Sufism and Politics among Senegalese Immigrants in Columbus, Ohio: Ndigēl and the Voting Preferences of a Transnational Community

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This thesis titled
Sufism and Politics among Senegalese Immigrants in Columbus, Ohio: Ndigël and the
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ABSTRACT

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Sufism and Politics among Senegalese Immigrants in Columbus, Ohio: Ndīgēl and the Voting Preferences of a Transnational Community

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The electoral ndīgēl is a voting command issued by some Senegalese Sufi leaders to their followers in support of one political party or another. Since 1946, this phenomenon has exemplified the religious leaders’ influence on the electoral outcomes. In the last decades, however, the electoral ndīgēl seems to have declined in influence, especially among the Senegalese voters in the diaspora who can partake in Senegalese elections through ‘distance-voting programs.’ By analyzing the electoral preferences of Senegalese citizens in Columbus, Ohio, this study argues that the decline of the electoral ndīgēl in this particular locality is based on the diasporic voters’ acquisition of a greater political awareness, achievement of financial independence and exposure to a politically more secular American culture.

The study is structured in five chapters. Chapter 1 provides a historical background on the evolution of the religion-politics nexus in Senegal. It discusses different phases of Islamic militancy and explains how the state-tarīxa relationship has evolved overtime. Chapter 2 examines how deterritorialization of Senegalese Sufi taalibés in general has contributed to the globalization of Senegalese tarīxas in different ways. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of research and data collection. Chapter 4 focuses on the case study, Columbus (Ohio), and discusses the translation of that globalization into ‘long-
distance’ political participation. It also investigates how Senegalese immigrants integrate Columbus, Ohio in different modes. More importantly, the chapter also discusses different transnational factors which cause the Senegalese expatriate voters to opt for a more *ndigél*-free voting. Finally, chapter 5 presents a set of remarks about long-distance voting among Columbus Senegalese and makes some recommendations.
DEDICATION

To Mardochee,

Aminata

And my beloved family back home.
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INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that Sufi orders, or tarixas, remain very influential Muslim institutions in Senegal, the voting commands, or electoral ndigêls, issued by Sufi leaders, or shaykhs, seem to have declined in influence in the last decades. In Columbus, Ohio where Senegalese expatriate citizens can partake in Senegalese elections through ‘distance-voting’ programs, such a decline is even more striking.¹ By analyzing the electoral preferences of Senegalese citizens in Columbus, Ohio, this study argues that this status quo is based on the acquisition of a greater political awareness, achievement of financial independence and exposure to a politically more secular American culture.

In 1993, following domestic and international political pressures, the Senegalese government convened a conference which proposed to reform and democratize the electoral code.² One of the new reforms was to implement ‘distance-voting programs’ which allow Senegalese expatriate citizens to register for elections, withdraw their voting cards and cast their votes from their respective destination countries. In the United States, Columbus, Ohio is one of the 25 Senegalese polling stations administered by the Senegalese diplomatic mission and the Consulate General in the United States.

Since the early 1990s Columbus, Ohio has been one of the most attractive destinations for Senegalese migrants to the United States. In part, this is due to the fact that industries and warehouses in the Columbus area provide greater job opportunities for unqualified Senegalese workers. Today, no less than 2936 people of Senegalese origin reside in Columbus, Ohio.³ Their housing sites and businesses are mostly concentrated in the Columbus area located in the East and North sides (see Figure 1). Senegalese
immigrants have integrated Columbus, Ohio in many ways. Some of them have developed successful businesses which include market centers, restaurants, immigration and insurance services, shipping facilities, and so on. Besides, the formation of both religious and secular associations has provided important spaces for social and religious integration. Overtime, such developments have increased the presence and visibility of Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio so much so that when the Senegalese government implemented its distance-voting programs in 2004, Columbus, Ohio was one of the first Senegalese polling stations to be created in the United States.4

Senegal is a relatively small country with an area of 196,200 square kilometers, about the size of South Dakota. The 2011 World Bank census estimates the country’s population to about 13 million. About 94 percent of Senegalese are Muslims. According to the 2010 Pew Research census, about 92 percent of all Senegalese Muslims are affiliated to Sufi orders.5 Sufi orders in Senegal are commonly called tarixa, or tariqa, and include Qadiriyya (10%), Tijaniyya (51%), Muridiyya (30.1%) and the Laayen (6%).6 The Wolof word tarixa is borrowed from the Arabic “tariqat” which literally means ‘way’ or ‘path.’ Tarixa refers to each one of the Senegalese Sufi orders that are governed by specific sets of spiritual practices and rituals which aim to train Sufi disciples in their quest for God.7 The Sufi rituals and practices are based on the Qur’an, the Sunna and the Islamic teachings of the Sufi precursors. Among the four Senegalese tarixas, Tijaniyya and Muridiyya remain politically and economically the most influential and have a strong presence in the Senegalese media and arts.8
Naturally, religious leaders within the *tarixas* – *Khalif-Généraux, shaykhs* and *sériëns* (*marabout*) – emerge as powerful figures with far-reaching powers of influence on their respective followers, or *taalibés* in Wolof (sing. *taalibé*). 9 The word *taalibé* is adapted from the Arabic ‘*talib*’ and literally means ‘student or learner.’ One can identify different degrees of religious authority among Sufi leaders within the *tarixas*. For instance, the authority of a tarixa’s *Khalif-Général* expands over the entire order while that of the *shaykh* and *sériëns* is more limited within segments of authority existing within the broader institution. Depending on their levels of authority, Senegalese Sufi leaders have the power to issue different types of electoral commands, or electoral *ndigëls*, which can influence electoral outcomes and political decisions at the state level. *Ndigël*, in its spiritual function, is a fundamental element in the Senegalese *tarixas*. It governs the relationship between the Sufi *taalibé* and the *shaykh*. Besides, an allegiance to the *shaykh*, or *njébbël* in Wolof, is mandatory before formal membership to one of the *tarixas*. *Njébbël*, from the verb *jébbalu* (to surrender) implies a total submission, both body and soul, to the command of the Sufi guide in exchange for salvation after death.

The 1946 Lamine Guèye Act (*Loi 46-940 du mai 1946*) extended French citizenship to indigenous Senegalese living in the rural area (beyond the *quatres communes*). 10 As a result, political leaders began to seek electoral support from the charismatic Sufi leaders who remained very influential in the countryside. 11 This period marked the beginning of an increased politicization of the Senegalese *tarixas*. Today, politics have been made integral part of the *tarixa* structure. For many *shaykhs*, involvement in direct politics or in patron-client relations seems to be a means for legitimation and consolidation of
authority. In the last two decades, many Senegalese *shaykhs* have increasingly engaged in constant transnational journeys which seem to increase their political influence on the expatriate *taalibés*-voters as well.

The case study is Columbus, Ohio, a city which hosts a growing “enclave” of Senegalese immigrant workers. In the last decade, this community has been attracting both political and religious leaders from Senegal in search of electoral or financial support. The Senegalese community in Columbus is mainly composed of two ethnolinguistic groups. One is Haalpulaar (literally speakers of Pulaar language) and is slightly dominant in number. Most of the Haalpulaar belong to the Tijaniyya *tarixa* and come from Futa, a region which geographically cuts across the Senegal River and straddles parts of northern Senegal and southern Mauritania. A second ethnolinguistic group is composed of Wolof. Most of them belong to the Muridiyya and Tijaniyya *tarixas* while a small number identifies with the Laayen and the Qadiriyya *tarixas*. In Senegal, these Wolof immigrants originate mostly from the western-central and northwestern regions of the country. In this study of Sufism and politics among Senegalese immigrants, the ethnolinguistic distribution is deeply considered for it helps provide a broader understanding of the religio-political dynamics which characterize the Senegalese diasporic electorate in Columbus, Ohio.

Religion and politics in Senegal is a topic which attracted and still attracts many researchers in the fields of history, political science, anthropology, sociology and others. In the last two decades, a significant volume of research has looked into the Senegalese diaspora as well. However, there is a very little coverage of how newly ‘enfranchised’
Senegalese in the diaspora participate in Senegalese politics. In focusing on Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio, this study seeks to fill a research gap by investigating how one community of Senegalese US residents expresses its views on politics at home. By examining key particularities in the processes of electoral participation among Senegalese citizens in Columbus, this research shows how migration can condition political change in the homeland, Senegal.

The study is structured in five chapters. Chapter 1 provides a historical background on the evolution of the religion-politics nexus in Senegal. It discusses different phases of Islamic militancy and explains how the state-tarixa relationship has evolved throughout time. Chapter 2 examines how “deterritorialization” of Senegalese Sufi taalibés in general has contributed to the globalization of Senegalese tarixas in different ways. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of research and data collection. Chapter 4 focuses on the case study of Columbus, Ohio, and examines the translation of that globalization into ‘long-distance’ political participation. It also investigates how Senegalese immigrants integrate Columbus, Ohio in different modes. More importantly, the chapter also discusses how political consciousness, financial independence and exposure to a greater diversity and political individualism influence the Senegalese expatriate voters to opt for a more ndigël-free voting. Finally, chapter 5 presents different recommendations in relation to the electoral attitudes of Columbus Senegalese and their participation in the distance-voting programs.
CHAPTER 1: ISLAM, STATE AND DEMOCRACY IN SENEGAL

The Tarixas as Institutions of Power

The fact that members of a tarixa share and commit to the same “imagined values” in religion and spirituality is reminiscent of what Benedict Anderson lists as part of the nationalist effort.\(^1\) Cruise O’Brien suggests a similar idea of nationhood in reference to the Senegalese Muridiyya tarixa, founded by Ahmaddu Bamba (1853-1927).\(^2\) In O’Brien’s analysis, the Murids of Senegal are united under a spiritual symbolism nurtured by Ahmaddu Bamba’s persona and his Sufi teachings. For Cruise O’Brien, Muridiyya emerges as a nation, an entity which is distinct from the Senegalese secular state perceived as an outsider, a “devil.”\(^3\)

From this standpoint, and at a non-political level, one can expand the same idea of nationhood to other Senegalese tarixas as well. Within the tarixa as a nation, religious power gets institutionalized mostly through an important sense of belonging which inhabits each Sufi follower, or taalibé. Such a Sufi-Muslim position normalizes and legitimizes submission to the authority of the Khalif-Général, the supreme leader of the tarixa. The same symbolism which governs unity under the Khalif becomes an uncontested source of power.

Such continuum in Sufi symbolism triggers the emergence of two other elements which, along with bloodline, endow the Senegalese Sufi tarixas with a unique structure and define them as formidable institutions of power. (1) Institutionalized inheritance through bloodline, (2) the ritual of jébbalu and (3) the religious associations (or daayira also written da’ira or dahira) constitute key elements in the tarixas which emphasize religious hierarchy by reinforcing a “pyramidal” structure of religious authority. The first
element, inheritance through bloodline, emphasizes the importance of lineage and gender in the distribution of leadership roles within the tarixas. Traditionally most Senegalese societies are patrilineal and patriarchal hence the male-dominated aspect of the sociopolitical organization. The Sufi tarixas which developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth century perpetuated the same tradition as the latter coincidentally followed the teachings of Islam. This historical continuity conditioned inheritance of the Sufi ‘General Caliphate’ through blood-line and masculinity.\textsuperscript{17} To this criterion, age is usually added.\textsuperscript{18}

In an interview, Murid notable Sëriñ Ousseynou Fall, Shaykh Ibra Fall’s grandson, insists, “\textit{Ne peuvent être Khalife que les fils des fils de Serigne Touba} [Only the sons of the sons of Sëriñ Touba (Ahmadu Bamba) can be Khalifs].\textsuperscript{19} This summarizes two fundamental conditions for leadership inheritance within the Muridiyya Brotherhood. “\textit{Fils des fils}” [sons of sons] insists on masculinity as one condition and “\textit{de Serigne Touba}” emphasizes blood-relationship with the Muridiyya founder as the other. In most cases, the same principles are institutionalized in the other Senegalese tarixas as well.

For the bloodline factor, many reasons seem to justify why it is emphasized in the Sufi structure. As Gellar rightfully notes, one fundamental reason is the belief among the Sufi taalibés that the (God-given) spiritual power of the Sufi founder is passed on through blood to his offsprings.\textsuperscript{20} Thus, descendants of Sufi precursors are usually believed to inherit the latter’s spiritual grace, barke in Wolof and baraka in Arabic. In many instances, this belief has made religious leadership a matter of blood, which causes the centralization of the Sufi authority around the founder’s descendants. In the end, the subsequent need for the devout taalibés to submit to the Khalif (to earn the barke)
consolidates the legitimacy of the *Khalifa-Général* and turns it into a powerful source of power and influence.

The second element which defines the *tarixas* as institutions of power is the ritual of *njébbël*. As mentioned earlier, *jébbalu*, or to surrender, implies one’s compliance with the orders (*ndigéls*) issued from the top. This confers a strong power of influence to the *Khalif-Général* (or the *Shaykh* in the case of Sufi segments of authority) and his entourage, or council. As Kane defines, *njébbël* is the follower’s expression of his/her submission, body and soul, to the religious guide. In addition, *jébbalu*, as submission of one’s existence to the religious guide also implies the establishment of a spiritual contract which links the Sufi *taalibé* to the founder of the *tarixa* who is spiritually represented by the *Khalif-Général* or the *shaykh*.

Beside the spiritual aspect, *njébbël* has also some political implications. As a contract, the ritual facilitates the social control and political influence of the *Khalif-Général* over the Sufi following. In most cases, after the performance of a *njébbël*, most followers feel compelled to abide by the spiritual command of the *khalif* (or the *shaykh*) who jealously watch over their *taalibés*. Furthermore, it is believed that an attempt to break the *njébbël* is capable of attracting misfortune upon the renouncing *taalibé*. In the end, *njébbël* becomes a strong thread which establishes a strong relation of power beween the Sufi follower and the spiritual leader. In so doing, it creates and consolidates religious authority and reinforces the power structure of the *tarixa*.

The third element-source of power is the Sufi-Muslim association, or *daayira*. The *daayira* is a religious organization which gathers followers belonging to the same *tarixa*
in one village, town, city, workplace, district, school, (foreign) country or in other spaces. The contributory activities of the *daayiras* vary depending on whether they are rural, urban, or diasporic (based in foreign countries). Usually, all types of *daayiras* contribute socially and economically to the development of the *tarixa*. As for the rural *daayiras* economic contribution is mainly agricultural. One example is the Murid traditional *Toolu Allarba*, or Wednesday field. It is held weekly and is an occasion for peasant *taalibés* to work in the field of the Murid *Khalif* for free so as to renew their *njébbël* to the supreme authority.¹²³ Urban *daayiras*, in lieu of the free agricultural labor, contribute financially through subscription fees.¹²⁴ Beside those regular fees, wealthy members of urban *daayiras* can offer personal gifts to the *Shaykh*, which nowadays can amount to millions of CFA (Senegalese currency). The way economic and financial contribution is provided is quite similar between local-urban and diasporic *daayiras*.¹²⁵ Yet the letter’s financial support to the *tarixa* is quite unique in its amount, mostly because the expatriate *taalibés* are wealthier and constitute, as Grillo and Riccio observe, the true agents of “translocal development” in Senegal.

More important is the contribution of the *daayiras* to the social development of the *tarixa*. Social activities mainly consist of religious gatherings during which the *taalibés* chant, socialize and praise the *shaykhs* and the miracles achieved by the *tarixa* founders (or precursors).¹²⁶ More importantly, such gatherings also constitute sources of religious propaganda. On such occasions *taalibés* may also attempt to attract others.¹²⁷

Now, how does the *daayira* reinforce the influential power of the Sufi authority? I explained earlier that the organization of the *tarixa* is based on a pyramidal organization
which places the *Khalif-Général* at the top. He is assisted by a council of *Jawriñ*, or councilors. The *daayira* – which submits to the *Khalif-Général* (or to the *shaykh*-segment leader) – has adopted quite a similar structure with an elected (or sometimes appointed) president (*Jawriñ*) at the top. Whether local-rural, local-urban or diasporic, the leaders of the *daayira* are mostly well-learnt in Islamic knowledge and usually have close relations with the *Khalif* or a *Shaykh*. Besides, the *daayira* also elect a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer and designate a spokesperson. Such an ‘institutionalization’ of leadership and the division of organizational roles confers to the *daayira* the image of a well organized association.²⁸ Under the leadership of the *Jawriñ* – representative of the *Khalif* or *Shaykh* – on top, the *daayira* facilitates the dissemination of the *ndigèl* at the grassroots level. In so doing, it contributes to legitimizing and consolidating the power of the *tarixa*’s supreme authority. Furthermore, the *daayira* institutions also play an important role during Muslim events. On occasions such as Prophet Muhammad’s birthday, or *Gamu*, in Tivaouane, the *Maggal* in Touba, the Qadiri *Gamu* in Ndiassane and the Laayen commemoration event in Yoff, the *daayiras* mobilize important numbers of people whose presence and contribution remains crucial to the success of those religious festivals.

In sum, bloodline, *njébbél* and the *daayira* structure constitute three different elements which legitimize, support and consolidate the influential power of the Senegalese Sufi authorities. Inheritance of the Sufi authority through bloodline legitimizes the superiority of the leading Sufi families. Through the *njébbèl* ritual the disciples commit spiritually to the development of the *tarixa* and submit to the uncontested authority of the *Khalif*. As for the *daayira*, it reinforces the pyramidal
organization of the *tarixa* and thus facilitates the dissemination of *ndigël* at the grassroots level. In the course of time, however, the increased politicization of the *tarixas*, among other factors, has caused the rise of different waves of Islamic militancy which militated for Islamic reformism and the ‘purification’ of the Senegalese Islam.

*Islamic Reformism, Moderation and State Politics in Senegal*

*Islamist Thought and the Secular State*

The conflictual relationship between Islamist thought and secularism dates back to history. In the African context, Scott traces it back to the early colonial period which saw the introduction of modern state system into majority-Muslim societies.29 Framed on the Western model, the modern state introduced political structures which deemphasized preexisting Islamic traditions. The subsequent rise of different Islamist movements in many colonies – and later countries – originated, in part, from the fact that Islam was seen as “a political religion in which religion and politics are unified.”30 In these words, Scott suggests that the fundamentalist Muslims’ reaction against the secular state is, for them, part of a necessary struggle for restoration and the purification of Islam.

Rousseau sees the secular state as neutral in matters of religion which, for many Islamists, contradicts fundamental principles of Islam.31 The conflict between the Islamist thought as supportive of an Islamic state and the secular state as promoter of religious neutrality and pluralism marked the evolution of politics in many majority-Muslim societies, and in Africa as well. In the same way, the project of democracy as understood in the secularist colonial and post-colonial states opposes, for instance, to the Islamic notion of *Wilaya* in the Islamist vision of state.32 Such continuous divergence has
climaxed with violent jihadist campaigns such as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in the 1930s and the *Jama’atu Ahlus-Sunnah Lidda’Awati Wal Jihad* (commonly known as Boko Haram) in present-day Nigeria. Yet the progressive expansion of Western secularism, especially in the nineteenth century, and the subsequent political change among Muslims urged the de-radicalization of many Islamist and revivalist movements. This caused the emergence of moderate Islamism in many Muslim countries.

In its political history, Senegal has not been an exception to the ‘conflict’ between secularism and the Islamist thought. One can highlight two major waves of Islamic militancy in Senegal which, over time, influenced the evolution of *ndigël* in one way or another. First, there is a pre-colonial wave of Islamic uprising which corresponds to an expansionist-anticolonial form of violent *Jihad*. The second wave consists of different Islamic reformist movements which developed between the mid-1950s and 1980s. Overtime, the decline of the two waves has given rise to Islamic moderation as represented by the Senegalese Sufi orders.

In the following pages, I explain how the ‘conflict’ between the Islamist thought and secularism has evolved in Senegal through different phases of Islamic militancy. First, I discuss Islamic uprisings in pre-colonial Senegal. Second, I explain how, after the victory of the French colonial forces, the *tarixas* have been able to flourish under a secular administration. Third, I explore different phases of Islamic reformism which characterized Senegal in late colonial times and in the postcolonial era. The fourth section discusses the fragmentation of the Senegalese *tarixas* and its causes. The fifth explains how political parties emerge from the *tarixas*, in part, as a result of fragmentation. It also
explains how such a fragmentation has caused the emergence of two types of electoral ndigêl: one central ndigêl and one ‘peripheral’ ndigêl. Finally, I examine the relation between democracy and ndigêl and demonstrate why the latter is anti-democratic.

Islamic Militancy in Pre-colonial Senegal

Pre-colonial Islamic militancy in Senegal corresponded with violent Jihadist campaigns carried mostly by Sufi leaders who sought to proselytize non-Muslims in the West Africa region. With the advent of European colonialism, proselytizing Jihadists became an anticolonial force of resistance and fought to preserve pre-colonial Islamic polities that stood in parts of what is now Senegal, Gambia, Guinea and Mali. Islamic resistsants such as Al-hajj Umar Taal (1796 – 1864), Samory Touré (c. 1830 – 1900), Mamadou Lamine Dramé (1840-1887), Fodé Kaba Doumbia (1818-1901), Maba Diakhou Ba (1809-1867) and many others engaged in anti-colonial campaigns. These figures embraced a double edged struggle aiming both to preserve the sovereignty of their people and to protect Islam. The Umarian Jihad – Al-hajj Umar Taal’s anticolonial and proselytization wars – was the most widespread. Taal’s campaign spanned the 1850s and the mid-1860. He spread Islam and the Tijaniyya tarixa and conquered a territory of 150,000 square miles.

The submission of such a large territory to one Islamic authority, indeed, marked an era of Islamic revolution and domination in a large sub-Saharan Africa region until the 1893 ultimate defeat of the Caliphate by the French colonial forces. Taal’s Jihad is important in two ways. On one hand, it marks the beginning of Muslim diversity in Senegal as Tijaniyya became the second tarixa in the country – the first being Qadiriyya
introduced in Senegal since 11th century. On the other hand, the ultimate end of the Taal Caliphate – in 1893 after Ahmad al-Kabir was defeated by the French – marks the beginning of a new state-tarixa relationship characterized by the pacification of the Sufi tarixas. Muridiyya was the third tarixa to emerge and was founded by Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba in 1886. In 1883, Seydina Limamoulaye (1843-1909) made his first declaration of sainthood, but only later will his Laayen tarixa take a full shape in Senegal. Qadiriyya, Tijaniyya and the two newly formed tarixas emerged together to constitute the essential part of the Senegalese Muslim population.

From Violent Jihad to Moderation: The Negotiation of a Colonial Coexistence

Pacification of Tijaniyya did not undermine its structure and that of other tarixas. Instead, it even helped consolidate the Sufi religious authorities mostly because, for the majority-Muslim indigenes, Qadiri, Tijani, Murid and Laayen shaykhs represented the only legitimate authorities in the colony. The fact that Senegalese Muslims considered the tarixas as legitimate social and religious institutions empowered the ndigêls issued by the Sufi leaders. This helped the tarixas flourish even under the colonial rule. Another factor which also facilitated stability and development of the Senegalese Sufi institutions under colonialism was the ability of the Sufi leaders to negotiate and compromise with the French colonial administration. Compromising and negotiation did not mean total submission to the colonial rule. It was rather a modus vivendi, or an agreement to disagree on certain crucial domains such as religion. As such, while the tarixas recognized the authority of the French colonial administration over the entire colony, the French administrators had a respect for the tarixa structures and their respective internal
authorities. The French colonial administration would interfere with tarixa matters only during delicate cases, conflicts of succession, for instance. The French colonial administration would interfere with tarixa matters only during delicate cases, conflicts of succession, for instance. Negotiation set the grounds for social and political coexistence between the two parties and facilitated mutual development in many ways.

