

BROTHERHOOD SOLIDARITY, EDUCATION AND MIGRATION: THE ROLE OF THE *DAHIRAS* AMONG THE MURID MUSLIM COMMUNITY OF NEW YORK

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ABSTRACT

The recent history of the Muridiyya is marked by an increasing urbanization of the brotherhood.¹ Mostly confined to the Peanut Basin of Senegal until the end of the Second World War, the brotherhood experienced an important migratory movement that sent Murid disciples first to the cities of Senegal and Africa, and then to Europe and the United States in the early 1980s. While scholars have noted and described the changes in the economy and constitution of the brotherhood, no attempt has been made to provide an alternative analysis of its development that integrates these transformations. A major contention of this article is that the recent evolution of the Muridiyya is best explained by characteristics internal to the brotherhood. Taking the Murid community of New York as a case study, it puts forward a framework for understanding the source of the cohesion and development of Murid migrant communities in an urban setting. This study has revealed that education, through the mediation of the *dahiras*, constitutes an important source of social capital among Murid migrants. The exploitation of networks of solidarity and brotherhood through *dahira* membership is critical to the survival of the Murids as a group and to their relative economic success in the urban context.

THE MURID MUSLIM MOVEMENT WAS FOUNDED at the turn of the twentieth century by Amadu Bamba Mbakke, a holy man from west-central Senegal. Bamba was born in the early 1850s and grew up in a context of

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1. Brotherhood is not an accurate translation of *tariqa* (path) that Murid disciples and shaikhs use to describe their organization. The bond that ties the Murid goes beyond mere fraternity in pursuit of worldly accomplishment that the word brotherhood implies. Murids share common beliefs and trust in Amadu Bamba and rely on his guidance for their fulfilment in this world and their salvation in the hereafter.

confrontation between Wolof kings, Muslim state builders and French colonialists. Senegal was the first country in West Africa to fall under European domination. By the 1890s French occupation of Senegal was almost completed. The traditional ruling class was defeated and its kingdoms divided into provinces administered by the French and their Senegalese allies. The cultivation of peanuts, vigorously encouraged by the colonial administration, rapidly became the base of the local economy.

In this context of rapid socio-economic and political transformation, Amadu Bamba regarded education as the main weapon in his struggle to save the souls of the masses. The pedagogy he developed from 1884, after he inherited the leadership of his family, put special emphasis on religious practice rather than ideology. He criticized the traditional way of teaching that mainly focused on memorizing the Koran, and advocated the combination of science and action. He compared those who learned without practising and implementing their knowledge to 'donkeys loaded with books'.² Over the years, Bamba continued to refashion his pedagogy. He developed a system of education based on the concept of *tarbiyya*, which combines instruction, work and prayers. This system is explained in his poetry,³ which is widely read among the Murids, and practised through the *daara-tarbiyya* or working school. The school stressed manual labour and constant meditation as a means to combat idleness and to provide the disciples with a shield against the corrupting influence of the French and the culture of the local rulers.⁴ It also emphasized the inculcation of values such as patience, humility, endurance and sharing. Amadu Bamba gained a considerable following in west-central Senegal and his numerous arrests and deportations by the French colonial authorities between 1895 and 1912 further enhanced his popularity.⁵

Scholars of the Muridiyya interpret the brotherhood as a response of the Wolof to the structural changes brought about by colonization and the introduction of a market economy. In Bamba's actions they see an attempt

2. Amadou Bamba Mbacké, *Massalik Al Jinaan* ('Les Itinéraires du Paradis'), (Daar El Kitab, Rabat, 1984) and *Recueil de Poèmes*, Vol. 1, (Daar El Kitab, Rabat, 1989) both translated from Arabic by Serigne Sam Mbaye.

3. For an analysis of Amadou Bamba's writings, see Fernand Dumont, *La Pensée religieuse d'Amadou Bamba* (NEA, Abidjan, 1975) and Amar Samb, *Essai sur la contribution du Sénégal à la littérature d'expression arabe* (Ifan, Dakar, 1971).

4. The *daara tarbiyya* is a specific Murid invention in Senegal. It is meant for adult disciples or *takk der* seeking 'an education of the soul'. The *daara tarbiyya* or working school was a combination of instruction and work. It regrouped male pupils aged from 9 to 25, organized in farming groups, under the direction of a supervisor or *jawriin* who represented the Murid Shaikh, founder of the *daara*. *Daara* education was an alternative to what the Murids perceived as the corrupting influence of the French and the *ceddo* (local aristocracy and their army of crown slaves). It used manual work as a way to transform the character of the disciples in the spirit of the brotherhood's ethic. The *Daara tarbiyya* often comprised a section in charge of initiating younger disciples into the Koran and Islamic rituals and practices.

5. Cheikh Anta Mbacké Babou, 'Autour de la genèse du Mouridisme,' *Islam et Sociétés au sud du Sahara* 11 (1997), pp. 5-39.

to rebuild Wolof society, which was profoundly disrupted by the colonial onslaught and the rapid economic and social transformations it provoked. These scholars perceived the brotherhood as a conservative rural movement and they were sceptical about its capacity to adapt to the progressive modernization of Senegalese society. They predicted that the combined effects of urbanization, Western education and the increasing penetration of capitalist relations of production in Senegal might lead to a progressive weakening and decline of the Murid organization.⁶

The brotherhood has shown, however, a capacity to generate cohesion and continuity among its members, despite the continuing softening of relations between *shaikh* and disciples characterized by strict submission.⁷ A century after its establishment, the Muridiyya remains the most popular and fastest growing Muslim brotherhood in Senegal. Its followers have spread beyond the borders of the country. Murid migrants thrive in the cities of Senegal, and in Europe and the United States, and the brotherhood is gaining new adherents in Senegal as well as among the populations in the host countries. At the time of the death of Amadu Bamba in 1927, the Murids were estimated to number 100,000. In 1952, Lucien Nekkache put the number at 300,000; today the Muridiyya contains over 3 million followers in Senegal out of a population of 10 million.⁸

Although most scholars attribute the emergence of the organization to external structural factors, I believe that the recent evolution of the Muridiyya is best explained by internal characteristics.⁹ Jean Copans has observed that peanut cultivation, which was perceived as the main factor in the foundation of the brotherhood, is no longer a central element of its economy. In addition, the brotherhood's base is shifting from rural to urban areas.¹⁰ Murid urban traders in Senegal and abroad are gradually replacing the farmers who, until recently, formed the social base of the brotherhood. While scholars have noticed the changes in the economy and the

6. See Donal Cruise O'Brien, *The Mourides of Senegal* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971), p. 238; Donal Cruise O'Brien and C. Coulon (eds), *Charisma and Brotherhood in African Islam* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1988), p. 136. See also Jean Copans, *Les Marabouts de l'Arachide* (Harmattan, Paris, 1988).

