To Wendell A. Narcisse
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This study investigates the transnational behaviors of Senegalese and Gambian (Senegambian) immigrants in Spain in relation to their employment and immigration status, or economic integration. Contrary to suggestions that transnationalism is a response to the downward mobility that nonwhite immigrants encounter in post-industrial countries, ethnographic data shows that engagement in cross-border activities increases with upward mobility in the labor market. The transnational practices of Senegambian immigrants who do not possess work permits and are involved in low-wage seasonal agricultural work are limited to telephone calls and remittances. Whereas, the transnational activities of immigrants who have work permits and are employed in less-skilled construction or factory work are more developed and include return visits, land purchase and home construction. The acquisition of a work permit is a significant variable for mobility in the labor market and engagement in transnational activities. After obtaining a work permit, immigrants usually abandon agricultural work for less-skilled employment in construction, services and factories that provide higher wages. Length of residence in Spain is also an important variable for economic mobility. With time in Spain, immigrants are able to regularize their status and improve their employment. The transnational activities of immigrants also vary according to the life course. When families are reunited, the
transnational practices of couples are curtailed to meet financial demands in Spain. Immigrant men who remain single or maintain their wives and children in Senegal or Gambia show greater transnational activities than those who have their families in Spain. As children become independent, transnational activities increase as immigrants make plans to retire in Senegal or Gambia. Variations in the transnational practices of Senegambian men and women are largely an outcome of their different rates of participation in the labor market. Differences between the economic integration of Senegambian men and women are consequences of the gender composition of migration to Spain, the family reunification policy of Spain, and the lack of opportunities for Senegambian women in the labor market. The case of Senegambian immigrants in Spain illustrates the need to reassess the relationship between transnationalism and integration in host countries.
CHAPTER 1

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS AND TRANSNATIONAL PRACTICES

Introduction

This study of Senegalese and Gambian immigrants in Catalonia, Spain examines how engagement in transnational practices, including activities that enable migrants to maintain social ties with their countries of origin, varies according to their economic integration, or type of employment and immigration status in the receiving country. Examining the relationship between economic integration and involvement in transnational practices is a departure from recent studies of transnationalism among Senegalese migrants in Europe and North America that largely concern Murid commercial and religious networks. Since the majority of Senegalese and Gambian immigrants in Catalonia are not traders, understanding the relationship between labor market participation and transnationalism is imperative. Observations on the relationship between integration and participation in transnational activities suggest that transnationalism is partly an adaptive strategy to the hostile reception and downward mobility that nonwhite immigrants experience in post-industrial countries. Such suggestions, however, ignore the legal and monetary resources needed to engage in transnational activities. Given the resources needed to facilitate certain transnational activities, downward mobility in the host country would limit the ability of immigrants to engage in these behaviors. How are the transnational practices of Senegambian immigrants in Spain affected by their occupational status in the labor market? Does engagement in transnational practices increase with improvement in employment status or upward mobility in the labor market? Questions concerning the incorporation of immigrants in the labor market raise the issue of immigration status since regular or legal status increases

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1 This study was funded with a Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant from the National Science Foundation.
employment options. The case of Senegalese and Gambian immigrants in Catalonia provides an opportunity to explore how employment and immigration status, or economic integration, affects engagement in transnational practices.

The introductory chapter includes a summary of the literature on transnational migration among Senegalese populations to put in context the migration of the Mandinka and Jola ethnic groups, which comprise the majority of respondents in this study. Since this study concerns the labor market participation of Senegalese and Gambian immigrants in Catalonia, concepts that pertain to economic incorporation, such as mobility and integration, are also defined in this chapter. Different approaches to the relationship between integration and transnationalism are then reviewed, followed by a presentation of the research questions and objectives of the study. Finally this introductory chapter ends with a summary of the subsequent chapters.

Recent Studies of Senegalese Transnational Migration

In general, studies of Senegalese transnational migration deal with the commercial and religious networks of the Muridiyya, an Islamic Sufi order, and the traders and entrepreneurs who compose its membership.\(^2\) These studies consider: the ways in which the religious philosophy and organization of the Muridiyya foster travel and transnationalism; the various functions of the dahir\(a\) (religious association or circle), particularly on maintaining solidarity among followers overseas; the transnational practices and entrepreneurial activities of Murid traders; and the lived experiences of Murid traders as migrants aboard.\(^3\) Among Murid migrants,

\(^2\) In the literature, there are various spelling of the Muridiyya and of its followers: Murid, Mourid, Mouride, Mouridism.

transnational processes occur on multiple levels: religious, economic, political and familial. The Muridiyya operates as both a religious organization and an economic community, tied together by a work ethic that promotes migration (Ebin 1996; Carter 1997; Perry 1997; Diouf 2000; Babou 2002; Buggenhagen 2003; Riccio 2003, 2004). Involvement in trade defines recent Murid migration—first to Dakar and then to cities around the world—and is a movement away from earlier migration to frontier lands to cultivate peanuts (Ebin 1995, 1996; Diouf 2000; Babou 2002; Buggenhagen 2003; Riccio 2004). The mobility and travel intrinsic to trade allow disciples to identify with the founder of the order, Amadou Bamba, who was deported from Senegal twice by French colonial authorities and sent into exile (Ebin 1996; Carter 1997; Diouf 2000). The luggage and suitcases in which Murid traders carry their merchandise is analogous with those of the founder (Ebin 1996; Carter 1997). Diouf’s depiction of the mobility of Murid traders articulates transnationalism: “he is an Italian, a New Yorker, a Marseillais, a Spaniard. He is constantly in movement. His stopover points are hotel rooms or overcrowded apartments in the main cities of the world where merchandise is piled up. He is always just stopping off, always in transit, thus erasing the notion of a fixed residence” (2000:695). As traders, Murid entrepreneurs are at the center of transnational processes. Portes et al. (1999) define entrepreneurs and the networks on which the success of their activities depend as transnational. Compared to migrants not engaged in commercial activities, entrepreneurs have greater involvement in cross-border activities (Portes et al. 1999). Beyond the commercial activities of the Murid traders, the ritual practices of the Muridiyya foster transnationalism: followers maintain religious ties to their sheikhs or marabouts through offerings and support religious projects through donations; sheikhs and their entourage tour the Murid circuits to minister to their followers; disciples make pilgrimages to the holy city of Touba; offerings and blessings circulate within the Murid diaspora
((Ebin 1996; Babou 2002; Buggenhagen 2003, 2009; Riccio 2004). Transnational practices among Murid migrants also take place at the familial level through remittances, visits, marriage, and home construction (Buggenhagen 2001, 2003, 2009; Babou 2009). Given that Murid traders are integral members of interconnected religious, commercial and familial networks based in Senegal, the attention paid to the Murid diaspora in the scholarship on transnationalism among Senegalese migrants is understandable.

With the focus of Senegalese transnational migration studies on Murid traders, the Wolof ethnic group, which largely makes up the Muridiyya, has been at the center of recent research. Current interest in the Wolof marks a shift from earlier preoccupation with the migration of the Soninke who made up the large majority of West African migrants in France in the post-independence period of the 1960s. The Soninke, therefore, have largely defined the literature on Senegalese migration although they are a minority ethnic group in Senegal (Timera 1996; Manchuelle 1997; Babou 2002; Riccio 2001, 2002). The Haal Pulaar comprised the second major ethnic group in the migration to France. Both the Soninke and the Haal Pulaar are located primarily in the Senegal River Valley, which encompasses Mauritania, Mali and Senegal. While migration studies of the Soninke and the Haal Pulaar from the 1970s and 1980s have themes of transnationalism, they are framed within a perspective of circular migration (Riccio 2001,

4 The Soninke and Sarahuli are the same ethnic group. Two common spellings are Sarahuli and Sarakole. The Haal Pulaar is made up of two ethnic groups, Fulbe and Tukulor, that share the same language. Variations in the names and spellings include: Fula, Fulani, Peul, Peuhl, Toucouleur, Futa Toro.

5 In a 1982 survey of 1,229 immigrants from the Senegal River Valley in France, 848 were Soninke and 203 were Haal Pulaar (Condé and Diagne 1986:60). In the case of the Senegal immigrants, which totaled 339 respondents, 155 were Soninke and 144 were Haal Pulaar (Condé and Diagne 1986:60). This survey gives an idea of the numbers of Soninke and Haal Pulaar in the post-independence migration to France. Whereas the Wolof is the majority ethnic group in Senegal, they only comprised 11 respondents in the survey. In 1987 Findley and Sow (1998) conducted a follow-up study of a sub-sample of the villages surveyed in 1982 to examine migration trends among the Soninke.
Recent studies, however, have explored transnational issues. Kane (2001, 2002) has examined the transnational dimensions of associations that link Haal Pulaar villagers and migrants in Dakar and abroad, specifically the operation of rotating savings and credit associations and the structural organization of the Thilogne village association. With respect to religion, Kane (2008) has researched the transnational organization of Gounassianke, a branch of the Tijaniyya, specifically how the sheikhs minister to their diasporic followers, how followers maintain a religious identity in the diaspora, and what types of projects followers finance in Senegal.

This study of Senegalese and Gambian (Senegambian) migration to Catalonia, Spain involves the Mandinka and Jola ethnic groups and, therefore, directs attention away from the Senegal River Valley where the Soninke and the Haal Pulaar are the dominant groups to the Gambia and Casamance Rivers. The Jola and Mandinka have been largely absent in research on transnationalism among Senegalese migrants. Both ethnic groups are minorities in Senegal. The Mandinka represents four percent of the Senegalese population and the Jola five percent; whereas, the Wolof comprises 43 percent of the population and the Hal Pulaar 25 percent (EIU 2008). Although both are minority ethnic groups, the Mandinka and Jola are not absent in the

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7 Senegambia refers to the region around the Senegalese and Gambian rivers and to the short-lived confederation between Senegal and Gambia from 1982 to 1989 (Merriam-Webster 2003). Senegambia conveys the shared cultural traditions and ethnic ties that transcend the imposed colonial borders dividing the two countries. As one informant noted, “Gambia is in Senegal.”

8 The Jola are a separate ethnic group from the Mandé-speaking Juula ethnic group. Spelling variations for the Juula include Dioula and Dyula.

9 Research has been conducted on Jola migration from the Casamance region to the capital Dakar (Lambert 1994, 2002, 2007; Linares 2003). For the beginnings of the migration see Mark 1978 and Van Der Klei 1985.
migration to North America and Europe. For instance, Carter notes the diversity of the Senegalese migrant population in Italy, “the community of Senegalese in Turin is not restrictive to the Wolof, who are the most often associated with the Mourid but is, rather, a very diverse community that represents many of the major ethnic groups in Senegal such as the Wolof, Serer, Peul, Toucouleur, Laube, Lebou, Mandinka, and Diola” (1997:75). However, Carter’s study focuses on the Wolof. Riccio also remarks on the “multi-ethnic” Senegalese community in Italy, “Fulani (Peul), Seere, Toucouleur and some Diola from the Casamance” (2004:934). However, he points out that the large majority is Wolof of the Murid Sufi order, which is the topic of this study (Riccio 2004:934). In contrast to the numbers of Wolof in Italy, Mandinka and Jola are the majority ethnic groups in the migration to the Maresme coast of Catalonia. Of the 42 Senegalese immigrants interviewed in this study, 25 are from the Casamance region of Senegal. Twenty-one of the respondents are Mandinka and 18 are Jola. Only two respondents are Wolof.

This study also shifts the focus away from groups involved in trading and commerce to those participating in the labor market. Mandinka and Jola immigrants in Catalonia are primarily engaged in the labor market. Just as Soninke migrants in France were at “the very bottom of the employment ladder” in the post-Independence period (McDonald 1969), Mandinka and Jola immigrants in Spain are engaged low-waged and unskilled work. The main jobs that immigrants in Spain perform are low skilled agricultural, construction and service jobs. The service jobs include domestic work and menial jobs in restaurants, hotels, and hospitals (King et al. 1997; Mendoza 1997; King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Baldwin-Edwards 1999; Martínez Veiga 1999; Arango 2000). The concentration of immigrant workers in Spain’s secondary labor market

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10 Of the 60 Senegalese and Gambian immigrants interviewed for this study, 27 are Mandinka, 18 Jola, 5 Soninke, 5 Hal Pulaar, 2 Wolof, 2 Balanta, and 1 Serer.

and the low wages and instability of this sector bring into question the capacity of immigrants to engage in transnational practices that require monetary resources.

Questions of mobility can be explained by the concept of “up the down staircase,” the situation in which skilled immigrants take on menial work in the receiving country to advance their socioeconomic mobility in their countries of origin (Margolis 1994:17-18). Mahler (1995) observes that immigrants with higher human capital fall further in status in the United States. Because the large majority of Senegambian immigrants in Spain have limited formal education, their involvement in unskilled work in Spain is not a decline in mobility. At the same time, low-wage and unskilled jobs in Spain allow Senegalese and Gambian immigrants to improve their status in their countries of origin (Skinner 1985; Goldring 1998; Lambert 1994, 2002; Riccio 2001; Newell 2005). Interpretations of transnationalism as an adaptive strategy in the face of downward mobility in the receiving country do not consider how economic and legal resources obtained through occupational mobility in the receiving country support the cross-border activities that tie immigrants to their countries of origin. This study of Senegambian immigrants in Catalonia takes up this neglect by examining how participation in transnational behavior varies across immigration status and type of employment. If the extent to which immigrants participate in transnational behaviors depends on the resources available to them (Portes 1999; Levitt 2000; Kivisto 2001), then the transnational activities of immigrants with increasing economic mobility in the host country will be greater in range and frequency. Conversely, the transnational activities of immigrants with declining mobility will be more constricted. This case study of Senegambians shows how immigrants with legal immigration status and occupational mobility engage in a greater degree of transnational behavior than those illegally residing in Spain and employed in seasonal low-wage employment.
Attention to the participation of Senegambian immigrants in the Spanish labor market introduces the issue of immigration status. Regular immigration status provides economic benefits not available to immigrants with irregular status. The possession of a work permit enables immigrants to participate in the labor market without punitive consequences. Regular immigration status also enables travel outside the host country. The acquisition of visas and permits also makes possible the geographical mobility that traders and entrepreneurs depend on for the success of their ventures. With the example of Amadu Dieng, a Murid trader from Ebin’s study (1996), Diouf points out that the mobility of Murid traders is “solely geographical” and adds that “territorial mobility is combined with considerable professional mobility” (2000:695-696). Dieng begins his circuit selling “Ouagadougou” bracelets in Marseilles and ends up buying beauty products and music cassettes, which are much more profitable commodities. Along his circuit, Dieng acquires more profitable merchandise as he sells off cheaper goods (Ebin 1996:97-98). Dieng’s multiple-entry visa for the United States facilitates his mobility and enables him to trade on a larger scale (Ebin 1996:97-98). Likewise, work and resident permits facilitate mobility within the labor market. Powers et al. (1998) find that undocumented immigrants in the United States experience upward mobility after regularizing their status although they remain in unskilled jobs. How does mobility, improvement in employment status and earnings, within the Spanish labor market affect the transnational practices of Senegalese and Gambian immigrants in Maresme?\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{12}\) Traders who do not obtain multiple-entry visas are forced to remain in New York because they may not be able to re-enter the United States (Ebin 1996). See also Perry 1997 and Riccio 2001, 2002.

\(^{13}\) In chapter 2, I discuss the mobility as a form of livelihood (De Bruijn et al. 2001; Tacoli 2001; Olwig and Sørensen 2002).
Bridging Integration and Transnationalism

Defining the residence of immigrants in terms of “integration” is problematic in that many think of their stay as temporary because the migration is economic. In addition many have no desire to adopt the culture of the receiving society, which is implicit in the concept of “integration.” While immigrants initially intend to stay for a period of time to earn enough money and then return to their countries of origin, many remain and bring their families. Others return to their countries of origin only to migrate again (Margolis 1994). This is particularly the case of Senegambian immigrants in Spain. As with Senegalese migration to France in the post-Independence period, Soninke and Haal Pulaar men migrated alone and engaged in a circular migration where they returned to Senegal for an extended period of time (Sargent and Larchanché-Kim 2006). They found unskilled jobs in the industrial sector (McDonald 1969; Timera 1996; Manchuelle 1997; Riccio 2002). However, the curtailment of immigration in the aftermath of the oil crisis of the 1970s and the passing of the family reunification act of 1976 led to more permanent settlement (Timera 1996; Sargent and Larchanché-Kim 2006; Riccio 2002; Kane 2008). Senegalese and Gambian migration to Spain has followed an identical pattern beginning with single men and ending with family reunification in the 1990s (Kaplan 1998; Kaplan Marcusán 2005). The presence of the second and third-generations speak to the permanency of the migration.14

An analysis of the relationship between engagement in transnational practices and economic incorporation in the receiving country, specifically opportunities for upward mobility through improvement in occupational status and income, calls for clarification of the different

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14 Kane (2002) questions the future of the Thilogne village association since the adult children of the Haal Pulaar immigrants do not have the same emotional bonds to the village of their parents.
concepts of integration.¹⁵ According to Favell (2001), integration is a popular term because it does not express the negativity that assimilation has come to connote. However, as Favell (2001) notes integration and incorporation are vague terms. Although assimilation has acquired a negative connotation (Glazer 1993; Alba and Nee 1997; Brubaker 2001), it remains the fundamental concept for understanding the process of sociocultural change that immigrants experience and their incorporation in the receiving society.¹⁶ Brubaker identifies a “general and abstract” definition of assimilation that refers to the “process of becoming similar or of making similar or treating similar” to a reference group (2001:533-534). Brubaker’s definition specifies a degree of similarity (2001).¹⁷ Two aspects of the general meaning of assimilation that Brubaker (2001) outlines are useful for understanding the integration of first-generation Senegambians in Catalonia. First, assimilation “is not something done to persons, but rather something accomplished by them” (Brubaker 2001: 543). Assimilation then is not static, but an active and ongoing process. Second, assimilation is not opposed to difference but to marginalization, which marks a shift from the cultural to the socioeconomic (Brubaker 2001). Although this second aspect emphasizes a shift to socioeconomic marginalization, upward mobility of immigrants continues to be tied to acculturation, or the adoption of the cultural and social norms of the host society (Alba and Nee 1997). For instance, immigrants who have a proficient command of Spanish and Catalan have better employment opportunities than those who do not. This study adopts Brubaker’s general meaning of assimilation to emphasize the economic position of

¹⁵ I use the concepts of integration, incorporation and assimilation synonymously.

¹⁶ The historiography of the concept of assimilation is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

¹⁷ Brubaker (2001) identifies two related meanings of assimilation. The second definition is “specific and organic” and “implies complete absorption” (Brubaker 2001:533-534). It stresses the end result and is the definition that has been discredited (Brubaker 2001:534).
Senegambian immigrants in Spain and to underscore the possibilities for both upward and downward mobility in the labor market.

The shift from cultural to socioeconomic marginalization expressed in Brubaker’s definition of assimilation (2001) corresponds with the theory of segmented assimilation. Segmented assimilation attempts to explain the individual and environmental factors that determine into which segments of the host society second-generation immigrants become incorporated (Zhou 1997). Three distinct outcomes of immigrant adaptation are possible: 1) upward mobility through conventional acculturation and economic integration into the middle class; 2) upward mobility as a result of economic integration into the middle class while retaining the immigrant group’s values and affiliation; 3) downward mobility due to acculturation and economic integration into the underclass (Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997). Segmented assimilation differs from classical assimilation and multicultural paradigms in its consideration of downward mobility (Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997). Although segmented assimilation has been used to describe the possible outcomes of second-generation adaptation (Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997), with modifications, these outcomes are applicable to the first generation. For example, first-generation immigrants can suffer downward mobility as a result of their economic incorporation in low-wage employment while experiencing minimal acculturation. Portes and Zhou (1993) identify three features of the receiving environment that contribute to downward mobility: discrimination, residence in impoverished areas, and restricted economic opportunities. The environment in which many Senegambian and African immigrants find themselves in Spain presents all of these features. The limited acceptance of African immigrants in Spanish society and their economic incorporation into the secondary

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18 Each of these factors has played a role in the marginalization of second-generation immigrant Muslim youths in France, which fueled the 2005 riots.
sector set conditions for the creation of an immigrant underclass. At the same time, opportunities for improvement in employment and earnings exist. With the possible trajectories of immigrant adaptation—mainstream, underclass, and ethnic enclave—the question of how transnational behavior varies across the different patterns of adaptation becomes critical.

Research on the relationship between integration and transnationalism largely offer explanations for the social ties immigrants maintain with their countries of origin. Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002, 2005) identify three explanations for transnational behavior that pertain to integration in the receiving country, “reactive,” “linear” and “resource-dependent” transnationalism. Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002, 2005) use reactive transnationalism to refer to the common theory that the maintenance of social ties to the community of origin is an adaptive strategy to the discrimination and downward mobility nonwhite immigrants experience in the countries to which they have migrated (Basch et al. 1994; Portes 1997, 1999; Waters 1999; Faist 2000; Foner 2000). For example, Basch et al. (1994) suggest that transnational ties enable migrants to circumvent the racial categorization of the United States. Waters (1999) observes that for West Indian immigrants in New York City assimilation means becoming black American, a “stigmatized” minority, whereas a transnational identity enables them to skirt this racial classification. Because Murid traders try to save money, they live in crime-ridden neighborhoods where they face hostility (Ebin 1996; Carter 1997; Stoller 2002). Buggenhagen indirectly associate the transnational activities of Senegalese male migrants to marginalization in the United States and Europe, “as male kin experience the stigma of race and immigrant class in Europe and America, they strive to build homes and produce families in Senegal, which they struggle to support through their remittances keeping them tied to their overseas lives”
Babou suggests that “growing hostility in Western Europe towards immigrants” was a factor in Murid choosing the United States as a destination in the 1980s (2002:158).

Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002) find that “experiences of discrimination and a negative perception of the society of reception do increase the likelihood of participating in the transnational social field” among Dominicans, Colombians and Salvadorans in metropolitan cities of the United States (2002:785). While their findings show a positive relationship, an alternative explanation may account for the association, especially since experiences of racism and discrimination have always been part of the immigrant encounter. In her example of Jews and Italians in New York at the turn of the 20th Century, Foner (1997, 2000) reminds us that the rejection of immigrants based on constructions of race has a long history. Moreover, the reactive explanation for engagement in transnational activities assumes that immigrants enjoy a higher status in their countries of origin, which is not necessarily the case. The Mandinka and Jola, the ethnic groups from which the majority of the respondents in this study belong, are minorities in Senegal. Moreover, a rebellion to secede the Casamance region from Senegal has been led by members of the Jola ethnic group. Similar to the Mandinka and Jola in Spain, immigrants coming from multi-ethnic countries where they are the minorities and are susceptible to discrimination raise doubt to the strength of interpretations of transnationalism as a reaction to hostility and downward mobility in the receiving country.

19 While the research of Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002, 2005) is one of the few studies to critically examine the relationship between immigrant incorporation and participation in transnational activities as well as to analyze gender differences, their focus on only two transnational practices—involvement in institutions that promote sociocultural ties to the country of origin and involvement in economic endeavors taking place in both countries of origin and reception—limits their conclusions considering the breadth of transnational activities immigrants undertake.

20 Lambert (1998) has examined the ethnic aspects of the conflict.
This study of Senegambians in Spain modifies the second explanation that Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002, 2005) identify for engagement in transnationalism. Linear transnationalism explains involvement in transnational activities as part of the continued connection immigrants have to their family and community of origin. The presumption is that with time in the receiving country, these ties will diminish (Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo 2002, 2005). This approach acknowledges the parallel course immigrant integration and participation in transnational activities share. Kivisto (2001) notes that at the same time that migrants are maintaining social connections to the sending communities, they are engaging in processes of acculturation to the host community. He stresses the importance of place insofar as the immediate concerns of the place where immigrants are located take priority over the distant needs of the sending community (Kivisto 2001). Foner (2000) also notes the importance of place and the limited resources of immigrants. Pointing to the permanency of migration settlement, Foner (2000) observes that financial obligations to relatives left behind may drain resources needed for projects in the host country. As family members join migrants, they become more involved with life in the host country, and ties to the homeland lessen over time (Foner 2000). Kivisto (2001) proposes that transnationalism is a form of assimilation. Although such a definition of transnational acknowledges the parallel course that integration and transnationalism share, it does not account for the variations of transnational behaviors among immigrants with comparable social ties in their countries of origin. Rather than diminishing over time, the ties immigrants maintain with their countries of origin are transformed by the life cycle immigrants and by circumstances in the receiving country and the country of origin (Levitt 2003). The transnational practices of Senegambian immigrants in Catalonia are defined by their continued membership in their communities of origin. At the same time, their economic integration in
Catalonia structures their capacity to engage in transnational practices. Integration therefore influences the types of transnational activities in which immigrants participate and the extent of their participation (Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo 2002; Levitt 2003; Morawska 2003).

The importance of the local context of the receiving country in shaping the form and scale of the transnational practices in which immigrants engage has been highlighted in recent research that show how immigrant assimilation in the receiving country correlates with participation in transnational activities (Levitt 2003; Morawska 2003). Morawska (2003) suggests that because of the different forms that assimilation and transnationalism take, they produce different combinations that are dependent on the particular configurations of the economic, political and cultural context of the sending and receiving countries and the local immigrant community (Morawska 2003:162). Levitt also proposes that transnational practices of immigrants in the United States vary in range and magnitude according to different assimilation trajectories in the United States to produce diverse outcomes (2003:178). She further argues that transnational practices are not incompatible with assimilation and ascribes the “false dichotomy” between assimilation and transnationalism to a lack of defining transnational practices (Levitt 2003:178).

In her exploration of transnational entrepreneurship, Landolt (2001) finds that the cross-border economic entrepreneurial activities of Salvadorian immigrants and the process of their settlement in the United States are mutually reinforcing. She observes how the local contexts of Los Angeles and Washington DC distinctly shape their transnational economic activities and how United States citizenship ensures the physical mobility necessary their transnational ventures (Landolt 2001). Among West African traders in France, Italy and the United States, the acquisition of resident permits, which usually require specific periods of residence in the country of issue, provides them with greater opportunities that can either reinforce their transnational
practices or their integration. This is particularly the case when trading activities take place within the informal economy. Residency permits facilitate travel, which expands business opportunities, and in some instances, traders are able to move on to salaried employment (Zinn 1994; Carter 1997; Perry 1997; Riccio 2001; Stoller 2002). Stoller observes that deteriorating urban conditions have made the American “bush” more appealing to many West Africans, luring them away from New York City—especially if they have what they call “papers,” namely, an employment authorization permit from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). This card not only enables them to drive registered cabs, but also allows them, unlike Issifi, to work for wages in factories and stores. (2002:7)

For Stoller’s informants, U.S. residency enables them to improve their occupational status and incomes although the jobs they find are in the same sectors. The West African traders are also able to improve their quality of life with the acquisition of residency. They are able to leave behind the unfavorable environment of New York for safer neighborhoods and larger apartments in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Emphasis on the economic aspect of integration introduces the third explanation for participation in transnational activities, which adds a material component. Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002, 2005) refer to this approach as resource-dependent transnationalism because it takes into account the monetary resources needed to facilitate transnational activities. Migration scholars have noted that the extent to which immigrants participate in transnational activities depends on the resources available to them (Portes 1999; Levitt 2000; Kivisto 2001). Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002) find that unemployment or nonparticipation in the labor market hinders involvement in transnational activities. In the resource-dependent explanation, Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002) also include perspectives of transnational entrepreneurship as an alternative course of immigrant adaptation to dead-end jobs in the receiving country (Portes 1997; Portes et al. 1999; Faist 2000). For example, in her study of the transnational economic practices of Salvadoran immigrants in the United States, Landolt concludes, “the above average
earnings of entrepreneurs suggest that transnational resource management and investment can facilitate social mobility and economic advancement” (2001:237). With such prospects for mobility, the limited number of immigrants involved in transnational entrepreneurial projects suggests that this alternative is not open to all immigrants. That Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo did a “purposive selection of one third of the sample...to insure that there were enough cases of transnational immigrants in the sample” demonstrates the small size of this subpopulation (2002:774). Studies on migrant traders hint at the participation of immigrants in the local labor markets (Zinn 1994; Ebin 1996; Carter 1997; MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000; Riccio 2001; Stoller 2002). 21 Zinn observes that after Senegalese immigrants in Bari, Italy receive resident permits, “a number of Senegalese head for northern Italy, where their social networks have indicated the availability of factory jobs” (1994:56). The fact that only a minority of immigrants are entrepreneurs raises the critical question of how does participation in the labor market shape transnational practices. This study of Senegambian immigrants in Catalonia, Spain answers this question and addresses other related issues regarding participation in the labor market and engagement in transnationalism.

The case of Senegambian immigration to Catalonia illustrates the need to reconcile transnationalism with participation in the labor market of the receiving country, particularly since the large majority of immigrants are not entrepreneurs or traders. The incorporation of many immigrants in the secondary labor market, where low-wages and flexibility characterize jobs, raises the question of the capacity of immigrants to engage in particular kinds of transnational practices that require substantial monetary resources such as home construction. 

The case of Senegambians in Spain brings up a second question, how does mobility in the labor

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21 Babou’s study on Senegalese hair braiders is the exception (2002).
market in terms of occupational improvement affect participation in transnationalism. The third question that emerges from the case study is how do different employment opportunities available to Senegambian men and women and variations in their participation rates in the labor market inform their involvement in transnational activities. Answering these questions requires several more specific research objectives: operationalizing transnationalism for purposes of measurement; constructing an occupational index that considers pay and immigration status, all of which represent economic integration; and comparing transnational and integration scores to determine the relationship between them. Explaining the differences between the transnational practices of Senegambian men and women involves an analysis of structural and cultural factors such as Spain’s family reunification policy and marriage practices, respectively.

Outline of Chapters

The second chapter reviews the various definitions of transnationalism. Transnational ties are then compared with urban-rural linkages to demonstrate that the behaviors that sustain them are the same, and therefore, transnational ties are extensions of urban-rural linkages. Approaches to urban-rural linkages are applied to transnational to introduce alternative perspectives for understanding transnationalism. The chapter concludes with a summary of migration history of the Jola of the Casamance to illustrate that migration is an integral part of life for many Senegalese and Gambians and to emphasize the continuity of migrants’ engagement in behaviors that connect them to their communities of origin.

The third chapter presents the research design and methodological approach of this study. The research objectives of the study are outlined in the first section: to operationalize transnationalism; to construct an occupational index; to compare involvement in transnationalism and occupational status; and to explain the factors that contribute to differences between the transnational activities of Senegambian men and women. A summary of the critiques of the
various interpretations of transnationalism follows the research objectives to support the study’s operationalization of transnationalism, which is based on Itzigsohn et al.’s model (1999) of “broad” and “narrow” transnationalism. Engagement in transnationalism is measured as low, medium or high. Occupational status is scaled according to contract length and salary since improvement in employment usually takes place within the same labor sector. To account for differences between men and women’s participation in transnational activities, this study adopts the “gendered geographies of power framework” (Pessar and Mahler 2003). The ethnographic methods used to analyze the relationship between participation in the labor market and involvement in transnational practices are also described in the chapter. The chapter ends with a discussion of entry into the Senegambian community of Mataró.

The fourth chapter describes the transition of Spain from a country of emigration to one of immigration. The features of recent immigration to Spain are examined: the sex distribution of the different immigrant groups; the role of immigrant labor in the Spain’s labor market; and the geographical concentration of the immigrant population. The historical internal migration from Southern Spain to Catalonia is presented to interpret recent foreign immigration to the region, specifically the role of migrant workers in Catalonia’s labor market and their integration in Catalonia. A brief description of Mataró reveals the work opportunities available to immigrants in the area. The chapter ends with a short history of Senegambian migration to Mataró.

The fifth chapter presents the ethnographic data collected. The first section explores the factors that have contributed to growing migration to Spain from Senegal and Gambia such as the deepening relationship between the two countries and Spain and the combined effects of migration. The second section describes the various ways of entering Spain. The third section relates each method of entry to the resources available to migrants, the type of reception that they
receive, and the immigration status that they acquire. Most of the chapter focuses on Senegambian settlement in Catalonia, specifically the challenges they encounter in securing employment, housing and work permits. How these problems are interrelated are also explained, particularly the acquisition of work permits for mobility within Spain’s labor market, in terms of improved employment status. Disparities between the labor market participation of Senegambian men and women are interpreted as a consequence of factors such as Spain’s family reunification policy, childcare and household responsibilities of Senegambian women, and limited work opportunities for Senegambian women as a result of racial and religious preference in domestic service. The last section of the chapter examines housing arrangements among Senegambian immigrants and delineates the different strategies to afford accommodations.

The sixth chapter examines the transnational activities of Senegambian immigrants in relation to their economic integration in Catalonia, Spain. The first sections of the chapter identify and describe the transnational practices according to private, public and economic domains. Although some Senegambian immigrants maintain ties with relatives abroad in countries in Africa, Europe and North America, which reflect an additional level of transnationalism, this study only considers transnational practices that link the countries of origin and reception. Factors that account for differences between Senegambian men and women’s transnational practices are explored. An examination of the relationship between participation in the labor market and involvement in transnational activities follows the discussion of gender and transnationalism. Immigration status and type of employment are used to measure economic integration. The transnational scores of a selected group of respondents are compared with their economic integration scores. Life cycle is taken into account as it corresponds to both labor
market participation and involvement in transnational practices. The chapter ends with a
discussion of the significance of citizenship for transnational practices.

The conclusion summarizes the main thesis of this study, social and economic mobility in
Spain supports the transnational practices of immigrants. The relevance of the project’s findings
to this study of transnational migration is presented. Aspects of this study that warrant further
research, specifically the transnational practices and lifestyle of retired migrants, cultural factors
that account for the divergent transnational practices of migrant couples, and the advantages a
social network approach to the study of transnational migration provide are discussed.
CHAPTER 2
THEORIZING THE TRANSNATIONAL PRACTICES OF SENEGAMBIANS

Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical and empirical support for understanding how the transnational practices of Senegambian immigrants in Spain is determined by both their continued membership in their communities of origin and their integration in Catalonia. An outline the various definitions of transnationalism is given followed by a description of the different activities that comprise urban-rural linkages to show that transnational ties are constituted by essentially the same activities. The parallels drawn demonstrate that transnational ties are extensions of urban-rural linkages.\(^1\) A review of the theoretical approaches to urban-rural linkages gives additional perspectives for understanding the transnational ties immigrants maintain. The review also presents conditions in both sending and receiving locations that foster and constrain migrants’ participation in activities that bind them to their communities of origin. The chapter ends with a summary of historical migration trends in Senegal and Gambia. The summary illuminates how migration developed into a well-established cultural institution, which represents a more recent approach to migration.

Definitions and Interpretations of Transnationalism

Since their emergence in the early 1990s, transnational migration studies have grown more cohesive despite the conceptual problems that have threatened to splinter the field into divergent directions. The major challenges have been the numerous definitions of transnationalism that have led to related methodological issues for studying the phenomenon, as well as varying units

\(^1\)Manchuelle (1997) has argued that Soninke migration to France is a “continuation” of their earlier migration to the urban centers of Senegal, primarily Dakar.
and levels of analysis. A single definition, however, is inconsistent with the inherent multidisciplinary nature of transnational migration studies, which is expressed in the different approaches to transnational research. The critical reviews of transnational migration studies have only strengthened the field, particularly the importance of setting parameters given the diverse and interrelated components of transnational processes.

The succession of definitions marking the evolution of transnational migration as a social field derives largely from the framework of Glick Schiller et al. (1992) and Basch et al. (1994). They define transnationalism as the practices that enable immigrants to maintain multiple cross-border social relations that range from individual to collective ties encompassing familial, economic, organizational, political and religious connections that bind immigrants in countries of settlement and nonmigrants in countries of origin (Basch et al. 1994). Transnational practices encompass a range of behaviors: sending remittances and goods, investing in land and housing, traveling, sponsoring family members through reunification programs, marrying someone from the home village, investing in entrepreneurial ventures, belonging to hometown associations, and participating in the electoral process in the country of origin (Basch et al. 1994; Itzigsohn et al. 1999; Levitt 2001; Portes 1996). While the transnational framework of Glick Schiller et al. identifies the cross-border practices and social relations migrants maintain, their definition has methodological shortcomings (1992; Basch et al. 1994). For example, Mahler (1998) points out

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two weaknesses in Basch et al.’s definition of transnationalism: procedures are not provided for measuring the social ties or classifying the units of analysis.