Furthermore, pacification of the Senegalese tarixas seemed to facilitate the satisfaction of mutual interests although asymmetrically. On one hand, the colonial administration could significantly benefit from the labor force constituted by the Sufi followers, or taalibés, who worked proudly under the spiritual ndigël of the Sufi guide. Mostly because, in this context, work does not mean servitude or exploitation for the disciple. Rather, it becomes a voluntary action inscribed in the context of ądđiya, or offering to the shaykh. Moreover, during the German occupation of France, Tijani shaykh Ceerno Saydou Nourou Taal helped recruit volunteer soldiers, the tirailleurs Sénégalais, throughout French West Africa colonies. On the other hand, the Sufi tarixas benefited from important financial supports and administrative privileges. The construction of the great mosque of Touba is one example. The project required purchase and transportation of a great volume of material some of which was to come from outside the country. The French colonial administration made funds available and the Murid community had to repay it back in installments. The colonial administration operated with other tarixas almost in the same way by assisting in the building of mosques and Islamic schools.

Collaboration between the French colonial rule and the Senegalese Sufi leaders became the basis for Islamic moderation in Senegal and facilitated the French political administration in many ways. Sufi leaders such as Ceerno Saydou Nourou Taal, Shaykh...
Ahmadu Bamba and Al-hajj Malick Sy played crucial roles in agricultural development, social cohesion and political order in colonial Senegal. However, while collaboration between French colonial administration and Senegalese Sufi leaders facilitated French rule in the colony of Senegal, it created and reinforced the politicization of the Senegalese tarixas as well.

‘Reformist’ Islamic Militancy in Post-colonial Senegal

Throughout the 1950s and the period spanning the 1970s and 80s, the ever-widening secularism and the progressive politicization of the tarixas caused the rise of Islamic reformist movements which included two distinct types of reformist (or revivalist) groups. One type includes the non-Sufi movements. They embrace quite a Salafi vision of Islam and tend to criticize both the secular state and the tarixas for respectively the excess of secularism and the introduction of ‘innovative’ religious practices. Non-Sufi reformist movement include the Muslim Cultural Union (Union culturelle musulmane –UCM), al-Falah and the Jama’at Ibadu Rahman (JIR). The second type is more composed of revivalist Sufi movements. One example of this type is the Dahirat al-Moustarchidine wal Moustachidati (DMWM). The movement constitutes a distinct segment of Sufi authority which sometimes conflicts with the General Caliphate, or the Khalifa-Général, based in Tivaouane. Yet, it adopts the same Islamic structure and principles as the broader tarixa.

Non-Sufi UCM (1953), al-Falah and JIR (1970s) were founded in different historical contexts. Yet, all three movements have developed the same radical Islamic rhetoric and embraced a double-edged criticism against two common ‘enemies.’ On one
hand, they all reject the secular state most of whose secularist policies they judge un-Islamic. On the other hand, they castigate most of the Sufi religious practices which they perceive as “innovations,” or bid’a and shirq. Yet, these Islamist movements, apart from the quite radical reformist rhetoric, have no major commonalities with, for instance, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, the Tunisian Al-Nahda or the Algerian GIA which did embrace violent Jihad in the past.

The UCM aka al-Ittihad ath-Thaqafi al-Islami (ITI) was the first Senegalese reformist movement and was founded by Cheikh Touré (1925-2005) and other “arabisants,” or Arabist scholars, including Saliou Kandji, Serigne Saliou Mbacké ambassadeur and Deyman Dieng. Members of this group mostly included former students who benefited from scholarships granted by Congressman Lamine Guèye to help Senegalese students further their Islamic studies in Arab North African country. Cheikh Touré was the most influential and embraced a radical rhetoric largely inspired from North African Islamist discourse following his stays in Mauritania and Algeria respectively in 1944 and 1952. In Mauritania, a scholar named Mukhtar Uld Hamidoun introduced him to the Islamist thoughts of Muhammad Abduh and other Salafi thinkers. At the Algerian Centre Bin Baddis, “he was able to witness the efforts of the Algerian Jamiyyat al-’Ulama’ al-Muslimin al-Jazz’iriyyin to reform the Algerian society” (Ibid.).

Again, the UCM’s radicalism was mostly verbal and its militants channeled their political activism mostly through regular Islamic conferences and publications. Touré expressed his radicalism through a strict stance against Western cultures and models. Touré and “his group championed a critical position against the French colonial
administration and the Sufi brotherhoods and their religious leaders (marabouts) who cooperated with it.°\textsuperscript{47} In a harsh attack on the Sufi leaders, Touré writes:

If those who claim to be custodians of religion were sincere believers, they would not fear to teach the truth….They would not have led astray those who believe in them…they would not have falsified the principles of Islam….their lack of faith in God led them a disgraceful collaboration with the colonialists, the capitalists, the exploiters, and all that in the name of religion.°\textsuperscript{48}

Furthermore, the leader of the UCM had even greater ambitions for constitutional reforms and, as expressed in his own words, he pressed “…for public recognition of distinctive Muslim norms, customs, and rites as well as Islamic personal law.”\textsuperscript{49}

The \textit{al-Falah} movement is a branch of the Saudi-based international movement of the same name. The international movement was founded in 1939 in Saudi Arabia but the branch in Senegal will not be officially recognized until 1975.\textsuperscript{50} After its recognition, the movement became very popular in the 1980s and, in part, the financial opportunities presented helped attract many sympathizers. With a significant financial support from the Saudi International Islamic Organization of Aid and the Kuwaiti Zakaat House, \textit{Al-Falah} militated openly for the establishment of an Islamic state in Senegal.\textsuperscript{51}

In the 1970s, the \textit{Jama’ at- Ibadu Rahman} (JIR) aka \textit{Harakat al-Fatah} (HF) was founded on the same grounds of Islamic reformism. Ideologically, the movement could even be said to be a continuation of Cheikh Touré’s philosophy. The latter’s Islamic rhetoric did somehow influence it. Like in Touré’s UCM, the \textit{Ibadus} – as JIR members are commonly called in Senegal – work with an agenda that calls for a radical return to ‘pure Islam.’ The movement “was strongly influenced by the Iranian revolution and established contacts with a number of ‘Northern’ Muslim countries as well as reformist
organisations of Saudi Arabian as well as Libyan and Egyptian extraction.” Like the UCM, the early years of JIR’s Islamic radicalism targeted both the Senegalese state and the Sufi tarixas. It criticized the first for its un-Islamic politics and opposed the latter for their Muslim practices. The Ibadus do not share the Sufi belief in shaykhood and believe that all Muslims are equal and should appear so. Also, they perceive God, or Allah, and the Qur’an as the sole cure for the Senegalese political and economic problems.

These non-Sufi reformist movements have many aspects in common. Not only do they all criticize both the secular state and the Sufi tarixas, but they have also adopted a Salafi-puritanist Islamic position. As a result, their organizational structures came to be completely distinct from Sufi, or tarixa-based, reformist movements such as the DMWM.

First, apart from the Qur’an and the Sunnah, none of the UCM, the al-Falah and the JIR has ideological connections with Sufism. Instead, they all condemn Sufi practices and even reject major Sufi concepts such as the notion of ndigël. As mentioned earlier, members of non-Sufi reformist movements consider Prophet Muhammad as the only human reference. They believe in equality among all Muslims before God and do not believe in sainthood. Given the non-existence of a centralized authority within these movements, there is little chance for one of their leaders to issue an electoral ndigël in support of the secular political parties. In most cases, these reformist leaders do not perceive the existing political parties as representative of their political views, which causes most of them (not all) to turn away politics.

What caused the failure of the non-Sufi Islamic militancy in Senegal? In response to this question, many factors need to be considered. The reformist campaigns of UCM, for
instance, faced two major challenges. On the one hand, the union failed to garner greater popularity in a predominantly Sufi Muslim environment. On the other hand, the reformist leaders faced president Senghor’s determination to consolidate a secular state. For instance, he had been able to control and de-radicalize the UCM by integrating most of its leaders in his political apparatus. In addition, under Senghor’s influence, ex-leaders of the UCM formed a far less radical Islamic union – Federation of Senegalese Islamic Associations (Fédération desAssociations Islamiques du Sénégal – FAIS) – which turned the UCM into a de facto cultural movement.

As for al-Falah, it faced numerous challenges as well. The movement was mostly ruined by quarrels of leadership and by issues over the management of financial resources. As the quarrels continued, the movement ended up to implode and to disintegrate into smaller groups, which reduced its forces of action. The JIR faced the same challenges as the UCM. As a result, although the movement still exists today, it has almost failed in its reformist agenda. Not only did it fail to reform the Senegalese Sufi Islam, but it also failed to significantly influence political changes at the state level. Today, most of the movement’s activities are focused on providing free Islamic educational services such as giving Qur’an and Arabic classes.

In the end, the failure of the Senegalese non-Sufi Islamic reformism can be attributed, in part, to a lack of popularity which, itself, seems to result from Senegalese’ apparent unwillingness to embrace a Salafi Islam. A second major cause of failure is the non-existence of a centralized authority as exists in the Sufi reformist movements or tarixas. Unlike non-Sufi reformist movements, the very existence of the Tijani DMWM,
for instance, is fundamentally based on a *shaykh-taalibé* relationship which is governed by a spiritual command (*ndigél*), a spiritual contract (*njébbél*) and a special commitment to ‘working for God’ (*Qidma*).

The *Dahirat al-Moustarchidin wal Moustachidati* (DMWM) is unique in its sociopolitical background. Although its creation and development follow the same time frame as the non-Sufi reformist movements – UCM, *al-Falah* and the JIR, – its foundational grounds are totally different. DMWM is the first Senegalese “social” movement to be found within the contours of a Sufi order. This makes it a perfect example of a *tarixa*-based reformist movement. The fact that the DMWM is reformist is not because of its religious orientation. Instead, it is because its spiritual leader involved in politics in unprecedented ways. The movement was founded in the late 1950s by the current Tijaniyya *khalif*-Général Shaykh Ahmed Tidiane Sy who, in December 2012, took over the Tijaniyya supreme leadership following the death of the late *Khalif*, Sëriñ Mansour Sy (1925-2012). The movement was created in a context of “intra-familial struggles and political activism” which essentially defines it as politico-religious.

This foundational context presents two major reasons which caused Sy to form the DMWM. On one hand, the movement was a response to a sequence of leadership crises following the founder’s failed attempts to take over the supreme leadership of Sy Tijaniyya – first in 1957 and then 1997. In such a context of political struggle, the creation of the DMWM was meant to help make up for the lost battles of leadership. In this respect, the DMWM provided a new and suitable space for the development of an ‘independent’ religious authority. In this respect, it would help the Shaykh expand and
consolidate his authority among the Senegalese Tijaniyya following. On the other hand, the movement was clearly an independent political extension of the Tijaniyya tarixa. In his 2011 Gamu speech, the shaykh states that the movement was created, in part, to support French General and statesman Charles De Gaulle. This inscribes in the context of the 1958 referendum during which De Gaulle needed electoral support from Senegalese voters in his attempt to maintain the French colonies in the Communauté Francaise (French Community). In the end, the DMWM emerges as a de facto political and religious movement.

Under Senghor, although Shaykh Ahmed Tidiane Sy would openly disagree with the government’s secularist policies, he had compromised with the state in many occasions in exchange for political favors which, in part, helped develop his segment of Tijaniyya. Sy’s successful (although short-term) collaborations with Senghor earned him a position of ambassador, which financially and politically supported the growth of the DMWM.

In the 1970s-80s, Sëriñ Moustapha Sy, son of Shaykh Ahmed Tidiane Sy, took over the leadership of the movement. It became one of the most well organized Islamic movements in Senegal and began to promote Islamic revivalism in modern ways. Yet, there has not been major changes regarding the movement’s politicization. Today the DMWM continue to invest in both Islamic and political activities. Its Islamic wing is very active and celebrates various Islamic events such as the yearly L’Université du Ramadan (The University of Ramadan), Gamu, Tamxarit (or Muslim New Year), Islamic conferences among other things. The hybrid agenda of the movement makes it hard to
simply reduce it to an Islamic movement. It is *de facto* political as well, and its involvement in politics is also what essentially defines it as a reformist movement. By forming a political party, the first DMWM leader sought to promote a new vision of Islam and politics by ‘breaking’ the long silence of the *tarixas*.

In sum, Senegal is home to a diverse Muslim community where the dominant Sufi *tarixas* have progressively learned to flourish under a secular state. Politicization of the *tarixas* and their development of peculiar Sufi aspects caused the rise of Islamic reformist movements whose major goal was to establish ‘orthodox’ Islam and a more Islamic state. Failure of the Islamic reformist groups is mostly due to the salience of the Sufi *tarixas* and the determination of the Senegalese state to build and consolidate a secular state. In the meantime, in most *tarixas*, the central authority, or the *Khalïfa-Général*, was ‘confronted’ with the emergence of new poles of Sufi authority. For now, it is just interesting how, in Senegal, expansion of Sufi lineages, leadership quarrels and politicization of the *tarixas* have led to the fragmentation of religious authority and the emergence of *tarixa*-based political parties.

*Fragmentation of the Senegalese Sufi Authority and the Multiplicity of Ndïgıëls*

Religious authority within the Senegalese *tarixas* is not monolithic. Overtime, the expansion of the Sufi families, the quarrels of leadership and the increased politicization have caused the fragmentation of the *tarixas* into different segments of power which coexist with the *khalïfa-Général*. Most of the *tarixas*, in fact, are characterized by the emergence of distinct segments (or ‘factions’) of authority which remain independent from the supreme leadership, or the *Khalïf-Général*, in many ways. This created
secondary poles of authority, or ‘peripheral leadership,’ within the *tarixas* and whose individual political interests often conflict with those of the supreme leadership. Peripheral Sufi leaders in Senegal include many charismatic Sufi *shaykhs* who, throughout time, have been able to gather important numbers of Sufi followers, or *taalibés*, who directly submit to their command, or *ndigèl*. Although most peripheral *shaykhs* recognize the supreme authority, the *Khalif-Général*, of the affiliated *tarixa*, they do not forcibly submit to the latter’s *ndigèl*, the central one. At the level of political involvement, this fragmentation caused the emergence of two types of electoral *ndigèls* within the *tarixa* structures. The central *ndigèl* issued by the *Khalif-Général* on one hand, and the peripheral *ndigèl* issued by the segment leaders, or peripheral *shaykh*, on the other.

How does the first factor, expansion of Sufi families, lead to the fragmentation of religious authority within the Senegalese *tarixas*? In Senegal, Sufi lineages differ from one *tarixa* to another. And each Sufi lineage is formed by large families in which the *shaykhs* compete for authority. Qadiri families include *Shaykh* Sidiya’s descendants in Dakar and *Shaykh* Bu Kunta’s family based in Ndiassane. Tijani lineages are numerous and include the Sy, Taal, Niass, Ba, Barro and other families based in different regions in Senegal. The Murid lineage includes families of *Shaykh* Ahmadu Bamba in Touba, his brother Mame Thierno’s family in Darou Mousty, and other families based in Dakar and Mbacké. Finally, the Laayen Sufi lineage is mostly composed of families which descend directly from Seydina Issa Laaye, the founder.
Such expansions of Sufi lineages constitute, indeed, a factor which fuels the growth of internal segments of authority within the four major Senegalese tarixas. Qadiriyya and Laayeen, respectively the oldest and youngest tarixas, are the least affected by this family-driven segmentation. Early expansion of Qadiriyya in West Africa created different poles of Qadiri authority in Mauritania, Senegal, and beyond. The subsequent segmentation of the Qadiriyya authority characterized the Senegalese Qadiris community as well. Today, a great majority of Senegalese Qadiri submit to the Qadiri khalif-Général in the city of Ndiassane, while a smaller fraction pays allegiance to a Qadiri authority of Mauritania. As for the Laayeen, no major family expansion seems to cause segmentation within the tarixa. As a result, the Laayen authority is still quasi centralized and is based in the Dakar village of Yoff. Expansion of Murid families has caused the development of different poles of authority, especially in the Western-central region of Senegal. Yet, despite the leadership quarrels which characterized the tarixa in the past, almost all Murid families submit to the Murid central authority based in the holy city of Touba.

Tijaniyya is the largest tarixa and has more segments of authority than any other Muslim Brotherhood in Senegal. The spread of Tijani families in the past helped expand the order in Senegal and beyond. At the end of Al-hajj Umar Taal’s Caliphate in the 1890s, Al-hajj Malick Sy (1855-1922) became one of the torch-bearers of Tijaniyya in Senegal and continued Taal’s Sufi teachings. His final establishment in Tivaouane – 108 Km North-east of Dakar – in 1902 turned the place into a holy city and capital of Tijaniyya in Senegal where taalibés from different parts of the world come for Siyaar
(visits to the saints) and to celebrate *Gamu* (the birthday of Prophet Muhammad). In the meantime, branches of Al-hajj Umar Taal’s family established themselves in different places in Senegal (cities of Dakar and Louga) and in Mali where Tijani followers also go perform Siyaar for and *Gamus*.

Ceerno Seydou N. Taal (c.1880-1980) established the Taal *Khalifa* in Senegal to which even members of the Taal family outside Senegal submit. In Kaolack – 185 Km Southeast of Dakar – one of Al-hajj Malick Sy’s contemporaries, Abboulaye Niass established a strong branch of Tijaniyya. The latter grew even stronger with the rise of his son *Shaykh* Ibrahima Niass’s foundation of the holy city of Madina Baye, in Kaolack. The Niass Tijaniyya is the largest Sufi branch in West Africa and has large numbers of followers in Nigeria, Niger and in many Western countries. Last but not least is the Tijaniyya branch of Madina Gounass, Tambacounda – 462 Km East of Dakar – most of whose followers are Pulaar speakers – *Fuutankoobe* and *Ngaabunkoobe*. As such large families grow in Senegal, the central authority of the *tarixa’s Khalif-Général* becomes confronted with power counter-balance. Most Sufi families which do not have legitimate claim to the central authority of the order have created their own individual poles of influence in different localities.

The second factor which causes the fragmentation of Senegalese Sufi *tarixas* is the quarrels of leadership. This phenomenon which has characterized almost all the *tarixas* usually involves Sufi families that are in a position to inherit the supreme leadership. As stated earlier, access to the supreme Sufi title, or *Khalifa Général*, is based on masculinity, blood-line and age. Such traditional convention of leadership inheritance
seems to have made succession within the *tarixas* more restricted and easier. However, such criteria do not solve the problem of inheritance everywhere and at all times. In some cases, some *shaykhs* claim lawful inheritance to the *Khalîfâ Général* regardless of age. This often results in intra-familial quarrels and requires extraordinary councils for solutions to be found.⁶⁶ In the past, such leadership quarrels characterized the Tijani Sy, Niass and Taal families and the Mbacké leading families of the Muridiyya.

Members of the Sy family based in Tivaouane are the traditional heirs of the supreme authority of Tijaniyya in Senegal. Beginning in the 1950s, major quarrels of leadership struck and fragmented the Sy Tijaniyya authority first in 1957 when current Tijani *Khalîf-Général* opposed his uncle Abdou Aziz Sy’s rise to the *Khalîfâ* in vain.⁶⁷ In 1997, the same story repeated with the same *Shaykh* Ahmed Tidiane Sy. This time he was opposed to his older brother and late *Khalîfâ Général* Mansour Sy who finally became and remained *Khalîf* until his death in December 2012.⁶⁸ In the end, *Shaykh* Ahmed Tidiane Sy’s repeated failures to rise to the supreme leadership, in part, motivated his investment in the *Daayirat al-Moustarchidîn Wal Moustarchidati*, an Islamic and political movement which significantly contributed to securing the legitimacy and authority of the *shaykh*.

In 1920s, similar quarrels of leadership also marked the Muridiyya *tarîxa* twice. First in 1927 between *Shaykh* Anta Mbacké and his nephew Muhammedu Moustapha Mbacké (Ahmadu Bamba’s eldest son), and then in 1945 between *Shaykh* Gaindé Fatma (Moustapha’s eldest son) and his uncle Sëriñ Fallou Mbacké. In 2007, the same issues of leadership marked the Taal lineage following the death of Ceerno Muntaga Taal, the
late Khalif of the Taal segment of Tijaniyya. Thus, while expansion of Sufi families causes fragmentation of tarixas at the national level, leadership quarrels tend to segment the leading Sufi families which usually belong to the tarixa founder’s bloodline.

The third factor which contributes to the fragmentation of the tarixas religious authority is politicization. As stated earlier, politics began to characterize the Senegalese tarixas after 1946 when rural Senegalese were granted French citizenship and the voting right which came with it. As stated earlier, politicization of the tarixas emanated from the fact that rural Sufi orders were brought to collaborate with political leaders who needed the vote of their taalibés. For many Sufi shaykhs, this period opened way for the involvement in patron-client relations and the creation of political parties as well.

The Tijaniyya tarixa was the first to open to direct political participation when Shaykh Ahmed Tidiane Sy transformed his DMWM movement into a political party named Senegalese Solidarity Party (PSS). The PSS is a pure result of politicization which deeply characterized the reformist DMWM in the late 1950s. Politicization of the movement marked Sy’s literal break from the main authority of the Sy Tijaniyya based in the holy city of Tivaouane. Since the formation of the Tijaniyya-based PSS, first in its kind, the fragmentation of the Sy Tijaniyya branch has progressively widened. The DMWM remained a distinct and independent Tijani entity until 2012 when its founder, Shaykh Ahmed Tidiane Sy, became finally the Khalif-Général of the Tijaniyya.

In the Muridiyya order, politicization has had similar effect on the fragmentation of the Murid religious authority. The 2004 foundation of Shaykh Modou Kara Mbacké’s Party of God’s Truth (now Party of Truth and Development) marked the emergence of an
‘independent’ political authority within the Muridiyya tarixa. Shaykh Bethio Thioune, a Murid ‘faction’ leader, has replicated the same political ‘independence’ through his open involvement in patron-client relations. In the last decade, he has been publicly issuing electoral ndigëls to members of his Murid faction, or the Càntakun, to vote for secular political parties. Independence of his ‘factions’ emanates from the fact that his actions were undertaken in total disconnection with the main Murid authority based in the city of Touba. Such involvement of Murid shaykhs in issuing peripheral electoral ndigëls has been subjected to a sharp criticism from Murids themselves. For Murid scholar A. A. Mbacké, for instance, the phenomenon is nothing but “traffic of influence” (my translation).  

In sum, one assumes that such politico-religious tendencies prove the nonexistence of one monolithic authority within Tijaniyya and Muridiyya tarixas to which all their respective followers would submitt. Instead, beside the supreme authority of the Khalif, there are many segments power which can also influence the Senegalese public sphere and its electoral outcomes.

Understanding these segments of authority within the tarixas provides a better comprehension of how ndigël is issued and which taalibé-voter follows whose ndigël. Understanding of segmented ndigëls is also crucial to capturing the dynamics of the religion-politics nexus in Senegal as well as in the diaspora. Fragmentation of the Sufi authority is also replicated in the Senegalese diaspora. For instance, different religious associations, or daayiras, which are affiliated to tarixa segments of authority exist in Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Gabon, United States, France, Italy, Belgium and other countries as well. Members of those daayiras pay their primary allegiance to a segment
or ‘faction’ leader, not directly to the *Khalif-Général* of the broader *tarixa*. As a result, in the political context, the peripheral *ndigël* remains even more present than the central *ndigël*. Such a trend is mostly due to the fact that most *Khalif-Générals* have been progressively distancing themselves from politics in the last decades because political participation seemed to threaten their legitimacy. In the meantime, the charismatic *shaykhs* who constitute the actual periphery of the Senegalese Sufi authority seem to take over the political wing of the *tarixas*.

The subsequent multiplicity of *tarixa* segments has increased the number of electoral *ndigêls* issued during elections. Many Senegalese politicians understand the segment leaders have the authority to issue electoral *ndigêls* which, although coming from the same *tarixa*, remain independent from and disconnected to each other. As a result, two segments or ‘factions’ within one *tarixa* may pay allegiance to two different political parties. In the same way, one *taalibé*-voter may not vote for a *tarixa*-based political party affiliated to her/his *tarixa* and follow the *ndigël* of his segment or ‘faction’ leader to vote for another secularist party. But there is little chance that the same *taalibé*-voter votes for a *tarixa*-based political party affiliated to a *tarixa* different than hers or his. Being able to gather support from such conflicting tendencies remains crucial to electoral victory. In his study of electoral trends in Senegalese, Schaffer (1998) makes a remark in Senegalese politics that, “The political survival of national leaders depends upon their ability to create a personal power base among competing clan leaders.”70 In almost the same way, electoral success of Senegalese national leaders depends, in part, upon the ability to win the support of the different religious “clans.” Consequently, most
politicians ensure that they remain in good terms and maintain good clientelistic relations with as many Sufi *shaykhs* as possible, especially during periods of elections.