7. Cheikh Guéye, author of a seminal work on the geography of Tuubaa, the holy city of the Murids (Karthala, Paris, 2001), referring to the increasingly assertive power of disciples in the brotherhood, speaks of a 'crisis of khalifal authority' (personal comm.). But the apparent total submission of Murid disciples to the will of their *shaikhs* claimed by adherents to the Muridiyya and conveyed by the literature appeared to be a simplification of the complex relationships between marabout and disciples.

8. Lucien Nekkache, 'Le Mouridisme depuis 1912', Rapport au Gouvernement du Sénégal (1952), Archives Nationales du Sénégal, sous série 2G (Saint-Louis, Senegal, 1952), p. 1.

9. O'Brien, *The Mourides*; Christian Coulon, *Le Marabout et le Prince* (Pedone, Paris, 1981); Copans, *Les Marabouts de l'Arachide*.

10. O'Brien, the *Mourides*; Coulon, *Le Marabout*; Mamadou Diouf, 'Commerce et cosmopolitisme: le cas des diasporas mourides du Sénégal,' *Bulletin du Codesria* 1 (2000), pp. 20-29; Copans, *Les Marabouts de l'Arachide*.

constitution of the brotherhood, no attempt has been made to provide an alternative analysis of its evolution that integrates these transformations.

In this article I reflect on the role played by the *dahira* in the recent development of the Murid brotherhood, including overseas. The *dahira* is a creation of urban Murids that fulfils religious as well as secular functions. It serves as an educational institution and an instrument for the socialization and integration of Murid urban communities. Founded in the aftermath of the Second World War, it has become a key institution of the brotherhood. I contend that the *dahira* was instrumental in the steady urbanization and economic transformation that have marked the Murid brotherhood since the end of the Second World War. The *dahira* is capable of performing this role because it constitutes an important source of social capital. Taking the Murid community of New York as a case study, I examine how the *dahira* contributes to the cohesion and continuity of the Murid brotherhood.

The origins of Murid dahiras

Cheikh Mbakke, a grandson of Amadu Bamba and heir to the first caliph of the Muridiyya, Mustafa Mbakke, founded the first Murid *dahira* in the 1940s.¹¹ For Mbakke, the foundation of the *dahira* responded to the need to enhance solidarity and organization among the growing Murid urban community.¹² This initiative was not, however, welcomed by Mustafa's brothers, who saw in their nephew's endeavour a ploy to establish his authority and bolster his candidacy to the caliphate.¹³ Yet it was the disciples themselves who took the initiative to develop and expand the institution. By the 1960s, the *dahira* started to gain popularity among Murid disciples. Today, it has become a central feature of the Murid brotherhood. *Dahiras* are found wherever a Murid community exists.

The *dahira* was first conceived as a sort of prayer circle where disciples from the same town or neighbourhood would meet on a weekly basis to read the Koran, chant Amadu Bamba's religious poems and socialize. Adherents of a *dahira* were required to pay weekly, monthly or annual subscriptions used in part for mutual assistance and in part to contribute to the expenses of the brotherhood as a whole through its paramount leader or caliph. The

11. Ibrahima Marone signals that the first *dahira* was founded in Dakar by disciples of Babacar Sy, the caliph of the Tijjaan brotherhood in Senegal, in 1928. See 'Le Tidjanisme au Sénégal,' *Bulletin de l'Ifan*, série B, 32 (1970) pp. 136–215.

12. Khadime Sylla, 'Immigration et confrérie: la communauté mouride en Europe', *Mémoire de DEA, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales* (1992–3), p. 110. Author's interview with Mustafa Amar, leader of the *dahira Daaru Xudoos* in New York City, May 1999.

13. Succession in the Sufi brotherhoods is a complex issue. There are often conflicts and rivalries among contenders for the leadership. See Cruise O'Brien, *The Mourides*, pp. 122–40; Jean Schmitz, 'Un politologue chez les marabouts', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 91 (1983), pp. 329–51.

dahira developed first, and remains to a large extent, an urban institution. The Muridiyya, as already indicated, was born and developed in the rural area of west-central Senegal. It took root in a region dominated by Wolof farmers. This context provided a certain geographical, economic, cultural and social cohesion to the brotherhood. In the cities, Murid immigrants were confronted with a new socio-economic setting; they were immersed in an environment where they constituted a minority.

They engaged in trade and other occupations where the traditional mechanisms of solidarity developed in the Murid heartland were no longer operative. The constraints of city life forced the dispersion of Murid disciples in different and distant neighbourhoods where they mingled with people who often belonged to rival confessional organizations. Moreover, settlement in town also meant separation from the *shaikhs* who provided moral support and guidance. The *dahira* thus may be seen as a means for urban disciples to preserve group cohesion and rebuild communal solidarity. *Dahiras* also played a political role. Murid disciples soon understood how the *dahira* could be a useful instrument to pressure the government and the administration of independent Senegal to respond to their interests.¹⁴ Murid *shaikhs* also used the *dahiras* as political leverage to convey voting instructions for their allies or protest against governmental decisions they judged to be detrimental.

Gradually, the institution experienced a transformation in its structure and functions. With the rapid growth of the brotherhood in the urban centres of Senegal, new *dahiras* appeared which were organized along gender, occupational or geographical lines. Disciples affiliated to specific branches within the brotherhood also started to organize in *dahiras*. With the internationalization of the brotherhood, migrant disciples created new *dahiras* modelled on the international NGOs, as shown by the example of *Hizbut Tarqiyya*,¹⁵ *Matlabul Fawzayni*,¹⁶ and *Maam Jaara Buso*. These new breeds of *dahira* bridge the factional structure of the brotherhood and the formal geographical, institutional, and political boundaries that separate the Murid diasporas scattered around the world. Murid leaders encouraged this trend by bestowing their blessings on disciples who organized in *dahiras*.

14. Ngañ Caam (author's interview, Dakar, 18 February 1999) associates the creation of the first federation of Murid *dahiras* in Dakar with the encounter in 1962 between the leaders of the Murid traders of Sandaga, then under the threat of expulsion from the streets surrounding the market by the administration, and Falilu Mbakke, the second caliph of the Murids.