Subsequent definitions have sought to refine the definition of Glick Schiller et al. (1992) and Basch et al. (1994), particularly the inclusion of levels of analysis. Elaborating on their definition, Guarnizo (1997) defines transnationalism as the interconnecting sociocultural, economic and political relationships that transcend the authority of the nation-state, including the behaviors that sustain these connections and the identities that emerge from them. Guarnizo (1997) differentiates two levels of transnationalism, group and individual, which he and Smith later clarify as transnationalism “from above” and “from below” respectively (Guarnizo and Smith 1998). Transnationalism from above involves sociocultural, economic and political relationships that transcend the authority of the nation-state, such as global systems of capital, media and political organizations; whereas, transnationalism from below includes the ordinary common practices of individuals, for instance remittances, visits and hometown associations (Guarnizo 1997; Guarnizo and Smith 1998). While Faist’s definition (2000) of “transnational social spaces” parallels Guarnizo’s in that it introduces levels of analysis, his interpretation stresses the cross-border ties. Transnational social spaces are sets of ties, including their composition and location in networks, and organizational networks sustained across different nation-states in which exchange takes place (Faist 2000). Faist (2000) identifies three types of transnational social spaces: kinship groups, transnational circuits, and transnational communities. Exchanges based on reciprocity, such as remittances, take place within kinship groups (Faist 2000). Constant flows of people, resources and information largely involving entrepreneurs and businesses comprise transnational circuits, which Faist (2000) adopts from Rouse’s definition of “transnational migrant circuit” (1991). Strong social and symbolic ties based on solidarity not
defined by kinship characterize transnational communities, for example diaporas (Faist 2000). Analogous to Faist’s “transnational social spaces” (2000), Levitt’s definition of “transnational village” represents a social space (2001). Recognizing an intermediate level between Smith and Guarnizo’s conceptualization of transnationalism from above and below (1998), Levitt’s definition of transnational village, or community, considers the cross-border practices of both migrants and nonmigrants within the social spaces in which these activities are performed and defined (2001). In considering the impact of transnationalism for nonmigrants, Levitt’s definition takes into account that nonmigrants also adapt to the values and practices of migrants, which she refers to as “social remittances” (1998, 2001). Moreover, transnational social organizations such as civic, political and religious organizations allow the participation of members in both the sending and receiving areas (Levitt 2001). Although these definitions elaborate on the framework of Glick Schiller et al. (1992) and Basch et al. (1994), the varied interpretations of transnationalism create more ambiguity. These interpretations involve different types of cross-border social relationships, practices and spaces, as well as the identities formed and maintained through these connections and activities and within these domains.4

**Interpreting Transnational Ties as Extensions of Urban-Rural Linkages**

The transnational ties that Senegambian immigrants in Spain actively nurture to anchor themselves to their communities of origin are best understood as continuities of the urban-rural linkages that have defined rural-urban migration in West Africa. The diverse activities that encompass transnational ties and urban-rural linkages are identical. The minor differences

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4 In addition, these various interpretations of transnationalism indicate the persistence of methodological shortcomings, specifically measurement and unit of analysis (Mahler1998; Portes et al. 1999). These major shortcomings of the different interpretations of transnationalism are discussed in Chapter 3 Research Design and Methodology.

5 The sub-heading refers to Manchuelle’s interpretation of Soninke migration to France as an extension of urban migration in Africa (1997).
between transnational and urban-rural ties arise from the exigencies involved in crossing national borders. The differences between transnational and urban-rural ties lessen further considering that rural-urban migration in West Africa also involves international movements. Migrants regularly and readily cross national borders in search of livelihoods in regional urban centers in neighboring countries. For instance, the historian Manchuelle relates the migration of Soninke to France in the early part of the 20th century to previous migrations to Dakar and other urban centers (1997). The Soninke industrial workers who migrated to France in the early 1960s previously had migrated to Dakar (Manchuelle 1997). “Migration to France was initially the continuation of the urban migration that had begun among the Soninke in the interwar period” (Manchuelle 1997:216). Accordingly, how rural-urban migration and urban-rural linkages have been theorized and researched have significance for this study of transnational migration and consequently for understanding the transnational practices of Senegambian immigrants in Spain.

Comparable to transnational ties, urban-rural linkages involve multiple commitments encompassing familial, social, economic and political dimensions that span geographical distances to bind urban migrants and rural nonmigrants together. Researchers have extensively documented the active and strong ties urban residents, who are first generation migrants in West African cities, maintain with their communities of origin (Adepoju 1974; Byerlee 1972; Condé 1973; Findley 1997; Gugler 1971, 1991, 2002; Gugler and Flanagan 1978; Lambert 1994, 2002; Potts 1997; Trager 1995). Lambert observes that appeals for “multi-local studies of migration”

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6 Urban migration to Dakar and other cities evolved from earlier migration to cultivate groundnuts on plantations and frontier lands under the navetanat system. Navetant is a Wolof word that indicates migration during the rainy season (Soumah 1981).

7 Emphasis is Manchuelle (1997).

8 The recognition of urban migrants as urban residents emphasizes the duality of establishing oneself in the city while sustaining ties with one’s rural community of origin. As with permanent urban residents, temporary migrants are subject to the exigencies of the city for the duration of their sojourn.
that linked urban and rural areas began in the 1970s (1994:9). Migration studies from the 1960s and 1970s show that the numerous practices constituting urban-rural linkages are the same activities comprising transnational ties. Data from a survey of the types of social and economic ties migrants in Oshogbo, Nigeria, which was carried out in 1971 and 1972, indicates that 78 percent of migrants regularly visited their communities of origin, 60 percent of migrants sent remittances, and of those remitting, 51 percent did so “very often” (Adepoju 1974:132). From a 1961 study of Eastern Nigerian migrants in Enugu, Gugler and Flanagan describe “strong ties” involving more elaborate activities than visits and remittances: marriage, home construction, retirement plans, and funeral arrangements (1978:64-65). At the village level, migrants in Enugu organized hometown associations that financed development projects in and lobbied on behalf of their communities of origin (Gugler and Flanagan 1978). Migrants in Enugu also supported migration from their communities of origin by hosting visitors and assisting new arrivals (Gugler and Flanagan 1978). The engagement of urban residents in activities that support urban-rural linkages illustrates their concurrent membership in their rural communities of origin and residence in West African cities. Gugler and Flanagan’s observation that urban migrants “operate in geographically separate but culturally and economically integrated system” emphasizes the articulation of urban destinations and rural communities of origin through the different activities migrants practice to maintain urban-rural ties (1978:64). This articulation culminates in a phenomenon Gugler calls “life in a dual system” that emerges when families take advantage of opportunities in both communities of origin and urban destinations thereby creating scattered

9 Urban-rural linkages suggest initiatives arising from the urban centers, and rural-urban linkages indicate from the rural location. In this study urban-rural is used to reflect initiatives arising from either location.
households as spouses, children or parents remain behind (1971, 1991, 2002). These studies on urban-rural connections in West Africa demonstrate that the activities in which urban residents engage to maintain connections to their rural communities of origin are the same that support transnational ties. Moreover, the activities urban residents practice to anchor themselves to their communities of origin while simultaneously establishing themselves in the cities to which they have migrated bridge these two locations. Studying urban-rural linkages then enable a “multilocal” approach (Lambert 1994, 2002), or a transnational perspective in the case of international migration.

Studies of rural-urban linkages from the 1960s and 1970s remind us that migrants have long maintained multiple social relations across national borders, particularly in the case of West Africa where rural-urban migration has also involved international movements to urban centers of neighboring countries. Although Glick Schiller et al. (1992) and Basch et al. (1994) have developed the transnational framework to distinguish current migration trends from former conceptualizations of migration that evoked rupture with the homeland and adaptation in the receiving country, migration scholars have questioned the “newness” of transnationalism as a phenomenon (Foner 2000; Kivisto 2001). Foner (1997, 2000) argues that Russian Jews and Italians in New York at the turn of the century sustained social relations that connected them to their communities of origin at the same time as they developed roots to the United States. Along the same line, Riccio contends that “the literature on what was called ‘circular’ labour migration in sub-Saharan Africa during and after the colonial period dealt extensively with what would now be called ‘transnational migration’” (2001:583-584). Studies of urban-rural linkages that

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10 Lambert’s use of a “multilocal” approach that transcends the division between urban and rural locations in migration studies is consistent with Gugler’s concept of “life in a dual system (1994, 2002). He extensively quotes Gugler and Flanagan (1978) in the call for a multilocal approach to the study of migration since the 1970s (Lambert 1994:10; 2002:XXIII).
predate transnational migration research lead into Portes’ discussion of “adumbration” in which the observance of a phenomenon precedes its coinage (2001:183-184). With the development of the concept, scholars are able to point to precedents and categorize them; whereas without the discovery of the concept, the scholarship remains disparate (Portes 2001:184). As studies of the urban-rural linkages African migrants maintain precede transnational migration research, these studies can inform and advance the current multidisciplinary field of transnational migration.

For instance, the observed characteristics and properties of urban-rural linkages also pertain to transnational ties. Urban-rural ties are dynamic adaptations to macroeconomic and political conditions (Potts 1997). Moreover they evolve over the life course to reflect the particular needs and circumstances of individual migrants and their families at specific points in time (Gugler 2002; Lambert 2002). Young or recent migrants who are dependent on relatives in urban centers may not have the resources to visit their communities of origin or to send remittances (Gugler 2002; Lambert 1994, 2002). Changes in urban-rural linkages may result from changes in the composition of the migrants’ households where spouses remain behind to cultivate or children are sent to school in the rural communities of origin creating “dual-households” (Adepoju 2004; Gugler 1971, 1991, 2002; Potts 1997). Ties may decrease with the death of parents in the community of origin (Gugler 2002). Involvement in rural investments may increase as retirement approaches (Gugler 2002). Urban residents planning to retire in their communities of origin prepare by building homes, investing in land, making agricultural improvements, and participating in the village rituals, such as initiation ceremonies and funerals, in addition to sending remittances to support rural households (Findley 1997; Gugler 2002;

11 The difference between migration at the turn of the century and now is the cumulative effects of advanced technologies in communication and transportation that compress space and time enabling a far larger number of people to sustain multiple social relations across borders (Portes 1997:813; Portes et al. 1999:219).
Urban residents’ desire to be buried in their ancestral home creates a final tie to their communities of origin (Tacoli 2001). Emphasizing the dynamic and evolving properties of urban-rural linkages calls attention to identifying changes in the transnational behavior of immigrants over the span of settlement in the receiving country. For example, Foner’s assumption that ties to the country of origin diminish over time as family members join immigrants and as immigrants become more involved in the receiving country need to be reconsidered especially as immigrants weigh retirement options in the country of origin (2000).

Insofar as the behaviors and activities that support urban-rural linkages and transnational ties are essentially the same, the motives of urban migrants for sustaining ties to their communities of origin can be extended to the maintenance of transnational ties. In fact, some of the reasons researchers have given for the maintenance of urban-rural linkages and transnational ties are identical. While economic and social connections between urban and rural areas arise from conditions in both locations, circumstances at the household level partly shape urban-rural linkages and transnational ties. At the household level, ties joining members separated between rural and urban locations form an economic strategy. Rural-urban migration in Africa is primarily economically driven, a means of securing cash and a livelihood (Colvin 1981; Gugler and Flanagan 1978). The culmination of natural disasters, environmental degradation, and structural adjustment policies has undermined agricultural production forcing African farmers to

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12 Tacoli (2001) argues that declining opportunities in the urban centers and narrowing rural-urban income gaps influence the direction of the flow of resources.

supplement their incomes or search for alternative livelihoods (Adepoju 1995, 2004; Findley et al. 1995). For example, because agriculture does not meet the subsistence needs of residents in the Senegal River Valley, households must rely on income provided by migrant labor (Findley and Sow 1998). Under these precarious conditions, labor migration becomes a livelihood strategy. A family may sponsor one or more members to engage in labor migration with the expectation that the migrant will send remittances (Adepoju 1995, 2004; Adepoju and Mbugua 1997). In some areas remittances are the most important source of income for many households (Tall 2005). In a 1987 survey of 75 households in the Senegal River Valley, migrant remittance comprised one source of household income (Findley and Sow 1998). According to Reboussin (1995), Jola women of the Casamance region of Senegal meet their obligations to their families through migration. Women leave the village where access to cash generating activities is limited for urban areas where they find wage employment to provide for their families (Reboussin 1995). The use of remittances for consumption needs, medical care, school fees, and other activities demonstrates the critical contribution of remittances to rural household incomes (Adepoju 2004; Tall 2005). Remittances also enable migrant households to hire replacement labor for agricultural production (Tall 2005). The economic motivations behind migration in Africa and the importance of remittances to the household economies emphasize the urgency of maintaining rural linkages.\footnote{Migration in West Africa is not only about securing a livelihood. Among many ethnic groups, migration has become entrenched in the culture and is a rite of passage to adulthood. This is particularly the case in the urban migration of the Jola of the Casamance region of Senegal (Lambert 1994, 2002; Reboussin 1995; Linares 2003). However, because Senegambian migration to Spain is largely economic as found in the survey of Senegambians in Catalonia, the discussion focuses on the economic motives for maintaining urban-rural linkages.}

\footnote{Bouillon (1998) and Adepoju (1995) depict migration as a “survival strategy.” Because all the migrants interviewed were not refugees but economic migrants, migration as a livelihood strategy is more appropriate, see Sørensen and Olwig (2002).}
The economic benefits of urban-rural linkages do not only contribute to rural households, but also offer advantages to urban residents. Recent research has examined urban-rural ties as a strategy to guard against the deteriorating conditions of the urban centers as an outcome of structural adjustment policies and economic downturn of the 1980s and 1990s (Adepoju 1995, 2004; Findley 1997; Potts 1997). The economic crisis has made dependence on rural incomes in the form of agricultural produce as urban residents turn to farming or access goods through family members in rural areas necessary (Findley 1997; Potts 1997). Lambert observes that among Jola migrants in Dakar, husbands and fathers send their wives and children to the village when they encounter economic difficulties in the city (1994:140). While Findley (1997) argues that urban migrants have less security compared to long-term residents in this environment of economic crisis, and therefore maintain contact with rural relatives, studies show that even long-term residents are maintaining ties with rural locations to offset the deteriorating situation in the cities (Ferguson 1999; Potts 1997). In such a critical environment, urban residents are retiring in their rural communities of origin and other rural locations in response to structural adjustment policies and economic crisis that have made life in the urban areas fragile (Ferguson 1999).

Maintaining urban-rural linkages as a strategy in times of economic crisis, however, is not a phenomenon of structural adjustment policies or economic crisis. Gugler and Flanagan (1978) have long pointed out the importance of urban-rural linkages as insurance in difficult time. They observe that rural incomes complement urban earnings and that land in the rural community of origin assures security for migrants facing widespread underemployment and unemployment in

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16 Structural adjustment policies have targeted the public sector reducing government expenditure and removing subsidies on social services, healthcare, education and residential development, retrenching civil servants, cutting official salaries and removing subsidies (Adepoju 1995, 2004; Potts 1997). All of which has increased unemployment, expanded the informal sector, and reduced the living standards and welfare of urban residents (Adepoju 1995, 2004; Potts 1997).
urban centers (Gugler and Flanagan 1978). The benefits of maintaining ties to the community of origin are not limited to urban migrants but also extend to international migrants who may encounter difficulties in the receiving country. According to Landolt (2001), Salvadorian migrants who work in low-wage and informal service jobs remit and invest in El Salvador to secure their assets in light of the legal and economic uncertainties they face in the United States. In addition to investments, transnational ties provide a social safety net for immigrants, which the example of Dominican parents in the United States sending delinquent children to the Dominican Republic shows (Guarnizo 1997; Levitt 2003). These examples show that urban-rural and transnational ties offer similar advantages to urban residents and international immigrants.

Beyond the economic reasons for maintaining urban-rural linkages, social motives are equally important to urban residents. The desire of urban residents to be buried in their ancestral communities shows how essential connections to the community of origin are to their identities (Tacoli 2001). In a sample of 200 residents in greater Dakar, Senegal, 74 percent visited relatives or attended family ceremonies consisting of funerals, baptisms and marriages (Sow 1981). Sow (1981) concludes that these practices show urban residents’ commitment to both the rural communities of origin and to the cities to which they have migrated. In addition these practices reveal the strength of linkages between greater Dakar and other regions (Sow 1981). Along this line, Skinner (1985) argues that West Africans use rural-urban labor migration to enhance their status in their communities of origin. Successful migrants enhance their prestige and that of their village through contributions aimed at rural development (Skinner 1985). At the transnational level, Skinner’s observation is reiterated in Goldring’s argument that transnational migrants maintain an orientation to their countries of origin to enhance their social status (1998). The

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17 Chapter four discusses some of the economic benefits Senegambian immigrants in Catalonia secure from the transnational ties that they maintain.
Mexican migrants in Goldring’s study acquire material possessions, build homes and invest in property and business to improve their social status in their hometown (1998). Definitions of how status is acquired can be altered through migration as transnational communities provide avenues for the formation of alternative power hierarchies (Goldring 1998). For example, migrants gain prestige through participation in hometown associations that sponsor infrastructural projects: paving roads, building wells, and constructing schools (Goldring 1998). The identity of Murid traders in Italy is similarly tied to social status in the country of origin as most of their investments are directed to the holy city of Touba (Riccio 2002). Not only are these houses symbols of the migrant’s goal of returning, but also a sign of status and success. Riccio (2002) observes that for Murid traders in Italy also gain status through participation in transnational village-based organizations that sponsor development projects in Senegal.

Conclusion

The studies and examples detailed in this section support the position that current West African migration to Europe and North America are extensions of past migrations to urban centers in Africa. As the comparison of transnational ties and urban-rural linkages shows, the social and economic motives that drive these connections and the practices that maintain them are fundamentally the same. In addition, as demonstrated in the examples given, transnational ties and urban-rural linkages share the same properties. The approaches to studying urban-rural linkages are therefore useful for understanding transnational ties. Of particular importance to this study of the transnational practices of Senegambian immigrants in Spain is how conditions in the urban centers or destinations affect migrants’ participation in activities that enable them to maintain ties with their communities of origin and the activities themselves.
Figure 2-1. Map of Senegal (EIU 2009b).

Figure 2-2. Map of Gambia (EIU 2009a).
CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the research design and methodology for analyzing the relationship between immigrant economic integration and participation in transnational activities. The first section states the research objectives. The second section presents the methodological approach to this study. The methodological section reviews some of the critiques of the different interpretations of transnationalism in order to explain the approach adopted to operationalize transnationalism for this study. The third section of this chapter details the ethnographic methods used to collect data and the construction of the questionnaire. The last section of the chapter details entry into the Senegambian community of Mataró in order to disclose issues of rapport with informants and positionality in the community.

Research Objectives

To answer the central question of this study, how does the economic integration of Senegalese and Gambian immigrants in Catalonia affect their participation in transnational activities, requires several research objectives:

- The first objective is to operationalize transnationalism, which entails defining transnationalism and developing a scale to measure the phenomena. This is done in the following section.
- The second objective is the construction of an occupational index that takes into account wages and immigration status. Occupation and immigration status are variables that indicate economic integration. The index is formulated in chapter five.
- The third objective is to compare transnational scores with economic integration, defined by occupational and immigration status, to assess the relationship between them. The

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1 The term “immigrant” is used instead of “migrant” to emphasize that Senegalese and Gambian nationals are in the process of settlement in Spain. Moreover, because the daily lives of the vast majority of Senegalese and Gambian immigrants do not “depend on multiple and constant interconnections” with their countries of origin, the term “transmigrant” is not used (Glick Schiller et al. 1992, 1995; Basch et al. 1994).
analysis of the relationship between economic integration and participation in transnational activities is contained in chapter six.

- The fourth objective explains differences between the transnational practices of Senegambian men and women in relation to disparities in their economic integration as an outcome of Spain’s family reunification policy, the gendered opportunities available in Spain’s labor market, and gendered expectations of childcare responsibilities. The consideration of gender in the migration process occurs throughout the study.

**Operationalization of Transnationalism**

Analyzing the relationship between occupational status and participation in transnational activities requires a consideration of the different criticisms against current approaches to transnationalism, both theoretical and methodological. These criticisms include: the different interpretations of transnationalism; the diverse levels and units of analysis; and the absence of procedures for measurement. Mahler (1998) attributes the definitional confusion to the numerous metaphors researchers use for transnationalism. To avoid ambiguity, Mahler (1998) promotes the use of Basch et al.’s concept of “transnational social field” (1994). Beyond the metaphors, Vertovec’s categorization of the six assumptions on which definitions of transnationalism have been based highlights the broadness of transnational perspectives and conveys the confusion that such a scope generates (1999). Kivisto (2001) further attributes the ambiguity surrounding transnationalism to differing definitions that do not provide temporal and spatial qualifications. He identifies three versions of transnationalism in the research: anthropological, middle-range theoretical, and social spatial perspectives (Kivisto 2001).

Besides theoretical concerns, scholars have raised methodological issues. Citing a need for a methodological framework for transnational studies, Portes et al. (1999) identify individual entrepreneurs and their support networks as transnational. Transnational entrepreneurs are

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2 I outline the different definitions of transnationalism in Chapter 1.

3 The six assumptions Vertovec examines are: social morphology, types of consciousness, mode of cultural reproduction, avenue of capital, site of political engagement, and construction of locality (1999:448-456).
involved in a higher intensity of cross-border activities that depend on the modern transportation and communication technologies that compress time and distance (Portes et al. 1999). However, Kivisto’s observation that this definition is too restrictive and leaves out significant groups of people, such as labor migrants, illustrates the need for a more inclusive interpretation (2001). The different critiques of transnationalism clearly underscore the need to formulate operational definitions for measuring transnationalism. With these critiques in mind and for the purpose of this study, transnational practices refer to the activities and behaviors in which immigrants engage to sustain diverse social ties in their countries of origin (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Basch et al. 1994; Itzigsohn et al. 1999; Levitt 2001).

Taking into account the intricacy and diversity of transnational processes, Guarnizo and Smith (1998) suggest establishing the level of analysis in order to set parameters and define suitable research methods. Following their suggestion, three levels of analysis are discerned in this study: individual behaviors, social ties and social spaces. For instance, the varied behaviors that comprise transnational activities maintain cross-border social ties and create specific social spaces involving migrants and nonmigrants alike. These are not simply different metaphors as Mahler (1998) suggests, but specific domains of study. Because each of these areas requires particular methodological approaches, confusion arises when they are used interchangeably. If the area of interest is cross-border social ties or relations, then such a study requires social networks analysis. Such an approach reverts back to Glick Schiller et al.’s definition involving cross-border practices, social relations and social fields (1992; Basch et al. 1994). As these areas widely overlap, they need to be specified to minimize confusion and address theoretical and methodological concerns. Weighing the need to identify the level of analysis, this study concerns the types of activities and behaviors Senegambians in Catalonia engage in to maintain social ties
to their communities of origin in Senegal and Gambia. While the study examines a range of behaviors and account for variation through economic integration in Catalonia, the participation of Senegambians in transnational activities also reflects the social ties they maintain with their communities and countries of origin.

Because the study concerns engagement in transnational activities and behaviors, a scale based on Itzigsohn et al.’s model (1999) to measure the degree of involvement in transnational activities is used. Itzigsohn et al. (1999) scale transnational practices into four categories: economic, political, civil-societal and cultural. Each of the categories forms a continuum of transnational activities ranging from “broad” to “narrow.” Four parallel scales determine the dimensions of broad and narrow for each of the categories of practices: the degree of involvement in the activities; the magnitude of cross-border movements; and the extent of institutionalization of the activities. The sum of these continua constitutes the transnational social field (Itzigsohn et al. 1999). The model is not restrictive and includes a spectrum of different behaviors and activities for comparing diverse groups, such as labor migrants, entrepreneurs and second-generation immigrants (Itzigsohn et al. 1999). Itzigsohn et al.’s model is an appropriate tool for measuring involvement in transnational behaviors in that it satisfies Mahler’s call (1998) for categorizing transnational practices and distinguishing between people who travel frequently and those who travel occasionally (1999).

Whereas Itzigsohn et al. (1999) measure four categories of behaviors, this study measures three types of activities: private, economic and public. Five Private transnationalism recognizes that

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4 Narrow transnationalism indicates habitual participation in economic, political or sociocultural practices involving frequent cross-border movement and a high degree of institutionalization. Broad transnationalism involves infrequent participation in material or symbolic practices comprising intermittent cross-border movements and a low degree of institutionalization (Itzigsohn et al. 1999:323).

5 Because the population of this study comprise of first-generation immigrants, cultural transnationalism is not considered in the analysis. As first generation immigrants, Senegambians are oriented toward their ethnic and
migration is a livelihood strategy for African families and households facing economic crisis and that immigrant women are more engaged in transnational behaviors pertaining to household subsistence (Pessar 1999; Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo 2002, 2005). Public transnationalism is based on Itzigsohn et al.’s “civil-societal” category, which refers to “those community practices—in the religious, sports, or mutual-help fields—that are not mainly political or market oriented” (1999:324). The economic category recognizes that immigrants combine employment in the receiving country with income generating projects in the country of origin. These projects supplement the incomes of immigrants, generate income for family members in the country of origin, and support the future return plans of immigrants. The dimensions of Itzigsohn et al.’s model (1999) are also modified. Since activities at the household level are not institutionalized, the institutionalization of the practices is not considered, only the level of participation and frequency of cross-border movement. This study considers only the degree of involvement in transnational practices and the magnitude of transnationalism. In addition to degree of participation in transnational activities and magnitude of cross-border movement, transnational activities are weighed according to the income and the legal resource needed to carry out each activity. Income is indicated by occupation and the legal resource is denoted by immigration status. For example, calls to relatives in the country of origin demand much less monetary resources than visits, which in turn require much more funds and regularized status in Spain. These three criteria combine to produce a transnational score of high, medium or low.

6 Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002, 2005) observe that immigrant men are more engaged in transnational activities that are institutionalized and civic oriented than women. They conclude that women are more engaged in practices pertaining to household subsistence (Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo 2002, 2005).
Operationalization of Economic Integration

To examine the relationship between engagement in transnational activities and integration, the transnational score of the respondents are compared with variables that indicate economic incorporation: immigration status and employment. As the discussion of integration in chapter one demonstrates, there are numerous definitions of integration. This study interprets integration in relation to Brubaker’s emphasis on the socioeconomic position of immigrants in host countries. Migration status and employment are two variables that indicate socioeconomic integration. Legal or regular immigration status is an essential variable in the process of integration (Massey et al. 1987). Legal status offers economic and social welfare opportunities that encourage integration and that are unavailable to immigrants with undocumented or irregular status. Powers et al. (1998) found that Mexican immigrants in the United States experienced occupational improvement after legalizing their immigration status. Moreover, residency and naturalization confer rights that facilitate particular transnational behaviors.\(^7\) For example, regularization of status allows for travel between receiving and sending countries.\(^8\) In consideration of the different immigration statuses and the different rights each confers, immigration status is ranked according to four categories: irregular, work permit, permanent resident, and citizen.\(^9\) Irregular status is the lowest rank of immigration status, and citizenship is

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\(^7\) Manuh (1998) observes that Canadian citizenship allows Ghanaians to work in government jobs, provides them with social security and other benefits in old age, and facilitates travel in foreign airports, allowing for increased mobility between Ghana and Canada. For returnees, Canadian citizenship provides security in case future crisis in Ghana (Manuh 1998).

\(^8\) African immigration to Spain is largely clandestine. Many Africans have legalized their immigration status through regularization campaigns. Several campaigns have been held since the 1980s. The most recent campaign took place in the spring of 2005.

\(^9\) *Irregular* is used to refer to the status of immigrants who are in Spain without proper authorization rather than *undocumented*. Immigrants with irregular status usually register (*empadronarse*) in their local municipality; therefore, they are not undocumented. A requirement of the 2005 regularization program was registration in a municipality at least since August 2004.
the highest level. With regards to employment, work in the primary and secondary sectors and self-employment are distinguished in this study.\textsuperscript{10} Employment in the primary labor market indicates higher integration compared to employment in the secondary labor market. Self-employment, described as an alternative to less desirable work in the secondary sector (Portes and Zhou 1992), scores equally with work in the formal sector. However if the business involves transnational movement, then the score is higher than employment in the formal sector.

**Gender Matters**

The research design for this study applies Pessar and Mahler's (2003) “gendered geographies of power framework” to explain the transnational practices of Senegambian immigrant men and women in relation to their economic integration in Spain (Mahler and Pessar 2001, 2006). The first component, “geographic scales,” refers to how gender operates on various spatial and social levels simultaneously. For Senegambian immigrants, gender functions on several levels: in migration selectivity to Spain; in Spain's family reunification policy; and in the gendered work immigrant men and women perform in Spain. The second component, “social location,” represents positionality within interconnected power hierarchies that involve social classifications such as race, religion, class and gender. Gender ideologies and relations within ethnic Senegambian populations and within Spanish society coalesce with migration to inform the economic integration and transnational practices of Senegambian men and women (Anthias 1998). Where race and religion intersect in Spain's labor market, Senegambian women lose out to Latin American women for domestic work. The third component involves expressions of agency. Senegambian women empower themselves through their position as mothers and wives. Because the gendered geographies of power framework considers the multiple dimensions of an

\textsuperscript{10} Dual labor market theory (Piore 1979) has been the foremost perspective for understanding the economic incorporation of immigrants in industrial countries.
individual’s social position, it is applicable for understanding the different trajectories of Senegambian men and women's economic incorporation in Spain and their transnational practices.

**Ethnographic Methods**

I used several ethnographic methods, such as participant observation, structured interviews and in-depth interviews, to analyze the relationship between the economic integration of Senegambian immigrants in Catalonia and their participation in transnational activities. The ethnographic approach captures the lived experiences, beliefs and identities of those studied (Foner 2003; Mahler and Pessar 2006). Participant observation, the principal method of ethnography, involves observing and interacting with people and their activities in different social situations (Spradley 1980). Participant observation provided the information needed to develop the interview guide for this study. The in-depth interviews include the migration histories of a small sub-sample of informants who are long-term residents, which permits an examination of change occurring over time (Marshall and Rossman 1995). The migration histories document the different stages of the migration process, from the decision to migration to eventual settlement in the host country. The migration histories of the individual respondents capture changes in transnational behaviors occurring alongside the integration process.

While transnational migration involves multi-sited ethnography, I conducted fieldwork in the Senegambian community of Mataró, Spain and did not travel to the communities of Senegal and Gambia where my informants are from. Although I did not follow the people, a strategy Marcus (1995) suggests for conducting multi-sited ethnography, I “strategically situated” my research within the wider context of the transnational activities of my informants (Marcus 1995).

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11 In terms of anthropological methods for the study of transnationalism, Marcus’ multi-sited ethnography approach (1995) encompasses the transformations taking place across sending and receiving countries.
The transnational activities of my informants inform my ethnography. For example, I accompanied informants to the *locutorios* (internet and telecommunication centers) where I observed them make international calls and wire money to relatives in Senegal or Gambia.\(^{12}\) I assisted an informant in preparing for vacation to Gambia. I attended wedding parties of grooms who were married in absentia to brides in Senegal or Gambia. As Hannerz (1998) argues, anthropological methods such as participant observation, life histories and surveys are relevant to transnational studies.

My fieldwork involved two stages of data collection. I collected data through participant observation and informal interviews with immigrants. Studies of groups who live on the margins of society, such as immigrants with irregular status, show that participant observation is more suited than quantitative methods for documenting their life experiences (Bourgois 1995; MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000). Participant observation involves not only observing people and their activities in different social situations, but also interacting with people and engaging in their activities (Spradley 1980). My level of participation in the daily activities of the Senegambian immigrants in Mataró was moderate, a balance between participation and observation, or outsider and insider (Patton 2002; Dewalt et al. 1998; Spradley 1980).\(^{13}\)

The activities in which I participated were diverse: visiting people in their homes where I usually ate lunch or dinner with them; attending parties (baptisms and weddings); and accompanying informants to work including landscaping and cleaning jobs. Not only did I participate in the activities of my informants, but I also assisted them in numerous ways. I helped

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\(^{12}\) Locutorios are parlors that provide various communication services: telephone booths for international calls, computers with Internet access, facsimile machines and money transfers.

\(^{13}\) The continuum of participation ranges from nonparticipation, no involvement with people or activities, to complete participation, becoming a member of the group being studied (Patton 2002; Dewalt et al. 1998; Spradley 1980).
my informants fill out applications for regularization and employment. I typed letters for family reunification purposes and bank transactions in Senegal. I drove my informants to visit relatives living in other regions of Catalonia. I took informants on trips to Barcelona to visit tourist sites as well as buy hair products. These activities further won my informants over and gave me greater insight into their lives. By building rapport, I formed comfortable relationships with my informants, which encouraged them to talk as they normally do and eventually to confide in me (Bogdan and Biklen 1998). Only through relationships based on trust was I able to ask provocative personal questions and expect serious answers (Bourgois 1995).

The second stage of my fieldwork involved developing the interview guide and conducting the interviews. Data gathered from participant observation and interviews with my informants and staff members of organizations dealing with immigrants, such as the comissionat per al Pla de la nova ciutadania (commissioner for the plan of the new citizen) and the responsable (responsible) of the Secretaria per a la Immigració (Secretary for Immigration), informed the construction of the interview guide.14 I also interviewed and consulted with key informants from the immigrant community who were cultural mediators and leaders of different immigrant associations. The interview guide solicited demographic and socioeconomic data, including employment history, previous migration experience, and reasons for migrating to Spain. During construction of the interview guide, I hired a Senegalese male assistant to help with recruitment of informants and to interpret for those who did not speak Spanish. My assistant spoke most of the languages of the different ethnic groups that comprised the Senegambian community of Mataró: Mandinka, Jola, and Wolof. He also reviewed the interview guide and gave me feedback

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14 The comissionat per al Pla de la nova ciutadania is the commissioner for the Plan of the New Citizen in the municipality of Mataró. The responsable for Secretaria per a la Immigració is the head of the Secretary for Immigration in the regional Catalan government, Generalitat de Catalunya.
on some of the sensitive questions. I conducted 60 interviews with immigrants from Senegal and Gambia living in Mataró. Table 3-1 lists the nationality, ethnicity, and gender of the respondents.

### Table 3-1. Gender and Ethnicity of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Mandinka</th>
<th>Jola</th>
<th>Serahule</th>
<th>Haal Pular</th>
<th>Wolof</th>
<th>Balanta</th>
<th>Serer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Although Serahule and Soninke are the same ethnic group, the respondents refer to themselves as Serahule.*

A few of the respondents did not live in Mataró but their ties to relatives and friends in Mataró made them available. All the interviews were digitally recorded with the permission of each informant. The large number of Senegambians with irregular status prohibited a systematic random sample. Snowball sampling was the method for building a sampling frame, which is appropriate for small populations that are difficult to find such as irregular immigrants (Johnson 1990; Bernard 2002).

**Entry into the Senegambian Community of Mataró**

Fieldwork for this project took place over a 14-month period from March 2004 to May 2005. I arrived in Barcelona on the fourth of March 2004, a week before the terrorist train bombings in Madrid, which occurred on March 11th.15 In the beginning of my fieldwork, I interacted with different West African immigrant communities, primarily the Nigerian community in Hospitalet and the Senegambian community of Mataró. However, because of budget limitations due to the devaluation of the U.S. dollar, time constraints, and safety

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15The Islamic terrorists were mainly Moroccans, and the backlash of the train bombings mostly targeted immigrants from North Africa. Sub-Saharan Africans, which are the population of this study, were not associated with the train bombings or with terrorism in general.
concerns, I decided to focus my research on the Senegambian community of Mataró. The three residential moves I made during my fieldwork symbolize the stages of my entry into the Senegambian community of Mataró.

For the first five months of my stay, I rented a room in Barcelona from a woman who migrated to Barcelona from Southern Spain. Her apartment was in the neighborhood of Pueblo Sec, which was the destination of earlier generations of migrants from Andalusia, but which currently has a large concentration of Dominican immigrants. Gaining entry into the Senegambian community of Mataró began when a colleague at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona gave me the contact information of a social worker in the central Càritas office in Barcelona who worked with Nigerian commercial sex workers. After informing me that most of the Senegalese and Gambian immigrants do not live in Barcelona but the surrounding cities, the social worker gave me the contact information of the director of the Càritas branch in Mataró, Centre Sant Pau. (Figure 3-1 is a map of the coast of Barcelona and Maresme and illustrates the distance between Barcelona and Mataró.) I made arrangements with the director to volunteer at Sant Pau on weekdays to become acquainted with the immigrants who were taking Castilian and Catalan language and adult literacy courses in the mornings and evenings. The director provided me with a list of the different Senegalese and Gambian immigrant organizations in Mataró and the names and telephone numbers of the executive members, who were contacted

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16 A number of Nigerian immigrants whom I encountered were involved in sex work which dissuaded me from further interactions with the community.

17 Càritas is a Catholic charity that administers diverse social programs.

18 In Spain the principle language is referred to as Castilian and not Spanish. To accommodate the largely Muslim population that Sant Pau serves, morning classes are restricted to women. Men attend the evening classes, however, there are a few young Muslim women in the evening courses.
and interviewed. My volunteer activities at Sant Pau facilitated my entry into the Senegambian community. As I built rapport with the students and clients, they invited me to their homes and to social events, where I began to meet other immigrants who were not affiliated with Sant Pau.