Such political realities in Senegal are replicated among Senegalese diasporic voters as well. In fact, many political leaders visit Senegalese immigrant communities in Europe, the United States and in other foreign countries in an attempt to preserve good relations and generate support. In the same way, many political Sufi *shaykhs* such as Modou Kara, Moustapha Sy, Mansour Sy Djamil and Bethio Thioune make frequent international trips in order not only to conduct spiritual visits, but also to renew and consolidate the political contact with the diasporic *taalibés*-voters. Also, the same *shaykhs* who founded the *tarixa*-based political parties are in constant search of political legitimacy and support in the diaspora.

*The Birth of ‘Tarixa-based’ Political Parties*

Before discussing this wave of political Islam in Senegal, it is important first to explain what I mean by a ‘*tarixa*-based’ political party. According to article 4 of the Senegalese constitution, a political party can only be secular with no ethnic, linguistic or geographical bias before it can be legalized. In other words, *de jure* Islamic political parties are banned. Thus, given that the ‘*tarixa*-based’ parties in question are constitutionally legal, they can only be secular, at least on the paper. The use of the expression *tarixa*-based is to represent a political party founded on the Senegalese constitutional grounds of secularism but whose membership is essentially constituted by members of the affiliated *tarixa*. Leaders of *tarixa*-based political parties claim usually to be secularist. Yet, it is difficult for the electorate to perceive them as simply politicians
like others. In most cases, their social and religious statuses as *shaykhs* and descendants of revered Sufi precursors are solidly engraved in their political profiles. As a result, while *tarîxa*-based political parties pull most of their supportive electorate from the affiliated *tarîxa*, they also face a lot of difficulties to convince the non-Muslim electorate and other voters who do not belong to the *tarîxa* they are affiliated. Today, many similar political parties exist in Senegal and compete for the political power.

About three decades after the foundation *Shaykh* Ahmed Tidiane Sy’s PSS, *tarîxa*-based political parties of this kind were launched by Muslim leaders. The first attempt was in 1991 when a group of *arabisants*, or Arabist scholars, lead by Cheikh Oumar Tall founded the Party for Liberation and Islamic Democracy (*Parti pour la libération et la démocratie Islamique*-Pldi). But the party was not legalized because of its Islamic bias. In 1996, Cheikh Bamba Dièye founded the Front for Socialism and Democracy/Union for Justice (*Front pour le socialisme et la démocratie/Bennoo Jubël*-Fsd/Bj). Despite the prominence of Dièye’s Islamic profile, the party was legalized because it conformed to the constitutional conditions of secularism. The party still exists and has completely lost its Islamic character since the death of its founder who is now replaced by his son, Cheikh Abiboulaye Dièye.

In the following years, many *shaykhs*, mostly from the Tijaniyya and Muridiyya *tarîxas*, abandoned indirect politics and personally engaged in the political arena by creating their own political parties. Some *shaykh*-party leaders benefit from their blood affiliation with Sufi founders. To some extent, this confers on them a political privilege. *Shaykh* Modou Kara, for instance, is the grandson of Mame Thierno Birahim Faty
Mbacké, the younger brother of the founder of Muridiyya. Similarly, Sëriñ Moustapha Sy is the great-grandson of Al-hajj Malick Sy, founder of the Tijaniyya.71

In February 1998 Moustapha Sy, the second leader of the DMWM movement and son of Shaykh Ahmed Tidiane Sy, founded the Party for Unity and Rally (Parti de l’unité et du rassemblement – Pur). The Shaykh intended to participate in the 2000 presidential election but suddenly withdrew his candidacy at the last minute. In 1999, a young Baay Faal Shaykh named Sëriñ Ousseynou Fall founded the Citizens’ Movement (Mouvement des citoyens-Mdc).72 In August 2000, Ahmet Khalifa Niass founded the Patriotic Alliances Front (Front des alliances patriotiques-Fap). In October 2000, Imam Mbaye Niang founded the Reform Movement for Social Development (Mouvement de la réforme pour le développement social-Mrds). Sëriñ Mamoune Niass founded his People’s Rally (Rassemblement du peuple-Rp) in 2002. In 2004, Murid Shaykh Modou Kara founded the Parti de la Verité de Dieu (PVD) following his leadership of the Murid movement named Diwan Silk al-Jawahir fi-Akhbar Sagharir (Diwan). Again on the Tijani side, Seriñ Mansour Sy Djamil who engaged in politics since the 1970s finally established One Day will Come (“Bes Du Ñakk”) in 2007. In the same year, Abdou Samath Mbacké established the African Movement for Social Renovation (Mouvement Africain pour la Renovation Social-MARS), a movement which has been active since 2005.73

Some of these politico-religious leaders call for radical political reforms. In Samath Mbacké’s inaugural speech, for instance, there is an apparent sense of Islamic radicalism.

“Notre parti compte prendre des mesures radicales dans tous les domaines pour
réconcilier le Sénégalais avec lui-même ... Il faudra rompre avec le modèle produit par l’école occidentale” (Ibid.).74 In this statement, the Shaykh promotes a return to Senegalese tradition and Islamic values, which Samath Mbacké believes can occur only through a rupture with the Western school. Such an anti-Western radical position is reminiscent of the failed Islamist rhetoric promoted by the UCM, *al-Falah* and JIR in the 1970s and 80s. In sum, *tarixa*-based political parties have a significant presence in the Senegalese political arena. Yet very few have so far attempted to run for presidential elections. By not running for presidency, most *shaykh* party leaders end up having to remain political clients supporting the political leaders in exchange for money and other political advantages *tarixa*-based. After analyzing the different factors which cause the fragmentation of the Senegalese Sufi authorities and the birth of *tarixa*-based political parties, now I discuss the relationship between democracy and *ndigël*.

*At the Crossroads of Democracy and *Ndigël*

*Ndigël* is a Wolof word which literally means a command or also an order. The noun derives from the verb *digël*, meaning to issue a command or an order (to someone). In the Senegalese Sufi context, the concept *ndigël*, like *njébbël*, constitutes one crucial element in the very existence of the *tarixa*. This is truer in the famous Wolof saying which goes, “*taalibé ndigël*” (a disciple submits to the command).

Even from a superficial understanding of the concepts of democracy and electoral *ndigël* (a voting command), one can conclude that the implications of individual freedom in the first dismiss the second. Almost similarly, the realm of a political *ndigël*, given its implications of political submission, fails to accommodate the key principles of the first.
However, summarizing the problem in this way may seem a bit simplistic or even reductionist. Thus, for a deeper analysis of this ‘antipathy,’ it is important to study the concepts of democracy and *ndigêl* at much deeper levels. Beforehand, let me attempt, first, to provide a definition of democracy and how its implications have evolved over time.

First of all, to define democracy, one must confront the issue of the universalization of the concept, which, in part, has made it even more difficult to tell what it really means. The history of political science teaches that different definitions of the concept have come to quite different conclusions depending on what study approaches are considered or what variables have been prioritized. Already in 1762, Rousseau wrote, “A prendre le terme dans la rigueur de l’acception, il n’a jamais existé de démocratie, et il n’en existera jamais.” [If we take the term in the strict sense, there has never been a real democracy, and there never will be.] Of course, Rousseau was speaking of democracy in terms of equal distribution of authority among the people, which he believed was impossible. Rousseau’s perception makes democracy a ‘utopic’ ideal to which polities can only aspire. In the nineteenth century, though, many social science scholars began to focus their attention on universal suffrage.

At this point, satisfactory electoral participation and its implications have become major elements in the definition of democracy. For instance, Alexis de Tocqueville commends what he calls an American democracy in these terms, “I have the chance to observe its [universal suffrage] effects in various places and among races of men whom language, religion, or customs turn into virtual strangers to each other, in Louisiana, as
well as in New England, in Georgia as in Canada.” In admiring post-colonial America’s electoral democracy, the French lawyer not only emphasizes universal suffrage as a key element for the establishment of a democratic government, but he also shows how America’s electoral system had outdistanced European monarchies in terms of political freedom and electoral participation.

Focus on universal suffrage as a key element of democracy continued to prevail throughout the twentieth century. However, attention was more focused on the inclusive and participatory aspects of elections. In his 1942 book, Joseph A. Schumpeter presents democracy as a specific “method” which facilitates decision making. In reference to the same method, Schaffer writes, “In specific terms, this method involves the selection of leaders through competitive elections.” Schumpeter’s definition of democracy later influenced many political scientists although some did believe it was insufficient. Today, while some contemporary political scientists such as Samuel Huntington and Robert Dahl go on to include deeper electoral details in the definition of democracy, others like Frederick Shaffer argue that, on top of “electoralism,” a democratic government is the one which serves for the purpose it was elected. Such an emphasis on the purpose of elections is well highlighted in Schaffer’s own words, “Democracy, after all, is a concept that encompasses both purpose and institution. It is used to refer to both political ideals and a set of institutions designed to realize these ideals.” For Schaffer, whether an elected government is democratic or not depends on whether it operates in accordance with the will of the governed or not. In contrast, Robert Dahl defines a government as democratic only if it is elected “through fair, honest, and periodic elections.” Thus,
unlike, Schaffer’s, Dahl’s definition seems not to care much about the aftermath of elections. Such a definitional contrast constitutes one challenge in establishing the actual meaning of democracy.

Despite such contradictions, some researchers have sought to make the concept democracy more encompassing and inclusive. In Samuel Huntington’s thin definition of democracy, for instance, he itemizes key elements which include “effective participation,” “voting equality,” “enlightened understanding,” “control of the agenda” and “inclusion of adults.” For Huntington, these elements altogether help guarantee democracy at the procedural level. In the end, although Dahl’s and Huntington’s procedural definitions of democracy slightly differ from Shaffer’s idealistic definition, all of them look at universal suffrage as a necessary pathway towards the establishment of a democratic political system.

Sharing the idea that achievement of democracy lies, in part, in the electoral procedures, Shaffer writes, “As an ideal, democracy has something to do with the goal of people participating meaningfully in their own governance, a goal that democratic theorists have closely associated with other ideals…including autonomy…equality…civic-mindedness…and moral and intellectual development” [stress mine]. Here, meaningful participation, “autonomy” and “civic-mindedness” imply an informed consent and a voluntary choice which, ideally, no cultural, religious or social practice or belief would hinder. At this particular point, the issue of political ndigêl comes into play. Also, at this level, it matters to argue, as Dahl would certainly do, that the democraticness of an elected government is not determined by whether it earned
supportive electoral *ndigêls* or not. Procedurally, a *ndigêl*-supported government might be democratic as long as the *taalibés*-voters went themselves to the booths and casted their own votes. Instead, the undemocraticnes of *ndigêl* lies in its very practice. In fact, by following a voting command, the vote of the *taalibé*-citizen loses all the above democraticness criteria, namely “autonomy,” “civic mindedness,” “voting equality,” “enlightened understanding”, and so on.

Furthermore, undemocraticness of the electoral *ndigêl* also stems from the fact that it does not promote religious pluralism, a key element in the consolidation of democracy. How does this happen? Today, for instance, some Senegalese intellectuals who support the electoral *ndigêl* (particularly the central one) argue that it is similar to other interest-based political practices which are very common in countries widely believed to be democratic. For A. Aziz Mbacké, for instance, *lobbying* in the United States has become quite a political tradition which, like the electoral *ndigêl*, consists of generating support for one political candidate in an attempt to preserve the economic, social or political interests of one particular group of individuals. Yet, despite the commonalities that both the Senegalese electoral *ndigêl* and the American *lobbying* are interest-driven and corruptive, the two practices also have major differences worth considering.

One is that while lobbyists may rely on their own financial power to bribe and influence government’s decision-making, the Sufi *shaykh*-client relies mostly on quite a blind cooperation of his following in order to earn financial revenues or other privileges. Another difference between the two practices is that religion, Islam and the *tarixa* in particular, remain the fundamental constants in the electoral *ndigêl*, while in the
American system religion is not forcibly the common denominator. Instead, what seems to be more of a priority is the immediate financial, economic or political concerns of the lobbyists (or the group). Thus, the Islam-based or tarixa-driven electoral ndigél tends to be less suitable for the promotion of religious pluralism than the lobbyist groups which can gather individuals of different religious affiliations. Once more, the electoral ndigél cannot be democratic in that it is bound to segregate against the religious affiliations of the non-Muslim Senegalese.

Most of the research on the Senegalese Sufi Brotherhoods, or tarixas, tends to focus more on the controversial political ndigél without paying much attention to what historically constituted the major functions of ndigél in the development of the tarixa. Abdou A. Mbacké, a Senegalese Murid intellectual, researcher, essayist and shaykh defines ndigél as, “an instruction or a recommendation issued by an empowered religious authority” to the followers of the order (my translation).\(^8^5\) He further traces the original context of ndigél back to the Arabic word “Amr.” Amr is many times repeated in the Qur’an and means a command (from the (chosen) leader).\(^8^6\) Mbacké insists that Amr is a command issued in the context of building the City of God (“la Cité de Dieu”) according to the “divine principles” (my translation).

In the Senegalese Sufi context, the “City of God” could be, for instance, each one of the four major Sufi communities – Qadiri, Tijani, Murid and Laayen. According to Mbacké, an electoral ndigél is valid only if it is “corporative.”\(^8^7\) The corporative ndigél emanates from the Khalif-Général who symbolizes unity within the order and contributes to the development of the Sufi-Muslim community. Nevertheless, the confinement of
(corporative) ndigël within the Islamic domain defines it as essentially non-pluralistic. In a religiously diverse country like Senegal, the prominence of Islam-driven ndigês in politics may undermine secularism, religious pluralism and the freedoms of non-Muslims.

To sum up, two major factors define the electoral ndigël as undemocratic. On one hand, the practice systematically stifles the taalibé-voters’ expression of their political convictions. In following an electoral ndigël, the only political preference which prevails is that of one citizen, the Sufi leader. How such tendencies handicap democracy is well expressed in Huntington terms, “if some members are given greater opportunities than others for expressing their views, their policies are more likely to prevail.” On the other hand, most electoral ndigês, given that they are fundamentally Islam-driven, do not tend to encourage religious diversity, which might constitute a major hindrance towards building long-lasting democratic institutions.

Meanwhile, another problem remains to be tackled. In fact, although we have come to see that ndigël contradicts the spirit of democracy, it is not made illegal by the Senegalese constitution. The Title I of the Senegalese constitution which defines the political parties emphasizes but the fact that political parties must be secular. It does not outlaw the practice of issuing electoral ndigël. Although this may seem a constitutional ‘negligence,’ there are two major reasons which explain why such ambiguity has prevailed. On one hand, many Senegalese political leaders relied and still count on the crucial support of the religious ‘clans’ to win elections. On the other hand, what seems to be a constitutional ‘negligence’ could be predicated on the anticipated difficulty to
enforce a law. It would be quite problematic to place limitations on the *shaykh-taalibé* private relationship, a relationship which is, indeed, part of a religious identity, a civil right.

With such factors in consideration, the issue of electoral *ndigêl* becomes a dilemma which only the *taalibés*-citizens seem to be better positioned to solve. In 1988, 1999, 2000 and lately in 2012, many *shaykhs* have seen their electoral *ndigêls* unproductive as they were scornfully disobeyed by *taalibé*-voters. Although such changes in political attitude result significantly from political consciousness at the local level (Senegal), some specialists of Senegalese politics such as Linda Beck believe that Senegalese expatriates might have an important role to play in bringing in political change. Such an argument is worth considering, especially in a context where Senegalese expatriate citizens, due to their exposure to more secular political cultures (in foreign countries), seem more and more committed to dissociating religion with politics.
CHAPTER 2: MIGRATION, TRANSNATIONAL SUFISM AND POLITICS AMONG THE MÓÓDU-MÓÓDUS

A History of Senegalese Migration to the US

Throughout the last five centuries one can identify different waves of Senegalese Muslims’ migration towards the Americas. Sylviane Diouf’s well-documented *Servants of Allah* situates the first wave at the times of slavery which saw the forced displacement of Muslim war captives to the Americas. Most of the Muslim slaves who boarded from the Senegalese coast were captured during inter-kingdom and *Tubenan (Jihad)* wars that swept pre-colonial West Africa and which opposed Muslim statesmen to non-Muslim kingdoms.

Diouf further argues that enslaved Muslims from what is now Senegal had remained Muslim for many decades even under the yoke of slavery and the christenizing attempts of Christian pastors. Furthermore, for many West African slaves Islam became a common identity which bridged ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences and later even triggered slave rebellions. In this particular historical context, Islam was considered “an African religion” and became part of an African identity. Thus, Muslim identity helped many slaves survive the horrors of slavery by allowing them to foster a spiritual sense of community among them. As I argue in the lines below, it seems that a similarly strong spiritual sense of community has developed among modern-day Senegalese móódu-móódus whose migration to the United States began in the 1980s.

According to Kane and Diouf, the term móódu-móódu derives from the name of the first Murid Khalif-Général, Shaykh Muhammu Mustafa Mbacké who took over the
leadership of the Muridiyya tarixa after Ahmadu Bamba, his father, passed away in 1927. The khalif was also called Móódu Mustafa Mbakke (Wolof spelling) and many Murid followers gave his name, Móódu, to their children and grandchildren. As Kane rightly points, one reason for this was cultural. In fact, Senegalese people strongly believe that when a child is named after a virtuous person, he or she will inherit seven jikko (or virtues) from the turondo (or godfather, godmother). In the same way, Murid taalibés who name their children after the virtuous Móódu Mustafa believe strongly that their kids will be blessed with any of the shaykh’s seven jikko.

The name Móódu spread in the western-central regions of Senegal where the Muridiyya developed first. Throughout time, the term móódu-móódu grew from being a Murid peculiarity to a general representation of “not too well educated Senegalese, a disciple of a Sufi shaykh of rural origin with some experience in migration, and particularly international migration.” Today, almost every Senegalese international migrant employed in wage-labor or unskilled jobs is called móódu-móódu (or móódu) regardless of their regional, ethnic, linguistic or professional background back home. The móódu most of whom, in general, are well educated in Islamic knowledge and Senegalese Sufi literature have made an uncontested contribution to the “globalization” of the Senegalese tarixas. Before tackling those patterns of globalization, first, it is useful to briefly discuss the dynamics of internal migration (or rural exodus) and external (international) migration in Senegal.

The beginning of Senegalese modern-day migration flux dates back to the aftermath of World War I. Since that period, the Senegalese migration has taken two patterns. The
first pattern is rural exodus, a phenomenon which saw many young countrymen overpopulate the Senegalese urban centers. The second pattern is the continuity of the first and was characterized by the international migration of most of those who came to the cities from the country. Major causes of rural exodus included agricultural crises, joblessness, and drought which increased poverty in the countryside. Diouf identifies three waves of Senegalese migration based on these migration patterns. Rural exodus characterizes the two first waves. One occurred between World War I and World War II. The second which began after 1946 was more important and was characterized by massive movements of Murid and Tijani taalibés towards big cities such as Dakar, Thiés, Rufisque, Diourbel, Kaolack and Saint-Louis. In the new destinations, the emigrants – móódu in Wolof and danniyanke in Pulaar – have been able to create different neighborhoods which tend to reflect their respective (rural) Sufi affiliations. This migration accelerated the urbanization of both Tijaniyya and Muridiyya tarixas and the expansion of Senegalese Sufi-Muslim authorities.

The third wave of migration corresponds with international migration which began in the 1970s. Many factors triggered this wave. The most outstanding among them include urban overpopulation and underemployment, the worsening of the 1970s drought and the devastating effects of the 1980s Structural Adjustments Programs. The Haalpulaar (Pulaar speakers) – from the northern Senegal region of Fuuta Tooro – were the pioneers of long-distance (international) migration. In the 1970s, Haalpulaar danniyanke and Wolof móódu from different regions of Senegal migrated to many West, central and southern African countries. Primary African destinations included Côte
d’Ivoire, Gabon and Cameroon. From there, many danniyanke and móðus saved money and successfully applied for European and American visas. In the 1980s, the Senegalese Westward migration which had targeted France since the 1960s began to include new destinations in the West especially the United States.

As highlighted by Kane and Buggenhagen, two major events encouraged Senegalese migration to the United States. The first one is the 1989-90 diplomatic crisis between Senegal and Mauritania which caused many ‘Negro-African’ Mauritanian refugees (along the Senegalese side of the Senegal river valley) to apply for asylum permits in the United States. Prior to the 1989-90 crisis, one could hardly distinguish a Senegalese Haalpulaar from a Mauritanian Haalpulaar. The two communities together peopled the Senegalese river valley and formed one ethnolinguistic community which the colonial boundaries sought to disunite in vain. In the post-1989-90, many Pulaar-speaking Mauritanian refugees benefited from US asylum opportunities. In the 1990s Senegalese Haalpulaar took advantage of the situation. Many found Mauritanian refugee cards and successfully applied for asylum in the United States. Today, some of them are US citizens and reside in Columbus, Ohio.

The second factor which facilitated Senegalese migration to the United States is the mediating role played by Senegalese Sufi shaykhs. This is facilitated by the fact that they have taalibés both at home and abroad. The Senegalese Sufi shaykhs play a double role as intermediaries par excellence. While they mediate between the taalibé and God, they also mediate between the taalibé-citizen and the political elite. The first mediation provides a religious and spiritual comfort. The second facilitates access to political
privileges and creates opportunities for economic development. Talking about political privileges, a good number of the 30,000 diplomatic passports issued by ex-President Abdoulaye Wade between 2000 and 2012 went to the client shaykhs, their wives and lieutenants, or Jawriñ.\textsuperscript{108} The financial and political privileges of the shaykh provide him with large opportunities to help his followers migrate to Europe or to the United States. One example is the Murid Shaykh Bethio Thioune. Between 2006 and 2012, he helped many of his taalibés – which includes students and workers – to migrate. His support was either financial or just through his political ‘connections.’\textsuperscript{109}

In sum, Senegalese migration follows three major waves characterized by internal and external patterns. Causes of mobility are many but considering Senegal’s relative sociopolitical peace, it becomes clear that the primary motivations of migration are economic. The several itineraries of Senegalese migrants are segmented and most of them take the United States as number-one target destination. Migration itineraries are uncertain, expensive and very demanding. Yet, at the center of this seemingly endless journey, the migrant taalibés have been able to transport their Sufi identities with them. As a result, they have significantly contributed the “globalization” of Senegalese Sufi orders and the expansion of the religious authority of their shaykhs in ways far removed from any form of fundamentalism.

\textit{Migration and Islam}

Many scholars share that diversity is what best describes Islam in today’s world. Islam as a religion, a culture or a community has witnessed rapid changes most of whose origins can be traced to the effects of international migration. Throughout history, “great
“punctuations” of different degrees have influenced the development of Islam in the Western world, which leads to what Roy calls the “globalization of Islam.”

Events such as President Lyndon Johnson’s 1965 immigration act, the 1967 six-day war, the civil wars in Pakistan and Lebanon, the 1979 Iranian revolution and the 1990 Gulf war have marked a new turn in West-bound migration in general, and migration to the United States in particular.

In the long years spanning the 1970s and 2000s, different waves of Muslim migration have triggered the emergence of a quite ‘different’ West whose political and cultural faces became marked by patterns of Islam. The growing population of Muslims in the West, initially in Europe, generated a good deal of scholarly interest. In the pre-9/11 period, this academic interest developed more in Europe than in North America.

In the pre-9/11 too, the literature on Islam and Muslims in the West looked principally into the sociocultural integration of Muslims and Islamic culture. Yet, in the last decades, the growing population of Western Muslim citizens and the challenges to institutionalize Islam in the West have nurtured radicalized Islamic fundamentalism among them. One should add to this the development of technology, which facilitated the spread of different interpretations of Islam and Islamic ideologies.