15. *Hizbut Tarqiyya*, formerly the *dahira* of the Murid students, was founded in 1975. It was the first Muslim religious organization founded on the campus of the University of Dakar, which was dominated by Marxist and nationalist student organizations until recently.

16. *Matlabul Fawzayni*, initially the *dahira* of the Murid immigrants, was founded in 1992 by a group of Murid living in Italy and Spain. For more on the Murid international *dahiras* see Cheikh Guèye, 'L'Organisation d'une ville religieuse' (Doctorat de troisième cycle de géographie, Strasbourg University, 1999), pp. 297–306.

The transformation in the structure of the *dahira* coincided with a modification of the role it performed within the community. The first *dahiras* founded in town can be viewed as a response to the social needs that emerged among Murid urban immigrants. New city dwellers in Senegal organized themselves in different types of ethnically and geographically based associations that served as instruments of socialization. The *dahira* was the specific response of the Murids to urban situations. This institution bridged the ethnic, geographical and other cleavages upon which urban solidarity was built. Indeed, the Murid was first identified by his/her religious affiliation. There was a global and negative image of the Murid migrant in Senegalese towns, regardless of his/her ethnic or regional origins. The distorted image of the Murid disciples among city dwellers can be traced from the colonial era during which the Muridiyya was associated with fanaticism, ignorance and vagrancy. This negative perception was only reinforced by the increase in Murid migration to towns, which started in the aftermath of the Second World War, gained momentum after independence in 1960, and accelerated during the droughts of the late 1970s. I contend that the feeling of marginality contributed to the development and strengthening of communal links between Murid disciples through institutions such as the *dahira*.

The first Murid community to settle in towns in Senegal was overwhelmingly composed of farmers and craftsmen who were not educated in modern French or Arabic schools, but were either uneducated or trained in the Murid *daaras* (or rural working schools). These immigrants also lacked the business skills that would have facilitated their integration into the urban economy. As a consequence, they had to carve out their own niche. Murid disciples worked as mattress makers, craftsmen, water carriers, porters, dealers in second-hand goods, and street pedlars, and they lived in the poorest neighbourhoods of the cities.¹⁷

However, most of these newcomers to town were nurtured in Murid values through the education they received in their *daaras*, villages or families. They learned the virtues of brotherly love and sharing, the importance of discipline and hard work. In the urban context, the *dahira* helped to preserve, develop and reproduce these values that shaped Murid identity. It fostered links of solidarity, reaffirmed the personality of the brotherhood and socialized the newcomers by providing a familiar and supportive environment. The *dahira* mediated between Murid values and urban constraints. Although the *dahira* was conceived as a religious institution, it also performed wider social functions. The weekly meetings of Murid disciples gave new immigrants (women as well as men) the opportunity to meet their

17. Paul Marty, *Etudes sur l'Islam au Sénégal*, vols I and II, (Leroux, Paris, 1917); Nekkache, 'Le Mouridisme depuis 1912'; O'Brien and Coulon, *Charisma and Brotherhood in African Islam*.

more experienced peers and to learn from their experience with city life. Problems at the workplace were discussed and support from the community sought; conflicts were mediated and business opportunities offered. The *dahira* also assisted in the organization of religious and social events, such as pilgrimages or marriages and baptisms, and helped to repatriate and bury the dead in the cemetery of the holy city of Tuubaa in Senegal or other Murid burial sites.

Murid migration to New York City

The literature on Senegalese emigration is dominated by studies of the Soninke and Pulaar immigrants of the Senegal River Valley.¹⁸ A harsh environment and a long tradition of contacts and interactions with North Africans and Europeans favoured the mobility of these two communities. Soninke and Pulaar sent the first groups of Senegalese emigrants throughout West and Central Africa and then Europe as early as the end of the First World War.¹⁹ Works on Soninke and Pulaar emigration reveal the important role ethnicity, parental authority and village solidarity play in the choosing of destinations, selecting and sending of immigrants, and building of networks.²⁰

Gérard Salem's thesis on Senegalese merchants in France constitutes the first major academic work devoted to the less known international Murid migration.²¹ Salem discovered that brotherhood solidarity and networks built by Murid merchants in the urban centres of Senegal constituted a stepping-stone that allowed for the expansion of Murid businesses across France and neighbouring European countries. Research conducted in Italy and the United States confirms the noticeable influence of the brotherhood

18. Souleymane Diarra, 'Les travailleurs africains noirs en France,' *Bulletin de l'Ifan*, xxx, série B, 3 (1968), pp. 884–1004; Adrian Adams, *Le long voyage des gens du fleuve* (Maspéro, Paris, 1977); Julien Condé et al., *Les Migrations Sud-Nord* (OECD, Paris, 1986).

19. Diarra, 'Les travailleurs africains'; Guy Prévost, 'Comment et pourquoi les travailleurs sénégalais viennent en France,' *Hommes et Migrations* 115 (1970), pp. 91–121; François Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants* (Ohio University Press, Athens, OH, and James Currey, Oxford, 1997).

20. In his study of the relationships between emigrants from Thilogne (a village of the Senegal River valley) and their village, Abdoulaye Kane shows the important role village solidarity plays in the life of Pulaar immigrants regardless of the country where they live. Abdoulaye Kane, paper presented at the international conference of Association pour une Anthropologie du Développement (APAD), Saint-Louis, Senegal, Jan. 2000.

21. Gérard Salem, 'De Dakar à Paris, des diasporas d'artisans et de commerçants: étude socio-géographique du commerce sénégalais en France' (Thèse de doctorat de troisième cycle, EHESS, Paris, 1983); *idem*, 'De la brousse sénégalaise au Boul'Mich: Le système commercial mouride en France,' *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 21 (1981), pp. 267–88.

on the behaviour of Murid immigrants.²² Findings from this research suggest that, in contrast to the cases of Soninke and Pulaar migration, ethnicity and village solidarity did not play a major role in the life and organization of Murid immigrants.

Although Murid traders started to migrate to Europe in the late 1960s, it is only in 1984/85 that the United States became an important destination for Murid migrants. Several factors contributed to the selection of the US as a major destination of Murid immigration. Millman notes that the rediscovery of Africa by a rising African-American middle class influenced by Afrocentrist ideas generated a renewal of interest in African crafts, culture and the continent in general.²³ African-American demand for African crafts in turn became a major incentive for Senegalese immigration to the US. I concur with Millman that contact with African-American tourists certainly enhanced awareness among the entrepreneurial Senegalese traders about the potential of the American market for African crafts. Yet I maintain that, in regard to Murid immigration to the United States, other factors have played a more critical role.²⁴ For example, the adoption by the French government of drastic immigration laws, following the oil crisis of the mid-1970s, and the growing hostility in Western Europe towards immigrants, contributed to the shift in the destination of Murid immigration.²⁵ Moreover, the drought that plagued Senegal in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, combined with the fall in the price of peanuts on the international market, led to the increase in the flow of West African immigrants to Europe. The difficulties in entering European countries compelled the Murids to explore alternative destinations.