In the fall of 2004, I ended my commute and moved to Mataró to share an apartment with a single Catalan woman in the neighborhood of Llántia, located on the hill above Cerdanyola, a neighborhood with one of the highest number of foreign-born residents (Ajuntament de Mataró 2004, 2006; IMPE 2006). I began teaching the morning beginning Castilian class at Sant Pau in place of the instructor who unexpectedly had hip surgery. At this time, I had built enough rapport and trust among my network of Senegambian informants to begin conducting structured interviews with the help of my Senegalese assistant. The director of Sant Pau recommended my gregarious and popular Senegalese research assistant whom he noted knew practically everyone. My assistant aided me in recruiting respondents and interpreted for those informants who did not speak Castilian.

My entry into the community was solidified when I rented a room from a Senegalese Mandinka couple with two small children in February 2005. Their apartment was located on a narrow street off the pedestrian boulevard in the commercial center of Cerdanyola, a neighborhood with the largest sub-Saharan immigrant population. Table 3-2 provides the residential distribution of immigrants in Mataró neighborhoods, and Figure 3-2 is a map of Mataró that shows the different neighborhoods (inserted at the end of the chapter). Living with the Senegalese family enabled me to observe and participate in their everyday activities, and also

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19 While community leaders were polite, they expressed fatigue from interviews for studies on Senegalese and Gambian immigration and related topics. For example, anthropologists from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona had previously carried out research among the Senegambian community of Mataró. While I was conducting fieldwork, I met a Belgian geographer who was also conducting dissertation research. Several weeks after I left Spain, an American anthropologist contacted me through the director of Sant Pau with questions about the Gambian community in Mataró.
provided me with access to more intimate events than baptism celebrations. For example, I was
invited to accompany the family to a wake where I not only observed grieving family members
and friends, but also preliminary arrangements to send the body back to Gambia. The intimacy
and familiarity I shared with my Senegambian informants enhanced and informed my analysis of
the relationship between immigrant integration and participation in transnational activities.

Conclusion

The analytical review of the approaches to measure transnationalism and this study’s
adoption of Itzigsohn et al.’s model (1999) to assess involvement in transnational practices
provide the framework to evaluate the cross-border activities of Senegambian men and women in
relation to their economic integration in Spain. This study defines transnational practices, cross-
border behaviors that enable immigrants to maintain ties with their countries of origin (Glick Schiller et al. 1992), as the unit of analysis. Economic integration is interpreted as occupational
and immigration status. The gendered geographies of power framework (Mahler and Pessar
2001, 2006) is applied to account for variations between the transnational activities of
Senegambian men and women and to explain disparities in their economic integration,
particularly the low participation rates of Senegambian women in Spain’s labor market. In order
to examine the economic integration of Senegambian immigrants in Spain and the employment
opportunities available to them, a analysis of immigration trends and the role immigrants play in
the labor market in the labor policy at the national and regional levels of Spain and Catalonia is
presented in the following chapter. A critical summary of Spain’s immigration policy,
particularly the challenges immigrants face to regularize and maintain their status, is given in
Appendix A.
Table 3-2. Neighborhood Distribution of African population in Mataró *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Mataró Total</th>
<th>Palau Escorxador</th>
<th>Rocafrica</th>
<th>Cerdanyola</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Africans **</td>
<td>7,085</td>
<td>1,329</td>
<td>1,877</td>
<td>2,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan</td>
<td>3,176</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>1,373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These figures represent the population numerated on January 1, 2006.
** In Spain, North Africans are referred to as Maghreb, which includes Moroccans, Algerians, Tunisians and Libyans. Africans are generally distinguished between Maghreb and sub-Saharan. Of the foreign population in Mataró, Moroccans are the majority comprising 41 percent (IMPE 2006).
Source: IMPE 2006

Figure 3-1. Map of the coast of Barcelona and Maresme. Source Google Maps (2009).
Figure 3-2. Map of the different neighborhoods in Mataró (Modified from Google Map 2009).
CHAPTER 4
RECENT MIGRATION TO SPAIN

Introduction

This chapter presents the major characteristics of contemporary immigration to Spain and Catalonia to locate Senegambian migration within wider national and regional trends. The first section describes Spain’s transformation from a country of emigration to one of immigration in the 1980s. The second section lists the major characteristics of the foreign population in Spain, specifically the diversity of the immigrants in relation to nationality, sex distribution, labor niche participation, and geographic concentration and examines how these features coalesce to make each migration stream unique. After the summary of migration trends at the national level, the third section outlines migration patterns at the regional level of Catalonia. Parallels are drawn between previous internal migration and current foreign immigration to Catalonia, which provides the context for understanding the economic incorporation of Senegambian immigrants in Mataró. The last two sections of the chapter provide a short description of Mataró, the field site, and a summary of Senegambian migration to the city.

A Migration Makeover

Since the 1980s, Spain has transformed from a country of emigration to one of immigration. The growth of Spain’s foreign resident population from 241,971 to 2,738,932 between the two decades of 1985 and 2005 demonstrates the country’s transformation to a country of immigration (INE 1987; OPI 2005, 2006). The year before Spain joined the European Community, 1985, defines the turning point in the country’s migration scheme (Huntoon 1998; MTAS 2006). Immigration grew steadily before Spain’s membership in the European

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1 Appendix A offers a critical summary of immigration laws and opportunities for regularization on account of the unauthorized nature of immigration to Spain, particularly from Africa. The summary describes the problems immigrants face in maintaining their status.
Community—the foreign resident population increased from 165,039 to 241,971 between 1975 and 1985 (INE 1980, 1987).² Table 4-1 lists the authorized foreign resident population of Spain from 1980 to 2005. The late 1980s marks the acceleration of immigration to Spain with an exponential growth rate after 2000.³ Table 4-2 gives the total resident population figures for 2000 to 2005.

### Table 4-1. Total Foreign Residents in Spain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>183,422</td>
<td>241,971</td>
<td>407,647</td>
<td>499,773</td>
<td>895,720</td>
<td>2,738,932</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Table 4-2. Total Foreign Residents in Spain since 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,109,060</td>
<td>1,324,001</td>
<td>1,647,011</td>
<td>1,977,291</td>
<td>2,738,932</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Along side the escalation of foreign immigration, Spanish emigration decreased considerably and emigrants who had left in the 1950s and 1960s to work in Northern Europe and the Americas returned to Spain in large numbers (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Calavita 1998; King 2000, 2001; Suárez-Navaz 2004). The political factors that account for Spain’s transformation include the end of the Franco dictatorship with his death in 1975 and Spain’s membership in the European Community in 1986 (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Martínez Veiga 1999; King 2000, 2001; Suárez-Navaz 2004). In conjunction with these political changes, Spain experienced economic growth and restructuring of its economy, particularly the

² The Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales quotes the number of foreign residents at 165,289 in 1975 as recorded by the Observatorio Permanente de la Inmigración (MTAS 2006:39).

³ Díez Nicolás’ four-year survey of immigrants, covering 2000, 2001, 2002 and 2004, indicates that the majority of immigrants came 1999 (2005:51-52). Thirty-five percent of the respondents in the 2000 sample had arrived in Spain less than a year. The portion of respondents with less than a year in Spain increased to 44 percent in the 2001 sample. For the 2002 and 2004 samples, the number of respondents who were in Spain for less than a year was reduced, 27 percent and 15 percent respectively. The number of respondents who were in Spain between one and five years was 54 percent in 2002 and 66 percent in 2004.
growth of the informal sector and underground economy (King et al. 1997; King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Baldwin-Edwards 1999; Martínez Veiga 1999; King 2000, 2001; Suárez-Navaz 2004). At the same time, Northern European countries that had traditionally attracted and recruited labor migrants restricted immigration sharply after the energy crisis of the 1970s (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; King 2000, 2001). In addition to these political and economic changes, Spain’s geographic proximity to Africa and porous border, specifically the coastline of Andalusia and the Canary Islands has facilitated migration from and through Africa (King et al. 1997; King and Rodriguez-Melguizo 1999; King 2000, 2001; Suárez-Navaz 2004). The ease of entry turned Spain into a transit point or “waiting room” for migrants en route to Northern European countries where immigration was restricted (Apap 1997; King et al. 1997; King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; King 2000, 2001; Ribas-Mateos 2000). However, as Ribas-Mateos describes, Spain has become a destination or “a new home” for migrants, making possible the formation of immigrant communities (2000:36). In order words, as Suárez-Navaz (2008) explains, membership in the European Community brought the French Pyrenees to the border of Spain and Africa.

The Foreign Resident Population in Spain

Before describing the characteristics of the foreign population in Spain, an explanation of different categories and enumerations is necessary to grasp the unauthorized nature of immigration to Spain and the varied dimensions of the diverse migration flows. As King (2000) notes, because of the unauthorized nature of immigration to Spain, enumerating the foreign population is problematic. Moreover, depending on the criteria of the calculation, enumerations of the foreign population vary considerably, which is evident in the tables at the end of the chapter.
reside in Spain and does not include foreigners residing in Spain without authorization.⁵ A more accurate count of foreigners with regular and irregular immigration status in Spain is the “foreign population” as enumerated from the municipal registry.⁶ The Ley Orgánica 4/2000, the law that permitted the regularization campaign of 2000, requires all persons to register with the municipality in which they inhabit with valid identification and verification of residence (Gortázar 2002; MTAS 2006).⁷ The municipal registry, therefore, represents the number of inhabitants, regular and irregular, residing in a municipality and functions as a population census of the municipalities (MTAS 2006; Gortázar 2002).⁸ Before the spring 2005 regularization campaign, the municipal registry enumerated the foreign population at 3,730,610 on January 1, 2005 (INE 2006). By the next year, 4,144,166 foreigners were registered in the municipalities, an increase of 413,556 (INE 2007). At the same time, only 2,738,932 foreigners had authorization to reside in Spain on December 31, 2005 (OPI 2005, 2006). At the end of the following year, 3,021,808 foreigners were authorized to reside in Spain, an increase of 282,876 (OPI 2007). These figures show the considerable discrepancy between authorized foreign residents and

⁵ As Aparicio and Tornos (2003) note, the number of foreign residents does not include those who have become naturalized Spanish citizens nor European Union citizens, mainly pensioners from the United Kingdom, Germany and the Netherlands, who live in Spain most of the year without registering with their local municipality.

⁶ The municipal registry is called “el padrón” in Spanish.

⁷ I registered with the municipality of Mataró with my passport as identification and a letter signed by the tenant from whom I rented a room as proof of domicile.

⁸ The Ley Orgánica 4/2000 gives immigrants with irregular status incentives to register in their municipality, for example, public health care under equal conditions as Spanish nationals and access to free basic education for minors under 18 years of age (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2002; Gortázar 2002; MTAS 2006). Immigrants with irregular status who are not registered in their municipality have the right to emergency health care, with pregnant women have the right to prenatal and postnatal care (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2002). In addition to the social benefits registration provides irregular immigrants, it serves as evidence of presence in Spain for regularization purposes (MTAS 2006).
foreigners not authorized to reside in Spain. While there are some problems with the municipal registry, it gives a reliable count of the irregular foreign population in Spain.9

Four major features of the foreign population in Spain are discussed in this section: the heterogeneous nature of the population; the enormous variation in the sex distribution of the different groups; the incorporation of foreign workers in Spain’s labor market; and the geographic concentration of the foreign population. The first feature of migration to Spain is its heterogeneity. Current migration to Spain is highly diverse and comprised of citizens from developed countries, largely European Union member states, and nationals from developing countries, primarily Latin America and Africa (Apap 1997; King et al. 1997; Colectivo Ioé 2000; Ribas-Mateos 2000; King 2000, 2001; Rodríguez et al. 2001; Rigau i Oliver 2003; Salvá Tomas 2003).10 The migration of both European Union citizens and third country nationals underscores the complexity of migration trends. Rodríguez et al. (2001) describe Southern Europe, specifically the Baleares Islands of Spain, as the “Nueva Florida” of Europe to emphasize the substantial migration of pensioners and retirees from northern European Union states, primarily Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.11 Along with the migration of retirees, there is a smaller number of northern European Union citizens who are either skilled workers or professionals employed in the tourist industry and multinational corporations or who are entrepreneurs engaged in businesses—bars, restaurants and real-estate agencies—providing

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9 The discrepancies involve cases where individuals are registered in more than one municipality, registered but no longer living in Spain, and are living in Spain but not registered (MTAS 2006).

10 Apap (1997) refers to Northern Europeans who retire in Spain as “elite” immigrants and distinguishes them from Africans whom she describes as “marginalized.” She includes immigrants from former Spanish colonies in the elite group; however, a differentiation must be made between immigrants of European descent from the former colonies and those of indigenous or African heritage (1997:144). For example, immigrants from the Dominican Republic or Ecuador will have vastly different racialized encounters in Spain than those from Argentina.

11 In addition to retirement migration, the Florida comparison highlights the importance of tourism for the Spanish economy and role of immigrant labor in the tourist industry (Rodríguez et al. 2001). See also Salvá Tomás 2003.
services to the referred retirement community and to tourists (Colectivo Ioé 2000; Rodríguez et al. 2001; Pumares Fernández 2003; Salvá Tomás 2003). With the large number of retirees plus the smaller number of professionals and entrepreneurs, Northern Europeans comprised the majority of immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s (Calavita 1998). 12 Table 4-3 provides the number of authorized foreign residents in Spain from 1980 to 2005 according to country of origin.

Table 4-3. Foreign Residents by Country in Spain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>20,878</td>
<td>28,485</td>
<td>45,576</td>
<td>41,942</td>
<td>60,575</td>
<td>71,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>22,678</td>
<td>39,052</td>
<td>78,210</td>
<td>65,251</td>
<td>73,983</td>
<td>149,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>Romania *</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1,208</td>
<td>10,983</td>
<td>192,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>7,665</td>
<td>9,706</td>
<td>17,679</td>
<td>18,426</td>
<td>16,610</td>
<td>82,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>1,249</td>
<td>2,224</td>
<td>14,470</td>
<td>26,481</td>
<td>50,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1,043</td>
<td>1,963</td>
<td>30,878</td>
<td>357,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>1,569</td>
<td>1,739</td>
<td>3,832</td>
<td>15,092</td>
<td>27,888</td>
<td>82,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1,879</td>
<td>4,507</td>
<td>7,616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>4,219</td>
<td>8,840</td>
<td>15,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>2,964</td>
<td>5,817</td>
<td>16,665</td>
<td>74,886</td>
<td>199,782</td>
<td>493,114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>3,856</td>
<td>11,051</td>
<td>27,678</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Romania joined the European Union in 2007.

While the retirement migration of European Union citizens has continued to increase steadily in recent years, public concerns about immigration and integration revolve around the

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12 Immigrants from Latin America, Africa and Asia also provide services to retired expatriates and tourists (Rodríguez et al. 2001).
exponential growth of migration from developing countries outside the European Union, primarily Africa and Latin America. For example, in 2001 citizens from European Union member states comprised 30 percent of the authorized foreign population in Spain while African accounted for 27 percent, Latin Americans 26 percent, Asians eight percent, and nonunion Europeans seven percent (DGEI 2001). By 2005, the year of the last regularization campaign, citizens of European Union member states made up 21 percent of the authorized foreign residents, whereas, Africans constituted 24 percent, Latin Americans 36 percent, Asians six percent and nonunion Europeans 12 percent (OPI 2005, 2006). Table 4-4 lists the number of foreign residents by continent from 2000 to 2005.

Table 4-4. Regional Origins of Foreign Residents in Spain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>304,149</td>
<td>366,518</td>
<td>432,662</td>
<td>498,507</td>
<td>649,251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>91,552</td>
<td>104,665</td>
<td>121,455</td>
<td>142,762</td>
<td>177,423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe (non-EU)</td>
<td>81,170</td>
<td>107,574</td>
<td>154,001</td>
<td>168,900</td>
<td>337,177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>331,352</td>
<td>362,858</td>
<td>406,199</td>
<td>498,875</td>
<td>569,284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>283,778</td>
<td>364,569</td>
<td>514,485</td>
<td>649,122</td>
<td>986,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>15,020</td>
<td>15,774</td>
<td>16,163</td>
<td>16,964</td>
<td>17,052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>1,024</td>
<td>1,018</td>
<td>1,112</td>
<td>1,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stateless/No Answer</td>
<td>1095</td>
<td>1,019</td>
<td>1,028</td>
<td>1,049</td>
<td>1,101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Calavita and Suárez-Navaz point out that the official term for foreign resident in Spain is extranjero, yet in public discourse extranjeros is reserved for foreigners from developed countries and inmigrantes for those from developing countries (2003:110; Calavita 1998:539).
As Table 4-3 indicates, in 2005 Moroccans were the largest group of authorized resident foreigners numbering 493,114 and comprising 18 percent of this population. Ecuadorians came in second at 357,065, or 13 percent of the authorized foreign resident population. Colombians totaled 204,348 (seven percent), Rumanians 192,134 (seven percent), and British 149,071 (five percent). These numbers reveal the smallness of the West African population. Authorized resident Gambians numbered 15,830 in 2005, and Senegalese residents totaled 27,678 (OPI 2005, 2006). In terms of the authorized African residents, data from 2005 indicates that Moroccans comprise 76 percent of the population in Spain followed by Algerians at five percent (35,437) and Senegalese at four percent (OPI 2005, 2006). Moroccans overwhelming represent the African resident population in Spain.¹⁴

The second major characteristic is the variation of the sex distribution among the different immigrant populations (King 2000; Escrivá 2000; Ribas-Mateos 2000).¹⁵ Overall, a slim majority of men represent the immigrant population as enumerated both in the municipal registry and from the number of authorized residents. In terms of the number of authorized residents in 2005, men comprised 54 percent of the population and women 46 percent (OPI 2005, 2006; MTAS 2006). Comparably, of the number of foreigners recorded in the municipal registry 53 percent were men (INE 2006, 2007). While a slim majority of the foreign population are men at the aggregate level, the sex composition differs greatly depending on the region of origin. In the case of the Latin American authorized foreign residents, women constituted a slim majority, 54 percent, whereas among the African authorized foreign population, men made up a larger

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¹⁴ Framing the migration of Senegambians within the larger context of migration in Spain gives an important perspective on the contrast between the actual size of the sub-Saharan population and the extensive attention their migration has generated in the public discourse on immigration and integration.

¹⁵ For the structural and sociocultural explanations for the gender distribution of various immigrant populations in Spain, see Ribas-Mateos 2000 and Escrivá 2000.
majority, 68 percent (OPI 2005, 2006). These figures correspond to the number of foreigners recorded in the municipal registry for 2005. Among Latin Americans, women likewise formed 54 percent of the registered population, and with the African population, men constituted 69 percent (INE 2006). Moreover, at the national level, the sex distribution of the foreign population is further skewed. For example, among the authorized Senegalese residents, men accounted for 82 percent of the population while among Brazilians, females made up 68 percent (OPI 2005, 2006). The variations in the sex distribution between the different migrant populations allude to the distinct gender norms and expectations held among the different groups. For instance, Latin American women pioneered the migration to Spain, a fact that is verified by their participation in the labor market. Of the Latin Americans registered as employed in 2005, 52 percent were women. In comparison, only 17 percent of African women were registered as employed in 2005 (MTAS 2006). The low participation rate of African women in the labor market is indicative of their migration through family reunification.

The third major feature of the foreign population in Spain is the concentration of foreign workers in the secondary labor market. The diversity of Spain’s migration flows from developing countries is partly an outcome of the country’s economic transformation, specifically the segmentation or bifurcation of its labor market and labor demands in the secondary labor market and informal sector (King et al. 1997; Mendoza 1997; Calavita 1998; King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Baldwin-Edwards 1999; Martínez Veiga 1999; Arango 2000; Colectivo Ioé 2000; King 2000; Pascual de Sans et al. 2000; Suárez-Nava 2004). The demand for low skilled migrant labor at a time when Spain is experiencing high unemployment supports the principles of dual labor market theory, which describes the fragmentation of the labor market into primary and secondary sectors (Piore 1979; King et al. 1997; Mendoza 1997; Martínez Veiga 1999;
Arango 2000; Colectivo Ioé 2000; Suárez-Navaz 2004). The secondary labor market, characterized by arduous manual labor, low wages, instability, loose regulations, and menial status, does not attract native workers and depends on the flexible and casual labor migrants supply (Piore 1979; Massey et al. 1993; King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Baldwin-Edwards 1999; Arango 2000; Colectivo Ioé 2000; Hoggart and Mendoza 2000; King 2000; Pascual de Sans et al. 2000). Corkill’s description of work conditions of in the plastic greenhouse illustrates some of the onerous circumstances under which immigrants work in agriculture.

More often than not they [immigrant workers] are prepared to endure conditions that native workers find unacceptable. In the invernaderos, the plastic-covered growing areas used for intensive agriculture in southern Spain, which can double or triple the annual harvest of watermelons, peppers, cucumbers etc., temperatures can soar to 50 degrees centigrade. [2001:836]

The main jobs immigrants perform are low skilled construction, agricultural, industrial, domestic and service jobs. The service jobs immigrants do include menial jobs in restaurants, hotels, and hospitals (King et al. 1997; Mendoza 1997; Huntoon 1998; King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Baldwin-Edwards 1999; Martínez Veiga 1999; King 2000; Pascual de Sans et al. 2000). In 2005, of the 1,688,598 foreign workers registered working, 19 percent were engaged in construction and 11 percent were involved in agriculture including livestock, forestry, fishing and aquaculture (MTAS 2006). The large majority, 63 percent, was involved in service including domestic work in homes and hotel and catering, which accounted for 45 percent of the service sector (MTAS 2006). The role of immigrant labor in agriculture and domestic service is further

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16 At the same time, these jobs in the secondary sector—construction, agriculture, domestic service, tourism and catering, and factory work—can be informal depending on whether workers are legally authorized to work and employers are paying workers’ social security (Baldwin-Edwards 1999).

17 Overall, 15 percent of foreign workers registered were engaged in domestic work in private homes comprised and 13 percent were involved in hotel and catering (MTAS 2006).
highlighted in the distribution of work permits through the quota system, which is discussed in the last section of this chapter (Cornelius 2004).

The fourth major feature of the foreign population in Spain is the concentration of particular groups in specific geographical areas as an outcome of the articulation of gender, nationality, labor niche, and destination (King et al. 1997). For instance, women comprise the majority of the Latin American population. They—Dominicans, Peruvians and Colombians—are primarily employed in domestic service, and 44 percent of the Latin American population is concentrated in Madrid and Barcelona, cities with high demands for domestic and service labor that immigrant women supply (Sassen 1998; Salvá Tomás 2003; OPI 2005, 2006). The high concentration of immigrants with identical nationalities in the same occupations and geographic areas reveal the geographical distribution of labor market demands as well as the role of social networks in facilitating migration (Massey et al. 1993; King et al. 1997; Martínez Veiga 1999; King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Corkill 2001). Pumares Fernández (2003) observes that migrants usually have family, friends and compatriots in the country of destination, who help them secure employment and other resources as well as maintain social relations to support cultural practices. In terms of geographical dispersal, the immigrant population is concentrated in four autonomous communities: Catalonia, Madrid, Andalusia and the Valencian Community. In 2005, these four autonomous communities accounted for about 67 percent of the foreign resident population, with Catalonia at 21 percent, Madrid at 20 percent, and Andalusia and the Valencian Community at 13 percent each (OPI 2005, 2006; MTAS 2006:57). Migrants from developing countries have settled in Catalonia and Madrid, autonomous communities with opportunities in the service work, construction and agriculture, whereas those from developed countries have established themselves in Andalusia, Valencia, the Canary and Balearic Islands, communities
where the climate and environment supports retirement and tourism (Colectivo Ioé 2000).

Madrid had the highest number of Latin American authorized residents with 28 percent of the population, followed by Catalonia with 20 percent, living primarily in the province of Barcelona (OPI 2005, 2006). In contrast, African authorized residents were residing largely in Catalonia with 32 percent of the population, half of whom were also concentrated in the province of Barcelona (OPI 2005, 2006). Andalusia had the second largest concentration of African authorized residents, 14 percent, with Madrid a close third, 12 percent (IPO 2005, 2006; MTAS 2006). The geographical distribution figures of the Latin American and African foreign resident population correspond to the employment sectors in which they are concentrated. For example, Latin Americans were overwhelmingly involved in the service sector; 71 percent of Latin American authorized residents employed were working in the service sector and only six percent in agriculture (MTAS 2006). Among the African authorized resident employed, 38 percent were engaged in the service sector and 27 percent in agriculture (MTAS 2006). These figures correspond with the concentration of Latin Americans in Madrid and Catalonia, primarily the province of Barcelona, and of Africans in Catalonia and Andalusia.

The four trends described in this section occur both at the national level and at the regional levels of the autonomous communities. In the case of Catalonia, the diverse economic configuration of the community—a global center, intensive agricultural areas, and coastal tourist zones—sets conditions that mirror migration to Spain at the national level. The following section details important trends at the regional level of Catalonia.

**Catalonia: An Internal and International Destination**

While the prevailing features of contemporary immigration to Spain mirror trends taking place in Catalonia, there are patterns particular to the province. As mentioned in the previous section, until the 1980s Spain was a country of emigration; however, emigration was only part of
the picture.\textsuperscript{18} At the same time as Spain experienced emigration in the 1950s to the early 1970s, the country underwent tremendous internal migration largely of peasants from the poorer rural regions of Andalusia, Extremadura and Galicia to the more developed regions of Basque Country, Catalonia, and Madrid (Calavita 1998; Pascual de Sans et al. 2000; Calavita and Suárez-Navaz 2003; Suárez-Navaz 2004).\textsuperscript{19} This post war migration was actually the second internal population movement of the 20\textsuperscript{th} Century. The first internal migration, which began during World War I and ended with the Civil War, attracted migrants from regions nearer to Catalonia compared with the distance of the second migration (Martín Díaz 1992; Pascual de Sans et al. 2000). As one of the most industrialized regions of Spain, Catalonia—along with the Basque Country—has a history of migration from less-developed regions of Spain (Pascual de Sans et al. 2000). Migrants supported the industrialization of Catalonia (Martín Díaz 1992). In addition to labor demands of the industrial sector, preparations for the Universal Exposition of Barcelona in 1929 and the construction of the metro system generated migration to Catalonia before the Civil War (Martín Díaz 1992:14). That immigrants have followed the earlier internal migrations to Barcelona and Madrid is not surprising. As noted above, 41 percent of the foreign population is located in the autonomous communities of Catalonia and Madrid (OPI 2005, 2006; MTAS 2006:57). Between 2000 and 2005 the authorized foreign population in Catalonia increased from four percent to seven percent of the total population. The percentage is much higher for foreigners registered in the municipal registry, 12 percent of the total population (Generalitat de Catalunya 2006:14-15). The foreign population in Catalonia is concentrated largely in the province of Barcelona (Generalitat de Catalunya 2006). Sixty-eight percent of

\textsuperscript{18} King (2000) draws attention to how internal migration in southern European countries—Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal—have been important in shaping current immigration into these countries.

\textsuperscript{19} This internal migration supported to the industrialization of Barcelona and Madrid (Calavita 1998).
foreigners with residency permit in Catalonia resided in Barcelona in 2005 (IDESCAT 2005). Moreover, the foreign population in Catalonia represents 180 nationalities with Moroccans comprising the largest group. However, the largest population growth in recent years has occurred among the Ecuadorian and Romanian populations (Generalitat de Catalunya 2006).

Parallels exist between the internal migrants of the post World War II period and immigrants from developing countries arriving after 1985 (King 2000). Two similarities that pertain to socioeconomic integration are labor market participation and residential location. Economic pressures have driven internal migration and foreign immigration. Both internal migrants and foreign immigrants have filled the demand for less-skilled and low-waged labor (Solé 1981, 1982; Martín Díaz 1992; King 2000). A 1978 study of migrants in metropolitan area of Barcelona indicates that internal migrants occupied the lowest occupational tiers in larger proportion than the Catalan population (Solé 1982). Identical to foreign immigrants, internal migrants were largely concentrated in construction work and service jobs, such as cleaning, food preparation, and transportation (Solé 1982:28). For example, one of informants in this study, Babacar, worked on a farm in Sant Andreu de Llavaneres where both Andalusians and Africans were employed when he arrived in Mataró in 1970. Babacar witnessed the transition of unskilled agricultural labor from internal migrants to foreign immigrants.

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20 In the regularization campaign of 2005, Catalonia represented 21 percent of the total 575,827 applications approved across Spain. A total of 119,518 foreigners were regularized in Catalonia (CERES 2006:23). Moreover, the province of Barcelona had the highest number of applications approved in Catalonia, 72 percent. The largest number of approved applicants in Barcelona province was from Latin American, 59 percent (CERES 2006:24).

21 Recent increase in the Moroccan population has to do with family reunification in the last few years (Generalitat de Catalunya 2006). See also Ribas-Mateos 2000.

22 Although internal migrants and foreign immigrants in Catalonia have filled similar labor market demands, significant numbers of internal migrants were involved in industrial factory work, such as textiles, that have largely been exported or sub-contracted. Instead of industrial factory work, foreign immigrants support the labor demands of small manufacturing and artisan firms (Pascual de Sans et al. 2000; King 2000).
Immigrants from developing countries also reside in the neighborhoods in which internal migrants initially settled. For instance, Andalusians comprise by far the largest internal migrant population in the Sants-Montjuïc district in the city of Barcelona. Residents born in Andalusia made up eight percent of the district population in 1991 and six percent in 2004 (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2006). At the same time, foreigners comprised three percent of the district population in 1991 and increased to 15 percent in 2004. However, Andalusians outnumbered all other immigrant groups aggregated by nationality. Of the total 176,027 residents registered in the district in 2004, the largest immigrant populations were Ecuadorians (three percent), Moroccans (one percent) and Colombians (one percent) (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2006). As in the case of Spain overall, the geographical locations in which immigrants have settled in Catalonia reflect their social networks and the economic sectors in which they are incorporated. For example, generally Latin Americans are found in urban locations while Africans are in mid-range and less urbanized cities (Rigau i Oliver 2003; Generalitat de Catalunya 2006). As discussed in the previous section describing the foreign population, women comprise the majority of the Latin American population and are involved in service and domestic work in the cities (Generalitat de Catalunya 2006). Whereas, men constitute the majority of the African population and are involved in agricultural work in the less urban areas and construction. For example, the largest registered immigrant groups in the city of Barcelona in 2004 were Ecuadorians, Colombians, Peruvians and Moroccans, in descending order of size. In contrast, the largest registered

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23 In describing the recent migration of Moroccans to Catalonia, King and Rodriguez-Melguizo observe that they “concentrate in the low-rent apartment blocks which formerly housed the earlier waves of poor internal migrants” (1999:67).

24 In Catalonia, Andalusians are concentrated in Barcelona and adjacent areas (Martín Díaz 1992).

25 Latin Americans including Brazilians collectively comprised the largest immigrant population in Sants-Montjuïc (Ajuntament de Barcelona 2006).
immigrant groups in Mataró in 2004 were Moroccans, Gambians, Chinese and Senegalese.26 In the case of the sub-Saharan population in Catalonia, they are concentrated in agricultural areas with the largest numbers in province of Girona, which is especially the case of Gambians (Generalitat de Catalunya 2006:19).

Beyond the parallels that the two migrations share, recent immigration to Catalonia diverges from the post World War II internal migration in the distribution of sex. In the internal migration, men and women migrated in similar numbers (Solé 1981).27 Foreign immigration to Catalonia has increasingly become feminized due to women migrating alone and through family reunification, as is the trend at the national level (Ribas-Mateos 2000; Escrivá 2000; Generalitat de Catalunya 2006). Latin American and African immigrant women illustrate both these trends. As described above, Latin American women have initiated the migration to Spain and as a result participate in the labor market in much higher numbers than African women who largely come through family reunification (Generalitat de Catalunya 2006).28 Within the African population, major differences exist in the gender composition of the different groups, particularly between Moroccans and sub-Saharan immigrants. In the Moroccan case, because men were migrating to Catalonia since the 1960s, the 1970s were characterized by family reunification (Rigau i Oliver 2003). 29 As a result migration from Morocco is in the process of shifting from largely a

26 Unpublished registration statistics from the Servei d’Estudis i Planificació of Maresme.

27 Among respondents who self-identified as upper class, men migrated in higher numbers than women; however, those who self-identified as working class migrated in comparable numbers (Solé 1981:147).

28 Reunited spouses initially receive permission to reside in Spain without work authorization.

29 Although Moroccans have a long history of migration to Spain, they only migrated in significant numbers after 1985 (Rigau i Oliver 2003). King and Rodriguez-Melguizo (1999) point out that Moroccans largely migrated to Northern Europe for work in the 1960s and 1970s just as Spanish peasants did. As Northern European countries tightened immigration and with the entry of Southern European countries into the European Community, Moroccan migration shifted to Spain and Italy which had been transit points for the previous migration to Northern Europe (King and Rodriguez-Melguizo 1999).
masculine to a feminine migration as increasing numbers of Moroccan women arrive on their own or come through family reunification (Ribas-Mateos 2000; Generalitat de Catalunya 2006). The more recent migration from Senegal and Gambia continues to be primarily of men (Ribas-Mateos 2000; Rigau i Oliver 2003; Kaplan Marcusán 2005). The numbers of approved applications for regularization in 2005 reveals the feminization of migration from Latin America. Women made up 57 percent of the approved applications in Catalonia (CERES 2006:25). Among the African population, women made up 15 percent of the approved application. If we look at the case of Gambians and Senegalese, 59 (three percent) and 132 (five percent) women were regularized respectively in the Catalonia in 2005 (CERES 2006:25). Given that conditions for regularization were based on securing a work contract and paying social security taxes, the difference between the number of Latin American and African women applying for regularization indicate the varying levels of participation in the labor market for these two groups. Comparing the numbers of approved applications with the figures for family reunification shows that African women largely arrive through family reunification. For example, in the province of Barcelona, 102 Gambians and 166 Senegalese came through family reunification, including spouses and children, in 2005 (CERES 2006:36). In 2004, the number of West Africans coming through family reunification was slightly higher, 233 Gambians and 317 Senegalese (CERES 2006:36).

**Mataró: Field Site**

The following synopsis of the local economy of Mataró gives a picture of the types of employment available to immigrants. Mataró is the county seat of Maresme, an agricultural and industrial area bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The city was one of the first regions in Catalonia to industrialize, with a specialization in textiles (Lope et al. 2002). As noted in the analysis of internal migration to Catalonia, work in the garment industry attracted internal
migrants to the region. In recent years, the textile industry has declined and been supplanted by small garment firms. The service industry has expanded as the local economy undergoes tertiarization (Lope et al. 2002). Compared to other regions of Catalonia, Mataró has a high rate of businesses operating in the underground economy (Lope et al. 2002).

Mataró’s size and location provides labor opportunities for migrant men and women. From Mataró migrant men can easily travel to the surrounding agricultural fields and greenhouses to work. The proximity of Barcelona, a 40-minute train ride southwest of Mataró, puts construction, domestic, and service work within commuting reach of migrants (Figure 4-1 at the end of the chapter is a map of the coast of Maresme that shows the distance between Mataró and Barcelona). Major cities such as Barcelona epitomize what Sassen (1998) identifies as global cities, where immigrants, mainly women, service the “strategic” sectors, the professional class. Of the total number of Africans residing legally in Spain, including Moroccans and Equatorial Guineans who both have historical ties to Spain, 30 percent live in the province of Catalonia and of that portion, 62 percent live in the province of Barcelona (INE 2005). These figures show that immigrants are geographically concentrated in areas where greater job opportunities in the secondary sector exists, primarily the autonomous communities of Catalonia, Madrid and Valencia (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999).

In addition to labor market demands, social networks account for increasing immigration to Spain (Massey et al. 1993). The high concentration of people of the same ethnicity and

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30 Catalonia is one of the 17 autonomous communities of Spain and is divided into four provinces: Barcelona, Girona, Lleida and Tarragona (I use the Catalonian spellings of the provinces). Each province is subdivided into regions or counties known as “comarca.” Mataró is the county seat of Maresme in the province of Barcelona.

31 Mataró’s location to Barcelona supported the robust growth of the construction industry in the 1990s (Lope et al. 2002). However, with the worldwide banking crisis of 2008, the construction industry has come to a standstill.

32 The Instituto Nacional de Estadística records 663,156 registered foreigners from Africa in 2005. Of that number, 200,536 were registered in Catalonia and 123,466 in the province of Barcelona.
nationality in the same occupations and geographic area reveal the fundamental role of social networks in facilitating migration (Martínez Veiga 1999; King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999). Social networks further sustain migration by mutually connecting migrants and nonmigrants in relationships through which information and assistance are transmitted (Boyd 1989; Massey et al. 1993). For example, the Gambian population in Catalonia consists 84 percent of the total Gambian population in Spain (IMPE 2006). In addition, 87 percent of the registered sub-Saharan African population residing in Mataró comprise of Gambians, Senegalese and Malians (IMPE 2006). Table 4-5 gives the number of authorized residents from Senegal and Gambia at the national, regional and municipal levels.