To capture such migration-related patterns of contemporary Islam, Roy and Appadurai make use of two concepts. They explain the transnational dimension of Islamic “fundamentalism” as the result of an ongoing “deterritorialization” of Islam and Muslims. In the analysis of both authors, the driving forces of West-bound Muslim migration (mentioned above) have occasioned the emergence of international Muslim
communities that seek to assert their religious rights in a predominantly non-Muslim culture. Insisting on this migration-fundamentalism nexus, Appadurai writes, “Deterritorialization, whether of Hindus, Sikhs, Palestinians, or Ukrainians, is now at the core of a variety of global fundamentalisms, including Islamic and Hindu fundamentalism.” Roy goes even further to introduce the concept of “neofundamentalism” and “neo-brotherhoods.” According to him, neofundamentalism characterizes our present-day “post-Islamist” world. By definition, Roy’s post-Islamism is in contradiction with Islamism. Roy argues that, unlike in Islamism where the main objective is to build an Islamic state, in post-Islamism, “Muslims do not identify with any given nation-state, and are more concerned with imposing Islamic norms among Muslim societies and minorities and fighting to reconstruct a universal Muslim community, or ummah.” Thus, the fact that neofundamentalism does not seek to establish an Islamic state marks a rupture in the evolution of Islamic fundamentalism. In the same way, it also highlights the focus of transnational Islamist movements on the Muslim society rather than the territory.

In this respect, neofundamentalism helps understand the relationship between Islamic fundamentalism and the international migration of Muslims. In the same analysis of deterritorialization, Roy argues that the globalization of Islam causes the emergence of what he calls “neo-brotherhoods” and “New Age religiosity.” According to Roy, “a neo-brotherhood is not simply the offshoot of a traditional tariqat, and is shaped along new lines; it is usually derived from traditional Muslim tariqat, but with some innovations.” As for New Age religiosity, it appears to be characterized by new forms of “syncretic”
spiritualities which tend to insist on the Muslim’s “well-being and happiness” rather than on a “strict compliance with sharia.” Indeed, most of the Senegalese Sufi tarixas seem to fit the definitions of both neo-brotherhood and New Age religiosity in two major ways. One, most of the Senegalese tarixas, which have come to incorporate Senegalese culture, are either born from or spiritually inspired by traditional Sufi orders from either the Middle East or North Africa. Second, none of the Senegalese tarixas or their (internal) segments seems to advocate for a strict implementation of the sharia.

In addition to the neo-brotherhood and New-Age-religiosity aspects of the tarixas, one must emphasize that the latter are not spiritually as syncretic as the Southeast Asian Sufi orders which Roy lists in his argumentation. The transnational membership of the Senegalese tarixas does not tend to incorporate other spiritual practices (from other fields) in its Sufi-Islamic references, teachings and rituals. Plus, despite the powerful forces of globalization, they strive continuously to remain as close as possible to the Sufi tradition in the homeland. Whether in Africa, Europe or North America, the Senegalese expatriate taalibés, especially the Murids and the Tijanis – more numerous – have marked their particularity through Islamic moderation, socio-religious solidarity and an acute sense of entrepreneurship. The development of such a diasporic Sufi-Muslim profile is mostly rooted in Sufi values acquired in Qur’anic schools, or daara, in the homeland. As the expatriate taalibés travel throughout the world, they transplant the same Sufi values in the global destinations where they establish themselves, rather than incorporating what seems to be the transnational ‘global Muslim identity.’
The Móódu-móódu and the Spreading of Sufi Tarixas

The transnationalization of Senegalese Sufism occurs in two major ways. On one hand, various socio-religious elements of Senegalese Sufi identities get transported throughout the world by constantly mobile móódu-móódu. This transnational mobility results, in great part, from the taalibés’ – especially the Murids – involvement in worldwide chains of business, trade and other forms of commodity exchange. On the other hand, Senegalese Sufi identities also spread through remarkable image and reputation carved by the mobile taalibés’ outstanding devotion to education, socio-religious peace and hard work. Each one of these qualities constitutes a reflection of Sufi values promoted in the teachings of Senegalese Sufi precursors.

Globalizing Sufi Elements of Identity

Diouf makes an interesting counterargument against John Hall’s idea that “everything is an outcast in the same way by the global process.” Taking the Murid central locality – Touba – as a manifest spiritual, geographical and spiritual reference for the dispersed Murids, he argues that the Senegalese Murid taalibés “resist [globalization] with their texts, their objects, and Touba…” Diouf emphasizes the centrality of the Murid material culture as a concrete mobile image which is transported throughout the world and always reminds the Murid taalibés of their existential identities and selves. “Texts” include the important volume of literature produced by Ahmadu Bamba and among which the Xasayid (poetry based on the Qur’an) remains the most famous. “Objects” include the famous baay Laat (large embroidered boubous), necklace pictures of shaykhs, prayer beads, lithography, paintings, audio and audiovisual material that most
Murids have with them wherever they are (at home, in business, while walking, etc). “Touba” remains the place, the epicenter which inhabits both hearts and spirits of the Murid migrants. These religious and cultural elements together constitute the Murid essence. It remains constant religious reference and preserves the same Murid identity in different localities of the globe.

The same resistance to the assimilationist globalization is also remarkable among the migrant Tijanis who ethnolinguistically remain more numerous and diverse than the Murids. In Senegal, the Tijanis (of different ethnicities) have appropriated the Moroccan *Jallaba* (long *boubou* topped with a hoody) by making it an integral part of the male dressing style. The *Jallaba* is usually worn with a thick cotton hat which is usually of red, black, white, brown or blue colors. Besides, one segment of the Senegalese Tijanis, namely the Haalpulaar, has quite a few particularities which tend to emphasize their Sufi-Muslim identity almost everywhere. In Columbus, Ohio, for instance, most of the Haalpulaar Tijanis are recognizable by their *boubous* (loose and long suits) and prayer beads in hands during religious gatherings and the performance of Tijani rituals such as the *wazifa* and the *Asru-al-Jumua*.126

Furthermore, the Tijanis *taalibés* also do own copies of Sufi literature produced by *Shaykh* Ahmed Tijani, the founder of Tijaniyya and also by Senegalese Sufis including Al-hajj Umar Taal, Al-hajj Malick Sy, *Shaykh* Ibrahima Niass, and others. Other Senegalese Sufi migrants such as the Laayen also transport similar elements of identity with them in their destination countries. The literature – often recited in different forms of chanting during regular spiritual gatherings – and the objects remain unchanged and
are passed on to the new (international) Sufi adherents – usually converts – who join Islam and the Senegalese transnational Sufi communities in Africa, Europe, America and in Asia. While such a process of cultural mobility consolidates Sufi memory and identity, it also becomes an integral part of a “global phenomenon” which Stoller refers to as “the commodification of culture.” 127

In sum, the development of Senegalese tarixas at the global level occurs through the migrant taalibés’ transplantation of different Sufi elements into global centers. This has increased the visibility of Senegalese Muslims, especially the Murids and explains why the Senegalese tarixas have received such an important attention in the Academia. In this context, affirmation of Islamic identity is rather pacific, which makes it more appealing in a global context of Islamic radicalism.

*Spreading Sufi Ideologies through Peace, Solidarity and Hard Work*

As mentioned earlier, one particularity of the Senegalese Sufi transmigrants is their non-engagement in any form of Islamic fundamentalism in the West. 128 This Muslim particularity results from an important cultivation and display of three major elements of a Sufi Muslim identity which characterize religious, social and economic life of the Senegalese diaspora of taalibés and helped a peaceful “globalization” of Senegalese Sufism.

In this sub-section, I explain how Senegalese Sufi tarixas, especially Muridiyya and Tijaniyya spread and attracted a transnational membership through Islamic moderation, socioreligious solidarity and a unique sense of hard work. First, I explain that Islamic moderation among expatriate taalibés is, indeed, a reflection of the historical moderation
of the Senegalese tarixas. Secondly, I show how the taalibés have been able to developed strong ties of socioreligious solidarity among themselves and with ‘home’ through diasporic daayiras (religious associations) whose success owes a lot to the spiritual assistance of several ‘transnational Sufi shayks.’ Thirdly, I explain how the expatriate taalibés have been able to spread their Sufi orders through an ability to develop an acute sense of hard work and entrepreneurship whose underlying principles remain rooted to homeland Sufi doctrines of work promoted that are well highlighted in the teachings of Senegalese Sufi founders and precursors.

*Spreading Senegalese Sufism through ‘Greater Jihad’*

One particularity of the Senegalese Sufi institutions is they have developed a remarkable commitment to peace and an ability to appease angered masses during times of trouble. For many Senegalese Sufi precursors, the greater Jihad, or one’s struggle against worldly temptations, constitutes the most important war for the Muslim. Greater Jihad is a core component of the Senegalese Sufi ethos. This is exemplified in Ahmadu Bamba’s constant refusal to engage in violent Jihad against both colonizers and non-Muslim West Africans. He insisted that that he would spread Islam through preaching and not through violent Jihad, or minor Jihad. Most of the leading Sufi of his time, namely Al-hajj Malick Sy, Ceerno Seydou Nourou, Shaykh Ibrahim Niass and Seydina Issa Laye embraced the same Islamic pedagogies of peace and, during the colonial period, most of them even instructed their taalibés to abide by the policies of the colonial state.
Such peace-oriented teachings have had a great impact on the attitudes of the expatriate taalibés whose most important creed, at home and in the diaspora, is to remain a ‘good Muslim’ deeply committed to liggéyal Sëriñ bi (working for the shaykh) and not indulging in violence of any kind. Working for the shaykh, in this context, is not a mere commitment to the satisfaction of the material needs of a Sufi guide. The meaning of liggéyal Sëriñ bi expands beyond an exploitative shaykh-taalibé relationship based on the satisfaction of personal interests. In this context, it matters to point that liggéyal Sëriñ bi is nothing more than liggéyal Yàlla (work for Allah) by following the guidance of the shaykh who is seen as a representative of Muhammad on earth and a vessel of God.

Attitudes of most of the transnational taalibés are framed on a sense of liggéyal Sëriñ bi. In situating themselves in this religious context, most of the taalibés strongly believe that only through peace can one serve God, and that service to the shaykh contribute to the development of Islam, the tarixa and the global Muslim community.

‘Diasporic Daayiras’ and the Transnationalization of Senegalese Tarixas

Socio-religious solidarity is a second aspect which also characterizes the Senegalese diaspora of taalibés. It is very common for groups of móódu-móódus to organize themselves in different types of associations in order to better cope with migration challenges most of which are, sometimes, related to the social and religious hostilities of an essentially non-Muslim destination. In response, the migrant taalibés usually engage in setting up both religious and secular associations. Organization of the religious associations basically reflects the traditional structure of the daayira at home. As discussed earlier, in Senegal, the daayira gathers Sufi followers of the same tarixa in a
particular town, city, workplace or school in an attempt to collectively practice their Sufi rituals and practices and also to contribute to the development of the affiliated tarixa.

Contributions of the daayira can be economic, financial and social. The diasporic daayira functions on the same principles and remains a suitable means for migrant taalibés to find mutual security and form a new family far from home. More importantly, the daayira becomes for the diasporic taalibés a socioreligious institution within which a strong sense of solidarity is developed. Cultivation of solidarity within the diasporic daayiras is well expressed in Diouf’s words:

The community imposes on itself norms, values, and regimentation that outline the undisputable contours of the group’s discipline. This discipline grounds the organization of financial relationships among members of the community and the establishment of a trust that is never broken. Social and ritual interaction – the recourse to mystical practices ensuring wealth, health, and success – circumscribe rules of economic exchange…

Diverse Muslim associations, or daayiras, of this kind have been founded in many destination countries where Senegalese migrant taalibés have settled. Those countries include the Gambia, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, United States, etc. In the United States, at least one daayira has been set up in different cities within the following states: Atlanta, Massachusetts, Washington, D.C, California, Michigan, Illinois, California, Maryland, New York, Philadelphia, Ohio, Tennessee, North Carolina, Texas, Rhode Island. Two major factors have facilitated the development of diasporic daayiras most of which were created in the 1980s and 1990s. A first and most important factor is the expatriate taalibés commitment to seek unity and solidarity within a daayira structure that most of them are familiar with. Secondly, the diasporic daayiras also benefit from an important spiritual assistance from several Senegalese transnational
Shaykhs who pay regular visits to the diasporic Sufi community. In this context, it matters to specify two types of transnational shaykhs. One type includes the apolitical shaykhs who do not indulge in politics whatsoever. The other type is composed of political shaykhs who engage in politics either directly by creating their own political parties or indirectly by maintaining patron-client relations with political leaders.

In his study of Senegalese religious associations in the United States, Kane draws a list of daayiras among which the Murid and the Tijani remain the most prominent. Under the spiritual guidance of Murid shaykh Sëriñ Mourtala Mbacké, the Murid daayiras in US have grouped themselves under an umbrella organization named Murid Islamic Community of America (MICA), which is headquartered in Harlem, New York. The Murid expatriate community in America is very active. This has been proved in their success to build a Murid mosque – Masjid Touba – in Harlem, New York City. Kane identifies five types of diasporic Murid daayiras: “a house da’ira (ker) that represents the interest of specific Murid lineage, a women’s da’ira, an independent da’ira, smaller groups called allarba, and, finally, “dissident groups.” These daayiras have distinct memberships and may have minor orientational disparities depending on which Murid shaykh they pay allegiance to and what locality in Senegal they come from. Yet, all diasporic daayiras commonly share two religious references: the spirituality of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba and the holy city of Touba.

Besides the Murids’, Tijani daayiras also flourished in New York. As mentioned earlier, the Senegalese Tijaniyya is formed of different segments of religious authority. This segmentation has replicated itself in the Tijani diasporic daayiras in the United
States. In fact, although all Tijani taalibés observe the same Tijani Sufi rituals and practices – wazifa, Lazim and asru-l-Jumu’a – they belong to different daayiras due to their different sub-tarixa affiliations.

There are three major Tijani diasporic daayiras in the United States which are respectively affiliated to three major lineages pertaining to Senegalese Tijaniyya. First, there are three daayiras all affiliated to the Niass Tijaniyya based in Kaolack, Senegal. One zawiya is based in Atlanta; another one is based in New York. The third is the women’s daayira named Daayira Mame Astou Diankha after Shaykh Ibrahim Niass’s mother. Then, in the 1980s, a second major Tijani daayiras was created by Tijani taalibés affiliated to the Sy lineage based in Tivaouane, Senegal. A third major Tijani daayiras – Galle Shaykh – was formed by Haal Pulaar taalibés who predominantly constitute the Senegalese enclave in Bronx, New York. Although Murid and Tijani diasporic daayiras remain the most prominent in the United States, there is also a presence of other daayiras affiliated to Qadiriyya and Laayen tarixas.

Most of these Sufi diasporic daayiras share common objectives. One of those is to facilitate socioreligious development of the expatriate taalibés living in the diaspora. A second major objective is to mutually help among themselves. A third major objective is to send regular àddiya, or offerings, to their affiliated shaykhs or the khalif-Général of their tarixas. There is a presence of other “All-Muslim associations” in which Senegalese taalibés are also active. These include the Arafat Association for the Pilgrimage to Mecca: Mutual Aid and Development, the daayira Ansarullah and an African Islamic Center famous for its support for African immigrants in general. In sum, if Senegalese
sectarian (Sufi) daayiras have flourished more than others it is because of a profound determination of the móódu- móódu to conserve and propagate their Sufi identities. Yet many transnational Senegalese shaykhs, through their efforts to spread Senegalese Sufi orders, played a crucial role in the formation and development of diasporic daayiras. After having introduced different diasporic daayiras, I discuss how Senegalese transnational shaykhs contributed to their formation and development. In the interest of this study and for a better understanding of the political implications, I identify two different groups of transnational shaykhs. Those ‘apolitical’ on one hand and those directly or indirectly engaged in politics on the other.

Since the 1970s, apolitical Senegalese shaykhs from different Sufi affiliations have travelled the world. Today, some of them have acquired high international Muslim profiles in the world which is, in part, due to a remarkable commitment to peaceful Islamicization and abstention to engage in either direct or indirect politics. One prominent transnational shaykh is the Haalpulaar and Tijani Ceerno Mansur Baro (1925-2007). He belongs to the Tijani lineage in Madina Gounass, locality within the Senegalese central-eastern region of Tambacounda. Ceerno Mansur, as most of his taalibès prefer to call him, is established in the coastal city of Mbour – 59 kilometers East of Dakar – and has an important following in Senegal which predominantly includes Futanke (peoples of Fuuta). He has personally initiated thousands of people into Tijaniyya and has taalibès in the neighboring countries of Gambia, Mali Mauritania and in some other places including Gabon, Côte d’Ivoire France, United States, Cape Verde and the Caribe Islands. Ceerno Mansur played an important role in spreading Islam and
Tijaniyya especially through his diasporic \textit{daakas} held every year in France, Belgium, Germany and some other places.\footnote{In Senegal, \textit{daaka} is a yearly festival which commemorates the departure of Ceerno Mansur’s father, Muhammadou Saydu Ba, to Madina Gounass. Since 1994 the same \textit{daakas} have been ‘transplanted’ into destination countries and allow “migrants to meet together and to socialize away from the routines of everyday life….”\footnote{A second apolitical transnational \textit{shaykh} is Cheikh Abdoulaye Dièye. His preaching of Islam and Bamba’s Sufi teachings began in Senegal but faced many challenges due to his contested legitimacy as a Murid \textit{shaykh}.\footnote{This was, in part, due to his birth – in Saint-Louis, Northern Senegal – to a Muslim family non-blood-related to the Murid Mbacké family of Ahmadu Bamba. Yet, Dièye has been able to rise to prominence through his exceptional character as a cosmopolitan Muslim and a skilled communicator of Bamba’s philosophy of Islam. Finally, Dièye’s success as a Murid \textit{shaykh} followed his successful proselytizing campaigns which garnered a new transnational membership to Muridiyya.}\footnote{The several diasporic \textit{daayiras} he founded in France and in the United States throughout the 1980s and 1990s include the “Khidmatul Khadim” International Sufi school, the Islamic Movement of the Murids of Europe (MIME) and the International Islamic Association for the Support of the Dissemination of Muridiyya in Europe (AIIDME). Interestingly, the most prominent \textit{Khidmatul Khadim} is one of the Murid diasporic \textit{daayiras} Kane calls “dissident groups.” Usually, the latter pay allegiance to none of the Mbacké \textit{shaykhs} and its members believe, like Dièye, that “the authentic heirs}}
to Amadu Bamba are those who truly embody his teachings and sincerely model their behavior on his.” In other words, blood relation to the Sufi founder is not enough to be his spiritual heir as is convention in many Senegalese tarixas. The idea is authentically Murid as Bamba writes in Nahju, “It is, in effect, through knowledge and Worship of God that every eminent man surpasses his peers and in no way through august descent.” By holding onto this position, Khidmatul Khadim seems to challenge the lineage-based appropriation of the Murid authority. Also, Dièye’s international Sufi movement seems to question the religio-political authority of many religious guides whose “shaykhood” is essentially based on descent. Thus, the Murid philosophy of Dièye and his followers embodies an apparent reaction against the localization (or ‘Senegalization’) of Muridiyya. It seems that such a Murid position seeks to de-center the tarixa from its homeland in order to make it more global. These developments – more present among Murid intellectuals – reflect an ongoing internal debate on how legitimacy should be determined and whose ndigël should be followed.

A third apolitical transnational shaykh is the late Sëriñ Mourtala Mbacké, Ahmadu Bamba’s youngest son. His popularity and presence in the Senegalese diaspora earned him the appellation, “ambassador of Muridiyya.” As mentioned earlier, he played an important role in the creation of Murid umbrella organization MICA. Sëriñ Mourtala Mbacké was famous for his frequent trips to Italy, France, the United States and other countries. His involvement in the events held by MICA or its diasporic sub-daayiras is usually oriented towards promoting the Murid Muslim culture and philosophy through talks, sikar, njàng, cànt, etc.
Beside the apolitical transnational shaykhs whose apparent ascetism has almost completely turned away from politics, there is a good number of transnational shaykhs who indulge in politics either directly or indirectly. One of them is Sëriñ Modou Kara Mbacké Noreyni. He is the founder and current leader of the Party of Truth for Development (Parti de la Verité pour le Développement -PVD), a Muridiyya-based political party. Kara is grandson to Mame Ceerno Bïrahim Faty Mbacké, Ahmadu Bamba’s youngest brother and disciple. Kara’s family relation with Ahmadu Bamba – nephew – has been a crucial factor to his legitimation as shaykh within the Murid order. Also determinant in the legitimation of Kara’s religious authority is his symbolic claim to be “Ahmadou Bamba’s General.” In tracing his projects to Bamba’s Islamic creed, Kara successfully frames for himself a suitable space of authority which first begins in an informal religious organization, Diwaan, and then propagates into an entire segment of power within the Murid tarixa.

Symbolic in Sëriñ Modou Kara’s quest of power and legitimacy is his establishment of a special security guard in Senegal. Called “commandos de la paix” (commandos of peace), Kara’s security guard has carved itself an appearance of a ‘little army’ made of his ‘personal’ taalibés. Usually dressed in white or black uniforms, Kara’s ‘soldiers’ parade during important events held by the ‘faction.’ The totality of this politico-religious ‘construct’ has garnered the shaykh an uncontested status of a powerful and influential Murid spiritual guide although his ‘military’ orientations have not been completely minimized by the Senegalese Intelligence department. Kara’s profile remains influential not only in Senegal, but also in Western metropolitan centers where his
taalibés have settled. The presence of the transnational *shaykh* in New York City, United States is one proof of a transnational authority.\(^{153}\)

In Buggenhagen’s depiction of Kara’s visit in New York City, one learns that the personality of the *shaykh* reflects a “moral authority” which commands submission.\(^{154}\) In a further remark on how Sufi authority gets constructed among the Senegalese expatriate diaspora, Buggenhagen writes, “For shaykhs like Kara the visit offered an opportunity to practice qualities of generosity and munificence that would underpin his claim to exalted status.”\(^{155}\) This confers to Kara a significant role in the globalization of Muridiyya through diasporic *daayiras* which pay allegiance to him. In Senegal, Kara’s PVD has existed for almost ten years now but the party has never participated in a presidential election. Nevertheless, in the last twenty years, especially in 1999, 2000 and 2007, the *shaykh* has issued electoral *ndigëls* in favor of different secular political parties. In the end, Kara emerges as a transnational *shaykh* whose particularity stems from his deep straddling of religion and politics. Yet, his unfruitful supports for ex-president Abdou Diouf in 1999 and 2000 have rather slightly undermined his political power of influence.

A second transnational *shaykh* who engages in direct politics is the Tijani *shaykh* Sëriñ Mansur Sy Jamil. He is Muhammadu Mustapha Sy’s eldest son who himself is the eldest son of Ababacar Sy, the first *khalif* of Tivaouane. His lineage and his particular family status (eldest male) granted him the *khalif* title, which remains capital to the legitimation of his religious authority although at a lower level compared to the above mentioned profiles. Yet, Jamil’s particularity stems more from his double-faced personality which seems to reflect Sufi wisdom on one hand and the Western-scholar
profile on the other. He is a well-learnt ndongo daara (student of the traditional Qur’anic school) and a graduate of high-profile Western institutions such as the Sorbonne in Paris and the Polytechnic Central London. As a former president of the Senegalese Students Union in France (AESF), Jamil acquired experience in international associational life long before he officially created a political party. Today, his profile as a transnational shaykh is consolidated by his regular trips to France, Belgium and the United States where he participates in both religious and academic conferences.

