‘Deported before Departure’: Migration and Immobility in Saint-Louis, Senegal

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Senegal within West Africa and its administrative regions.
Introduction

‘Certains jeunes sont refoulés avant même d'être partis’.¹
Ridjal, 29.08.2008

Yat, a youth I met during my fieldwork in Senegal, had told me that his friends were ‘real Americans’. Not only did they rap in English, but, more generally, they adopted an American lifestyle. He called it ‘le style américain’ and emphasized that he was not just talking about clothing. When I encountered these ‘American’ rappers and their music, however, it became clear that none of them aspired to living the American way of life quite as much as Yat himself. While the rappers were influenced both by foreign and Senegalese artists, Yat preferred American music. Unlike the rappers, he was never caught wearing bubu ² (Senegalese robe), to which he favoured jeans and Nike trainers, and it was he who punctuated his sentences in Wolof and French with snippets of English such as ‘yeah man’ and ‘you know’.

Reflecting on Yat’s demeanour, Yat’s neighbour, a young school teacher named Ridjal, commented that some youths are deported from Europe and the USA before they even leave: they are, ‘refoulés avant même d'être partis’. According to Ridjal, Yat’s behaviour manifested his unfulfilled desire to travel to America. But Yat was working on that - he assured me that a year from now he would be out of the country.

In this account of my six weeks spent in the Senegalese town of Saint-Louis, or Ndar as it is known in Wolof, I endeavour to understand aspirations to mobility such as Yat’s as well as, more generally, the meanings invested in migration by people in the sending area. Most importantly, this thesis shows how family and neighbourhood relations in the sending area and the phenomenon of international emigration mutually influence each other.

After devoting the first chapter to the methodological and theoretical approaches used in this study, in chapter two I reveal the historical and structural factors affecting migration to and from Senegal. Chapter three then examines the transnational character of my field site, the neighbourhood of Diamaguène in Saint-Louis. Chapter four provides a framework for understanding the family and

¹ ‘Some youths are deported before they even leave.’
² For pronunciation of words in Wolof, see Appendix 1.
social expectations faced by men and women in Diamaguène. Finally, having illustrated the prevalence of migration as a livelihood strategy, chapter five turns to those who cannot, or who do not wish to emigrate. First though, an introduction to Diamaguène is called for.

**A transnational neighbourhood: Diamaguène and its ties abroad**

Nine of the eighteen players in the Diamaguène-based *Boko Joom* football team had close kin overseas. Player number two’s aunt lived in France and number eleven’s father was in Holland. Others had brothers and sisters in the USA, Spain, and Italy. The most famous émigré among these family members was Papa Waigo N'Diaye, a professional football player for ACF Fiorentina. Yet, as demonstrates the number of players able to boast a household member in a foreign country, while Papa Waigo N'Diaye’s flourishing career was the neighbourhood’s sole sporting success story, the fact that he lived and worked in Europe was far from unique. In the words of one of my informants, in Diamaguène, there were ‘émigrés à gogo’ (an abundance of emigrants).

Diamaguène was not, however, considered by Saint-Louisians to be the area of the city which had (or had ever had) the highest rate of emigration. Other neighbourhoods renowned for their experienced seamen, were said to be important departure zones and it was the expanding outskirts of the city which were thought of as housing the greatest number of remitted-to families. In respect to migration, Diamaguène, which is situated between the fishing communities and the Saint-Louis *banlieue*, was given no particular attention. While there exist no records or statistics to probe such perceptions and measure the emigration, by boat and other means, of Diamaguène residents against that of people living elsewhere in Saint-Louis, it is interesting to note that the first inhabitants of Diamaguène were themselves relocated from the coastal strip of Saint-Louis, called *La Langue de Barbarie*, where the ever-advancing ocean flooded their homes in the 1930s. Before the Saint-Louis authorities installed people in the area which was to become Diamaguène, it was a marshland (see figure 2). The subsequent flooding and sanitation problems, which it still faces today, especially during the rainy season, render somewhat tragic the epistemology of the name given to this new location: *diama guène*, so the story has it, is derived from the words exclaimed by the relocated peoples as they arrived ‘diama dia!’ meaning ‘here is peace!’.
Figure 1: Map showing the main neighbourhoods of the city of Saint-Louis, including Diamaguène which is outlined in black. Courtesy of the Saint-Louis Agence de Développement Communal.
Figure 2: Maps taken from Bricaud, F. & J. Vast (1987) which illustrate the marsh upon which Diamaguène was built in the 1930s. Interestingly, the territory is still considered marshland in 1950.

A survey conducted by the Saint-Louis council shows that in 2001, some seventy years after its establishment, approximately 8,300 individuals lived in Diamaguène (ADC, 2001). A more recent estimate, made by the local Statistics and Demography Service, considers the 2007 Diamaguène population to be 11,839.³ Discounting Pikine which has a population of 36,333 and is considered a town in its own right by many Saint-Louisians, Diamaguène is amongst the four most populated of the twenty two neighbourhoods of Saint-Louis and represents 6.6 % of the overall population (179,953 inhabitants in total).

³ This estimate was kindly provided by Assane Niass of the Service Régional de la Statistique et de la Démographie on the basis of two of the Service’s previous studies.
While some Saint-Louisian neighbourhoods have acquired a reputation of being wealthier, more modern, poorer, or more crowded than others, Diamaguène resists labelling. Its composition in terms of income per household, number of people living under one roof and its architecture, is heterogeneous. Even the one thing for which Diamaguène is famous – its flooding – does not apply to the neighbourhood in its entirety. Those living on the most recently housed plots were quick to note that the appearance of stagnant pools of water during the rainy season is a problem mainly situated in what they jokingly call Diamaguène village, as opposed to Diamaguène ville where the streets are wider and the evacuation of used waters more effective. In the same jovial manner, those living in Diamaguène village reverted from time to time to a terminology which favoured their part of the neighbourhood, describing it as Diamaguène plateau, a qualifier borrowed from the central business district of Dakar. Friendly rivalry aside, the most modern part of Diamaguène is more widely known as Suku Mar. It is called so in honour of a certain Monsieur Mar who, when the eastern mosque was about to be built, ingeniously instigated the creation of a sand bank upon which it could sit safe from flooding. Suku is Wolof for ‘banking up’. As a result, not only the mosque, but the whole area stands on higher ground than the original section of Diamaguène which, to this day, remains below the level of the adjacent River Senegal.

The various occupations and professions of Diamaguène residents are an additional illustration of the neighbourhood’s heterogeneity. Here lived bakers, builders, teachers, street vendors and musicians. This is not to say, however, that their living conditions were the same. For example, Penda lived in a three roomed house with her mother, her brother and her cousin while Néné, who lived directly opposite, shared approximately the same surface with over twenty people. Néné only went to primary school for two years yet, thirty yards down the street, Astou, her contemporary, was preparing for her first semester at university.

The great majority of Diamaguène residents are Muslim, reflecting national tendencies (Dial, 2008). Most of my informants were followers of a Muslim brotherhood of which the four principle are the Tijaniyyah, the Murids, the Qādiriyya, and the Layennes. Ethnically, Diamaguène, like Saint-Louis, is dominated by Wolofs, but it also counts among its inhabitants members of other groups such as the Serer, Fula, Toucouleurs and Jola. Although Senegalese society is marked by a caste system, my findings concerning caste are limited as I did not feel direct questioning socially acceptable, nor did I stay in Senegal long enough to understand the subtle non-dits surrounding this topic.

4 The ethnographic references used in this thesis are therefore predominantly accounts of Wolofs in Senegal.
5 On caste in Senegal see Diop (1981) and Dilley (2004).
Diamaguène is not only socially heterogeneous, but disparities mark the landscape: tiled two-story edifices can be seen towering over their modest, crumbling, one-storey counterparts. So while the roof of Djatou’s rented house fell in during the first storm of the rainy season, the latest addition to her immediate neighbour’s imposing home is an elaborately decorated porch – the first porch in the street. As Veblen’s (1899) seminal work demonstrated long ago, conspicuous consumption is an important dimension of social differentiation. In the case of Diamaguène, because many of the larger houses have been built with money remitted by family members abroad, participation in transnational circuits is intimately linked to social mobility – even, as notes Levitt (2001), for those who do not leave. In this way, when a migrant finances the construction of a house, or perhaps the improvement of the existing family home, s/he not only secures a place for his or her family to live and income if they rent out rooms, but also the social status associated with property ownership and large houses (Riccio, 2005). Of course, and as I shall demonstrate throughout this thesis, neighbourhood relations are complex and visible material comfort cannot simply be equated to social status. Yet while alternative discourses and representations will be taken into account, the present analysis is based on the premise that consumption practices and taste (as demonstrated, for example, by Yat’s preference for things American) are central to social distinction and power relations (Bourdieu, 1979).

To return to the Boco Joom football players, I have mentioned that half of them had close kin overseas. I define ‘close’ as close enough to financially contribute to the household of which the football player is part. Were it not a question of having a bread-winning family member in another country, but simply a question of having a family member abroad, all of the football players would correspond to the designation. This can be explained by two main factors: firstly, that, in Senegal, the notion of family corresponds to the extended family, thus incorporating cousins, and in polygamous cases, one’s father’s other wives and children (doomu baye – children of the same father). The second factor is plainly the scale of international emigration. In Diamaguène, everybody knows somebody who has left and many are in contact with them, be it by telephone, by texting, or via the Internet. Migrants might telephone their families to communicate transfer codes allowing them to draw money from one of the numerous Western Union, Moneygram, or other transfer agencies which can be found on all of the main streets in Saint-Louis. Migrants also phone to find out how Boco Joom is getting on in the Saint-Louis championship. Old schoolmates text each other with the latest developments in neighbourhood gossip and in cyber cafés, brothers and sisters eagerly await their five minutes of Skype talk time with their siblings in Europe. Internet and mobile phones provide the means to stay in touch with friends and family living elsewhere, but they
also offer the potential to establish connections with new people. As such, the popularity of chat forums and emailing explain how some youths can truthfully claim to having over one hundred cyber friends within Senegal and elsewhere.

Another link between Diamaguène and foreign countries is immigration. Not everybody living in Diamaguène was born there. Many Senegalese move around the country at different periods of their lives and have family in various regions. And in addition to this internal mobility, Saint-Louis is a receiving area to migrants from neighbouring African countries. In particular, Guinean street vendors and shoe-shiners are to be found living and working in Diamaguène. Furthermore, due to Saint-Louis’ tourist industry and international NGO sector, Westerners, known as tumbaabs, are never far away. In fact, according to my older informants who had vivid memories of colonial times, whilst tumbaabs never lived in Diamaguène, they have always been part of the city.

Visible from Diamaguène, the main island of Saint-Louis was disputed by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the French from the early 17th century onwards due to its strategic position at the mouth of the River Senegal. Under European rule, it acquired a key role in the Atlantic trade, including the trade in slaves. As the first of the four French Communes of Senegal, prior to the colonial conquest of the mainland, the island of Saint-Louis became an urbanized commercial hub where relations between Africans and Europeans gave way to a Métis merchant community, known as habitants or originaires (Diouf, 1998).

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6 Tubaab or touhab is used in Senegal and other West African countries as a general term for a white person. In 1853, the Abbott P.-D. Boilat thought the word derived from ‘tougal’, that latter part of the word ‘Portougal’ (spelt ‘Portugal’ in modern French) the nation of the first Europeans to set foot in West Africa.
Figures 3 and 4: *Originaires* did not consider themselves, and were not considered, natives. Neither, however, did they fully embrace the French assimilation policy despite acquiring French citizenship. Instead, they created their own particular hybrid culture expressed through clothing, festive demonstrations and culinary art (Diouf, 1998). Among the most famous *originaires* were the *signares*. *Signares* were women living with, or having affairs with, European merchants and who acquired wealth through this, sometimes becoming entrepreneurs themselves. The group of European-dressed women pictured above belong to a *signare* family. A calendar on the wall of this middle-class room marks the 12th February 1915. The second photograph, of an elegant and poised woman, was taken around the same time. Both photographs are from Bouttiaux et al., 2003.
Saint-Louis and the surrounding areas were, however, outward-looking prior to European intervention. Indeed, the Atlantic trade routes introduced by Europeans competed with the century-old trans-Saharan trade networks before eventually monopolising commerce. As Barry (1972) reminds us, slaves and other goods had long been traded by the inhabitants of the sub-Saharan region in exchange for horses and other livestock from the nomadic Moors. Both historically and contemporarily then, the Senegalese have sought, and continue to seek, opportunities in all geographic directions as demonstrated, for instance, by current labour migration to the Gulf States (Diatta & Mbow, 1999) and Japanese investment in Senegal (Sarr & Thomas, 2005).

But it is not only through the mobility of people, past and present, that Diamaguène can be considered a transnational urban setting. The objects and images that span national borders, geographic environments and cultural contexts, referred to by Appadurai (1996: 6) as ‘mass mediated images, scripts and sensations’, must also be taken into account. Following Parkin’s (1993) approach to globalisation, I will seek to understand the relationship between Diamaguène residents and objects and media that originate elsewhere. As such, while the technology may be globally shared, its meaning may not. The particular ways in which Hindi music videos, Brazilian soap operas and American action films (all of which feature daily alongside Senegalese programmes on Senegalese TV) are received and assessed have much to teach us about local values and desires (Das, 1995; Miller, 1995).

This brief presentation of Diamaguène has introduced the neighbourhood as an urban territory with old and new ties to foreign places and peoples. In virtue of the importance of emigration from Diamaguène and the consequent trans-border relationships that this entails (financial and social), and because the lives of those who have no family outside of Senegal are marked by global phenomena, I have frequently referred to the notion of transnationalism. A precise definition of this term is provided in the following chapter. For the moment however, it is central to bear in mind that though some authors refer to transnationalism as transcending the political and juridical borders of nation-states (Suro, 2003), the term is in no way synonymous with free movement. On the contrary, while I describe transnational characteristics of everyday life in Diamaguène, many residents are unable to emigrate despite aspiring to do so.
Figure 5: The main island of Saint-Louis circa 1920. Unknown photographer, Adama Sylla Collection (Saint Leon & Fall, 1999).

Figure 6: Similar setting on the island some 87 years later, Photograph by Amber Stechman, September 2007.
Chapter 1: Methodological and Theoretical Approaches

Methodology

This research project is an attempt to understand Senegalese-European migration from the viewpoint of men and women who have come to be known in migration literature as ‘those left behind’ (Kane, 2002; Biao, 2005). As such, it presents only one side of the transnational reality of migration and would no doubt benefit from complementary field work in Europe. Yet despite its limitations in terms of time and resources, this qualitative study focuses on the side of African migration which has been afforded the least scholarly attention: the experiences of people in the sending context. In order to appreciate these, I concentrated on the methods of participant observation and interviewing.

Choice of neighbourhood and living arrangements

Unable to conduct a study representative of Saint-Louis as a whole, I selected a neighbourhood upon which to focus. Diamaguène was chosen in light of my past connections with Saint-Louis: the previous year, I had spent three months working as an intern for the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Dakar. Because of the IOM’s well known anti-irregular emigration campaign, I made a point of not contacting Saint-Louisians I had been in touch with during my time at the IOM. Instead, meeting new people unaware of my previous affiliation with the IOM was imperative in gaining access to peoples’ understandings of migration as well as their personal aspirations. When in Dakar in 2007, I had lived with a Senegalese family that had no connection to the IOM. During this time, I had spent a weekend in Saint-Louis with the nephew of this family and met his half-sister, Penda, who is a resident of Diamaguène. Penda, her mother Djatou, and cousin Awa were the only people I knew in Saint-Louis who did not associate me with the IOM. They therefore represented my door to meeting informants.

I did not, however, reside in Diamaguène. Had I lived with my initial contacts during my six-week stay, our relationship would have necessarily been marked by a regular financial exchange of some sort, a weekly contribution covering the cost of my food being indispensable. The family I did stay with, on the other hand, lived in a more affluent area of Saint-Louis and was better-off, meaning that my presence represented little strain on the household economy. Instead of contributing on a weekly basis, I presented the head of the family with a gift at the end of my stay. This set-up
allowed me to establish relationships in Diamaguène which were exempt of any financial ties that might have influenced the rapport between informant and researcher.

![Image](image1.png)

Figure 7: Diamaguène village after the rain. The River Senegal and the metallic bridge, Pont Faidherbe, linking the main island of Saint-Louis to the rest of the city is visible in the background. Photograph by Amber Stechman, September 2007.

**Informants and methods of inquiry**

By spending time with Penda, Awa and Djatou, I gradually met most of their neighbours and attended neighbourhood events such as weddings, concerts and football matches. I also met people by simply approaching them and introducing myself, when they were sitting outside their houses. This much I could do in Wolof, but my poor knowledge of the language meant I was forced to continue in French. This limited my interviews to French speakers, except for one during which a friend of the interviewee acted as interpreter. The ‘snowball’ effect of one meeting leading to another was, at times, aided by my specific requests to be introduced to people with family overseas, for example, but, more often, it occurred simply through sharing the everyday activities of my first informants and getting to know their family, friends and neighbours. On other occasions, due to general friendliness, curiosity and, sometimes, opportunity, I was approached by people intrigued by the presence of a *tubaab* in Diamaguène.
**Participant observation**

Concretely, my participant observation of life in Diamaguène consisted in participating in sitting outside peoples’ houses with them and engaging in conversation with neighbours and passers-by; watching television; listening to music; helping to prepare food, and, more often, sharing meals; washing up; accompanying people on their errands to nearby corner shops, the market and money transfer agencies; going to football matches; attending weddings and concerts, and minding babies.

Of course, despite my ongoing presence and participation in everyday happenings, I was never anything but novel in the neighbourhood, nor were the reasons for my being there clear to everyone. As such, it was important to take into account the impact of my presence on what was going on around me (Clarke in Emerson, 1995). For example, I was aware that as a European researching what had become a hot topic since the Senegalese government and international organisations’ recent attempts to crack down on irregular emigration to Europe, initial responses to my inquiry may have simply sung in tune with governmental rhetoric.⁷

My lack of local knowledge was accepted and, usually, accommodated. This consequently provided me with detailed explanations which I then sought to triangulate. Not only did I discuss the same topic with different people, but I also approached the same people with the same topic at various intervals. In fact, asking the same question to the same person at different points in our relationship was one of the most revealing methods used because the answers provided sometimes varied over time. It is equally important to note that in the absence of variation, repeated questioning gives more weight to an informant’s discourse. As such, while this method does not necessarily lead to more information, it may be qualitatively beneficial.

Nonetheless, despite spending much time with informants and building rapport, time was not necessarily on my side. In the last week of my fieldwork, I was surprised to learn that one of my informants had lied to me about her status as a university student. Only through talking to others did I find out that Madjitana had a tendency to invent stories. Yet I have not discarded the information provided directly by her. On the contrary, the object of my inquiry being ambitions and dreams, Madjitana’s fantasy of being a university student and one day becoming an air hostess touches directly on the topic of aspirations. It also speaks for the relationship between Madjitana and I:

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⁷ When I first met Mamadou for example, he asserted that emigration was ‘une mauvaise chose’ (14.08.08) (a bad thing), but over the course of several informal meetings and conversations about other topics, his statements on the subject became more nuanced.
Madjitana may have found it difficult to tell a fellow student that she had failed her exams two years running and could no longer study at Université Cheikh Anta Diop.