Table 4-5. Authorized Senegambian Residents 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Spain</th>
<th>Catalonia</th>
<th>Barcelona (Province)</th>
<th>Mataró</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>27,678</td>
<td>9,576</td>
<td>4,732</td>
<td>985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>15,830</td>
<td>13,235</td>
<td>4,335</td>
<td>1,208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Senegambian Migration to Mataró

As early as the 1960s, Gambian men pioneered Senegambian migration to Mataró, and Catalonia in general. At the time, most of the immigrants had the intention of moving on to their preferred destination of France or Britain. Babacar, a 58-year old Gambian who arrived in Mataró in 1970, intended to earn money working in Spain and then moving on to continue his studies in France. However, 35 years later, he is a Spanish national married to a Catalan woman and has a grown daughter. When Babacar arrived in 1970, his uncle, who had spent some

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33 The foreign national population from sub-Saharan African comprised 2.67 percent of the total population in Mataró in 2006. The population of Mataró was 118,891 in 2006 (IMPE 2006).

34 To protect the anonymity of respondents in this study, all names have been substituted with pseudonyms. Babacar lived in a border town in Gambia, where one road separated Gambia and Senegal. Because of proximity, he attended a Senegalese school where he learned French, which helps explain his desire to migrate to France instead of Britain. Babacar does not speak English as formally educated Gambians do.
time in Maresme, was preparing to move to France. Babacar’s uncle delayed his trip for a month to assist Babacar in settling in the area. During the interview, Babacar, who is of the Jola ethnic group, joked that he had to “perfect his Mandinka” because the majority of the sub-Saharan Africans he encountered were Gambians of the Mandinka ethnic group. According to Babacar, when he arrived in 1970, there were practically no sub-Saharan immigrants. He explained that the Jola started arriving in the mid-1980s and in larger numbers after 1991. Babacar’s observation is confirmed by different studies of Senegalese and Gambians in Catalonia. Kaplan Marcusán distinguishes three periods, “starting at the end of the 1970s, then increasing with new contingents in the 1980s, and finally consolidating through family reunification in the 1990s” (2005:52).

Because Gambian men migrated in the 1970s and started bringing their wives as early as the mid-1980s, there is a presence of young adults of the second-generation among Gambians that is absent among the Senegalese population. In addition, based on fieldwork conducted by Jabardo Velasco, the Senegalese who arrived during the 1970s and 1980s were from southern Senegal (2006:28). Since they were largely Haal Pulaar, Mandinka and Serahuli, they had more in common with their ethnic Gambian counterparts than with their fellow Senegalese compatriots from the north who were of different ethnic groups, such as the Wolof (Jabardo Velasco 2006:28). The Wolof began migrating to Spain in the 1990s, and in comparison to earlier migrants from Gambia and the Casamance region of southern Senegal who have largely settled in Catalonia, they reside in diverse locations, mainly Madrid and the coastal zones where they engage in commercial activities (Jabardo Velasco 2006:28). They are the Muride traders whom researchers have focused on (Carter 1997; Perry 1997; Diouf 2000; Riccio 2002,

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35 The stages of settlement that Kaplan Marcusán distinguishes are similar to the phases that Timera (1996) and Sargent and Larchanché-Kim (2006) identify for Soninke migration to France.
2003; Stoller 2002, 2003; Papa Sow 2004). As the Senegalese respondents in this study demonstrate, the Senegalese migration experience is much more diverse.

**Conclusion**

This chapter’s summary of national and regional migration trends provides the context for interpreting Senegambian economic integration in Spain. Senegambian immigration follows previous internal migration to Catalonia. The majority of Senegambian immigrants reside in Catalonia, with half of the regional population living in province of Barcelona where the country of Maresme is located. As the case with immigrant from developing countries, Senegambians are incorporated in the secondary labor market where they find unskilled, temporary and low-wage jobs. Senegambian men are primarily engaged in agricultural and construction work. Senegambian women are less active in the labor market partially as a result of their immigration status as reunited spouses. The following chapter analyzes the integration of Senegambians in Mataró: migration and arrival to Catalonia; participation in the labor market; immigration status; and housing arrangements.
CHAPTER 5
SEARCHING FOR A LIVELIHOOD: SENEGAMBian MIGRATION TO SPAIN

Introduction

The first section explores the factors that have contributed to growing migration to Spain from Senegal and Gambia such as the deepening relationship between the two countries and Spain and the combined effects of migration. The second section describes the various ways of entering Spain. The third section relates each method of entry to the resources available to migrants, the type of reception that they receive, and the immigration status that they acquire. Most of the chapter focuses on Senegambian settlement in Catalonia, specifically the challenges they encounter in securing employment, housing and work permits. How these problems are interrelated are also explained, particularly the acquisition of work permits for mobility within Spain’s labor market, in terms of improved employment status. Disparities between the labor market participation of Senegambian men and women are interpreted as a consequence of factors such as Spain’s family reunification policy, childcare and household responsibilities of Senegambian women, and limited work opportunities for Senegambian women as a result of racial and religious preference in domestic service. The last section of the chapter examines housing arrangements among Senegambian immigrants and delineates the different strategies to afford accommodations.

Migration

As discussed in chapter four, some of the economic and political changes that have transformed Spain from a country of emigration to one of immigration include: the end of the Franco dictatorship; Spain’s membership in the European Community; and the restructuring of Spain’s economy. Geographical factors such as Spain’s porous border and proximity to Africa also account for increasing migration from West Africa. At the same time, however, Spain
became one of several alternative destinations that arose in the 1990s as Northern European
countries—in the case of Senegalese and Gambian migration, countries such as France and the
United Kingdom, respectively—closed their borders to immigration. The tightening of
immigration control through the adoption of the Schengen Convention in 1990 made
immigration to former European colonial metropolises extremely difficult for Africans. In
response to migration restrictions to traditional destinations in Northern Europe, West Africans
sought alternative destinations (Bouillon 1998, 2001; Findley and Sow 1998; MacGaffey and
Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000; Babou 2001; Adepoju 2004). For West Africans, Spain became one
possible alternative among a handful of new destinations that included South Africa, the United
States, and Italy.  

The migration history of Lamine, a 37-year-old Mandinka from Kolda in southern Senegal,
illustrates the different destinations open to West African migrants. Lamine lived in the Ivory
Coast for six years before migrating to Spain in 1994.

I left Senegal in 1988 and went to the Ivory Coast. From there [the Ivory Coast], I visited
Senegal. My uncle told me that people were passing through Morocco to enter Spain. But I
returned to the Ivory Coast. My brother later came to the Ivory Coast. He asked me to help
him because he had nothing. He was only a student and didn’t have anything. I helped him
come to Spain. So my brother was the first to come [to Spain]. After one year, he sent me a
ticket, and I also came.

[Why did you migrate to Spain?] Well, at first I didn’t want to come because I didn’t know
anything about Spain. I was in the Ivory Coast. I was living well because I was working for
a French woman. The woman was very good. We got along well and didn’t have any
problems. I didn’t have work or money problems in the Ivory Coast. I lived well. I also
took in many immigrants in my house. I lived well there. As I had helped my brother come
to Spain, he wanted to help me. He told me, “Come here. Here is better than there. You

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1 In the case of South Africa, the closing of European borders coincided with the demise of apartheid, which ended
the country’s isolation. MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga observe that as visas for Belgium and France became
increasingly difficult to secure, traders from Congo-Kinshasa and Congo-Brazzaville shifted their activities to South
Africa (2000). In fact, the Central African traders were attracted to South Africa because the products they traded
were cheaper there than in Europe (MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000). The ease of entry to South Africa
also made it a favorable destination, and by the mid-1990s, the “fastest-growing” Congo-Kinshasa migrant
think that you are making money there, but here is better.” So I told my boss that I was going on vacation to Senegal. She believed that I went to Senegal. I returned to Senegal and applied for a visa to come here. I got a visa for Lisbon, Portugal. I was in Portugal for one week, yes.

Lamine’s economic success in the Ivory Coast is illustrated by his ability to sponsor his brother’s migration to Spain, his admittance that he lived well, and his initial reluctance to migrate to Spain. His economic mobility in the Ivory Coast suggests that migration in Africa can be as fruitful as migration to traditional destinations such as France. In the Ivory Coast, Lamine was able to find work in his profession as a tailor. However, in Spain, Lamine has not been able to work full-time as a tailor, which is his aspiration, and has labored agriculture, construction and textile work. He supplements is income tailoring on his days off. In this context, Spain then is one option of various opportunities for West African migrants.

In addition to the cutting off of traditional European destinations, the expansion of capitalism in developing countries also creates ideological and cultural linkages between sending and receiving areas (Massey et al. 1993). The implications of such global cultural linkages can be understood using Appadurai’s (1996) concept of “ethnoscape” and “mediascape.” Ethnoscape is “moving groups and individuals,” of which tourists and migrants are part mediascape “refer both to the distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information” (Appadurai 1996:33-35). International sports, particularly soccer, have engendered a global following and have opened alternative destinations for Senegalese and Gambian migrants. For example, two male informants, who did not know anyone in Spain before their migration, decided to come to Barcelona on account of the Fútbol Club Barcelona. They were Barça fans in Senegal and Gambia for years. One of the informants, a 33-year-old Senegalese named Idrissa, explained:

[How did you know about Catalonia?] I liked the Fútbol Club Barcelona for a long time. And I knew a lot about Barcelona because my boss in Mauritania, his son also liked the
Fútbol Club Barcelona. He would always buy Barcelona things. He gave me a Barcelona shirt and other things. But before that, I liked the Fútbol Club Barcelona... I knew that Barcelona, the Fútbol Club Barcelona was in Catalonia. So when I left, I headed for the direction of Catalonia.

For Idrissa, who is the only member of his family to migrate, his knowledge of Catalonia and his desire to migrate to Barcelona were based on his following of Barça. Although Idrissa’s migration is economically driven, his choice of Spain as a destination is part of larger global processes related to the marketing and following of European soccer leagues. Similarly, Carter (1997) explains the decision of Senegalese traders to migrate to Italy in relation to the presence of Italian enterprises (for example, construction and fashion designs) in Senegal. At the start of the migration, the number of Italian enterprises came third after American and French businesses in Senegal. Although Italy is not a former colonial power, the country has a strong presence in Senegal. In terms of the linkages between Spain and Senegal, Lacomba Vázquez and Moncusi Ferré point to the deepening of the relationship between the two countries through the growing presence of Spanish tourists, Spanish nongovernmental organizations, and cooperative projects between Spanish and Senegalese cities (2006:78-79). As a female Gambian informant, Bintou, explained, the biggest industry in Gambia is tourism from Europe, especially from the Scandinavian countries (Ebron 1997). Linkages created from the growing relationship Spain has developed with Senegal and Gambia have helped potential migrants to conceive of Spain as a possible destination.

In addition to the growing presence of Spain in the form of tourists, nongovernmental organizations and sister city project in Senegal and Gambia, the cumulative effect of people migrating, sending remittances, returning for vacation, and building homes has made the migration self-sustaining (Massey et al. 1993). Prospective migrants are influenced by the
migration of others, especially successful migrants. This was the case for Souleymane, a 27-year-old Gambian from Brikama.

My friend, who studied with me in Gambia, would come with a new car. He would come and go to a bar. If you met him there at the bar, he would buy everyone a drink. He would take out money. Sometimes he would give out money saying “take, take, take.” He would go with his car and girlfriend. Where did this guy get this money? He went to Europe to get money. Why should I sit here? I also decided to go look for money like him. He bought a nice house. He moved his family there. He had everything.

For Souleymane, his migration was inspired by the success of his school friend. The impression his friend made on Souleymane was considerable considering that Souleymane did not have a job in Gambia and assisted his father in farming. As Newell observes in his analysis of the relationship between identity and migration to France among youths in Abidjan, explanations for migration based solely on economics are incomplete without an understanding of consumption theory (2005:165). Through the elaborate consumption that migration enable migrants such as Souleymane’s friend to undertake during short vacations to Gambia, migrants are able to reconstruct their identities based on their displays of wealth and elevate their social status among peer (Newell 2005).² Considering that the majority of Senegalese and Gambians in Spain are engaged in low-wage and menial work in agriculture and construction, the transnational practices and ties enable migrants to improve their social status in their communities of origin (Skinner 1985; Goldring 1998).³ Lambert (1994, 2002, 2007) and Rebourssin (1995) also describe how Jola migrants show the success of their migration to Dakar by their clothing and adoption of an urban attitude. Along the same line, Riccio observes that

The return of migrants when it is characterised by ostentation, plays on the imagination of the people staying home, forming a symbolic push factor underlying the emigration from

² See Friedman (1994) and MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga (2000) for a discussion on consumption and self-identity among Congolese migrants.

³ Chapter three summarizes the types of jobs available to immigrants in Spain. The fifth section of this chapter describes the occupations of the respondents in this study.
Senegal. A striking example is a new house built in the middle of nowhere in the countryside yet having two floors.... These houses are becoming a status symbol and even a symbol of identity. (2001:585)

Riccio’s observation highlights the social aspects of migration and the sociocultural motivations for maintaining transnational ties. At the same time Buggenhagen (2003) calls attention to the unfinished home construction projects that litter the Senegalese landscape. These unfinished homes represent competing gender goals (Buggenhagen 2003) and stretched commitments abroad and in Senegal (discussed in chapter 6).

While the rewards of migration—wealth, two-story homes, and status—are persuasive, many potential migrants are aware of the difficulties and risks involved. In fact some are warned of the problems that they will encounter. Assane, a 24-year-old from Kédougou, Senegal, was warned of the difficulties of life in Spain from returning migrants.

In my town, there are many people who have migrated to Spain and come back for vacation. I would always visit them and ask how is it in Spain. They would explain to me how it is, what happens here. I would say well I also want to go. I didn’t know how to get a visa to visit Spain. I wanted to see if I could get work and earn money too.... They [returning migrants] would say that Spain is good. Yes, very good but also bad because finding work is very difficult. When you find work, you earn very little.

The information Assane received from the returning migrants of his town includes both encouragements and cautions of life in Spain. However, these warnings did not stop Assane from coming to Spain. The return of successful migrants and their displays of wealth evoke the possibilities of migration in terms of the potential rewards and make migration tangible for nonmigrants. As Souleymane asked himself, “Why should I stay here?” Souleymane’s questions leads to a second question, how to get to Spain.

Methods for Entering Spain

This section outlines the authorized and unauthorized methods migrants use to enter Spain. Authorized methods consist of different visas that define a migrant’s presence in Spain: tourist,
worker, family member and student. Contrary to public impression, the number of sub-Saharan Africans who enter Spain without authorization is equivalent to those who enter on tourist and work visas. Data from a four-year survey (2000-2004) of 3,048 immigrants, published by the Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales (Department of Labor and Social Affairs) found that in the case of sub-Saharan Africans, 40 percent entered Spain without authorization. At the same time, 21 percent of sub-Saharan Africans entered Spain on work visas, 17 percent on tourist visas, and 5 percent on residency visas without permission to work (Díez Nicolás 2005:57). Those who enter as tourists usually overstay their visas and lose their status, which increases the number of sub-Saharan immigrants without authorization to reside in Spain. Those who come to Spain on residency without work authorization are spouses, usually wives, and children who come through family reunification. As the data from the four-year survey indicates, a significant number of sub-Saharan Africans enter Spain without authorization. The large majority Senegalese and Gambians who enter Spain without authorization come through Morocco and arrive in the Canary Islands or the enclaves of Melilla and Ceuta. Less commonly, they enter Spain unlawfully through a transit EU member country, primarily Portugal or France. Migrants usually have legitimate visas for entering Portugal but false documents for France, which usually involves a trafficker. Unauthorized methods entail the use of traffickers and smugglers at various points of the migration process. The overview of the different methods of entry focuses on unlawful means because large numbers of Senegalese and Gambians enter Spain without authorization.

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4 None of the 65 Senegambian immigrants interviewed entered Spain on a tourist visa.

5 The study includes a total of 443 sub-Saharan African respondents. I also refer to this study in chapter four.
Method One: The North African Route

As highlighted in the news media and public discourse, the most common means of entering Spain without authorization is by fishing boats, called *pateras* or *cayucos*, and Zodias off the coast of Morocco, Mauritania and Senegal. Before the increased fortification of the borders of the enclave cities of Ceuta and Melilla, migrants also walked across the border. Since the late 1990s, arrival by fishing boats has evolved alongside the intensification of border surveillance off the coast of North and West Africa. Before increased border control, migrants entered the Spanish enclaves on the coast of Morocco or crossed the Straits of Gibraltar. As border surveillance intensified, migrants began sailing from Morocco to the Canary Islands (Figure 5-1 shows the different travel routes). While migrants shared similar stories of setting off on pateras for the Canary Islands or the enclaves, or walking across the border into the enclaves, how they got to the departure points in Morocco and the length of time taken to arrive there were diverse and reflected their economic situation in Senegal. For those with financial means, getting to Morocco involved a short plane ride; but for those with fewer resources, their trip took years.

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6 Pateras are small fishing boats in the form of open dugouts that carry about 10 to 15 occupants. Larger pateras have been designed for trafficking. These pateras have between 15 to 22 horsepower engines and can carry between 40 to 45 occupants. Cayucos are colorful Senegalese fishing boats that have come into use with the shift of the embarkation point to the coast of Senegal and Gambia. They can hold between 40-70 occupants and usually have 40-horsepower Enduro-Yamaha engines. Zodias inflatable boats are also common vessels used by traffickers. They can carry as many occupants and cayucos, but they have engines with more horsepower, up to 60 (El País 2007).

7 The departure points have shifted from Morocco to the coast of Senegal and Gambia. This shift occurred after fieldwork was completed; and therefore, none of the respondents in this study sailed from Gambia or Senegal. All went through Morocco. See Carling 2007) for details on the routes taken.

8 The North African route that West Africans take to reach Spain follow the same path as earlier migration to France. Condé and Diagne (1986) describe migration in “stages” where migrants stop in different countries of transit to earn money to continue on their journey to France. Migrants took an average of two years to reach France (Condé and Diagne 1986:84).
Abdoulaye’s short trip to Spain from Senegal is representative of migrants who have enough money to complete the journey in a short time. Abdoulaye was a professional soccer player in Senegal. Although he had a good life in Senegal, Abdoulaye was curious about life in Spain. He went with his team to play a match in Morocco and took the opportunity to come to Spain.

[How did you arrive in Mataró?] I came on the patera with many people through Ceuta. We arrived in Morocco at Tangier. They helped us. We paid the money and then boarded the boat. We headed for Ceuta. When we arrived in Ceuta, we were taken to a Red Cross camp. We stayed there for two months.

Not all trips are as short as Abdoulaye’s. Setting out from Gambia in 2000 and arriving in the Canary Island of Fuerteventura in 2001, Aliou’s journey lasted over a year because he ran out of
money and had to work in Libya to earn enough money to continue his journey. Aliou left Gambia and traveled by bus and train for three months through Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger to get to Libya. By the time Aliou arrived in Libya, his money had run out. He spent nine month in Libya working as a bricklayer to earn enough money to resume his journey to Europe.

I worked in Libya. [How long did you work in Libya?] Nine months as a bricklayer. [How did you find this work?] In Libya there are places where foreigners go. In the mornings you go and wait there. People who are looking for workers pass there in cars looking for foreigner who want work. In the afternoons they return us there... [How did you know about this place? Did someone tell you?] In Libya there are people [foreigners] established there. They’ve lived there for a long time, many years. When I arrived, they told me, “Tomorrow I will accompany you there. There is a place, you have to sit there and look for work.” [Did you have friends in Libya?] No. In Libya I didn’t know anyone before arriving there. I didn’t know anyone there. What money I had in my hands could only get me to Libya because I knew that when I arrived in Libya I could work a little to move on to the next place.

After saving enough money in Libya, Aliou continued his journey to Europe. Aliou did not set out for Spain, but for Europe, whatever possible country he could enter, which is why he traveled to several countries “looking for a way.” His first opportunity to enter Europe was Malta. His attempt to enter Malta, however, was not successful.

From Libya, I left with a man for Malta. I arrived in Malta. Three days later I returned to Libya in a boat. [What happened in Malta?] When I arrived in Malta, I was told that I didn’t have permission to enter. The hotel where we stayed called the police. The police arrested me and sent me back to Libya.

After returning from Malta, Aliou remained in Libya for a month before attempting to enter Morocco. His first attempt to enter Morocco was blocked as a result of the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001. The bus on which he was riding was not permitted to leave the Libyan border and enter Algeria:

I left Libya in September 2001. We were on the bus for Morocco. There was a problem in the United States, the terrorist attacks. We didn’t leave Libya because the bus could not leave the border. We arrived at the border and we were told, “In America there are problems. Today the cars aren’t leaving the border in Africa or Europe.” We stayed there for one week. We spent two days without eating or drinking. On the third day, this guy
brought some water, nothing else. At one o’clock at night, he brought us a lot of hamburgers. Later we returned to Libya.

Finally in December, Aliou was able to enter Algeria and continue on to Morocco.

On the first of December 2001, I left Libya. I arrived in Algeria on the third day. On the fifth day I arrived in Morocco, Rabat and Dar Caid Zem. There were two or three routes for entering Spain. The first route was closed. The Moroccans knew the new route to Spain. But I didn’t know where I was going. When we arrived in Morocco, the Moroccans said that we didn’t have a patera. Each of us, we were ten, had to pay 700 dollars for a new patera with a motor. With a motor, we could cross 3,000 kilometers in 24 hours. When I arrived on the beach, I saw this small patera with a Yamaha 35. I didn’t know it was be a small patera. I thought it would be a big boat. Because I know these things, they are in Gambia, Senegal. It’s all there. I never crossed the sea, only the river. In Africa I never went to the beach. We left Morocco on the 26th of December. I arrived on the 27th day at night around 12:30. The police was had arrived when we landed. The police asked me how did I arrive. I replied that we had come from Morocco. The police took me to Fuerteventura.

The journeys of Aliou and Abdoulaye contrast considerably. Abdoulaye’s trip lasted less than a few days, the time taken to arrive in Tangier, make arrangements with traffickers, and travel by patera to Ceuta. Aliou’s journey, however, was filled with setbacks: he ran out of money; he was deported from Malta; and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack in the U.S. delayed his entry into Algeria. The different points of departure for Abdoulaye who traveled in 1998 from Tangier and for Aliou who set off at the end of 2001 from Dar Caid Zem, reflects the shift in routes from the North coast of Morocco in the direction of the enclaves or the Strait of Gibraltar to the southwestern coast of Morocco on course to the Canary Islands. At the time of fieldwork in 2004 and 2005, the large number of African migrants entering Spain without authorization by boat or patera passed through Morocco where they embarked for Spain (Carling 2007).

While Aliou’s journey lasted over a year, the longest journey among my informants lasted four years. Idrissa left Senegal in 1996 and arrived in Spain at the end of 2000 in November. Idrissa spent over four years on his journey. Compared to Aliou who ran out of funds, Idrissa did
not start out his journey with any money and had to work all along the way. Idrissa left Senegal in 1996 for Mauritania where he hoped to make enough money to migrate to Europe.

I arrived in Mauritania in 1996. [How many years did you stay in Mauritania?] Three years. I stayed there a long time. Because I arrived without any money, I stayed there for some time to find a solution. I knew no one in Europe. I worked little by little to earn some money. When I earned enough, I left Mauritania. I returned to the crossroad of Senegal and then went to Mali. [How long were you in Mali?] I stayed in Mali for two weeks because I still had the money that I had earned in Mauritania. Then I moved on to Burkina Faso. I was there for two days. I also went through Niger. I spent one week there. [Was this the route to Spain?] Yes, for Europe. [So you wanted to come to Europe but you didn’t know which country?] I didn’t know in which country I would find the luck to enter Europe. [Was there someone helping you?] No one. I used the money that I had earned in Mauritania to pay and to continue on, to through country after country.

When I arrived in Algeria, I ran out of money. I arrived with nothing. So I stayed there for eight months searching for more money. Since I had no one helping me, I had to look for money. I had to work. In Algeria, I painted. I found an Algerian man who was very good to me. He had one house after another. Today we painted here tomorrow there. So he took me and I worked for him. [How did you find this man?] Over there is a place the people go to look for work. So, this man went there and saw me. [How did you know about this place?] I met people who were living in Algeria for some time. They knew where to go to find work. [People from Senegal?] From Senegal, from Mali, from all over Africa. So I went with them. I went there, met this man who had work. He took me and I worked with him for eight months. After I had earned enough money to travel on, I moved on. [How did you move on?] From Algeria I arrived in Morocco. Then I traveled on to arrive here. [Did you have to pay someone for the voyage?] Yes. [How did you find this person?] I met Moroccans who wanted to come here also. There was a man who was a guide. He guided people. I paid him and passed through. [You passed through one of the enclaves of Spain?] No, I came through a Moroccan town. I didn’t come by boat, I walked to Spain. [Which city did you enter?] Ceuta, Ceuta is Spain. We walked all night. I don’t know which towns we passed during the night. But we walked through some towns before we arrived.

Carling describes the lengthy journey of Idrissa, his time in Mauritania and Libya, as a “de facto immigration” (2007:10). Although migrants like Idrissa are passing through on their way to Europe, they must work in the transit countries to earn money both to sustain themselves and to continue their journey, and therefore spend a considerable amount of time in transit countries (Carling 2007:10). Moreover, the manner in which Aliou and Idrissa found work in Lybia and Algeria indicates a market for cheap migrant labor. One informant worked in a bakery in Libya for two years before arriving in Spain. From the ethnographic data collected, Mauritania, Algeria
and Libya are countries where migrants can find work to finance their journey to Europe. When asked about Morocco, informants generally replied that there was no work in Morocco. Only when migrants had sufficient funds to pay traffickers and smugglers for the trip to Spain did they enter Morocco.

Two strategies for surviving the journey to Spain that arise from the interviews are “looking for your people” and “knowing a little French.” When migrants arrive in Algeria and Libya, they look for their people. For many West Africans, their people are members of their ethnic group, as well as their compatriots. For example, while Abdoulaye and Idrissa are Senegalese and Aliou is Gambian, all are Mandinka and could draw on their ethnic ties for assistance. With respect to communicating with locals and other migrants encountered on the journey, language is not a barrier. As Idrissa points out, all the countries on the route to Spain have a French legacy. Idrissa, who has no formal education, only instruction on the Koran, learned French while working in Mauritania. His ability to speak French facilitated his journey.

In addition to the strategies for surviving the North African route, family members left behind do not expect remittance or support from migrants while they are on their journey even though the passage can last several years. Although Idrissa’s journey lasted four years, he did not send money home when he worked in Mauritania and Libya. The money he earned was for his journey. Idrissa has only started sending money to his family in Senegal after he found work in Spain, which took him a year. For five years, Idrissa did not send money to his family in Senegal. Aliou also did not send money to support his family in Gambia during his journey, which lasted over a year. In comparison to Idrissa who has no wife or children, Aliou has two children in the care of his mother in Gambia. During their travels, migrants may contact their family members
by telephone to alleviate their worries. However, there is no expectation of remittances or support from the migrant.

**Method Two: False Documents and Smugglers**

A second means of entering Spain without authorization is with false documents or genuine documents of other people provided by smugglers and traffickers. Respondents who used false documents and traffickers were much better off economically in Africa than those who arrived in fishing boats as they could afford to pay the exorbitant costs of the trafficker’s service, the documents and the travel expenses. The use of false and genuine documents also involves official ports of entry, usually airports, which entails interaction defined in legal terms with authorities than via fishing boats. For example, when migrants arrive on the Canary Islands, the Red Cross receives them. When migrants with false documents are stopped in airports, the immigration authorities or police arrest them. Ibrahima, a 29-year-old Jola from Gambia, came to Spain via France where he was arrested at the airport for entering the country with a false visa. Ibrahima took a train to Mali were he boarded an Air France flight for Paris with false documents.

The police took all the papers I had in the airport. I was given a lawyer. I was in a hotel for two weeks. Afterward, I appeared in court before a judge to work things out. With the help of this lawyer, everything turned out well. I was released. [They didn’t put you in prison?] No, it was like a prison. They took me to a hotel where people are held. If things didn’t work out I would have been sent back to my Senegal. [Why did the judge let you go?] I don’t know. Maybe the lawyer paid him. It was the lawyer who helped me leave. [Who paid this lawyer?] The businessman who arranged my trip to France paid the lawyer.

Ibrahima was smuggled into France through a trafficking ring. He paid a total of 4,070 euros, money he saved from working as a chauffeur in Gambia. After his release, Ibrahima moved on to Spain where he had friends.

Whereas Ibrahima used false documents to enter France, Fatou, a 41 year-old Wolof woman, traveled to France on authentic documents of another woman provided by a trafficker.
The trafficker accompanied Fatou on the trip. Fatou is one of two female respondents who did not come to Spain through family reunification.

I didn’t want to come here. My plan was to go to France. I paid a man that brought people here. I paid him a lot of money. I got a loan from the bank with my father’s help. I put up my house as a guarantee with the bank. We borrowed the money. We paid a trafficker to bring me here…. Before coming I wasn’t divorced, but my husband treated me badly. I didn’t have anything, food, clothes, nothing. I have four children. I wasn’t able to take care of them. People told me, “If you have the possibility to go to Europe, you could earn a living. You could help my children.” For this reason I came to Europe. [You wanted to go to France. What happened that made you come to Spain?] I was told that France does give people papers. Over there [France] it’s very difficult.

Considering Fatou’s difficult marital situation in Senegal and her parental responsibilities, her independent migration to Spain is not surprising. Fatou is part of a growing number of West African women who have begun to migrate to Spain independently of spouses and family. In terms of migration to Spain, Fatou’s case shows how migrants with greater resources can finance their travel. In comparison to Aliou and Idrissa, who had to work throughout their travel to finance their journey, Fatou mortgaged her house. Not only did Fatou have a house to mortgage for her trip, she was one of the few informants who owned a house in Dakar before migration, which indicated her higher economic status.

Fatou’s case also illustrates how the opportunity to obtain residency and work permits encourage migration to Spain. The prospect of gaining papers is also a motivation for immigrants who reside in other European Union member countries. Demba, a 35-year-old Gambian, came to Spain in 1985 because he heard that Spain was preparing to give out papers to immigrants.

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9 Carling argues that the opportunities for regularization of status in Spain are essential to the migration (2007:7). Critics of the regularization campaigns, specifically the conservative Partido Popular, have defined these programs as an attraction to unauthorized migration, efecto llamada (call effect).
I left Gambia and arrived in Paris. I was in Paris for one year. I didn’t have papers. I arrived here [Spain] in 1985 when they were about to give out papers. I came here to obtain papers.

Demba spent a year in France living with his brother. It is not surprising that Fatou and Demba came to Spain from France, where it is difficult to gain work or residency permits. Cheikh, a 25-year-old Wolof, came to Spain on his way to Germany. He had a tourist visa for Germany.

During his transit in Madrid, he called his friends living in the city who convinced him to disembark because Spain was about to give out papers. Cheikh had to wait four years to obtain his papers. He arrived in 2001 and did not receive his papers until the regularization campaign of 2005. Demba, however, received his papers the same year he arrived in Spain, 1985. Fatou obtained her papers in 2002, a year after her arrival.

**Method Three: Work Permits and Tourist Visas**

As outlined in the introduction of this section, the authorized methods for entering Spain or another EU member country involve obtaining a visa that defines the holder’s status in the country. The three types granted to respondents of this study include work, tourist and family reunification visas. For migrants who are lucky, securing an employment contract provides legal entry into Spain through a work visa. For Moustapha, a Pular from Dakar, a friend of his father arranged a work contract for him. Moustapha explained to his father’s friend who was on vacation from Spain that he wanted to come to Spain. Moustapha lamented that he did not have a job in Senegal although he had a chauffer license. Because his father was 70 years old and retired, Moustapha had to help support his family. He decided to migrate to Spain to buscar la vida (search for life), which signifies a search for a livelihood. His father’s friend arranged for a work contract for Moustapha. With the savings from his father and older brother, Moustapha was able to pay for his trip.
While Moustapha had a direct flight from Senegal to Spain, Samba arrived in Spain in a roundabout way. Samba, a 42-year-old Mandinka from Dakar who has a residency permit in Portugal, lived in Lisbon for nine years before moving to Mataró. Samba describes life in Portugal as difficult because he could not find employment. For years he traveled between Lisbon and Seville trading. He worked a little in Seville in the “black economy” since he did not have a work permit for Spain. Finally Samba’s brother persuaded him to come to Mataró where there was work. Samba’s case was an exception. Most immigrants who come to Spain via a European Union member country do not have residency in those countries, at best a tourist visa, which was the case for Lamine. As described in the previous section, Lamine came to Spain via a tourist visa for Portugal. He stayed in Portugal for only one week before moving on to Spain. The open borders between EU member countries permit migrants to move on to their final destination after arriving in a transit country.

**Method Four: Family Reunification**

With respect to family reunification visas, Senegambian women primarily arrive in Spain through this process. As discussed in Chapter 2, in the case of Senegal and Gambian migration to Spain, men are the pioneers and the large majority of women migrate through family reunification (Kaplan 1998; Ribas-Mateos 2000; Kaplan Marcusán 2005). For married women coming to Spain to join their husbands, the trip is more of a thrill, as many have not flown in a plane before traveling to Spain. Fatima, a 25-year-old from Kédougou in Southwestern Senegal, came to Spain in 2001 through family reunification. All she knew about Spain was that her husband was there. Her husband paid for the expenses of the trip. From Kédougou, she traveled to Dakar where she flew to Madrid and then Barcelona where her husband was waiting for her. Often marriage ceremonies are carried out in absentia of the husband who is in Spain. Frequently, many of the brides do not know their husbands, which was the case for Fatima.
However, the arrival of a wife is marked by celebration, which is discussed in the following section.

In addition to spouses, children arrive through family reunification. Mame came through family reunification at the age of seventeen in 2001. Mame’s older sister was unable to come as she turned eighteen during the application process. Mame’s parents were petitioning for her sister’s visa. Mame’s description of the visa process reveals that although migrants coming through family reunification have planned trips with minimal risks, the process of getting a visa is onerous.

[Can you explain the process of getting a visa?] Normally I would take a bus to Dakar almost every month. [Why every month?] I had to visit the embassy to find out about my visa. In Dakar, I would get up at four in the morning to go to the embassy because there were a lot of people waiting. [Did you have an appointment with someone?] No. [What would happen at the embassy when you arrived?] I would wait my turn. When my turn came, I would enter, see the official and then return home.

At an association meeting with an official from the Senegalese consulate, members of the association complained about the sale of places in the line to enter the embassy and see an official and other instances of corruption. With such corruption, Mame was never sure if her turn would come to enter the embassy and speak with Spanish officials about her visa. Otherwise, she would have to return to Gambia without an interview since the embassy in Dakar serves both countries.

With respect to Spanish policy, applicants must prove that they can financially support the reunited family members and provide adequate housing accommodations. The economic stability these requirements represents can take years for applicants to achieve, particularly if they arrived in Spain without authorization. As some of the accounts in the following section indicate separation between spouses and parents and their children can last for years. Lamine had been trying to bring his wife to Spain for four years.
I want to bring my wife here. It’s been almost four years since I’ve bought this flat in order to bring my wife. I’ve applied for the visa many times, but they won’t give it to her. The consulate in Dakar refuses to give the visa. I never had any problems with anyone here, not the police, no one. I am always working. I have a flat. I have no problems. I don’t know why they won’t give her the visa.

Lamine has been applying for a visa for four year to no avail. At the same time, Lamine is lucky because he can travel to Senegal to visit his wife and family. The predicament of Mame’s sister also attests to bureaucratic delays of immigration procedures. Not only did Mame’s sister turn eighteen during the visa application process, Mame’s parents were stuck in a petition process for about three years. Although the application procedures for both work and family reunification visas can be burdensome, these visas are the only legal means of economic migrants have of entering Spain and reuniting with their families. As depicted in the narratives of Abdoulaye, Aliou and Idrissa, the majority of migrants who do not have sufficient monetary resources or the right social contact are forced to enter Spain without authorization through Africa.

Reception in Spain

The reception migrants receive in Spain depends on the manner in which they enter Spain and whether they have relatives or contacts in Spain. This section outlines the different reception migrants receive upon arrival in Spain. Many migrants have relatives or friends in Spain whom they can rely on for support. However, although migrants expect support from relatives and friends, assistance is not guaranteed. Migrants who are the first in their personal networks to migrate draw on ethnic ties for support, primarily for initial housing and work. The range of reception varies from migrants sleeping on the streets to reunited spouses welcomed with celebrations.