For many Tijani taalibés-voters in Senegal and abroad, Jamil’ adaptability to Muslim and Western contexts is an embodiment a political modernity. A modernity which seeks to accommodate traditional Sufi morality within the Western values of democracy. Yet, the ‘hybridity’ of Jamil’s religio-political profile does not seem to be erased. Like other shaykhs, Jamil seems to pull his political legitimacy from the tarixa structure. For instance, throughout his campaign for the 2012 parliamentary elections, the khalif has repeatedly claimed to have received a ndigël to directly engage in politics from the late Tijani Khalif-Général, Sëriñ Mansur Sy. Although Jamil does not openly claim an electoral ndigël issued by the Tijani Khalif-Général to his favor, his televised claims seek to generate an implicit one in order to win the votes of the Tijani electorate. The ‘electoral strategy’ seems to have worked in 2012 since Jamil’s party, Bés Du Ñakk, won four seats at the National Assembly. Jamil’s party holds 6.78 percent of the total seats which is only five seats less than the total seats won by the incumbent majority, PDS. Jamil’s political rise in 2012 seems to contradict the argument that electoral preferences of Senegalese voters are not fundamentally determined by religion. From a general
picture, however, what seems to be Jamil’s 2012 ‘exploit’ (great achievement) – and which contrasts Kara’s and others’ progressive political decline – is, in reality, but a minor reflection of a surviving nostalgia for a Sufi morality rather than an actual generalizable continuity of the influence of religion on Senegalese politics.

A third transnational political shaykh is the Murid Bethio Thioune. He is the spiritual leader of the Càntakun, another ‘faction’ within the Murid tarixa. Bethio is a graduate of the Senegalese prestigious Ecole Nationale d’Administration (Grande Ecole for Training Civil Servants) and pulls his Sufi legitimacy and shaykhood from the fifth Murid Khalif-Général, Sëriñ Saliou Mbacké. Bethio and Dièye have one commonality. Both are Murid shaykhs who do not trace their religious legitimacy from blood-relation with Sufi precursors and had to establish their shaykhood from scratch. As Havard portrays, Bethio’s profile presents a few deficiencies enough to pose challenges to his rise as Murid shakhy.158 Not only does he seem to lack higher Islamic education, but also his Murid expression fails to embody the official version of Bamba’s Sufi teachings. Still, Bethio succeeded where many failed. He has built a strong legitimacy by exploiting his close relations with Sëriñ Saliou Mbacké. Beginning in the 1990s Bethio has surprisingly gathered an important following ranging from uneducated businessmen to intellectuals trained in the Western university. Bethio’s expatriate taalibés have settled countries such as France, Belgium and the United States where his constant visits help expand and consolidate his version of Muridiyya in the diaspora. Bethio’s participation in indirect politics manifests through many patron-client relations he has with leaders of secular political parties.
In the end, one notes that the diasporic daayiras constitute the spiritual extensions of the tarixas in the world and also represent the influential power of the shaykhs to whom the members of the daayiras pay allegiance. In this globalized world, such a Muslim authority is nurtured by the regular visits transnational shaykhs pay to their expatriate talibés. Although all the transnational shaykhs, both political and apolitical, contribute to a pacifist globalization of the tarixas, they have quite different Muslim profiles and agendas. For now, it is important to look at how traditional Sufi doctrines of hard work foster a sense of entrepreneurship among the Senegalese Sexpatriate taalibés in the United States.

*Spreading the Tarixas through Sufi Doctrines of Hard Work*

Appadurai argues that deterritorialization creates “new markets,” new “travel agencies” and other infrastructures that accompany the transmigrants in building an “invented homeland.”\(^{159}\) In other words, displacement of people increases the mobility of goods and services which results from the migrants’ attempts to ‘transplant’ ‘home’ in the destination territory. This reality of migration is very present among Senegalese migrants. In the midst of a capitalist world, the móódis seek continuously to thrive economically by valuing their Sufi doctrinal references. This triggered the emergence of an almost unique type of transnational Muslim whose Muslim identity is also reflected in entrepreneurship and business and does not forcibly follow the constraining mechanisms of capitalism.\(^{160}\) Most of the móódis who have successfully built international business networks find part of their motivational energy from a strong commitment to liggééyal sëriñ bi which, in turn, is based on different sources of guidance constituted by texts and
poems produced by Senegalese Sufi precursors such as Al-hajj Malick Sy and Ahmadu Bamba Mbacké. Thus, to talk about the Senegalese expatriate taalibés’ ‘logic’ of work and business comes down to discussing how the doctrine of work is expressed in the Senegalese Sufi literature.

The Senegalese Sufi doctrines of work, usually modeled on the quest of knowledge (‘ilm in Arabic), constitute a central theme in the Senegalese Sufi literature. The rich and diverse poetry by the Tijaniyya precursor Al-hajj Malick Sy is one example. Aware of the importance of science in human development, he made of teaching and learning a major creed throughout his life. In tirelessly inviting Tijani followers to work hard and seek knowledge, he writes, “Oh youth of this epoch, I invite you to revivify religion through science, respond!” (My translation). He is the first to follow this path by conducting numerous journeys throughout Africa in order to seek knowledge. His Sufi teachings, framed on Al-hajj Umar Taal’s vision, characterized many daaras of the Saint-Louis region – northern Senegal – part of whose former disciples today live in the United States as móódus. A similar depiction of the doctrines of knowledge and work are expressed in Ahmadu Bamba’s Nahju. In the fifth chapter of the collection of poems, the Murid founder writes, “Reduce your sleep, keep away from laziness, limit your time of rest and be serious in your projects.” This call seems to have rung very well among Murid taalibés. As mentioned earlier, one characteristic of Murid “taalibéhood” is commitment to work and to the ndigél of the shaykh as the famous Wolof saying testifies, “taalibé ndigél,” meaning, a disciple follows ndigél.
In Bamba’s vision of human existence, the purpose of life is not simply the acquisition of wealth. It is rather the achievement of faith in God which can only be attained through a continuous struggle based on principles such as justice towards one’s partners (in business), fairness, good collaboration and so on. This perception of hard work and entrepreneurship guides most of the Murid móódu who have built successful businesses in “New York, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Turin, Livorno, Milan, Rome, Paris, Toulon, Lyon, Hong Kong, Berlin, London, Yaoundé and Madrid.”\(^{164}\) Bamba’s insistence on hard work is also present in another poem which reads, “Work as if you would never die, and pray as if you would die tomorrow.”\(^{165}\) His idea of hard work is combined with faith in God. In other words, the labor of the Muslim finds its essence in its contribution to the building of the city of God. In Senegal, Bamba’s call to hard work boosted Senegalese agricultural economy in the colonial period and facilitated the building of the great mosque of Touba. Today, the same call has been echoed in the diaspora where móódu work tirelessly to ensure their quite symbolic contributions to the refinement and maintenance of the largest mosque in sub-Saharan Africa.

Finally, beyond the móódu spirit of entrepreneurship and quest for economic development lies an expansion of Sufi identities whose conquest of new spaces within a globalizing world is becoming more and more real. The particularity of Senegalese workers in the West is that profit-making is not the actual purpose of life struggles as embodied the normal capitalist spirit. Instead, hard work is first motivated by an ambition to symbolically contribute to the building of the City of God. Labor ceases to be something mechanical and becomes defined by faith, which frees the worker from the
constraints of capitalism. Thus, in the continuous effort to reconstruct “home far from home” away from religious fundamentalism, deterritorialization of Senegalese Muslims becomes a driving force for a double-edged social development. On one hand, it fosters cultural diversity; one the other hand, it helps develop new sociopolitical perspectives among the taalibés, which facilitates integration in destination countries and fuels new perspectives capable of nurturing political change back home. Thus, cultivation of Sufi doctrines of work towards a collective socioeconomic development is not synonym to total ignorance of the phenomenon related to the politicization of the tarixas. The migration experience has triggered the emergence of new perspectives which spring from a sociopolitical milieu whose quite specific political implications are shaped by dynamics different from political patterns at home.

**Politics among the Senegalese Diaspora in the United States**

**A Hybridized Citizenship?**

From classical thinkers such as Aristotle, Cicero, Machiavelli and Rousseau to our contemporary twenty-first century thinkers, the definition of citizenship has been subjected to many interrogations and the subsequent divergences have fueled many debates. Defining citizenship is made even more difficult by a context of increased migration following different social and political circumstances. The ensuing deterritorialization of citizenship brings in additional definitional elements which, in the context of globalization, can only increase the complexities of what citizenship means. By deterritorialization of citizenship I mean the displacement of an individual from one country of citizenship to another destination country where s/he may or may not acquire
another citizenship. Depending on different state jurisdictions, the deterritorialized citizens may have to lose their initial citizenship prior to acquiring new citizenship rights in destination countries such as Germany. Other destination countries such as the United States may not force immigrants to swear off their first citizenship although it is recommended.

In both situations the political identity of the deterritorialized citizen is most likely to become hybrid. On one hand, it remains ‘haunted’ by a political memory to which the ‘new citizen’ may still hope to physically return one day. On the other hand, it becomes marked with engraved characteristics of a jurisdictional two-ness: political participation in both ‘home’ and destination countries. Many Senegalese citizens in the United States are still caught in this entangling political net which thus increases the complexity of their political identity. Nevertheless, such hybridity in citizenship does not seem to compromise Senegalese US residents’ participation in Senegalese politics.

In today’s world political and jurisdictional complexities of this kind are frequent and only increase trickiness in telling with perfect certainty who is (and who is not) the citizen of which country. As a result, interconnection between globalization and citizenship has become more obvious. Arguing in this respect, Schattel writes, “When globalization and citizenship are both viewed as interactive, then globalization can be viewed as an open invitation to citizenship and a way of thinking and living within new geographical, intellectual, and moral horizons.” Shattel’s position helps understand, for instance, how common transnational concerns – environment, women’s rights, etc – are being prioritized over the boundaries of the nation-state. Yet despite the fact that
transnational concerns seem to transcend national identities and generate more encompassing and ‘global’ citizenships, no government in the current world seems to promote an idea of ‘international citizenship’ to the detriment of national citizenship.

As a result, although possibly committed to international organizations, present-day nation-states are jealously protecting the validity of national identities and citizenship of their people. Attempts to protect national citizenship are even extended beyond national boundaries. Senegal is one example in this sense. Its government has made constitutional revisions in the early 2000s to allow Senegalese citizens in the diaspora to vote from their destination countries. Today, Senegalese citizens residing in different foreign countries can cast their votes from five foreign electoral colleges or zones established as follows: sub-Saharan Africa, Europe, North America, South America and Asia.

*Politics among Senegalese Citizens in the Diaspora*

The growing number of Senegalese living abroad and of the fact that they constitute an important financial resource, the Senegalese government has dedicated an entire governmental department – *Ministère des sénégalais de l’extérieur* (Department of Senegalese Living Abroad) – to the concerns of the Senegalese migrant community beginning in 2001. Despite suppression of some governmental departments, judged ‘useless’ under Macky Sall’s current regime, Abdoul Mbaye’s 2012 government perpetuated the same governmental commitment to the concerns of Senegalese citizens living abroad. The department is currently merged with the Senegalese Foreign Affairs department into what is now the *Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et des Sénégalais de*
The same migrant-related governmental programs are still valid and facilitate integration and participation of Senegalese migrants in Senegalese politics.

In 2008, migrant remittances transferred to Senegal were estimated to 560 billion CFA (about 1.3 billion US dollars). Surprisingly, only 5 percent of those funds integrate the circuits of national investments while the 95 percent go into domestic consumption. In the end, most of the remittance sent by the Senegalese emigrants ends up coming back to the country’s importation partners which mostly include Western (destination) countries such as France, Germany, the United States and Spain. In an attempt to put an end to this non-developmental cycle, the Support Funds for Senegalese Migrants’ Investment in Senegal (Fonds d’appui à l’investissement des sénégalais de l’exterieur - FAISE). It is in the context of actualizing such developmental projects that the Senegalese government has been consistently seeking to strengthen its political ties with Senegalese expatriate citizens. Many steps have been taken in this respect. One major step consisted of including the Senegalese emigrants in the decision-making process back home. In this sense, the Senegalese government, in collaboration with its consulates and the Senegalese secular diasporic associations, has created five electoral colleges which allow the Senegalese migrants throughout the world to vote in five geographical zones: the sub-Saharan Africa zone; Europe; a zone composed of the Maghreb, the Middle East and the Gulf countries; America and finally Asia. Voters in
each one of these electoral colleges are composed of members of secular Senegalese
diasporic associations who can register and vote in different electoral districts.

   Earlier, I explained how the religious life of Senegalese expatriate taalibés in the
United States is organized around diasporic daayiras which also exist in many other
destination countries. In almost the same way, the political life of the Senegalese living
abroad is organized around the secular diasporic associations whose major role is to help
migrants connect with the Senegalese foreign authorities and to facilitate electoral
participation in the five electoral colleges. To this, it matters to add that a Senegalese
migrant’s acquisition of a second citizenship does not compromise her/his voting rights
during Senegalese elections. The Senegalese consulate which is in charge of registration
in foreign countries demands from distant-voters only the following:

   - to have a proof of Senegalese citizenship
   - to be aged 18
   - to be a registered member of one secular [diasporic] association belonging
to one of the electoral colleges
   - to be in full possession of one’s civic and political rights
   - to be in no way incapacitated as referred to in the law
   - to be of a good morality
   - to be in possession of one’s consular card (carte consulaire) which serves
as proof of one’s registration at the Senegalese Consular Services.

   In conclusion to this chapter, one notes that Senegal has become an emigration
country since the 1970s when drought, unemployment and the quest of social mobility
forced peasants to engage in international migration. The Senegalese migrant population
which is estimated to about 636, 633 people is predominantly composed of young men –
aged between 20 and 50 years old. 171 Most of them are ‘uneducated’ workers and
businessmen but have acquired Islamic education in traditional Qur’anic schools, or
In the global context of Islamic neofundamentalism characterized by what Roy calls neo-brotherhoods and New Age religiosities, the international following of the Senegalese tarixas emerge as transnational neo-ethnic enclaves which refuse to be absorbed by the ‘globalized Islam’ trends. While this tendency supports the globalization of Senegalese tarixas, it also facilitates the transnationalization of the politicized ndigël.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research examines the religion-politics nexus among Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio. Three major objectives are considered. The first one is to show how the phenomenon of electoral *ndigêl* has evolved in time, and how it is disseminated among Senegalese immigrant voters in the Columbus, Ohio area. The second major objective is to investigate the different processes of social integration among Senegalese Columbus residents which have facilitated economic development and set up the grounds for long-distance political participation. The third objective is to demonstrate that the emergence of a more *ndigêl*-free vote among Senegalese citizens in Columbus results from an achievement of a greater political consciousness, financial independence and their experience in a secular American political culture.

The nature of this research is such that it requires a close examination of peculiar social and cultural patterns of the target community, which justifies the use of qualitative research. The fact that Sufism is itself a philosophical understanding of Islam and a delicate topic imposes a careful analysis of religious thoughts which guide the social and political attitudes of the *taalibés*-voters. Kramer-Kyle (2012) writes, “…qualitative research is a comprehensive approach in which the research design, questions and analysis align closely with foundational theoretical and philosophical assumptions of the study." Thus, adoption of qualitative research methods for this particular study is predicated on an intention to better understand the philosophical and spiritual implications of the Senegalese *tarixas*, whose religious ideologies are largely represented...
in Columbus, Ohio by Sufi associations (diasporic daayiras). Such a methodological approach is adopted in the hope that it will bridge the gap between the ‘world of ideas’ (Sufi abstractions of life) and certain aspects of politics in the ordinary world.

Research validity is made a great concern in this project. Validity, in this context, means the reliability of the data and how far the results reflect the reality of the target community. For this purpose, familiarity and intimacy with the target community have been made major priorities in the processes of research and data collection. The researcher’s familiarity with the target community and the research site resulted from more than two years of life experience and one month of intensive investigation. Familiarity was also facilitated by the researcher’s ability to speak the four major languages – Wolof, Pulaar, French and English – spoken among Senegalese immigrants in the research site.

However, familiarity with the participants has not excluded the respect of their privacy as prescribed by the Ohio University Institutional Review Board which authorized this research. In this effect, anonymity of the research participants has been preserved either by keeping their names totally secret or by using an abbreviation system which does not indicate the participant’s initials at all. Defined by Smith et al. as “the ability to conceal a person’s identity,” anonymity helps ensure the security of the participants’ private information. In an attempt to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between Senegalese religion and politics, this study has made it a major concern to investigate the modalities of religious and cultural transplantation among Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio. In this respect, part of the research
methodology is inspired by what Appadurai terms “transnational anthropology,” which consists of an interdisciplinary and multidimensional approach of the study of societies on the move and in friction. In the case of this study, this approach appears to be more of a comparative method and seeks to examine the evolving functions of some Senegalese religious and cultural institutions as they get transplanted into the area of Columbus, Ohio.

“Transnational Anthropology” as an Approach

Freire writes, “And a society beginning to move from one epoch to another requires the development of an especially flexible, critical spirit.” This assertion is of great relevance in the context of research methodology as the study of evolving societies requires new research approaches. Appadurai raises the same concern in the concept of “transnational anthropology.” In Modernity at Large, his study of transnationalism examines, among other things, the relationship between mobility and the increase of social and political diversity. His particular contribution to the study of international migration seeks principally to capture the shifting spaces and identities of migrant communities in many parts of the world. Chapter three of the book introduces a useful approach to the study of migration and transnationalism. In suggesting a transnationalist approach of the study of diasporic communities, Appadurai seeks to step back a little from the traditional “primordialist” paradigm of anthropology. According to Appadurai, primordialist ethnographies do not suffice to capture all social dynamisms in a transnational world constantly on the move.
He argues that given the impacts of international migration cut across different national boundaries, it becomes necessary for the researchers to implement synchronic research methodologies in order to capture the transnational forces of sociopolitical change. A synchronic methodology, in this sense, cuts across different subjects and seeks to reconcile, for instance, certain elements of culture and tradition which get transplanted from one locality to another. In this research on Senegalese migrants in Columbus, transnational ethnography helps examine how cultural practices in Senegal are transplanted into Columbus in the hope that they will serve the same social functions as in the homeland. Applied, in this research, to the study of Senegalese political dynamics, transnational anthropology reorients research perspectives towards the causes of change—“cascades”—which emerge out of political and cultural frictions. In following Appadurai’s approach, this study hopes not only to show the functional patterns of cultural transplantation, but also how transplanted elements of Senegalese culture, for instance, get transformed in the diaspora in such ways that they can condition social and political change back home.

It is my belief that transnational ethnographies such as in Appadurai’s, Roy’s and Kane’s books, published respectively in 1996, 2004 and 2011, help to better capture the mobility-driven relations which develop between different communities and localities of the globe. Appadurai’s synchronic model shows, for instance, how Indians, through globalization trends, have come to appropriate the British cricket sport by adding Indian peculiarities to the British version. In almost the reverse way, Kane’s book explains how Senegalese elements of religion and culture seek to legitimize themselves in New York,
especially among the African Americans. On a broader perspective, Roy’s 2004 study shows how West-bound Muslim migration causes the emergence of new Muslim “religiosities,” or ways of being a Muslim, characterized by the development of new forms of ethnicity. In all three models the researchers seek to examine different patterns of globalization trends through synchronic methodologies which cut across culture, religion, society, economy, and politics.

The focus of my research on a diasporic Senegalese community which is continuously subjected to external influences requires, indeed, a similar synchronic, multidimensional and interdisciplinary research model. As this research inscribes in the transnationalism framework, I hope that a transnational ethnography of the Senegalese community in Columbus – culturally situated between Senegal and the United States – will help capture the modalities through which migration causes factors of social and political change.

*Research Site and Data Collection*

The field work for this study was done in Columbus, Ohio, United States. Specifically, the research focused on the area bordered by eastern Franklin in the west, Licking County and southern Knox in the north and Fairfield County in the southeast (see *Figure 2* for a presentation of Columbus, Ohio counties). Collection of data related to the Senegalese immigrants in Columbus was not an easy task. Data collection was made quite challenging for two major reasons. On one hand, the immigrant interviewees were not initially so cooperative because they feared that their ambiguous immigration history might be published and fall in the hands of the US Department of Homeland Security. In
fact, as I pursue my research, I later realized that, although about 70 percent of Senegalese Immigrants in Columbus are legal US residents (see estimates in chapter 4), not all of them had followed a ‘clean’ legal immigration history. The fear that the research may publicize private information made it harder to pull out useful information related to their early years in America. Although, later, I convinced most of them that their identities will be kept anonymous, I strongly believe that my informants have preferred not to provide all useful information. Lack of access to such data constitutes one of the limits of this research.

On the other hand, the key sources of US immigration statistics – US Census Bureau, Homeland Security, Metropolitan Area websites, County websites, etc. – do not provide itemized data about Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio. Only a little information about Africa-born Columbus residents is available. One major reason for such scarcity of specified data is that most US statistics tend to classify Africa-born US residents together with African Americans in the same ‘race’ (or ‘ethnicity’).

Part of very helpful data for this research came from the General Consulate of Senegal which made some key information available to me. Since the beginning of the research process (winter 2012), I have been corresponding with the Consulate through fax, e-mails and over the phone. The office of the General Consul made many documents related to Senegalese US polling stations available to me, mostly by fax and e-mail attachments. Plus, such correspondence also provided me with an opportunity to ‘phone-interview’ some of the Consulate staff members who participated in electoral registration in Columbus, Ohio. Yet I am convinced that an actual trip to the Consulate’s
headquarters, in New York, NY, would have been very helpful. Yet, this was quite impossible, in part, due to a lack of financial means. Also, statistical information collected from the informants and other accessible electronic sources helped make useful estimations about Senegalese Columbus, Ohio residents.

Selection of Research Participants

In their empirical study of data collection from “hidden populations,” Salganik and Heckathorn find that “social networks” provide a wider access to interest-based groups of informants.\(^\text{176}\) What they describe as a snowball-effect selection seems to facilitate the researcher’s access to a growing circle of research participants. Such a strategy has been useful in recruiting research participants for the purpose of this study. In Columbus, Ohio, Senegalese social networks consist mainly of the religious organizations, or diasporic daayiras and the secular associations which gather a lot of Senegalese on different occasions.

Apart from my previous acquaintances, I met most of my first informants at Chez Rama, a Senegalese restaurant located on East Livingston Street, East Side Columbus. From there my connections widened. I was introduced to Imams and leaders of Muslim associations, or daayira. After visiting many Senegalese neighborhoods where most daayira are based, I gained easier access to almost all the association members and could even take part in their regular meetings. In some other cases, it required that I drove to meet some informants at their houses. In those instances, I first arranged to schedule a particular day and time for interview because most of the participants have very busy schedules. This caused most of my interviews to be held on Friday nights or during week-
ends. In the end, although I heard from about 200 hundred Senegalese (usually during associational meetings), I obtained 50 formally arranged private interviews. Although I listened attentively to almost anyone willing to contribute, I targeted the individuals who seemed to have more information and experience about Senegalese community life in Columbus, Ohio. Those mostly included wage-labor workers, Imams, owners of restaurants and grocery stores and people who provide services in immigration, money-transfer and shipping (from Columbus, Ohio to Senegal).

The Research Participants

Fifty (50) interviewees participated in this research. They are all of Senegalese origin and belong to different Sufi tarixas. The chart on page 94 provides details about their gender, ethnicity, languages, Sufi affiliation, age and occupation. As Table 1 shows, the 50 interviewees do quite reflect the Senegalese Muslim diversity in Columbus. Out of the 50 participants, only 11 are women. Given the dominant presence of male móóds, this chart seems to proportionally reflect the gender-based distributions of the Senegalese community in Columbus, Ohio. The Age Range colon is divided in three sub-colons each of which represents a distinct age-class, which reflects that most of my participants are aged between 30 and 49. In my observations, most Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio belong to this age-class. Also, as one can immediately notice in Table 1, most of the participants belong to the Haalpulaar ethnolinguistic group and are all affiliated to the Tijaniyya tarixa.
Table 1. Presentation of the Research Participants. Note: Division is based on Sufi affiliations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sufi Affiliations (Tarixas)</th>
<th>Tijaniyya</th>
<th>Muridiyya</th>
<th>Laayen</th>
<th>Qadiriyya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nbr. of Research Participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnolinguistic groups</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haalpulaar &amp; Wolof</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wolof</td>
<td>Wolof$^1$</td>
<td>Wolof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-70</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wage labor, service, Imam, business owners, students, etc.</td>
<td>wage labor, service, business, students, etc.</td>
<td>wage labor</td>
<td>wage labor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of my Wolof participants are Murid while other Wolof are Tijani as well. The reason why there are small numbers of Laayen and Qadiri participants is because their respective Sufi communities are far less numerous compared to the Tijanis and the Murids. In fact, it was only after repeated attempts that I have been able to meet a few of them. In sum, the group of 50 participants seems to constitute a quite fair representation of the Senegalese Sufi-Muslim diversity in Columbus, Ohio. This religious and gendered

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$^1$ Two of my Laayen interviewees are Lebou but I classify them as Wolof since they all have the same Wolof linguistic background.
diversity has been helpful in capturing the diverse political dynamics which characterize most of Senegalese diasporic communities.