The first Murids arrived in America in the early 1970s.²⁶ This group was composed of a small number of temporary migrants already engaged in business ventures across Africa and Europe. These traders stayed in cheap

22. Donald Carter, 'Invisible cities: from Tuba to Turin: Senegalese transnational migrants in Northern Italy' (Ph.D thesis, University of Chicago, 1992); Ottavia Schmidt Di Friedberg, 'L'Immigration africaine en Italie: le cas sénégalais,' *Etudes Internationales* 24 (March 1993); Victoria Ebin, 'Les commerçants mourides à Marseille et à New York,' in Emmanuel Grégoire and Pascal Labazée (eds), *Grands commerçants d'Afrique de l'Ouest* (Karthala, Paris, 1993), pp. 101–123; Scott L. Malcolmson, 'West of Eden: The Mouride ethic and the spirit of capitalism,' *Transition* 71 (1996), pp. 24–43; Sylviane Diouf-Camara, translated from French by Richard Phicox, 'Senegalese in New York: a model minority?' *Black Renaissance/Renaissance Noire* 2 (Summer/Fall 1997), pp. 95–115.

23. J. Millman, 'Caste party: Africa arrives in America,' *APF Reporter* 17 (1996), pp. 1–5.

24. In fact, the World Festival of Negro Art organized by President Senghor, father of Senegalese independence and first President, in 1966 in Dakar was an important cultural event that allowed Americans and Europeans to discover and appreciate Senegalese art and artists. But it was only in the late 1970s that the American market was explored.

25. Stephen Castles and Mark Miller, *The Age of Migration* (The Guilford Press, New York, 1993).

26. Victoria Ebin, 'A la recherche de nouveaux "poissons": stratégies commerciales mourides par temps de crise', *Politique Africaine* 45 (1992), p. 94; Diouf-Camara, 'Senegalese in New York,' p. 96. See also author's interviews with Mbay Caam and Cheikh Amar, Harlem, New York, May 1999.

hotels in New York City for a couple of months a year during the summer, selling masks and antique items in return for cosmetics and other merchandise prized in Africa. They relied primarily on the small community of Senegalese students in the city for their businesses. One of the most successful of these seasonal traders, Cheikh Guèye, joined up with a Korean businessman to open the first plant for the production of artificial hair in Dakar in 1978/79.²⁷ This small number of transnational traders paved the way for the larger waves of immigrants of the mid-1980s. New York rapidly became the privileged destination for Murid immigrants. They were attracted by the opportunities offered by the American market, the relative tolerance of street vending by the New York City authorities, and the absence of strong competition.²⁸

The mid-1980s marks the arrival of the second wave of Murid immigrants in New York. These permanent immigrants specialized in street vending. The group was mainly composed of single men in their thirties who had already garnered some experience in street vending from previous sojourns in African and European cities.²⁹ The majority originated from the rural area of west-central Senegal, which was plagued by a cycle of drought and economic depression. They lived in apartments rented collectively, sharing rooms and food to cut costs and reproduce a situation similar to the living environment at home. In contrast to the pioneers who specialized in the selling of antique items, they dealt in a variety of goods. They sold watches, umbrellas, sunglasses, T-shirts, hats and other items, targeting mainly tourists visiting the downtown area. With their suitcases full of merchandise they peddled their wares on Fifth Avenue, Lexington, 42nd and 34th Streets, Times Square, Canal Street and Broadway. Street vending, along with cab driving, remains the main occupation of Murid migrants in New York City, despite the police pressure to which they are now subjected.³⁰ In fact, vending is not only the most lucrative job, but also the only occupation offered to the new immigrant who often lacks the means and the skills to engage in other businesses. According to the unofficial reckoning of some police officials in New York, 90 percent of all arrested street

27. Author's interview with Mbay Caam, Harlem, 17 May 1999.

28. Diouf-Kamara, 'Senegalese in New York,' p. 95. My informants in New York City also acknowledged that, at the beginning of their settlement in the city, the police showed a certain tolerance for their activities. They were rarely arrested, and when they were, only the merchandise exposed was confiscated. Now they say that the pressure is intense and there is less tolerance. They are charged with selling counterfeit goods, which is a more serious offence that can carry up to a year in prison. City officials also consider the help that the Murid community provides to its members in trouble with the police as evidence of organized crime. See David Hecht, 'New York dispatch: watch men,' *The New Republic*, 12 April 1999.

29. Author's interviews.

30. On Senegalese business in New York see Paul Stoller, 'Spaces, places, and fields: the politics of West African trading in New York City's informal economy,' *American Anthropologist* 98 (1996), pp. 776-88.

merchants in the city are Murid.³¹ However, the adoption of the US amnesty law of 1986 resulted in a steady diversification of the economic activities of Murid immigrants in New York City. This law allowed many immigrants to escape from the semi-clandestine situation in which they were living.

By the early 1990s some Murid migrants had started to create their own businesses using savings accumulated from street vending and money generated from the rotating credit system.³² They mainly targeted the services and commercial sectors. There were Murid businessmen who specialized in shipping, travel arrangements and the transfer of remittances.³³ These entrepreneurs tapped the market created by the growing number of Senegalese immigrants in New York and the African traders travelling back and forth between Europe, New York City and Africa for their businesses. Although some of the Murid businessmen were performing these jobs illegally, they had the trust of their (often illiterate) customers to whom they offered an alternative to the costly and complicated procedures of the banks and international shipping companies. This trust, that is rooted in belonging to the brotherhood, is an important element for the construction of the networks which, in turn, support the businesses of Murid immigrants.