For those who cross the border by boat or walk across to the enclaves, their first encounter with Spain is through the Red Cross. For Abdoulaye, he spent two month in the Red Cross camp in Ceuta before being released, at which time he went to Mataró to stay with a friend of his
father. Aliou also spent about the same time in the Red Cross camp on the island of Fuerteventura. After he was released he lived on the streets of Las Palmas before making his way to Mataró.

I was in Las Palmas for three months. I met this girl from Senegal. She worked in a very big restaurant. I was sleeping in the Bilbao bank at night.\textsuperscript{10} She passed there all the time on her way to Mercadona [supermarket]. I saw her one morning at about 7:15. We talked a little. She took me to the market. I bought two shoes, some pants and a shirt. She took me to her house. A month later she gave me 150 to buy a ticket to come here to Mataró.

Unlike Abdoulaye, Aliou did not have any contacts in Spain and as a result was homeless for two months after his release from the Red Cross camp. Aliou finally received assistance from a Senegalese woman who helped him move on to Mataró. Although Aliou spent several weeks homeless in Las Palmas, he was able to find temporary housing with members of his ethnic group immediately after arriving in Mataró.

I arrived at the Mataró train station. I got off the train and saw a Gambian guy. We spoke the same language. He told me, “Okay, I will take you to my house for one week. You look for your people.” I told him okay. The same day there was a meeting like the ones we have in the church. He took me there. I saw all of my compatriots there. They were all Gambians. When we returned to his house, he told me, “In the morning I will take you to this guy. He will take you to where there are many fields.” He told me, “You can go there…. If you know those roads, you will always be able to look for work. There are people who take persons with no papers. But here [Spain] is very easy to get papers. If you don’t have papers you can’t work. There are people who take people to help them.” I said okay, no problem. In the morning, this guy took me to the fields. Every morning I went there. Then one day a Catalan took me to work for a month. And that was it. Now I can arrange my things little by little.

For those individuals who are the first within their social network to migrate, drawing on ethnic ties is essential for meeting their initial subsistence needs in Spain. Aliou was able to draw on ethnic ties for temporary shelter and to find work.

\textsuperscript{10} Aliou was sleeping in the ATM (automatic teller machine) booth of the bank. Once inside the booth, he locked himself in to sleep.
In comparison to Aliou who did not know anyone in Spain, Idrissa knew someone from his village who took in him.

I didn’t know the guy well in my hometown. I found him here [Spain], and he took me to his house. [On the first day that you arrived?] Yes. [How did you find this guy?] He was here. I knew him before I came here. [Did you call him before you arrived?] I called him when I was in Ceuta. I met someone in Ceuta who told me that this guy was here and then gave me his phone number. I called him. And when I arrived here, he took me to his house.

Not only did this person from Idrissa’s village welcome him into his home, but he also supported Idrissa for a year while Idrissa looked for work without success.

I spent a year without work. The guy who took me in supported me. I lived with him without paying. He has helped me until now, until the day that I found work. He helped me a lot when I came here. I arrived without work, and he helped me. I didn’t have to pay anything. I remained at his house. I slept there. He didn’t ask me any questions, nothing. Well, I stayed there for a year.

Although he was not a friend of Idrissa when they were in the village together, village ties gave Idrissa more support than the ethnic ties that Aliou drew on for assistance. The strength of village ties is evident in the numerous hometown and village associations that immigrants have formed in Mataró, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Immigrants who come on work contracts do not necessarily have a better reception than those who come through Morocco. Although Moustapha came with a work contract, his reception was not as good as Idrissa’s. Moustapha’s reception was better than Aliou in that he had a place to go when he arrived in Spain. However the conditions in which Moustapha found himself were undesirable. Moustapha explain, “My father’s friend was in Lleida. Life was very complicated. There was no work. I was in a house with a lot of people. I explained this to Abdoulaye who was my neighbor in Senegal and was living in Mataró. And he told me to come here to Mataró.”

Lleida is in the interior of Catalonia and is largely an agricultural area. Moustapha’s housing situation is typical of agricultural zones where housing is in short supply and immigrants workers
live in cramped conditions (Suárez-Navaz 2004). Moustapha stayed a few months in Lleida before moving on to Valencia with his father’s friend. Finally, six months after arriving in Spain, Moustapha contacted a neighbor from Dakar, Abdoulaye, who was living in Mataró and explained the overcrowded conditions in which he was living. Abdoulaye invited Moustapha to come to Mataró. Moustapha moved in with Abdoulaye and his wife and their two young children. Although Moustapha is of the Pulaar ethnic group and Abdoulaye is Mandinka, they were neighbors in Dakar. As their families continued to live next to each other, Abdoulaye was compelled to take in Moustapha. Comparable to Moustapha, Assane also came to Spain on a work contract. Assane’s older brother who was living in Mataró arranged a contract for him. Mataró. As a result, Assane had a much more welcomed and pleasant reception in Spain than Moustapha. Assane’s two older brothers paid for all of his travel expenses, and Assane moved in with his brothers and their wives and children when he arrived in Mataró.

As Assane’s case demonstrates, most migrants receive substantial assistance from relatives living in Spain. However, familial ties do not always guarantee support. For Fatou who was smuggled into France, her reception at her cousin’s house was not well received.

My cousin received me in his house. There are good people and there are bad people. When I was in his house, I had to endure many things. I suffered there because I was not working, I couldn’t pay for my room. I didn’t have money to contribute to the meals. If I was there and the meal was ready, I ate. If I wasn’t there, when I arrived at the house, I didn’t have food. But I had a friend that lived next to there. This woman helped me a lot. If I wanted to call my kids, she gave me money. Then it was the peseta. She helped me with money to call my kids. When she cooked, she gave me a little of the food. She would call me, “Fatou, come and eat at my house.” I feared carrying food to my cousin’s house. My cousin and his wife mistreated me because I had nothing. I was there, but I had to endure because I didn’t have anywhere else to go.

As Fatou explains, she was mistreated at her cousin’s house. Because Fatou had nowhere else to stay, she endured abuses from her cousin’s wife. Fatou’s mistreatment in the hands of her relatives is not uncommon.
For women who come through family reunification, their reception to Spain is a celebration as they are reunited with their husbands. Aminata who is 40-year-old Mandinka from Dakar, came to Spain in 2002 with her son. She describes her reception on arrival, “I was very happy when I arrived here because there were many people waiting for me. They cooked all this food for my arrival. We were two [she arrived with her young son]. We arrived here. We ate well. Then we relaxed, talked with people and then we went to sleep. I was very happy with my reception.” When Aminata’s husband left for Europe, he was away for seven years before his first return visit to Senegal. Aminata’s husband took several years to get to Spain. She says, “He took the long way.” He also returned to Senegal a second time, two years after his first visit. Two years after her husband’s second visit to Senegal, Aminata and her son came to Spain through family reunification. Aminata and her husband were separated for a total of eleven years. She was twenty-nine years of age when her husband left Senegal. As Aminata remarked, there was much to celebrate. The celebration given for Aminata contrasts sharply with Aliou sleeping in the ATM booth of a Bilbao bank in Las Palmas.

**Senegambian Settlement in Catalonia**

This section deals with the three major problems that Senegambians face in Spain based on responses from this study: finding work, securing housing and obtaining papers, or regularizing status. The difficulties that respondents identify are variables that define and measure integration in Mataró. The difficulties mentioned are also consistent with findings from the four-year survey of 3,048 immigrants in Spain referred to in the second section of this chapter. In 2000, the problem that preoccupied respondents of the four-year survey was finding work. The problem of finding work tied with regularizing status as the problem that preoccupied respondents the most in 2002. Regularization of status was the problem that preoccupied respondents the most in 2001 and 2004. In all four years, finding a place to live fell third after finding work and obtaining
papers. In the sub-sample of sub-Saharan Africans overall, 29 percent mentioned finding work, 26 percent said regularizing immigration status, and five percent reported finding a place to live (Díez Nicolás 2005:68). Consistent with the four-year study, the difficulties of finding work, acquiring residency and work permits, and securing a place to live are the most frequently mentioned difficulties respondents in this study listed in terms of living in Mataró. These three problems are interrelated and reinforce each other. Renting an apartment requires proof of employment and income. Proof of employment involves having work and residency permits.

Both Senegambian female and male respondents in this study mentioned these three concerns: finding employment, obtaining work permits and securing adequate housing. Because the majority of Senegambian women have been granted residency without permission to work, they apply to obtain work permits through petitions or when they renew their residency permit, usually with unsuccessful results. Without permission to work, Senegambian women have difficulty finding employment. Those who find employment work unlawfully or “under-the-table.” For Senegambian women who are permitted to work, the jobs available are limited, mainly cleaning, elder care, and sewing for subcontractors. Senegambian women are also concerned about securing adequate housing for their families. As children are born to Senegambian couples, the family outgrows the small apartments which initially accommodated couples or single men. Since most women are prohibited from working and have difficulties finding employment, they cannot contribute to the housing and living expenses, which prevents many families from renting or buying larger apartments.

Although both Senegambian men and women share similar concerns that pertain the their settlement in Spain, their lived experiences differ substantially. West African gender norms and expectations coalesce with those of the larger Spanish and Catalan cultures to create distinctive
roles for men and women. Anthias points out that “the social and economic position of men and women from ethnic minorities is partially determined by the ways in which gender relations, both within the ethnically specific cultures of different groups and within the wide society, interact with one another” (1998:181). The interaction of differing gender relations within both Senegambian and Spanish or Catalan cultures have reinforced women’s role within the reproductive sphere of the household and men’s role in the productive sphere of employment.

**Gender, Immigration and Work in Spain**

As discussed in chapter four, work opportunities for immigrant men and women is highly gendered. Senegambian men are engaged in primarily agricultural and construction jobs, whereas women are involved in cleaning, caretaking and sewing work. To understand and interpret how differences between the economic integration of Senegambian men and women account for variations in their involvement in transnational activities, this study adopts Pessar and Mahler's “gendered geographies of power framework” (2003).11 The “gendered geographies of power framework” considers the multiple dimensions of an individual’s social position. Three of the frameworks components are used to understand the trajectories of Senegambian men and women's incorporation in Spain and their transnational practices: geographic scales, social location and agency (Pessar and Mahler 2003).

The first component of the gendered geographies of power framework is “geographic scales.” This refers to how gender functions concurrently on multiple spatial and social levels concurrently (Pessar and Mahler 2003). For Senegambian immigrants, gender operates at various levels in the migration and integration process: in the composition of the migration; in Spain's family reunification policy; and in the gendered work immigrant men and women perform in

11 See also Mahler and Pessar (2001, 2006).
Spain. In terms of gender composition, Ribas-Mateos (2000) has described three types of gendered migration flows to Spain: a largely female movement from Latin America and the Philippines; an initially male stream transitioning to female from Morocco; and a predominately male flow from Gambia that is representative of West Africa. The clandestine and dangerous nature of the journey appears to deter the migration of Senegambian women. The prevalence of Jola ethnic women in the urban migration from the Casamance region of Senegal to the capital Dakar and their absence in migration to Spain via fishing boats to the Canary Islands highlight the gendered nature of the migration. More recently, Kaplan Marcusán (2005) observes that Gambian women have begun migrating to Spain in the 1990s through family reunification. Table 5-1 numerates the Senegambian male and female authorized resident population in Spain in 2005. Tables 5-2 and 5-3 give the number of West Africans in Mataró in 2004 and 2006, respectively, which are the years before and after the regularization campaign of 2005. "Mi marido me trajo aquí" (my husband brought me here) is a regular response of Senegambian women to motives for their migration. This response reveals the gendered migration pattern of Senegambians to Spain where men are the migration pioneers and women migrate to join their husbands through family reunification (Kaplan 1998; Kaplan Marcusán 2005).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>27,678</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>15,830</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OPI (2005)

12 In the case of the Jola of the Casamance region of Senegal, the migration of men to the capital Dakar was in response to the migration of women who set the precedent (Lambert 1994, 2002, 2007; Reboussin 1995). However, in the migration to Spain Jola men are the pioneers.

13 The disproportionate gender ratio of the Senegambian population in Spain is represented in my sample population in which 73.85 percent of the respondents are men.

14 Senegalese men pioneered the migration to New York and Turin in the 1990s (Perry 1997; Carter 1997; Stroller 2002; Riccio 2003).
Table 5-2. Sub-Saharan Registered Men and Women in Mataró 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>1083</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 5-3. Sub-Saharan Registered Men and Women in Mataró 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>1052</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>1266</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The second level on which gender operates in the migration and integration process is in Spain's family reunification policy, which reunites spouses as dependents but prohibits them from participation in the labor market.¹⁵ The legal exclusion of reunited spouses from labor market participation confines Senegambian women to the reproductive sphere and denies them the pre-migration autonomy they enjoyed. For example, in rural-urban migration in Senegambia, women migrate independently of men. Among the Jola ethnic group of the Casamance region, women are predominant in the migration to Dakar (Lambert 1994, 2002, 2007; Reboussin 1995).¹⁶ In the case of the Serer, more women than men tend to migrate temporarily to Dakar, where they pound millet (Gadio and Rakowski 1995). Consequently, while Senegambian women

¹⁵ The 2005 Regularization Program, which granted one-year renewable work and resident permits, excluded spouses and holders of resident permits without authorization to work (Arango and Jachimowicz 2005).

¹⁶ Renewal of residency in the fifth year offers Senegambian women the possibility of obtaining work authorization. However, the award of work authorization is not perfunctory but dependent on the discretion of bureaucratic intake officials.
become dependent on their husbands who are the breadwinners in Spain, their pre-migration mobility and its implicit economic autonomy suggest a post-migration decline in status.17

Fatima, a 25 year-old Senegalese woman, has been living in Spain for three years and has never worked in Spain. She explains that her life is not difficult because her husband is working.

Women are always together, but the men only sometimes on Saturday and Sunday. For example, the women don’t go to work. They are always free during the week. So, I can leave and go to someone’s house or someone can come here. A bunch of people here, a bunch of people there. It depends on what we do together. But for the men it’s not the same. When they leave, they’re gone from Monday to Saturday, Sunday if they can, looking for work until they find work.

Fatima’s description of women visiting each other during the day concurrently illustrates the amount of free time they have to socialize and the low participation rates of Senegambian women in the labor market. At the same time, Fatima recognizes that for women it is not all about enjoying each other’s company while the men are away at work. She explains that “What men can do, women are not able to do. The men are able to find work but the women cannot. Sometimes it is difficult.” Her comments also reveal that Senegambian men primarily shoulder the economic responsibility of supporting their families in Spain.

Abdoulaye’s criticism of the employment restrictions of reunited spouses also reflects the pressures on husbands whose wives join them in Spain.

The worst is that husbands have to support their wives because wives don’t get papers to work. If they accept that the wife comes here to Spain but only give her residency, I don’t see that as logical. If the husband has to work, the wife what? She stays home like this [he points to his wife] watching the telly? This is not good. The wife also has to have freedom to work. You understand me? Almost all the women who are here, almost all in reality don’t work. You know, this is not good. So, if you bring your wife, the husband has to

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17 Escrivá (2000) observes that in the Peruvian, Dominican and Philippine cases in which women are generally the pioneers, female migrants protect and financially support male relatives, which is the opposite of the Senegambian experience in Spain. Latin American and Philippine women have been able to regularize their status through domestic work and consequently gain more permanent legal status than their male counterparts who are generally in temporary and seasonal work (Escrivá 2000). As Pedone (2003) also describes, Ecuadorian migration to Spain presents the same phenomenon; women are the initial link in the migration chain to Spain. In these cases, husbands come through family reunification and suffer the same employment restrictions as Senegambian women.
work and also the wife. The wife has to have her freedom. The wife is a human just like everyone else, like a man. Here [Spain] only the man works to put food on the table, to pay the rent, to pay the bills. This is not good. My wife doesn’t work. She’s never worked in Spain. She’s been here for a year and some months.

Abdoulaye’s indignation discloses the financial pressures on husbands who bring their wives to Spain. At the same time, he disparages the housework and childcare that consumes women’s time. For example, both Fatima and Abdoulaye’s wife have young children. The majority of Senegambian women spend their first few years in Spain having and caring for children. As Kaplan Marcusán describes, motherhood is the “primary life project” of Senegambian women (2005:59). Moreover, Bledsoe argues that in Gambia, the main function of marriage is to have children (2002:71). Therefore, when reunited wives arrive to Spain, they “start or continue building their family” (Kaplan Marcusán 2005:59).

As child grow older and attend kindergarten and primary school, Senegambian women begin to look for work. Mariama is one of the few women to receive a work permit with her residency. Although she has been in Spain for six years, she has only been working for five months because her children were young. She is enrolled in a training program sponsored by the local government to train workers to clean and to care for the elderly in nursing homes. After graduating from the program, Mariama hopes to secure employment in a nursing home. In comparison to Mariama, some women combine work and childcare. Khady describes how she managed work and childcare when her children were young:

When I arrived here, there was a lot of sewing work. The women would sew, and I got into sewing. And then came the kids. When I had my children, when they were small, I couldn’t take them to the nursery because it was too expensive. So, the children stayed in the house with me. I bought a sewing machine that I paid for little by little. With the children, I would work in the house. [Were you working for yourself or for a factory?] For a factory. They would bring me the work in the house. [After this sewing work, what other work have you done?] Cleaning. [Were you cleaning when the children were older?] Yes, when the children went to school. Sometimes at nine o’clock I would go clean a house. At noon, I would get the children. In the afternoons I would sew. [So you mixed cleaning and
sowing?] Yes. [How long did you sew?] Many years, many years, since ’88. If there’s a lack of work, we don’t work. If there’s work, we get going.

Khady’s narrative describes not only how she managed work and childcare by doing piecework at home and later added cleaning when her children started attending school. Her story touches on the exportation of the textile industry of Mataró and Catalonia overseas. The textile and garment factories that offered unlimited opportunities to internal migrants and foreign immigrants have contracted considerably. When Khady arrived in 1985, there was still substantial work available in the textile industry. Twenty years later, most of these jobs have gone overseas.

The third level on which gender functions in economic integration of Senegambian immigrants is the work available for immigrant men and women. Senegambian men who do not have authorization to work are able to find work in agriculture; whereas Senegambian women are active in subsistence agriculture in their countries of origin, they do not work in the fields in Spain although Eastern European and Moroccan women are recruited to work in agriculture. Senegambian women who do not have work permits generally look for domestic work in the informal sector or provide services to immigrants, primarily braiding and styling African women’s hair. Fatima, who does not have a work permit and is the mother of a toddler as described above, explains that she makes a little money braiding African women’s hair and sewing. Most Senegambian women in Fatima’s situation state that they braid hair; however, hair braiding is not profitable in Mataró.¹⁸ In comparison to Senegalese hair braiders in the United States, the circumstances are remarkably different. Hair braiding is a lucrative industry catering to African American women (Ba 2008; Babou 2009). Babou (2009) observes that “the popularity

¹⁸ In tourist beach destinations such as Calella, braiders have a larger clientele of European tourists who want their hair braided.
of Senegalese-style braiding opened a large window of opportunity for female immigrants in the United State. Braiding was a lucrative business, which afforded self-employment and upward mobility to female immigrants” (2009:9). Moreover, braiding generates a much higher income than some of the work that Senegalese men perform such as driving taxis (Babou 2009). Gender ideologies of the United States and higher income have enabled Senegalese women to challenge African gender norms and have affected the household division of labor, leading to an increase in divorce among Senegalese couples (Ba 2007; Babou 2009). The ability of Senegalese women in New York to challenge traditional gender norms contrasts sharply with the economic dependency of Senegalese women in Mataró. The financial and legal dependence of Senegambian immigrant women on their husbands curtails their possibilities (Kaplan Marcusán 2005). Moreover, Senegambian men who can afford to have their wives join them in Spain on average have attained a measure of economic stability. Family reunification is dependent on the economic circumstances and immigration status of the petitioner. Petitioners are required to have appropriate housing and sufficient salary to cover the expenses of the family, particularly since the reunited spouse is prohibited from employment.19 The Senegambian example in Spain shows that assumption of men losing and women gaining status in the migration process must be reconsidered, at least in some cases. The differences between Senegalese immigrants in New York and their counterparts in Mataró highlights how important the social and political context and the economic structure of the host country is in shaping the experiences of immigrant men and women.

The second component of Pessar and Mahler's gendered geographies of power framework (2003) is “social location.” Social location denotes an individual's position within interrelated

19 Although home ownership is not a requirement for the petition, informants told me that renters do not get approved.
power hierarchies produced by historical, economic and political factors that encompass race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, class and gender (Pessar and Mahler 2003). The social location of Senegambian migrants in Spain is rooted in historical and political factors that have facilitated the immigration of Latin Americans and have deterred African immigration. Geographical proximity to Africa has prevented a more open policy of migration (Escrivá 2000). Before 2005, Spain did not have any labor agreements with sub-Saharan countries in Africa, except with its former colony Equatorial Guinea. The bilateral labor agreements which Spain has had with several Latin American countries shows an historical preference for Latin Americans over sub-Saharan African immigrants. Latin Americans have few linguistic and cultural differences and are socially more accepted than Africans, whom Spaniards associate with the underground economy (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999).

Racial and religious prejudices also produce different opportunities for Senegambian men and women in Spain’s labor market.20 Senegambian women are at a disadvantage in Spain’s labor market where they compete with other immigrant women for domestic and service jobs.21 They lose out to Latin American women who may share cultural, linguistic and religious similarities with the local Catalan and Spanish populations. Racial and religious prejudices decrease the hiring desirability of Senegambian women, who are African, black and Muslim, for the intimate domain of domestic and caretaking work (Anthias 2000). As Khady recounts:

There are times when you leave your number at an agency. When an employer wants a worker, the agency calls you. But when they find out that you are African, they do not take you. There are employers who do not want immigrants. They prefer a Spanish person to an immigrant. We have this problem here in Mataró.

20 Kofman et al. (2000) argue that employment restrictions on reuniting spouses drive them into the informal sector.

21 The demand for domestic workers mainly accounts for the feminization of recent migration to Southern Europe (Anthias and Lazaridis 2000).
Preferential and racist practices are evident in the hiring of Senegambian women to care for elderly Catalan and Spanish persons but not for young Catalan or Spanish children. Latin American and Filipina women are preferred to care of young children. None of the women interviewed in this study cared for children, however, most at one time or another cared for elderly parents or grandparents of Catalan and Spanish employers. Cultural and racial preferences weaken Senegambian women’s position in the labor market.

In addition, the low educational level of Senegambian immigrant women and their limited language competency are handicaps in the labor market. According Kaplan Marcusán, in the 1990s, 83 percent of Senegambian women were illiterate (2005:57). That the majority of female respondents in this study needed an interpreter for their interviews illustrates the problem of Spanish language competency. Although the cleaning and domestic work in which Senegambian women perform do not require training or advanced education, employers complain of problems arising from miscommunication, such as following directions and reading the instructions on cleaning products. These issues of literacy, language competency, religion and racism also affect the prospects of Senegambian men in the labor market but in different ways from the opportunities available for women. Many Senegambian women complain of the ease in which men find work. Fatou describes the disproportionate employment prospects for men and women:

They are different. It is easier for men than for women because women are unable to do the work that men do. A woman can’t work in the field. There is more work here for men than for women. A woman can care for an old person or a child and clean houses and hotels. Here in Mataró, there aren’t many hotels. That’s the difference. If there were more hotels, then women could work in the hotels. For a woman, it’s very difficult to find work because there aren’t many hotels.

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22 Personal communication from the director of Càritas.
23 Zinn (1994) observes that Italians believe Senegalese are “good” immigrants and think North Africans are involved in crime.
Senegambian men, however, do complain of not finding work and mistreatment on the job sites. Since Senegambian men work mainly in construction and agriculture—jobs that do not demand the close personal contact that domestic and caretaking work require—racism does not necessarily exclude them from being hired. Rather the historical animosity held for North Africans, derogatorily known as Moros, in Spain supports the hiring of sub-Saharan African men.

Personal experiences with racism illustrate the public and private divide between Senegambian men and women that has been strengthened by Spain’s reunification policy and the unfavorable conditions Senegambian women face in the labor market. When discussing racism, men usually bring up situations in the workplace, whereas women talk about their reproductive rights. When a group of Senegambian women in this study was asked about experiences with racism, only one account concerned the workplace. A woman described how on the phone a prospective employer told her to come for the job, but when she arrived and he realized that she was African, he told her sorry, the job was not available. The narratives, however, quickly turned to racist interactions with medical providers and encounters on the streets. A mother of five children described how doctors suggested that she tie her fallopian tubes. A second woman described the insults she received from strangers on the streets when walking with her children, “¡Poco tanto hijos!” (So many children!).

The third component of Pessar and Mahler's gendered geographies of power framework (2003) includes the different forms of agency individuals exert from their social locations. As Senegambian women experience a decline in their autonomy, they gain a measure of agency.

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24 Common insults that respondents and informants receive on the streets are “¿Porque no vuelves a tu país?” (Why don’t you go back to your country?) and “¿Porque está aquí? ¿No le gusta su país?” (Why are you here? Don’t you like your country?).
from their positions as mothers and wives. Morokvasic (1993) argues that for immigrant women in situations where

work experience outside the household is often unrewarding and does not represent a sufficiently attractive alternative to social recognition... performance in household tasks may remain the only possible source for such recognition and self-respect, and women may accept the status quo in the household relations. (475)

In light of the employment prohibition arising from their status as reunited spouses and the unfavorable prospects they face in the labor market, Senegambian women have sought empowered through their roles and responsibilities as mothers and wives, the terms under which the Spanish state recognizes them. According to Kaplan Marcusán (2005), adult literacy education for Senegambian women grew out of their demand for instruction on reproductive health issues. As mothers, Senegambian women, like their West African counterparts in France, have greater interaction with institutions and agencies that provide social and healthcare services and are able to draw on the relationship they establish with staff members for support (Sargent and Larchanché-Kim 2006). Senegambian women can also challenge customary gender roles and expectations that conflict with Spanish norms and legislation. Interviews during dissertation fieldwork disclose that Senegambian women have availed themselves of laws against domestic violence. A complaint of Senegambian men is the power the Spanish state gives their wives to take their house and children. The forms of agency that Senegambian women exert as mothers and wives do not detract from their financial and legal dependency on their husbands but rather indicate that they are not simply victims.25

25 The fourth component of Mahler and Pessar’s gendered geographies of power framework (2006) is imagination which involves “images, meanings, and values associated with gender, consumption, modernity, place and ‘the family’ that circulate with the global cultural economy” (2006:43).
Employment Opportunities for Senegambian Men in Catalonia’s Labor Market

Securing work is of paramount importance, not only for transnational activities but because the migration is economically motivated. It is a search for livelihood. As discussed in chapter four, most African men are involved in agricultural and construction work. In terms of agriculture, the work is seasonal and the pay is low. The pay for construction work is much better than for agriculture, but construction work is also temporary as workers find themselves between projects. The possession of a work permit does not appear to increase mobility within Spain’s labor. Employment prospects for Senegambian men who have work permits improve with length of residence in Spain. Immigrants with work permits who have been in Spain for a short time are engaged in the same jobs as immigrants without work permits. While having a work permit facilitates employment for immigrants in the formal sector, such as working in a poultry or textile factory, the jobs available for immigrants with and without work permits is basically the same, particularly since many Senegambian immigrants have low educational levels.

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26 Because this study examines the relationship between occupational status in the labor market and involvement in transnational practices, entrepreneurial commercial activities such as trading is not considered in the analysis. Whereas studies on transnationalism have focused on traders, this study concerns participation in the labor market. Chapter one gives a review of studies on transnationalism and traders. This study recognizes that for immigrants, entrepreneurship in the ethnic economy is an alternative to less desirable work in the labor market and a to avoid downward mobility in the receiving country (Portes and Zhou 1992, 1993). However, most immigrants are not entrepreneurs, but work in the labor market (Kivisto 2001).

27 Chapter one has a discussion on migration as a livelihood strategy.

28 The worldwide banking crisis and recession that began in 2008 has crippled the construction and real estate industries of Spain. The implications of the crisis for immigrant workers are discussed in the conclusion. When fieldwork was conducted in 2004-2005, the construction industry was experiencing a boom and immigrants readily found employment in the industry.

29 Although involved in the same jobs as those without authorization to work, immigrants with work permits enjoy benefits and protections that authorized workers do not. For example, they earn the lawful minimum wage and are entitled to unemployment benefits when their contracts end.
Figure 5-2 below summarizes the occupational mobility that is possible for Senegambian men in Spain. The different categories of employment are illustrated as a staircase to represent directions of upward and downward mobility in the labor market. Agricultural work comprises the bottom step of the staircase to express its low level in the occupational ladder. Self-employment is the top step of the staircase to indicate its higher status. The characteristics of each category of employment are included in the step.

Aliou, who has been in Spain for two years and does not have papers, works as a day laborer doing different jobs on farms and nurseries, picking tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables or cutting flowers.

[Are you working?] Sometimes there is work sometimes there isn’t. [What do you mean?] When the weather’s hot, there are few people with papers in the tomato fields so that the tomato won’t rot. Only when it’s hot do we [immigrants without work permits] earn a little money. When it’s cold, there isn’t any work. [Are you working in the fields, a flower garden or a greenhouse?] I can’t tell you the correct type because sometimes it’s a flower garden, a vegetable farm, or something else. The truck comes to take me. I go and pick
Aliou describes his work in the greenhouses in terms of the tomato cycle. During the summer when crops are in season, such as the tomato, Aliou works long hours. However out of season, he is out of work. Immigrants with work permits who are involved in agriculture also work under the same conditions. Oumar, who came to Spain on a work contract, works temporary jobs on different farms. Like Aliou, Oumar has been in Spain for two years. As his job in a strawberry field recently ended, Oumar moved to Mataró to find work. “My work stopped almost one month ago. I don't have any work, yet. I'm looking for work here. [So your work has stopped?] Yeah, my contract finished. [Your contract's finished? And how long was your contract?] My contract was for six months”. Although Oumar had a six-month contract to work in a flower garden, the durations of his jobs can be for only a few days. When asked how many jobs he has had since coming to Spain, Oumar answered, “I’ve work many different kind of jobs. Sometimes they call me for two or three days work. I have to work that.”

For immigrants with work permits there is still a level of insecurity about work, especially since the jobs are seasonal and temporary. Moreover, for those who have work permits and who have been in the country for a short time, their work opportunities are the same as those who do not have papers. Most respondents work in the agricultural production of fruits and vegetables or the cultivation of flowers. In addition to the unfavorable working conditions, the pay is low, especially for immigrants without work permits. Aliou describes his pay in terms of the black economy:

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30 Oumar, who is a Mandinka from Gambia, completed high school and spoke English well. He was much more comfortable speaking English than Spanish. His Spanish was very limited. My interactions with Oumar and his interview were conducted in English.
I can’t say that living in Mataró is very difficult because if you go look for work, if there is work, you will work. You earn a little because you don’t have papers. The Spanish call this black money. You understand? [I nod my head to say no.] If you don’t have papers or if you have papers without a contract, what you earn is black money because you don’t have a contract. A person who is working without papers makes black money because they don’t pay him well. It’s called black money.

Black money, *dinero negro*, signifies not only paying immigrants under the table but also the omission of taxes and social security benefits. From Aliou and Oumar’s descriptions of the unreliable availability of work in agriculture and the low wages, migrants are in precarious financial circumstances.

The employment situation of recent arrivals with work permits who are not involved in agriculture is not much better than the conditions Aliou describes. Moustapha has been in Spain for eight months and has had three jobs since arriving in Spain. His job changes represent lateral moves and do not reflect upward mobility. When Moustapha arrived in Lleida, the season was over, and there was no work to be found. He traveled to Valencia with his father’s friend who had arranged his work contract to enter Spain. In Valencia, Moustapha sold pirated CDs. He explained that he was unhappy and nervous about selling CDs because he had to hide from the police. After arriving in Mataró, Moustapha worked as a day laborer, an assistant to a bricklayer. After a few weeks, his work ended. He later found work in a tomato greenhouse near Sant Andreu de Llavaneres, which is one train stop up the coast from Mataró. Although Moustapha had a work permit, the types of jobs that he has worked are similar to those available to immigrants without work permits. Figures 5-2, 5-3, 5-4 and 5-5 are pictures of the different temporary jobs one informant had over the duration of fieldwork, which was a year and a half. As the figures show, the jobs consist of landscape work and trash collection in public spaces such as mall parking lots and sports venues.
Immigrants with several years in Spain and work permits appear to fare better than recent arrivals with permission to work. Abdoulaye, who has been in Spain for six years, has a permanent contract as a fitter on construction projects, which he has held for five years. His first job in Mataró was working in agriculture for one month. As Mamdou’s employment history indicates, possession of a work permit and time in Spain have a positive effect on employment prospects. Moreover, immigrants who had been in Spain for several years and did not have authorization to work but borrowed the permits of others fared better in the labor market. Cheikh who has been in Spain for three years uses the permit of a friend to work at a chicken factory. Before he borrowed the work permit, he worked in a flower garden for two years. The borrowing of work permits among friends and relatives and as the renting of work permits is widespread. Samba, who works with a friend’s permit in a waste management company, explains, “There is work, but to work is a problem because there are many people who don’t have papers. You have to borrow papers to work.” The possession of a work permit, however, does not assure employment or permanent contracts. Malick who arrived in 1998 is still involved in temporary construction work. He finds temporary contractual work through an employment agency.

Construction bricklayer. [Do you have a contract?] Yes, I have a contract. [Is the job permanent or temporary?] No, not permanent. First, three months, then six months, it depends. Before I worked on a three-months contract. Then I was hired on a six-month contract. I was called again on a six-month contract, but the work hasn’t begun. In the meantime, I worked on a two-month contract, then a four-month contract. [Have you had any other jobs since you’ve been in Spain?] It depends. Before I looked for work as a

31 Before working in the poultry factory, Cheikh who is Muslim and Wolof, worked in a pork factory for four months. I asked if he had any difficulties working in the pork factory, he responded, “The very religious don’t like pork. We must not eat pork. But I really don’t practice. You have to eat and make a living first, then the religion.”

32 A Catalan acquaintance recounted a story that illustrates the extent to which work permits are borrowed between friends and relatives. A sub-Saharan African immigrant applied for a position that was vacant because the previous worker was fired. She had to tell the applicant that he could not apply for the position because he had been fired last week.
bricklayer. There wasn’t any work. The other day, I put my name down. I said that I was a bricklayer. The boss told me he would call me. He did call me, and I went to work. The factory job lasted a month. I’ve had various jobs. First I worked in the factory. The second job was in Telefónica. I also looked for work in Barcelona. [What did you do at Telefónica?] I met a boss who was putting the pipes that are below the ground. They were removing the pipes and the cables. Construction and the field, I didn’t spend much time in the field.

Although Malick has a work permit, he is trapped in a circle of temporary construction work.

Malick’s case shows that having a work permit does not guarantee employment although to obtain a work permit an applicant needs a work contract. In addition, these short contracts do not entitle Malick to unemployment benefits.

The mobility that Lamine, who has been in Spain for ten years, has experienced suggests that length of residence in Spain affects employment opportunities. Lamine works in a textile factory that makes underwear. He is a weaver in the factory, which is owned by American company. Lamine’s work history in Spain began in the fields like the majority of Senegambian immigrants.

The first year, I worked in the field. I was accustomed to the field because in my country, in my village, I worked in the field. My father was a farmer. So, I know the field. I don’t fear that work. I had to work in the field because I didn’t have papers. I didn’t have a fixed contract. There were times when I worked a day, sometimes two days, sometimes a week. On the days that I didn’t work, I sewed on the sewing machine. I was progressing here [Spain]. I don’t know, maybe two years or three years. I submitted my papers. I got residency. So I went to look for a fixed job. [In what year did you receive your residency?] I received my papers in 1998. But between 94 and 98, I worked in the field. Each year, I submitted for my papers, 94, 95, 96 but I didn’t get them. I submitted the paperwork. It got lost. They refused my application. They told me no. So finally in 98 they accepted me, the 15th of September. They sent me a letter. I still have the letter. They told me to go get a visa in my country. I went to Senegal for the visa. After getting my papers, I worked in the field for two months. I left my boss, the one from the field. He is very good man. Even now, I stop by there sometimes. He gives me flowers. He tells me, come work for me. Yes, a very good old man, a Catalan, very good. He tells me, come with me. I tell him no because he pays me too little, very little. I have a lot of expenses. Finally, I told him that I didn’t want to. Yes, I left there.... I left the field and went to work putting up paneling. I left mounting paneling for this company. [How many years did you put up paneling?] Paneling, three years and some. It’s been a year since I left that job because it was very dangerous. I’m telling you, a lot of people had accidents, some fell, some died. There were others who broke their legs, arms, because the work is very dangerous. At times we
climbed up floors to mount the paneling like this. But at that job [mounting paneling], I earned a lot, but the job was very dangerous. Each year I would decide to change jobs. This year, I made the decision to change.