**The Researcher**

Since the emergence of sharp criticisms which rose against the orientalist and misrepresentative Eurocentric literatures about Africa, Africanist ethnographers have made the issue of research decontamination a serious concern. Decontamination of research, in this context, means the ability of the researcher to undertake a research which not only encourages the target participant’s active involvement, but also seeks to be as bias-free as possible. Furthermore, contingent upon the researcher’s ability to conduct a consent-based and participatory research, decontamination has implications which concern more the attitudes of the researcher and her or his relationship with the research target. Arguing on the same line, Stambach, Ross and Roy share the contention that decontamination of research necessitates that the researcher become part of the research object and, at the same time, an instrument of research for the sake of validity and objectivity.  

In this present study, although the fact that the researcher is Senegalese appears an advantage, it was also the source of two major research challenges. On one hand, the researcher, as himself member of one *tarixa*, was exposed to falling into certain biased assumptions which sometimes characterize the “rivalist” trends existing between Senegalese Sufi *tarixas*. The same challenges existed in terms of ethnicity. On the other hand, the fact that the researcher is Tijani made it a little difficult to infiltrate other non-Tijani Sufi circles. This was the case when my non-Murid attitude caught the attention of
one member of the Columbus, Ohio Murid daayira, Mafatihul Bischri. As a result, the individual in question appeared to distance himself from me for quite a while.

In response to such challenges, the researcher adopted different methods of socialization which helped convince of his pedagogical neutrality. For instance, when I first attended one of Mafatihul Bischri’s regular Sunday meetings at Kimberly, I prayed with the Murids, participated actively in certain Sufi rituals and shared some of Ahmadu Bamba’s Sufi poetry some of which I knew already. Thus in a quite timely manner, such interactions created a relation of trust between the Murid participants and the researcher.

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2 It is common among Murid taalibés to place their forehead on the hands of those they greet. I did not do that when I first met the Murid follower in question.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Columbus, OH: A Destination for Senegalese Migrants

Immigration and Presence of Senegalese in Columbus

The historical factors which made Columbus a land of immigration in the early post-Revolutionary War period continue, today, to attract migrants not only from within United States, but more importantly from around the world. As Hunker argues, traditional factors of immigration include Columbus’ geographical particularity which offers an agriculturally fertile setting – water resources, adjustable whether and climate. Other factors of immigration include the establishment of successful industries which makes Columbus area a host-place for many industries and national service agencies.

Although Ohio achieves statehood in 1803, its early settlements began before 1784. Columbus was chartered a city in 1834 with a population of 3,500. Today, according to the 2010 US Census Data, it features a population of 787,033, about 225 times its 1834 population. Such demographic statistics are very telling. It presents Columbus as “the fastest growing city in the northeastern quadrant of the nation and one of the fastest growing large cities anywhere in the nation.” Such a city growth has been parallel to the Ohio population growth, in general, and results essentially from different waves of external (international) and internal (national) immigration. The latter, throughout history, shaped the peopling of Columbus in particular and that of Ohio in general. External waves of immigration include the past and current influx of international migrants, first, from mostly western and eastern Europe and later - in the early 1990s – from other parts of the world. Internal waves include movements of
American immigrants from mostly neighboring states where, unlike in Ohio, industrial bases faced different crises.\footnote{184}

African immigration to Columbus, Ohio which includes Senegalese immigration belongs to the 1990s international waves. Beginning in the early 1990s, important waves of African immigration – from namely Somali, Ethiopia, Senegal, Mauritania, Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, etc. – began to reach the Columbus area.\footnote{185} Yet, Columbus was not among the first major US destinations for African immigrants as many Africans settled in other US cities since early 1950s. In 2007, there were 1.4 million foreign-born US residents from Africa which makes up 3.7 percent of the 2007 total US immigrant population.\footnote{186} A good number of Africa-born US immigrants – about 34 percent – came from West African countries, which highlights the prominence of West Africans in the African community residing in the United States.

While immigration flux constitutes an actual response and contribution to Columbus economy, it has also impacted the city’s ethnic composition. In both early and later settlements, the dominant ethnicity in central Ohio had been associated with Western Europe.\footnote{187} Over time, this pattern of ethnicity has progressively changed. In 1990, for instance, about 75 percent of the Columbus population was White while 15.9 percent accounted for so-classified blacks.\footnote{188} Twenty years later, the percentage of Columbus whites dropped to 64.2 percent while the classified Black population increased to about half the population of the White majority.\footnote{189} Two major reasons explain such demographic changes in the Columbus area. One is that, as Hunker points, the birth rate among Columbus blacks increased significantly compared to the whites. A second reason
is that the Columbus Black population has simply grown as a result of international migration influx from Africa.

It is difficult to find specified data about Columbus Africans. Yet, it remains a fact that African immigrants constitute an important part of the Columbus Black community due to increased immigration flux and high birth rate. Other Columbus ethnic/racial minorities include Hispanic or Latino (5.6), American Indian and Alaska Natives (0.3 percent), Asians (4.8 percent), Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (0.2 percent) and other ethnicities which make up 3.3 percent of Columbus total population. This data shows that ethnic diversity in Columbus grows progressively throughout the years. It defines Columbus as an increasingly cosmopolitan area where the presence of Africans is significantly visible in culture, business and workforce.

Today, the United States is Senegal’s eighth largest emigration country after Gambia, France, Italy, Mauritania, Spain, Côte d’Ivoire and Gabon. According to 2013 peoplemov.in statistics, 16,745 Senegalese reside in the United States. Of course, this figure is to be taken with care as it does not reflect the actual number of Senegalese US immigrants. Data provided by peoplemov.in website records only legal immigrants. According to my research and personal interviews, about 40 percent of Senegalese US residents are illegal, thus not recorded in US or any other official immigration service. As a result, one can assume that the actual number of Senegalese immigrants could be about twice – more than 30,000 – the number recorded in peoplemov.in website.
Figure 1. Columbus, Ohio population growth by decade between 1950 and 2010. Source: http://development.columbus.gov/demographics.aspx

The community of African immigrants in Columbus is visibly dominated by Somalis most of whose massive arrivals to the US began in the wake of the civil war that followed the 1991 ousting of Siad Barre. After the Somalis – who account for more than 13,000 in Columbus, and some other African presences, the Senegalese community is more likely to rank in the first four largest African communities in Columbus, Ohio. Senegalese immigrants are more visible in the Columbus suburban area through their businesses and in the workforce. Although “scattered almost everywhere in Columbus, Ohio,” most Senegalese immigrants and their businesses are to be found in East side Columbus – Fairfield county and eastern Franklin county – and in North side Columbus – Licking county and southern Knox (see Figure 2 on page 101).

The Senegalese enclave in Columbus is dominated by two major ethnolinguistic groups. One is composed of Haalpulaar (speakers of Pulaar or Fula) and another is formed by the Wolof (who usually speak Wolof). Although Pulaar is very present among
the Haalpulaar, the Wolof language seems to keep its homeland function as the lingua-franca and trans-ethnic means of communication among the móódu. Senegalese immigrants also use English and French especially when the conversation includes one or several speakers of non-Senegalese languages.

Despite ethnolinguistic disparities, almost all Senegalese immigrant workers in Columbus refer to each other as móódu- móódu. Over time, the term has come to form an integral part of the Senegalese immigrant identity in Columbus, Ohio and elsewhere. Despite their Francophone background, many móódu I met have good English language skills. In part, this is due to the fact that many Senegalese committed themselves to learning English after realizing that it is crucial to employment and success in the United States.

*Establishment of Senegalese Immigrants in Columbus, Ohio*

In his study of family and social network theory, Milardo shares one major finding that the mobility of people operates through network relations that allow the development of migration “pathways” paved by kin or village members who migrated earlier. He also adds that the same pathways and relationships help strengthen “traditional solidarities” that exist within “homogenous ethnic groups.” Milardo’s perception of the relationship between ethnicity and mobility characterizes many waves of international migration today.
In the same way, kinship ties and geographical commonalities constitute determinant factors in Senegalese migration influx in Columbus, Ohio. Furthermore, such migration patterns are reflected in the distribution of Senegalese neighborhoods (and residences) in Columbus, Ohio. Out of the 50 Senegalese immigrants I interviewed, 45 confided to me that they moved or landed in Columbus to follow their relatives, friends,
co-city dwellers or co-villagers who settled Columbus before them. Today, most of the Columbus Senegalese who live together in the same apartments share the same ethnolinguistic group or hometown (or village). In this section, I first introduce the geographical site where most Senegalese immigrants live in Columbus, Ohio. Then, I discuss how Senegalese immigrants integrate Columbus, Ohio through (1) their *daayiras*, (2) media and information technology and (3) trade and business relations.

*Where do Senegalese Immigrants Live in Columbus, Ohio?*

Geographically, housing and business sites for Senegalese Columbus residents are more present in the Columbus area bordered by Refugee Road in the South, Morse Road in the North, Hamilton Road in the East and Downtown Columbus in the West. The suburban housing sites usually constitute of courts (within large neighborhoods) formed usually of two, three, or four-bedroom apartments. East side Columbus neighborhoods occupied by Senegalese include Berwick, Lindwood, Glenbrook and Eastland which are all located between East Livingston Street and Refugee Road. Other East-side neighborhoods of minor Senegalese presence include Walnut Heights and Independence village also located between the same streets but further in the East. In North side Columbus – areas of Licking, northeastern Franklin and southern Knox – Senegalese neighborhoods include Maize-Morse, Hide Park, Forest Park East and Brandywine. These four neighborhoods are situated along Morse Road and bordered, in the West, by Maize and Karl Roads and, in the East, by Westerville Road.

Usually, Senegalese immigrants usually occupy a common court and live sometimes with a few Gambians, Ghanaians or Guineans. Most Senegalese share
neighborhoods with African Americans, although most of my informants admit that they do not have close relations with them. Ethnolinguistic differences among Senegalese immigrants in Columbus are also visible. For instance, while Wolof and Haalpulaar immigrants may share the same housing court, hardly do they share the same apartment. The groups of Senegalese immigrants tend to perpetuate the kinship and locality-based ties which had facilitated their immigration to Columbus, Ohio. Most of my informants claim that they feel more comfortable living with Senegalese with whom they had previous connections or, at least, share the same regional and linguistic backgrounds.

While the Haalpulaar seem to remain linguistically more conservative, the Wolof also tend to stick to the Wolof language. There are two major outcomes from this diasporic social distribution. One, the ethnolinguistic division among Columbus Senegalese causes the emergence of two major political entities: one Haalpulaar-Tijani group which is more important in number, and one Wolof-Murid group which is numerically smaller. Second, such an ethnolinguistic division which strongly conditions diasporic life among Senegalese immigrants in Columbus creates two political tendencies within the enclave. On one hand, visits from apolitical and political transnational Tijani Shaykhs characterize the religious and political lives of Haalpulaar-Tijanis. On the other hand, religious and political lives of the Wolof-Murid community are marked by the presence of similar categories of Murid transnational Shaykhs.

Yet, the gap resulting from housing distributions seems to be compensated by social interactions between the Senegalese Tijani and Murid communities in Columbus. In Columbus, Haalpulaar-Tijani taalibés and Wolof-Murid taalibés usually participate in
each other’s religious festivals. The Columbus Murid daayira, for instance, counts 50 active members. But its regular events such as the Maggal\textsuperscript{198} welcome more than a hundred people including Haalpulaar and Wolof Tijanis.\textsuperscript{199} Interaction and collaboration among móódu has facilitated many communal achievements and the initiation of great Muslim projects in Columbus. The Haalpulaar Tijanis have been able to rent an entire flat on East Livingston Street which has served for mosque – Masjid Umar Futiyu Taal – for more than a decade now. On one Friday of March 2013, Imam Ablay announced that he was moving to a second mosque also opened by Senegalese immigrants in Columbus. One current major project is the building of the Umar Futiyu Taal permanent masjid whose building site is located on Refugee Road. Although Haalpulaar Tijanis are major contributors, important financial support also comes from other Muslim sympathizers from Egypt or the Middle East.\textsuperscript{200} And today, as one of the managers insisted, the mosque is open to anyone willing to give.

\textit{Integrating Columbus, Ohio}

\textit{‘Diasporic Daayiras’ and the Integration of Senegalese in Columbus, Ohio}

In Columbus, Senegalese Muslim associations include mostly daayiras affiliated to the Tijaniyya, Muridiyya and Laayen tarixas. Some of them have successfully registered non-profit and benefit from US tax exemption. Tijani associations include \textit{Ahhab Cheikh Oumar Foujyou Tall} (Friends of Shaykh Al-hajj Umar Taal), \textit{Daayira Sope Nabi} (Lovers of the Prophet), daayira Ceerno Seydu Nuru and other smaller daayiras which usually pay allegiance to Sufi shaykhs in the immigrants’ hometowns or villages. The Murid and the Laayen daayiras in Columbus are respectively named \textit{Mafatihul}
Bishri and Farlu Ci Diine Ji Seydina Issa Roho Lahi Ohio. Although membership composition varies from one *daayira* to another, their major activities are similar and usually aim to facilitate mutual help, socioreligious integration and to gather *àddiya* (offerings) to be sent to the affiliated *shaykhs* at home.

One outstanding Tijani *daayira* in Columbus is *Ahbab Cheikhou Oumar Foutiyou Tall*, sometimes shortened *Ahbab*. It is a large and very active association with both male and female members. *Ahbab’s* activities range from *Gamu* (also *Mawlud* in Pulaar) and religious conferences to organization of pilgrimage trips to Mecca. The *daayiras* has more than three years old and has about two hundred registered members. *Ahbab* members pay a 5-dollar monthly subscription and convene a general meeting every three months during which achievements and future plans are discussed. In 2012, the association sent 1,500 dollars to the Taal Tijaniyya *zawiya* in Senegal as a contribution the annual *Mawlid*. *Ahbab’s* pioneer event is its big Islamic conference held every year. The 2012 Islamic conference was held in Kimberly courtyards, Glenbrook County and the keynote speaker was *Shaykh* Seydu Muntaga Taal.

What makes *Ahbab’s* yearly Islamic conference a big event is the fact that it gathers a large portion of Senegalese immigrants from Columbus, Ohio and beyond. Distinguished guests come from Ohio cities of Cincinnati and Cleveland. Others come from Washington, DC. Most of the guests from beyond Columbus are representatives of other diasporic *daayiras* formed in other American cities. The event is, after all, an opportunity for the immigrants to meet, greet and socialize with their dear ones. For most of my Haalpulaar informants, the night of the *Ahbab* conference is a ‘holiday.’ Even the
few who do work on the day arrange to leave warehouses and businesses early in the afternoon.

Colorful dressing styles and shining jewels reinforce the cultural colorfulness of the event and mark the presence of women. *Ahab* is a Sufi association which promotes women’s agency in the Columbus Tijani community. In his gendered study of “contemporary Islamic revival” in Sudan, Howard shows that Sufi elements of progressive Islam create conditions for the existence of Muslim women’s greater agency as rarely found in the orthodox Islam space. The Sufi environment within *Ahab* seems to echo Howard’s remark about the Sudanese Republican sisters. For instance, *Ahab*’s women have successfully created a monthly *tontin* (weekly or monthly subscriptions) to help its members achieve pilgrimage to Mecca. In Senegal, *tontins* are very common among women and serve as a sort of informal banking systems that facilitate mutual assistance among the members. Set up in 2012, the *Ahab* women’s *tontin* inscribes within the same framework. Its monthly subscriptions amount to a 5,275-dollar total each year. This is enough funds to cover pilgrimage fees for one *haaja* every year. The 2012 drawing for the first winner was held during *Ahab*’s Islamic conference. In addition, *Ahab* women made two financial contributions, amounting to 10,250 dollars, to the building of the masjid Umaar Futiyu Taal in Columbus.

The topic of the 2012 conference focused on the education of Senegalese Muslim kids born in the diaspora. The speaker, Ceerno Seydu, emphasized the importance of parents in the Islamic education of Muslim children born in a non-Muslim setting. Selection of such a topic was not done at random. It is part of *Ahab*’s objectives to help
its members preserve their Tijani Muslim identity in a predominantly non-Muslim environment. In fact, most of the Tijani daayiras listed above organize conferences of this kind. And in doing so, they manifest the same intention as Ahbab. This is part of the expatriate taalibés’ constant struggles to recreate home far from the homeland in an attempt to overcome the challenges of deterritorialization. Ahbab has a large audience and its 2012 conference had been recorded and made available for sale in Columbus African markets to ensure larger distribution.

The Murid daayira, Mafatihul Bischri, is another religious platform for the social integration of Senegalese in Columbus. The association was founded in 2005 and is based in Kimberly courtyards, Glenbrook County. The daayira was founded under the spiritual ndigël of the fifth Murid Khalif-Général, Sëriñ Saliou Mbacké. The name Mafatihul Bischri was coined by the Khalif himself over the phone. According to the president, the association has 50 active members and is part of MICA, the Murid umbrella organization in America based in Harlem, New York City. Mafatihul Bischri follows a regular agenda based on Touba’s official calendar of events. During major Murid events in Senegal such as the Maggal, the daayira too organizes its parallel events in Columbus. In Senegal, both Murids and non-Murids travel to Touba during Maggal celebration. In the same way, during Mafatihul Bischri’s maggal in Columbus, many non-Murids are invited to celebrate the day together with Columbus Murids.

Mafatihul Bischri is mostly composed of módus from the Wolof ethnolinguistic group. The daayira holds two types of regular gatherings. One is held every Sunday and is mandatory for all members to attend. On Sunday meetings members discuss the
daayira’s achievements and future projects. Discussion topics include, for instance, how much money to send to Touba during the Maggal, which Shaykh is coming to visit, who needs financial help, and so on. When a member is seriously sick or dies, the daayiras informs the nationwide MICA to take care of the person or repatriate the corpse to Senegal on the same or next day. The second gathering is the Guddig Ajjuma, or Friday Eve. It is not mandatory but is strongly recommended for taalibés to attend. Celebration of Guddig Ajjuma consists mostly of Xasida recitations, chants. The night celebrates Friday, a day for Muslims’ common noon prayer, and is an opportunity for Murid taalibés to renew their faith and strengthen their spiritual bond with Ahmadu Bamba.

A third Senegalese Muslim association in Columbus is the Laayen daayira named *Farlu Ci Diine Ji Seydina Issa Roho Lahi Ohio*, sometimes shortened *Farlu*. Literally, the name means ‘commitment to religion as taught by Seydina Issa Laaye,’ the founder of the Laayen tarixa. *Farlu* is a branch of the national Laayen association which bears the same name in Senegal. Other branches like the one based in Columbus exist in other foreign countries. *Farlu* counts eighteen active members who meet regularly in Columbus. Their religious events include religious talks usually offered by visiting shaykhs, yearly commemoration of the founder’s Call (*Appel Seydina Limamou Laye*) and the celebration of the birth of Prophet Muhammad.

Beside the diasporic daayiras, there is *Pulaar Speaking Columbus* which is different from another *Pulaar Speaking* based in New York. It is a Senegalese-run secular association and includes members from Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Ghana, Mali, Guinea, Sierra Leone and even America. *Pulaar Speaking Columbus* is more oriented
towards catering for the immediate social and financial needs of its members, which gives it the structure of an informal insurance company. Everyone is welcome to join the association even if they have no interest in the Pulaar language. Newly admitted members pay a 5-dollar admission fee which includes the membership card fee. Members continue to pay 5 dollars every month.207 Pulaar Speaking Columbus repatriates the corpses of its deceased members and provides financial assistance up to 1500 dollars to its regular members.

In conclusion, one notes that the diasporic daayiras in Columbus constitute important platforms for the social and religious integration of Senegalese in Columbus. As diasporic Sufi institutions, they facilitate mediation between Senegalese expatriates in Columbus and the Sufi authorities back home. One major difference between the three daayiras seems to be the nature of their allegiances. Ahbab is under the direct patronage of the Taal Tijaniyya, which is but one segment of the Tijaniyya authority in Senegal. Thus, it does not pay direct allegiance to the central authority of Tijaniyya back home. On the contrary, Mafatihul Bischri and Farlu submit respectively to the Murid and Laayen central authorities. Such different patterns of allegiance determine whether a diasporic daayira in one particular locality, is ‘national’ or not. Both Mafatihul Bischri and Farlu could be said to be national. But Ahbab seems more like a de facto Haalpulaar Tijani association, despite its prominence in Columbus, Ohio and the fact that it is open to almost anyone. Because of this profile, one may conclude that Ahbab not national.
Integration through Media and Communication Technology

Many studies in the fields of media and communication demonstrate that, throughout the globe, media outlets and communication technology play determinant roles in the framing of communal identities (Trebbe & Shoenhagen, 2011), the representation of sociocultural diversity (Urs Dahinden et al., 2011; Roy, 2004) and in the definition of religion and religiosity (Bunt, 2003; Khannous, 2011; Azzi, 2008; Garon 2003; Youmans & York, 2012). In the case of the Senegalese enclave in Columbus, Ohio, media and Internet technology are instrumentalized for the same purposes of social, religious and economic integration. The development and accessibility of technology has facilitated the establishment of communication platforms among Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio. Senegalese media outlets in Columbus include several Internet-based radios and websites which provide access to live TV channels based in Senegal.

One online radio is named Renndo (www.renndo.com) and is headquartered in an apartment located in Kimberly courtyards, Glenbrook neighborhood. It usually broadcasts in Pulaar and sometimes in French and English. The radio reports live during important social, political and religious event such as the Ahbab Islamic conference, visits of Senegalese political leaders and so on. In many shows, Pulaar speaking contributors make phone calls to share their views on particular topics of the day. The radio does a lot of advertising and announcements for local Senegalese businesses and associations.

Radio Diamalaye (diamalahi.org) is the second online radio. Like Renndo, Diamalaye is also based in Columbus, Ohio. The radio is owned by members of Farlu,
the Columbus *daayira* affiliated to the Senegalese Laayen *tarixa*. The radio broadcasts live, but recorded Laayen religious festivals, songs and conferences are also always available on the webpage and are continuously playing.

While the two radios facilitate communication and connection among members of the Senegalese immigrant community (and between them and other immigrant communities), they also support cultural rootedness. The Internet-based media outlets provide daily news about home and the diasporic community in both Columbus, Ohio and abroad. Beside the two online radios hosted in Columbus, Columbus Senegalese have also access to other online radios based in different American cities and foreign countries as well. Plus, they can also watch and listen to Senegalese TVs and radios from a free live-TV software, *sunuradiotv* which is downloadable from www.sunuradiotv.com. Other websites are also available and include www.sunutv.com, carrapide.com, seneweb.com, leral.net, xalimasn.com and many others. In sum, the online radios and the communication/news websites constitute media infrastructures which play an important role in reducing culture shock and facilitating integration within the enclave and within the society of Columbus, Ohio.

*Integration in the Columbus, Ohio Economy*

As a response to the demands of a growing Senegalese immigrant community, different businesses have opened in Columbus, Ohio. They are mostly located in East and North sides of Columbus. There are two Senegalese market centers and three restaurants specialized in Senegalese cuisine. One grocery store named *African Market* is located on East Livingston Street nearby one Senegalese restaurant named *Chez Rama. Medina*
restaurant also called “Restorant Jallo” is located near the crossroads between Hamilton and Refugee Roads and is hosted by the second Senegalese market center. The third restaurant, *Dabakh*, is located in North side Columbus, near the crossroads between Morse Road and Cleveland Avenue.