Commercial businesses are located in the neighbourhood of West 116th street and Frederick Douglass Boulevard in Harlem where a great number of Murids live. After the closure of the 125th Street African Market by Mayor Giuliani in 1995, African merchants retreated to the new but smaller market opened on West 116th Street.³⁴ Many Murid immigrants preferred to settle outside the market around 116th Street and Malcolm X Boulevard where they created a sort of economic and cultural enclave, which is now known as Little Senegal.³⁵ Senegalese immigrants own 80 percent of the businesses located in this area.³⁶ The enclave functions as both a residential neighbourhood and a work area. Immigrants rented space on the ground floor of their apartment buildings where they opened restaurants specializing in the preparation of Senegalese and African dishes and stores selling crafts, Islamic paraphernalia, *halal* food, and other ethnic goods. The

31. Hecht, 'New York dispatch', p. 1.

32. Author's interview with Cheikh Amar, Harlem, 19 May 1999.

33. S. M. Tall, 'Kara Exchange International, nouvel instrument financier pour les courtiers mourides, de l'axe Dakar-New York,' paper read at Colloque Internationale de l'APAD, University of Hohenheim, Germany 5-8 June 1996.

34. Diouf-Kamara, 'Senegalese in New York,' p. 101; Stoller, 'Spaces, places and fields,' p. 782; Sharon Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities* (Blackwell, Cambridge, 1996).

35. For a theoretical analysis of the concept 'economic enclave' and its application to a migrant community see Alejandro Portes, 'The social origins of the Cuban enclave economy of Miami,' *Social Prospect* 30 (1987), pp. 340-72. *Little Senegal* is also the title of a movie set among the Senegalese community of Harlem released in April 2001 by the French filmmaker, Rachid Bouchareb.

36. Hecht, 'New York dispatch,' p. 1.

Malcolm Shabaaz mosque, located at the heart of the enclave, served as a community centre for Murids, who rented space in the complex for the celebration of the *maggals*³⁷ and *mawlud*,³⁸ and the organization of conferences and other activities during the annual celebration of Amadu Bamba Day. During the hot summer weekends, groups of Murid and Senegalese immigrants cluster under the shade of their apartments or at the doors of the numerous shops that dot West 116th Street to play the French card game *belote* or checkerboard with much noisy laughter and disputes. Murids are credited for their positive contribution to changing the face of this formerly impoverished and violence-ridden sector of Harlem.³⁹

Murids entertain distant relationships with their American neighbours; they have closer relationships with the African-American Muslim followers of Malcolm X who manage the Malcolm Shabaaz mosque.⁴⁰ They pray in this mosque led by Imam Pasha and participate in the parades and activities organized by the community. The imam of the mosque pays respect to Shaikh Murtalla during his annual visit to New York and interacts with Murid disciples. The Muridiyya is making inroads among the African-American community of Harlem, but Murid disciples are not actively involved in *dawa* activities.⁴¹ Conversions are made mostly through marriages between Murids and African-American women or during the visit of Shaikh Murtalla which draws much attention to the Murid community of New York City. Murids recognize that the personage of Amadu Bamba appeals to African-Americans because of his status as a black hero and his steadfastness in the face of French colonial oppression, but they blame language barriers and over-commitment to their business enterprises for the slow development of the brotherhood among African-Americans. Now that they have built their own centre where a mosque, a school, a library, and offices to care for people interested in the brotherhood are available, they hope that they will be able to do better in bringing people into the brotherhood.

The saying that in matters of immigration women often follow men is also confirmed with regard to the Murids. A small number of Murid women, already familiar with international trading, first started to arrive in New York as temporary migrants in the late 1980s. These women targeted the

37. The *maggal* is the major Murid religious event which draws up to 2 million pilgrims to the city of Tuubaa every year. See Christian Coulon, 'The *Grand Magal* in Touba: a religious festival of the Mouride brotherhood of Senegal', *African Affairs* 98, 391 (1999), pp. 195–210.

38. The celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad.

39. Hecht, 'New York dispatch', p. 1.

40. For relations between the Murid and their African-American neighbours, I rely on my interviews with Dame Babou, the local correspondent of the Senegalese newspaper *Sud-Quotidien*, and with Gumba Jaxate, the treasurer of the umbrella *dahira* of the Murid of New York and leader of the Murid community there for many years.

41. *Da'wa* is an Arabic word meaning calling or activities for the propagation of the Muslim faith.

summer markets. By the early 1990s more women arrived as spouses joining their husbands. The number of Murid women in New York has recently increased considerably; the majority of them are single, divorced or temporary migrants who have left their husbands behind in Senegal. In contrast to the men, these women come mainly from urban areas. In fact, Murid immigrants of rural origin often prefer to marry urban women for the sake of prestige. In addition, only women city dwellers seem to show enough independence vis-à-vis parental authority and cultural constraints to attempt the adventure of migration alone. Murid women in New York City have their own *dahira* named after Maam Jaara Buso, Amadu Bamba's mother. They are proud of their participation in the life of the community. They feed the disciples during the religious feasts and, as their president, Fatim Amar, boasts, they are always at the forefront of the fulfillment of financial duties and other economic, social, and cultural obligations.⁴²

Many of the businesses run by women are concentrated in residential areas. They work in restaurants or prepare in their own kitchens the food they sell to Senegalese working downtown. The section of Broadway between 27th and 31st Streets is particularly targeted because of the concentration of Senegalese businesses there. However, hair braiding now constitutes the principal activity of Senegalese women in New York. Many women have opened their own beauty salons or work at home; some are hired and work for compatriots or for African-American hair stylists. An increasing number of women are involved in street trading and compete with the men.

The arrival of women and the reunion of migrant families have brought some tensions in the Senegalese and Murid migrant communities of New York. Divorces and family disputes have become rampant in immigrant families. 'The African Hour' and 'African Time', two weekly radio talk shows run by Senegalese journalists based in New York City, devote the majority of their discussion themes to these questions.⁴³ My sources estimate that fewer than 50 percent of all marriages contracted between Senegalese immigrants in New York last more than four years. This seems to be a normal rate of divorce in the American context but it is fairly high for Senegalese who, in general, enjoy a stable family life. Married men who moved their families from Senegal to New York City also experience the same problems of divorce and disputes. Men and women disagree in their explanation of the causes of the problem. The men blame the women for neglecting their duties as caretakers of their husbands and houses by

42. Intervention of Fatim Amar at the conference held in August 1996 at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York by the Murid community on the occasion of the annual visit of Murtalla Mbakke.

43. During my two field trips in New York I was able to monitor the debates in these two talk shows. My interviews with Dame Babou, one of the talk show hosts, and other Senegalese immigrants confirm the existence of these tensions.

devoting too much energy and time to making money. Furthermore, the men reproach their women for refusing to participate in the household expenses, citing Wolof and Islamic traditions that exclusively assign this responsibility to men. Male immigrants also criticize the women for taking advantage of the rights and opportunities that women enjoy in the United States while refusing to bear the constraints that come with these benefits.