During his ten years in Spain, Lamine has gone from physically demanding and low wage work in the fields, hazardous work in construction with higher pay, to safer textile work in a factory for a little less pay. Lamine’s move out of agriculture only occurred after he obtained his work permit. Procuring a work permit is essential for occupational mobility; however, as the cases of Oumar and Lamine show, it is not enough. Unlike Oumar and Lamine who had their papers but were involved in agricultural work, Lamine speaks Spanish well, which he has improved on with time in Spain. Moreover, Lamine has a wider social network than Oumar and Lamine, which also comes with length of residence in Spain. A friend of Lamine recommended him for the textile job. In addition to the various jobs he has held, Lamine has a sewing machine and works as a tailor to supplement his income. Lamine aspires to work full-time as a tailor and be his own boss in the future. Lamine’s narrative also details the various challenges that immigrants confront. He describes the difficulties involved in regularizing his status and gaining a work permit. He applied three times for work authorization without success. His narrative also illuminates on the bureaucracy around permit applications: his paperwork was lost and his application was denied twice.

Whereas Lamine aspires to be his own boss, Demba who has been in Spain for nineteen years is a subcontractor. Before working as a subcontractor, Demba owned a store that sold groceries and sundry items to West African immigrant consumers. However, he lost the store when his partner, a cousin of his, mismanaged the finances. Now he is a subcontractor for construction projects.

I work for myself, on my own account. I don’t want to make a contract with anyone because I won’t earn anything. You get your floor and you give me a meter. Each meter thirty euros. I do it all. If I dig, you pay me and that’s it. Now I don’t work for anyone. I
work on my own account. I have been on my own account for seven years. Every three months I pay taxes. If I get sick, I am going to lose because I can’t take off from my business. So if someone makes me a contract, he’s only going to pay my social security every month. But he’s not going to pay the taxes for the license. So I pay two taxes. If I have to lose, it’s better to lose once.

Although Demba is involved in construction, a sector with a heavy presence of immigrants, he has experienced some mobility as a certified mason and has become his own boss. Few of the respondents in this study have been able to achieve such mobility outside of entrepreneurial projects within the ethnic enclave. The same factors that have contributed to improvement in Lamine’s occupational status have played a role in Demba’s mobility in the construction industry: permanent resident status; language competency; and social contacts. All of which relate to the length of time in Spain. At the same time, Demba has been able to transfer the skills and business knowledge that he obtained in Gambia to Spain. In Gambia, Demba worked as a bricklayer before managing a store that his brother in France opened. Demba began his occupation career in Spain in construction, which he left to open a store. After losing the store, Demba returned to construction work as a subcontractor. Demba has been able to transition to entrepreneurship, which is what Lamine hopes to do in the future with his tailoring.

**Employment Opportunities for Senegambian Women**

As with the case of Senegambian men, the possession of a work permit does necessarily change the types of jobs Senegambian women perform in Spain. However, authorization to work is critical for mobility within the labor market. The types of work Senegambian women perform in the formal and informal sectors involve cleaning, caregiving and cooking jobs in nursing homes, businesses such as hotels and restaurants, and private homes. Women also engage in piecework, which they either perform at home or in makeshift factories in garages. The jobs

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33 Demba is one of a few respondents certified in a vocation.
accessible to Senegambian women share the same characteristics as those available to Senegambian men, temporary and poorly paid. The work and livelihood strategies of Senegambian women in Spain are also similar to their counterparts in France. Soninke women in France are engaged in cleaning and catering work in hotels and restaurants (Timera 1996). As with the situation in Spain, these jobs are poorly paid and involve long hours. Working conditions subject women to exploitation (Timera 1996). There is minimal difference between formal and informal sector work, with the exception of payment of social security taxes by the employer on behalf of the employee. While the jobs in these two sectors are similar, the absence of benefits in the informal sector is of major significance to the lives of Senegambian women.\footnote{Working under a borrowed work permit actually benefits the legitimate cardholder as the borrower contributes to her state benefits and pension.}

For Senegambian women who do not have legal permission to work or who want to supplement their incomes from formal employment, provide services to West African immigrants, primarily women. The services that Senegambian women provide include braiding and styling hair, caring for young preschool children of West African immigrants, and cooking for single men or men who do not have their wives in Spain. The scale of these activities is low, and the activities take place in the women’s homes. Soninke women in France also engage in the informal sector where they trade in West African products, style and braid hair, and sew (Timera 1996). In addition to providing services in the informal economy, Senegambian women in Spain who do not have work authorization borrow work permits from relatives or friends to acquire formal employment, which is the same strategy that many Senegambian men use.

Whereas women who come through family reunification as wives are concerned with beginning or growing their families, women who migrate independently to support their families in Africa are active in the labor force from the time of their arrival. Mame, who is a 21-year-old
Gambian, was reunited with her parents and younger siblings who were born in Spain and has been in Spain for three years. Because Mame came as a daughter and not a wife, she does not have the domestic responsibilities that newly reunited wives have. She is free to attend Spanish classes and to work although she does not have a work permit. Since coming to Spain, Mame has had two jobs. Her first job involved sewing for a sub-contractor that hired immigrants without work permits. She sewed for six months. More recently, her father arranged for her to work in a restaurant owned by a relative of his boss. She has been working at the restaurant for three months.\textsuperscript{35} In comparison to Fatima and Abdoulaye’s wife limited knowledge of Spanish, Mame has learned to speak Spanish proficiently although all three women have been in Spain for about the same time.\textsuperscript{36} The comparison between Mame and Fatima and Abdoulaye’s wife attest to the domestic demands reunited spouses with young children shoulder and the affects of these on women’s participation in the labor market.

The active participation of reunited young adult children like Mame in the labor market is similar to divorced women who migrate independently. The employment trajectory of Fatou, the divorcée from Senegal, illustrates the jobs available to immigrant women. The first year Fatou was in Spain, she did not work. She arrived to Spain without authorization from France. To make money, Fatou cooked maize patties that she sold to West Africans on Saturday and Sunday. Her first job was in a hotel in the mountains, where the manager applied for a work permit on her behalf. At the end of the second season, Fatou’s contract ended. She later found employment cleaning in a hotel in Tarragona with the assistance of a Senegalese friend who worked at the hotel. As with the hotel job in the mountains, the job in Tarragona was seasonal. Fatou moved to

\textsuperscript{35} Although Mame told me that she was a waitress in the restaurant, when I went to eat at the restaurant with my Catalan roommate and a Senegalese friend, she was working in the kitchen.

\textsuperscript{36} Fatima and Abdoulaye’s wife needed an interpreter for their interviews.
Mataró and found a domestic job in a private home, which she quickly abandoned because of contractual fraud. At the time of her interview, Fatou was unemployed:

The first hotel where I worked, I worked there two seasons. You know, hotel work is seasonal, six months, six months. I worked there two seasons, almost a year. You know the hotel ----? I worked there last year for four months. After that I came here [Mataró]. I worked in a private house for a month and a few days. The owner of the house cheated me. I worked there for over a month, but he didn’t want to give me a contract. He made a contract for only seventeen days, no more. He cheated me for a month without a contract because I didn’t know.

The length of Fatou’s contracts is indicative of the seasonal and temporary nature of employment in the tourist industry. The jobs available to immigrant women in the tourist industry and immigrant men in agriculture share the same properties, they are seasonal, physically demanding, and low paying. Fatou employment history shows that Senegambian women’s participation in the labor market is determined by the circumstances of their migration to Spain. The work that is available to Senegambian women in Spain’s labor market illustrate that there are few opportunities for upward mobility. A small number of Senegambian women migrated to Spain in the late seventies and early eighties have become cultural mediators in hospitals and social agencies. However, cultural mediation has become a popular occupation among second-generation women who have personal knowledge and familiarity with both Senegambian and Catalan cultural practices, which most first-generation Senegambian women do not have.

**Housing Accommodations: A Place to Rest Your Head**

Housing arrangements represent the social and economic integration of Senegambian immigrants in Spain. The three patterns of housing arrangements identified in this study are single men sharing an apartment; married couples with young children taking in boarders; and single families living alone. Housing patterns correspond to the migration and settlement process where men migrate first, wives join their husbands, and couples establish families. The analysis of housing accommodations is organized according to this pattern of settlement. The difficulties
immigrants face in securing housing—lack of regular immigrant status, affordability, and racism—that lead to overcrowded living conditions, are considered. Tension and conflicts arising from living arrangements between housemates are also explored, particularly tension around gender norms and behaviors.

The overcrowding living conditions that characterize agricultural zones where work is seasonal and adequate housing is scarce (Suárez-Nava 2004) distinguish the living arrangements of single men and young families from established immigrant families in Mataró. However, the living arrangements of single men are the most crowded and resemble the conditions under which Murid traders live (Ebin 1996; Carter 1997; Perry 1997). Because many single men do not have regular immigration status, they must group together to secure housing. Overcrowding is also an outcome of the desire to minimize living expenses, particularly as Senegambian immigrants are involved in low-wage temporary employment. Ibrahima, for example, has only been in Spain for one year and does not have any relatives in Spain, only friends. He lives in a three-bedroom apartment with nine other men. His roommates are from Senegal and Gambia and are of the Mandinka and Jola ethnic groups. The overcrowding conditions observed in this study is consistent with data from the 2001 census, which finds the residences of foreigners are smaller and have fewer rooms than those of the Spanish (MTAS 2006:88). Kaplan in her survey of 121 Senegambian immigrants in Girona, also finds that most immigrants live in small apartments and in crowded conditions: 53 percent of respondents live in apartments with five to seven people; 28 percent with eight to nine people; and 20 percent with four or less (1998:107). Consistent with Kaplan’s study and the 2001 survey, the majority of informants in this study live in crowded

37 Institutional housing estates for immigrant workers, such as the foyer in France, are absent in Catalonia.
apartments. Difficulties in securing housing are also an outcome of racism, as locals prefer not to live among immigrants.

Oumar outlines the difficulties of finding a place: affordability, immigration documents, employment requirements, and racism. Although Oumar possesses a work permit and has a job, he cannot afford to rent an apartment on his own because his pay is too low. Oumar recently had moved out an apartment where he boarded with a married couple and initially had trouble finding an apartment with his friends. He describes the difficulties of finding a place in Mataró for immigrants without papers and a steady job.

It’s very difficult to find a place if you come as an illegal immigrant. [Why is it difficult?] It is very difficult because they demand a guarantor. Many people come from Morocco and African countries enter illegally. After the Red Cross releases them, they are told to go. Where can they go if they don't know anyone here? Without papers, they can’t find work. What are they expected to do? Criminal acts to survive or what? They have no room, nothing. And even if they have papers there is no job security so you can’t get a room. Because the landlord asks to see your contract, your pay stubs, everything. It’s impossible to rent a place if you don’t have a job. So where can you stay? Renting here is a problem for Africans because people believe that if you give an African a place, many people will come to stay. And this is true. You cannot let your fellow African sleep outside. He doesn't have papers. He doesn't have anything. You have to invite him to your room. Everyone wants to live two or three people, but when someone comes without papers, who has nothing, you have to take him to your house. [Was it difficult for you to find a place to stay?] No, because I know people and I have friends.

In his account, Oumar also explains a factor contributing to overcrowding, the obligation to assist other immigrants who do not have accommodations. Oumar had conflicts with his previous landlord over “friends” spending the night. The issue of overcrowding is an obstacle to housing for single immigrant men. Cheikh and his roommates were asked to leave their apartment because too many people were living there. According to Cheikh, four people lived in the apartment; however, some friends were “visiting” from Switzerland.38 The landlord charged that

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38 Cheikh did not disclose how many friends were visiting.
too many people were living in the apartment and asked Cheikh and his roommates to leave. Cheikh argued that he could not throw his friends out on the streets.

Just as immigrants borrow work permits to find employment, they also borrow documents to rent apartments. Papis borrowed Oumar’s work permit to get a contract with a cleaning agency in Barcelona. Borrowing Oumar’s work permit enabled Papis to secure employment and to use his work contract to rent an apartment for Cheikh and his roommates, all of whom did not have papers. Although Cheikh was working with a friend’s work permit, he did not have permission to rent an apartment using his friend’s identification.

Immigrants who have better-paying jobs, such as skilled construction work, and regular immigration status have no problems renting or buying an apartment. Abdoulaye has a fixed job in construction as a fitter. His description of securing an apartment is the converse of Oumar’s account. “To find a place is very easy. If you have a fixed contract and you want a place with your wife only, you go to the realtor. With your work papers and contract, the realtor and the bank will help you find a flat.” Although Abdoulaye describes the process as “very easy,” he has two boarders. With two young children and a wife who is not working, he needs boarders to make ends meet.

There are three strategies for renting or buying an apartment. These strategies indicate the life course, integration and settlement process of immigrants. The first strategy involves a group of men renting an apartment together to reduce costs. An immigrant who has a work permit and steady employment rents the apartment, and the roommates may or may not have regular immigration status. For example, in Idrissa’s flat, his roommate who has a permanent contract rents the apartment. There are three bedrooms and three primary residents, Idrissa, Ousseynou and Bakary in whose name the house is rented. However, a number of people pass through
Idrissa’s apartment for a period of time. Idrissa has the biggest room in the apartment, which has an extra bed. He took in a friend’s nephew for a few months. The nephew slept on an extra bed in Idrissa’s room. When Ousseynou’s sister divorced her husband and moved to France, her daughter did not want to leave Spain and moved in with Ousseynou. She slept on a mattress on the floor in Ousseynou’s room. Depending on whom Idrissa and his roommates take in, the number of residence fluctuates.

The second pattern involves immigrant men who want to bring their wives to Spain. When Senegambian men decide they want to bring their wives to Spain, they save enough money to buy a flat. They then take in boarders, mainly young single men, while the family reunification application is being processed. When the application has been approved and the arrival of the wife is imminent, the owner of the apartment asks the male boarders who are not related to him to move out. Usually the males living with married couples are brothers and nephews. At the same time many boarders prefer not to live with married couples. Cheikh, who is looking for an apartment to rent with his friends, sums up the problems that arise with living with married couples:

Because it’s not my flat, it’s my friend’s. I have to live and they have to bring their wives. If your wife comes, I have to leave and look for another place. I don’t like living with a woman that is not my wife. We are men and women things are complicated. To live with a woman who is not your wife is not good. Sometimes you go take a shower and you walk back to your room. It’s provocative. I don’t like it. I wouldn’t want someone to insult my wife. So I avoid living with a woman who is not my wife. That I’m sure of, I will never live with a woman that is not my wife, in principle.

Cheikh touches on the fears that many husbands have of boarders, that they will have sex with their wives. Cheikh, in principle, avoids such provocation by not living with women who are not related to him or his wife. However, families who are experiencing economic difficulties will have male boarders who were not their relatives.
In addition to the arrival of a wife, a common reason for changing rooms is an increase in rent. Before his present situation, Aliou rented a room for one year for 120 euros a month. He was also responsible for 20 euros a week for communal meals and his share of the utilities. Aliou complained that he did not always have work and could not afford 120 euros every month. He later moved in with a friend where he pays 100 euros a month. He is living in a three-bedroom apartment with five other men. However, Aliou is looking for a room because his friend’s wife is coming in a few months.

The third strategy for saving money and affording an apartment is to pool multiple families together. Such an arrangement usually involves brothers who move in with their families. For example, Malick lives with his two brothers, their wives and young children—three toddlers—in a three-bedroom apartment. Malick describes his living arrangements in terms of, “My brother is good. I eat well. I sleep well. Peace, no problems.” In comparison to Malick’s contentment, women prefer to live alone with their children and husbands, without other women, both sister-in-laws and second wives, or boarders. Khady, a 34-year-old Balanta from Gambia, lists the reasons women prefer not to live with other couples.

Before, I didn’t have a work contract, only my husband. A flat is too expensive for one person to pay, so we joined together two families. Things didn’t work out well because we were always fighting. Finally, when people began buying flats, each family decided to be with their own family. But before, when families joined together, there were always problems between the women. [What kinds of problems?] No woman wants another to order her around, that’s a woman’s habit. If I scrub here, the other scrubs behind me because she feels that it is not clean. They are problems like that. I cook the meal, and the other says it doesn’t taste good. We fight. Women’s things always turn out like this when living together. [Now you live with only your family?] Now, with only my family.

According to Khady, two families would live together to afford the apartment. However, under such living conditions, interpersonal relations between wives would give rise to conflicts. As Khady points out, these disputes concern housekeeping, specifically meals and cleaning.
Whereas Khady and her husband have decided to live alone with their children, Senegambian families, particularly young families still share apartments.

Housekeeping conflicts are not isolated to separate families living together, but also concern single men living together and male boarders renting rooms from couples. The benefit of living with a married couple is that the wife cooks the meals and does the housekeeping. Djiby explains the problems and benefits of living with a married couple than with a group of men.

At this time I also want to stay there because my economic situation is not good. Here is more expensive than our house. And truthfully we don’t have any freedom there, but we don’t do anything. His wife does all the cleaning and cooking. You come and go, you sleep and that’s it. I like this arrangement because I lived this way in Senegal. But if you live here, if Idrissa cleans everything today, tomorrow will be my turn. And if I’m tired there could be an argument, so I prefer to live where I am now. But I also need to come and go as I please and to receive friends. Where I am now, I can’t receive a friend at the house. I can have a girl over to eat, but I prefer not to bother people who don’t like that.

When only men live together in an apartment, arrangements are made to alternate cooking and cleaning duties among the occupants. From Djiby’s explanation conflicts can arise between roommates over cooking and housekeeping chores. However, when a wife is present, these duties are her responsibility as the woman of the house. At the same time, couples have fewer boarders, usually one or two. Djiby remains satisfied living with the couple because he does not have any domestic duties as his counterparts who live together. Although Djiby is satisfied that he does not have to do chores, he is disgruntled about not being able to invite guests, especially female friends, to the house. Upon further questioning Djiby explains:

When you live with a married couple, it’s difficult to have a girl or girlfriend over. They will see it as an insult. There are many Africans here who come from the village and have the village mentality. The Africans from the city are different. If a wife is home all the time and a man living in the house has women coming and going an if her husband misses one week or two weeks, the wife can make with this man. People fear this can happen, their wives make out with boarders. For this reason, men who don’t have their wives here prefer to live with single men than with a married couple.
What Djiby elaborates on is the possible risk of wives having affairs with boarders, while the husband is away at work. For this reason as mentioned above, male boarders living with couples are usually the relatives of the husband. One exception was the boarders at Bintou’s house. Bintou’s husband was terminally ill with cancer. He had not worked in over a year and Bintou did not have permission to work. She and her husband had two Gambian boarders of the same ethnic group, Mandinka. One of the boarders was Oumar. Bintou constantly complained about the “boys” and was relieved when they moved out. She described her house as a “ghetto” with boys coming and going. Some of the neighbors complained of the traffic in and out of her house. Bintou said that she could not rest, as there was no peace with the boys. She complained that some of their friends would spend the night. She would wake up and find someone sleeping on the couch. She mentioned that she could have asked her boarders to pay for their friends spending the night, but she did not. She at least expected that the boarders would ask her permission to have their friends stay over, which they did not. Bintou constantly argued with her boarders about their friends’ “coming and going.” Bintou explained that at one point Oumar was so rude to her that her husband had to get involved. She said that she treated Oumar really well, even cooked breakfast for him, and that he would not find better treatment anywhere else. Now that Oumar and his roommate are no longer living with her, Bintou is relieved and enjoys the quietness of her house. She describes her new boarder, an older man, as “quiet and calm.” Bintou likes having him live with her. To avoid the conflicts described between Bintou and Oumar and explained by Djiby and Cheikh, young men prefer not to live with couples, and couples that can afford to have only their families in the house do not take in boarders.

39 Bintou omitted that meal arrangements between lodgers and landlords usually include breakfast and dinner.
This analysis of the living arrangements and livelihoods of Senegambian immigrants summarizes their settlement in Mataró and the challenges that they encounter in establishing themselves in Spain, as well as the strategies they use to overcome these problems. The major problem immigrants have concerns their immigration status. Without authorization to work and reside in Spain, immigrants live in the shadows of the black economy as Aliou describes. This black economy not only involves working without authorization, but also the using documents of other people to secure jobs, to rent apartments, and in general, to go about living in Spain. Strategies also involve pooling resources with other immigrants that result in overcrowded living conditions. While some of these conditions have been documented in previous research (Kaplan 1998; Kaplan Marcusán 2005), the ethnography of how immigrants negotiate these arrangements have not. The analysis of the living arrangements of Senegambian immigrants in Mataró, the various social, economic and legal factors the lead to these arrangements, and the conflicts that arise from these arrangements give insight into their lived experiences and their integration.

Conclusion

The various methods of entering Spain define the status of Senegambian immigrants in the country: irregular immigrant, worker and reunited family member. In turn, these different immigration statuses demarcate opportunities in Spain’s labor market. Senegambian immigrants, as most immigrants from developing countries in Spain, have difficulties securing employment, work permits and accommodations. These three problems are interrelated in that renting an apartment requires proof of regular immigration status and income and improving employment involves the acquisition of a work permit. Two factors that play a significant role in occupational improvement are time in Spain and obtainment of a work permit, although immigrants remain in the same economic sector. While the acquisition of a permit does not guarantee mobility within Spain’s labor market, respondents, who have been in Spain for a few years and later regularize
their status, leave agricultural work for better paying construction work. Compared to the high participation rate of Senegambian men in the labor market, only a small percentage of Senegambian women work in both the formal and informal sectors. The low participation of Senegambian women in Spain’s labor market is a result of: Spain’s family reunification policy precludes reunited family members from initial participation in the labor market, responsibilities for childcare, and racial and religious preferences for domestic work that puts Senegambian women at a disadvantage. Just as Senegambians have strategies to find employment, they engage in various tactics to secure and afford housing. Three housing patterns emerge from these strategies: single men live on overcrowded conditions, young couples take in boarders, and older families live alone. How patterns of settlement, particularly employment and immigration status, affect participation in transnational activities is examined in the following chapter.
Figure 5-2. Cleaning up at Formula One auto racing. (All pictures were taken by the author and used with permission from the informant).

Figure 5-3. Landscaping in a private home.
Figure 5-4. Cleaning the streets of Maresme.

Figure 5-5. Collecting shopping carts at Carrefour.
CHAPTER 6
TRANSNATIONALISM AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY IN SPAIN

Introduction

This chapter examines the transnational activities of Senegambian immigrants in relation to their economic integration in Catalonia, Spain. The first sections of the chapter identify and describe the transnational practices according to private, public and economic domains followed by a discussion of the differences between Senegambian men and women’s transnational activities.1 Case studies are then presented to analyze the relationship between economic integration, defined by type of employment and immigration status, and involvement in transnational activities. The chapter ends with a consideration of the implications of Spanish citizenship for engagement in transnational practices.

Transnational Practices Among Senegambians in Spain

The transnational practices of Senegambian immigrants may be grouped into three categories, private, public and economic, based on Itzigsohn et al.’s classification (1999). Private transnationalism involves activities that take place at the household level. The private transnational activities observed in this study are phone calls, remittances, return visits, land purchase, and home construction. Public transnationalism involves membership in village associations, religious orders and non-governmental organizations. Economic transnationalism relates to investments in Senegal or Gambia that include land, rental properties and businesses, such as telecommunication centers. Figure 6-1 is a visualization of the different categories of transnational practices examined in this study. The activities are listed according to the magnitude of transnationalism from high, medium to low. Under private transnationalism,

1 While some Senegambian immigrants maintained ties with relatives abroad in countries in Africa, Europe and North America, which reflect an additional level of transnationalism, this study only considers transnational practices that link the countries of origin and reception.
international phone calls to family and friends in Senegal or Gambia demand the least amount of monetary and legal resources and home construction requires the most. The different types of associations are not scaled as they share similarities in the projects carried out in Senegal or Gambia. Transnational practices can overlap in that the activities in the private arena can also include the economic domain. Two transnational activities that overlap are land purchase and home construction. Their categorization depends on the objectives of the activity. Homes built for personal or household use cover the private transnationalism. Homes constructed for rental purposes comprise economic transnationalism.

**Private Transnationalism**

This section describes private transnationalism at the household level. The activities examined are remittances and return visits. The use of telecommunication technology to maintain transnational ties is omitted because contact with family and friends by telephone is the

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Figure 6-1. Categorization of transnational activities observed in this study according to magnitude.
most basic activity of household transnationalism. No matter occupational status or time spent in Spain, immigrants are able to contact relatives and friends in Senegal or Gambia frequently. A five-euro phone card provides about 30 minutes of communication depending on where the call is made, a landline or pay phone, and the country dialed. In addition, locutorios (telecommunication centers) charge callers per minute, allowing immigrants who have less than five euros to call Senegal or Gambia. Figure 6.2 is a picture of a locutorio in Barcelona, where immigrants make long-distance calls. A few informants also maintained contact with family and friends through the Internet and email, services that locutorios also provided. None of the respondents in this study communicated with relatives and friends through written letters or cassette tape recordings. With the spread of mobile technology, communication by mobile phones have supplanted letters and cassette tape recordings, which were popular methods for migrants to communicate with family and friends in Senegal and Gambia.
Remittances

As elaborated in chapter two, the transnational practices in which Senegambian immigrants engage are extensions of urban-rural ties that have defined urban migration in Africa. These ties arise from and are defined by conditions at points of origin and destination. Senegambian migration to Spain is economic, a search for a livelihood and a household strategy in the face of economic crisis (chapter two). For these reasons, sending remittances is an expected outcome of migration. World Bank data on officially recorded remittances in 2006 was US $633 million for Senegal and US $64 million for Gambia. Remittances accounted for 12.5% of Gambia’s GDP that year and 7.1% of Senegal’s GDP (Ratha and Xu 2008).² Four patterns of sending remittances arise that relate to the life course of households. The first situation involves young and single immigrants who are the only members of their families aboard and whose remittances are critical to their parents’ household. The second scenario includes married immigrants who have established their households in Senegal or Gambia and continue to support their parents’ household. This group of married immigrants, mainly men, sends remittances to two households. The third scheme concerns the pooling of resources between immigrants with immediate relatives in Spain and aboard. Teaming together to send remittances reduces the burden of supporting families in Senegal or Gambia for individual immigrants. The fourth pattern consists of immigrants who mostly support their households and send remittances to their wives. The different economic and social conditions under which remittances are sent are described below.

Oumar and Ibrahima are young single Gambian men who have been in Spain for a short time and are engaged in seasonal low-wage agricultural work. They are the only members of their families aboard and must send remittances every month to support their families. Oumar’s

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² The amount of remittances is much greater if unofficial records are included (Ratha and Xu 2008).
explanation of the uses of the remittances he sends illustrates his family’s dependence on his support.

[What does you family do with the money you send?] They need food. Sometimes school fees, which has to be paid every three months. Sometimes medical care and other things. It's too much. [How often do you send money?] Normally, I send money for food every month. But when problems other than food arise, I have to send.

The remittances that Oumar sends provides for the subsistence needs of his father’s household, school expenses for his brothers and sisters, and unexpected emergencies like medical expenses. The dependence of his family on remittances is reflected in the monthly frequency in which Oumar sends money to Gambia. Ibrahima’s responsibilities to his family in Gambia are similar to Oumar’s circumstances. He must send money every month for his mother and younger siblings. He is the oldest son, and his father who is dead had three wives and many children. As Ibrahima explains: “I have a lot of brothers and sisters. My father had three wives. I’m the only one here [Spain]. I send money for them to survive.... My brothers and sisters are all in school. My mother can’t pay all school expenses. I have to help her. Every month I have to send money.” As the oldest son of his father, Ibrahima has had to take responsibility for his brother and sisters. In all two cases, Oumar and Ibrahima are the only members of their families abroad, and therefore, carry the sole burden of supporting their families.

Although Oumar and Ibrahima send remittances each month, the amount varies according to their incomes. Ibrahima does not have a work permit and is a day laborer in agriculture, and therefore, has an unstable income. Respondents who are engaged in unskilled agricultural work, such as Ibrahima and Oumar, earn between 600 to 700 euros per month and less if they do not work the whole month. Consequently, for many immigrants in Oumar and Ibrahima situation, the amount of remittances sent fluctuates depending on the circumstances in which they find themselves at the end of the month. Aliou describes how the money he sends varies: “Because
my mother has my children, each month I have to send 150 euros. If not, I can send 70, 100, 80 or 50. If I have, I normally send them food for two months, 150 euros. When I send 50 euros a month, they always lack.” Although the amount of money Aliou sends changes, he consistently remits. In all these cases, remittances are essential to the subsistence of family members back in Gambia. The uses and application of remittances reflect how migration functions as an economic strategy for households in West Africa.

Some situations are less critical than others. Cheikh, who is not married, sends money when he can, but his family does not depend on him to survive. He sends money to his mother to settle her “things” because she does not work. Cheikh explains, “I don’t know exactly what she does with the money. If she tells me that she needs this or that, I don’t ask what she is going to do with the money. I give to her if I have. What she does with the money is not important to me.” Cheikh sends money to help out his mother, but he only sends to his father and sister if he has extra funds to spare. In a similar manner, Mamadou has avoided supporting his siblings although he is the only family member abroad. He regularly sends money to his wife and mother. His wife lives in a separate house from his mother. If his siblings need money and if he has the funds, he helps them out. However, Mamadou points out that his siblings are not an obligation, but his mother who is seventy years old and his wife are his responsibilities. Mamadou is an exception as most immigrants support younger siblings in Senegal or Gambia. Mamadou’s case points to the double burden that some immigrants with spouses and children in Senegal or Gambia shoulder. In addition to supporting their spouses and children, they also provide for their parents.
and younger siblings. Mamadou’s situation illustrates the second pattern where remittances support two households.³

Sending remittances is not void of conflict, which largely arises from the pressure of balancing family obligations in Senegal or Gambia and personal needs in Spain. Conflicts also develop from expectations of family members in Senegal or Gambia. Oumar describes the challenges he faces to meet the needs of his family in Gambia and his own requirements in Spain.

The belief people have in Africa is different from Europe.... When you are in Europe you see documentaries about Africa. When you are in Africa, you see many programs about Europe and then you see people coming from Europe with money. They have everything. You don't know where or how they get this money. So Africans believe that when you come to Europe, you get money. Once you get here, everyone thinks that you have money. They all depend on you. When they have problems, they focus on you and tell you their problems.

Oumar attributes the unrealistic expectation of nonmigrants to media images and the behavior of return migrants. As discussed in chapter four, images of lifestyles in Europe and displays of wealth by return migrants encourage emigration. At the same time, nonmigrant family members place greater pressure on immigrants based on misconceptions of the lived experience of immigrants in Europe. When Oumar’s relatives encounter problems, they call on him because he is working in Europe and therefore in a position to help them. Fatou, who is a divorced Senegalese woman, also has the same lament about misperceptions of family members left behind.

Every month I have to send my father money because he thinks that people here [Spain], have a lot of money. My mother is not alive, and I have siblings in Senegal who are not married and depend on me. Each month if I earn a little, I pay my rent, I pay for the flat

³ Conflicts on the receiving end of remittances are described by Buggenhagen (2001, 2003). According to Buggenhagen, conflicts between wives and mother-in-laws over the amount of remittances they receive have led them to ask their husbands and sons to remit to them secretly (2001:391-392).
where my children live in Dakar because I am divorced from my husband. I pay water, electricity, all.

All of her family’s expenses fall on Fatou’s shoulders. She has four children who live in her house in Dakar while her father and siblings reside in a small town. Fatou actually supports two households, hers and her father’s. Considering the weight of Fatou’s obligations, it is not surprising that she is one of the few Senegalese women in Mataró to migrate independently to Spain.

The mismatch between the expectation of nonmigrant family members and the lived reality of immigrants in Spain raises the question of how do immigrants manage their obligations to family members and their personal expenses in Spain on their meager wages. Not only are the wages immigrants earn in the secondary labor market low, but also their employment is usually seasonal and temporary. Oumar explains the difficulties of making ends meet with little pay and sending money home.

When I arrived, I worked for the man who arranged my visa. But the work was seasonal, strawberries. So I only worked for one season and had to wait for the next season. But I have to pay the rent, pay my accounts. I couldn’t wait for another season to work. I had to find a job. So I left Sansiberia and came to Mataró to find work.

Oumar underscores the difficulties of meeting financial obligations in Catalonia with seasonal work picking strawberries. Oumar must also support his family in Gambia with his meager income. Oumar’s comments illustrate the difficulties migrants in agricultural work face in maintaining transnational activities at the household level. They remit less money to Africa compared with those working in construction as bricklayers or fitters. At the same time, immigrants with and without work permits who are involved in agricultural work and have been in Spain for a short period of time show minimal participation in transnational activities at the household level. Their activities primarily consist of remittances. While Oumar remits regularly, he has not traveled to Gambia although he can legally travel with his work and residency
permits. Not only are Oumar’s transnational activities curtailed because of his low wages, Oumar minimizes his living expenses to support his family in Gambia. He lives in a small apartment with four other Gambians to save money. Overcrowded living conditions are partially an outcome of efforts by immigrants to reduce their living expenditures in Spain in order to remit to family members. As mentioned above, Aliou refuses to pay more than 100 euros per month for rent. He works in a greenhouse and has to send money home every month to his mother who is caring for his two children.

In addition to minimizing living expenses, another means of balancing financial obligations in Spain and Senegal or Gambia is to sponsor the migration of additional family members, usually brothers or nephews. As a strategy to reduce obligations to relatives in Senegal or Gambia, sponsoring the migration of relatives to Europe reduces the financial burden of supporting family members in Senegal or Gambia. This is the third pattern of remittances at the household level, where immigrants who have siblings or immediate family members abroad can organize themselves to support their families in Senegal or Gambia. Such cooperation relieves the financial burden of supporting relatives on individual immigrants as obligations are shared between siblings or family members.4 With the presence of other relatives in Spain to shoulder the responsibility of remittances, immigrants may completely defer the burden of supporting relatives in Senegal or Gambia. For example, Lamine’s brother, who was the first member of his family to migrate to Spain, stopped sending remittances to his parents and siblings in Senegal. His support for his wife and son and his neglect of his family demonstrate the fourth pattern of remittances at the household level. According to Lamine,

4 Among Jola migrants in Dakar, family members pool together to send remittances (Reboussin 1995: 142). Buggenhagen observes that pooling remittances between Murid traders reduces fees because only one transfer of money is made (2001:391).
I used to send money with my brother. Now because my brother has his wife and children in Senegal, he has withdrawn. Before each of us would take out something and send it together. They say that people here change. Now if you ask him for something, he says no. He says now my wife and my son. Normally I send something every month. Now we are lucky because I have another brother who has just come. Now both of us can send something each month.

Lamine’s brother is able to defer the responsibilities of maintaining his family members in Senegal to his brother. He is the same brother who convinced Lamine to leave the Ivory Coast and migrate to Spain. Lamine’s migration to Spain has enabled his brother to turn his energies to his wife and son who are still in Senegal. In turn, Lamine is looking forward to his younger brother’s contribution to the support of their family, which will alleviate the burden on Lamine who also has a wife and son in Senegal. The sharing of responsibility for relatives in Senegal and Gambia is only possible if other immediate family members are also aboard in Europe or the United States. Therefore, sponsoring the migration of other family members is advantageous.

Just as brothers cooperate to send money home, married couples organize to send money to relatives in Africa. Moussa and his wife Khady, who have been married for seventeen years, take turns sending money to Gambia. One month, they send remittances to Moussa’s family, and the next month to Khady’s parents. Khady explains that they cannot afford to send remittances to both families at the same time.

It depends. At any given month, we have to put in a little together. We send to my husband’s family, and the next time my family. But we can’t send to both our families at the same time because we have children here. We have to pay the flat, a lot of things. So the best thing is one family at a time.

Khady and her husband have five children in Spain. Moreover, Khady has only had a work permit for one year, sixteen years after arriving in Spain. Before acquiring her work permit, she cleaned private houses and sewed for subcontractors at home, all within the informal economy. Khady and her husband, therefore, have to collaborate to support their families in Gambia. At the
same time, Khady’s explanation discloses the competing demands between Gambia and Spain, especially with five children in Spain.\(^5\)

In comparison to the contribution Khady makes to the support of her husband’s family, women who are not working must depend on their husbands’ generosity to send money to their families in Senegal or Gambia. Astou, who married her husband at the age of fifteen and arrived in Spain a year later, is enrolled in a beginning Spanish course at the Centre San Pau. She has been in Spain for a year and has never worked. Astou is completely dependent on her husband for her welfare in Spain, both legally and financially, and for money to send to her parents. The reliance of reunited wives on their husbands to send remittances their relatives in Senegal or Gambia does not lessen with time spent in Spain if the women are not working. Mariama, who is enrolled in a caretaker-training program and has been in Spain for six years, depends on her husband to send money to Gambia. As described in the third chapter, Mariama has never worked in Spain. She spent her first few years in Spain at home caring for her two young children. As husbands are not obligated to remit to their wives’ families, wives rely on their husbands’ good will.\(^6\)

Return Visits

This section examines the visits Senegambian immigrants make to their respective countries of origin. The analysis examines the ways in which visits to Senegal or Gambia reflect economic integration in Spain in terms of immigration and occupational status. How visits represent particular stages in the life course of reunited families in Spain in the number of trips

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\(^5\) As discussed in the first chapter, Foner (2000) observes that financial obligations to relatives in the countries of origin can diminish resources for projects in the receiving country, particularly in light of the limited resources of immigrants.