In the course of time, Senegalese businesses have been able to attract not only Senegalese from different Ohio cities, but also Africans and Americans. At the One can frequently meet with non-Senegalese African and African American customers who visit the shop. As the market became quite international, its services, suppliers and (food) items became international as well. For instance, the owner of *African Market* on Livingston told me that he is supplied by different African trade chains whose actors “travel between different African countries and the American cities of New York, Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio.” *African Market* is not only a grocery store. It has collaborated with the Senegalese bank, *Banque de l’habitat du Senegal* (BHS) to open a BHS branch which provides money transfer services from Columbus, Ohio to Senegal, Gambia and Ghana. Another branch of BHS exist in Columbus, Ohio and is located on Refugee Road, not far from *Medina* restaurant, in the East side still.

While Senegalese owned markets sell different items from different African places, the restaurants too have developed their menus to include, for instance, Ivoirian and Ghanaian dishes. While Senegalese usually order typically Senegalese meals – “*ceebu-jèn*” (rice and fish), “*ceebu-yapp*” (rice and meat) or *Maafe* (peanut-based sauce eaten with white rice) – some do order the Ivoirian “*Athieke*” whenever offered on the menu. The Senegalese restaurants seem to satisfy the nostalgic needs for a good Senegalese
cuisine. Interestingly, in an attempt to respond to the needs of a quite cosmopolitan Africa-born immigrant community, their ‘culinary blending’ has come to provide an addition to the Senegalese traditional dishes. To some extent, this reflects one reality of migration in which the transnational interaction of cultures, for business purposes, seem to require from Senegalese restaurant owners to go beyond the Senegalese culinary scope.

In sum, the integration of Senegalese immigrants in Columbus operates through different means. Religious and secular associations, media infrastructures, trade and business constitute crucial spaces and tools through which the Columbus, Ohio Senegalese mark their presence in the destination area. Although these developments seem to be more of an integration within the Senegalese enclave, it matters to acknowledge that the enclave integration is tantamount to integration in the Columbus cosmopolitan society. It seems that it is the enclave itself which (informally) provides the actual tools and means for the integration of new incoming Senegalese migrants. Furthermore, integration in Columbus, Ohio seems to be the cause and, at the same time, the consequence of economic struggles among Senegalese in Columbus, Ohio. Some of these struggles were successful and have created economic development among móódus. In 2004, such economic presence and visibility of Columbus Senegalese has caused the Consulate General of Senegal to include Columbus, Ohio in the four voting districts established in the state of Ohio. This new step began a new era of diasporic politics among Columbus Senegalese. In the section below, I discuss how Senegalese citizens who reside in Columbus participate in Senegalese politics.
How Do Senegalese Columbus Residents Participate in Senegalese Politics?

Voting From Columbus, Ohio

In the last section of Chapter 2, I listed five electoral colleges that the Senegalese government created in five regions throughout the world to enable expatriate Senegalese to register and vote from different countries. The Senegalese electoral college for North America includes the United States, Canada and Brazil. Columbus, Ohio belongs to this college and is one of the 20 Senegalese voting districts in the United States (see Table 2).

As a brief reminder, the first electoral participation of the Senegalese diaspora, in general, was in 2007. Revised in August 2004 by the 2004-32 Act, the Senegalese electoral file was broadened to include Senegalese voters in foreign countries. According to the Consulate General of Senegal which manages electoral registrations throughout the United States, 4,598 Senegalese US residents were registered to vote in 2007. In 2012, electoral registrations in the United States spiked to 9,161 voters and a total of 4728 had successfully casted their votes in 25 polling stations established in 25 US localities. Table 2 on page 117 lists the number of polling stations and voting districts in the United States for the 2012 presidential and legislative elections.

Based on data provided by the Consulate General of Senegal, Table 2 highlights the political prominence of Ohio as the host state of 4 Senegalese polling stations. In the state of Ohio, Columbus remains a significant polling station considering the relatively important presence of Senegalese in the area. According to the Consulate General of Senegal in New York, 334 Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio were registered to vote in the year 2012. While 60 percent (202) managed to successfully cast their votes
during the 2012 presidential election, only 22.4 percent (75) of the same number of registered voters voted during the Senegalese legislative election.

The figures show a striking contrast in electoral participation among Columbus, Ohio Senegalese. As for the presidential election, the high participation seems related to certain ethnicity dynamics which particularly marked Columbus, Ohio in that year. During the 2012 run-off, for many Haalpulaar Senegalese, the victory of Macky Sall, who belonged to the Haalpulaar (or Pulaar) ethno-linguistic group, was to do the Haalpulaar proud. In fact, he was to be the first Haalpulaar President in the country’s history. This generated a lot of electoral motivation and support from the Haalpulaar community including those in Columbus, Ohio. At the end of the run-off, Macky Sall won 94.05 percent of the Columbus votes, which left Abdoulaye Wade with less than 6 percent of the votes. Yet once the presidential goal was achieved, the political motivations among the Columbus, Ohio Haalpulaar seemed to have faded. This caused participation in Senegalese elections in Columbus, Ohio to decline drastically during the 2012 legislatives.

One clerk from the Consulate General who participated in the entire electoral process in Columbus, Ohio informed me that “only about 25 percent of the Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio who have the age to vote [18 and beyond] might have found time to register to vote in 2012.” Given that those 25 percent corresponds to 334 (registered voters), the elementary ‘cross multiplication’ solution produces that no less than 1336 Senegalese, aged 18 or beyond, might be residing in Columbus, Ohio. In terms
of demographics, it also matters to consider the important portion of the enclave’s population which is below 18.

In fact, 20 individuals out of the 50 research participants live with their families. Most of those families are composed of at least 4 members. In some families, especially the Haalpulaar, the number is even larger and the couple may have between 5 and 6 children. In my own observations and general overview of the Columbus Senegalese residential distribution, I would assume that about 30 percent of the voting-age population lives in families of at least 4 people (husband, wife and kids). This analysis leads to the following reasoning. If the number of families \( xf \) represents 30 percent of the 1336 Senegalese, then \( xf \) equals 400 families. The estimated total number of Senegalese living in families is the product of \( xf \) by 4, which makes 1600 people. One concludes that in total no less than 2936 people of Senegalese origin live in Columbus, Ohio, today.

Furthermore, according to the 50 people I interviewed in Columbus, about an average of 70 percent of Senegalese Columbus residents are legal. The same informants strongly believe that about 95 percent of registered voters are legal residents. One reason most of them provided to explain this tendency is that most Senegalese illegal residents in Columbus, Ohio tend to avoid any contact with the Senegalese Consulate General for fear that they might be identified and deported like their fellow illegal migrant in France and Spain.
Table 2. Senegalese polling districts and stations established in the United States. Note: Based on data provided by the Consulate General of Senegalese in New York.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Voting Districts</th>
<th>Nbr of Polling Stations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>Atlanta (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>Boston (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>San Fr. &amp; L.A</td>
<td>San Francisco (1), Los Angeles (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Chicago (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>Baltimore (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>Memphis</td>
<td>Memphis (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>Minneapolis (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>NY C, Br. &amp; Bronx</td>
<td>New York (6), Brooklyn (1), Bronx (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Raleigh</td>
<td>Raleigh (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Col., Wil. &amp; Cin.</td>
<td>Columbus (1), Cincinnati (2), Wilberforce (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Philadelphia (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>Providence</td>
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<td>Texas</td>
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<td>Washington</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

During the 2007 and 2012 elections, the Columbus, Ohio voting station was administered by a team which is composed of the following members. There is a president, an administrative agent who either comes from the Consulate General or from the Senegalese embassy (hosted in Washington, DC). The president is assisted by an
assessor and a secretary. The team is supervised by a representative of the Senegalese Délégation Extérieure de la Commission Electorale Nationale Autonome –DECENA (Foreign Delegation of the Autonomous National Electoral Commission. Also, each one of the political parties can send one member to represent them at the voting station.209

In Columbus, Ohio, the electoral registration sessions and the only voting station are set up at Chez Rama restaurant which is located on East Livingston Street, East side Columbus. According to a Consulate agent, the choice of the restaurant is based on the hope that it might help meet many Senegalese immigrants who frequently come to the restaurant to buy food. On the day of election, Sunday, the voting both of the only Columbus “normally opens at 8 Am and closes at 6 Pm.”210 After discussing the implications of the electoral process, now I demonstrate how the phenomenon political ndigêl is present among the Senegalese electorate in Columbus, Ohio.

Presence of Electoral Ndigêls in Columbus, Ohio

In Chapter One, I explained that three major factors – the expansion of Sufi lineages, leadership quarrels and the increased politicization of the tarixas – caused the fragmentation of the central ndigêl, the one issued by the tarixa’s Khalif-Général. The subsequent emergence of the peripheral ndigêl, issued by segment leaders, did not only complicate the nature of the Senegalese Sufi-Muslim authority, but also increased political activism among shaykhs (in the periphery). Today, most of the shaykhs, in a constant quest of power and legitimacy, engage in indirect politics through various patron-client relations. At the diaspora level, some of these shaykhs have chosen Columbus, Ohio as one of their preferred destinations in the United States.
Some informants admitted that most of the visiting *shaykhs* seem apolitical as they refrain from issuing *ndigëls*, at least explicitly. In part, this attitude results from the fact that some explicit electoral *ndigëls* in the past had not been well welcomed by the *taalibés*-voters in Senegal. In some cases, the resulting attitudes of the *taalibés* even threatened the legitimacy of the political Sufi leader. This was the case in 1988 when Murid *Khalif-Général* Abdul Ahad Mbacké saw many Murid *taalibés* disobey the electoral *ndigël* he issued in favor of ex-President Abdou Diouf. 1988 was also the last time a central Murid authority, the *Khalif-Général*, issued an explicit electoral *ndigël*.

As a result of the 1988 event, many *shaykhs* began to instruct voting commands in rather implicit ways. As opposed to an explicit *ndigël* which is publicly issued by a *shaykh* directly to his *taalibés*, an implicit one is usually camouflaged (*juñj*) in speeches held by religious leaders during widely televised religious events. In most cases, implicit *ndigëls* are issued through compliments that one *shaykh* makes regarding one political leader’s financial support to the *tarixa* or one segment within it. In so doing, the *shaykh* insinuates his support to the political leader in question. At the same time, this generates political sympathy and support from the followers.

Interestingly, compliments of this kind are more frequent during periods of election. For instance, during the 2012 electoral campaign, Youssou Ndour, leader of *Fekkee ma ci boole* (I Join the Circumstances) payed a widely mediatized visit, or *siyaar* (*ziarra*), to the Murid *Shaykh* Bethio Thioune. On that occasion and in front of a large audience of *Cäntakun taalibés*, the *shaykh* complimented Youssou Ndour in many ways. In the first place, the *shaykh* introduced him as a Murid “*taalibé* who is renewing his *njébbël* before
him [Bethio].” Then, he added that “he supports him [Youssou] and that he [Youssou] was trustworthy because he is a taalibé who has shown generosity to him [Bethio].” In the end, he formulated prayers in support of Ndour’s career. Such patterns of implicit ndigél are present within the Senegalese immigrant community in Columbus, Ohio and are mostly disseminated through media – TV, audiovisual records, Internet and community radios – and sometimes in religious gatherings held during the visits of transnational shaykhs in Columbus, Ohio.

Many Senegalese transnational shaykhs maintain close ties with the Senegalese expatriate taalibés in Columbus, Ohio. One of those shaykhs is Ceerno Seydou Nuru, the one who spoke at Ahabb’s 2012 Islamic conference. Ceerno lives between Dakar, Senegal and Columbus, Ohio where his wife and children also reside. He is mostly viewed as apolitical and seems more concerned with Islamic education. Sometimes, in special occasions, his religious speeches present aspects of implicit ndigél as defined above. In 2008, ex-president Abdoulaye Wade made an important financial contribution towards the completion of the Halwaar mosque in Dakar, Senegal. Wade’s contribution was widely well received among followers of the Taal Tijaniyya segment. During the 2009 Mawlid – a widely broadcasted event which celebrates the birth of Prophet Muhammad – many speakers, including Ceerno Seydou who was then in Senegal, made many compliments on Wade and his government. The same compliments were also well echoed during some of Ceerno’s talks in Columbus, Ohio and other places.

The same aspects of implicit ndigél are not absent in the Murid diaspora in Columbus, Ohio. One member of the Columbus diasporic daayira, Mafatihul Bishri,
informed me that Murid political Shaykh Bethio Thioune came to Cincinnati, Ohio on one occasion and that many Columbus Murid taalibés went to listen to his talk. As he describes the event, he reports, “The shaykh held a speech which invited us, Murid taalibés, to keep committed to Islam and to the order [Muridiyya]. He would insist that a true taalibé must surrender to his guide and obey his ndigél at any circumstance.” As mentioned in the previous chapter, Bethio Thioune is a political transnational shaykh. In Senegal, he has paid political allegiance to different political parties. As confirmed in these words, Bethio’s speech held in Cincinnati, Ohio is one example of the transnationalization of Senegalese electoral ndigéls.

Apart from Ceerno Seydou and Bethio, there are many other transnational shaykhs who pay regular visits to the Senegalese expatriate Sufi following in Columbus, Ohio. Many Tijanis shaykhs come from different localities in Senegal and their trips are sometimes sponsored by Tijani daayiras in Columbus, Ohio. Tijani shaykhs include Sharifs, or ‘descendants of Prophet Muhammad, Ceerno Mamadu Barro and many others. Murid shaykhs include Sëriñ Mustapha Abdu Khadre, Baay Shaykh Mbacké and Sëriñ Ngunda. Visitors from the Laayen religious authority include Baye Sherif Ousseynou Laaye who had his first religious conference in Columbus, Ohio in 2012. Although most of these transnational shaykhs may not be involved in direct politics, the religious speeches they hold sometimes facilitate the dissemination of different patterns of electoral ndigél, especially through compliments regarding political leaders. The chart below shows the answers of 50 interviewees to the question: “how often do you hear your affiliated shaykh compliment about a political leader during electoral campaigns?”
Table 3. Perceptions about the comments of the political shayks. Note: Data is based on questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the light of these answers, one notices that the phenomenon electoral *ndigël* is present in Columbus, Ohio, at least among the 50 interviewees. Given that 47 out of 50 respondents claim to witness frequent implicit *ndigëls*, one can assume that Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio remain exposed to the interference of religion with politics. In the light of this analysis, I argue that the political *ndigël* is present in Columbus, Ohio but mostly in implied ways.

Nevertheless, although all 50 respondents admit to have a great consideration for the speeches held by their religious guides, or *shaykhs*, most of them believe that it is high time religious leaders ended their attempts to influence the electoral preferences of their *taalibés*. In the section below I describe such political positions and explain how they are shaped by two major transnational factors of political change. One is achievement of financial independence. The other relates to immigrants’ exposure to a politically more secular American culture.

*Why Do Senegalese Voters in Columbus Reject the Electoral Ndígél?*

Except one, all the 50 respondents, who are of different Sufi affiliations, crossed out the box “*not into account whatsoever*” in response to the question: “How do you take
your religious guide’s comments on political candidates?” (In the questionnaire, the four boxes included “not into account whatsoever,” “not into account,” “fairly into account,” “strongly into account”). Contextualized in the 2012 presidential election, the objective of this question was to gather information about the percentage of the 50 interviewees whose votes might actually be determined by the political views of their religious guides. In the end, the research shows that, in 2012, 98 percent of the interviewees claim to have casted a vote free of implied ndigël. Such a low influence of ndigël is in contrast with electoral tendencies in the home country. It quite impossible to find quantifiable data about the number of ndigël-driven votes in Senegal. Yet, many reports (Seck, 2012; Gueye, 2012) suggest that a good number of Senegalese taalibé votes might have been been motivated or influenced by charismatic shaykhs – namely Kara and Bethio – who openly issued voting ndigëls in exchange of important amounts of money and political promises.211

Based on the answers provided by the 50 interviewees, one can assume that about 92 percent of Senegalese citizens in Columbus votes are ndigël-free. Compared to the data provided by 2012 electoral reports, the Columbus percentage appears to be in large contrast with the higher rate of ndigël-influenced votes in Senegal during the 2012 election. Such voting patterns of contrast between home and diaspora trigger the question: why this asymmetry in the influence of ndigël? In other words, why is the community of diasporic voters less affected by voting commands? In listening to many Senegalese immigrant voters in Columbus, Ohio, one can easily understand that political consciousness remains a major factor in what shapes the migrants’ voting preferences.
Postulating that a close connection exists between mobility and consciousness, Carr (2011) writes, “Global mobility is part of a wider educational process – human development.”\(^{212}\) He further adds, “Acculturation and culture shock are focal points in such human development processes.”\(^{213}\) Carr’s note on the sociopolitical outcomes of global mobility seem to provide one explanation clue to why Senegalese voters in Columbus seem to have earned more of a deeper political consciousness than most of their counterparts staying in Senegal.

Although it seems true that Senegalese migrants are more likely to develop a greater sense of individualism and personal freedom due to exposure to political and cultural diversity, political awareness alone does not seem to be the only reason why ndigël affects migrant voters less than it does to voters at home. Because, indeed, one can argue that Senegalese voters in Senegal are politically conscious too. This urges one to seek factors of this contrast somewhere else. Holding onto the contention that political consciousness tends to develop more among mobile Senegalese than non-migrants, I argue that two factors – financial independence and exposure to a secular American political culture – constitute other factors which influence ndigël-free voting preferences among Senegalese citizens in Columbus, Ohio.

*The Financial Independence Factor*

In an empirical study of generalizable voting dynamics, Rekkas argues that the “amassed support of the electorate” depends, in part, on campaign expenditures.\(^{214}\) Such relationship between electoral outcomes and financial power has been established by
many advocates of the rational choice theory. The Senegalese electorate, like voters in many poor countries, remains extremely exposed to electoral abuse.

Many reports have indicated that, in most cases, quite outrageous electoral expenditures contribute significantly to diverting the electoral preferences of the poor and needy Senegalese voter. In contrast, diasporic voters in Columbus, compared to the average Senegalese, are very rich people and thus do not need revenues from electoral bribery. Most of them are wealthy enough to offer their àddiya, or offerings, directly to the shaykh, while most of the poor taalibés-voters in Senegal usually tend to seek an indirect way to offer that àddiya. And usually, they give their votes in the hope that it will generate financial revenues to the shaykh. The chart below shows the answers of 50 Senegalese respondents in Columbus, Ohio to the question: “Do you believe that a taalibé-citizen should follow an electoral ndigël as a means to help yield financial income for the shaykh?”

Table 4. Perceptions about the instrumentalization of ndigël. Note: Data is based on questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers do not believe at all</th>
<th>on some cases</th>
<th>believe</th>
<th>strongly believe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this chart too, the figures are very telling. Almost none of the informants is ready to take bribes in exchange for their votes. The opposite is more likely to be recorded
among local Senegalese voters according to Seck and Gueye’s 2012 reports which highlight the highly publicized presence of political *shaykhs* in the 2012 campaign. In the end, one understands that achievement of financial independence among Senegalese voters in Columbus, Ohio enables them to avoid electoral bribes which usually condemn most *taalibés*-voters to honor the patron-client relations that their *shaykhs* buy into.

*Influences from a Politically More Secular American Culture*

Hernecker shares with many theorists of “participatory democracy and self-management” that, “workplace democracy has the potential to lead workers to expand their solidarity beyond the frontiers of their enterprises.” What Hernacker terms participatory democracy can be understood as a sense of equality in personality and access to entrepreneurial opportunities. The first seems mostly absent in many Senegalese Sufi structure given the fact that religious leadership is still determined by birth. In Columbus, Ohio, however, most of my informants admit that a great sense of equality, individualism and freedom of choice is enforced at their workplaces in Columbus. Most of them also seem to live by the same (workplace) principles in their homes and within their communities. Thus the profiles of most Senegalese immigrants in Columbus fit in Hernacker’s characterization. In an attempt to verify this assumption, I proposed to examine the changes in the voting preferences of some of my interviewees by isolating a group of 12 informants. All of the latter have regularly voted in the period which spanned between 1988 and 2007. In the end, I obtained that not only their political involvement has constantly increased, but also they have been progressively less and less exposed to
mixing political views with religious affiliations. Below are quotations from three recorded interviews.

Interviewee 1 is a fifty-two-year old man and summarized his political viewpoint in the following words, “Amnaa siñ kay... Wante Senegaal dafa bari ay siñ jamono jiñ nekk nii. Te politig bi rax ci seen jëftin moo doy waar. Su eleksoñ jotee, ñenn ñi dañ lay jéém a manipile. Fii ci Amerig nag amul loolu... Man dunduma ko book fii. Fii, damay wooteel ku saab xel jàpp... Moo tax man, léégi, samay kilifa diine, seen kadduy diine rekk laay déglu. Luñ ma wax ci politig duma ko jëfe” [Of course I have a shaykh… But, nowadays, there is a lot of shaykhs in Senegal. And my major concern is that most of them are politicized. During [Senegalese] elections, some try to manipulate you. But I don’t see anything like that here in the US… Here [during American elections], I vote according to my own conviction… That’s why, now, I follow my shaykhs only in religious matters. When they issue a political command [during Senegalese elections], I don’t follow it].

Interviewee 2 is a fifty-eight-year old man and has lived in the United States for fourteen years. Talking about the contrast between his past voting in Senegal and his present-day political attitude, he said (in Pulaar), “…woote am Senegal, kala to koreeji am buri yahrude ko toon ngabortoomi. Nedđo abbotonoo tan ko e keewal. Kono gila ngarmi Amrik, kebmi kaayitaaji am, mbadûmi wootte e wooteeji leydi ndi, paammi wonde nedđo foti yahrude tan ko e miijo mum e kadi mbo yona” […] as for my voting back in Senegal, I used to simply follow the choice of my community. One would always follow the majority. But since I came to the United States, got my papers [citizenship]
and started to vote in US elections, I understood that one should only follow their own mind and vote according to their own conviction].

Interviewee 3 is a fifty-five year old man and has been in the United States for fifteen years. Speaking in Pulaar, he expressed his political position in these words, “Kala ceerno jamiroowo ma yo a wootan o wala o, ko kaalis yëewata wona Alla… Gila puddimi wootde e elekoaraji Amrik ko njiimi doo ko to bange demokaraasi findini jam no feewi” [Every shaykh who issues to you a command to vote for one political leader or another is looking for money, not God… Since I began taking part in American elections, I have learnt a lot from the [American] system in terms of democracy].

The three discourses are illustrative of political change among Senegalese expatriate voters in Columbus, Ohio. Many other participants observed quite similar political views. In highlighting the break existing between the past (voting back home) and the present (voting in Columbus, Ohio), all three statements demonstrate that the American experience has played quite a determinand role in cultivating different values of secularism, individualism and freedom among the Senegalese expatriate voters. Moreover, voting during American elections has significantly influenced the expatriate citizens’ voting during Senegalese elections. The fact that there is little influence of religion in their American electoral preferences has caused a progressive change in political attitude regarding their votes during Senegalese elections. As a result, they are less and less inclined to following electoral ndigëls.

In conclusion to this chapter, one notes that the Senegalese immigrant community in Columbus, Ohio is socially, economically and politically active. Struggles for social
integration at different levels have increased the visibility of the immigrant community. Visibility occurs through social networks fueled by associational relations, media and business. Long-distance participation in Senegalese politics marks a new era in Senegalese migration and politics. Yet, although continuous efforts have been made by the Senegalese government, US embassy and General Consulate to help electoral participation, the latter is still ineffective among Senegalese in Columbus, Ohio given the low percentage of participation.
CHAPTER 5: GENERAL REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Remarks on Senegalese Electoral Participation in Columbus

According to the 2012 report of the Senegalese Autonomous National Electoral Commission (Commission électorale nationale autonome – CENA), 87,696 Senegalese voted from the entire Senegalese diaspora. From the same report, one can discover that the Senegalese electorate in the diaspora put together is more important than the number of voters in the Senegalese regions of Sediou and Kedougou. According to these statistics, the diaspora plays an important role in the outcome of Senegalese elections.

More importantly, the Senegalese diaspora, including the electorate in the United States, contributed significantly to the 2012 victory of President Macky Sall who earned 72.79 percent of all diaspora votes. Despite these facts, low electoral participation in the diaspora, especially in Columbus, Ohio, is yet to be deplored.