Most of my time was spent with young men and women. The age group between seventeen and thirty-five has become the main focus of my study. This is partly due to the timing of my fieldwork which meant that I was present during the long hivernage (rainy season) holiday, when pupils, students and teachers return home from their places of study and work, to stay with their families. It is also linked to the fact that I was often welcomed in to the worlds of people of my own age. While the notion of youth translates into different realities for Senegalese men and women, women tending to be considered ‘young’ for a shorter period of time than men as they generally marry younger (Dial, 2008), I navigated quite easily between gender groups. As other women ethnographers have written of their field experiences (Lederman, 1986), I was able to sit in on afternoon tea drinking sessions with men, as well as help my female friends with household chores. Interestingly, the latter activity was initially met with amusement, while my status as an ‘honorary man’ (Dewalt and Dewalt, 2002: 84) seemed more normal to my informants. Indeed, I was always treated as a guest despite striving to put myself in my informants’ shoes and participating in numerous activities. People grew to know me and vice versa, but the most succulent pieces of fish and meat were moved to my side of the bowl wherever I ate, as benefits a guest.

While spending much time with certain informants, there were many people whom I only met once. These meetings were with people in their workplace from whom I obtained factual information regarding their place of employment or the services or data it provided. My conversations with bank clerks, employees of money transfer agencies and employees in the council’s departments of development, youth and employment are some examples of such dialogues. I also spoke with civil servants whose professional responsibilities led them to be involved in matters of emigration. All of these conversations, most of which took place outside of Diamaguène itself, informed my analysis.

**Interviewing**

The distinction between casual conversations and interviews might be seen as a weak one in that all of the interviews were semi-structured and none of them were audio-recorded. Yet differentiating between the two became a useful tool in scheduling meetings and talking to people individually.

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8 Because of the assimilation of emigration to émigration clandestine (irregular emigration) in local discourse, I decided against visual and audio recording.
When I asked permission to interview someone, I stressed the need to be alone with them and explained that I would write down everything that was said. There is no doubt that the set-up affected what was said (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1989), but I found that the advantages of a formal setting outweighed its disadvantages due to the limits of ‘deep hanging out’ (Geertz, 1973). For example, mapping who had family overseas, where the migrants lived, since when and with whom proved an impossible task on the basis of informal conversations. Furthermore, interviewing addresses the ethical question of consent more clearly than participant observation. Whereas everyone I spent time with was at least vaguely aware of my research agenda, interviewing gave interviewees obvious control over what they chose to disclose. At the same time, conducting formal interviews gave greater legitimacy to my questions and, by extension, my presence as a researcher.

In the context of Saint-Louis where many NGOs and other organisations seek to discourage emigration, I felt the need to reassure interviewees that I had no hidden agenda. As well as informing them that the only people who would read my thesis were members of my university, an efficient means of conveying the anonymity of the study was to ask informants to choose their own pseudonyms. This technique benefited both the interviewing process and the analysis by opening a window into how my informants wished to be perceived, how they perceived themselves, as well as their preferences and interests. One informant requested to be known as Baggio because, as a teenager, he had aspired to becoming as great a footballer as the Italian Roberto Baggio. Another wished to be referred to as Ridjal which, so he told me, was Arabic for ‘man’. Hawa chose her pseudonym for its rarity: ‘Le H ne se prononce pas alors pas tout le monde sait qu’il est là.’

I always spent time with interviewees in the days and weeks prior to and after formal interviews. Often, these get-togethers took place at home, allowing me to meet the other members of the household. Households, which incorporate individuals, and separate extended families, were the most manageable unity of study and also the most relevant in terms of financial relationships. A successful émigré can remit to a wide range of family members, but for people living in Diamaguène the most urgent obligations are towards the people one is living with, even if they are not one’s parents or siblings. As the example of the Boco Joom football team illustrated, having a member of one’s family overseas is the case of most Diamaguène residents. What can make a difference to budgets is having a household member abroad. I interviewed fourteen people who belonged to households with at least one member overseas and seven people who did not have a

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9 ‘The H isn’t pronounced so not everybody knows it’s there.’ (Interview conducted on the 16.09.2008)
household member overseas. The interviews were conducted with seven women and seven men. In respect to professions and occupations, the sample reflects Diamaguène’s diversity: a housemaid, a retired civil servant, a secretary, two students, an unemployed youth, a volunteer with an NGO, a child carer, a bank clerk, a health worker, three teachers and a retired teacher. These interviews allowed me to ask delicate questions about income and remittances, and it was often at such times that the irregular or regular status of émigrés was touched upon. This set-up was also conducive to interviewees sharing their dreams and life projects with me. In the case of my most talkative informants, interviews took on the form of life stories which provided an abundant source of information and a means of understanding how informants make sense of their trajectories and ‘cope with society’ (Geiger, 1986). Most importantly, interviews were part of a longer, ongoing, dialogue contextualized and enriched by participant observation. In effect, in this study, participant observation and interviewing were complementary. Each mode of inquiry has added to the results of the other by allowing an opportunity to verify information, fill gaps, and add layers of meaning.

Of course, the limitations to my research remain. Time is the main factor which played against both the breadth and depth of this study, but language too constituted a major constraint. Not only did my lack of understanding of Wolof limit my discussions to French speakers, thus selecting only those people who had attended state schools for a number of years, but it also allowed for notions and meanings to be lost in translation. As a window into the semantics of social life, language is a way of understanding the informant’s world in his or her own terms. Unfortunately, in this study, those terms were rendered in French - a language fully mastered by the majority of my informants, but not the language which they use to communicate with their peers in daily life - and then translated into English by myself. Acknowledging that ‘an ethnographer’s material is always representation’ (Herndl, 1991), my findings are presented in the past tense so as to avoid generalising opinions and circumstances which are specific both to the period of my fieldwork and to my subjective interpretation of them. Yet despite these limitations, my findings contribute to gaining a better understanding of migration as it is perceived by men and women in the Senegalese sending context.
Theoretical approach

Migration or human geographical mobility, however one wishes to call the leaving of one place to go to another, is a physical action. In the majority of cases, before migration is experienced, it is an idea. On this basis, I conceive of international migration from Senegal first and foremost as a project (Velho, 1992; Carling, 2002). The migration project may, or may not, be put into practice, but the sending area remains a site where such projects are formulated. In what follows, I shall present the theoretical approaches to migration which inform my analysis of Diamaguène as a place where migration and its outcomes are imagined before they are actually experienced.

Early studies of migrant populations contributed to de-territorializing the way anthropologists think about culture (Brettell, 2000). They demonstrated that humans on the move or settling in new areas are not bounded to a specific set of cultural habits intrinsic to their place of origin, nor that they necessarily shed them and adopt new ones once they settle.10 On the contrary, migrants negotiate their lives in respect to their social capital and the new environments and influences that they encounter. Since the 1990s, this perspective has been broadened by theories of transnationalism, a process whereby migrants operate in social fields that transcend geographical, political and cultural borders (Glick Schiller, Basch & Szanton Blanc, 1994). In this view, though migrants can only physically be in one place at a time, their lives are shaped by multiple attachments - which do not exclude attachment to ‘home’ as argued by Kibreab (1999). While nomads and migrants in general existed before national boundaries, transnationalism is a useful concept when thinking about who participates in contemporary global flows of people and ideas. As Mahler (1998: 69) suggests, prior to the worldwide outreach of radios and televisions, ‘global information was more of an elitist enterprise, limited to those with access to newspapers, books, travel accounts and so on’. In Senegal, this shift towards the democratisation of access to global information is summed up by the following remark made by a professor at the Université Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar:

Avant, les jeunes Sénégalais rêvaient d’aller à Oxford. Maintenant ils veulent aller à Manchester. Tout ce à quoi pense mon fils de douze ans le samedi soir est le match de Manchester United le lendemain.11

10 For examples in African contexts see the work of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute.
11 ‘Senegalese youths used to dream of going to Oxford. Now they want to go to Manchester. All my twelve year old son can think of on Saturday nights is Manchester United’s match the next day.’ (05.08.2008)
While the desired destinations and the forms of participation in ‘global culture’ have changed, the point here is that the category of ‘Senegalese youths’ has also altered. In this thesis, I will demonstrate that globally aware Senegalese youths today are people from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds.

A distinction must be made, however, between transmigrants (Glick Shiller, Basch & Szanton Blanc, 1995) and those who do not migrate despite participating in transnational circuits. It may be the case, as I suggest it is in Senegal, that the latter’s lack of mobility is imposed by European immigration legislation – a fact which flies in the face of celebratory interpretations of transnationalism as unimpeded by national borders – nonetheless, people who do not physically migrate can be considered to ‘live their lives within a context which has become transnationalized’ (Levitt, 2001: 9). As such, the numerous yellow and black signs of the Western Union agencies which line Saint-Louis’ main streets are a reminder of the links between people living ‘here’ and ‘there’. Indeed, financial remittances and their material manifestations are concrete examples of the transnational character of Diamaguène. From here, for instance, relatives living in Europe and North America are contacted and requested to contribute to the neighbourhood football teams’ new kit, an appeal rarely refused as it is a means for the émigré to manifest his or her presence, albeit symbolic, within the community. Yet, even without material support, communication and information technologies allow for ideas to be shared and images to circulate.

Still, no serious attempt to understand the importance of the images associated with places can be made without taking into account the colonial and post-colonial heritage of Saint-Louis. While Saint-Louis’ past is one of métissage and cosmopolitanism (Diouf, 1998), its more recent, post-independence, history is marked by economic failure. In this context, Western-inspired models of ‘development’ play out against grassroots migration success stories. In Diamaguène, which has its own Association de Développement (known as the ADD) set up by residents, the idea of ‘getting out’ of poverty through employment and out of ignorance through education is upheld. But so is the idea of leaving economic difficulties behind through emigration.

The consensus today in migration theory is that migratory phenomena cannot be understood without linking macro and micro levels of analysis (Brettell, 2000; Castles & Miller, 2003). This seems all the more pertinent in a local context directly affected by international structures in terms of migration. Indeed, Ferguson’s (1999) study of daily life on the Zambian Copperbelt as increasingly marked by a gap between people’s dreams of a better life and their disconnection from the
structures which enable the realization of such dreams, captures the situation of Senegalese would-be migrants whose aspirations are rendered less and less accessible by the increasingly selective and restrictive immigration policies of rich Western states. Carling’s (2002) analysis of Cape Verdean non-migrants takes into account this restrictive aspect of today’s migration order. Without elaborating on the structural constraints facing migrants, I have borrowed Carling’s (2002) notion of ‘involuntary immobility’ which distinguishes between the aspiration to emigrate and the ability to do so. In line with this, during my fieldwork, I endeavoured to understand who wanted to emigrate and who did not, as well as where these positions fitted into people’s life histories and projects. My focus was not on the realization of individual projects, but rather on the influences that converge in the formation of migration projects.

Economic opportunity, or lack of it in Saint-Louis, is undeniably a major part of wanting to migrate. Saint-Louis is historically a receiving area of migrants from the east who made their way to the town in search of work (Camara, 1965). Yet to suggest that when times are tough, migration becomes the economic strategy of those most in need, is to ignore the intricacies of migration projects as they are formulated in the sending countries. Firstly, as Castles and Miller (2003) have demonstrated, it is rarely the poorest who actually emigrate. In Saint-Louis, and more generally in Senegal, despite the contributions of many people towards the price of only one ticket or one fee, emigrants remain those who can afford air fares or fees charged by intermediaries who organise overland emigration or emigration by boat. As we shall see, they are also the people who can afford to associate with people likely to facilitate their departure. Secondly, pure economic interpretations of migration - often referred to as ‘push-pull’ theories - fail to take into account the allure of working abroad which may play as great a role as the earning itself. The notions of being able to control how money is spent as well as being able to save are particularly attractive to people in a context where resources are seen to be siphoned off by family and social obligations:

Ce que tu ne donnes pas à ta maman, tu donnes aux parents de ta maman. Si tu ne le fais pas, on te reproche d’être mauvais. Ce que tu gagnes dans ton commerce, tu ne peux pas le garder … et puis il y a des cérémonies à tout moment.12

This can be related to existing literature on the burden of social obligations. The success of Pentecostalism in Nigeria and Ghana, for example, has been linked to how conversion provides a

12’What you don’t give to your mum, you give to your mum’s relatives. If you don’t, you are reproached for being bad. What you earn from your business, you can’t keep … and there are ceremonies all the time.’ (Baggio, 27.08.2008)
means of escaping family pressure to share resources. Importantly, this example demonstrates the limits to a purely economic understanding of why people want to emigrate. A more holistic approach is required in order to give weight to other non-economic incentives. The concept of a ‘field of possibilities’ (Velho, 1992) is useful when trying to understand how the desire to emigrate emerges:

In any case, the project is not a purely internal, subjective phenomenon. It is formulated and elaborated in a field of possibilities that is circumscribed historically and culturally, as much in terms of the concept of the individual itself as in terms of themes, priorities, and existing cultural paradigms. (Velho, 1992: 14)

In this study, I have conceptualised the migration project as one strategy within a field of possibilities. In fact, it can be seen as one livelihood strategy among others (Olwig & Sørensen, 2002). Including non-economic factors in the definition of a livelihood strategy (Chambers & Conway, 1991; Ellis, 2000) enables a better examination of the various influences that play out in the formation of migration projects.

This chapter has shown the field methods and the analytical tools which I have used to understand how Diamaguène residents’ lives are affected by migration and how they in turn affect migration outcomes. I consider international emigration from Saint-Louis to be a ‘total social phenomenon’ penetrating not only mobile ways of life, but also seemingly sedentary experiences (Ba, 2007). My analysis of this transnational setting is informed by economic, social and historical approaches which, only taken together, can start to outline the desires and needs that emigration responds to as a livelihood strategy. In order to situate Diamaguène as a place where migration projects emerge, the following chapter sketches the history of regional and international migration as well as the political and economic developments which have marked Senegal and its relationship with Europe.
Chapter 2: Historical, Political and Socio-Economic Context

While emigration from Senegal is not a new phenomenon, current migration trends reveal new characteristics. This chapter identifies continuities and differences between present-day emigration from Senegal and its historical precedents. The evolution of international migration policy and legislation, but also the economic and political circumstances of Senegal over the last fifty years, will be examined in order to make clear how international emigration has become a widespread livelihood strategy in contemporary Senegal.

Current internal and international migration

Within Senegal, people move in order to live with family elsewhere, to go to school or university, to work or to look for employment. Quite often children do not grow up in one place: many of my informants had spent time living with aunts and uncles in other parts of Senegal. This depended on how many siblings they had, who could afford to keep them, who needed help with running the household and where they would be closest to educational institutions. Awa, for example, was born in Kaffrine and came to live with her aunt Djatou, and her cousin Penda in Saint-Louis when it was time for her to start high school. She explained that there was a high school in Kaffrine, but that the Saint Louisian school had a better reputation. Concurrently, her parents had taken on their nephew (Djatou’s son), as he had found informal work in Kaffrine rather than in Saint-Louis. Underlying moves such as this swap are kinship alliances between a nephew or niece and his or her maternal uncle. In some cases, a maternal uncle can become as important a figure as a father: his permission will be asked in marriage requests, for example. More generally though, child relocation signals the custom, in some West African countries, of ‘giving’ or ‘exchanging’ children among relatives (Isiugo-Abanihe, 1985). This does not mean that attachment to a specific place as ‘home’ does not exist; on the contrary, belonging to a village, town or neighbourhood can be deeply felt and expressed. Yet geographical mobility, be it permanent or temporary, is frequent.

While most urban-rural migrants are civil servants such as nurses and teachers posted to remote Senegalese areas, land impoverishment has made rural exodus the major form of Senegalese internal migration. The regions of Saint-Louis, Louga, Thiès, Kaolack and Diourbel (see map on page III) - known as the bassin arachidier (peanut basin) - successfully produced peanuts in colonial times, but due to over-cultivation and drought, vast areas have since become infertile.
Major sections of the Saint-Louis and Louga regions have been turned into desert, forcing people to seek alternative livelihoods in Senegalese cities and further afield. The Senegalese government is presently promoting the Grande Muraille Verte (Great Green Wall) agricultural initiative in the shape of a wall of vegetation running from Dakar to Djibouti. Yet these steps against desertification come only after World Bank-enforced structural adjustment policies which saw the dismantling of price controls and subsidies, and crippled the agricultural sector (Riccio, 2005).

In the heyday of peanut cultivation, seasonal migrants, called nawetaan, from the Wolof word nawet, meaning ‘rainy season’, travelled from neighbouring countries to work in the bassin arachidier. A colonial report states that, in 1949, 39,661 migrants transited through Tambacounda on their way to the peanut basin from Guinea, Mali and other Senegalese regions (Rapport no 38, 1950). Today, immigrants are still very much a part of the Senegalese demographic landscape. In 1978, Senegal signed the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) agreement on the free circulation of people within the community and has since been among the most liberal member countries in terms of immigration (Wagbou, 2008). Young Guinean merchants are the most obvious of immigrants in Diamaguène, as they set up shop on street corners, but other wealthier areas of Saint-Louis have been home to Moroccans and Lebanese for many generations (Boumedouha, 1990). The World Bank (2008) estimate of the stock of immigrants as percentage of the Senegalese population in 2005 was 2.8%, equalling 325,940 individuals. Senegal is not, however, only a country of immigration, it is also a country of transit. Just as some Senegalese migrants to Côte d'Ivoire or Gabon view their stay there as transitory, in other words, long enough to save sufficient funds to move onwards (whether this goes according to plan or not), Guineans and other immigrants in Senegal are, in some cases, on their way to other African or European destinations.

Migration between African states is a more wide-spread phenomenon than migration to other international destinations (Ratha & Shaw, 2007). In fact, migration within the region represents about 90% of total migration in West Africa (OECD, 2009). In respect to out-migration from Senegal, however, over the past fifteen years, Europe has become the most important destination of Senegalese emigrants. A nationwide household survey by the Senegalese Statistics Agency found

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13 By extension, the same word navétanes designates inter-village and inter-neighbourhood football tournaments which are carried out during the rainy season and in which the Boco Joom team participates.

14 In Europe, this fact is often overshadowed by exaggerated accounts of the numerical importance of African-European migration, as well as the numbers of sub-Saharan migrants to Maghreb who actually travel onward to Europe (de Haas, 2008).
that, in 2004, 46% of emigrants who had been abroad for five years were in Europe, 43.9% were in African countries, mainly the Ivory Coast (6.6%), and 7.5% of emigrés were in the USA or Canada (Ministère de l’Economie et des Finances, 2004).\(^\text{15}\) Within Europe, Senegalese migrate mainly to France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Germany and Switzerland. As well as the Ivory Coast, African destinations include Gabon, Burkina Faso, Congo-Brazzaville, Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea, Mali, Morocco, Algeria and South Africa. Finally, outside of Africa, Europe and North America, Senegalese also migrate to Asia (Japan, China, Taiwan) and Middle Eastern states such as Kuwait, Bahrain, Dubai and Saudi Arabia (Wagbou, 2008). Young men and women (respectively 84% and 16% according to the same survey) make up the majority of Senegalese international emigrants (Robin, 1996; Ministère de l’Economie et des Finances, 2004).

In accordance with this, my fieldwork indicates that émigrés spoken about by friends and family in Diamaguène left when they were between the ages of 17 and 35 years old. Mostly men, they emigrated to Spain, Italy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the USA and Côte d’Ivoire. In the majority of cases, migration was considered a long term project, not just a matter of a few months or years, but generally for the greater part of one’s working life, ideally interspersed with regular lengthy trips home. In respect to emigration to Europe and North America, in Diamaguène it was widely acknowledged that those who emigrate by irregular means (which I estimate to be the majority, considering the few who emigrate through highly skilled recruitment, University programmes or through marriage to foreigners\(^\text{16}\)), would not return to Senegal for a visit until their status in the host country was regularised. In the case of marriage to a member of the host society, it was suspected by non-migrants that even after retirement the émigré would not return to Senegal. If predicted at all, the duration of time overseas was measured in financial goals and material achievements. Mina, for example, explained that her husband, an émigré in Italy, only envisaged returning to Senegal permanently once he had financed the building of his fifth house. At the time of my fieldwork, he had spent fifteen years in Italy and had built two houses, one for Mina and the other for his mother.