Women immigrants, on the other hand, assert their refusal to be confined to the kitchen, and emphasize their right to work, to earn money, to support their parents back in Senegal, and to make provision for the future. They accuse the men of being jealous of their better financial situation. Moreover, the women suspect that if they allow their men to save money by sharing the household expenses, the men might gain the financial capacity to marry another wife. Women believe that many male immigrants are uncomfortable with family life in New York because they no longer hold the position of authority they enjoyed in Senegal, a position which allowed them to control the lives and economic resources of their wives. It is interesting to note that if *dahira* networks have been successful in helping the economy of the migrant communities, they have not so far had a noticeable impact in solving the crises that plague Murid migrants' families. The overwhelming domination of men in these institutions, gender bias, and the intimate nature of the problems involved in marital relations perhaps explain this failure.

Dahiras in New York City

Mustafa Mbakke, a great-grandson of Amadu Bamba, founded the first Murid *dahira* in New York City in 1985/86.⁴⁴ Mustafa arrived in New York City in 1981 to study at the New York Institute of Technology, after having completed his religious training in Saudi Arabia. The headquarters of this first *dahira* was at his house in Brooklyn. It must be emphasized, however, that, before the creation of this *dahira*, informal meetings were organized on a weekly basis by some Murid disciples living in New York City. These gatherings were occasions to read the Koran and the poems of Amadu Bamba and share refreshments.⁴⁵

What Mustafa provided was a formal and regular structure that brought the whole community together. His house served as a rallying point for the Murids of New York. The Brooklyn headquarters was also a place where people learned about Amadu Bamba's message and teachings. In addition, Sunday night discussions were organized for African-American Muslims interested in learning more about Amadu Bamba.

44. For information on Mustafa and his role in the creation of Murid *dahiras* in New York, I rely on Malcolmson, 'West of Eden' and my interview with Abdrahman Ahmed, a leader of the African-American Murids of New York, in May 1999.

45. Author's interview with Cheikh Amar, Harlem, 19 May 1999.

The years 1985/86 brought an increase of Murid migration to New York City. This period was also marked by changes in the immigrants' agenda. More Murids started to move from mid-town Manhattan to uptown in Harlem, the South Bronx and Brooklyn where rents were more affordable. They tended to live in the same buildings and neighbourhoods. As noted by my informants, it was during this period that many immigrants started to make plans for a longer stay in the United States.⁴⁶ The US amnesty law of 1986 that allowed 1,000 Senegalese undocumented immigrants to acquire a legal status enhanced this trend.⁴⁷ As a result, by the end of the 1980s many immigrants started to bring their families to the US. Although the growth of the Murid community of New York City is a perceptible reality, it is difficult to provide an accurate estimation of the number of Murids currently living in the city. The community is overwhelmingly composed of undocumented immigrants. In 1986 when only 100 Senegalese immigrants were officially recorded by the US immigration service, 1,000 came out of the blue to take advantage of the amnesty law of the same year. The people I interviewed believe almost unanimously that the pace of migration of Murids to the United States has recently quickened in spite of tougher immigration laws. This opinion is consistent with the findings of a report released by the New York City Planning Department in January 1997.⁴⁸

The brotherhood's networks are very effective in channelling disciples into the country. In 1994, the Senegalese Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimated that 11,000 Senegalese immigrants lived in New York.⁴⁹ Recently, Susan Gordon, the consul at the US embassy in Dakar, put the number of Senegalese immigrants in the US at 10,000.⁵⁰ The leaders of the Murid *dahiras* of New York maintain that 80 percent of all Senegalese in New York and the United States are Murid. Currently, the Murid community in New York City can be estimated conservatively at around 5,000 to 7,000 out of a Murid community of perhaps 10,000 to 12,000 in the entire United States.

With the growth of the Murid community in New York, new *dahiras* were founded on the basis of marabout affiliation. These *dahiras* grouped disciples affiliated to a specific Murid leader and his lineage. In 1996, fourteen of these types of *dahiras* existed in New York; in 2001, perhaps thirty *dahiras*

46. Shaikh Amar relates these changes in the following terms: 'Since we realized that God has decided that our stay was going to be longer than anticipated and that we do not know when we are going to return home, we decided to put ourselves in adequate conditions.' Interview, Harlem, 19 May 1999.

47. *The New York Times*, 9 January 1997: A16.

48. *Ibid.*

49. See Tall, 'Kara Exchange International'.

50. *Sud-quotidien*, 15 December 1999. Ms Gordon did not indicate the source of this information. If the number reflects the immigrants officially recorded by the US immigration authorities, then one should at least double this number to approach the exact population of Senegalese immigrants.

of this kind functioned in the city.⁵¹ The importance of these *dahiras* reflects the *rapport de forces* between maraboutic lineages established back in Senegal. The *dahira Fatah* founded by disciples of the late Shaikh Falilu Mbakke, second caliph of the Murid, is the most powerful branch *dahira* of New York in terms of its constituency and financial contribution. It frequently welcomes sons and grandsons of the *shaikh*, who all year long tour the disciples to strengthen the bond between them and collect alms and financial support. *Fatah* also makes a substantial contribution to the leader of the lineage based in Tuubaa. The *dahira Daaru Xudoos*, which groups disciples of Shaikh Mbakke, is perhaps as powerful as *Fatah*. The late Shaikh Mbakke was the oldest grandson of Amadu Bamba and a powerful figure in the Muridiyya and Senegalese politics. He introduced the *dahira* among the Murids and his disciples were the first to organize in urban areas. The leader of this lineage, Serin Mbakke, is certainly the most powerful Murid leader after the current caliph, Shaikh Saliu, and he draws his power mainly from contributions made by his rich disciples established in the towns of Senegal and the rest of the world. *Dahiras* affiliated to the family of the late caliph Shaikh Abdul Ahad, to Mustafa Basiru Mbakke, another grandson of Amadu Bamba, to the family of the late Ibra Fati, the half-brother and close collaborator of Amadu Bamba, and to other less powerful Murid lineages also function in New York. Murids claim that all of these *dahiras* work in harmony and entertain fraternal collaboration. This is certainly true, but one can still perceive that beneath the show of unity and fraternity there is a certain competition that replicates the rivalry between Murid shaikhs in Senegal.