Very low electoral participation is recorded in the Columbus, Ohio polling station. In the light of the previous estimations, only about 25 percent of all Senegalese immigrants in Columbus were registered to vote in 2012. According to data provided by the Consulate General, the average number of immigrants who actually voted in each US polling station was 169. This means that, in Columbus, more than half of the total number of registered voters might not have successfully casted their votes in 2012. This brought the percentage of electoral participation down to about 10.75 percent. Proportionally compared to the 57.1 percent electoral participation in Senegal, this participation is very low.
Many factors explain the causes of such a tendency. One reason relates to the general belief among Senegalese immigrants in Columbus that “all of them [presidential candidates] are the same.” In fact, out of 50 interviewees, 48 believed firmly in this political view. This position is mostly predicated on the fact that the 2012 major presidential candidates, namely ex-president Abdoulaye Wade and current president Macky Sall, belonged to the same political formation – the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS). The fact that the two candidates led the two strongest coalitions in 2012 – that were more likely to win – discouraged some Columbus voters who did not foresee change.

A second reason is the fact that most Senegalese immigrants in Columbus have tight schedules. Usually they work five to six days per week and for at least 8 hours per day. Throughout my research, I learnt that only a very few is willing to take a day off in order to register for elections or to vote. Even when registration teams are sent to Columbus from the Consulate General for registrations purposes, most immigrants are hardly visible. Most of them argue that they would rather stay home and rest after a long day of labor instead of finding time to register or vote for politicians who “only run for their pockets.” A third reason relates to the distribution of national identity cards (carte nationale d’identité) and voting cards (carte d’électeur). Many registered voters failed to withdraw their voting cards on time because they were outside US when Consulate General teams came back to distribute those cards. And when card owners returned to US, they did not seem very committed to withdrawing their cards or urging the Consulate General to forward them by any means possible. A fourth reason concerns transportation.
The fact that some Senegalese immigrants in Columbus cannot drive – because they are undocumented or just unlicensed – has made it difficult for them to travel at their will. As a result, most of the undocumented immigrants worry more about finding rides to get to work rather than worrying about transportation for electoral registration and voting.

*Note on the Electoral Ndigël Phenomenon in Diaspora*

The electoral *ndigël*, especially the implicit one, remains a major challenge in the consolidation of Senegalese electoral democracy. The constant presence of transnational *shaykhs* in Columbus, Ohio and the online dissemination of implicit *ndigëls* through technology seem to constantly expose the votes of the expatriate *taalibés* to the influence of religion. Yet, one particularity of the Senegalese immigrant voters in Columbus is that their political consciousness, financial independence and exposure to an American secular political culture have caused them to develop a more conscious and influence-free voting. The same is more likely to apply to other voters in the Senegalese diaspora given that they face the same migration-driven realities.

Electoral preferences of this kind are integral part of what constitutes the solid grounds for positive political change in Senegal. However, given the small percentage of electoral participation among Columbus, Ohio Senegalese, one can argue that a lot still needs to be done for the Columbus *ndigël*-free vote to be more effective. It seems that political consciousness among the Senegalese immigrant voters would gain a greater positive impact on the Senegalese democracy if combined with a significant electoral participation, which is for now lacking.
Recommendations on How to Increase Electoral Participation among Senegalese in Columbus, Ohio

Recommendations to Immigrant Voters in Columbus

- **Taking up the responsibility for political change:** This study shows that many Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, Ohio do not seem to take voting during Senegalese election as a serious civic duty. Most of them do not seem to perceive voting as an effective way of expressing one’s patriotism. It matters, in this occasion, to remind that only those who are politically active (voters) actively participate in the actual process of decision-making and nation-building. In this respect, Senegalese immigrants in Columbus, who already dispose of a rare opportunity to remain active citizens even beyond national boundaries, must fulfill their civic responsibility by massively participating in elections. In this respect, I believe that electoral registration and voting, whether in Columbus, Ohio or in any other place in the diaspora, must be worth taking a day-off.

- **Maximizing the advantage of existing ndigël-free voting preferences:** The fact that Senegalese immigrants in Columbus are much less influenced by electoral *ndigëls* is already an advantage. It constitutes a great potential towards the consolidation of Senegalese electoral democracy. In fact, compared to the Senegalese voters back home, immigrant voters in Columbus, if really committed to voting, are more likely to cast a more objective vote. An objective vote, in this context, means a vote which is less
likely to be subjected to diverting financial, social and religious manipulations. In this respect, ndigël-free votes among Senegalese citizens in Columbus, Ohio should be maximized.

- *Should one expect, for instance, that the Senegalese state play an effective role in increasing electoral participation among Columbus Senegalese?* As an addition to the course of our analysis so far, this question seems to help develop on issues related to whether the Senegalese state could play an effective role in increasing political participation among the diasporic citizens or not. In a study of the decline of electoral participation in the United States, Abrahamson et al. suggest that the low electoral participation among the American electorate results from “the weakening of party loyalties among the American electorate and declining beliefs about government responsiveness.”²¹⁷ In almost the same way, most Senegalese immigrants turn away from voting because they feel continuously forgotten by the successive governments and ruling parties. Moreover, it seems that the political leaders tend to be more interested in what makes their victory rather than the citizens’ effective participation in the electoral process. In cases of presidential term circumventions, for instance, an incumbent Senegalese government may discourage voting in one particular station or district after realizing that the particular electorate is not favorable for its victory. Given this quite habitual course of things, one can conclude that the responsibility of the state in increasing electoral participation is limited. As
a result, I suggest that the any effective way to increase electoral
participation among the Senegalese diasporic electorate is to come from the
voters themselves, not the state which can only be a temporary facilitator.

- **Self-organization among diasporic associations to facilitate active participation in the electoral process:** This research also shows that
Senegalese immigrants in Columbus are not sufficiently involved in the
electoral registration process despite the fact that membership to one
Senegalese secular association is mandatory before one can register to vote.
By self-organization, I mean the immigrant voters seeking to reach out to
the Senegalese government or General Consulate in order to guarantee
themselves a full participation in the electoral process. Again, as earlier
mentioned, voting is viewed as a right and a civic duty which each
Senegalese immigrant should claim and fulfill just like other civil rights and
duties. For this purpose, the secular associations could be of greater utility in
taking group initiatives. It seems obvious, for instance, that the (secular)
associations might be better informed about what time, days and places are
most suitable for electoral registration and voting to be held. Also, the
associations could be more instrumental in providing transportation
assistance to some of the immigrant voters who do not own cars. Yet it
matters to highlight that such an associational involvement in the electoral
process faces one recurrent challenge both at home and in the diaspora. In
fact, although secular, most Senegalese associations tend to deemphasize
political involvement by claiming that they are ‘apolitical’ so as to preserve their ‘credibility.’ By so confusing civic mindedness and political partisanship, many association members may end up distancing themselves from politics, which I believe is a structural mistake and discourages political activity. One should add that an association may promote political participation without having to influence the voting preferences of its members.

**Recommendations to the Senegalese Government and General Consulate**

- **Wider inclusion of Senegalese social networks in electoral registration processes:** According to my interviews and personal observations, the Senegalese diasporic social networks do not seem fully instrumentalized in the processes of electoral registration and voting. Once again, it is, in part, the immigrant voters’ responsibility to make that happen. Mostly because the government, after all, is there mostly to cater for its own political advantages, not forcibly the interest of the voter. Also, throughout my research, I discovered that those Senegalese social networks in Columbus which mainly include secular associations and *daayiras* constitute crucial spaces for one to get to meet and familiarize with Senegalese immigrants. In the same way, the Senegalese government and Consulate General should utilize those networks in getting more immigrants to register and to vote.

- **Increasing the number of registration teams and their mobility reach the more Senegalese in Columbus:** Given that some Senegalese immigrants do
not own cars or have driving licenses, it belongs, in part, to the Consulate General to find ways to facilitate access to registration and voting places. This can be done by increasing the number and mobility of the registration teams, by providing transportation assistance or by having registration sessions set up at more convenient times and places closer to Senegalese places of residence.

- *Facilitating the distribution of ID and voting cards:* This is a major issue which some of my informants experienced. In fact, out of the 50 interviewees 9 stated that they have not been able to either collect their national IDs or their voting cards. One cannot vote without one or the other. Most of the informants blame it on the Consulate General which they say has not facilitated the collection process. Two (2) other interviewees stated that they were sure to be registered for the 2007 elections but could not find their names on the electoral lists on the voting day. It is high time such problems were solved by the Senegalese government and its Consulate General in order to guarantee a fuller access to voting.
CONCLUSION

In conclusion to this study, it is legitimate to state that the Senegalese electorate in the diaspora, due to its growing number and particular social status, has an important role to play in the distribution of political power at home. The particularity of immigrant voters in Columbus, Ohio is that their voting preferences are much less vulnerable to the electoral ndigël compared to home voters. Such a political contrast between home and there is based mostly on a greater political consciousness, achievement of financial independence and exposure to a more secular and individualistic American political culture. In fact, from workplaces to the surrounding neighborhood in Columbus, Ohio, Senegalese immigrants have familiarized and finally committed themselves to greater ideas of electoral individualism and political freedom.

Furthermore, the fact that Senegalese migrants in general and the Columbus enclave in particular constitute a major financial support for large families in Senegal causes them to have a great political influence on the electorate back home. Subsequently, this could facilitate the translation of ndigël-free voting into the electoral attitudes back home. Yet, it seems that such political communication can only be effective if Senegalese citizens in the diaspora show more commitment to participating massively in the distance-voting programs, which is presently lacking.

The study has found that such a low electoral participation is caused by three major attitudinal factors. One, most of the interviewees give no interest to voting because they believe that all the presidential candidates are the same and only run for their own bellies. Two, the (secular) diasporic associations which constitute crucial social networks within
the Columbus Senegalese community are not sufficiently instrumentalized (by both the members and the government) in the electoral process. By instrumentalization, I mean a fuller integration of the Senegalese secular associations in the electoral which could facilitate the registration of voters, the distribution of voting cards and voting. Three, most of the Senegalese in Columbus, Ohio are wage-labor workers who have busy schedules which very few of them are ready to change for voting reasons.
GLOSSARY

àddiya: Arabic-borrowed, offering to a Sufi guide, or leader

al-hajj: Arabic-borrowed, Muslim male who completed pilgrimage to Mecca

amr: Arabic-borrowed, a command from the leader

asr-ul-jumu’a: Arabic-borrowed, a Tijani ritual

athieke: West African dish, especially the peoples of Côte d’Ivoire

bid’a: Arabic-borrowed, innovation in Islam

ceebu-ginaar: Senegalese dish, rice and chicken

ceebu-jën: Senegalese dish, rice and fish

ceebu-yapp: Senegalese dish, rice and meat

ceerno: Pulaar for shaykh

daayira: an association fo Sufi followers

danniyanke: Pulaar for migrant

futankoobe: Pulaar demonym for the people of Fuuta, a region which straddles parts of southern Mauritania and northern Senegal

gamu: commemoration of the birth of Prophet Muhammad

guddig ajjuma: Thursday night, Sufi followers perform rituals in celebration of Friday

haalpulaar: an ethno linguistic group of Senegal

ibadu: Arabic-borrowed, Member of one Senegalese Islamic reformist ovement named Jama’at Ibadu Rahmane

jèbbalu: to surrender to a Sufi guide
**jumu’a:** Arabic-borrowed, Friday collective prayer for Muslims

**khalif-général:** supreme leader of the *tarixa*

**laayeen:** a Sufi order in Senegal

**mawlid:** Pulaar for the commemoration of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad

**maafe:** Senegalese dish, peanut-butter-based sauce eaten with white rice

**maggal:** most important Murid event, commemorates

**marabout:** same as *shaykh*

**móódu-móódu:** a Senegalese immigrant, usually wage-labor workers

**murid:** follower of the Muridiyya *tarixa*

**muridiyya:** a Sufi order in Senegal

**ndigël:** a (spiritual) ‘command/order’ issued by a Muslim Sufi guide or leader.

**ngaabunkoobe:** A Fulany community in the Senegalese region of Tambacounda, originally came from Guinea

**njëbbël:** submission to a Sufi guide

**pulaar:** a language spoken by the haalpulaar

**qadiri:** follower of the Qadiriyya *tarixa*

**qadiriyya:** a Sufi order in Senegal

**qidma:** Arabic-borrowed, the idea of working for God

**sëriñ:** Wolof for *shaykh*

**séérér:** an ethno linguistic group of Senegal

**sharif:** descendents of Prophet Muhammad

**shaykh:** Arabic-borrowed, a Sufi guide, or simply a Muslim guide
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>taalibé</td>
<td>a learner, a Sufi disciple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tarixa</td>
<td>from the Arabic tariqat, refers to each one of the Senegalese Sufi orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tijaniyya</td>
<td>a Sufi order in Senegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siyaar</td>
<td>from Arabic, spiritual visit to a Sufi leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tijani</td>
<td>follower of the Tijaniyya tarixa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ummah</td>
<td>Muslim community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wazifa</td>
<td>Arabic-borrowed, a Tijani ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wolof</td>
<td>an ethno linguistic group of Senegal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENDNOTES

1. The lexis ‘distance-voting programs’ is mine. It refers to the processes of electoral registration and voting administered by the Senegalese government and its US Consulate General based in New York.


9. Except for the term Khalif-Général which refers to the supreme leader of a tarixa, people’s usages of other titles usually overlap. Also, the leaders of distinct segments of religious authority within a tarixa bear the title Khalif-Général. Shaykhs are usually blood-related to a founder or historical leader of a tarixa and are well-learnt in Islamic knowledge. They are the conventional heirs of the supreme leadership – the General Caliphate. Yet, other taalibés who are not blood-related to the leading family may also earn the title Shaykh through different procedures of seeusal (rendering shaykh). While the authority of the Khalif-Général covers most of the tarixa, different types of shaykhs can be leaders of distinct Sufi segment or ‘fractions.’ Sēriñ (or Siñ) – literally ‘teacher’ – refers to a knowledgeable person who is well-learnt in Islamic knowledge. So, it can also be used for the above mentioned religious guides – Khalifs, Shaykhs. In the present days, the term has become a title given to respectable (senior) men although they may know only a little about Islam.

10. Until 1946, only Senegalese of Dakar, Gorée, Rufisque and Saint-Louis origins were granted (French) citizenship. So, inhabitants of these ‘four municipalities’ could vote like French citizens in France although there were certain civil inequalities still (see Gautron, 1962).

11. See Diop, 1981 In Persee for the transition of Muridyya from rural area to the urban center.

12. The term “enclave” is borrowed from Kane (2011). He uses it with different references – ethno-linguistic, cultural, and national – to categorize Senegalese immigrant groups in New York City. In this paper, I use “enclave” to refer to Senegalese immigrant community in Columbus, Ohio regardless of their ethno-linguistic differences -Haalpulaar, Wolof, Séérér, Joola, etc.


15. Cruise O’Brien, Symbolic Confrontations: Muslims Imagining the State in Africa.


17. General Caliphate and Khalifa-Général are used interchangeably in this study. Both expressions refer to the Sufi supreme authority which is held by the Khalif-Général, the supreme leader of the Sufi order, or tarixa.

18. Although leadership inheritance within the tarixas is age-based as well, juniors within the lineage/family do sometimes claim to be heirs of the spiritual legacy. See Kane (2011) on the Sy Tijaniyya and the Niass Tijaniyya and also Loimeir (2009) and Behrmann (1970).

19. Ndiaye, “serigne Ousseynou Fall, petit-fils de cheikh ibra fall : «Les enfants de Serigne Bara avaient pris leur père en otage, malgré lui».” Lineage-based leadership inheritance has been institutionalized so much so that when Atou Diagne – a leader of Hisbut Trqiyya (a Murid youth organization) – claimed Muridiyya supreme authority, his entire organization was banned for years by the Murid authority.


21. Except for the term Khalif-Général, usages of other titles usually overlap, which makes it tricky even for Senegalese themselves to tell clearly who is what. Sēriñ (or Siñ) – literally ‘teacher’ – refers to a knowledgeable person who is well-learnt in Islamic knowledge. So, it applies to religious guides with other
titles such as Khalifs and Shaykhs. In present days, the term has become a title given to respectable (senior) men although they may know a little about Islam. Khalif is a title for senior men in a family of a founder of a Sufi order. Non blood-related people can also earn the title through an ‘elevation’ procedure known as seexal (to render a Shaykh). Khalif is more of a blood-inherited status/title born by male seniors in the Sufi founder’s bloodline. They are usually the ones who can inherit the General Caliphate. Although they recognize the spiritual authority of the Khalif-Général of the tarixa, Shaykhs and Khalifs usually lead segments (or “factions”) formed by their own taalibés.

22 See Diop, Fonctions et activités des dahiras mourides urbaines (Senegal).
24 Ibid.
25 See Ebin (1995); Diouf (2000); Ross (2010); Kane (2011).
26 Not all daayiras perform such regular animated performances. Daayiras of professionals, for instance, only contribute financially most of the time.
28 ‘Drummers,’ here, applies usually to the Qadr (from Qadiriyya) and the ‘Baay Faals’ of Muridiyya. The Tijani do not include drumming in their Sufi ritual performances.
30 Ibid., p.3.
31 Rousseau, Du contrat social ou principes de droits politiques, 1762.
32 The Islamic principle that establishes that a non-Muslim cannot rule over Muslims.
33 For more information about colonial resistance in the Senegambia region see … The History of Islam in Africa and Robinson, The Holy War of Umar Tal.
34 Robinson quoted by Kane (2011).
35 See Mbacké, Sufism and Muslim Brotherhoods in Senegal
36 The Umarian Caliphate/empire did not end at his defeat. His son, Ahmad al-Kabir, took over the rule until his defeat by the French in 1893.
40 See Kane (2011).
42 Bid’a: Post-Muhammadanic innovations present in Sufi rituals in general. Shirq: association of something or someone with Allah.
44 Kane (2011, p. 46).
45 Loimeier, Patterns and Peculiarities of Islamic Reform in Africa
48 Kane (2011, p. 46)
51 Ibid.
52 Loimeier, (2003, p. 244).
54 Ibid.
55 Ibid. p. 9-10
The founder of the movement, Shaykh Ahmed Tidiane Sy, calls it a social movement.


Gamu or Mawlid (from Arabic Mawalid) is the celebration of the birth of the prophet. The speech is available at the DMWM website (http://moustarchidine.com/index.php/medias/videos/30-videos-mawlid/79-mawlid-2011).


Ses Glover, Sufism and Jihad in Modern Senegal: The Murid Order

willane (december, 2012).

See Mesquelier, Women and Islamic Revival in a West African Town; Kane (2011).

see Kane (2011).

See Behrman (1970); Kane (2011); Loimeier (2009).

For more details, see Willane in leQuotidien.

For more details, see Willane in leQuotidien.


Schaffer


Baay Faałs constitute one body of the Murid taalibés who trace their status of ‘privilege’ – they believe they are exempt of the five pillars of Islam – from Shaykh Ibra Faal, first taalibé of Shaykh A. Bamba.


Ibid.

Schaffer, Ibid.

Rousseau, p.47

Tocqueville, Democracy in America and Two Essays on America, p. 228.


Ibid., p. 5


Dahl (Ibid).


The author gives one Qur’anic reference: (4:59)


Ibid. pp. 18-21.

Ibid.

Ibid. pp. 145-152

Ibid.

Kane (2011); Diouf (2000)

Kane (2011, p. 44)


100 Diouf, 2000.
102 Kane (2011, p. 59-65); Buggenhagen (2013).
103 Bredeloup (1992, p.3); Traore (1994, p. 64).
104 Ibid.
106 Kane (2011, Ibid.).
107 Interview with five Haalpulaar immigrants in Columbus, Ohio.
112 Cesari, “Islam in the West: From Immigration to Global Islam,” In _Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review_ (p. 149-152).
113 Ibid
114 Cesari, Ibid.
118 Roy (2004, p.2)
119 Ibid., p. 221.
120 Ibid., p.225.
121 _Daara_ literally means school, but is mostly used in Senegal to refer to the Qur’anic school. Sufi _daaras_ teach the Qur’an, Islamic knowledge and are also known for providing moral education to disciples, or _taalibés_.
123 Diouf (2000, p. 685)
124 Ibid. p. 700.
125 _Baay Laat_ is a _boubou_ that bears the name of the third Khalif-Général of Touba and whose work was very important to the construction of the holy city of Touba.
126 _Wazifa_ and _Asru_ are part of the Tijani mandatory _wird_ (sets of prayers) rituals performed at specific times on top of the mandatory five Islamic prayers of the day.
128 Kane (2000) makes the same affirmation.
129 Sufi ‘transnational _Shaykhs_’ refer to the Senegalese Muslim guides who contribute to the “globalization” of the Senegalese Sufi order (see Babou, 2011; Kane, 2011; Soares, 2004). Most of these Senegalese _Shaykhs_ have regular calendars to visit their _taalibés_ settled in foreign countries in Africa, Europe and America.
130 Cruise, O’Brien, Ibid.
131 Ibid.
133 When satisfaction of personal interests becomes the basis of a _shaykh-taalibé_ relationship – as is the case of some segment leaders within the _tarixas_ –, the resulting political _ndigél_ becomes even more dangerous. Because, not only does it undermine the political preferences of the _taalibé-citizen_, but it also loses any sense of “corporativeness” and thus does not even contribute to the development of Islam.
According to information provided by the Senegalese General Consulate in New York, many Senegalese are present in cities within these states.

Kane (2011, p. 95).

Ibid.


Ibid. p. 923.

Ibid.


Babou (Ibid. pp. 43-44).

Babou (Ibid. p. 36).

Bamba, Nahju (Chapter 5, v.162), French trans. by S. Sam Mbaye. The translation (from French) into English is mine.


Interview with the president of the organizational commission of the Murid Daayira in Columbus, Ohio. Sikar is borrowed from the Arabic ‘Zhikr,’ meaning repeated recitations of the names of Allah. Njàng, in this context, means Sufi chants (based Sufi poetry written by Sufi precursors) usually performed in musicalities which differ from one tarixa to another. Cànt literally means praise-singing and praises miracles achieved by Sufi leaders. Sometimes cànt performances may be very similar to njàng, but the first is always louder and is sometimes thought to be just ‘Mbalax’ (Senegalese secular and rhythmic music).


Ibid.

Ibid.

Buggenhagen (2013).

Ibid. p. 260.

“Serigne Mansour Sy Djamil, Banquier Et Guide Religieux : Un Cartesien Sur Le Minebar”

Ibid.

Havard, 2006.


See Sow, Les logiques de travail chez les mourides.

Quoted by Elhadj Mansour Sy in “Le mot du président de la fondation” In www.fsdj.org.


Bamba Mbacké, Nahju (v.168). English translation is mine.


Ibid. p. 9.


Gouvernement du Sénégal (www.gouv.sn).


Peoplemov.in.

Smith et al. (2011).


Appadurai, 1996.


Hunker, Columbus, Ohio: A Personal Geography (2000, p. 7).


Ibid. p.7


Hunker (2000, p. 44).


Ibid.


Ibid.

Peoplemov.in


Many of my informants who live in East and North sides of Columbus share this estimation. Interview with the owner of Chez Rama, a Senegalese restaurant.


Interview with M. W.

Maggal is the major Murid event which drags more than a million people to the Murid holy city – Touba, Senegal – to commemorate Ahmadu Bamba’s 1902 return from his exile in Gabon. Interview with Murid daayira active members Taala and Cheikh.

Interview with O. S.

Interview with an active member of Ahbab.

Interview with F. L.

Interview with T. and C.

Interview with Taala and Cheikh.

Farlu Ohio website (http://diamalahi.org).

Interview with the Pulaar Speaking Executive Bureau; Réglement Interieur (2008-2009).

Data provided by the Consulate General of Senegal by mail.

Information provided by the Consulate General of Senegal in New York, NY.

Ngane Diouf, Head of the Economic Affairs, Consulate General of Senegal.


Ibid.


I have rewritten this quotation from one of my interviewees.

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Hunker, Henry, L. (2000). *Columbus, Ohio: A Personal Geography*. Columbus, OH.: OSUP.


Mesquelier, A. *Women and Islamic Revival in a West African Town*. Bloomington, IN: IUP.