\(^\text{15}\) As such, 53.5% of emigrants travelled to Europe, the USA or Canada. These results contrast with surveys prior to 1993 which revealed that 42% of emigrants travelled to Europe and North America (Ministère de l’Economie et des Finances, 2004).

\(^\text{16}\) Marriage to Senegalese nationals with European residency should also be included in this section although I did not hear of any women or men from Diamaguène emigrating this way.
Historical context of Senegalese migration

The colonial presumption that prior to European arrival, African societies were intrinsically sedentary has been denounced as underpinning development projects in Africa today (Bakewell, 2007). Amongst scholars, however, it is well established that migration pre-existed the arrival of Europeans in West Africa (Black et al, 2006). As in other regions of the world, environmental factors including floods, wars – often religious – (Diop, 1965) and nomadism have affected population movement and settlement over the centuries. As early as 800 BC, caravans travelling along trans-Saharan routes traded West African gold, ivory and slaves while buying cloth, salt, beads and metal goods (Barry, 1972; Shillington, 1995).

For some ethnic groups such as the Soninké living in the Senegal River Valley, geographical mobility was an institution linked to environmental and economic factors. Contrary to many depictions of African migration as the last resort of the poor, Soninké migration was intrinsically related to power. Seasonal migration to trade slaves and produce ensured that agriculturally unproductive months were used profitably and that, as a consequence of the financial gain made through trade, social status and influence were attained and maintained by migrants. According to Manchuelle (1997), contemporary Senegalese international emigration is a continuation of this Soninke form of profit-seeking, status-securing migration. Indeed, the workings of current transnational networks echo the Soninké ‘institutions of solidarity’, as Manchuelle calls them, which facilitated mobility as well as maintaining family and village ties. Manchuelle’s account of Soninké migration shows that economic tactics motivated West African migration long before Europeans set foot on the continent. He therefore dismisses the idea of Senegalese society as sedentary prior to colonial intervention, and rejects modernisation theories which contend that rational economic thinking is something that Africans have learned through their contact with colonizers.

Following colonial ties, but also colonial obligations, France was the first European destination of Senegalese migrants. During the first and second World Wars, many Senegalese men enrolled as tirailleurs (infantrymen). After the wars, some stayed on in France, but most returned to Senegal where they were seen as model employees by the colonial authorities on the basis of their experience in the metropolis (Université d’Aix, 1968). As Manchuelle’s thesis demonstrates, it was again profitable to the French state to call upon its Senegalese nationals during the post World War Two reconstruction phase. Requiring no visas, contrary to European workers, labourers from
French West Africa were recruited from the 1950s onwards. The main French car companies hired workers directly in the Senegal River valley and in the region of Tambacounda in the 1950s and 1960s (Riccio, 2005).

Figure 8: This undated and anonymous photograph was taken in a studio in Marseille. From the 1940s to the 1990s, the studio’s main clientele were immigrants of Senegalese, Algerian and Mauritanian origin who sent the pictures home to their families, often displaying the trappings of modernity, such as the Polaroid camera in this image (Pliez, 2008).
Yet the ethnic groups of the Senegal River valley are by no means the only Senegalese for whom migration is a way of life. Traders of the Muslim Murid brotherhood are undoubtedly the most notorious Senegalese migrants, both at home and internationally. Belonging to a brotherhood is a fundamental characteristic of Islam in Senegal (Marty, 1917; Dia, 1980; Magassouba, 1985). Founded in the nineteenth century by the Senegalese marabout Cheikh Amadou Bamba (who was subsequently exiled by the French colonial authorities), the Murid brotherhood has grown significantly in followers and wealth over the last century through trade involving efficient interaction with outsiders, namely colonial powers and more recently the global economy. At the death of its founder in 1927, the brotherhood adopted a form of organisation which required total submission of followers to the ‘caliph’ at the head of the religious hierarchical system. In turn, this structure provided a type of protection to the Wolof peasants who grew peanuts commercialized by the brotherhood. When considerable international migration of many Murids (but also other Senegalese) occurred in the 1970s following a cycle of severe droughts, the doctrine of the brotherhood, ever dynamic, moved towards a valorisation of travel which it related to the original exile of the founder. It is within this context of positively validated commerce and travel that a transnational network of Murid traders established itself (Diouf, 2000).

Senegalese scholars such as Ndiaye (1997) and Sarr (2003) have drawn attention to how Murids have negotiated a strong position in contemporary Senegal without favouring the European success model over traditional and religious values. Contrary to the idea of Western education as a condition of development as proclaimed by Senegalese post-independence élites, Murids have become successful economic actors without following the state education system and, often, without speaking French (although most are literate in Arabic, having attended l’Ecole Coranique – Quran schooling), and they did so by functioning in the informal sector. In the last thirty years or so, Murids have seized opportunities to expand geographically and financially.

Murid émigrés are colloquially referred to in Senegal as Moódu moódu. Etymologically the name is a deformation of the Wolof name Mouhamadou, in reference to Mouhamadou Moustapha Mbacké, successor of Cheikh Amadou Bamba and caliph of the Murids from 1927 to 1945 (Sarr, 2003). In popular Senegalese discourse, the nickname Moódu moódu generally refers to émigrés from rural areas, notably the Baol interior, and with little or no formal education. Consequently,

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17 In the Wolof language, there is a tendency to repeat words when making them into nicknames. As such, a person from Saint-Louis, Ndar in Wolof, is called a Ndar Ndar.

18 Peasants who have moved from the Baol to urban areas are often referred to as Baol baol.
the word has acquired a negative connotation regardless of a migrant’s actual level of education. In line with this, one of François Manchuelle’s Soninké informants in Bamako said: ‘I cannot read, but I can count’ (1997: 3). That idea was deplored by a Diamaguène resident speaking of Moódu moódu who dominate the market in Saint-Louis: ‘Ils ne savent que compter l'argent.’

Importantly, not all migrants are men. The emergence of a feminine equivalent to the nickname Moódu moódu - Fatou Fatou - is demonstrative of the growing feminisation of emigration from Senegal and other West African states as signalled by Adepoju (2004), although one of the families I encountered in Diamaguène had a history of female migration to France starting as early as the 1960s. One interpretation of the etymology of the nickname Fatou Fatou presented to me by my informants related Fatou Fatou directly to interactions with Europeans and Europe. Fatou, they explained, was the only female local name that the French colons could pronounce and remember so many Senegalese women working as maids during the colonial era were called Fatou by their employers. Considered to again be working for tubaab, but now in Europe or North America, female Senegalese émigrées have been reassigned this name. And a question of assignation it is as, in Diamaguène at least, these terms can be used in a pejorative way: one never calls oneself a Fatou Fatou or a Moódu moódu because of their association with the uneducated labour migrant stereotype.

Recent political framing of Senegalese-European migration

Starting in the 1980s, Senegal faced a secessionist conflict in the southern part of the country, Casamance. This combined with the 1970s droughts, as well as deepened economic instability in the West African region between 1980 and 1990 (Adepoju, 2004), accentuated emigration and diversified the destination countries of Senegalese migrants. Not only did southern Senegalese become refugees in neighbouring countries, but due to a harsh economic downturn in many West African countries, fewer Senegalese migrants were able to find work in them. Opportunities to migrate to Europe legally have shrunk dramatically in the last 25 years. During the period of large scale labour migration from the 1950s to the early 1970s, Southern European and non-European workers’ migration to various Western European countries was facilitated through colonial ties or bilateral guest worker agreements (Turkey and Germany, for example). Around 1973 to 1974, however, mass recruitment ceased due to economic recession and restructuring (Castles & Miller, 2003). Since then, migration flows have been sustained through family reunification, asylum-

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19 ‘All they know how to do is count money.’ (Madjitana, 04.08.2008)

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related and irregular migration, and through migrants’ adaptation to national immigration legislation. For instance, Senegalese migrants shifted destinations from France to Germany, then to Italy and Spain, when obligatory entrance visas were introduced in the 1980s (Robin, 1996; Marfaing, 2003). More recently, the harmonisation of European Union immigration policy and legislation has seen the rise of what has come to be known as ‘Fortress Europe’: immigration laws have been tightened through the restriction and selection of migrants and borders are increasingly policed and externalised (CEC, 2005; McKeever et al., 2005). The impact of these changes on Senegalese flows to Europe has been to criminalise emigration except for migrants who are married to a European, who have a student visa or who are highly skilled.

Net immigration to Europe has not decreased, revealing that instead of curbing immigration, such laws have simply increased the percentage of irregular migrants travelling to Europe (Ndione & Broekhuis, 2006). This continuity, de Haas (2008) explains, is due to structural demand for cheap migrant labour in European countries. He argues that ‘combating illegal migration’ is a rhetorical device put to use by European governments who face growing xenophobia as well as anti-terrorism and security issues. Indeed, recent attempts to ‘manage’ Senegalese-European migration either ignore structural demands for labour or, less often, seek to control them through direct recruitment in Senegal. Media campaigns against irregular emigration, the financing of micro business projects in Senegal, vocational training, and attempts to harness the skills and resources of émigrés all discourage the emigration of those who have not yet left. Even Spain’s initiative to legally recruit seasonal agricultural workers in Senegal is based on the idea that Senegalese workers will return to Senegal once the job finished. In recent years, the notion of ‘development’ has become increasingly linked to migration through such programmes (Bakewell, 2007). While the Senegalese government is keen both to share its expatriates’ resources with non-migrants and to negotiate financial and material aid from European states, the latter have become interested in the contribution of diasporas to development in Senegal as remittances are perceived as potentially decelerating migration (Newland, 2007).

In Diamaguène, campaigns to convince people to remain in their hometown and to contribute to its development are demonstrations of migration ‘management’. In the summer of 2007, the IOM

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20 The Direction des Sénégalais de l’Extérieur (DES) (Directorate for Senegalese Nationals living abroad) was set up in 1993.

21 This is no doubt linked to the fact that, in many developing countries, remittances represent a considerable percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP) and surpass foreign direct investment (FDI) (Newland, 2007).
promoted an anti-emigration slogan in the suburbs of four major Senegalese towns, including Saint-Louis: *tukki taxul tekki* (leaving is not succeeding), a slogan similar to that circulated at the end of the 1990s: *pour s’en sortir n’est pas nécessaire de sortir* \(^\text{22}\) (Riccio, 2005). Funded by the European Union this campaign aimed to discourage potential migrants from what was termed irregular emigration. In practice, this meant discouraging all emigration because those targeted by the campaign had little means of accessing regular channels of emigration. When the opportunity of regular emigration through recruitment for agricultural work in Spain was televised later in 2007, the centre dealing with Saint-Louisian applications was flooded with youths inquiring about the programme. Not knowing how many or on what basis youths would be recruited, employees of the centre informed applicants that being chosen was a matter of luck.

On ne peut pas faire espérer tout le monde, mais on ne va pas refuser tout le monde. Alors, on explique qu’on ignore combien de personnes vont partir et pour combien de temps. Nous nous entretenons avec chaque candidat pour 5 minutes pour lui faire comprendre que d’être choisi est une chance. Ainsi on souhaite éviter la déception et une réaction négative des jeunes. Vous savez, la ruée vers le centre était inquiétante. J’ai dû engager une société de gardiennage pour assurer la sécurité du bâtiment et du matériel. \(^\text{23}\)

### Senegalese economic context

Formal employment opportunities have significantly decreased in Senegal since the economic crisis which started in the 1970s. From the early 1980s onwards, as a condition attached to loans from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, there was a shift from state intervention in the Senegalese economy towards privatisation. Consequently, jobs in administration, the health sector, education and public utilities such as telecommunications and electricity have dwindled. Despite the emergence of a massive informal sector,\(^\text{24}\) rapid population growth has further reduced the possibility of finding formal employment. According to World Bank estimates, in 2007 43% of the

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\(^{22}\) This is an abbreviated version of the phrase ‘pour s’en sortir, il n’est pas nécessaire de sortir’ a play on words which uses the meanings of *s’en sortir* (to succeed) and *sortir* (to go out, to leave). It can be translated as such: it is not necessary to leave to succeed.

\(^{23}\) We cannot make everybody hope, but we’re not going to turn everyone away. So we explain that we don’t know how many people will leave nor for how long. We talk to each candidate for 5 minutes to make them understand that to be chosen is to be lucky. As such, we hope to avoid disappointment and a negative reaction on the part of youths. You know, I had to employ a security team to ensure the security of the building and material.’ (Head of the centre dealing with applicants, 26.08.2008)

\(^{24}\) According to Marfaing and Sow (1999), the Senegalese informal sector took off in the 1970s and by the 1990s, no less than eighty percent of employment was classed as informal and three quarters of household necessities were obtained through informal sources, meaning that these services and goods escaped public monitoring (Smith, 1989).
Senegalese population was under 15 years old and some 100,000 jobs need to be created yearly if Senegal’s growing youth is to be absorbed by the formal labour market (World Bank, 2007). As in many African states, young men and women from poor economic backgrounds have fewer options than their parents’ generation (Tranberg Hansen & Vaa, 2004). The three members of the ‘United Brothers’ rap group,25 who competed in a talent show in Diamaguène during my time there, expressed their discontent with the current economic and political situation in Senegal through their music.

Défar jardin, place publique, changé aye lampe you bësse,
Takhoul gnounane changement développement,
Kholal pontoran ndarbi Pont Faidherbe lime si jakhe si khalisse khedione nassi bire,
Lo goubé gaye gar,
Ame diam boumar takhe ga diaye sa gole,
Gourou Sénégal égal féninène,
Gorgué dioboul wal mazing mo dioboul,
Mo tekhe taye jeunesse bi thiboul.

Building gardens, public areas and lamp posts,
Does not mean change or development,
Look at the Faidherbe Bridge,
The money for its repair should feed stomachs,
You reap what you sow,
It is not worth selling your honesty,
The government of Senegal is just a lie,
Is it the president who is dishonest?
Or could it be the mayor?
This is why our youth does not eat. 26

In Wolof, these verses reveal the nickname of the Saint-Louis mayor Ousmane Maseck Ndiaye who is locally, and mockingly, called Mazing, in reference to his attempts to embellish Saint-Louis: in line with his slogan Andi dfar Ndar (Building Saint-Louis together), Ousmane Maseck Ndiaye has overseen the construction of various public parks, notably one in which benches have roofs, zing in

25 United Brothers are not the rappers that Yat boasted about it the opening chapter. Rap, along with Mbalax, are among the most common forms of artistic youth expression in Diamaguène.

26 The entire song, in French as translated from Wolof by its authors, as well as the English version translated from French by myself, can be found in Appendix 2.
Wolof. The amalgamation of the word *zing* with Maseck to create the nickname Mazing succeeds in associating the mayor with what is perceived by many Saint-Louisians as his principal endeavour, conducted at the cost of more pressing issues. Citing the renovation of the colonial Faidherbe Bridge as a waste of money that should rather ‘feed stomachs’, the United Brothers, aged fifteen, sixteen and seventeen, show their contempt for such projects. In an interview conducted with the group members, during which they translated (from Wolof to French) and contextualized the above lyrics, they explained that the hunger mentioned in the song is symbolic of their desire to work. One of the band members had recently dropped out of school and the other two, who had a brother in Spain, said that they were contemplating doing so too.

Mazing construit des parcs au lieu de stimuler l’emploi. L’État devrait créer des entreprises et fournir un salaire minimum. C’est l’essentiel. Il faut arrêter que les riches aident les plus riches. 27

Portraying Mazing and President Wade as dishonest and self-serving, the song goes on to suggest that Mazing uses government money for his personal benefit. While no proof to back such accusations exists, in Diamaguène at least, mistrust of politicians and their priorities prevails. An anecdotal example was given to me by the representatives of the Diamaguène development agency: *Association de développement de Diamaguène* (ADD). Computers and books that they had organized to be shipped from France to Senegal were blocked in Dakar port because the Saint-Louisian official whose signature was required to exempt them from import duty refused to cooperate. The ADD representatives suspected that the official had sold the computers and books for his own profit.

Formed in the early 1990s, the ADD is representative of a wave of autonomous organisations centered on a common origin, region or neighbourhood created in Senegal in the 1980s and 1990s in response to failing state institutions (Diouf, 2003). 28 The founding members of the ADD organised local rubbish collections in the early 1990s, although the association was only officially formed after floods in 1994. Due to a lack of assistance from the Saint-Louis council, the ADD approached private donors to finance new water evacuation systems in the main streets of the

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27 ‘Mazing builds parks instead of stimulating employment. The state should create businesses and provide a minimum salary. It’s fundamental. It should be stopped that the rich help the richer.’ (Alassane, 20.08.2008)
28 As a result of this, today most urban areas in Senegal have *Associations Culturelles et Sportives* (cultural and athletic associations, known as ASC) and *Groupements d’Intérêt Économique* (economic interest groups, referred to as GIE). ASCs and GIEs are responsible for multiple neighbourhood projects such as clean-up operations, educational classes and libraries.
neighbourhood. In the following years, in addition to organising adult literacy classes and HIV and Malaria prevention programmes, the ADD opened a community nursery (the only one in Diamaguène) which is run on a near voluntary basis.

On the whole, Diamaguène residents consider the state to have disengaged from local problems. Even Saint-Louis’ twinning with the French town of Lille was perceived as manipulated by the Saint-Louisian authorities to the detriment of the neighbourhood of Diamaguène. Like households calling upon their members overseas, the Association de Développement de Diamaguène (ADD) instigated help from a former Diamaguène resident living in France who tried to set up an association composed of Senegalese migrants in France. According to her sister Eva, the émigrée found that the Senegalese members were not involved enough – ‘ils ne s’impliquaient pas assez’ - and she decided to open the society to other acquaintances of hers interested in contributing toward development projects in Senegal. It was at this point, however, that goods were blocked at the port in Dakar.

Disappointment in the state’s withdrawal is not confined to those who, as Grillo and Mazzucato (2008: 192) put it, shared the experience of ‘an optimistic emergence from colonial rule with hopes and expectations dashed by subsequent economic and political failure.’ Younger generations too deplore the current political and economic state of affairs. As expressed by the head of the centre dealing with applications for regular migration to Spain, who feared ‘a negative reaction on the part of youths’, frustration is widespread. Successful emigration, first of Murids, but now of Senegalese of all confessions, presents an inspiring contrast to this politico-economic context and its failed models of betterment. As Riccio (2005: 100) notes, contemporary migration is reversing notions of social hierarchy:

...[I]t is the unskilled and sometimes illiterate who is travelling globally without losing touch with the beloved homeland whereas the white-collar or the graduate seems bogged down in what seems a failed path of social mobility inherited by colonial and postcolonial legacies and rhetoric.

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Chapter 3: Transnational Circuits

‘J’avais beau dire à Madické que, femme de ménage, ma subsistence dépendait du nombre de serpillières que j’usais, il s’obstinait à m’imaginer repue, prenant mes aises à la cour de Louis XIV.’ 30

Fatou Diome, extract from ‘Le ventre de l’Atlantique’

This chapter builds on the previous by adding the essential dimension of transnationalism to its description of life in Diamaguène. Through information and communication technologies, Diamaguène residents participate in ‘global culture’ and maintain and create relationships with émigrés. Remittances too are a form of exchange between migrants and non-migrants which reveal both how emigration can affect the sending area, but equally how household relations in Diamaguène influence remitting mechanisms. In what follows, both material and intangible links to people and places abroad will be explored, but not without taking into account the power-plays which underlie and result from relationships between ‘here’ and ‘there’.

I do not rule out that my own European origin played a part in defining the ‘there’ in my ‘here’ and ‘there’ conversations with the inhabitants of Diamaguène. Not only was Europe frequently identified as an emigration destination - as indeed it is by Diamaguène émigrés - but Europe and the USA were referred to in opposition to Senegal in dialogues which did not even touch on the topic of migration. Yet while my presence may have encouraged comparisons between Senegal and Europe, many other influences bring Saint-Louisians to express themselves along these lines.

Images from afar

One of my older informants, Sidy, who was over seventy at the time of my fieldwork, nostalgically remembered Saint-Louis in its glorious days. Sidy recollected his city’s role as a colonial hub: a place where enormous French shops could be found, from where Senegalese peanuts were exported to far off destinations and where decisions were taken for the entire region of French West Africa. In Sidy’s view, the golden age of Saint-Louis had passed. The extent to which Sidy benefitted from the colonial system is questionable, but he was nonetheless well placed to note that while tourism kept Saint-Louis on the map, the city no longer participated in world affairs as it once did.

30 ‘It was no good telling Madické that, as a cleaner, my subsistence depended on the number of floor cloths I used, he persisted to imagine me with a full stomach, at ease in Louis XIV’s court.’
The idea that opportunities must be sought elsewhere is widespread in Diamaguène. Economic precariousness, a rapidly growing population and the perceived disengagement of the state, as outlined in the previous chapter, help explain this, but so can the colonial heritage of Saint-Louis, the circulation of mediated images of the ‘West’ and, not least, migrant success stories. While Sidy compared Saint-Louis today with its colonial past, my younger informants compared their city and its population with people and places that they saw on the Internet and television and that they had heard about in music and by word of mouth.

By describing the TV and Internet images that circulate between Diamaguène and elsewhere, I do not mean to suggest a causal relation between media and migration. The impact of such images on aspirations to emigrate is difficult to evaluate, not least because reactions to images are highly subjective. My aim is simply to depict a transnational characteristic of life in Diamaguène which potentially plays out in the formation, or not, of the desire to leave.

According to a survey by the Saint-Louis council, in 2001 sixty percent of households in Diamaguène had a television (ADC, 2001). My own experience was that televisions remained switched on most of the day and that, in the case of good neighbour relations, people from households without televisions had the opportunity to watch other people’s. Between video clips, the news and blockbuster Hollywood films were advertisements, phone-in talk shows, religious reports on the spiritual leaders of various brotherhoods, and soap operas both Senegalese and South American. One of these in particular was extremely popular in my circle of friends and informants: Au Coeur du Péché (At the Heart of Sin). Dubbed into French, this Brazilian soap opera followed the lives and love affairs of a wealthy Brazilian family and its enemies. As its genre would have it, every episode ended dramatically: Would Alfredo find out that Tamino was not his legitimate grandson? Would the lost lovers notice each other as they passed on the escalator? The show came on at 5pm, a time of day which enabled many of my female informants to watch it before preparing the evening meal. But it was also followed by many men who would not hesitate to fill me in, as would my female friends, if I happened to miss an episode. In fact, even some non-French speakers enjoyed Au Coeur du Péché. The popularity of the show can be measured by the fact that it was broadcast at a more convenient hour during Ramadan so as to not coincide with the daily breaking of the fast. To mention Au Coeur du Péché is to give an example of how foreign media is related to in Diamaguène. As suggested briefly in the introduction, new information technologies have partially democratised information, although barriers persist and I will come back to this. For instance, literacy is not a prerequisite for viewing images of Brazil. Furthermore, my informants’
comments suggest that links are made between themselves and the protagonists. As Djatou once said spontaneously while the credits were rolling: ‘Tu sais, nous sommes proches de Brésiliens. Des Sénégalais étaient transportés là-bas comme esclaves et donc nous avons le même sang’.31 So while Au Coeur du Pêché portrayed people – mostly white – whose adventures are strikingly different from life in Senegal, it was accorded a space in daily routines and also, for some at least, provided a sense of connection.

Senegalese television channels devote many hours per day to African, but also American and European music clips. Hip-hop and Senegalese Mbalax were the most popular genres of music among my informants (musicians and non musicians alike) and these genres were indeed predominant on television. Set in luxurious villas, Beverly Hills-style promenades or sleek locations with a Ferrari or two as props, American hip-hop and r’n’b video clips churned out images of opulence that even the most exclusive of Saint-Louisian hotels could not rival. Many European and African artists too showed themselves in lavish settings wearing expensive clothes and jewellery. Such images and songs offer both exoticism and familiarity to Senegalese viewers. Through their lyrics, many rappers retain their street identity to which listeners can relate. One Senegalese clip in particular tells the story of a homeless youth whose reverie becomes the setting for his song as he falls asleep on a bench and dreams of life as a wealthy and successful rapper.

### Everyday communication across borders

The use of the Internet is another information and communication technology affecting life in Diamaguène. While reports focusing on the number of cyber cafés in Senegal suggest that Internet is accessible throughout the country (World Bank, 2007), access to Internet is contingent on other factors too. Even before the cost of using the Internet in a cyber café (only one of my informants had internet access at home) and even before literacy or IT familiarity, comes the question of time. Internet is different to television in the sense that one cannot clean rice while watching, for example, and one must ask permission to leave the house, possibly leaving it unattended, in order to visit a cyber café. These restrictions apply to women exclusively. Unsurprisingly then, the overwhelming majority of Diamaguène cyber café-goers are young men.

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31 ‘You know, we are very close to the Brazilians. Senegalese were transported there as slaves and so we have the same blood. We are part of the same family.’ (01.09.2008)
The fact that migration is thought to be easier through contacts abroad reflects in part the impact of migrant success stories in Diamaguène (such as bi-national marriages), but also an adjustment to restrictive European immigration policies. Also, the history of emigration through social networks has arguably played a role in and the quick realisation that communication technologies can be used to build transnational networks. Thus, people in the cyber cafés nearest to Diamaguène spend most of their time there frequenting chat forums where they come into contact with people in other regions of Senegal, West Africa and further afield. Where possible, many also use webcams to see and talk to their interlocutors. One of my informants boasted 310 contacts in Senegal alone and another, Ibou, told me that he had made the acquaintance of a Belgian woman on the dating forum www.abcoeur.com. However, she had disappeared from the forum since he had asked for financial help in opening a hairdressing salon. Ibou was disappointed by this woman's lack of what he called solidarity. He complained that while his correspondent could easily access the Internet from her home and that doing so was inexpensive, for him like for other Senegalese, using the Internet was costly and it had been a sacrifice to spend his money on meeting regularly with her. She had neither recognised this, nor been willing to help him. To stress the immorality of some Europeans, Ibou told me that he had once seen a girl in a cyber café spread her legs and put a webcam under her skirt. According to Ibou, who told me that he had noticed that the girl was on a French chat forum, she did this to show her female anatomy to the person she was talking to. Ibou was certain that the girl was talking to a Frenchman and that he had demanded this of her. When I asked if the girl might have acted on her own initiative, Ibou refuted the idea and said: ‘Jamais une femme Sénégalaise ferait ça et jamais un homme Sénégalais demanderait à une femme de faire ça’.32

Ibou was not alone in considering Europeans to be morally corrupt. Other Diamaguène residents contrasted Senegalese values such as solidarity, compassion and generosity with what was seen as European individualism and promiscuity. Ridjal, for example, frowned upon the behaviour of Senegalese men who congregated outside Saint-Louisian hotels, waiting for female tourists to arrive. Designating the practice as prostitution masculine (male prostitution), Ridjal said: ‘C’est une solution de facilité. Tu gagnes de l’argent et en plus t’as du plaisir, c’est facile et paresseux’.33

Ridjal was also critical of people’s infatuation with émigrés and told the story of a girl from Diamaguène who married a Fala (Senegalese émigré to Congo or Gabon):

32 ‘Never would a Senegalese women do such a thing and never would a Senegalese man ask it of her.’ (03.09.2008)
33 ‘It’s the easy option. You earn money and you also take pleasure in it, it’s easy and lazy.’ (29.08.2008)
C’était une fille du quartier, très belle, donnée en mariage à un Fala. Mais leur mariage n’a pas duré deux ans – tous les deux sont décédés du SIDA. Les familles ne regardent que l’argent. Si j’avais une fille qu’un Fala ou un Moódu moódu voulait épouser, j’exigerais des analyses à la clinique. Cette fille a seulement su qu’elle avait le SIDA quand son mari est décédé. C’est dangereux d’être aveuglé par l’argent. Les gens ne sont pas réveillés.34

Here, Ridjal clearly suspects émigrés to have a greater chance of carrying sexually transmitted diseases and this may be linked to social representations of migrant lifestyles and values. A change in values among émigrés was often linked to the host society. Chérif, for example, vehemently asserted that if Senegalese émigrés forgot about their families left behind and failed to live up to their responsibilities to stay in touch and remit, it was under the influence of European women. In what follows, I shall turn to the relationships between Diamaguène residents and their friends and family overseas.

Émigrés communicating with family and friends in the sending country play a part in the circulation of ideas and knowledge between sending and receiving societies. Transnational circulation of information depends on many factors, one of which is the frequency of communication between migrants and non-migrants. This includes periodically returning to Senegal, which is more difficult for those residing abroad illegally. The migrant members of the households I spent time with in Diamaguène had visited their families once their status in Europe and the USA allowed them to travel and return to Europe; but, crucially, they had not visited before they had amassed sufficient funds to finance the trip and come laden with presents. I encountered few returnees from Europe during my time in Diamaguène and most were of retirement age. Alongside the discourses surrounding migration projects, this suggests that émigrés from Diamaguène tend to spend an important part, if not the entirety, of their working lives abroad. Many leave with the intention of earning a specific amount of money rather than with a length of time in mind. Marfaing (2003) has noted that for Senegalese immigrants in Germany, this often results in migrants continually postponing their return to Senegal.35

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34 ‘It was a young girl from the neighbourhood, very beautiful, given in marriage to a Fala. But their marriage didn’t last two years – they both died of AIDS. Families only see money. If I had a daughter who a Fala or a Moódu moódu wanted to marry I would demand analyses at the clinic. This girl only knew she had AIDS when her husband passed away. ‘It’s dangerous to be blinded by money. People aren’t conscious.’ (29.08.2008)

35 In the context of forced migration, Hansen (2007) has noted the tendency among returnees to emigrate again because they are unable to uphold their family’s standard of living from home.
It also seemed that once émigrés had reached some kind of financial stability, they telephoned their family more frequently. Telephone was by far the most frequent means of communication, but text messages were also used by my younger informants, as was Skype. According to Abdou, himself a non-migrant with two cousins overseas, the fact that émigrés ring more frequently when they have obtained relatively stable employment is not only because of the expense of telephoning, but also because of family expectations attached to migration. His own aunt would scold her son if he rang home merely to say that he was well. Consequently, he took to calling only when he had a Western Union code to transmit to his mother.

Unsurprisingly, the type of information exchanged between non-migrants and migrants depended on their personal relationship. The content of telephone conversations varied greatly if it was between friends or between family members and also depended on age. One of Ridjal's migrant friends asked him questions about the state of the job market in Senegal and his chances of finding employment there. These were questions which he felt he could not ask his family because they were intent on him finding employment in France. Ridjal and his friend shared with each other their gossip, worries and aspirations for the future. Based on the accounts given to me by my informants, it seemed that phone calls between friends often provided more vivid and more positive descriptions of life in Europe than calls to family members. This may be because boasting to friends is less likely to result in greater demands in terms of remittances. Another explanation might be found in the link between family and witchcraft in many African societies (Geschiere, 1995). In effect, in Senegal it is widely believed, yet rarely expressed, that witchcraft is at its most harmful in the hands of kin. It may be the case that émigrés divulge information prudently to relatives for fear of the services of marabouts being sought out to act against them. With friends, migrants could be less guarded. An émigré friend of Baggio’s, for example, had told him that it was cheaper to drink milk than water in Italy: ‘Tu t’imagines ?’, Baggio said to me pensively, ‘Il peut passer des jours sans boire de l’eau.’36 Such anecdotes feed into images of Western abundance to which non-migrants are already exposed through Internet and television. In this way, mediated images and ideas, on the one hand, and migrant stories, on the other, merge in the construction of social representations of what many Diamagène residents referred to as ‘developed’ and ‘rich’ countries.

Yet Diamaguène residents’ lucid knowledge of the dangers and difficulties of illegal and legal immigration to Europe reveals that émigrés relate the hard times as well as the good. Talking of her cousin who left recently to join his mother, who is legally established in Spain, but who had not yet

36 ‘Can you imagine? He can go for days without drinking water.’ (27.08.2008)
put in a request for family reunification, Madjitana said: ‘C’est pas facile. Il ne peut pas circuler comme il veut. En quelque sorte, il est sous la protection de sa mère. Il se limite à sortir pendant des heures sûres de peur d’être refoulé.’ 37 Djimbi whose two younger brothers had sailed to Spain in a fishing boat told me that not only was it difficult for them to find work, but that they were depressed and missed Senegal. And Monsieur Diop, whose son had travelled to France with his football club and never returned, displayed a deep understanding of his son’s precarious situation in France. While he still played football – in the French third division – he only did small jobs, ‘des petits boulots’, making just enough money to survive. To my question of how their family members and friends find life in Europe and the USA, *la vie est dure* (life is hard) was a recurrent response.

While phone calls and text messages are a relatively recent means of communication between migrants and non-migrants, hearing émigré stories of life abroad is not a new phenomenon in Senegal. Murid traders have recounted their experiences abroad since the 1970s, and in the 1980s, male Malian, Mauritanian and Senegalese labour migrants to France from the Senegal River Valley were known to send home oral testimonies in the form of cassette recordings:


The notion of management features in the above quote. The émigrés described by Condé and Diagne control their families ‘from afar’ and ‘solve their problems to the slightest detail from France’. Their messages clearly contain instructions, a tendency which is echoed in contemporary Diamaguène. It would therefore be inaccurate to describe transnational communication between migrants and non-migrants merely as a means of conveying information about ‘here’ and ‘there’. Émigrés have a hand in family affairs, notably through their orders about how money is to be shared and spent. Today, telephone calls ensure the presence and exercise of the authority of

37 ‘It’s not easy. He can’t move around as he would like to. In a way, he is under the protection of his mother. He limits himself to going out to safe hours of the day because he is afraid of being deported.’ (04.09.2008)
38 ‘Having emigrated to support their families, these men live in constant relation to them, feeding them from afar and solving their problems to the slightest from France. They use postal services (letters, telegrams and telephones). Better still, they bestow on those of them leaving for vacation in Africa ‘letters’ recorded onto magnetic tapes in which they state their messages at length, thus by-passing the barrier of writing.’
émigrés within their families as cassette messages once did for migrants from the Senegal River valley. Unfortunately, my findings do not allow for a fair comparison between the implication of men and women émigrés in life back home as the latter were greatly outnumbered by their male counterparts.

The Senegalese government and the international community have recognised the pivotal role played by émigrés within their communities of origin. Consequently, attempts to harness the potential social, as well as financial, contribution of migrants to development in Senegal have recently been implemented. At the same time, within development and migration studies, the notion of ‘social remittances’ has flourished. Social remittances are understood to be the ideas, knowledge and skills which are relayed by émigrés from host societies to their societies of origin. In her analysis of social remittances of migrants between a neighbourhood in Boston, USA, and a Dominican village, Levitt (2001) distinguishes three types of social remittances: normative structures, that is to say ideas, values and beliefs; systems of practice, in other words the actions which are shaped by normative structures; and finally social capital. While the short time-frame of my fieldwork inhibits a longitudinal examination of social remittances to Diamaguène, it did not appear that local values had moved towards those of the host societies of migrants (which are multiple, contrary to Levitt's case-study). On the contrary, the mere risk of migrants’ values changing was deplored by many informants, such as Chérif who condemned those who ‘forget where they come from’ and advanced the idea that male émigrés who do not remit have been perverted by *tuubab* women. Respect for émigrés and the different lifestyles they led was contingent on their ongoing participation in home affairs. Echoing Riccio’s (2002) findings among Murid emigrants in Italy, a sense of Senegal as ‘moral home’ prevails in Diamaguène. ⁴⁰ Europe may be the place to earn money fast and to study. It may be modern, clean and rich, but morally and spiritually, Western industrialised countries are considered poor. One of Riccio's informants expressed that:

Many Italians…. do not respect their parents, when they become old their children want to forget their responsibility, putting them into an old people’s home. In Senegal it would never happen. Another thing is that here there is less faith. Faith helps people to think about life. Here people are too materialistic. (Riccio, 2002: 79)

⁴⁰ Within Senegal, Guèye (2003: 614) situates Touba as an urban pole for Murids: ‘The new Murid, in spite of a highly international orientation, views Touba as an anchor and a source of personal identity. S/he creates an urban society with a strong sense of identity, a mental construct of the Touba homeland, a particular lifestyle and a distinct world view.’
In respect to Levitt's category of systems of practice, while migrants’ behaviour differed in some respects to local practices in Diamaguène, the shift arguably occurred under the influence of the migration process rather than through an imitation of practices in the host country. The example turned to in the next section is that of decision-making power in financial issues, which I argue is influenced more by social relations in Senegal than by European customs. Unlike Levitt’s field site, there were no signs of these new practices infiltrating the local area. In Diamaguène, it seemed that being abroad was the only situation in which acting differently was socially permitted.

Prestige and status acquired within the emigrant community and transferable to the sending areas are what Levitt refers to by social capital as a remittance. It is possible that in the case of male Murid migrants, who work and live together in the host country, the respect earned by a migrant from his co-migrants finds echo within the families and religious organisations back in Senegal. Unfortunately, this discussion is beyond the scope of my findings. What represented an outstanding effect of migration in Diamaguène, on the other hand, was the transformation of financial capital earned overseas into social capital in the sending context. In many cases, downward professional mobility in the host country brought about the upward social mobility of households in Diamaguène. In other words, although émigrés did jobs in Europe for which they were often over-qualified, their remitted-to households gained in purchasing power and status. How the émigré sponsor of the *Boco Joom* football team earned his money was irrelevant, what mattered was that his family in Diamaguène was thanked for his generosity.

**Transnational remitting mechanisms**

In 2007, the World Bank (2008) recorded that 874 million US dollars were officially remitted to Senegal. Yet the sums remitted through recorded channels such as banks and large money transmitters constitute only part of the total funds sent by migrants back to Senegal. Unrecorded channels include delivery by hand, transfer in the context of business and transfer through money transmitters serving a particular social group (Pieke, Van Hear & Lindley, 2007). To obtain an estimate encompassing informal remittances, Fall (2002) suggests tripling formal amounts. Following this calculation, in 2007, some 2,622,000,000 US dollars were sent to Senegal. The 2004 Senegalese household survey provides an insight into where remittances come from. It reports that in 2004, Europe, Côte d'Ivoire and North America were the destinations with the highest

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40 Based on Senegal’s GDP estimated at 9.1 billion US dollars in 2007 by the World Bank (World Bank Country Brief), remittances to Senegal in 2007 (formal and informal according to Fall’s formula) equate to 9.6% of Senegal’s GDP that year.
remitting rates: 80.8% for Europe and Côte d’Ivoire and 79.1% for North America. Remittances were sent the most regularly from Europe, North America and other non-African states (Asia, the Middle East and Australia for example), they were regular in 55.7%, 48% and 44.6% of cases, respectively. Côte d’Ivoire was the African country remitting the most regularly, which is to say in 31.8% of cases (Ministère de l’Économie et des Finances, 2004).

