and is shaped by transmigrants' development projects.

Third, development theory must allow for serious consideration of remittance-based economies that have their own internal logic despite deviating from the individualistic, profit-maximizing logic of capitalism. Too often, the remittances-and-development literature assesses the development potential of remittances based on a universalized assumption of what constitutes consumption versus productive investment. By exploring how remittance-based economies in diverse locales are embedded in political, social, and religious spheres, it is possible to better understand individuals' motivations for participating in transmigration. Such explorations would enrich the remittances-and-development literature by adding significantly to the debates on why remittances exacerbate inequality in some contexts and mitigate it in others. Cultivating a better understanding the internal logic of transmigration and remittance-based development may permit deeper discernment of whether to be optimistic or pessimistic about the impacts of remittance-based development. This kind of analysis is equally useful for those who wish to support remittance-based development and for those who wish to reduce the rate of migration.

Fourth, it is important not to romanticize remittance-based development, which, as noted in the review of the literature, would risk inappropriately shifting the burden of development from the state onto transmigrants. Migration is often a survival strategy; Grillo (2002:138) reminds us that "much of the quotidian life of transnational migrants is concerned with getting a livelihood often in difficult circumstances." In this light, transmigrants' remittance-based development projects serve different functions in relation to the state; they may fill gaps left by

the state, create alternatives to the state, or even become sites of resistance against the state. For instance, the state is still somewhat active in the region in which Touba is located, yet too often its infrastructural projects are poorly executed or fail to reach completion. The village in which ASCODE is implementing a multifaceted development project is still waiting for the state to install the final section of a four-kilometer pipeline intended to bring potable water from the nearest town. ASCODE's transmigrants will likely complete their project of drilling a borehole, installing a generator, and building a water tower on the outskirts of the village before the state completes its pipeline, and at a significantly lower cost. In this way, remittance-based development projects may respond directly and more effectively to the needs of the people than the state, and transmigrants thereby gain credibility in the eyes of the people. Such projects, if successful at a large scale, could challenge the legitimacy of the state. But if transmigrants' development projects exacerbate inequality in the sending context, as discussed at the end of Chapter 4, then there is certainly still a place for the state as an agent of more redistributive development.

These modifications of development theories and critiques would create openings for applying the lessons learned from remittance-based development within the Muridiyya to other studies of migration and development. Studies across diverse locations could account for different kinds of relations of power than those studied here; for example, accounting for the gender disparities in Mouride transmigration was beyond the scope of this study. The "androcentric" nature of this study thus obscures how women of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds are impacted by transmigration and remittance-based development (Riccio 2000). The silencing of women in the remittances-and-development literature must be countered by future studies analyzing the gendered nature of transnational social spaces (Gardner and Grillo

2002; Marlin-Bennett 2008). Future studies could also examine generational shifts within Mouride transmigration, for the impacts of remittance-based development discussed in this paper may not be sustainable if second-generation migrants choose to abandon the hypermobile existence of their predecessors. If the next generation chooses to settle in the receiving contexts, they may be less motivated to contribute to collective remittances. In this case, the potency of transmigrants' associations as sites of social and political transformations would likely be reduced.

Beyond this specific case, additional comparative studies of transmigration would generate a more comprehensive understanding of why remittance-based development succeeds in some contexts and fails in others. In Chapter 1, Mexican hometown associations were presented as a benchmark for this case study on transnational Mouride associations' remittance-based development projects. By incorporating analyses at both subnational and transnational levels, Goldring's (2002) study of hometown associations and this paper both indicate the value of moving across multiple scales in order to better visualize the diverse impacts of remittance-based development. Each of these two cases reveals that migrants' transnational associations are partially autonomous from, yet still constrained by, the state; in neither case does remittance-based development exist in a vacuum. A comparative study of these two cases would likely illuminate how the specific nature of the relationship between migrants and the state in each context affects the development potential of remittances. Due to interventions like the Two-for-One matching fund program, the Mexican state has channeled remittances toward community development projects more effectively than the Senegalese state. But each Mexican hometown association is typically comprised of migrants from the same village, which then becomes the target of its remittance-based development projects (Goldring 2002). By contrast, religion plays

a distinct role in binding Mouride migrants together and motivating them to participate in remittance-based development projects that focus predominantly on the city of Touba, even without the direct assistance of the state. In each case, migrants' collective desire to advance their social status influences both the forms development projects take and the locations in which they are carried out, but the particular messages these projects convey to their "audiences" vary depending on the context (Gardner and Grillo 2002). Moreover, in both cases the relationship between migrants and the state not only shapes remittance-based development projects in the sending context but also undergoes transformations itself as a result of transmigration. While my research indicates that Mexican hometown associations may serve as political trampolines for individual upwardly mobile migrants, the political effects of remittance-based development appear to be more deeply rooted and more far-reaching for Senegal. Because Senegal, by contrast with Mexico, has historically enjoyed remarkable stability due in no small part to its informal power-sharing relationship between the religious and political elite, the potential for remittance-based development to empower transmigrant *talibés* and yield not only local but also regional and national political transformations seems to be greater. More detailed comparative studies of these two cases, or of other cases with high levels of migration such as Nigeria, Egypt, or India, would likely illuminate not only how remittance-based development affects the (re)distribution of political and economic power in the sending context, but also how religion may play a role in binding migrants together and keeping them oriented to their places of origin.

In sum, development theory must be modified to account for how remittance-based development defies conventional understandings of the scales of economic and social activity. This study of remittance-based development within the Muridiyya has attempted to illustrate how transmigrants, circulating in transnational social spaces, conduct development projects in

their places of origin that transform the political and social contexts in which they are embedded. In order to understand the true development potential of remittances, it is necessary to consider how migration is both symbolic and substantive; migrants' motivations, contexts, and worldviews contribute to shaping an internal logic of migration that both influences and is influenced by remittance-based development.

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