Following the first visit of Murtalla Mbakke, the youngest son of Amadu Bamba, to the United States in 1987, an umbrella *dahira* that regroups all the Murid of New York has been created. There is a division of labour between this *dahira* and the branch *dahiras*. The umbrella *dahira* handles the relationships between the whole community and the head of the brotherhood in Tuubaa. It mediates between the Murid community and the administrative and political authorities of New York City.⁵² It raises funds to finance local projects and contribute to the functioning of the brotherhood in Senegal. The umbrella *dahira* has the task of collecting voluntary

51. I thank Dame Babou, correspondent of the Senegalese newspaper *Sud-quotidien* in New York, for making available to me the list of associations formed by Senegalese living in the city.

52. Ahmed Sugu indicates that the idea of creating an association that regroups all the Murids of New York comes from Murtalla Mbakke and Balloji, the latter an African-American Murid and civil rights activist from New Jersey. He maintains that in 1987, Saliu Mbakke, son of the third caliph, Abdou Ahad Mbakke, came to New York to visit Balloji. The disciples, who at the time did not have access to the municipal authorities, met with Balloji to seek his intervention so that they could gain access to the authorities to submit their complaints and wishes. Balloji advised them to create a formal organization that would be the interlocutor with the authorities. The following year Murtalla Mbakke recommended that the disciples create the umbrella *dahira*. He also advised them to elect Balloji as their representative and adviser on all things related to governmental and municipal affairs.

financial contributions that are sent to the caliph every three months. This *dahira* also organizes the events that each year commemorate in New York 'Amadu Bamba Day', instituted in 1989 by the borough of Manhattan with the support of Mayor David Dinkins and Congressman Charles Rangel.⁵³

The branch *dahira*, as shown above, is formed by Murids affiliated to the same leader or lineage of leaders. The scope of its actions is generally limited to its members. Its activities are primarily geared to the socialization of its adherents and the satisfaction of their religious and social needs. It helps with the organization of events such as baptisms, marriages and the visits of religious leaders. It also plays an important economic role. It is to this *dahira* that Murid migrants turn when they have no relatives or contacts that can help them settle. In times of hardship, the branch *dahira* is the first institution to provide support to disciples. Its actions range from finding housing and providing start-up money for a job, to paying bail and financing the repatriation of deceased migrants to Senegal for burial. Disciples belonging to the same branch *dahira* generally know each other and maintain close personal relationships.⁵⁴

The international *dahiras* are also represented in New York. These types of *dahira* connect the Murid diasporas with Tuubaa and specialize in raising money for projects aimed at the maintenance and modernization of the holy city, and the propagation of Amadu Bamba's teachings. *Matlabul Fawzayni* buys cleaning equipment for the city of Tuubaa and spearheads sanitizing campaigns on the eve of every rainy season and *maggal*. This organization has raised \$8 million for the building of a modern hospital in Tuubaa, which is almost completed. *Hizbut tarqiyya*, on the other hand, specializes in the translation and diffusion of Amadu Bamba's work through printed materials and tapes, and takes care of guests during the *maggal*.

Dahira as a source of social capital

I use the concept of social capital developed by Bourdieu, Portes, Coleman, and other economic sociologists, to understand the mechanisms of brotherhood solidarity and the impact of the *dahira* in the development of the Muridiyya. Pierre Bourdieu defines capital as social power. He distinguishes between different forms of capital based on the accumulation of specific types of resources: 'cultural capital,' which is related to information and educational credentials; 'social capital,' which is founded on social connections and group membership; 'symbolic capital,' which is the form taken by any legitimized and recognized type of capital. These types of capital are

53. Interview with Mor Samb, Harlem, 2 August 1996.

54. Interview with Ahmed Sugu, Harlem, May 1999.

in turn fungible and convertible into the material form. I adopt the definition provided by Bourdieu.⁵⁵ However, unlike him, I do not conceive of social capital as merely a resource mobilized by factions or individuals in the competition for enhanced economic position or social status within a social structure. Rather, I emphasize the importance of community-oriented goals, which are not always exclusively reducible to the search for economic gains. I contend that the cohesion and continuity of the Muridiyya stem from its capacity to generate and circulate social capital among its followers. Three main institutions of education and social interaction play an important role in the production and distribution of social capital among the Murids. These are the *daara*, the *dahira* and the *maggal*,⁵⁶ but the *dahira*, because of its ability to foster trust and social networks, played a more influential role in the urbanization and economic development of the brotherhood.

Trust is generally considered a central element of any social institution that generates social capital. A group within which there is extensive trustworthiness and trust is able to achieve more than one that lacks these features.⁵⁷ The production of trust is predicated on the capacity of a group to enforce its norms by compelling the members to fulfil their obligations by virtue of its intrinsic power. Looking at the effects of social capital, scholars emphasize the importance of benefits derived from the connections to social networks beyond the immediate family. These benefits are secured through access to information and other scarce resources. However, the resources themselves do not constitute social capital; rather, the concept refers to the individual's or group's ability to mobilize them on demand. Social capital facilitates actions through the changes it creates in the relations among persons.⁵⁸

The *dahira* constitutes an important source of social capital because of the functions it performs among Murid disciples. The *dahira* derives its power and influence exclusively from the community of disciples. Adherence to a *dahira* is an engagement to embrace and protect the values of the Murid brotherhood and to conform to its ethic. Many of my informants in

55. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 1995); *idem*, 'On the theoretical and practical existence of groups', *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 32 (1987), pp. 1-18; *idem*, 'The forms of capital', in John G. Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, London, 1986), pp. 249-58.

56. See Coulon, 'The *Grand Magal*'.

57. See Ellen Wall, Gabriele Ferrazi, and Frans Schryer, 'Getting the goods of social capital,' *Rural Sociology* 63 (1998), pp. 300-22. See also Alejandro Portes, 'Social capital: its origins and applications in modern sociology,' *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998), pp. 1-24; James Coleman, 'Social capital in the creation of human capital,' *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988), pp. 95-120.

58. Alejandro Portes, *The Economic Sociology of Immigration: Essays on networks, ethnicity and entrepreneurship* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1995), p. 12. See also Coleman, 'Social capital', p. 100.

New York City define the *dahira* as a sort of 'classroom without ink or black-board' (that is, without the written word). They perceive the *dahira* as an institution where the core values of the brotherhood, such as fraternity, discipline, hard work, humility and sharing, are preserved and reproduced. The ability of the *dahira* to foster mutual trust among the Murids is rooted in its capacity to promote these shared values. This trust is re-enforced by the common belief that by working the Murid is also fulfilling a holy duty. The disciples perceive every economic success of a Murid as a testimony to the truthfulness of Amadu Bamba's message and a concrete manifestation of the acceptance of his prayers by God. Therefore, the granting of resources to a fellow *dahira* member to help his business is seen as a moral obligation and holy duty for which reciprocity and material rewards are not expected. On the other hand, every failure due to deviations from the values of the brotherhood and obligations of the disciples is seen not only as a personal failure but also as a betrayal of the community's ideals.⁵⁹ This attitude further enhances ties among members of the community and deters violation of its moral principles. Values reproduced and dispensed through the *dahira* generate 'similar dispositions and interests' among disciples, which in turn facilitate the production of social capital.

Networks among disciples through *dahira* membership and common belonging to the brotherhood also affect Murid businesses. Brotherhood solidarity plays a critical role in sending migrants to the United States and helping them find an occupation. Would-be migrants are generally loaned the airfare and provided (not always for free) with the bank statements and other documents needed to obtain a tourist visa. Some even send their stamped passports to parents and fellow disciples denied a visa to help them get to New York. Lodging, food, start-up money, information, and training are provided to new immigrants by fellow disciples belonging to the same branch *dahira*. Murids see it as their duty to help fellow disciples because their success is also the success of the whole community and a source of pride and prestige.

Social capital accumulated through communal interactions is also convertible into material gains. Coleman has shown that the existence of mutual trust among the Jewish diamond traders of New York constitutes an important economic asset, as it allows for saving costs on quality control and security measures.⁶⁰ The same observation can be made about the Murid traders of New York. Murid businessmen involved in the transfer of remittances and shipping benefit most from the networks of the brotherhood and the mutual trust among disciples. Money transferred by Murid immigrants every year amounts to at least \$15–20 million (my own estimate) and perhaps two-thirds of this money is transferred through the three

59. See interviews with Gumba Jaxate in Harlem, May 1999.

60. Coleman, 'Social capital', pp. 98–9.

main money transfer businesses run by Murid disciples.⁶¹ All the transactions involved in the process are based on trust and verbal agreement. Those wanting to send money to their families in Senegal entrust the dollar amount plus a commission to the businessman. The latter, in turn, sends a fax to his correspondent in Senegal to order the payment of the same amount of money in the local currency (the CFA Franc) to the designated family. When the Senegalese correspondent, who is often a Murid trader at Sandaga or the other markets in Senegal, is ready to travel to New York, he already has in place all the money he needs for his shopping, etc. so that he does not need to transport money and pay fees to the banks and customs.

The Murid shipping and banking agent in New York City is often a broker who has ties with Koreans, Pakistanis, and other wholesalers dealing in watches, sunglasses, cosmetics, shoes and other items coveted by Senegalese traders. Hence, the banking agent often helps his fellow Murids buy and ship the merchandise to its destinations in Africa. This whole transaction is done without the signing of a contract or the involvement of government officials. It is exclusively based on trust.⁶² Simplification of the operations allows savings in costs and time for the Senegalese fellow traders and investment money is made available to the shipping businessman. Both parties have an interest in abiding by the rules because of the mutual benefit reaped from the transaction, but they also know that their failure to do so would be interpreted as a betrayal of the values of the brotherhood and would be penalized by the community. Even though *dahiras* do not have bylaws and there is no specific punishment for unruly disciples, the honour and prestige accumulated by the model disciple constitute an important symbolic capital that can also be converted into material gain. The exemplary disciple can access the position of *Jawriñ* or confidant and representative of the caliph and become a respected leader of the community. This status will enhance his capital of trust and benefit his business.

Conclusion

Scholars have long observed the dynamism and relative success of Murid business entrepreneurs in Senegal and abroad. Some find the capacity of Murid businessmen to duplicate the mode of organization of the brotherhood and its values in their relations with their employees and clients as a

61. This estimate is derived from the compilation of information related to the average monthly remittances sent by Senegalese immigrants in New York City and the special contributions they make during holidays and the brotherhood's religious events. Curiously, it seems that the success of the migrant's system of money transfer has inspired some formal and international financial institutions. Murid banking agents now face the competition of national and international financial companies such as Banque de l'Habitat du Sénégal, Money Gram, or Western Union. See also Tall, 'Kara Exchange International'.

62. Tall, 'Kara Exchange International'.

major cause of their success.⁶³ Others emphasize the so-called secularization of the Muridiyya and the ability of Murids to translate religious values into economic assets.⁶⁴

In spite of the diversity of causes advanced to explain the dynamism of Murid migrant traders, scholars of the Muridiyya acknowledge a strong connection between common belonging to the brotherhood and the behaviour of the migrants in the economic realm. These scholars see the *dahira* as the main instrument for the adaptation of the Murids to the urban setting and they have also observed that networks of disciples acting through this institution constitute important economic assets.⁶⁵ However, less attention has been devoted to the motivations that induce Murid migrants to create *dahiras* and the mechanism through which this institution impacts the economy of the urban disciples. Social capital appears to be an effective conceptual tool for understanding the political economy of the Murid community of New York. This article has shown how values conveyed through the *dahira* foster networks and mutual trust between Murid disciples and how, in turn, social capital is generated through the activities and interactions of *dahira* members.

The example of the *dahira* demonstrates that the production and appropriation of social capital can take different forms. Bourdieu argues that social capital, like the other types of capital (human and material), is intentionally produced and used by individuals or groups in the competition for increased economic and cultural gains. The case of the *dahiras* of New York shows that social capital can be produced and used through activities that are not primarily geared towards the exclusive realization of economic profit. Social capital is not a resource used only in contexts of competition among individuals. It can be collectively produced and appropriated by a community for the fulfilment of economic, cultural or other needs.

Murids in New York City are aware of the critical role brotherhood solidarity plays in their survival as a group and in their economic success. The willingness of Murid migrants to take risks in their business ventures is facilitated by the sort of insurance coverage provided through the exploitation of networks of relationships and solidarity among fellow disciples. But this bond is not exclusively rooted in the quest for material interest. Murids are also motivated by spiritual and religious goals, such as participating in the accomplishment of Amadou Bamba's prayers and being useful to a fellow disciple for God's sake. The economic and spiritual goals are not mutually exclusive; rather, they reinforce and legitimize each other.

63. Laurence Marfaing and Mariam Sow, *Les Opérateurs économiques au Sénégal: Entre le formel et l'informel, 1936-1996* (Karthala, Paris, 1999), p. 120.

64. Salem, 'De la brousse sénégalaise'; Momar C. Diop, 'Les affaires mourides à Dakar,' *Politique Africaine* 4 (1981), pp. 90-101.

65. Momar C. Diop, 'Fonctions et activités des dahiras mourides urbains (Sénégal)', *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 3 (1981), pp. 79-91; Salem, 'De la brousse sénégalaise.'