Figure 9: Leaflets advertising a worldwide remitting agency and one operating within the CFA franc zone (twelve formerly French-ruled African countries, as well as in Guinea-Bissau and in Equatorial Guinea).

On the main street of Diamaguène, Western Union signs dominate the landscape, but they are not the only official remitting agencies to be found in Saint-Louis: there are competing agencies such as Moneygram, Travelex Transfers, Money Express and Telegiros, a Spanish based agency. While some of these agencies stand alone, others are affiliated with the post office and with various banks which, in part, explains why, when I asked the manager of the largest Western Union agency how many Western Union agencies there were in Saint-Louis, he simply laughed and said that there were so many that it was impossible to count them. As well as being prolific, most agencies were busy, most of the time. Even my informant Mina, whose situation outwardly corresponds to the receiving end of a typical informal, or semi-informal, Murid brotherhood network (Tall, 1998; Guèye, 2003), received money through the Western Union from her husband, a Murid street vendor

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41Such as Tall’s example of Kara International Foreign money exchange which is legally established as an exchange service in the USA, but relies on informal networks in Senegal.
in Italy. This is not to say that the husband did not also use informal means of getting money to his wife, nor that he refrained from engaging in other transfer networks with other people, for religious or business reasons for example. Mina told me that her husband used Western Union because his type of work was illegal and that he preferred to send money when he had it on him, rather than see it confiscated were he to be apprehended by the police.

The second formal means of sending money to Senegal is through bank transactions. Only one of my informants reported using this mechanism to receive money from his brother in the USA. The brother had an account in Senegal and regularly transferred money to it from California, his siblings in Diamaguène used the émigré’s own bank card to withdraw money from the account. It has been suggested that the unpopularity of transferring money through banks lies in the low cap on foreign exchange transactions and the absence of a tradition of using banks (Guèye, 2003; Jettinger, 2005). It is equally important to take into account that it takes 3-4 days to transfer by bank; agencies like Western Union transfer immediately. Also, while bank fees for international transfers can be cheaper than those of transfer agencies, a minimum amount of money must be placed in the bank to open an account (between 25,000 and 50,000 CFA at the CBAO) and maintenance fees apply.

The informal mechanism used by Mina and her husband - and perhaps the most obvious way of getting money from A to B - was an annual door to door delivery of money when Mina's husband visited Senegal. This sum, somewhat larger than at other times of the year, provided the household with enough money to cover the large spending of the weeks following Ramadan. A variant of the personal delivery system is a cash-in-hand payment, by the émigré, in advance to a shop keeper during a holiday home. For example, Eva's sister visited her once a year from France where she had been living for the past twenty years. During her time in Diamaguène she paid a local shop-keeper an amount that covered her sister's needs in oil, rice and sugar for one whole year. Eva could therefore rely on collecting her groceries regularly.

Unlike Mina’s husband who had a permit which allowed him to spend eight months of the year abroad and four in Diamaguène, or like Eva’s sister who had acquired French residency, many other emigrants are unable to return to Senegal for financial and legal reasons. My discussions with remitted-to individuals and households uncovered that many remitters requested the services of a middleman (and in my informants’ experience it always was a man). Émigrés sometimes use a travelling trader to assure that their money is delivered safely – Mina’s husband also annually entrusted money for his wife with a fellow Murid trader travelling back to the Fouta region of
Senegal. Traders were also used as intermediaries by non-traders. One scenario was that the trader him or herself travels between Senegal and other countries of destination where s/he comes into contact with the émigré wishing to remit. In cases where the émigré gives the trader money in the country of destination's currency, both are advantaged by not losing out through money conversions (for the trader) and fees (for the émigré). The trader will use that money while abroad and give the émigré’s family money in CFA upon his return, or request that one of his colleagues in Senegal do so. Another scenario is that the trader lends money to the émigré – the loan will be paid by the émigré in the currency of the host country during the trader’s next trip and the trader will assure that the designated recipients receive the equivalent sum. Such credit systems rely greatly on trust and therefore tend to flourish in religious or family networks. Regarding Murid merchant networks, Buggenhagen (2001) stresses the centrality of reciprocity and obligation in obtaining capital, credit, and a client base for trading ventures.

In Diamaguène this sort of arrangement took place with traders who were not necessarily mobile themselves, but were occasionally business partners with or related to (often both) the mobile trader. It was once the case that the émigré himself was an associate of the businessman in Saint-Louis. The émigré-associate assumed the purchase and transport fees of commodities (such as white goods) to Senegal, knowing that his family would be paid by the partner in Saint-Louis.

Most frequently though, direct and formal remittance mechanisms linked émigrés to shop owners in Saint-Louis. The émigré’s interest in going through a middleman was that the shop owner would follow the émigré’s instructions about how the money was to be distributed. Waly, for example, the son of the owner of a large shop in the Diamaguène market would receive money from various émigrés through Moneygram, Western Union or by personal delivery. On one of the days I met with Waly, he had just been to collect 200,000 CFA from Moneygram. His instructions were to give 100,000 CFA francs per month for two months to the wife of the émigré. Despite being instructed to give the wife the remitted money not rice or oil or other such staples which he sold in his shop, the advantages for Waly were that he was able to use the capital. In addition to this, according to Waly and others, émigrés often add a ‘gift’ for the shop-owner (25,000 CFA francs in the case of the 200,000 transfer). Waly said that a good Muslim shopkeeper would never demand a fee, but that a good Muslim émigré would never forget to include a little ‘gift’.

42 None of my informants spoke of middlewomen, although I did meet a woman who acted as a local money lender, a role long accorded to men known as Baay Xaalis which translates as ‘father money’ (Ndiaye, 1997).
Under these conditions whereby the émigré not only pays a transfer fee by using the services of a formal agency, but also includes a gift, or voluntary fee, for the local businessman, the importance of the middleman becomes obvious: ensuring control over when, and in what quantity, money is received by the family is a primary preoccupation for the émigré. I suggest that this behaviour is symptomatic first of the drain on personal resources that families are seen to constitute and, second, of spending stereotypes attached to women.

A Senegalese television series which ran in the months of August and September 2008 depicted a scheming mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law who lived together, as patrilocality would have it, while their son and husband was in Europe. Upon receiving a smaller quantity of money from her son than her daughter-in-law, the mother came up with all sorts of ways of upsetting her son’s marriage such as pretending that her daughter-in-law was out whenever the son telephoned home. Three themes in this TV show emerged from my fieldwork in Diamaguène. They were: the general idea that, in the case of patrilocality, when a husband is abroad, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law will not get on; the predominantly male belief that women will resort to all sorts of schemes to squeeze money out of men; and finally that émigrés send different amounts of money to different members of their families.

In respect to mistrust of women, the Senegalese sociologist Sow (1994) has advanced that an ‘ideological referential system’ ensures the endurance of the idea that women generate only minimal or supplementary incomes for households. This scenario was indeed the case prior to the encroachment of capitalism on Wolof society when it was exclusively women’s manual labour that was required by the household (Diop, 1985). At that time, the little money women earned outside was considered their own. Yet things have changed: various studies completed since the 1990s have shown that in the current context of unemployment and population growth, women have been the most resourceful household members in generating income. In fact, according to a 1992 study for the Population Council by Boye, while one father in five catered fully to his children’s maintenance and education, one mother out of two did the same. The ideological referential system – which it should be noted is not specific to Senegal, feminists the world over have deplored the structural and ideological barriers preventing full recognition of women’s labour – can be illustrated through the case of Mina:

Since marrying in 1998, three months before her eighteenth birthday, Mina had had three children, but she had simultaneously pursued her secondary education obtaining her baccalauréat (equivalent
of A levels), a degree in mathematics, and a diploma in IT management both from the Université Gaston Berger in Saint-Louis. This was made possible through the steady flow of remittances from her husband working as a street vendor in Italy. After unsuccessfully seeking employment in the private sector, Mina started teaching mathematics. Then, after one year in a school in Podor, from where she travelled back every weekend, she found a position in a secondary school on the main island of Saint-Louis. In respect to household spending, remittances from Mina’s husband covered daily expenses. With her salary, Mina had bought a plot of land outside of Diamaguène. Her plan was to build a house there, to rent it out and to place the profit in a bank account specifically dedicated to financing her children’s education. Mina explained that this was a sort of back-up plan in case her husband became unable to stay in Italy: ‘L’émigration c’est pas sûre. Un jour l’Europe va se réveiller et vouloir des emplois pour ses jeunes.’ 43 Though not expressed by Mina herself, it might equally be argued that like other women in polygamous marriages, Mina also had to bear in mind the possibility of her husband taking on a second or third wife with whom his earning would have to be shared. Whatever her motivations, Mina was clearly thinking ahead. Her purchase of the land upon which she intended to build a house was not hidden from her husband - he telephoned her everyday and requested to be kept up to date with the day’s spending. When there were bills to pay, Mina read them to her husband over the telephone and then followed his instructions on how to pay them. Coherent with the view that families, and in particular women, drain men’s resources, Mina’s emigrant husband insisted upon accountability in an attempt to affirm his power over his household and wife.

An alternative response to the widespread idea that women are large spenders is to accommodate it. Every month Hawa’s brother sent 150,000 CFA francs to his family, through Western Union, and he had given strict instructions that 50,000 were to go to his father, 75,000 to go to his mother and 25,000 were to be shared between his younger sisters and brother. Here the mother is clearly favoured over her husband and the other members of the family, but this, according to Hawa, is because the father, a baker, has his own income, whereas the mother has no income of her own for events such as ‘tontine’ credit association meetings and weddings. Bop (1996) has documented how giving at ceremonies has traditionally been a means for women to consolidate their social status and that of their families: spending on clothes and gifts therefore serves a precise social function, notably, in the case of Murids, through the production of alliances and blood relations

43 ‘Emigration isn’t a sure thing. One day Europe is going to wake up and want employment for its youth’. (16.09.2008)
With the decline of men’s capacity to provide for their families, Neveu Kringelbach (2007) notes that women have sought to support and coach each other in business ventures, often using what have become female dominated social events and spaces to raise money. Still, social representations of women’s ostentatious spending overshadow their major contribution to, and management of, household budgets. Drawing on a study based in Dakar, Adjamagbo et al. (2004) link this to women’s desire to keep up the appearances of a traditional division of labour because this in turn reflects upon their virtues as a wife and subsequently the position of their children in society. Indeed, dominant values link a mother’s loyal and modest behaviour to the success of her children (Diop, 1985).

Unlike Hawa’s household, in the situation depicted in the television series, the emigrant’s mother and wife could not be trusted to share the remitted money according to the emigrant’s wishes. He therefore sent them different amounts separately. Going through a middle-man is one means of ensuring this: the wife and mother each visit the shop owner to receive their designated amount. Not only is this control over who gets what a means of minimising tension among family members and a way of manifesting one’s authority despite one’s physical absence, but it is also linked to gendered ideas of spending in Senegal (women as extravagant spenders), and I would argue, the maintenance of male dominance. It can also be associated with one of the motivations to migrate which I have identified through my fieldwork which is that of wanting to dispose freely of one’s earnings. Here, distance allows for greater decision-making power. Would-be migrants aspire to such freedom and migrants make use of it, not only through remitting, but also through providing precise instructions on who is to receive what and when.

Concentrating on what is informal and what is formal does not make full sense of remitting logics in the case of the neighbourhood of Diamaguène. Most often, a mixture of informal and formal mechanisms combined to meet social as well as economic imperatives. While remitting mechanisms were multiple, they were most often undertaken individually. Other than Murid brotherhood networks, I did not come across any transnational organisations such as ‘hometown’ associations which engaged in financial remitting.

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44 In the context of forced migration, Nick Van Hear (2002) has noted the role of spending remittances on rituals and ceremonies in reasserting social bonds.
Remittances and social mobility

Few people owned cars in Diamaguène, but Abdou had just acquired a shiny Peugeot. In order to purchase it, he took out a loan from the Compagnie Bancaire de l’Afrique Occidentale (CBAO) the condition of which was to provide the bank with proof of employment. This was no problem as he had been employed by the state, as a teacher, for eight years. Abdou's plan was to use the car first as an unregistered taxi, a clando (slang for clandestin) in Dakar and, once enough capital had been accumulated to paint it yellow and black and register it as a proper taxi, he wanted to bring the car back to Saint-Louis where his younger brother would be its official driver. In a nutshell, Abdou had obtained credit from the bank to invest in a business strategy. However, I had heard a different story. My attention had been drawn to the car before I met Abdou. Some weeks earlier, sitting on the opposite side of the street to where Abdou lived, another Diamaguène resident had pointed to the car and said ‘Regarde la voiture bleue là-bas! C'est parce que son cousin est à l'étranger.’ Indeed, for his neighbours, the fact that Abdou had an émigré in his family was sufficient to explain the apparition of the Peugeot. Like houses and clothes, cars were material signs of wealth which could, more often than not, be explained through transnational links.

In the great majority of remitted-to households I knew, remittances were spent first and foremost on daily consumption and then on real estate (the disputed contribution of remittances to ‘development’ will be discussed in chapter five). Becoming a property owner and building a second storey on a house literally equated to going up in the world. When I arrived there, Diamaguène’s first Italian-style porch had just been completed, unconventionally hiding its owners from their neighbours during the cooler evening hours when most sat outside. This material sign of distinction directly affected the status of the owner of the house. The fact that her daughter was divorced and living alone in Paris was not an embarrassment as it might be if she were divorced and living alone in Dakar, for example (Dial, 2008). On the contrary, she was considered to be an honourable daughter who helped her mother. Migration had allowed the daughter to legitimately lead an alternative lifestyle while her sisters living in Senegal were only spoken of in reference to their husbands and children.

Concrete manifestations of betterment, and importantly the rapidity of change, play their role alongside information technologies and migrant stories in rendering Europe and North America highly desired destinations. The speed with which some émigrés are seen to make money overseas

45 ‘Look at the blue car over there. It’s because his cousin is overseas.’ (Cheikh, 12.08.2008)
cannot be rivalled even by those with steady incomes. Baggio, for example told me of one of his friends who, since graduating from teacher training college, was doing his utmost to save enough to buy a plane ticket to France. He still contributed, as expected, to household expenses, but he spent nothing on himself: no transport fees, no clothes, no outings, no cigarettes. Despite having a profession and the promise of an increased salary over time, Baggio’s friend considered it preferable to travel to France and earn money fast. Similarly, the signature of the economic pact to send Senegalese youths to work seasonally in Spanish agriculture was televised and celebrated by the Senegalese government as an alternative to irregular emigration by boat. According to the head of the office dealing with Saint-Louisian applications, the day after the pact featured on the Senegalese evening news, the local authorities were inundated with applicants, many of whom were employed civil servants. Life may be hard in Europe, la vie est dure là-bas, but people in Diamaguène see this hardship as paying off in a relatively short period of time. As such, Djimbi, whose brothers told her that they had still not found full time work in Spain after four years there, nonetheless requested money from them. The brothers subsequently borrowed from a middleman who Djimbi was instructed to visit in Saint-Louis.

It is possible that the education available to Mina, whose situation was mentioned previously, would have been inaccessible had her husband not worked abroad. As an unemployed mechanic prior to his departure, his income was next to nothing. Mina’s husband is an example of an émigré who has surpassed the economic opportunities which were available to him in Senegal. Mina is highly qualified and is working towards educating her children to the same degree. Her two elder sons currently go to the private Catholic school in Saint-Louis which is open to all religious affiliations and, according to Mina, more reliable than state schools as there are no strikes in private establishments. Kaba’s brothers and sisters also go to the Catholic school. Their fees are paid by Kaba’s older brother who lives in California. Kaba is proud to say that even while his brother was himself a student in America, he managed to send home enough money to support their younger siblings. As well as the private Catholic primary school, Kaba’s brother helped to support their sister who is currently studying sociology in Lyon. More recently, Kaba requested that his older brother help one of the younger brothers, who is a talented football player, to emigrate, but he refused to consider it before the younger brother had re-sat his baccalauréat (A levels):

46 In fact, it is questionable whether they would have married at all. Mina’s husband had been working abroad for four years before their marriage was arranged by their families.
Pour lui, l'éducation c'est vraiment la priorité. Un de nos frères est un très bon footballeur. Il a râté son bac deux fois alors j'ai demandé à mon frère aîné de l'aider à partir à l'étranger. Il m'a répondu que c'était exclu avant qu'il n'obtienne son bac.47

According to Kaba and others, the majority of children at the private Catholic school are from households with migrant members who can afford the 32,000 CFA franc pre-inscription fee along with other expenses. This hints at the form of investment remittances are taking in Diamaguène and, by extension, emerging differences between households with migrant members and those without. So while power is exerted by emigrants over their households in Diamaguène, remitted-to households themselves exert power over households without migrant members. Financial remittances, and their spending, create and accentuate differences between households. An interesting part of this is that social upward mobility in terms of education, but also purchasing power, is available to people who, were it not for migration, would not be provided with such opportunities. Emigration and remittances therefore play a central role in reconfiguring social relations in the sending area of Diamaguène.

Through this description of flows of images, ideas, stories and capital between Diamaguène and emigrant host countries, the contrast between the mobility of things and the immobility of Diamaguène residents has become all the more apparent. Caught in asymmetrical relations, non-migrants participate, communicate, send and receive, but rarely on their own terms. Not only is access to information and communication technologies unequally distributed within Diamaguène, but Ibou’s account of his own and others’ experiences in cyber cafés, for instance, are illustrative of the imbalance of transnational relations between Europeans and Senegalese. Yet while Westerners are depicted as morally inferior, and the difficulties of living and working in Europe are recounted by emigrants, Europe and other Western destinations are nonetheless desired by many.

47‘For him, education is a priority. One of our brothers is very good footballer. He has failed his A levels twice so I asked my older brother to help him emigrate. He answered that it was out of the question until he had passed his A levels’. (Kaba, 14.09.2008)
Chapter 4: Migration Aspirations

"We’re going to do everything we can to leave, 
“Barca wala barzakhe” Barcelona or the cemetery, 
We’ll break down the borders and barriers, 
To have or to die, 
If we don’t work, what’s the family going to eat?" 48

United Brothers, 16.08.2008

The omnipresence of emigration in society, discourses about the difficulties of life in Senegal and participation in transnational circuits constitute the backdrop to the emergence of migration aspirations in Diamaguène. The present chapter turns to the social relations which influence how and by whom migration projects are formulated. Concentrating on youths, it will explore the family and social expectations faced by young Diamaguène residents, as well as their personal aspirations, thus revealing both collective and individual motivations behind emigration projects.

‘C’est le rêve de tout le monde d’avoir un fils à l’étranger’49 is a remark made by an employee in the Saint-Louis council’s Department of Youth which encapsulates the link between migration and male bread-winner rhetoric. This rhetoric regulates household relations in Senegalese society so despite growing reliance upon women’s incomes, sons’, husbands’, brothers’ and uncles’ financial contributions are considered crucial to household budgets. According to Diop’s (1985) landmark publication on Wolof families, in the days of auto-subsistence, while it was primarily the reproductive labour50 of women which was demanded of them, in some cases, women were given small plots of land which they could exploit and personally profit from. In urban areas particularly, women no longer farm, but engage in formal and informal revenue-generating activities. In spite of their earnings no longer being their own to dispose of freely, but being increasingly important in supporting households, the ideology of the former sexual division of labour persists (Adjamagbo et al., 2004). Consequently, as is the case in Europe, for example, it is mostly male unemployment - as opposed to women’s - which is perceived as problematic by men themselves, their families and

48 Opening lines of the United Brother’s song ‘Emigration’, see Appendix 2 for the full song in French and English.
49 ‘It’s everyone’s dream to have a son overseas.’
50 I adopt here the notion of reproductive labour which has been used by feminists to draw attention to the contribution of unpaid household labour, child-rearing and the maintenance of workers to the capitalist project (Delphy, 1998; Anderson, 2001). Despite this example predating capitalism in Senegal, reproductive labour aptly describes the central role of women in producing labour power itself.
society at large (Delphy, 1998). For young men, the denial of the role of provider, or contributor, poses the same threat as prolonged celibacy for both sexes: marginalisation.

Pressure to contribute to household budgets and the social recognition this contribution provides do not necessarily result in the formulation of migration projects. As we shall see in the following chapter, some Diamaguène residents have no desire to emigrate. Nonetheless, emigration as a perceived solution to the problem of being financially and socially immature cannot be overlooked. Not only do examples of the success of émigrés abound in Diamaguène, but migration seemingly requires few prerequisites: it transcends educational attainment, professional skills, religion and caste. Moreover, travel can be paid for on credit. On this basis, and despite migration depending on variables such as avoiding immigration authorities and being able to draw on social networks, emigration is contemplated, aspired to, and sometimes put into action as a livelihood strategy.

The situation of Yat exemplifies this. There were many reasons why Yat wished to go to Europe. He dreamt of football and money, but his desire was equally fuelled by a sense of duty towards his family, and in particular towards his mother, his father’s second wife of whom he was the only son. Yat knew that his mother was counting on him, rather than his sisters, to find an occupation and later to provide for her when she retired from her job as a secretary. More effort and money had been invested in his education than in that of his four sisters. After leaving school at the age of 15, it was arranged between his parents and local craftsmen that Yat would become a welder, but he subsequently abandoned the apprenticeship because he frequently injured his hands. Following this, and on the basis of his promising football skills, his mother paid for him to go to the Elite Foot football school in Dakar which he attended for one year. To his great disappointment, this did not lead him to become a professional sportsman. One of his friends from the school is now in the national team and another travelled to France for a competition and remained there illegally. This second friend now lives in Italy with his brother and, according to Yat, while this may not be as glorious an existence as being a footballer, this friend is nonetheless making money, unlike Yat who is now back living with his family in Diamaguène. In the few weeks prior to my fieldwork, Yat had worked as a door-to-door sales representative for one of the major Senegalese telephone operators, but he had refused to continue the job after his employer had failed to pay him for a week’s work. A job in Europe, on the other hand, was guaranteed to be rewarding.
As mentioned previously, Yat was described by one of his peers as being ‘deported before he had even left’. His longing for things American and his dissatisfaction with life in Diamaguène were seen as an affliction by his neighbour: Yat aspired to what was out of reach and suffered from it. Indeed, Yat was unhappy working as a welder’s apprentice and was given the chance to try and make it as a footballer. But his plans to become a professional footballer had failed and as well as leaving Yat disappointed and feeling like he had let his mother down, the experience had fed his disdain for the life that awaited him back in Saint-Louis. In training again with the local football team, Boco Joom, he continually argued with the coaches who, he complained, had no skill, and only knew how to make the players run circuits. Finally suspended by Boco Joom, he did the unthinkable for someone who grew up in Suku Mar (his bloc of Diamaguène) and joined a rival team. His professional experience working for the phone company reflects a similar stance: he had followed his mother’s recommendations and found a job, but he refused to work while he was not being paid, unlike his colleagues who had assured him that delays in payment were recurrent. Clearly Yat could not fit in while he aspired to a higher standard of working conditions and pay. Nor could he be comfortable in the Boco Joom team having previously left it to train in a professional football school. Yat’s aspiration to emigrate arguably contributed to his uncompromising attitude. Were he to emigrate and remit to his family, he would live up to their hopes of him finding employment and personal fulfilment. More importantly though, he would be pursuing something that he considered worthwhile.

Similarly, the example of financial remitting mechanisms in the previous chapter demonstrated how emigration can be interpreted as a response to family expectations (to provide for the household), that is on one’s own terms (through retaining control over how much money is remitted to whom and when). Being able to control one’s earning is a tantalizing prospect in a context where resources are seen to be siphoned off by family. For this reason, the emigration project is comparable to the success of Pentecostalism in Ghana and Nigeria:

Pentecostalism’s stress on the nuclear family and its exhortations to break with unbelievers accord young people striving for upward mobility not only a certain amount of freedom from such pressures, but also protection from resentment and jealousy in the form of witchcraft, most feared and dangerous in the hands of blood relatives. (Marshall-Fratani, 1998)

My informant Abdou told the story of a friend of his who buried part of his salary as only underground would it be safe from his family.
While those about to emigrate from Senegal cannot find protection from demanding family members through migration alone and thus often seek out the services of experts in esoteric knowledge (marabouts) they have in common with Ghanaian and Nigerian converts to Pentecostalism the desire to escape family pressure. So although migration projects and trajectories present themselves as strategies promoting collective interests and fulfilling social expectations, opportunities and constraints imposed by kinship relations are often seized and negotiated by individuals to their personal advantage. Emigration might even represent the occasion to break away from family pressure. Despite its speculative character, the case of Madjitana’s brother provides an example of the extremes to which some are prepared to go to live independently.

My informant Madjitana’s mother, Sokhna had been married four times and widowed three times. By her first husband she had had a son called Ousin. Madjitana’s father was her second husband and when he had passed away she had remarried and had another daughter, Seynabou. At the death of Sorna’s third husband, she became the third wife of her cousin, a well-off tailor and part time religious singer (of the Tijaniyyah brotherhood) who lived in the suburb of Pikine, but visited Sokhna in Diamaguène two nights per week. Of interest here is the fact that Madjitana’s family considered Ousin to be dead. Ten years ago, he had disappeared during a journey from Dakar to Saint-Louis. The seven-seater Peugeot he was travelling in had broken down in the countryside along the way forcing the passengers to get out of the car. It was only when the engine had been repaired and it was time to climb aboard again that the passengers and driver realized that one of them was missing. Nobody had seen Ousin since. Distressingly, the incident took place only four months after Sokhna’s third husband died, leaving her with her two young daughters and her own ageing parents in Diamaguène. A few days later a corpse was found on a beach in a village not far from Saint-Louis. Despite the village being situated on the other side of Saint-Louis to the road linking Saint-Louis to Dakar, many assumed that it was Ousin’s body that had been washed up. However, Adbou, a neighbour and close friend of Ousin, disagreed with this scenario. When I pressed him about the disappearance of his childhood friend, he told me that he had gone to see the corpse and knew that it was not Ousin. He was certain that Ousin was still alive and that he had seized the opportunity of the car breaking down to leave. In fact, before travelling down to Dakar that time, he had vowed that he would not return to Saint-Louis until he had become rich. He was intent of making money in Mauritania, where he had previously worked as a teacher, or elsewhere. He was not happy living in the poor suburbs of Saint-Louis, and, according to Abdou, Ousin had only contempt for his maternal uncle who lived in a spacious home and had a thriving business in Dakar. When I asked Abdou if his friend had felt the pressure of having to cater for his widowed
mother and sisters, he told me that Ousin had indeed perceived his mother, grandparents and sisters as a weight on his shoulders, but Abdou argued that this was unjustified and that Ousin’s mother would not demand much money from him and that his uncle was generous: ‘Il pensait qu’ils attendaient beaucoup de lui, mais ce n’était pas le cas.’ Nonetheless Ousin resented both his mother’s lack of resources and his uncle’s wealth. Ousin wanted to make it on his own, for himself. The fact that Madjitana and her family spoke of him as dead – although Madjitana did say that she sometimes sensed that he was still alive – demonstrates not only their way of coming to terms with his disappearance, but perhaps also that it is socially more acceptable to be dead than to abandon one’s family.

Figure 10: Painting (from a photograph) by my informant Abdou, August 2008.

52 ‘He thought that they expected a lot of him, but it wasn’t the case.’ (Abdou, 12.09.2008)
Another factor rendering migration attractive is the rapidity with which money is made overseas. This explains the keenness of civil servants to drop their jobs in Senegal to go and pick strawberries in Spain, for example. The interviews I conducted indicated that informants felt that even three months of work overseas would provide émigrés with a lump sum that could not be accumulated through years of work in Senegal due to low pay, unemployment and family expenses. Manifestly, within two or three years émigrés earn enough money to purchase land or to get married, two milestones which require much patience for civil servants and that are unthinkable for Saint-Louisian fishermen, for example, let alone the unemployed.

In Senegal, marriage is both a social obligation and a religious prescription. Diop (1985: 157) notes that men’s social status remains low until they marry: ‘Jusqu’à leur mariage, conclu jadis sans leur avis, ils sont considérés comme des mineurs devant obéissance et respect à leurs parents et aînés.’ In her study of marriage in Dakar, Dial (2008) shows that for women too, marriage represents the attainment of social maturity. By the age of thirty, 58% of women born between 1967 and 1976 were married. This marks a difference with older generations such as the cohort born between 1942 and 1956 of whom 99% were married at the age of thirty. Yet despite this tendency to marry later, women remain more than twice as likely to be married by their thirties as men (58% against 26%). In respect to religion – be it Islam or Catholicism – incitement to marry goes hand-in-hand with the condemnation of sexual relations outside of wedlock.

Dial’s research uncovered that parental authority in terms of marriage is weakening in Senegal, notably due to economic hardship, whereby loss of capital equates to loss of marriage bargaining power. Dial also suggests that representations of romantic marital relations, parents’ emphasis on marriage, alongside the fear of pregnancy outside of it, have also eaten away at parents’ power in such matters. At the same time, economic considerations, rather than those of kin, are increasingly influential in the choice of a partner, be it made by individuals or their families. In Diamaguène this is reflected in competition among women for wealthier men and émigrés (who if not already wealthy, are assumed to become so) as well as male non-migrants’ incapacity to compete with émigrés as far as women are concerned. As Ridjal put it: ‘Si tu es rival avec un Moódu moódu, même si tu es fonctionnaire et que tu es plus aisé que le Moódu moódu, tu perds.’ The widespread

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53. Until their marriage, previously arranged without their consent, they are considered minors, owing obedience and respect to their parents and elders’.

54. ‘If your rival is a Moódu moódu, even if you are a civil servant and you are better off than the Moódu moódu, you lose.’ (29.08.2008)
perception of wives as siphoning off resources is echoed by the consideration that women are costly to court. Dominant gender models ensure that both men and women play up to this.

If there are economic restraints on courting, the cost of weddings and married life are out of bounds for many. Not only are ceremonies expensive, but bridewealth (Dial reports between 95,000 and 420,000 CFA francs in Dakar) must be produced, as must nuptial bedroom furniture. After a certain period overseas, successful émigrés from Diamaguène are able to meet these conditions, returning not necessarily for the Muslim marriage which is concluded at the mosque between families and in the absence of the bride and bride groom, but for the subsequent ceremonies of their first, second and sometimes third marriages.\(^55\) In Senegal, marriages take place in several stages more or less spaced out over time, depending largely on resources. Without corroborating the local stereotype of Murid \textit{Moódu moódus} as, in the words one of my informants, ‘polygames de nature’\(^56\), it is important to note that due to economic preoccupations, migration is a deciding factor in being able to marry or not, the choice of partner(s) and the size of the ceremony (number of guests and calibre of musicians, for example).

Of course, marriage can be a means of emigrating in itself. Family reunification in Europe is not characteristic of male Senegalese migrants who have generally kept close ties not only with family in Senegal, but also to place for affective and spiritual reasons (Riccio, 2003). In my interviews, practical reasons were given to explain why family reunion in Europe was not desirable. Mina, for example, explained that her quality of life is better in Senegal than it would be in Italy. Talking of her two sisters-in-law who have joined their husbands in Italy she said: ‘Elles ont plus d’argent car elles aussi elles travaillent là-bas, mais elles se plaignent que leurs maris travaillent trop et qu’ils ne sont jamais à la maison.’\(^57\) The case of Lamine’s brother, who stayed in Senegal with his daughter while his wife took up a scholarship in a French university, suggests that patterns may change with the rise in female emigration, although this is contingent on increasingly strict family reunion legislation. After six years apart, in 2008 Lamine’s brother and his daughter joined their wife and mother in France.

\(^{55}\) Although I am not aware of the exact arrangements of their married statuses (monogamous or polygamous unions), all of my informants were Muslim which means that unless otherwise set forth in writing, polygamy is a possibility.

\(^{56}\) ‘\textit{Moódu moódus} are naturally polygamous’ (06.09.2008)

\(^{57}\) ‘They have more money because they work too, but they complain that their husbands work too much and that they are never home.’ (16.08.2008)
Marriage to Europeans most often entails emigration for the Senegalese partner. Two of the families I spent time with had a member overseas because the person in question had married a European. Abdou’s cousin, formerly a member of the Association de Développement de Diamaguène, had met a French nurse who had collaborated with the association for four months. After their wedding in Diamaguène he had travelled to Lille with her and was currently studying at the university there. Another example is that of Fatou Gueye’s daughter, Astou, who lived alone in Paris, divorced from her French husband whom she had met while living in Dakar.

The hope of such travel plays its part in prompting some youths, men and women, to pursue internet-based relations with Europeans as did Ibou, among others. While Ibou had requested immediate financial help from his Belgium correspondent, his motives were also long term: his mother encouraged him to marry a tubaab, and he sought to instigate such a relationship through internet technologies. In this vein, Venables (2008) and Robinson (2007) have argued that Internet is a transnational space that allows women in particular, to reach out and, to some degree, to act outside of kinship-based power structures. With similar migration projects in mind, some locals seek to associate with Western tourists and NGO workers in Saint-Louis. On this topic, Venables (2008) has noted that in the Southern Senegalese town of Ziguinchor, Senegalese men tend to create social and professional relations with Europeans visiting and living in the area while Senegalese women tend to form romantic and sexual relationships. In Saint-Louis too, one only encounters male informal guides with small groups of Spanish or French tourists, yet it would be erroneous to establish a clear gender distinction between the types of relationships Saint-Louisians engage in with foreigners. Like jobs in the tourist industry such as being a guide, receptionist or waitress, affection, romance and sex are used by men and women alike to earn money, but also to secure links to Europe that may result in migration.

By linking this chapter’s findings on social pressure and individual motivations to what was covered in previous chapters, we see that migration projects emerge at the intersection of global structural factors, participation in transnational circuits and social relations at the local level. Discounting age, which tends to be under thirty-five years old, those who have left Diamaguène resist grouping by individual characteristics: while emigration was previously dominated by Murids, people of all confessions and brotherhoods now emigrate; migration transcends socio-
economic status and educational attainment; both unemployed and employed people aspire to migrate; parenthood can be both a reason to stay and a reason to go; having a member of one’s family overseas can facilitate network migration, but in some cases, remittances from émigrés also permit younger siblings, for example, to invest in livelihood strategies in Senegal. Furthermore, while men and women may have different reasons to aspire to emigration, these can mostly be related to their family relations. As such, expectations attached to gender roles can lead to the desire to earn money and to manage it oneself, to enter what is socially defined as adulthood, to escape parental authority and social control, to lead alternative lifestyles and, last but not least, to experience Europe. In what follows, life histories will provide an insight into the personal trajectories that shape individuals’ feelings about staying, whether this immobility is involuntary or voluntary.
Figure 11: Wall on the main island of Saint-Louis covered in posters advertising concerts, rap albums and discotheques. Winners of the Nescafé Music Awards, the *Saint-Louis Soldiers* are the rappers Yat described as American. Photograph by Amber Stechman, August 2008.
Chapter 5: Immobility

‘Le Moódu moódu peut épargner à l’étranger et il peut aussi décider quand il contribue ou non. Par exemple, s’il entend parler d’une naissance, il sait qu’il y aura bientôt un baptême et il peut ne pas répondre au téléphone. Si tu vis ici par contre, tu participes à tout et tu dépenses tout.’ 59

Ridjal, 29.08.2008

Through the two previous chapters’ descriptions of transnational circuits and social expectations, factors influencing the formation of migration projects have been suggested. Despite increasingly restrictive European immigration legislation, such factors play a crucial role in defining life projects and aspirations in Diamaguène. Drawing on this, the present chapter seeks to explore the lives of those who cannot emigrate and what immobility means to them. Consideration will also be given to the circumstances of informants who explicitly stated that they did not wish to emigrate so as to contrast involuntary immobility with voluntary immobility.

The disputed contribution of émigrés

Because emigration is a widespread livelihood strategy in Senegal, paying attention to non-migrants’ discourses on emigration, its benefits and drawbacks, is a starting point for understanding how they make sense of their own sedentary situations. Local debates on the effects of emigration on the neighbourhood hardly question the decision to leave or not – such discussions take place at the level of government, both Saint-Louisian and national.60 Instead, the principle issue of contention is how remittances are spent. In this way, their similarity with academic and policy discussions on the impact of remittances is striking. Are remittances invested? What constitutes investment? Inefficient investment, or lack of investment, is frequently put forward by researchers as explicative of the incapacity of money sent home to make a difference (de Haas, 2005). Indeed, some authors claim that by financing basic everyday needs such as food, shelter, education and

59 ‘The émigré can save abroad and he can also decide if he wants to contribute or not. For example, if he hears of a birth, he knows that there will soon be a baptism and can not answer the telephone. If you live here, however, you participate in everything and you spend everything.’

60 The idea that youths interrupt their education to emigrate and drain the sending area of brains (such as was suggested to me by a hotel manager in the town of Louga) does not hold water with youths in Saint-Louis who are often faced with unemployment despite completing high school or a university degree. Similarly, while a representative of the Ministry of Youth in Saint-Louis told me that civil servants who emigrate to do menial jobs in Europe ‘sacrifice their social status’, for those who emigrate and those who aspire to, the cost or ‘the returns’ (Van Hear, 2002) of emigrating are greater than the ‘outlay’: professional downward mobility overseas can equate to social upward mobility in the sending area.
health care, remittances fall short of investment (Newland, 2007). Other approaches suggest, however, that injecting financial means into households who spend them on immediate needs is a form of investment in human capital (through education for example) and stimulates local economies through consumption (Durand et al, 1996; Grillo & Riccio, 2004; de Haas, 2005). Corresponding debates were voiced in Diamaguène, where there was fierce criticism on the part of non-migrants who were not remitted to, of émigrés merely building houses and not contributing to the wider economy. While some non-migrants without household members overseas recognized the implications of real estate for the construction sector, others argued that the impact of remittances stopped there. Many of my educated, and sometimes unemployed, non-migrant informants complained that the majority of émigrés were not educated and possessed no entrepreneurial or technical skills with which to start up businesses in Saint-Louis. My findings do not allow me to probe such claims, but how my informant households spent remitted funds indicates that parallel to housing, a priority was sending children to private schools – an expense which might be considered a form of long-term investment. The debate is ongoing in Saint-Louis, where a representative of the Chamber of Commerce assured me that émigrés never start up businesses. By contrast, an employee of a nationwide agency seeking to promote investment in Senegal, the Agence Nationale Chargée de la Promotion de l’Investissement et des Grand Travaux (known as APIX),61 estimated that four or five in ten clients of hers lived and worked overseas, or were returnees. Professional confidentiality prevented her from naming specific business projects in Diamaguène, but she mentioned a water desalination plant which had been opened by an émigré still living abroad. Another case was that of Dodo, who lived nine months of the year in Spain where he juggled three jobs. The remaining three months he spent in Diamaguène running a satellite cable installation business for which he had provided the initial funds and which was managed by his brother. In 2008, Hawa’s brother, who had recently obtained a residence permit in Italy, was able to travel home for the first time in six years. During one week of this month-long stay, an Italian acquaintance of his sojourned in a hotel on Saint-Louis’ main island. Together they investigated co-investment opportunities such as opening an ice-making factory in the region.

Of course, starting a business does not guarantee success, but these few examples of initiatives anecdotally illustrate that some émigrés from Saint-Louis are looking further afield than real estate to invest fruitfully their earnings from overseas. Yet despite generous estimates by the APIX

61 The APIX website outlines the agency’s strategy towards the ‘entrepreneurial diaspora’. http://www.investinsenegal.com/ (accessed 07.04.2009)
representative as to the number of business ventures by émigrés, these cases are dismissed by the dominant discourse on émigrés among non-migrants which minimizes the former’s contribution to economic activity in Saint-Louis. When instances arise they are downplayed as exceptional and favouring only the émigré’s family or religious brotherhood. The fact that Murids provide multiple services through their control of both the informal sector and the transportation sector (Guèye, 2003), is overlooked in debates on the community benefits of emigration. So despite emigration translating into prestige in terms of purchasing power for families with members overseas, and this in turn affecting aspirations to leave, respect from people who are not remitted to is mainly acquired by those who mobilize resources for the community. Eva’s sister is one such person: she set up a migrant association in France which financed projects run by the Association de Développement de Diamaguène (ADD). In the adjacent neighbourhood of HLM, an émigré in Germany secured funding from the charity HELP ALLIANCE with which a community centre was built. The centre housed a crèche and a hairdressing training centre for young mothers. In this way, as within family relations, for emigration to be valued socially it must profit non-migrants materially. As such, emigration from Diamaguène is simultaneously highly desirable and open to severe judgement.

‘Local development actors’

Among my informants, the harshest critics of emigration were educated at least to the level of secondary school. Some were in a relatively secure position, financially and socially, from which they could afford to compare emigration unfavourably with their own trajectories. Others had clearly been adversely affected by the economic difficulties in Senegal and, though educated, were not able to find employment that matched their aspirations. One of the latter was Chérif. At the age of 47 he had never been married and had been out of paid work for decades. The way he told his life story and his discourse on emigration provide an example of how a male non-migrant presented his financially inferior situation as morally superior to that of émigrés.

At the time of my fieldwork, Chérif lived in the house where he was born. His father had died when he was very young and Chérif had grown up in the house with his mother, his mother’s older sister and his brother and sister. Chérif stressed the achievements of his mother and maternal aunt who bore all of the household expenses alone. Instead of returning to her family or remarrying when her husband died, Chérif’s mother, Aïda, started working as a cook for a French family living on the

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62 This could be related to Riccio’s (2005) findings on the mistrust of Murid traders as ‘tricksters’ who only become rich by fraudulent means.
main island. Chérif recalled that she could prepare Senegalese and European dishes alike and speculated that it was then that his family's association with tubaabs began. The first French family for whom she had worked had requested that she accompany them to France when they left, but she had refused and quickly found work with another expatriate family. His mothers’ first employers were those that Chérif remembered the best though, as they had taken him and his siblings on picnics and excursions.

Chérif’s aunt was a teacher at the nearby Lycée Charles de Gaulle. Describing her as a strict woman during his childhood, Chérif referred to her and his mother with great respect, notably in terms of their resourcefulness which he contrasted with what he saw as the present tendency of women to rely on their husbands for everything and to only share amongst themselves. He explained to me that his mother and aunt worked outside of the home, raised the three children and built a little shop (known as a boutique) and a garage next to their house. In 2008, the shop and garage were rented out, as they had been initially, but during part of her retirement, Chérif’s aunt had managed the shop. She died in 2002. Aïda was still alive, but she had become ill in her old age and now lived with Chérif’s sister in the adjacent neighbourhood of Cité Niax. Chérif told me proudly that he kept the house and its contents just as they had been when his mother and aunt lived there. One of the many photographs that lined the walls of the living room was of his aunt and ten other women (see photograph on next page).
Figure 12: Chérif’s aunt is pictured lying on her side in the central photograph.
Chérif told me that these were the founding members of the first women’s tontine credit association (Regroupement de femmes) in Diamaguène. He further explained to me that his aunt had pushed him and his friends to do something about the poor living conditions in Diamaguène when the great flood had taken place in the early 1990s. In his words:

Elle avait une vision qui était celle de regrouper les gens. Elle avait une audio cassette au salon et elle aimait qu’on s’y retrouve ou qu’on passe du temps à discuter dans la boutique. Quand il y a eu les grandes inondations au début des années 1990, elle nous a dit « Allez les jeunes, faites quelque chose! ». Le Gouverneur devait passer sur la grande route a côté de la maison alors on a décidé de faire barrage. On a dit que le Gouverneur ne passerait pas par là sans s’arrêter. Il fallait qu’il voie comment nous vivions. 63

According to Chérif, the Governor stopped and talked to the people blocking his route, and that was the beginning of the Association de Développement de Diamaguène.

Talking about his education, Chérif said that he went to primary school in Saint-Louis and when he was 12, he was selected through a competition to continue his education at the paramilitary boarding school in Bango. To his surprise and that of his family, he failed his first year in Bango. In hindsight, he considered that this had been due to the sudden freedom discovered in Bango which contrasted with the strict rules he had been accustomed to at home. But Chérif was able to repeat the school year and progressed successfully until he was expelled at the age of 16 for participating in a strike complaining about the quality of the canteen food. Strikes were forbidden and the parents of all the participants in the strike were summoned to collect their children who, despite being expelled, would be called upon by the army at the age of 18. During the following two years, Chérif attended the local school where his aunt taught. When called up by the army, he completed his civic instruction, which included a posting to Dakar where he held an administrative position. While in Dakar, he lived with an uncle who subsequently found him work. For two years he organised women’s sewing classes in a Centre civique et social (civic and social centre). After this, however, he returned to Saint-Louis where his sister was not yet married, his brother was an electrician and his mother and aunt were still working.

63 ‘She had a vision that was to bring people together. She had a cassette player in the living room and she liked us to meet or to spend time talking in the shop. When there were floods in the early 1990s, she said to us “Come on youngsters, do something!”’. The Governor was supposed to drive along the big road next to the house so we decided to create a roadblock. We said that the Governor wouldn’t come through without stopping. He had to see how we live.’ (07.09.2008)
Upon his return, Chérif started investing time in what he called *la solidarité de communauté* (community solidarity) and *les activités de développement* (development activities). Under this banner, he followed multiple training courses (to become a youth camp monitor, a health advisor and to set up development projects for example), but without any resulting in paid work. Although he continued to invest his time in community projects - he had recently collaborated with a French NGO in order to learn how to create a neighbourhood library by downloading digital books with out-of-date copyrights - Chérif said that he had grown weary of the lack of cooperation from the local authorities in implementing development projects, and, most of all, the absence of financial recognition for *les acteurs locaux de développement* (local development actors):

> Parfois la seule motivation que t’as, c’est ta propre volonté. Il n’y a aucune prise en charge de l’ADD ou d’autres institutions. Tu t’engages pour ta patrie, pour ton quartier, tu t’impliques, mais c’est usant et c’est pas facile d’assumer.  

Chérif’s sister married a retired professional basketball player whose main activity had become trade, and she also traded a little. At the time of our meeting, Chérif told me that it was his sister and her husband who supported him financially. His brother was also married and still lived in the family house, although he was rarely there as he worked and spent most nights at a tourist camp outside of the city. Tourism was much more profitable for him than being an electrician. During her husband’s absences, Chérif’s brother’s wife stayed with her own family. With nobody else at home, Chérif cooked for himself, but also relied on the hospitality of family and friends. Until his fridge-freezer had broken down, Chérif had sold ice, but thereafter his only sources of income were the rent from the garage and shop (which were shared with his brother and covered only the electricity and water bills) and the miserly profit – approximately 6,300 CFA francs per month - he made from buying bread from a baker and having it sold in the *boutique* next door.

Over the years, many of Chérif’s childhood friends from Diamaguène had emigrated. One emigrated to Italy some seven or eight years earlier, shortly after getting married to a local girl. He was a mechanic, but had been out of work for some time before leaving and in Chérif’s view, he could not face the difficulties of life in Diamaguène: ‘C’était quelqu'un qui voulait bouger. Son seul souci était

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64. Sometimes the only motivation you have is your own willpower. There is no [financial] support from the ADD or other institutions. You commit yourself for your country, your neighbourhood, you get involved, but it’s wearing and it’s not easy to bear.’ (07.09.2008)

65. As middle man, he made a profit of fifteen francs per baguette of which 15 were sold per day at the price of 200 CFA francs. This amounts to 6,300 CFA francs per month.
de partir ailleurs. Il pouvait pas faire face aux difficultés ici.66 The émigré’s mother and his sister, who had a steady job in a hotel on the main island, had paid for the journey. Every two years, he returned to Diamaguène for a two week holiday, but his Senegalese wife had long since left her in-law’s home and he was now living with an Italian woman. He had even brought her to Senegal on his last trip. To illustrate how his childhood friend had changed, Chérif explained that he no longer sat and drank tea with his old friends in the afternoon, only going out at night with his girlfriend. Chérif expressed that the émigré had no ‘sentiments de reconnaissance’ (feelings of recognition) towards his old friends and that he had taken on the tubaab culture – ‘Il a pris la culture tubaab’. Chérif believed that if he were to work abroad, he would not change his habits. Not all émigrés changed of course, but he feared it was happening more and more.

Chérif’s situation provides an insight into various aspects of non-migrant life and brings to the fore the discursive and material power-plays between migrant and non-migrant spheres. Firstly, alongside Chérif’s account of how two Diamaguène grassroots associations evolved under his aunt’s influence, Chérif’s story reveals how his own involvement as an acteur de développement local provided him not with an income, but with a position in society. While he deplored the fact that he was not paid, his role as a volunteer in social projects in Diamaguène is central to a narrative devoid of recent employment, marriage and offspring. Associating himself with local development initiatives is also how he distinguished himself from those who had left. Whereas he had invested time and effort for the betterment of the neighbourhood, his émigré friend had not been able to face such difficulties. Moreover, the émigré had detached himself from his wife and friends in Diamaguène. In presenting things this way, Chérif reversed the local acknowledgement of successful emigration as a positive household strategy and sought to show how merit lies not with those who provide for their families from abroad, but with those who try to make change come about at home. Implicit in this is a critique of individualistic tubaab culture, in contrast with Senegalese values such as solidarity. Like his mother who worked for tubaabs and his brother who is employed by a French-run hotel, Chérif collaborated with Westerners. But he did so without adopting their values: even if he were to travel overseas, Chérif claimed that he would not change.

In contrast with Chérif’s account, unemployed, single men of Chérif’s age were perceived by local people as socially inadequate. Neither contributing to household budgets, nor conforming to standard trajectories of marriage and procreation, they were seen as failures in many respects.

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66 ‘He was someone who wanted to move. His sole worry was to go somewhere else. He couldn't face the difficulties here.’ (07.09.2008)
Regarding local development initiatives, what Chérif presented as a required full-time engagement was manifestly unnecessary as the president and founder of the ADD was herself employed as a teacher. Being active within the local development scene was considered better than doing nothing, but it was far from a desirable occupation. Interestingly, it was not Chérif, but other Diamaguène residents who told me that Chérif’s brother-in-law, that is to say his sister's husband, was a *Moódu moódu*. Chérif had mentioned that his sister's husband traded, but not that he bought merchandise overseas which he and his wife then sold in Senegal (and vice versa). If such suggestions are true, in light of Chérif’s affirmation that his sister and brother-in-law provided for him, it would appear that Chérif was supported by the fruits of his sister’s and brother-in-law’s transnational trade. It might even be thanks to their support that Chérif was able to maintain his involvement in unpaid community development projects. Unfortunately, due to time constraints, I was not able to question Chérif about this point. It may be untrue that his brother-in-law is a *Moódu moódu*, Chérif may have unintentionally omitted the fact, or he may consider his brother-in-law’s circular migration differently to that of his émigré friends who have adopted *tubaab* culture. Still, the point demonstrates how sedentary and mobile existences intertwine despite their separation in discourse.

Not all unmarried and unemployed ‘local development actors’ were as critical of emigration as Chérif. Using self-deprecating humour, Cheikh replied to my comment on the beauty of Mina, an émigré’s wife, by pointing at his body and saying: ‘Oui, c'est vrai. Et le pire c'est que son mari est aussi moche et aussi petit que moi.’ Indeed, Cheikh’s attitude was very straight-forward, if he were an émigré, he too might have a beautiful wife, and if he were married, he would not spend so much time hanging around: ‘Si j'étais marié, tu penses que je serais ici à trainer?’ But, at the age of 45, he was neither married nor an émigré, instead he invested his time and energy in cultural neighbourhood activities and, during the school holidays, the inter-neighbourhood football tournament. His presence at the *maison de quartier* (community centre) and his involvement in the cultural programmes based there had made him a recognized member of the community. If they did not know him personally, everybody I met in Diamaguène knew of Cheikh.

Another ‘local development actor’, Pape was by no means as famous as Cheikh, but through his involvement with the ADD he had become a volunteer health representative for an international

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67 ‘Les acteurs de développement local’ is a term used by Chérif, Cheikh and others to designate Senegalese people doing paid or unpaid work for the Saint-Louisian development sector.

68 ‘Yes it's true. And the worst of it is that her husband is as ugly and as short as me.’ (16.09.2008)

69 ‘If I were married, do you think that I would be hanging out here.’ (12.08.2008)
organisation funding malaria prevention in the region. Working sometimes for 14 days in a row, Pape fully embraced this occupation to which he was dedicated alongside other ADD functions. Like Chérif and Cheikh, his role within the local development sector had become his greatest responsibility. For all three of these informants, in the absence of paid employment, social work for the community was a means of doing something which corresponded both to their level of instruction and their concerns to raise the standard of living in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, despite not generating income and certainly not enough to marry, such activities and the professionalism with which they were carried out were a means of constructing an acceptable, if not usual, social identity.

**Voluntary immobility**

It would be inaccurate to claim that the Diamaguène residents who did not wish to emigrate had not experienced factors which can contribute to the formation of migration aspirations, such as family pressure to generate income. On the contrary, played out in different circumstances, this same factor can weigh the balance against emigration. Ridjal’s story is exemplary of how his family’s financial needs steered his career away from personal interest towards practicality.

Ridjal was the third of his mother and father’s five children. At the time of my fieldwork, Ridjal was 27. He had just completed his first year of teaching in a village near the eastern town of Podor and was staying in the family home in Diamaguène for the holidays. In the village near Podor, where Ridjal was the only teacher, he had a class of 27 pupils preparing for secondary school entrance exams. His status at present was that of *volontaire de l’éducation nationale* (national education volunteer) as he had followed only one year of instruction before his posting and there remained further training sessions he needed to complete before he would become a fully qualified teacher, an *instituteur diplômé*. Nonetheless, Ridjal had earned a small salary during this first year, most of which he had sent home to Saint-Louis.⁷⁰ Indeed, the reason why he had entered this profession was to be able to contribute to household expenses. Ridjal had started studying philosophy at the university in Dakar, but when his father retired from his job as a long distance driver, Ridjal and his elder sister had interrupted their studies to follow the one-year course in teaching to contribute sooner to the household income. This was their father’s idea and he had enrolled them. Before they had completed the training, he had died. Now it was Ridjal, his sister, 

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⁷⁰ *Volontaires de l’éducation nationale* receive approximately 50,000 CFA francs per month and benefit from a health insurance.
who had been posted to Matam, and their elder brother, an accountant for the local water works, who provided for their mother and two younger brothers as well as themselves.

Ridjal’s goal was to become an *instituteur diplômé* in the following year and then to finish the probationary phase of five years before he turned 35 which would guarantee his pension. Without teaching in national establishments for five years prior to turning 35, he would not receive his full salary in pension, but one month’s salary for three months. This is a long term project that he contrasted with the situation of émigrés: ‘Un fonctionnaire qui perçoit 200,000 plus indemnités continue de les percevoir à soixante ans. Un *Moódu moódu*, lui, ne perçoit rien.’ In effect, Ridjal argued that his was the most secure project in the long run. While Ridjal had friends overseas, one in particular who had won a scholarship to study in France, he had no intention of emigrating himself: ‘Si on me donnait le visa aujourd’hui, je ne partirais pas. Pourquoi partir vers un avenir incertain? Est-ce qu’ils ont vraiment plus que nous?’ In Ridjal’s view, émigrés are free to decide if and when they want to contact their families in Senegal as well as if they want to send them money. The downside of this is that they do not participate in daily events and cannot help in emergencies:

> ‘Si quelqu’un tombe malade pendant la nuit, qu’il faut l’amener à l’hôpital et payer les frais, ce n’est pas le *Moódu moódu* qui va le faire. Il ne pourra pas envoyer de l’argent au milieu de la nuit.’

Ridjal argued that the glory of earning a lot of money overseas (or of benefiting from money earned overseas) is much more appealing to many Saint-Louisians than working in Senegal. He, however, preferred the security of a pension and valued immediate participation in family affairs. Ridjal’s biography gives us an insight into his statements: it is possibly the fact that he had to abandon his first choice of career because his father had no pension, that having a pension for himself was a priority.

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71. ‘A civil servant who earns 200,000 plus benefits continues to receive it at the age of sixty. A *Moódu moódu* receives nothing.’ (29.08.2008)

72. ‘If I was given a visa today, I would not leave. Why depart towards an uncertain future? Do they really have more than us?’ (29.08.2008)

73. ‘If someone falls ill in the night, must be taken to the hospital and bills paid, it’s not the *Moódu moódu* who is going to do it. He won’t be able to send money in the middle of the night.’ (29.08.2008)
Involuntary immobility

Throughout this thesis, various ethnographic examples have touched on the situation of ‘involuntary immobility’, a term coined by Carling (2002) to designate one consequence of restrictive European immigration policies on traditional migrant sending areas. Carling breaks migration down into two parts: first the wish to migrate and, second, its realization. This separation enables a better understanding of non-migrants who are trapped between their aspirations and the inability to fulfil them. In this study, I have shown how this form of entrapment shapes people’s prospects, actions and status. From Yat who cultivated a pseudo-American identity while recovering from the disappointment of not becoming a professional football player to the United Brothers rappers who sung their contempt for Senegalese politicians and presented emigration as the only solution to their problems, we have seen various outcomes of involuntary immobility. Another example is that of teenage Awa who aimed to go to university overseas, although she realized that her chances were slim. As my fieldwork coincided with school holidays, Awa had no homework to do or classes to attend, but she nevertheless found multiple ways of practising her German and English, which were her strongest subjects. When she was not cooking, cleaning or running errands, Awa sat watching video clips – often in English – with her pencil poised, ready to write down any words she was not familiar with and that she would look up in a dictionary later. She and I conversed in German when alone and she told me of her dream to go to university in Germany. Universities in Senegal, she said, were not as good. She needed to get a state scholarship to study in Germany. Scholarships to study abroad are discerned on the basis of *baccalauréat* exam results and one scholarship is provided per subject per administrative region. Awa’s mark in the *baccalauréat* German exam, which she would sit in two years time, therefore needed to be the highest in the whole region of Saint-Louis.

In 2007, through an exchange scheme between Awa’s school and a German school, a German girl of Awa’s age spent one week with her and her family in Diamaguène. Few Senegalese pupils were able to replicate and stay with their contemporaries in Germany. According to Awa, those who were selected for the trip were not those with the best marks – Awa was top of the class – but those who ‘sortaient avec les profs.’ But this episode had not deterred Awa from her intention of excelling in the *baccalauréat* exam and possibly studying in Germany.

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74 ‘went out with teachers’ in the sense of having romantic or sexual relations with them (10.08.2008)
Baggio was another person who considered emigration to be his best option. In the meantime though, he engaged in informal trade. Baggio had spent most of his life between his maternal uncle's household in Kaffrine, his father's home in Touba and, from time to time, his mother's in Saint-Louis where he was staying in August and September 2008. At the time of my fieldwork, he was 31 years old and unmarried. He had attended school until the age of 15, but had had no professional training other than what he had learnt from his own business initiatives over the years. Baggio would previously buy three bags of sugar (50kg) at 18,000 CFA francs in Kaffrine and sell them for 24,000 CFA francs in Diourbel. By doing this twice a week and subtracting transport fees, he made 10,000 CFA francs a week (comparatively, a full time school teacher might earn 75,000 CFA francs per week). Parallel to this, Baggio traded charcoal between Tambacounda and Dakar where he tells me reliable clients awaited him. Because this specific type of charcoal is a protected natural resource, human consumption is limited to two bags per person per year and Baggio would buy five other people's rations per trip. In order to get the allowances officially approved of without being caught, Baggio would pay employees of the Ministry of the Environment in Tambacounda to stamp all of the allowance tickets in one go early in the morning before the Environment Inspector arrived. Were there any checks made by the authorities during the journey to Dakar, Baggio would be obliged to bribe officials, but he could nonetheless count on selling each bag, purchased at 1,500 CFA francs, for 6,000 CFA francs minimum and 7,500 CFA francs maximum. After trading sugar and charcoal, Baggio started travelling to Mali, on the train that links Bamako to Dakar, to buy cloth to sell at a profit once back in Senegal. However, since witnessing his uncle’s success in the moped taxi business in Kaffrine, Baggio’s latest idea was to purchase a ‘Jakarta’ low-consumption moped in Bamako, where, even including import duty, the model was at least 100,000 CFA francs cheaper than could be found in Senegal (250,000 instead of 350,000 CFA francs). At the time of my fieldwork, Baggio was trying to borrow here and there to raise 250,000 CFA francs, but he aimed to eventually earn 6 to 7,000 CFA francs per day through this informal occupation in Kaffrine.

Yet more than his latest business project, what preoccupied Baggio was the time the administration was taking to issue a new passport for him. Having lost his original passport some four months before, he had immediately requested a new one (which entails presenting one’s birth certificate and paying 6,000 CFA francs), but he was still waiting for it. He put this down to it being the holiday season during which administrative procedures are slow. It had caused him great frustration because, during his wait, his father had called him from Touba to inform him that his emigration to
Italy had been arranged. ‘Mon père pense à moi et essaie de m’aider,’ he said. Baggio’s father had organised for him to travel with a merchant from Touba to Italy. Baggio told me that his transport would have been free and that the trader would have helped him to find work in Italy. The plan had not been put into practice, however, as Baggio had no passport with which to travel. He told me that he was going to try and make the moped taxi business successful in Kaffrine, but that if another opportunity to travel to Europe presented itself through his father’s contacts, he would seize it.

The cases of Baggio, Awa, the United Brothers and Yat display different attitudes and ways of working towards emigration or managing the aspiration to emigrate. While Yat had not yet tried to emigrate, he stated that he would: ‘Moi, je meurs d’envie de partir … je vais tout régler et partir. J’ai des contacts.’ Over the course of one of our conversations, he narrowed his departure down to one year from then: ‘Moi je ne vois que l’argent. Je partirai tôt ou tard. Si tu reviens dans une année, je ne serai plus ici.’ This stance is not uncommon among would-be migrants in Senegal and it seems that using the timeframe of one year renders immobility more tolerable. As for the United Brothers, their frustration with their circumstances was channelled into creative projects, but the possibility of joining their older brother in Spain lingered. Awa, on the other hand, had not lost faith in school. She liked studying and worked hard towards one day entering a German university.

This chapter has shown that because the honour in leaving Diamaguène is in remitting, not in the act of leaving per se, emigration can be aspired to, but not always morally endorsed. This configuration allowed Chérif to project himself as morally superior to émigrés, despite being in the position of a social failure. Similarly, Ridjal presented himself as more hardworking than those who see emigration as their only option. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that these personal interpretations may have evolved over time, revealing the constraints of a synchronic study. Moreover, an analysis predominantly based on discourse, as this thesis is, runs the risk of ignoring

75 ‘My father thinks of me and tries to help me.’ (27.08.2008)
76 ‘Me, I’m dying to leave…I’m going to arrange it all and leave. I have contacts.’ (24.08.2008)
77 ‘Me, I can only see money. I will leave sooner or later. If you return in a year, I won’t be here anymore.’ (10.09.2008)
78 Many thanks to Hélène Neveu Kringelbach for sharing her own fieldwork experiences with me and signalling this as a recurrent attitude among people who want to leave.
those who do not express their wish to leave, but who would not hesitate to do so if the opportunity presented itself (and who may secretly be planning their departure). Indeed, the distinction between those who say they do not want to leave and those who say they want to emigrate is partly rhetorical and requires contextualisation. To better understand the reasoning behind statements on emigration this chapter has turned to life histories. We have seen that depending on individual characteristics and circumstances, different views on migration are expressed. Ridjal, who was employed and had prospects in Senegal (marriage, professional promotion, pension), albeit in the long term, had not pursued his first choice of career, but had instead catered for his family, alongside his elder siblings, after his father died. His stance in the emigration debate can only be understood by taking all of these factors, as well as his personality, into account. Madjitana’s brother who disappeared shortly after his stepfather’s death is an example of another young teacher on whom family responsibility had the opposite effect.

In the case of involuntary immobility, numerous strategies are developed in order to maximize one’s chances of leaving. As such, restrictive European immigration policies have both provoked a diversification of destinations (Robin, 1996; Marfaing, 2003) and affected what people do before migrating. Emigration strategies have not only moved towards dangerous headline-making endeavours, such as travelling to the Canary Islands in dugout fishing boats, but they have also encouraged male and female non-migrants to gravitate towards milieux likely to enhance their chances of regular emigration. The fact that Yat, who longed to travel overseas, approached me, and not the opposite, is illustrative of one such strategy. Though Yat did not actively seek out the company of Westerners as did many of the so-called guides on Saint-Louis’ main island, he was not prepared to pass up the opportunity of meeting a tubaab woman walking down the street in Diamaguène. Joining social networks linked to tourism and the NGO sector is a means of increasing the likelihood of entering into relationships (business or personal) with Westerners capable of facilitating migration. Similarly, hours spent chatting to foreigners on the Internet can be interpreted as hopeful attempts to secure a future overseas (Venables, 2008). A priori, Awa’s focus on emigrating through a scholarship may seem unreasonably optimistic, but Awa realized that, because she had three elder brothers whose desires to emigrate would be supported by the family

79 Hélène Neveu Kringelbach has told me of the secretive side of emigration projects whereby it is considered safer to emigrate without warning for fear of jealous family members preventing the departure or influencing its outcomes through the services of experts in esoteric knowledge, known as marabouts.

80 As noted by Velho (1992: 15): ‘No matter how possible it is to explain sociologically the variables which are articulated and which act on specific biographies, there is always something irreducible, not necessarily due to an individual essence but rather to a unique combination of psychological, social, and historical factors, impossible to be repeated ipsis litteris.’
before hers, this was a means of pursuing her dream which would be endorsed by her family. Compared to other emigration strategies, this lay potentially within her reach. In other situations, it may be less a question of working towards a dream than coping with reality in the meantime. Baggio’s innovative informal activities, referred to locally as *dugu fi guène fi* (a bit of this and a bit of that), were to him a second choice with which he had to make do until he could leave.
Conclusion

Using the framework of transnationalism, this thesis has explored the phenomenon of Senegalese migration to Europe and North America from the point of view of non-migrants in the sending area. Concentrating on family and neighbourhood relations, it has drawn out both the diverse meanings invested in international migration and the many factors contributing to the formation of migration projects. Avidly desired and yet fiercely criticised by some, emigration is aspired to for reasons ranging from family loyalty to a longing for freedom.

Chapter two contextualised Senegalese mobility historically and economically. While international migration is not a new phenomenon, the ‘West’ has recently become the major destination of Senegalese migrants. Indeed, in a context marked by economic decline and state disengagement, international migration has come to be seen as a viable livelihood strategy not just by Murid traders, but by people from a wide range of backgrounds.

Chapters three and four looked at factors contributing to the predominance of migration as a livelihood strategy. Chapter three described how the circulation of images and capital associates migration with success. While communication with friends and family overseas ensures that non-migrants are informed of the difficulties of finding employment in Europe and living there illegally, for example, there exists a shared belief that, sooner rather than later, emigration pays off. Far from irrational, this belief is linked to the high rates of remittances sent back to Senegal, especially from Europe and North America (Ministère de l’Économie et des Finances, 2004).

As a consequence of financial remittances, the physical and socio-economic landscape of Diamaguène is being reconfigured. Acute inequalities in purchasing power characterise the neighbourhood. As we saw in chapter five, non-migrants who do not directly reap the benefits of emigration criticise this polarisation, claiming that remittances should contribute to the greater good through investment and development. Development is, indeed, a recurrent theme, especially among those who aspired to post-independence ideals of advancement through education. While the benefits of migration for the community remain controversial in Saint-Louis, the number of businesses opened by émigrés is generally underestimated and the effects which have already trickled down only unwillingly recognised. Moreover, spending habits are not confined to material consumption as the popularity of private schools for the children of émigrés indicates.
In addition to the impacts of emigration on the sending context, it is important to acknowledge that social relations in Diamaguène, and between Diamaguène and abroad, shape the formation of migration projects, their realisation and their outcomes. Research has demonstrated that households carry great weight in planning and funding emigration (Boyd, 1989). Moving away from the notion of household strategies, however, chapters four and five of this thesis emphasised the role of household relations and expectations in forging individual aspirations. My findings revealed that for men, emigration represents the opportunity to fulfil the duty to provide for one’s household and thus gain respect. Migration equally holds the possibility of earning enough to marry, so achieving full adult status. For men and women alike, the migration project can respond to the desire to travel, to experience an alternative lifestyle and to escape parental authority and social control. As such, family and household relations can result in the seemingly opposed desires to provide for one’s household and to be independent. Yet émigrés reconcile these through the modalities of their remittances. For instance, by exercising control over who received what and when, male émigrés live up to social obligations to remit, and do so in ways which increased their personal authority. Similarly, the alternative lifestyles led by women abroad are tolerated by their families because of their considerable contributions to household budgets.

It is the combination of social recognition and freedom from social control which is desired by many young would-be migrants in Diamaguène. Additionally, as members of transnational communities, non-migrants’ ambitions to emigrate can be read as claims to participate in a world which is visible, and to some extent palpable from Diamaguène, but which remains to be fully experienced. The failure of migration projects to materialize can result in frustration and despair, especially when migration is perceived as the only solution. As Katy Gardner (1995: 16-17) writes of Sylhet in Bangladesh, migration has not only helped to create inequalities in the neighbourhood, but ‘it has become a metaphor for thinking about them.’ As such, migration is a symbol of success and success signifies migration.

Chapter five described different types of behaviour and discourse adopted by non-migrants depending on their aspirations. We saw that not everyone in Diamaguène wants to emigrate and that those who do not, to justify their position, oppose the dominant celebration of emigration by presenting themselves as morally superior to émigrés. As for my involuntarily immobile informants, when they did not invest their hope, energy, time and money into one emigration strategy, such as Awa’s aim for scholarly excellence and Yat’s failed attempt to migrate through professional football, they sought to maximise their chances by trying to enter into contact (virtual
or in person) with tubaab or émigrés likely to facilitate their departure. Sometimes though, for people already part of networks, it is a question of waiting for one’s turn. Whereas Baggio got on with business while awaiting a phone call from his father, two members of the United Brothers group, whose elder sibling was already in Spain, could not see the point in investing their energy in Senegal and were considering dropping out of school.

The implications of migration to the ‘West’ for people in urban Senegal are no doubt more complex than this small scale study can establish, but I will nonetheless set forward a broad conclusion to my analysis: aspirations to emigrate are linked to the economic dominance of households with migrant members, but they do not only reflect economic motives. From the viewpoint of aspirants, emigration represents the key to pursuing individual desires which will be accepted by their families because of the remittances. As such migration is perceived not only as a route to financial security, but also to empowerment.

The ethnographic examples in this thesis cover both men’s and women’s experiences and opinions. These are crucial to acquiring an understanding not only of the Senegalese sending context, but of Senegalese migration. Senegalese migrants, especially Murids, have been researched from New York to Berlin, but those on the other end of the transnational ties have been paid considerably less scholarly attention. My findings bring non-migrant communities to the centre of discussions on remittances by acknowledging their influence on remitting mechanisms. In Diamaguène, financial relations between household members are the site of negotiations of power and status. While anthropologically-minded researchers have emphasised how remittance spending in the receiving context responds to social and cultural requirements (Van Hear, 2002), the social underpinnings of how money is remitted remain largely to be explored.

Considering non-migrants within the migration paradigm also unveils the hierarchy which characterises participation in global flows (Ferguson, 2006) and the frustration that this entails for involuntarily immobile non-migrants, some of whom are ‘deported before departure’. It is my view that current European Union-funded anti-emigration campaigns in Senegal achieve little more than flagging up these inequalities. Slogans such as tukki taxul tekki (leaving is not succeeding) and their accompanying discourses seek to encourage Senegalese youths to invest in the local. To the majority of youths in Diamaguène, however, the most constructive and personally fulfilling contribution they could make clearly lies in the global.
Bibliography


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Appendix 1: Transliteration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels</th>
<th>Nearest English Equivalent</th>
<th>Wolof Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>absorb</td>
<td>souba (tomorrow or morning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aa</td>
<td>far</td>
<td>daal (really)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>get</td>
<td>dem (to go)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ee</td>
<td>where</td>
<td>see (to examine)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>é</td>
<td>say</td>
<td>bés (day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ëé</td>
<td>sane</td>
<td>réér (to get lost)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>kër (house or family)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>meet</td>
<td>nit (someone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>moment</td>
<td>siis (seat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ó</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>xob (leaf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oo</td>
<td>door</td>
<td>jóg (to get up)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>óó</td>
<td>phone</td>
<td>soo (if you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>cook</td>
<td>fóó (to do laundry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uu</td>
<td>moon</td>
<td>nuyu (to greet)</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonants</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>boy</td>
<td>ban (mud)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>church</td>
<td>caabi (key)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>dog</td>
<td>dof (crazy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>fire</td>
<td>fas (to eat with one’s hand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>good</td>
<td>dogal (to decide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>job</td>
<td>jox (to give)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>cool</td>
<td>lekk (to eat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>land</td>
<td>loolú (that thing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>moon</td>
<td>moo mú (Murid émigré)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>nob</td>
<td>nawet (rainy season)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>onion (ny)</td>
<td>Pikine (neighbourhood in Dakar and Saint-Louis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>park</td>
<td>and Saint-Louis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>rat</td>
<td>reer (evening meal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>sign</td>
<td>siis (seat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>tomorrow</td>
<td>tubaab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w</td>
<td>war</td>
<td>wolof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>your</td>
<td>xaalís (money)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>yaay (mother)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prenasalized consonants</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mb</td>
<td>mbalax (type of dance music)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nj, ng</td>
<td>Ndar (Saint-Louis)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñ</td>
<td>ngato (cake)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parking</td>
<td>ñaam (jaw)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Double vowels are elongated and double consonants are stronger than single consonants.
Appendix 2: Song by the United Brothers

Two versions of the United Brother’s song ‘Emigration’: the authors’ translation from Wolof to French and my translation from French to English.

Emigration

On va tout faire pour émigrer,
« Barca wala barzakhe » Barcelone ou le cimetière, 81
On va casser les frontières et les barrières,
Avoir ou mourir,
Si on ne travaille pas, que va manger la famille ?

Dès lors on vit avec l’espérance,
Notre souffrance nous guide,
Il faut qu’on entre dans les pirogues pour émigrer,
Même si une vie de chien nous attend là-bas,

(Refrain)
C’est le Président qui est malhonnête ?
Ou serait-ce le maire ?
C’est pour cela que la jeunesse ne mange pas.

L’émigration clandestine chauffe notre cœur,
Et même détruit nos intestins,
Changer notre destin,
Mes amis, il n’y a pas d’objet auquel se tenir lorsqu’on sombre dans la mer,

Je ne peux pas compter combien de personnes la mer a tuées,
Combien de personnes de notre pays y ont perdu leur vie,
Vendre leurs affaires et mourir,

(Refrain)
“Défar Ndar” Reconstruire Ndar,
Ce sont des paroles en l’air,
Promettre est une dette,
On a besoin de travailler,
Sinon on te frappe !

2006, 2007, notre ville s’étouffe de plus en plus,
On nous mène on ne sait où dans l’obscurité,
2008 le chemin devient de plus en plus dur,

81 Barca wala barzakhe has become a grassroots pro-emigration slogan. It can also be translated as ‘Barcelona or the afterlife’.
On entend des informations de plus en plus néfastes,

Mazing l’impose,
Je vais le dire et mourir, je m’en fous !
Au fond, ce qu’il détourne de l’Etat est plus que ce qu’il montre,
Le gouvernement du Sénégal n’est que des mensonges,

(Refrain)

Construire des places publiques, des jardins, des lampadaires,
Cela ne veut pas dire changement ou développement,
Regarde le pont Faidherbe,
L’argent pour se réfection devrait nourrir des ventres,
Tu récoltes ce que tu as semé,
Ca ne vaut pas la peine de vendre ton honnêteté,
Le gouvernement du Sénégal n’est qu’un mensonge,

(Refrain)

Ne pas avoir du travail,
C’est la cause qui nous pousse à émigrer,
Ne pas avoir de l’argent,
Est l’origine de la souffrance et de la pauvreté.

Emigration

We’re going do everything we can to leave,
« Barca wala barzakhе » Barcelona or the cemetery, 82
We’ll break the borders and barriers,
To have or to die,
If we don’t work, what’s the family going to eat?

Therefore we live in hope,
Our suffering guides us,
We must board the dugouts to emigrate,
Even if a dog’s life awaits us there,

(Chorus) Is it the president who is dishonest?
Or could it be the mayor?

82 Barca wala barzakhе has become a grassroots pro-emigration slogan. It can also be translated as ‘Barcelona or the afterlife’.

91
This is why our youth does not eat

Illegal emigration warms our hearts,
And even destroys our intestines,
Change our destiny,
My friends, there is nothing to hold on to when one sinks into the sea,

I can’t count how many people the sea has killed,
How many people from our country who have lost their lives there,
Sell their things and die,

(Chorus)

‘Défar Ndar’ Rebuilding Saint-Louis,
Are just empty words,
To promise is a dept,
We need to work,
If not, you’re in for it!

2006, 2007, our city is suffocating more and more,
We’re being taken we don’t know where in the dark,
2008 the road is getting harder and harder,
We hear more and more harmful news,

Mazing commands it,
I’ll say it and die, I don’t care!
Really, what he embezzles from the state is more than what he shows,
The Senegalese government is just a pack of lies,

(Chorus)

Building gardens, public areas and lamp posts,
Does not mean change or development,
Look at the Faidherbe bridge,
The money for its repair should feed stomachs,
You reap what you sow,
It is not worth selling your honesty,
The government of Senegal is just a lie,

(Chorus)

Not having work,
Is the cause that pushes us to emigrate,
Not having money,
Is the origin of suffering and poverty.