\(^6\) In the case of Jola migrants in Dakar, husbands also send remittances to their wives’ families when their wives are unable to remit (Reboussin 1995:142).
made and the purpose of the visits is also considered. The visiting patterns of reunited immigrants families are compared with immigrants who maintain their wives and children in Senegal or Gambia. Explanations for the differences between the visitation tendencies of Senegambian men and women are outlined.

The fact that immigrants without papers cannot visit Senegal or Gambia is obvious. For this reason, return visits represent a change in status for many immigrants who were in irregular status as a result of arriving in Spain without authorization or overstaying their visas. Shortly after obtaining residency and work permits, immigrants make a return visit. A trend that has been discerned among single immigrant men is that they usually marry on their first return trip and leave their new wives behind when they go back to Spain. However, those who cannot afford or are unable to travel to Senegal or Gambia can still marry since the presence of the groom and even the bride is not necessary as parents and relatives arrange the marriage. Because many Senegambian men migrate to Spain when they are single—one of the reasons they migrate is to earn a livelihood to support a family—marriage symbolizes a level of success in Spain.

With marriage, the pattern diverges into two directions depending on whether or not the wives remain in Senegal or Gambia or come to Spain through family reunification. For a spouse to come through family reunification, applicants must have residency for at least one year, sufficient financial resources to support the reunited family member, and adequate housing (Aguelo Navarro 2003). Due to these requirements, immigrants must have a minimum of economic stability in Spain to bring their spouses, which may take some time to achieve. While their wives are in Senegal or Gambia, Senegambian men will visit Africa at least once a year if

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7 Many wedding occur with the groom in absentia. While I was living with the Senegalese family, Abdoulaye threw a small wedding party for his friend who recently had gotten married.
they can afford the trip. However, once their wives arrive in Spain, visits to Africa are curtailed for a period of time as they establish their families in Spain.

Senegambian men with wives in Senegal or Gambia make more trips than single men and married men whose wives are in Spain. Abdoulaye, for example, received his residency and work permit in 1998, the year he arrived, and returned to Senegal in 2000 to marry. He stayed for over two months on his first trip. He returned nine months later for the birth of his daughter. His wife came to Spain in 2002. Abdoulaye has not returned to Senegal since his wife’s arrival. In comparison to Abdoulaye, Mamadou arrived in Spain in 1999 and obtained his papers the same year. He waited four years before traveling to Senegal to marry in 2003. This was his only trip to Senegal. Although Mamadou has only visited Senegal once, he has been involved in constructing a house in Dakar that he plans to rent. The difference between the cases of Abdoulaye and Mamadou is the allocation of their limited resources. Most immigrants do not have sufficient resources for both marriage and investments (discussed below). As one informant explained, those who marry delay investments, and those who invest delay marriage.

Senegambian men who have wives in Senegal or Gambia and who a stable income usually visit more often than those who have their wives in Spain. The wife of Lamine is still in Senegal. Lamine makes frequent trips to Senegal to visit her. His first trip to Senegal was in 1998 to obtain a visa as part of the regularization of his status, which was four years after he arrived in Spain. Lamine can afford to visit his wife in Senegal several times a year when he has time off from work.

I just left Senegal. In July, I went to Senegal and stayed for three weeks. Next month, if God helps me, I want to go. I want to bring my wife but until now she hasn’t received a visa. [How many times do you travel to Senegal in a year?] Well, it depends on work. Before, where I was working, each year you had a month of vacation. With this company, you work three months and then you have twenty-four days off. So for this twenty-four days, I will try to go to my family.
The recent trips that Lamine has made also relate to his wife’s visa application. Lamine has applied several times for a visa without success. Lamine’s case illustrates that affordability is not the only factor involved in traveling to Africa. The ability to take time off from work is also an issue. Demba also makes frequent trips to Gambia, where his wife and children live. Demba has been living in Spain for 19 years and has two houses in Serekunda. Demba visits his family in Gambia every eight months. He explains

I want to be with my family. But at this moment there is no way. I can’t be here for a year or more away from them. If I work a little, eight or nine months, and if I have the ticket and a little money, I’m gone. I stay there for three or four months. I can’t be away from them for so much time, two years, a year and some, without returning. To only send money is not worth anything. You also have to be there, to be with your family a little.

As described in chapter five, Demba is a subcontractor for construction projects. He can afford the cost of frequent trips to Gambia and the time off. Both Lamine and Demba are economically successful immigrants. Moreover, as one informant observed, having one’s family in Senegal or Gambia is cheaper than bringing them to Spain in terms of expenses. Time will tell if Lamine’s visits to Senegal will diminish after his wife finally arrives in Spain.

The importance of income for frequency of visits to Senegal or Gambia is demonstrated in a comparison of Malick with Lamine and Demba. Malick arrived in Spain in 1998 and received his work permit in 1999. Although Malick’s wife and four children are in Senegal, Malick has only visited Senegal once in the six years since he has obtained his papers. His visit occurred in 2002. Unlike Demba and Lamine, Malick has not had steady work in Spain. He is a bricklayer and has been on a series of temporary contracts. Malick simply cannot afford to visit his family in Senegal because he has not been able to secure permanent employment.

The majority of Senegambian women do not returned as often as men, with the exception of those who migrate independently of family reunification. For example, because Fatou migrated to support her children, her transnational activities parallel those of Senegambian men.
Fatou has been living in Spain for four years and has traveled to Senegal for extended periods, twice in the three years that she has had her work permit. Whereas the children of Senegambian men left behind are in the care of their wives or mothers, Fatou’s four children are on their own. Her oldest daughter who is twenty years old cares for the younger children. Fatou’s situation is more urgent, as she needs to be in Senegal for her children. According to Fatou,

The first time, I stayed there for four months. [That’s a long time.] But it’s short for me. There are people who like to migrate here, but if I had the means to maintain my family, I would be with my kids. [How old is the youngest?] The youngest is eight years old now. When I call her on the phone, she asks me, “Mama are you coming tomorrow? When are you coming?” I tell her, “Look, I don’t have any money.” She tells me, “Mama, it’s the same. I need you here with me.” If I had something I would stay there. I don’t like to migrate.

Fatou does not want to be away from her children, but she has no means of providing for them in Senegal. Because Fatou has had seasonal work in hotels, she has been able to travel to Senegal during the off-season. Moreover, Fatou has been renting rooms and has minimized her expenses to provide for her children in Senegal and for her trips home.

Fatou’s case however is an exception. Most Senegambian women do not travel to Africa their first few years in Spain. After Senegambian wives come to join their husbands in Spain, the transnational practices of the young couples, specifically the activities of the husbands, decline as resources are concentrated on the demands of their families, primarily their children. Awa, a 35-year-old Gambian woman who has been living in Spain for nineteen years, explains an eleven-year period where she did not visit Gambia in terms of her financial obligation to her children in Spain:

It’s been two years since I’ve been. Before that I went every year. [When did you start visiting? The first time you made a trip? Do you remember the year?] The year was 96. [So you didn’t visit for over ten years?] At the time, the children were small, and we weren’t well financially because of the children. I worked and spent all my money on the children and sent a little to my family. And they [employers] didn’t pay well before the euro.
On their income, Awa and her husband could not afford to provide for their two children and carry out costly transnational activities such as visiting Gambia. In terms of transnational activities, she could only afford to send “a little” to her family. Awa spent eleven years in Spain before making her first visit to Gambia. Her oldest child was ten years old when she made her first trip. As in the case of Awa, in general when their children grow up, the transnational activities of immigrants increase as they are able to direct resources to projects in Africa, especially for retirement. Nineteen years after arriving in Mataró as a new wife, Awa’s husband has begun construction on the land he owns in Gambia, which is the reason for her next trip. Her oldest child is now eighteen years of age and works to support himself.

A practice among young couples that cannot afford to have the wife unemployed in Spain and to provide for young children in Spain is to send the wife and children to Senegal or Gambia. Two years after Khady arrived in Spain, her husband left his job on a farm where he had worked for seven years because the pay was too low to support his family. However, he had a difficult time finding work, so he sent Khady to Gambia where she stayed for two years with their two young children. While Khady was away her husband trained to be a welder and has spent most of his working years in this field. The return of Khady and her children to Gambia for two years recalls Potts (1997) analysis of the reliance of urban residents in Africa on rural ties to enable them to weather an economic crisis. Lambert (1994) also observes that Jola men in Dakar send their wives and children back to their villages in Casamance when they encounter financial difficulties in the city.

The different scenarios on return visits at the household level illustrate how trips signify status in Spain. Immigrants who return to visit have at least regular immigration status. The

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8 Khady was pregnant with her second child when she left for Gambia.
frequency of visits indicates occupational status. Improved occupational status into skilled
collection or factory jobs and self-employment provides the income and time need to take
trips. Occupational status in Spain accounts for the differences in the frequency of visits between
immigrants who have similar familial commitments in Senegal or Gambia. Frequency of visits is
also a sign of the life course for immigrants who are reunited with their families in Spain. With
families in Senegal or Gambia, return trips are much more frequent. When families are reunited
and children are young, visits decline. After children are grown and immigrants begin to arrange
for retirement, visits increase in frequency.

**Public Transnationalism**

Associative membership defines the collective Senegambian experience in Spain. The
large majority of Senegambian immigrants in Mataró participate in some type of association.
Respondents who were active in organizational life are usually involved in several associations.
These associations are based on nationality, ethnicity, religion, hometown or village, and gender.
Membership in different organizations shows how the needs, interests and identities of
immigrants overlap. Typically the ethnic group that comprises the majority of the members
defines the character of an association although the function of the organization is not ethnic.
Cheikh, for instance, is a Wolof from Senegal and does not belong to any associations. He
explains his lack of participation to the small number of Wolof in Mataró: “Most associations are
ethnic. We are not of the same ethnicity. They speak another language that I don’t understand.
Of my ethnicity, there aren’t many here.” As Cheikh’s explanation alludes to, Mandinka and Jola
comprise the majority ethnic groups in Mataró. Accordingly, associations in Mataró tend to be
marked by Mandinka and Jola cultural practices, such as the language in which meetings are
conducted. In addition to the ethnic composition of associations in Mataró, associational life is
gendered as with most social and economic activities in West Africa. Senegambian men and
women have their own associations; however, wives and children do receive benefits from the membership of their husbands and parents in an organization.

Mutual-aid associations are well established among Senegambians in Mataró and Catalonia. The largest and oldest mutual-aid association is the multi-ethnic organization Jama Kafo, which has branches across Catalonia. Jama Kafo began as an insurance and burial association to return the bodies of immigrants who had died in Spain to Senegal or Gambia. Jama Kafo’s beginnings as a burial association parallel the formation of Jola migrant organizations in Dakar (Lambert 1994, 2002; Reboussin 1995). The association of Jola migrant women in Dakar, Boutem, was established when a maid died in the city (Reboussin 1995:99-103). A second group of Jola migrants from the Boulouf region of the Casamance formed an association in Dakar to arrange the funerals of migrants and to organize social events in the city (Lambert 1994:92-94; 2002:99). The formation of Jama Kafo as a burial association follows the pattern established by urban migrants in Dakar. Idrissa’s description of the association sums up its objectives for assisting Senegambian immigrants in Spain.

You can die at any time and when you die here, the people have to take your body back to your country. So I participate. If I die, they will carry me back. Each month I pay a little. [What is the name of this association?] It is called Jama Kafo. They are all immigrants. It helps to be a member because carrying a body back to Senegal is expensive. It can be over a million pesetas [10,000 euros]. For a person to save that after earning their living is very difficult. So they formed the association. More than a hundred people meet each month and contribute five euros or ten euros. If you are lucky, you won’t die here.

While Jama Kafo offers other types of support to its members, most of the respondents who are members of the association mention burial assistance when asked about the services the organization provides. Several respondents who are not members of Jama Kafo explain that they are members of another association, which is an actual insurance company. They have purchased

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9 Kafo means a group or association.
a burial policy from an actual insurance company. Besides the return of bodies to Senegal and Gambia for burial, Jama Kafo does not carry out any projects in Africa. The purpose of the organization is to assist immigrants in Spain. According to Kaplan, mutual-aid organizations such as Jama Kafo support recent arrivals by providing information about work and resident permits, work contracts, and family reunification and helping immigrants fill out applications (1998:127-128). Jama Kafo also assists immigrants file complaints of racism in the work place and housing.¹⁰ The female equivalent of Jama Kafo is Musu Kafo. The organization, however, is not a burial association but a support network for women. Musu Kafo assists first time mothers, and members come together to celebrate rituals such as baptisms (Kaplan 1998:128). The disparate objectives of Musa Kafo and Jama Kafo demonstrate the distinct migration experiences of Senegambian men and women in Mataró.¹¹

Transnational associations include formal organizations recognized by the municipality and regional governments. Associació Planeta (Association Planet) is a popular organization among Senegalese immigrants that also has Catalan members. Planeta is a developmental association that carries out projects in Senegal. Idrissa describes the goals of Planeta below:

Planeta helps the people in my town in Senegal. [Does Planeta help immigrants in Mataró?] No, it does not function to help people here…. In Senegal, there are places where the land is good, but there is no water to cultivate. Farmers do not have transportation to go and sell their produce. So Planeta helps them…. And here the Catalans are good people. They help the association. They bought a truck and sent it to Senegal. When the people farm, they can harvest the produce and take it to market.

As Idrissa’s description indicates, the main objective of Planeta is to support economic development in rural areas, specifically the Casamance region. The projects that Planeta carries out in Senegal do not diverge from the activities of hometown and village associations, which are

¹⁰ Personal communication to author by an executive member of Jama Kafo.

¹¹ Female respondents also participate in rotating-saving associations. The organization of the rotating-saving associations do not have a transnational dimension as observed in Kane’s study (2001).
discussed below. During fieldwork, Planeta collaborated on a roundtable with two other developmental organizations, *ANAFA Los Amigos de Ziguinchor* (The Friends of Ziguinchor) and *Amic ep Senegal Mataró* (Friend of Senegal Mataró). ANAFA is an NGO that implements development projects in south and southwestern Senegal. Its staff consists of both Senegalese immigrants and Catalans/Spaniards. Amic is an organization that promotes exchanges between students in Catalonia and Senegal. Its members are largely Catalan/Spanish educators. None of the respondents in this study participated in these two organizations.

In addition to developmental groups such as Planeta, immigrants are also involved in hometown and village associations. Hometown and village associations are popular among respondents in this study. These associations are not as formally organized as Planeta. Most are not officially recognized by the municipal and regional governments. In comparison to Jama Kafo, hometown associations help immigrants in Spain as well as support hometown development. Lamine’s description of the organization that he belongs to typifies the local and transnational objectives of hometown associations.

Our association is called Francounda, like our town. We are the first from this part. We say the Association of Francounda…. If I’m not working, they will help me each month and give me 120 euros. If my wife has a child, they will give me 220 euros to help me…. Yes, we do for our town. [What do you do?] We help to provide school chairs, to build another school, to help the people of the town. We send money to build more schools there. The government builds a school and the town builds another. We send money to help them do this.

The hometown association of Francounda has a dual role in assisting immigrants through difficulties in Spain and sponsoring school construction in Senegal. The Association of Francounda is emblematic of the Thilogne Association Développement in France (Kane 2002). The Thilogne association, which is comprised of Haal Pulaar immigrants, assists in the repatriation of deceased members, provide financial support to their widows and children, and offer aid to injured members (Kane 2002:252). At the same time, the association sponsors
projects related to education, healthcare services and water supply in the village of Thilogne (Kane 2002:246-249). Hometown or village associations function as both a mutual aid and development organization.

While the efforts of organizations such as Planeta and Francounda have a transnational reach, most of the immigrants participating do not necessarily take part in the transnational implementation of the associations’ activities. Engagement in transnational activities varies among the membership of these organizations. The implement the cross-border projects requires that executive members engage in a higher degree of transnationalism than general members. The expansion of a hometown association into a number of branches can add an additional dimension of transnationalism as resources and information flows between the branches (Kane 2002). The Thilogne association, for example, has branches in different European, North American and African countries, whereas, the Francounda association has only one branch located in Spain. The comparison between the Thilogne and Francounda associations indicate that although the scope of hometown associations is transnational, variations in participation in cross-border activities exist between and within these organizations.

**Economic Transnationalism**

The three economic transnational activities examined in this section are land purchase, home construction and business ventures. Immigrants who eventually want to return to Senegal or Gambia make investments in their country of origin. The primary investments are in land and home construction, two activities that fall under economic and private transnationalism as both take place at the household level and are income-generating projects. More often immigrants have purchased land, but have not started construction on a house. The house may be for personal use or investment purposes. The location of the house gives an idea of the goals of the owner. The home construction project of Mamadou is an example of how home construction can
fulfill both household requirements and generate income. Mamadou’s family lives in the
Casamance region in Senegal but he has brought land in Dakar and is in the process of building a
house in the city. Before migrating to Spain, Mamadou had never lived in Dakar. He spent all his
youth in the Casamance region farming and fishing. Mamadou explains his decision to build a
house in Dakar and not his village in terms of an investment.

[Why aren’t you building a house in your town? Why Dakar?] Because nothing happens in
the village. The house is for the future, a business. If I have a house, I can rent it, or many
things. But in my village, if I build it there, no one will rent it. But I have the possibility of
building in the village. In the village it’s easy to build a house. But in Dakar it’s not.

For Mamadou, Dakar represents economic possibilities that are not available in his village in
Casamance. Mamadou’s place in the capital and the village parallels Buggenhagen’s observation
that Murid migrants try to build homes in two “strategic” locations in the Murid religious and
trading network, Dakar and Touba, the holy city of the Muridiyya (2009:197). According to
Buggenhagen, migrants build homes as a sign of wealth and with the intention of residing in
them when they retire (2001:373-376). By constructing a house in Dakar, Mamadou
establishes himself in the capital. At the same time, he retains his membership in the village
where he has rights to familial land. Mamadou’s transnational investments are in Dakar and in
the village where his family and wife reside.

Investments such as home construction are tied not only to status in and plans for return to
the country of origin as Buggenhagen suggests, but also are related to the economic
circumstances in which immigrants find themselves in the host country. For example, Mamadou
is able to begin construction on his house in Dakar because he has not invested in Spain.
Mamadou rents a room from Abdoulaye, which allows him to save money for projects in
Senegal. Mamadou has been in Spain for five years and does not have any intentions of buying a
house in Spain or bringing his wife to Spain in the near future. In comparison, Lamine bought an
apartment with his brother in Mataró with the intention of bringing his wife to Spain. Lamine’s investment in Spain has delayed his intended projects in Senegal. Whereas Mamadou’s house is under construction, Lamine has purchased land but has not begun construction.

I have land. For the moment I have not built the house. I would like to build the house this year, if God helps me. I want to sell this flat. I have a project to sell this flat. This flat, we bought it in 99, at the time it was valued at 11 million pesetas [110,000 euros]. We bought it for 11 million at four percent. Now this flat is worth more than 25 million [250,000 euros]. So I want to try to sell this flat to get something to build my house in Dakar. If I have a profit of five million pesetas [50,000 euros] or three million [30,000 euros], I can build my house in Senegal. But if I only get two million, I will get another flat.

The construction of Lamine house in Senegal depends on his success in selling his flat in Spain. For Lamine, investments in Spain translate into investments in Senegal. However, if the sale of Lamine’s flat is not as profitable as he hopes, then his investment will go into another flat in Spain. The cases of Lamine and Mamadou show how investments in Senegal are tied to choices made in Spain.

Both Mamadou and Lamine do not mention their wives in their investment projects. In fact, Senegambian husbands and wives do not necessarily cooperate in investments in Africa largely because of descent rules where the husband’s property belongs to his patrilineal family and not to his wife, especially if the wife is not making any financial contributions. Fatima, a Senegalese woman who came to Spain through family reunification and has been in Spain for three years, aspires to build her own house although her husband has constructed one in their hometown of Kédougou. Fatima explains that because her husband collaborated with his brother to build the house, it belongs to her husband and his family. Fatima’s case raises questions of the consequence of inheritance and descent rules on the transnational practices of men and women that have not been taken into account in transnational studies. Because of patrilineal customs,

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12 With the collapse of the Spanish real estate market and the worldwide financial crisis, Lamine has been unable to sell his apartment in Mataró.
women may be deterred from investing with their husbands in projects in Africa. Souleymane’s collaboration with his mother and not his wife in managing his rental property in Gambia is another example of such cultural practices. Souleymane built a multi-unit house in Brikama. His mother, the only other family member aware of Souleymane’s investment, manages the house.

Now I have a business. [What kind of business?] I bought a house that I prepared well and brought in people. Every month they pay rent. [Who take care of this house for you?] My mother. [Does you family use the money from the rent or does your mother send you the money?] This money I am saving for myself. But the money is also for family emergencies. My mother has the account, not my wife, not my father. [Why your mother?] To tell you the truth, I trust my mother more than my father…. If my family tells me that they have some problem and need money. I call my mother on the phone and tell her to take out the amount needed. I then tell my family that I sent the money and that my mother has it. My mother withdraws the money. She doesn’t tell anyone that the money is from the house. It’s between her and me.

Souleymane’s arrangement with his mother and not his wife shows how Senegambian men cooperate with their family members and not with their wives in investment projects in Africa. Such familial cooperation extends to business ventures beyond home construction. Samba opened two locutorios (internet and telephone centers) in Senegal.13 But for the past two years the locutorios have been shuttered as a result of his brother’s mismanagement. Samba could not control the “coming and going of the money” or pay the invoices. However, Samba’s wife who lives in Senegal was not involved in his business venture although she has computer skills, demonstrated by the fact that she communicates with Samba through the Internet. These examples are reminders that in the African case, marriage is not always a cooperative union and that kinship ties take precedence over marital bonds, which impacts the transnational practices of couples.

Although all the respondents described above are of the Mandinka ethnic group, the strength of patrilineal ties over marital bonds applies to the other ethnic groups in Senegal and

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13 Samba is the only respondent in the study who at one point in time owned a business in the country of origin.
Gambia. Among the Jola, for example, Lambert observes that while patrilineal ties are considered unbreakable, marital unions are viewed as unstable (2002:25). In addition to the strength of patrilineal ties, husbands and wives generally have distinct responsibilities for the maintenance of the household and usually maintain their finances independently. In the case of the Jola, husbands and wives keep and manage the money they earn separately (Lambert 1994:187). Moreover, husbands and wives typically are unaware of each other’s income (Reboussin 1995:150). The separation of income is also observed among the Serer ethnic group. Serer husbands and wives usually do not pool their money; instead, each has specific obligations to the household (Gadio and Rakowski 1995: 433). The economic transnational arrangements described in this section demonstrate that the practice of separate finances between husbands and wives and the precedence of patrilineal ties over marital bonds continue in the transnational projects of Senegambian men and women in Spain.

Differences between Men and Women’s Transnational Activities

The transnational activities of Senegambian men and women differ significantly with women showing much less engagement than men. Disparities between the economic integration of Senegambian men and women partially account for variations in their involvement in transnational activities. As discussed in chapter five, most Senegambian women come through family reunification and are not granted work authorization. Those who seek employment are at a disadvantage in the Spanish labor market, where employers favor Latin American women for domestic and childcare work. With no or few employment possibilities, Senegambian women are unable to access the monetary resources needed to support transnational practices. In addition to variations in the pattern of integration between Senegambian men and women, cultural factors contribute to differences in their transnational practices. A summary of the cultural factors that
engender differences between the transnational practices of Senegambian men and women is presented in this section.

There are three cultural traditions and practices that contribute to differences in Senegambian men and women’s involvement in the transnational activities. As described above, cultural practices that maintain the separation of finances between husbands and wives may deter spouses from collaborating on transnational projects. Kinship ideologies and patrilineal traditions may also discourage spouses from cooperating on transnational projects in Senegal or Gambia. Under inheritance customs, joint transnational investments in houses and land may fall under the control of the husband’s family upon his death. Besides patrilineal customs, the practice of polygyny may dissuade women in such marriages from engagement in transnational activities, particularly traveling to Senegal or Gambia. A common practice is to have the first wife who has returned from Spain to remain in Senegal or Gambia and have the second wife travel to Spain on the residency permit of the first wife. As Kaplan (1998) and Bledsoe et al. (2007) point out, polygyny is common among rural Gambians and Senegalese and is practiced in Spain although illegal. In Kaplan’s study of 121 Senegambian immigrants in Girona, 27 percent of the married men had two wives (1998:100). Kaplan describes a strategy where the first wife returns to Gambia with her children and then the second wife comes to Spain (1998:102). Bledsoe et al. (2007) attribute high fertility rates among Gambian women to the circulation of co-wives and their children between Spain and Gambia to evade Spanish prohibition on polygyny (2007:401). Because the residency permit is exchanged among the co-wives, second and third wives become “invisible” in Spain (Bledsoe et al. 2007).14 The observations that Kaplan (1998) and Bledsoe et al. (2007) make correspond with concerns that several Senegambian female respondents raise in

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14 Among Senegalese, Malians and Mauritanians in France, Diouf explains that co-wives share the identity of the wife who is legally in the country, which is how two births for one woman can be recorded for one year (2002:154).
this study. Respondents mention the unwillingness of Senegambian wives to go “on vacation” to Senegal or Gambia because husbands or their families may force them to remain behind in order for co-wives to travel to Spain. Although none of the female respondents in this study admit to being in polygynous marriages, several describe such situations. Female respondents also note that women may not know that their husbands have taken another wife. A female respondent describes that in the past men would take advantage of women, but now women have become lista (wise) and will go to the Spanish embassy in Dakar for assistance. One story that commonly circulates is of a woman who was abandoned in Gambia with her children when her husband took a second wife. The Spanish embassy paid the airfare for her and her children to return to Spain. The woman and her children were away for over a year. These stories show that not all Senegambian women agree to the circulation of co-wives between Spain and Senegal or Gambia and that women draw on their roles as mothers to secure their rights and to protect their children’s rights and opportunities in Spain. As transnational practices enables Senegambian men to evade Spanish law in order to have multiple wives, women also circumvent genital cutting prohibitions in Spain by taking their daughters to Senegal or Gambia for the procedure. Parents take their daughters on “vacation” to have them cut. However, since 2005, parents can be prosecuted for cutting done outside of Spain with six to twelve years of incarceration (García 2008). Parents can also lose custody of their daughters if authorities suspect a risk. A network of pediatricians, schoolteachers, and social workers are required to report any suspicions to the police. The cultural practices described in this section show how particular customs can encourage or discourage transnationalism depending on goals of the individual.

Researchers have suggested that men's transnational participation is greater than women's because they have a stronger orientation to the community of origin as a result of the loss of
status they experience in the host country (Itzigsohn and Giorguli-Saucedo 2005). Others have argued that women are less likely to orientate themselves to the communities of origin because of the gains made in the host country (Itzigsohn and Giorguli-Saucedo 2005; Pessar 1986, 1999). The Senegambian experience in Spain begs a reexamination of assumptions that differences in transnational behaviors between immigrant men and women is an outcome of the loss of status men experience and the gains women achieve in migration to post-industrial countries. Along with the significance of economic and social integration, the Senegambian case underscores the role of kinship ideologies and customs in accounting for variations in the transnational practices of immigrant men and women. Mahler and Pessar (2006) observe that “gendered kinship ideologies, relations, and practices appear to assume a role in migration processes, although these often go unexamined” (2006:35). The Senegambian case shows how cultural practices, such as marriage arrangements, and kinship customs can influence the types of transnational activities Senegambian men and women practice.

**Transnational Practices and Economic Integration in Mataró**

The ethnographic analysis in the previous sections provides the social and economic aspects of the transnational activities of Senegambian immigrants in Spain. This section analyzes the relationship between economic integration, defined by occupational and immigration status, and participation in transnational activities. Each of the cases presented represent different groupings of immigration status, employment and transnational activities. Figure 6-3 lists the various combinations of the different categories and the relationship between them. The categories of employment are ranked according to the occupational scale represented in Figure 5-2. The order of employment status in Figure 6-3 depicts the progression of occupational advancement in the labor market in relation to immigration status. Unskilled agricultural work at the bottom of the figure is the lowest rung of the occupational ladder and self-employment at the
top of the figure is the highest rung. Each of the respondents described in this section represents a specific combination of employment, immigration status and transnational activities, or case study. Occupational and immigration status, or economic integration, is associated with specific transnational activities. The transnational activities examined are remittances, return visits, associational membership, land purchase, home construction, and business ventures. These activities encompass the private level of the household, the public domain of associational membership, and economic investments. As Figure 6-3 indicates, the transnational activities listed increase in magnitude from the bottom to the top of the chart. The transnational score is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Migration Status</th>
<th>Transnational Activities</th>
<th>Scale of Integration and Transnationalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employment (highest income)</td>
<td>Work Permit, Permanent Resident, Citizen</td>
<td>Remittances, Visits, Association Membership, Family Reunification, Land, Home Construction, Business Ventures</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Construction and Factory Employment (permanent contracts and higher wages)</td>
<td>Work Permit, Permanent Resident</td>
<td>Family Reunification, Land, Home Construction, Business Ventures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less-Skilled Construction, Service and Factory Employment (temporary and permanent contracts and higher wages)</td>
<td>Work Permit</td>
<td>Remittances, Visits, Association Membership, Family Reunification, Land, Home Construction</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irregular Status</td>
<td>Remittances, Association Membership, Land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled Agricultural Work (seasonal and lowest wages)</td>
<td>Work Permit</td>
<td>Remittances, Association Membership</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Irregular Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6-3. Employment, migration status and transnational activities.

based on involvement in the transnational activities listed and consists of an ordinal index of low, medium, and high. The transnational score is compared with two indicators of economic integration, immigration status and employment. The integration score is also ranked according
to low, medium, and high. In addition length of residence in Spain, marital status and location of spouse and children are included in the discussion. As described in chapter five, length of residence is a significant variable associated with employment and immigration status. Because the large majority of Senegambian female respondents are not active in the labor market, the analysis of the relationship between participation in transnational activities and occupational and immigration status centers on Senegambian men in Mataró.

**Case I: Irregular status and agricultural employment.** Aliou, who is a 27-year-old Jola from Gambia, has been in Spain for two years and does not have a residency or work permit. He works intermittently in agriculture in what he calls the “black economy.” His transnational activities are limited. He sends remittances monthly to his mother who cares for his two children. He has land in Gambia that he owned before migrating to Spain. Aliou pays a migrant farmer in Gambia to plant vegetables on his land during the rainy season. The arrangement is not a business venture, but a means for Aliou to retain land in his village. If the land is not in use, the village leaders will reallocate the land. Because Aliou’s immigration status is irregular, he has not traveled to Gambia since arriving in Spain. Aliou is very active in the different associations in Mataró. He is in both the Jola and Mandinka associations although he is a Jola. Both associations are mutual-aid organizations that provide insurance for their members. While both associations pay travel expenses to repatriate their members to Africa in cases of illness or death, neither supports projects in Senegal or Gambia. Aliou score is low on the transnational index. His transnational practices primarily consist of regularly sending remittances. None of the associations to which he belongs carry out transnational projects. Aliou’s economic integration in Spain is also low. He does not have regular status and works unlawfully in the informal agricultural sector, which is the lowest rung of the occupational scale.
Case II: Work permit and agricultural work. Oumar, a 26-year-old Jola from Gambia, has been in Europe for two years. After arriving in Spain on a work contract, he went to Switzerland and worked in a restaurant for a year and a half. Fearing that he would be deported if Swiss authorities discovered him, Oumar returned to Spain where he had a work permit. He worked for six months in a strawberry field. Oumar has been unemployed for a month as his job picking strawberries ended with the season. He has signed up with an employment agency, which has contracted him for temporary jobs. Oumar sends remittances to his family every month. Although he has been to Switzerland and has a work permit for Spain, Oumar has not visited Gambia since coming to Europe. He does not belong to any associations. With respect to property in Gambia, Oumar has his own land, which his brother farms. Oumar has no immediate plans to build on the land. Like Aliou, Oumar’s transnational practices largely consist of sending remittances to his family. Although he has a work permit, Oumar’s is engaged in the same types of jobs as Aliou. Oumar has a score of low on the index of transnational practices. His score for economic integration is low because he is engaged in seasonal agricultural work similar to immigrants who do not have a work permit.

Case III: Irregular status and less-skilled work. Idrissa, a 33-year-old Mandinka from Senegalese, has been living in Spain for four years. He does not have a work permit and installs automatic hand driers in public bathrooms. Like Moustapha and Aliou, Idrissa works on a daily basis. Before installing hand driers, Idrissa worked in a plant nursery for several months. Idrissa sends remittances when he can after paying his rent and other expenses. In addition to sending remittances, Idrissa belongs to several associations, two of which undertake charities in Senegal. He is a member of Planeta, which has several projects in Senegal. Planeta has a mixed

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15 A Spanish work permit does not entitle immigrants to work in other EU member states or European countries. However, Spanish nationality enables immigrants to move within EU member states and work.
membership of Senegalese and Catalonians. The second organization is an Islamic charity that runs an orphanage is Senegal. The head of the organization is in Senegal. Besides these two organizations, Idrissa belongs to Jama Kafo, which is a mutual-aid organization that services the needs of immigrants in Spain. Although Idrissa is in a similar situation with respect to his irregular status as Aliou, his transnational activities are more developed. He is engaged in both private and public activities. His transnational score is low high, on the higher end of the low scale, and his integration score is low. While Idrissa is involved in more skilled work at a higher pay compared to Aliou and Oumar, he is still a day labor without a contract.

**Case IV: Work permit and temporary employment.** Mamadou, a 28-year-old Mandinka from Senegal, has been in Spain for five years and has a residency and work permit, which he received the year he arrived in Spain. Mamadou has held various jobs, a total of five since arriving in Spain. He first worked in a factory making bags and purses for four months. After his contract ended, Mamadou worked in a poultry plant where he killed chickens. He left the plant after six months because he did not like the work. He then worked casting iron. After which he worked mounting beams on construction projects, which he did for nine months. He left for vacation to Senegal, and when he returned was relieved from the job. Mamadou found work in a plant nursery for six months before landing a second construction job, which he has held for five months. Although Mamadou has held a series of temporary employment that range in skill level, he works contractual jobs in the formal sector. His economic integration score is medium. Mamadou has work and residency permits and is engaged in the formal sector.

In comparison to the previous cases described above, Mamadou’s transnational practices are more developed and involve all three categories of transnational activities (private, public and economic). He sends remittances to his elderly mother every two months and to his wife
every month. Since arriving in Spain, Mamadou has bought land in Dakar and is in the process of building a house for investment purposes. He has only traveled to Senegal once, four years after arriving in Spain. Mamadou is in several associations. He is involved in Planeta as well as a hometown association that carries out projects in Senegal. While Mamadou is involved in all three categories of transnational practices, his mobility has been limited. He has only traveled to Senegal once. His transnational score is medium high, on the higher end of the medium scale. There is much potential for Mamadou’s transnational practices to increase, especially his mobility between Spain and Senegal, because his family still lives in the Casamance and he is building a rental house in Dakar.

**Case V: Work permit and skilled construction employment.** Abdoulaye, a 28-year-old Mandinka from Senegal, has been in Spain for six years. He started working in the fields for one month before a friend from Senegal helped him get a job as a fitter with a construction company. Abdoulaye has been working for the same construction company for five years and has a permanent contract. Abdoulaye has had his residency and work permit since 1998, which he was granted before leaving the Red Cross camp where he stayed for about a month when he arrived. Compared to the pervious cases described above, owns his apartment and is reunited with his wife and children. Abdoulaye’s wife is not employed. To earn extra money, she braids hair. Abdoulaye has two boarders living with him and his family to make ends meet. His integration score is medium high. He has a skilled construction job in the formal sector and has a work permit although he struggles financially to meet the needs of his young family in Spain.

Abdoulaye’s transnational practices are limited to the household level. He does not have any economic investments in Senegal or belong to an association. Abdoulaye has visited Senegal twice since arriving in Spain. The first visit was in 2000 to marry his wife and visit his family in
Dakar. He spent two and a half months in Senegal on his first trip. Nine months later, he visited Senegal when his daughter was born. Abdoulaye’s wife arrived in Spain in 2003 and his daughter arrived in 2004. He has two young children with his wife. Abdoulaye sends money every month to Senegal to his family and to his wife’s family. According to Abdoulaye, both families depend on the remittances to subsist. Abdoulaye explains that he and his wife have to organize ourselves. Look at how things are going. How are we going to pay the flat, to live, to buy food, everything? Whatever we have, we send because if we don’t send, they won’t eat.

Abdoulaye does not have any projects in Senegal and does not own land. He does not belong to any associations in Mataró. With the arrival of his wife and daughter to Spain and the birth of his second daughter, Abdoulaye’s transnational practices have declined. He has not visited Senegal since the arrival of his wife. He only sends remittances to his father and mother-in-law—his wife’s father is dead. Abdoulaye’s transnational score is a medium low because it is limited to the private realm of the household. His mobility is also limited. He has only traveled to Senegal twice in the six years that he has resided in Spain. In addition, family reunification is does not support transnational practices for two reasons. First, the requirements for family reunification reinforce the economic integration of immigrants in Spain. Applicants must have sufficient income to support reunited family members and must have adequate accommodations to house them. Second, as Abdoulaye’s case illustrate, when spouses and children are reunited, resources are directed to the immediate needs of the family in Spain.

**Case VI: Permanent resident and entrepreneur.** Demba, a 35-year-old Serahule from Gambia, has been residing in Spain since 1985 and is a permanent resident. As described above, Demba is a certified mason and works as a subcontractor. Demba returned to masonry work after losing his grocery store in Zaragoza to mismanagement, which he owned for seven years. Demba’s economic integration score is high. He is a permanent resident and remains an
entrepreneur although his first business venture failed. With regards to participation in transnational activities, Demba is involved in all three domains, private, public and economic. Demba is one of the most mobile respondents in the study. He returns to Gambia every eight to nine months and stays for three to four months. Demba has built two houses in Serekunda although he is from Basse. His wife and children live in the first house and he rents out the second house, which his younger brother manages. He sends remittances to his wife, who is completely dependent on him, every month and to his father every four to five months. Because Demba has several brothers in Europe, he and his siblings take turns sending money to his father. Demba has just brought a flat in Mataró with the intention of bringing his wife and children to Spain. He explains that he wants to bring his children to Spain before they reach the age of eighteen, which is the cut-off age for family reunification. Because he wanted his children to attend school in Gambia and learn “good” English, he had decided to delay their entry into Spain. Demba hopes to retire and return to Gambia in fifteen years and have his children support him in the same manner that he and his sibling cooperate to maintain his father. Demba belongs to a mutual-aid organization in Zaragoza and a religious group based in Gambia that operates different charities. Because of the magnitude of his transnational activities, Demba’s transnational score is high.

Case VII: Permanent resident and temporary employment. Moussa, a 47-year-old Balanta from Gambia, has been living in Spain for 22 years. When Moussa first arrived in Spain in 1983, he worked on a farm for seven years. When his wife and child joined him in 1988, Spain did not have an official family reunification policy. With the arrival of his family, Moussa decided to leave agricultural work because he could not afford to maintain his family on the wages he received. He sent his wife and child back to Gambia for two years while he trained to
be a welder. Moussa has worked as a welder for different construction companies. After two work injuries, Moussa has abandoned welding for work as a bricklayer, which provides less income. However, he has not been able to find permanent employment as a bricklayer. Moussa is currently unemployed and collecting unemployment compensation. His economic integration score is medium. Although Moussa has experienced occupational improvement from agricultural work to skilled employment in construction, recent injuries have led to an occupational decline. Bricklaying is entry-level job in construction. At the same time, because Moussa has worked in the formal sector, he has access to unemployment and injury compensation.

Moussa’s transnational activities remain at the household level. His transnational activities consist of sending remittances every month to either his relatives or his wife’s family, about 100 euros. Moussa’s transnational mobility has been particularly limited. In the 22 years that Moussa has been in Spain, he has only been to Gambia four times. He is a member of Jama Kafo, but does not belong to any other association. Besides his family land in his village, Moussa does not have any projects in Gambia. Moussa’s transnational score is low. His low score reflects his attention to needs in Spain. He has to support his wife and five children in Spain. His wife is unemployed and has only recently received a work permit although she arrived in Spain in 1988.

**Case VIII: Citizen and domestic work.** In comparison to Moussa, Awa has been in Spain for nineteen years.\(^{16}\) She came in 1985 at the age of 16 as a young bride. Awa is involved in cleaning and sewing work. Although she works in the secondary labor market, her participation is in the formal sector. Her cleaning jobs have been contractual and she has paid her taxes, which allows her to collect unemployment benefits since she is currently unemployed. Awa’s economic

\(^{16}\) Although the analysis of the relationship between economic integration and participation in transnationalism is focused on male respondents, Awa is included in the analysis because she is one of two respondents to have obtained citizenship. The second respondent is also female.
integration score is low high. While she is employed in the formal sector, Awa is subject to the shortcomings of domestic work such as low wages and short-term contracts.

As described in the previous sections, Awa did not return to Gambia for eleven years after arriving in Spain. Her resources were spent caring for her young children. In recent years Awa has been able to travel to Gambia once a year. Awa is preparing for an extended trip to Gambia to oversee construction on the land her husband owns. Her husband has also asked her to visit a second plot of land that he has rented to a farmer. Awa points out that the land belongs to her husband. While Awa’s husband has investments in Gambia, she actively maintains ties through visits and remittances. Awa does not belong to any associations. However, because associative membership is largely a male domain Awa’s transnational score is high.

Discussion. Respondents with low transnational scores fall into two groups: those who have irregular immigration status and those who have work permits and have been in Spain for a short time. These two groups show the least participation in private and economic transnationalism. At the household level, their transnational activities consist of sending remittances. They also have not made investments in Senegal or Gambia since their migration to Spain. These two groups of respondents are primarily involved in seasonal agricultural work. The large majority of respondents with irregular immigration status, however, are active in public transnationalism. Associational membership is not affected by immigration status. Rather the services that mutual-aid and hometown associations provide members encourage the participation of immigrations with irregular status.

Respondents with medium transnational scores have residency and work permits and are involved in less-skilled and skilled work in construction, services and manufacturing. Respondents in this group are distinguished by several characteristics that combine to produce
diverse configurations of integration and transnationalism. In regard to economic integration, respondents in this group are differentiated by type of work contract, permanent or temporary. However, the location of a respondent’s spouse (wife) and children appears to affect involvement in transnational practices more than the type of work contract a respondent has. The transnational activities of this group vary according to number of return visits and investments in Senegal or Gambia. Respondents with wives and children in Spain make less return visits than those whose families are in Senegal or Gambia. Not only do respondents with wives and children in Senegal or Gambia make more return visits, they also have higher rates of investments, specifically home construction. This group also varies in their participation in transnational associations. Associational membership appears to be related to personal preferences rather than to aspects of economic integration.

**Citizenship and Transnationalism**

The case of Awa introduces important questions on the relationship between integration and transnationalism. As described above, Awa has lived in Spain for 19 years and is preparing for a prolong visit to Gambia, her first trip since obtaining Spanish nationality. Awa jokes that she needs a visa to go “home” now that she is a Spanish national. Awa’s reference to Gambia as home and her renunciation of Gambian citizenship to gain Spanish nationality appears to be a paradox. However, Spanish citizenship allows Awa to be more transnational. As a Spanish citizen, Awa is able to spend extended periods in Gambia without the restrictions related to permanent residency. Awa is also a citizen of the European Union, which allows a level of mobility within member states that permanent residency does not permit. For instance, Awa can relocate to Britain and work.\(^{17}\) Awa’s case shows how long-term residents and entrepreneurs are

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\(^{17}\) After the completion of the study, Awa left her husband and moved to Manchester.
willing to give up Senegalese or Gambian nationality for Spanish citizenship in order to acquire rights and privileges that advance their transnational projects.

Citizenship defines membership in a nation-state that involves individual rights and obligations. The discourse of citizenship among Senegambians in Catalonia does not include sentiments of belonging, but rather involves rights to mobility and security. The following quote from Demba expresses a concern for the future:

I want to apply now because I don’t know how I will return to Gambia. Before when I was here for a short time, I thought that I had to return to my country. But the way things are now, no one knows what tomorrow will bring. It’s best to get the nationality for the children. When I return my children will stay here.

Not only does Demba’s desire for Spanish nationality reflect a concern for the future, but also a desire to maintain ties with his children who will remain in Spain. As described above, Demba expects his children to financially support him when he retires to Gambia. Spanish citizenship then will facilitate Demba’s visits to Spain in his retirement. Moussa who has petitioned for citizenship and has been living in Spain for 22 years responds, “Nadie sabe de mañana” (No one knows about tomorrow) to questions about his application for Spanish citizenship.

As insurance against future uncertainties, Ong’s concept of “flexible citizenship” (1999) is useful for understanding the significance of citizenship for Senegambian immigrants in Spain. Flexible citizenship is an outcome of the strategies mobile Chinese professional employ to take advantage of numerous nation-states for purposes of investment, work and residence (Ong 1999). While Senegambian immigrants do not hold multiple passports and are not part of an elite professional class, citizenship is a strategy for safeguarding a future full of unknowns and for securing mobility between Europe and Africa. In the case of Moussa, mobility does not involve frequent travel between Spain and Gambia. In the 22 years that he has resided in Spain, Moussa has only visited Gambia four times. Spanish citizenship, however, will enable him to relocate to
Gambia and to return to Spain for visits, which would be impossible as a Spanish resident. Moreover, Moussa’s pension will go much further in providing him a comfortable retirement in Gambia than in Spain.

Although the marginal position of Senegambian immigrants in Spain counters the privileged position of Chinese elite professionals, both groups use citizenship as a strategy to insure against future uncertainties. Spanish citizenship does not augment the transnational practices of most Senegambian immigrants. Due to a lack of financial resources, their transnational behaviors remain circumscribed to remittances, home construction or repair and limited visits to Senegal or Gambia. The majority of Senegambians are of rural origins and have limited formal education (Kaplan 1998; Kaplan Marcusán 2005), which is reflective in the sample population. The low-wage work in which Senegambians are involved does not support greater transnational practices. Senegambian men are engaged in agricultural and construction work while women take on domestic and caretaking work. The demands of supporting their families in Spain further reduce resources for transnational projects.

The motives of Demba and Moussa for acquiring citizenship are typical of long-term residents. Moussa’s wife, Khady, states, “Little things are easier if you are not an immigrant. If you are Spanish, doing some things is much easier than if you are not.” Missing in Khady’s explanation are sentiments of belonging and identification with Spain or Catalonia. Moreover, Senegambian migrants who do have Spanish nationality do not define themselves as Spanish or Catalan. They admit that their children are Spanish because they were born and raised in Spain. Nationality then for the Senegambians is defined by the place where one is born and raised.

Catalan nationalism also shapes the views of Senegambian immigrants on citizenship. The

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18 However, children born in Spain to parents who are foreign residents must apply for Spanish citizenship. At least one year of residency in Spain is required.
majority of Senegambians in Mataró and the Barcelona area speak Spanish, not Catalan. Catalonian nationalism makes identifying with Spain problematic for Senegambian immigrants, and practices of exclusion such as racism call into question their membership in both Catalonia and Spain. The position of Senegambian immigrants in Spain falls between Latin Americans, who are accepted as they share cultural similarities with the Spanish and the Catalans, and the North Africans, primarily Moroccans, who historically have been the “Other,” the Moors. The integration of Senegambian immigrants into Spanish society conforms to the differential exclusion model. In this model, immigrants are incorporated as ethnic minorities marginalized by both their ethnicity and immigrant status (Castles 1995; King and Rodriguez-Melguizo 1999).

As neither Senegal nor Gambia shares dual citizenship with Spain, Senegambian immigrants in Spain must renounce their nationalities to acquire Spanish citizenship. Sentiments of national belonging among Senegambian immigrants is contentious as most identify with their ethnicity first and their nationality second. This is the case of the Jola ethnic group of southern Senegal, which has led a sporadic separatist movement. In Catalonia, the Mandinka, Jola, and Serahuli are the three largest ethnic groups. They also spread across the national boundaries separating Senegal and Gambia. Therefore, giving up Senegalese or Gambian nationality for Spanish citizenship does not necessarily involve a sacrifice of identity for Senegambian immigrants.

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19 The March 11, 2004 train bombings in Madrid have only increased public mistrust and suspicion of North Africans.
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study. The findings focus on the employment of Senegambian men and their participation in transnational activities because the large majority of women in this study are not active in the labor market. The first section of the chapter presents the findings. The significance of immigration status for mobility in the labor market and transnational activities is discussed. How length of residence in Spain relates to mobility in the labor market is also considered. Explanations for the differences between Senegambian men and women’s transnational activities are outlined. The second section of this chapter charts how engagement in transnational activities follows the life course. The chapter ends with questions for future research.

Participation in Transnational Activities and Upward Mobility in Spain’s Labor Market

Approaches to transnationalism that suggest engagement in cross-border activities is a response to the racism and downward mobility immigrants encounter in post-industrial countries do not consider the monetary and legal resources needed to engage in transnational practices. The low-wage and flexible jobs in which immigrants are concentrated do not provide the financial resources needed to support transnational activities. While studies have shown that transnational entrepreneurial activities are a means of economic mobility, the majority of immigrants are not entrepreneurs but employed in the labor market. For immigrants employed in the labor market, this study finds that engagement in transnational activities does not increase with downward mobility in the receiving country. Rather, engagement in transnational activities increases with upward mobility in the labor market of the receiving country. Senegambian immigrant men who remain in low-wage seasonal agricultural work show less participation in
transnational activities than those who experience improvement in employment, such as less-skilled and skilled construction, service and factory work. The range of transnational activities also expands with improvement in employment to include activities in the private and economic domains. The transnational practices of immigrants who work in agriculture primarily consist of remittances; whereas, the activities of immigrants not employed in agriculture include return visits, land purchase and home construction. Findings show that the transnational activities of immigrants in less-skilled construction, service and factory jobs are related to marital status and the location of spouses and children. Senegambian men with wives and children in Senegal or Gambia are more engaged in transnational activities than those with families in Spain. With regards to membership in transnational associations, participation does not increase with improved employment in Spain. Because immigrants who are engaged in agricultural work have irregular status and are recent arrivals, their participation in hometown associations, which function as both mutual-aid and development organizations, is attributed to the benefits that membership provides.

This study also finds that immigration status affects both mobility in the Spanish labor market and participation in transnational activities. All three of these variables correlate. Type of employment is indicative of immigration status. Participation in particular transnational activities that require physical mobility such as return visits demonstrates immigration status. Half the respondents in this study have irregular immigration status since they either entered Spain without authorization or overstayed their visas. The large majority of respondents who do not have work permits are employed illegally in agriculture, mainly as day laborers in greenhouses. With the acquisition of a work permit, respondents move on to less-skilled work. Immigrants
who regularize their status in Spain and obtain work permits usually leave agricultural work for better paying construction work.

Length of time in Spain is also a variable that influences economic mobility in the labor market and participation in transnational activities. Respondents who have work permits but have only been in Spain for a short time, less than two years, work the same jobs in agriculture as respondents who do not have work permits. Because Spain has had a series of regularization campaigns, immigrants with irregular status have had opportunities to regularize their status within four to five years of arriving in Spain. In addition to regularization of status, length of time in Spain corresponds with improvement in employment. With more time in Spain, Senegambian immigrants are not only able to regularize their status but also to improve their employment. While these variables, time in Spain, employment and immigration status, are interrelated, immigrants who have been in Spain for several years appear to have larger personal networks through which they can find work. Some respondents in less-skilled employment in construction and factories found their jobs through friends and relatives.

Senegambian men and women show significant disparities in participation in the labor market and engagement in transnational activities. The study finds that female respondents are much less active in the labor market than male respondents. The low participation rate of Senegambian women in the labor market is a result of the migration process and the jobs available to immigrant women. Senegambian men are the pioneers of migration to Spain and women come through family reunification. Only one of the female respondents in this study migrated to Spain independently. Family reunification grants reunited spouses and children residency permits without authorization to work. In addition, much less jobs are available for Senegambian women in the labor market as they compete with Latin American and Eastern
European women who are preferred for domestic, cleaning and caretaking work. In addition to
differences in the employment available to men and women, men’s employment prospects
improve with length of residence in Spain, whereas women’s possibilities remain fairly the same.
Because the majority of women arrive in Spain as young wives, motherhood and childcare
consume their first few years in Spain. For these reasons, most of the female respondents in this
study are unemployed.

As an outcome of their inactivity in the labor market, Senegambian women who come
through family unification show much less participation in transnational activities. Because they
are unemployed and do not have an income, Senegambian women must rely on their husbands to
remit to their families in Senegal or Gambia. Likewise, female respondents in this study do not
have independent investments in Africa. Cultural practices also appear to lessen Senegambian
women’s participation in transnational activities. Husbands and wives usually do not cooperate
on investment projects in Senegal or Gambia. Rather, Senegambian men usually carry out
projects with their relatives. In addition, polygyny discourages Senegambian women from
traveling to Africa, where co-wives may be waiting to take their turn in Europe.

Examining the transnational behavior of immigrants in relation to their integration in the
host country shows that the transnational practices in which immigrants engage are partially
contingent on their economic mobility within the host country. Moreover, the transnational
activities of immigrants vary depending on their phase of settlement in the host country,
particularly their stage in the life course. The significance of the economic integration of
immigrants in the host country for transnational behavior suggests that social issues such as the
access to regularization becomes a relevant concern for the country of origin as well as the host
country.
Transnational Practices and Life Course

The study finds that participation in transnational activities corresponds to the life course. The majority of Senegambian men are young and single when they arrive in Spain. Because they have irregular immigration status as a result of entering Spain without authorization or overstaying their visas, the transnational practices of recent arrivals primarily consist of sending remittances to their families in Senegal or Gambia. Within a year of regularizing their status or receiving a work permit, respondents make a return visit to Senegal or Gambia. Many usually marry on their first return trip. With marriage, immigrants either begin the process of bringing their wives to Spain or decide to keep their families in Senegal or Gambia. Respondents with wives and children in Senegal or Gambia make more return visits than those whose families are in Spain. Respondents who delay marriage make investments in land and home construction, usually for rental purposes. With family reunification, transnational activities decline as resources are concentrated on supporting families in Spain. When children grow up, transnational activities increase as resources are freed up and respondents begin to make plans to retire. While none of the respondents have retired from the labor force, their plans for retirement largely center on spending prolong periods in Senegal or Gambia and traveling to Spain to visit their children. Respondents who are approaching retirement or planning for retirement consider obtaining Spanish nationality to facilitate mobility between Spain and Senegal or Gambia.

Taking the life course into account to understand participation in transnational activities shows that migration is a livelihood strategy for Senegambian immigrants. Their working years are spent in Spain and their retirement involves returning to their countries of origin.

Future Research

Between the time this study was conducted and published, Spain’s economy has been hit hard by the worldwide financial crisis that began in 2007. The financial crisis has brought about
the collapse of the construction industry in Spain. As construction jobs provided mobility for Senegambian immigrants, the collapse of the industry raises questions about the employment situation of immigrants. With the collapse of the construction industry, immigrants have lost not only lost their jobs, but also a path for occupational advancement. Moreover, immigrants with irregular status have been squeezed out of agricultural jobs as Spanish nationals and immigrants with work authorization compete for these jobs. The economic crisis raises questions about the transnational strategies Senegambian immigrants have adopted to weather the crisis.

The current economic crisis provides an opportunity for advancing understanding about the relationship between immigrant integration and involvement in transnational activities. How will growing unemployment among Senegambian immigrants in Spain affect their transnational practices? How are Senegambian immigrants drawing on their transnational ties to survive the economic crisis? Since transnational ties are extensions of urban-rural linkages, will Senegambian immigrants adopt the same strategies that urban migrants use to get through economic difficulties in the cities? Are Senegambian men sending their wives and children back to Senegal and Gambia to weather the economic crisis? These are questions for future research.
APPENDIX A
SPAIN’S IMMIGRATION POLICY

The fact that the vast majority of Africans enter Spain without authorization, as well as the importance of regular immigration status for the ability of immigrants to engage in transnational activities, call for a discussion of Spain’s immigration policy, specifically the avenues for regularization. There are two avenues for unauthorized foreign residents to regularize their immigration status: regularization campaigns and an annual quota system. As these avenues indicate, labor market demands have largely defined Spain’s immigration policy. Since 1985, Spain has conducted five campaigns to regularize the status of unauthorized foreign residents, 1985-1986, 1991, 1996, 2000-2001, and 2005. Eligibility requirements for regularization have predicated on employment contracts, which show that these campaigns have been far from amnesties. Employment contracts have also been the basis of the annual quota system. Established in 1993, the quota system was originally designed to recruit foreign workers for labor shortage sectors but transformed into an instrument for regularizing immigrants already in Spain (Mendoza 2001; Gortázar 2002; Cornelius 2004). The difficulties of securing employment contracts, which are the basis of the campaigns and quota system, have made the regularization of status unobtainable for many immigrants. Not only have immigrants encountered problems with regularizing their immigration status, but they have also found maintaining their status difficult as work permits have been temporary, a year or less, and bureaucratic procedures have hindered permit renewals (Calavita 1998; Cornelius 2004; Suárez-Navaz 2004). Barring the difficulties of obtaining and holding on to a work permit, these campaigns have provided immigrants with opportunities to regularize their status, making Spain an exception in the European Union.
The series of regularization campaigns outline the evolution of Spain’s immigration policy. Before 1985, Spain was a country of emigration and indicatively did not have legislation governing immigration or stipulating the legal rights of foreigners (Calavita 1998; Calavita and Suárez-Navaz 2003).¹ In the absence of legislation, foreigners were not required to adjust their status given that there was no process for regularization (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999). However, the situation changed in the mid-1980s as a result of concern for increasing immigration from developing countries and negotiations for entry into the European Community that called for Spain to control immigration (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Calavita 1998; Calavita and Suárez-Navaz 2003; Cornelius 2004; Suárez-Navaz 2004).

**The Law on the Rights and Liberties of Foreigners**

Spain’s immigration legislation is founded on the *Ley Orgánica sobre Derechos y Libertades de los Extranjeros* (Organic Law on the Rights and Liberties of Foreigners), enacted in 1985.² The primary objectives of the Ley Orgánica were to control immigration and to bring Spain’s immigration policy in line with that of the member states, particularly as Spain is a border state and point of entry for immigrants into the European Community (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Calavita 1998; Calavita and Suárez-Navaz 2003). As subsequent amendments to the legislation indicate, the Ley Orgánica initially was in the words of Arango (2000) a “police approach” to immigration and did not promote the integration of immigrants (Cornelius 2004:404). The Ley Orgánica created categories of foreigners with specific rights. The primary grouping differentiated between foreigners from European Community member and

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¹ Before the Ley Orgánica of 1985, the rights of foreigners were ambiguously defined in the Spanish constitution of 1978. Foreigners enjoyed the rights laid out in the constitution and in accordance with international laws and agreements. The constitution further qualified that foreigners did not have the right to vote or hold elected office (Calavita 1998:542; Calavita and Suárez-Navaz 2003:111).

² The Ley Orgánica was partly an outcome of conditions for joining the European Community (Calavita 1998; Calavita and Suárez-Navaz 2003; Cornelius 2004).
non-member countries.\(^3\) Foreigners from non-European Community countries were further classified into those granted visa waivers and those subjected to visas requirements. To control immigration, the Ley Orgánica instructed foreigners from non-European Community countries planning to stay in Spain for more than 90 days to obtain residence and work permits (Calavita 1998). To apply for a work permit, foreigners had to present a job offer from a Spanish employer along with the application to the Spanish consulate in the country of origin (Mendoza 2001; Laubenthal 2007). With the requirement of entrance visas and residence and work permits, the law established categories of authorized and unauthorized foreigners and stipulated the specific rights of these two categories.\(^4\) The work permits were mainly temporary lasting one year or less and had geographical and occupational restrictions that tied the holder to a particular employer and location (Calavita 1998; Hoggart and Mendoza 2000; Mendoza 2001; Suárez-Navaz 2004). To renew work permits, immigrants had to provide a work contract and payment of social security contributions, which proved difficult for immigrants subjecting them to irregularity (Calavita 1998; Hoggart and Mendoza 2000; Mendoza 2001; Suárez-Navaz 2004).

All subsequent immigration laws have been modifications or qualifications of the Ley Orgánica. Originally, the law established a preferential category for nationals of the Philippines, Equatorial Guinea, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Dominican Republic and Peru, exempting them from visa requirements and giving them special treatment in the acquisition residence and work permits. However, with the rapid growth of immigration from Morocco, the Dominican Republic and Peru in the late 1980s, these exemptions were rescinded in 1991 (Calavita 1998; King and

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3 EU members in Spain are subject to the regulations and treaties of the EU and not to Spanish immigration legislation (Calavita 1998).

Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999; Calavita and Suárez-Navaz 2003). Initially the Ley Orgánica did not recognize permanent work and residence status or provide for family reunification. In 1996, to promote the integration of authorized foreign residents, the law was amended to establish permanent work and residence status for foreigners who held temporary work and residency permits without interruption for consecutive five years and to regulate family reunification (Calavita 1998; Hoggart and Mendoza 2000; Mendoza 2001; Gortázar 2002). However, the judicial regulation of permanent residence was not implemented until 2000 when Spain’s immigration law was fundamentally reformed (Gortázar 2002). The reforms of 2000 recognized family reunification as a right with the condition that applicants could sufficiently provide for the housing and subsistence needs of reunited family members in Spain (Gortázar 2002). The reforms of 2000 went further to distinguish the rights of unauthorized and authorized foreign residents. Unauthorized foreign residents who enrolled in the municipal registry were given free access to healthcare and compulsory education for minors (Gortázar 2002).

**Regularization Campaigns**

The Ley Orgánica and each of its amendments have included a regularization program. The first regularization in 1985-1986 was a by-product of the Ley Orgánica given that its enactment assigned foreign residents to irregularity. The campaign lasted for nine months and out of 43,815 applications, 38,181 were approved (Mendoza 2001; Cornelius 2004; Kostova Karaboytcheva 2006). Specific shortcomings of the 1985-1986 regularization program involved logistical weaknesses such as lack of programmatic information and infrastructure to effectively

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5 Calavita (1998) observes that the repeal of privileges was passed a month before Spain joined the Schengen in June of 1991. Moreover, she points out that “many observers have noted that the evolution of Spain’s immigration law goes hand in hand with the process of European integration (Calavita 1998:543).

6 The Spanish parliament passed the reforms in April of 2000, but the conservative Popular Party, which later gained a majority, amended them in August.
administer the program (Gortázar 2000). For example, immigrants had to submit their application for regularization to the police, which deterred them from applying (Gortázar 2000). The 1985-1986 program also suffered from policy objectives of the Ley Orgánica that plagued subsequent regularization programs. For example, conditions for eligibility required foreign applicants or their employers to provide work contracts and make social security and tax payments (Gortázar 2000). The dependence of applicants on their employers made immigrants seeking to regularize their status vulnerable (Calavita and Suárez-Navaz 2003). Spanish employers in low productivity and informal sectors reduce overhead and increase profits by not paying their workers the minimum wage or making social security payments on their workers’ behalf (Calavita 1998; Huntoon 1998; Baldwin-Edwards 1999; Pumares Fernández 2003). As King and Rodríguez-Melguizo observe, the large majority of eligible foreign workers passed up the 1985-1986 regularization program out of fear of losing their jobs (1999:59).7 A total of 38,181 immigrants regularized their status in the 1985-1986 program (Gortázar 2000; Mendoza 2001; Cornelius 2004).

In addition to the difficulties of obtaining work contracts to regularize their status, immigrant faced procedural and bureaucratic challenges.8 Hoggart and Mendoza have argued that the “processes associated with obtaining and retaining legal permits are so complicated that they heighten possibilities of slippage into illegality” (2000:12). First, the work permits that immigrants obtained in the 1985-1986 program were for extremely short durations of

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7 The regularization campaign drew a small minority of the estimated unauthorized foreign population (King and Rodríguez-Melguizo 1999).

8 Cornelius (2004) points out how separate submissions for work and residence permits to two different ministries delayed the renewal of permits, and therefore, increased the possibility of falling out of status.
employment. Forty-one percent were for three months or less (Mendoza 2001:170; Cornelius 2004:). By 1989 only 39 percent of the 38,181 immigrants who regularized their status in the 1985-1986 program continued to have permits (Mendoza 2001:170). The majority, 51 percent, had “slipped” into irregularity having lost their work or resident permits. In the case of the 1991 program, which granted one-year work permits, about half of the 110,113 immigrants who regularized their status were out of status by 1995 (Mendoza 2001:171). The campaign of 1991 granted one-year work permits and had better publicity than the first regularization campaign (Kostova Karaboytcheva 2006). While the 1996 regularization program was open to foreigners who were in Spain before January 1996, it was largely directed at immigrants who previously held work or residence permits but had been unable to renew them or who had applied for permits (Calavita 1998; Gortázar 2000; Mendoza 2001). About 25,000 immigrants renewed their status in the 1996 program (Mendoza 2001; Kostova Karaboytcheva 2006). Moreover, in accordance with the 1996 reforms to the Ley Orgánica, the 1996 regularization program granted residence permits without work authorization to eligible foreigners who were mainly reunited family members (Gortázar 2000). The 2000-2001 regularization program also targeted immigrants who had fallen into irregular status. To be eligible, immigrants had to have been in

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9 As work permits are tied to employment contracts, the length of permits reflect the temporal and seasonal nature of the jobs immigrants perform. For example, out of the 38 African farm workers Hoggart and Mendoza (2000) interviewed in 1995 in the province of Girona, only five had permanent contracts. Hoggart and Mendoza assigned the number of temporary contracts to the seasonality of agricultural work noting that the fruit-picking season ran from July to September (2000:9).


11 The 1991 program was extended to provide residence permits for family members of those immigrants who had regularized their status through the program. Only 5,889 residence permits were granted (Gortázar 2000:304; Mendoza 2001:170).

12 As noted earlier, to encourage integration, the 1996 reforms of the Ley Orgánica provided permanent work and residence permits to immigrants who held permits for five consecutive years (Calavita 1998; Gortázar 2000; Mendoza 2001).
Spain before June 1, 1999 and had to have applied for or obtained a work or residence permit within the preceding three years of the campaign, which ran from March to July 2000 (Gortázar 2002:10). The August modifications of the April 2000 reform of the Ley Orgánica stipulated occasions for regularization allowing for temporary residence permits for immigrants who were unable to renew their permits as well as on humanitarian grounds (Gortázar 2002:15).13 According to Gortázar, the provision of temporary residency to immigrants who had previously held regular status enabled them “to avoid incurring irregularity due to the difficulties regarding the renewal of permits (2002:15). However, as the 1996 regularization campaign that also targeted immigrants who had incurred or slipped into irregular status illustrates, immigrants continued to fall into irregular status due to their inability to secure work permits and the bureaucratic procedural impediments. The 2000 regularization program was extended into 2001 as a result of mass demonstrations and protests over deportations sanctioned by the August modifications of the 2000 reform of the Ley Orgánica (Cornelius 2004). The criteria for eligibility were loose. Immigrants who had arrived in Spain before January 23, 2001 could apply for permits on humanitarian grounds and on the basis of “roots” established in Spain (Cornelius 2004:414).14 In the end, over 300,000 immigrants were regularized (Cornelius 2004:415).

The regularization campaign of 2005 was a departure from previous programs. It was more of an economic plan to incorporate the informal or underground economy into the formal sector and to augment the social security fund (Arango and Jachimowicz 2005). The government of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) argued that because irregular immigrants used the

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13 This regularization also included immigrants whose applications were pending or previously rejected and asylum seekers who had applied before February 2000 (Gortázar 2000).

14 A special regularization for Ecuadorians was implemented after protests over the tragic death of twelve Ecuadorian immigrants with irregular status. The immigrants were crammed in a van that collided with a train on their way to work (Cornelius 2004).
education and public health services regularizing their labor would contribute to the growth and economic activity of Spain (García 2004). Eligible applicants had to reside in Spain for more than six months—registered in a municipality before August 7, 2004—with no criminal record in their country of origin and had to obtain a work contract of at least six months, three months for those working in agriculture (Arango and Jachimowicz 2005; Bárbulo 2005; Kostova Karaboytcheva 2006; Ospina 2007). In addition to the work contract, employers had to pay for taxes on behalf of the applicants (Arango and Jachimowicz 2005). In terms of self-employment, the 2005 regularization campaign was more innovative than previous programs. While the previous campaigns had applications for self-employment, usually street-hawking, gardening and domestic work (Mendoza 2001), the 2005 program accommodated the particularities of domestic work and self-employment. Domestic workers, who did not work full time, had to work a minimum of 80 hours a month for one employer or at least 30 hours a week for a minimum of twelve days a month for several employers. In addition, domestic workers could submit their regularization paperwork and pay their taxes on their own behalf without going through their employers (Bárbulo 2005). 

Because the regularization campaign took place in the final months of the study, some of the problems Senegambian immigrants in Mataró encountered as they attempted to regularize their status were observed. First, immigrant workers continued to have trouble with their employers to submit the necessary paperwork and to pay the required social security taxes. Workers at a nursery outside of Mataró went on strike when their employer did not submit their paperwork. The strike went on for several days before the employer submitted the documents on behalf of the workers. One Senegalese respondent in this study was hired to be the caretaker of a

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15 Each employer had to sign the application and indicate when the applicant (the domestic worker) began working, how many hours the applicant worked per month, and how many future months of work predicted.
vacation home, which had been repeatedly vandalized, up in the hills above Vilassar de Dalt and Cabrils. The owner agreed that upon submission of the documents for a work permit, the respondent would move into a shed on the property. However, the owner was slow to submit the paperwork, and the respondent had to get the director of the Càritas center in Mataró involved in the matter. The director had originally informed the respondent of the position. The newspaper, El Periódico ran stories of employers resisting regularizing their workers (Vilaseró 2005).

Second, the possibility of falling out of status into irregularity remained as successful applicants were granted one-year work and residence permits (Arango and Jachimowicz 2005).

In the end, 575,827 immigrants regularized their status in the 2005 campaign, representing 83 percent of approved applications out of a total of 691,655 (CERES 2006:7). Forty-one percent (284,230) of the applicants were women. Female applicants also were approved in higher numbers than men’s, with 89 percent approved compared to 80 percent (CERES 2006:7). The top three nationalities of approved applications were Ecuadorians (127,644), Romanians (99,673) and Moroccans (68,401) (CERES 2006:8). Sub-Saharans represented six percent of the applicants for regularization (CERES 2006:9). The largest increase in population among the different immigrant groups has been eastern Europeans: Romanians, Ukrainians, and Bulgarian (CERES 2006:10-11).

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16 The arrangement did not work out for the respondent because he became extremely lonely living on the property and commuting to Mataró.

17 CERES (2006) points out the disproportion between the number of sub-Saharan immigrants and the attention they receive in the debate on illegal immigration. Sub-Saharan immigrants dominate the news media with images of landing on the Canary Islands or breaking through the fortifications of the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla (CERES 2006).

18 Romania and Bulgaria become EU members in 2007.
Annual Quota System

The annual quota system, more commonly known as the *contingente*, is a means for securing regular status for immigrants with irregular status in Spain. The quota system, implemented in 1993, was part of the 1991 reforms and designed to fill regional labor shortages through the recruitment of foreign workers abroad, specifically from non-EU member countries. Under the quota system, foreign workers are permitted to enter Spain on short-term contracts and are required to return to their countries of origin when their work contracts expire. However, the quota system has been a conduit for granting work permits to immigrants with irregular status already in Spain (Calavita 1998; Gortázar 2000; Cornelius 2004). Critics of the system have called it “a concealed regularization program” or “a disguised legalization program” for immigrants with irregular status living in Spain (Gortázar 2002:3; Cornelius 2004:406). When respondents with irregular status in this study were asked what were the procedures for obtaining a work permit, most answered that they needed an employment contract. Their responses revealed awareness of a process for regularization through employment contracts.

The recruitment of foreign workers was initially limited to a small number of countries that shared bilateral labor agreements with Spain: Ecuador, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Morocco and Romania (Cornelius 2004). Since 2007 labor agreements have been made with several West African countries as part of Spain’s African initiative to deter unauthorized immigration from sub-Saharan Africa. Along with these labor agreements, Spain has extended economic development aid. For their part, the West African countries have agreed to the repatriation of their nationals and to stop unauthorized migration. With the worldwide financial crisis that began in 2007, the recruitment of foreign workers through the quota system may fall victim to the raising numbers of unemployed immigrants and Spanish citizens.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ermitte St. Jacques received a master’s degree in Latin American Studies in 2001. While completing a master’s degree, she began the doctoral program in anthropology. Her dissertation research grew out of findings from her master's thesis, which explored the social and political factors that impede the integration of Haitian immigrants in the Bahamas. Ermitte received a National Science Foundation Dissertation Grant to fund her dissertation research. After receiving her PhD, Ermitte continued her research on transnational migration among West African immigrants in Spain with funding from a National Science Foundation Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania.