

TERANGA: THE ROLE OF ASSOCIATIONS IN THE SENEGALESE COMMUNITY IN THE
CITY OF BUENOS AIRES (2012-2018)

A Thesis
submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
of Georgetown University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Arts
in Development Management and Policy

By

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Washington, D.C.
August 20, 2019

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ABSTRACT

This study contributes to the growing field of literature and research that focuses on the nature and influence of the existent African population in Argentina, specifically on transnational Senegalese migrants to the city of Buenos Aires. Over the years, Senegalese immigrants have constructed their own associations and self-help networks within and outside of Argentina. The intention of this work is to explore the nature, role, and the use of these formal and informal associations in the Senegalese migrant population in the city of Buenos Aires, specifically examining the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* (ARSA) and the Murīdiyya (or Murīd brotherhood) in Buenos Aires in order to understand why Senegalese immigrants prefer informal associations to formal ones.

Tracing the historic influence of Islam and Sufi Brotherhoods in Senegal, as well as Senegalese associations in Italy, Spain, and the United States, this thesis will seek to provide additional details on the noted discrepancy between the intentions of the Senegalese Association in Buenos Aires and the population it serves, positing that although there exist formal associations, migrants only use them for formal procedures, with many preferring to seek aid from group solidarity or religious associations such as the Murīdiyya. The findings show that migrants do not utilize the ARSA with frequency due to the nature and reason for their migration. The lack of time and the view towards living “here and there”, as well as the strong ties with the

Murīdiyya, gives more weight to the informal associations, principally the Murīd brotherhood. Additionally, due to the autonomous role the Murīdiyya holds in Senegal, and their relation to the State, many migrants are not accustomed to relying on the State for the provision of aid, and therefore defer to their own network rather than the formalized association. However, the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* aids migrants by representing Senegalese culture and its community, as well as advocating on behalf of migrants in legal matters and residency status. Therefore, the ARSA does serve as an important intermediary role for migrants in Argentina, especially considering the lack of embassy or consulate in Argentina.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research and writing of this thesis
is dedicated to my family and the Senegalese community in Argentina.

Many thanks to Gisele Kleidermacher , Mark Rom, Samba Diallo, Baba Badji, and all those who
volunteered their time to let me into their world.

Miles Johnson

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Introduction

Argentina has a long history of migration and stands today as one of the world's cultural melting pots with influences from all over Europe, America, Asia, and Africa. Walking through the streets of Buenos Aires, this cultural mix is evident through the diverse set of languages, ranging from Quechua and Guarani, to English, Spanish, French, Chinese, and Arabic. The city pays homage to the multitude of cultures on show through various festivals, each one dedicated to a different group or influence. As a migrant myself to Buenos Aires, I was constantly aware of the presence of other cultures and traditions, both internally as well as those coming from overseas or neighboring countries, and additionally conscious of the desire of all migrants to find their way in this new home. However, against the backdrop of the bustling porteño streets, one group caught my attention more than others. In a country where, according to the Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos, less than one percent of the population identifies as being Afro descendent, African migrants stand out against a background of white or tan skin. However, despite this visibility, they paradoxically occupy the margins of society, as they work primarily in the informal sector, speak different languages, and are not frequently portrayed in the Argentina media. I began to wonder about these individuals who while being so visible, were at the same time made invisible within their host society. It was through this investigation that led me to the Senegalese community in Buenos Aires, as they constitute the largest population of African migrants living in Argentina. Consequently, I became aware of the presence and influence of the Murīdiyya and the role of religious associations in the Senegalese community. This investigation also took on a personal quality, as my research led me to explore and engage with the culture and history of my adopted brother, Baba Badji, a Senegalese refugee who has

lived in the United States for over 20 years. By reading the works of authors such as, Marta Maffia, Gisele Kleidermacher, and Bernarda Zubrycki, I further developed my interest in the topic of African migrants and was compelled to learn more about the community that had first caught my attention.

The African presence in the city of Buenos Aires is not a new phenomenon, but rather one that has been, “sistemáticamente negada o minimizada.”^a(Maffia et al 2007:1) This thesis for the masters of Arts in Development, Management & Policy for the Department of Government and Department of Politics and Government at Georgetown University and the Universidad Nacional de General San Martín, contributes to the growing field of literature and research that focuses on the nature and influence of the existent African population in Argentina with the aim to offer a different perspective to long held narratives in Argentina that marginalize or negate its presence. This study will concentrate specifically on the last wave of immigration from South Saharan Africa, specifically from Senegal to the city of Buenos Aires. Over the years, Senegalese immigrants have constructed their own associations and self-help networks within and outside of Argentina. The intention of this work is to explore the nature, role, and the use of these formal and informal associations in the Senegalese migrant population in the city of Buenos Aires, specifically examining the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* (ARSA) and the Murīdiyya (or Murīd brotherhood) in Buenos Aires in order to understand why Senegalese immigrants prefer informal associations to formal ones.

^a “systematically negated or minimized” (Translation by author)

1.1 Problem and Objectives of the Study

Several authors such as Zubrzycki, Sarubbi, Maffia, and Espada that have focused on Senegalese migration have highlighted the lack or absence of participation in formal institutions. Both the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* as well as other similar associations in other countries such as the *Asociación de Inmigrantes Senegaleses en España* (AISE) distinguish the preference of migrants for using informal mutual aid organizations, such as the Murid brotherhood, instead of integrating themselves into institutions that relate directly with the state. Therefore, if formal institutions as well as informal associations already exist in Argentina, the question remains, why do migrants not make use of the formal associations? Several authors have planted several possible hypotheses. Sarubbi (2013) mentions that “tal vez haya quienes se unen a la asociación para poder regularizar su situación migratoria, y no consideran importante, o conveniente, el formar parte de estas reuniones, ya que lo que más les importa es su situación legal para poder seguir trabajando, juntando dinero y poder enviar remesas.”^b (Sarubbi 2013:138) Zubrzycki (2016) also emphasizes the fact that many Senegalese have little to no knowledge of the ARSA, consequently not making full use of the Association. Therefore there exists a gap between the intentions of the ARSA and the population it serves. This thesis will address this gap and seek to build on the findings and conclusions made by Sarubbi and Zubrzycki, examining what circumstances allow for migrants to make use of the ARSA, expanding on notions of participation and examine the details behind the potential suggested reasons. The focus will be expanding upon the questions posited by Sarubbi and Zubrzycki, such as what might account for the lack of participation? And, what is the role of associations in daily life of migrants? This

^b “perhaps there are those who join the association to legalize their immigrant status, and they don’t consider it important, or convenient to form part of the meetings, as what is really important to them is their legal situation in order to continue working, saving money and being able to send money back home.” (Translation by author)

project will focus on two associations in the city of Buenos Aires, one formally recognized organization by the Argentine state, the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* (ARSA), and the other an international religious association, the Murīd brotherhood. Both cater to the population of Senegalese migrants, acting as spaces that reinforce a sense of identity and community, have the power to organize the dispersed immigrant population in important cultural events, and also serve other functional roles as well. Different from the Murīdiyya, the ARSA is a formally recognized organization by the state and therefore can handle legal issues. The ARSA provides a space where migrants can vocalize problems with the Argentine state and also count on political representation for their needs, most significantly regarding the issue of procuring residency documentation and fighting against injustices enacted against the migrant community. Rather than be viewed as competing agencies, these two associations are complementary, catering to different needs in the Senegalese community. Through the course of this study, it has been shown that while the ARSA has overarching goals to aid the Senegalese community, many turn to the ARSA for formal procedures related to obtaining documentation and legal proceedings, while relying on the brotherhood, strong individual relationships, or group solidarity for aid in solving personal informal issues. The aim of this study is to explore the gap between goals and their intended reach and the success and integration of members of the Senegalese community into these associations, exploring the preferences migrants have for each one and under what circumstances they are utilized.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the existing literature, this present thesis will seek to provide additional details and nuance to the noted discrepancy between the intended goals and aims of the ARSA and its

perceived reach in an attempt to begin to understand the phenomenon of participation, usage, and preference among the Senegalese migrants for certain types of associations. The focus of this thesis will be to address the following research question: under what circumstances do immigrants use the ARSA? And corollary to this question; when do migrants resort to the Murīdiyya? To answer these questions, the following secondary questions must be posed:

- What influence does the Murīd brotherhood have in Senegal and Argentina that accounts for its preference among migrants?
- How does this influence relate to Senegalese associations world wide? What similar issues have been present in other countries?
- What are the main goals and services provided by the ARSA? How do members view their success in fulfilling these goals and what opinion do they have of the services offered?
- What perceptions do the migrants have that lets them privilege one organization over another? What influences an individual's desire to participate in the ARSA or the Murīdiyya?

1.3 Hypothesis

This work argues that although there exist formal associations for the migrants linked to the state, migrants only use them for formal procedures, such as obtaining documents or registering formal complaints. Migrants do not utilize the ARSA with frequency due to the nature and reason for their migration. The lack of time and the view towards living “here and there”, as well as the strong ties with the Murīdiyya, gives more weight to the informal associations, principally the

Murīd brotherhood. Additionally, due to the autonomous role the Murīdiyya holds in Senegal, and their relation to the State, many migrants are not accustomed to relying on the State for the provision of aid, and therefore defer to their own network rather than the formalized association. The evidence of how formal associations are used and created globally supports this argument, as many formal Senegalese associations worldwide have similar problems of participation. Additionally, interviews with community members highlight how the lack of time or financial resources contribute to the inability to invest fully in a formal association. Furthermore, by studying the role of the brotherhoods in Senegal offers insight into how influential they are and sheds light on behavior patterns of the Senegalese abroad.

Evidence that would challenge this argument would show that the interactions between the brotherhoods and the ARSA are more fluid and complementary than believed. Additionally, it is possible that there is a specific type of person, or profile, who participates more often in formal associations, so that this is a common phenomenon with human beings, where only certain profiles defer to formal institutions. Finally by investigating levels of participation in the Senegalese community in both the Murīdiyya and the ARSA could show that migrants do not participate in either institution or simply utilize the formal Association more often.

One of the surprising results of this study was the nature of solidarity among the Senegalese community. The notion of *teranga*, a form of hospitality, plays a fundamental role in the reception and insertion of Senegalese migrants into the social and economic framework of Argentina. *Teranga* and the unique form of solidarity in the Senegalese community has proven to be an influencing factor on how migrants solve their problems, many resolve their issues before approaching the brotherhoods or the Association. Therefore, while one association may be

prioritized over the other, the concept of association and solidarity is fundamental to the Senegalese migrant population.

1.4 Methodology

In order to carry out this investigation, both primary source documents as well as informal semi-structured and formally structured interviews were consulted and utilized. Close reading and review of the existing literature that focuses on immigrant associations in Buenos Aires throughout history as well as the literature on Cape Verdeans and Senegalese in Buenos Aires was thoroughly researched and explored to provide context for this project. I have also utilized studies that focus on associations and the Murīd brotherhood, not only in Argentina, but in Spain, Italy, and the United States, where similar circumstances have been created and studied. Finally a thorough reading of the history of Senegal and the rise and influence of Islam was also utilized to provide further insight into the role the brotherhoods have in Senegal. In addition, literature on association and organization theory as well as transnational migrant theory were researched in order to provide a theoretical framework in which this work is situated. Statistics and data from the Dirección Nacional de Migraciones, la Comisión Nacional para los Refugiados y el Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INDEC) was used to compliment this research and provide demographic information on the chosen population.

To obtain detailed information from key actors within the ARSA and Murīd brotherhood, I conducted 5 formal interviews in 2018 with both President and former President of the ARSA, members of the Murīdiyya, and other migrants from the Senegalese community. Interviews were conducted mainly in Spanish, but also in English, depending on the preference of the individual. The interviews have been transcribed and are later quoted in the original language they were

conducted in. Due to the nature of their work, long hours and mainly street peddling, informal interviews were of vital importance to obtain vital information as to the Senegalese experience in Buenos Aires, 20 informal interviews on the street, during religious events, such as the Magal, and in various urban locations were conducted with Senegalese migrants over the course of 2016-2018 to both members of the Murīdiyya and of the Tijāniyya. Due to the status of many migrants, identifying information will not be disclosed as many migrants reside in Argentina irregularly. Additional interviews were also conducted in New York City with two individual representatives from the *Association Des Senegalais D’Amerique* in order to add to information that could not be found in the relevant literature about Senegalese associations in the United States. A further interview via skype was conducted with the professor of Islamic studies at Washington University in St. Louis, Samba Diallo, to add relevant information about Islam in Senegal, the Murīd brotherhood, and Senegalese associations in the United States.

Chapter I: Essential Considerations

The migrant Senegalese population in Buenos Aires, and more broadly Argentina, is small compared to other recent and historic migrant groups. Constituting only a few thousand, immigrants from Senegal, and Africa in general, fall well behind migrants arriving from other Latin American countries, such as Paraguay, Bolivia, and Venezuela, as well as migrants from the United States and Europe. According to the 2017 report by the Ministry of Interior, as shown in figure 1, African migrants do not even feature on their top 15 list of immigrants seeking permanent or temporary residency.

NACIONALIDAD	PERMANENTE	TEMPORARIA	TOTAL
PARAGUAYA	30.030	31.312	61.342
BOLIVIANA	20.524	27.641	48.165
VENEZOLANA	4.092	27.075	31.167
PERUANA	8.688	11.582	20.270
COLOMBIANA	5.699	10.415	16.114
BRASILEÑA	6.922	1.077	7.999
CHILENA	1.611	2.187	3.798
ECUATORIANA	860	2.827	3.687
URUGUAYA	1.408	1.762	3.170
CHINA	1.666	1.059	2.725
ESTADOUNIDENSE	462	1.308	1.770
ESPAÑOLA	511	1.103	1.614
MEXICANA	403	1.127	1.530
DOMINICANA	805	302	1.107
FRANCESA	206	790	996
OTRAS	2.244	5.147	7.391
TOTAL	86.131	126.714	212.845

Figure 1.1 Approved Residency Status by Nationality and Category 2017

Taken from “RADICACIONES RESUELTAS 2017.” Direccin Nacional De Migraciones | Accesible, Ministerio Del Interior, Obras Publicas, y Vivienda, www.migraciones.gov.ar/accesible/indexN.php?estadisticas

The same report, seen in figures 1.2 and 1.3, finds that just over 200 applicants for residency, be it permanent or temporary, were reported to be from the African continent.

Compared to other applicants, persons from Africa represent a minority within the immigrant community in Argentina, with only people coming from Oceania representing a smaller number. While this number may be under representative of the total number of Senegalese and African migrants, due to reasons later discussed such as the irregular nature of their migration, it is emblematic of an overall trend, illustrating the small comparative ratio to other migrant groups.

ZONA	PERMANENTE	TEMPORARIA	TOTAL
AMERICA (MERCOSUR)	79.835	115.880	195.715
AMERICA (NO MERCOSUR)	2.418	4.730	7.148
EUROPA	1.630	4.040	5.670
ASIA	2.080	1.857	3.937
AFRICA	145	146	291
OCEANIA	23	61	84
TOTAL	86.131	126.714	212.845

Figure 1.2 Approved Residency Status by Region and Category 2017

Taken from “RADICACIONES RESUELTAS 2017.” Direccin Nacional De Migraciones | Accesible, Ministerio Del Interior, Obras Publicas, y Vivienda, www.migraciones.gov.ar/accesible/indexN.php?estadisticas

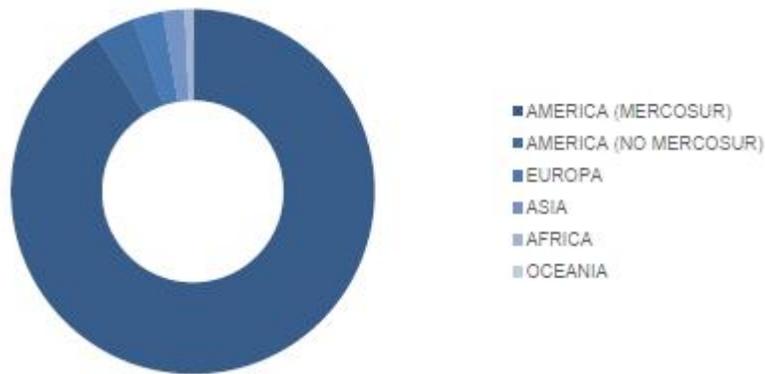


Figure 1.3 Approved Residency Status, both Permanent and Temporary 2017

Taken from “RADICACIONES RESUELTAS 2017.” Direccin Nacional De Migraciones | Accesible, Ministerio Del Interior, Obras Publicas, y Vivienda, www.migraciones.gov.ar/accesible/indexN.php?estadisticas

With a population so small compared to others seeking residency in Argentina, thus constituting an even greater minority when considering the rest of the natural born Argentine

citizens, why is it even important to study and examine this group? Apart from various key scholars citing the importance of further study into this phenomenon, my answer to this question is threefold. The Senegalese migrant population and their associations in Buenos Aires represent a worldwide phenomenon that manifests itself in other countries such as Spain, France, Italy, and the United States, they are a unique group compared to other migrant groups due to the importance of their religious networks and their vision of transnationalism contributing insights to the literary field on development and modernization theory, and finally examining the ARSA and the Murīd brotherhood offer insights into relevant policy and efficacy decisions, not just for Senegalese immigrants, but for other ethnic groups that have differing world views than those of the host State and context in which they reside. In a moment in time where immigration is a central issue for many nations, the study of the Senegalese in Argentina offers insight into a global phenomenon with certain policy implications.

Due to various push factors, such as famine, the structural readjustment in the 1990's put forth by the IMF and World Bank, and economic hardships, Senegalese immigrants can be found all over Europe, the United States, and lately, Latin America. Due to its proximity and historic and colonial ties, France, and consequently Italy and Spain, became a primary destination for many Senegalese seeking a better future (Zubrycki 2011). While the immigrant population is varied and diverse, constituting many different ethnic groups such as Wolof, Serer, Fulani, and Diola, coming from diverse geographic locations, and with a variety of impulses, such as refugees fleeing war and famine, or the desire to earn money abroad to improve circumstances back home, a large proportion of this migrant group belong to the Murīdiyya. This group's migration project is connected to improving economic self-worth, sending money home to both family as well as the brotherhood to fund development projects in the holy city of Touba

(Zubrycki 2011). Murīd networks are found all over Europe, the United States, Asia, and now Latin America. Many dedicate themselves to the informal sector, selling similar products such as handbags, sunglasses, electronics etc (Sow 2004). Their project is also similar in nature, sending extra money home to their family and also their *dahira* in Touba in order to fund development projects such as hospitals and libraries (Zubrycki 2011). Additionally, many share the same desire to reside part of the year abroad and part of the year in Senegal, constituting part of the transnational phenomenon found among other migrant groups in the world.

As the Murīd take up residency in a foreign country, over time separate immigrant associations are later formed distinct from the self-help network of the local *dahira*. This phenomenon will be later discussed, however the creation of specific Senegalese associations, and the problems that they face is not unique to Buenos Aires, but part of an overall trend that has been documented and studied in Spain, France, Italy, and the United States. Examining the ARSA in Buenos Aires contributes to the growing literature of this global phenomenon of Senegalese migrants and how they organize themselves in their newly found homes.

This population is also unique, not just in Buenos Aires, but globally as it is a group that is strongly linked to a common religious identity with strong affiliations. According to the US Department of State, Senegal is a country that is around 96% Muslim^c, most belonging to different Sufi brotherhoods. The two largest are the Tijāniyya and the Muridiyya. While the Muridiyya constitute the second largest Sufi order compared to the Tijāniyya^d, they have a certain level of influence within Senegal. Presidents have made trips to appeal to Murīd leaders

^c Information taken from “The World Factbook: Senegal.” Central Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, 1 Feb. 2018, www.cia.gov/LIBRARY/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sg.html.

^d Information taken from “Religious Identity Among Muslims.” Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, 9 Jan. 2015, www.pewforum.org/2012/08/09/the-worlds-muslims-unity-and-diversity-1-religious-affiliation/.

and voters for support in elections, while the city of Touba holds an almost autonomous rule over itself (O'Brien 1977). Additionally, the monopoly of groundnut production, as well as the increasing number of remittances coming from the ever growing global network of Murīds abroad, represents the powerful economic influence the Murīdiyya hold within Senegal.

While many groups emigrate due to financial reasons and the desire to seek better opportunities in other locations, what differentiates the Senegalese and in particular the Murīd group is the affiliation to the religious order. While individuals migrate seeking fortune for their families, the brotherhood also orchestrates, organizes, funds, and supports these migrants as well. Many of the remittances that are sent back home are also destined towards the *dahira* that is used to fund other migrants in addition to other development projects in Touba. The strong affiliation to their religious order makes the Murīd a unique migrant group in the world, and therefore an interesting case study in itself.

It is precisely this influencing nature of the Murīd that make this group an interesting subject. Not only in terms of their international influence and organizational capabilities, but also as the Murīd represent a challenge to existing theories around development and modernization. Both Weber (1958) and early modernists like Lerner (1958) highlight the process and influence of development and modernization on a nation and its people. While modernization theory and rationalization theory proposed by Weber (1958) and his notion of the “disenchantment” have been largely criticized over the years, both Weber (1958) and other early modernization and development theorists posit the notion that through various processes such as urbanization, education, and industrialization, people begin to shift from traditional systems based upon familial ties, religion, and kinship, to a more “rational” system founded upon notions of bureaucratic organization and science. These ideas suggest that as a nation “modernizes” and

becomes increasingly incorporated into global economies, reliance upon traditional authorities and power structures would give way to an inherent trust in the institutions of the State. However, as Senegal, a nation that has undergone a certain amount of “modernity”, urbanization, industrialization, and incorporation into the globalized world, no longer a colony of a foreign empire, it seems that the reliance upon traditional power and authority, specifically the power of Islam and the Muslim brotherhoods, remains. Not only have these religious associations maintained their authority concerning their disciples, but they also hold significant social, economic, and political influence within Senegal. Therefore, the study of the Murīd brotherhood and the relationship between formal and informal associations contributes certain perspectives regarding the ongoing field of development and modernization theory literature, perhaps questioning the previous Eurocentric and Western models.

Finally, the case study of Senegalese migrants and their associations in Buenos Aires yields important policy considerations and implications. While the ARSA has been created by Senegalese immigrants, for Senegalese immigrants, there remains a clear gap between the goals and intentions of the association and the use made by the migrants. This is a phenomenon that is cited not only in Buenos Aires, but in Spain, France, Italy, and the United States. The gap between intention and function implies some sort of flaw in the planning and design of these associations that are unable to meet the demands of their targeted population. While the ARSA may play one fundamental role, in terms of the legal obtainment of documentation, the perceived success of their other goals remains in question due to lack of participation and involvement in the association. This suggests that perhaps there are other ways of organization and association in the migrant community that satisfies various needs and issues confronted by the migrant community without the need for a formal association.

The ARSA has been set up in accordance with the Argentine government and fits and follows the necessary protocols to give it legal recognition within Argentina, however, perhaps in the process of molding the association to conform to the requirements of the state, the ARSA has overlooked the significance of the way Senegalese migrants organize and structure their lives in Argentina. This has broader policy implications, suggesting a level of ethno-relativism that needs to be taken into account when constructing policies. By considering the various cultures, traditions, and power dynamics within different ethnic groups, policy makers can design more effective policies targeted to specific ethnic groups. This argument is furthered by Katzer (2011), whose study of the Hurape indigenous group in Mendoza illustrates the importance for policy makers to incorporate the culture and practices of the target group into policy decisions to design effective and inclusive policies. Therefore, the study of the ARSA in Argentina and the role it plays for the Senegalese migrants in Buenos Aires, not only sheds light on the effectiveness of ethno-relativism in policy creation and decisions in this context, but can be applied to other Senegalese associations, and even broader to other contexts where the state is in contact with ethnic groups that differ culturally from the majority within the State.

Additionally, as the world is now more than ever becoming an increasingly globalized place, and especially during a century where immigration has become a central political and social issue for many nations, the study of a specific immigrant group and the way in which it organizes itself and its members to interact with the State has particularly important policy implications. Especially in a time where specifically Muslim immigration appears to be a central political issue in countries in both Europe and the United States, the study of the Senegalese and the importance of the Murīdiyya could potentially shed light on the importance of religion and its influence on migrant groups. This could be useful in future policy decisions, considering how to

effectively provide services for a specific and unique group in which religion and traditional practices of the country of origin perhaps has more of an influence than political institutions and customs in the country of reception.

The study of the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* and the Murīd brotherhood and the role they play for Senegalese immigrants in Buenos Aires is important in of itself as an interesting phenomenon and also has global implications. The Murīdiyya as a religious Sufi order is a unique group that holds political and economic sway in Senegal and extends its reach beyond Africa to Europe, Asia, the United States and Latin America. Due to the span of its network, the study of the Murīd has global implications as it is a group found in many countries and the wealth generated has development implications in Senegal. Furthermore, it is a unique immigrant group as it is one that encourages emigration as a strategy for financial betterment as well as development of their own religious community. The Murīd and Senegalese Associations also present interesting phenomena that occur in other countries, not only among Senegalese immigrants but also reflect tensions that exist between state policy makers and ethnic minority groups. This study contributes to the existing literature that examines the gap between Senegalese immigrant associations and their use by the migrant community, not just in Argentina, but globally in several countries in Europe and the United States. Furthermore, this study has implications for policy decisions as it evaluates formal associations that have conformed to state requirements, and perhaps have failed to take into account ethnic relative practices or traditions, thereby hindering its efficacy.

Chapter II: African Immigration to Argentina

This chapter will focus on contextualizing historically as well as describing the profile and nature of the recent phenomenon of Senegalese migration to Argentina. It is important to place this phenomenon within a larger historical context, as the African presence in Argentina is a history that is often misrepresented, oversimplified, or marginalized, and it is necessary to show that the Senegalese migration to Argentina is not a recent aberration, thus helping to gain insight into the relationship between African migrants and the Argentine State. This chapter will briefly revise the three waves of African migration to Argentina described in the existing literature. The main focus will be on the final wave of African immigration, specifically the recent Senegalese migration, exploring the profile of this group and the unique nature of their migration. Finally the chapter will discuss the reasons and conditions that have led to the global phenomenon of Senegalese migration and more specifically, the arrival of Senegalese immigrants in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

2.1 African Presence in Buenos Aires: Colonial Period to 1920

The first Africans were forcefully brought over the Atlantic Ocean as slaves at the beginning of the 15th century. Different from other colonies in the Americas, slaves in Argentina were used primarily as household servants in Buenos Aires, rather than forced to work on large agricultural plantations as in Brazil, the Caribbean, or the United States, and therefore a relatively smaller number were brought over to Argentina compared to the rest of the Americas. However, similar in all cases of slavery, Africans were torn from their homes and subjected into harsh labor that was supported by the government of the time. Therefore, since the beginning, the

relationship between the form of the State in Argentina and the African population has been one of a power imbalance, lack of mobility and recognition, ultimately leading to marginalization and discrimination. Today thought of as a minority of the population, in the middle of the 18th century Africans and their descendants reflected an average of 40% of the total population (Goldberg et al. 2005). This number declined due to outbreaks of yellow fever, poor living conditions, and the war with Paraguay, where many were sent to fight on the front lines. According to Maffia et al., “El último registro (hasta el año 2010) en el que se hace referencia al color del individuo es el de 1887, donde se registra un brusco descenso de hasta el 2% de la población africana.”^e (Maffia et al. 2007:5) Thus, while present early in Argentine history, since the end of the 19th century, the African population in Argentina has been one of decline.

This decline, along with the policies of the Argentine state concerning a process of conforming to a national identity, one that excluded African presence and focused largely on European heritage, produced “una desaparición sólo en el sentido de que los afroargentinos se tornaron casi invisibles en la mezcla étnica de la ciudad. La gente de color siguió existiendo como una entidad étnica activa e identificable en la ciudad, pero cuyos miembros se redujeron hasta la insignificancia en comparación con las oleadas de italianos, españoles, judíos y otros europeos que llegaron a la ciudad.”^f (Maffia et al. 2007:6) Combined with the massive waves of immigration at the beginning of the 20th century as well as the re-imagination of an Argentine identity led by the state, African heritage was essentially made obsolete. It was only until 2010 that the option of Afro-Argentine was made available on the census, illustrating the legacy of this

^e“The last register (until the year 2010) that made reference to the color of an individual is in 1887, where it records a drastic decrease to 2% of the African population” (Translation by author)

^f“a disappearance only in the sense that Afro-Argentines became almost invisible in the ethnic mix in the city. People of color continued to exist as an active identifiable ethnic entity in the city, but whose members were reduced to almost an insignificant number compared to the waves of Italians, Spanish, Jews, and other Europeans who came to the city” (Translation by author)

minimization, marginalization, and negation of African identity that has endured over the centuries. Thus until the mid-20th century, the African presence and heritage had largely become marginalized and been made effectively invisible.

2.2 The Cape Verdeans

The 1920's saw the beginning of the second wave of African immigration with the arrival of Cape Verdeans to Argentina, a migration that lasted until the 1970's. Maffia classifies this wave as the Cape Verdean Diaspora, where the difficult situation in Cape Verde forced many migrants to look for a better life in other countries, without any motivation of return. Key to this migration was the effort of migrants to insert themselves into the lifestyle and culture of Argentina, distancing themselves from their African identity. Maffia (2003) explains that, "Los caboverdianos en Argentina no se constituyeron en grupos cerrados, hablan perfectamente el castellano, no les han enseñado el 'criol' a sus hijos, el que en el mejor de los casos entienden, pero no hablan; no consumen diariamente comida caboverdeana, sólo en algunas ocasiones, principalmente festivas; no mantienen las prácticas tradicionales vinculadas al ciclo vital."⁸ (Maffia 2003:84) In this wave of Africans to Argentina, the process of adaptation was based on creating distance from the country of origin and "argentinization", assimilating to the Argentine way of life. It is important to note that different from following wave of immigrants in the 1990's, the objective of Cape Verdeans was not to return home. Therefore, the necessity of integrating themselves into Argentine society and lifestyle was a higher priority than maintaining ties with Cape Verde and the life they left behind.

⁸"The Cape Verdeans in Argentina didn't constitute a closed group, they speak perfect Spanish, they have not taught Creole to their children, in the best cases some understand it, but they do not speak it; they do not consume Cape Verdean food daily, only on some occasions, mainly in festivals; they do not maintain traditional practices tied to the life cycle." (Translated by author)

Maffia describes that this strategy of insertion into Argentine culture and society was a process of invisibilization, a tactic that had been learned and implemented in Cape Verde against the Portuguese. Through assimilation and the adoption of Argentine culture, language, and traditions, the Cape Verdean community sought to minimize their African identity and smoothly insert themselves into the Argentine community. In Argentina, Maffia highlights that this practice was necessary when facing a national discourse that, “han negado la presencia de negros en Argentina y como respuesta anticipada frente a posibles actitudes discriminatorias.”^h (Maffia 2003:88) In Argentina, it is not that Africans were discriminated solely due to their skin color and identity, rather “que él es visto como no existente, mecanismo que se revela como una de las principales formas en que se manifiesta el racismo.”ⁱ (Boaventura Leite 1996:41) The lack of visibility in Argentine culture, the narrative that Africans had disappeared, created a reality where Africans stood out against a white backdrop that is oriented towards Europe and European migration. Thus African immigrants are made “hyper-visible” as ethnically they cannot fully hide their identity in society. Paradoxically, while made hyper-visible, at the same time the African population is one that is made invisible, as they are excluded from and do not conform to the national Argentine narrative. This is seen today as street vendors from various African countries racially are made hyper-visible due to the color of their skin in a country that is predominantly white, but yet marginalized as they largely work in the informal labor sector, peddling their goods on the sides of streets (Maffia et al. 2007). For the Cape Verdeans, Maffia

^h “had negated the presence of blacks in Argentina and as an anticipated response to discriminatory attitudes” (Translated by author)

ⁱ “that he is viewed as if he doesn’t exist, a mechanism that reveals one of the principal forms in which racism manifests itself” (Translated by author)

argues that in order to insert themselves into Argentine society, they chose to adapt to this hypervisibility through assimilation and distancing themselves from their homeland.

Similar to the other waves of migrants to arrive to Argentina, Cape Verdeans also constructed their own networks of self-help and mutual aid in order to ease the transition to a new country and way of life. These networks formed the base of what Maffia classifies as “núcleos” based on family groups. These “núcleos” were in charge of finding housing for the newly arrived, finding employment, as well as providing assistance with other daily life necessities. As time passed, the “núcleos” formed “microcontextos”, “fueron los gérmenes de la ‘Sociedades’ o ‘Asociaciones’, es decir, los que con un régimen de autoridad y cumpliendo determinadas funciones, se constituyeron en instituciones.”^j (Maffia 2003:246) From these first self-help organizations, arose the *Sociedad de Socorros Mutuos de Ensenada* in 1927 and the *Unión Caboverdeana de Dock Sud* in 1932 with the goal of “cubrir necesidades funcionales referidas a la ocupación, alojamiento, recreación, y manifestaciones culturales de origen general.”^k (Maffia 2003:246) Similar to the Cape Verdeans who constructed their own associations and institutions based on networks that were established based on mutual aid, the Senegalese, arriving at the beginning of the 21st century, also have constructed their own groups that are now recognized by the state with legal authority.

2.3 *The New Wave of African Migration to Buenos Aires: The 2000's-Present*

Since the beginning of the year 2000, another wave of immigrants has formed part of the new presence of Africans in Argentina. Different from the Cape Verdeans, this wave one that is

^j “were the seeds of the societies or associations, that is to say, those with a regime of authority, performing determined functions, they became institutions.” (Translated by author)

^k “covering the necessary functions regarding work, housing, recreation, and cultural displays in general.” (Translated by author)

heterogeneous and widely diverse. Migrants come from several countries on the African continent and within the immigrant population there is a variety of cultures, socio-economic statuses, religions, and geographical and ethnic origins. In 2001 the national census counted a total of 1,883 individual African migrants, 51% corresponding to people coming from Sub Saharan Africa. This population was distributed throughout the country, with the majority of migrants living in the province of Buenos Aires and the city of Buenos Aires, but others were counted to be living in Córdoba, Mendoza, Salta, and other provinces throughout the rest of the country. Among the most represented, were those coming from South Africa and countries in West Africa, the largest population coming from Senegal, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Ghana, and to a lesser extent migrants from Mali, Liberia, Guinea. Migrants were also counted from the central region of Africa, the majority of whom came from Congo, and the eastern region of Africa, the most represented being Ethiopians (Maffia et al 2007). The Senegalese population, due to its size and representation, will be the focus of this study.

2.4 On Transnationalism

It is important to note that different from the previous waves of Africans coming to Argentina, the recent Senegalese migration is a transnational one. Transnational migration has been the subject of recent literary study and, as a term, has been a relatively new point of discussion and critique. First introduced by Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc (1994) as a term that challenged the long held beliefs of immigrants as simply, “persons who uproot themselves, leave behind home and country, and face the painful process of incorporation into a different society and culture” (Schiller et al. 1995:48) Rather than view this process as one directional, migrants leaving home, never to return and leaving behind their culture and

traditions to adopt the new ones present in the country of reception, theorists decided there needed to be a more intricate definition that accurately encompasses the diversity and complexity of the way migration takes form today. Due to the increasing spread of globalization and the frequent negotiation of borders and nationality that migrants constantly face, and the ability to maintain ties with home, the term *transnational* or *transmigrant* refer to the fact that immigrants living in the country of reception daily depend upon a variety of connections and relationships that involve more than one nation state. This idea is predicated on the notion that migrants are constantly negotiating multiple identities, cultures, traditions, through their relationships and connections to their origin nation as well as their receiving nation. Rather than view the migrant as leaving behind their culture with their move away from their home country, transmigration is “the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and of settlement”. (Schiller et al. 1995:48) Portes (1999) later expanded upon this definition as “occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders for their implementation.” (Portes 1999: 219) Guarnizo (2003) argues that the definition put forth by Schiller et al. (1995) does not necessarily distinguish between those who participate in activities linked to the country of origin and those who don’t, finding fault as there is no specification as to the parameters of a transmigrant, as many immigrants send remittances and maintain contact with home, but may not consistently conducting cross border activities. This shows just how complex migration itself is as a concept as diverse groups of people are uprooted for various reasons and interact differently with the host nation of their choice, facing differing degrees of acceptance and marginalization.

The focus of Boccagni (2010), in their study of Ecuadorian migrants living in Northern Italy, is helpful to this study of the Senegalese in Argentina. Boccagni expanded this definition to

include, “immigrants’ attachments at distance in the affective and the emotional realms, insofar as they fuel systematic relationships of mutual communication and support not grounded in physical proximity.” (Boccagni 2010:186) Boccagni focuses on transmigration social ties, explaining, “social relationship and practice ‘at distance’ (along with the identity orientations they build on) that allows immigrants to exert relevant influence on the social lives of those left behind and, vice versa, that allows the latter to impact the life course of the former in significant ways.” (Boccagni 2010:186) Both Boccagni and Portes definitions are useful when exploring the Senegalese population in Buenos Aires as many are involved in religious groups and economic activities that are linked to their home country of Senegal, while also navigating the receiving context of Argentina. Additionally, Boccagni’s definition helps to explain the emotional connections that remain not only to the home country, but reinforcing practices and behaviors from Senegal and later reproduced in Argentina. This is significant when examining the Senegalese migrant population as it is a population that maintains strong ties with Senegal as well as negotiates its relationships and connections to Argentina. It is clearly evident, not only due to the constant contact with home through social communications applications, the consumption of Senegalese media, the transfer of remittances, but also the continued and reproduced cultural and religious practices, that this community constitutes a transnational one.

Kleidermacher (2016) in her study of Senegalese migration to Argentina, outlines the factors that constitute the Senegalese as transmigrants. Kleidermacher (2016) notes how many Senegalese migrants are constantly in communication with family members and friends back in Senegal through their cell phones. The increase in accessibility of social media and the facility to maintain ties back home through technology, is one aspect that keeps migrants in constant contact and maintaining strong relationships with Senegal. During work, it is common to see

Senegalese migrants constantly conversing through their cell phone with family or friends back home. Sharing media and conversing through applications such as Skype, WhatsApp, and Facebook, as well as frequent calls and text messages keep migrants socially, culturally, and politically tied to Senegal. Kleidermacher (2016) also notes how family visits back home and the idea of one day returning to Senegal is the main goal of their migration also classifies the Senegalese as transmigrants, as the decision to move is not a final destination, rather viewed as a fluid coming and going between Senegal and Argentina. Economically, Senegalese migrants maintain their links to Senegal through the continued sending of remittances and flow of capital from Argentina to Senegal. Mainly this money is used to support family members back home, but through the various religious brotherhoods, especially the Murīd (will be expanded upon in later chapters), money is also sent to aid in mutual development projects in cities such as Touba. Kleidermacher (2016) explains how these religious brotherhoods are an important network that extend beyond the borders of Argentina and Senegal. These brotherhoods are reproduced in Argentina and serve as meeting points for migrants where customs and traditions from Senegal are weekly practiced, facilitate the visits of religious figures from Senegal, provide aid for recently arrived migrants, therefore providing social, cultural, and economic support that extend back to Senegal. The Senegalese Associations (which will be discussed in further detail in proceeding chapters) also serves to maintain links between Senegal and Argentina as it helps to send deceased bodies back for burial in Senegal and has recently organized the participation of migrants in voting in elections in Senegal.

These factors explored by Kleidermacher (2016) make clear that the Senegalese population in Argentina is a transmigrational one that maintains strong ties through various aspects, both socially, culturally, economically, and politically to both sending and receiving

country. The concept of the Senegalese as transmigrants is essential to understanding the nature of their migration and the way these migrants interact and participate in their preferred associations. When focusing on participation and policy considerations, it is important to note this strong connection as it differentiates the Senegalese from previous migrant groups whose aim was simply to establish and insert themselves into the Argentine context. Therefore, due to this relationship, in order to understand the function of associations in the life of Senegalese migrants, it is important to contextualize this phenomenon not only within Argentina, but additionally within the culture and history of Senegal.

2.5 Push Pull Factors: Migration in Senegal

For many, the presence of African migrants, let alone the Senegalese, in Argentina is a surprising one. Far from the continent of Africa, a nation that has held traditionally strong ties with Europe not just for past immigration but also social and political influence, not to mention the general lack of strong visible ties to Africa demographically, culturally, and historically, Argentina is simply a striking destination choice for African migrants. Therefore it is essential to contextualize the recent Senegalese migration to Argentina historically, and to examine the reasons that account for their presence in Buenos Aires.

When considering African migration, it is important to note that in Africa, intracontinental migration is greater than international emigration, and there are more African immigrants in Africa than in any other part of the world. (Kabunda 2007) In Senegal, not only have many left to neighboring countries, but also migration extends to countries in Europe, such as Italy, France, and Spain, the United States, and most recently countries in Latin America, principally Brazil and Argentina. Migration is not a new phenomenon in Senegal, but forms part

of cultural behavior since before its colonization by the French. In Senegal, “la propia tradición africana precolonial se caracterizó por importantes movimientos migratorios motivados por la búsqueda de nuevas tierras fértiles para la población o para alimentar a los rebaños.

Posteriormente, la colonización europea (francesa en este caso), con su política de reclutamiento para las minas y los cultivos de exportación, favoreció este fenómeno.”^l (Kleidermacher 2016:187) Therefore the concept of uprooting and seeking opportunities in new promising spaces has long been a part of Senegalese culture pre and post colonization. However, when Senegal gained its independence from France in 1960, this migration took on an international focus as its political independence did not imply economic independence. A series of development policies as well as the international crisis of 1973, debt, and the consequent structural adjustment put forth by the World Bank and the IMF in the 1980’s, created not only difficult economic situation in Senegal, but spurred migration from rural areas towards urban centers, other nearby African countries, and later towards Europe and the United States. Europe and the United States became attractive destinations not only due to their historic colonial ties (in the case of France), but also because of their image as, “como el éxito de la sociedad de consumo y el modelo de referencia para todo proceso de desarrollo y modernización.”^m (Kleidermacher 2016:188)

Migration is “una estrategia familiar, una empresa colectiva donde la familia ve al hijo emigrante como su salvador.”ⁿ (Zubrzycki 2009:5) Migration abroad is viewed as a successful paradise, a myth that is reproduced from migrant to migrant, creating a feedback loop with the

^l “the precolonial African tradition was characterized by important migratory movements in search of new fertile lands to feed the herd or population. Later, European colonization (in this case French) and their policy of recruitment for mines and cultivation for exportation, favored this phenomenon.” (Translated by author)

^m “the success of the society of consumption and the model as a reference for the whole process of development and modernization.” (Translation by author)

ⁿ “a family strategy, a collective business where the family views the emigrant son as its savior.” (Translation by author)

desire to leave the country and “hacerse hombre, tener dinero, mujer e hijos. El prestigio se manifiesta no sólo en términos materiales, sino sobre todo sociales y simbólicos, ya que el emigrante exitoso es aquel que mantiene la responsabilidad moral de redistribuir su riqueza, manteniendo financieramente a su familia, su comunidad y sus redes de amigos.”^o (Zubrzycki 2009:5) Therefore, Senegalese migration was not only a way to improve an economic situation for family and community, but it also holds important symbolic weight, a means to show and prove individual capabilities.

Consequently, countries in Europe, France, Italy, and Spain, and the United States began to pass immigration reform that restricted African migration, making it increasingly more difficult for Senegalese immigrants to arrive. Therefore Latin America and more specifically Argentina due to its less restrictive immigration policy at the time and the possibility to work without legal documents became an attractive destination for Senegalese migrants.

2.6 The Senegalese in Argentina

It is important to emphasize that, according to Traore, the Senegalese population is difficult to measure due to the nature of their migration. He highlights two reasons that complicate any current census data, “en primer lugar es una población muy inestable que va cambiando constantemente: dos de cada tres senegaleses llegados a la Argentina hace 10 años atrás, emigraron posteriormente hacia otros destinos principalmente Europa. Por otra parte, las fuentes oficiales no son muy confiables, teniendo en cuenta el problema de la porosidad de las

^o “to become a man, have money, a wife and children. Prestige doesn’t only manifest itself in terms of material wealth, but overall socially and symbolically, as the successful emigrant is the one who maintains the moral responsibility of redistributing their wealth and financially maintaining their family, community, and their friends.” (Translation by author)

fronteras.”^P (Traore 2007:8) This implies that the population of Senegalese immigrants could be much larger than what the official data suggests. Also it marks something key in understanding the nature of this population and their behavior that is important to any public policy or Association. The desire to live “here and there” described by Moreno Maestro (2006), living part of the year in Senegal and the other in Argentina, shows the difficulty in organizing, designing, and implementing policy, as it is a population in constant flux. While there are Senegalese who desire to establish themselves in Argentina and permanently reside there, many hold a vision of the future where they will eventually return to Senegal. This constant movement of migrant, as well as the unofficial entry of many individuals; therefore make it hard to obtain an official number. However, Kleidermacher (2016) estimates, according to the community, that there are around 4,000 Senegalese residing in Argentina.

Due to the absence of a Senegalese embassy in Argentina, the Senegalese have to find other ways of entering the country. Traore and Zubrzycki (2016), in their analysis and approximation of the various migrant networks, have identified three distinct networks. The first group comes from the south of Senegal, from the region of Casamance. This group is ethnically Diola and enters the country either through Brazil or directly from Senegal. It is important to note the differences in Senegal between the region of Casamance and the rest of the country. Casamance is a region to the south of Senegal that is partially separated by the country Gambia. The Casamance region is ethnically different from other parts of Senegal, as many are from the Diola ethnic group, and has had independent movements in the past that has led to civil war in the region. Many migrants that come from this region leave as refugees seeking asylum.

^P “in the first place, it is a population that is unstable and is constantly changing: two of every three Senegalese that arrived in Argentina 10 years ago have later emigrated to other destinations, principally Europa. On the other hand, the official sources are not always accurate, keeping in mind the porous nature of the borders.” (Translated by author)

The other group, termed by Zubrzycki as the *Mekhe* network, comes from the north eastern provinces, close to the capital of Dakar, is ethnically Wolof, and tends to enter through Brazil, Bolivia, or through Ecuador, or directly from Senegal. The third network, identified by Traore and Zubrzycki, come from the cities of Diourbel and Touba and the provinces close to Dakar. They are also of Wolof ethnic origin, are tied to the Murīd brotherhood, and also enter through Brazil or Bolivia after having crossed the continent from Ecuador, or through Brazil (Zubrzycki 2016). It is important to understand that these networks are radically different not only in the way they enter Argentina, or their ethnicity and place of origin, but also in the way they organize, where they live, and their motivation for migration, some being family relocation, others seeking asylum, while many seek participation in a transnational project connected to earning money to send back to Senegal. This last group will be one of the objects of this study, due to the way in which the Murīdiyya and their network of self-help has extended internationally, to be used in order to solve daily problems and also due to the high population within the Senegalese migrant population.

As Traore states, it is not only important to contextualize this migration within the historical trajectory of Argentina, but also “considerar la presencia de inmigrantes senegaleses en la Argentina, no como un fenómeno aislado sino una realidad que tiene su origen dentro de un contexto mundial.”⁹ (Traore 2007:5) Therefore, examining the context in which the phenomenon of Senegalese migration to Argentina exists, it becomes evident that it is part of a much larger global current within Africa and internationally that has been created and nurtured, not only through local forces such as politics and famine, but global influences as well. Additionally, it

⁹ “to consider the presence of Senegalese immigrants to Argentina, not as an isolated phenomenon but as a reality that has its origin in a global context.” (Translation by author)

becomes clear that throughout history African immigration to Argentina has been not only constant and diverse, but also marginalized due not only to the number of migrants compared to other regions of the world, such as Europe and bordering Latin American countries, but also in the manner in which the national narrative has, at times, marginalized or excluded the African presence. Despite this, as with other immigrant groups who arrive in Argentina, African migrants have created their own associations and institutions based around mutual aid and representation. It is therefore vital to migrant success that there be established forms of representation in a host country that has not accounted for their presence, and historically denied it.

In the case of the Senegalese who form part of the most recent wave of African migration, while the exact number of migrants is difficult to obtain, it is certainly a heterogeneous population of men and women of varying ethnicities, Wolof, Diola, Serer, etc. and from different cities and regions within Senegal, who arrive through a variety of already established networks, and travel for a variety of reasons, some economically motivated, while others seek adventure, and even more see their participation as forming part of a greater development project back in Senegal. This is significant to mention due to the tendency in the media and literature to present African immigration and African migrants as stereotypes, painting a general homogenous image of this population as poor asylum seekers who arrive as stowaways in cargo ships or as drug dealers involved in illicit activity. Generally, however, the majority are ethnically Wolof, belong to the Murīd brotherhood, and are mainly composed of men between the ages 18-60. The next chapter will focus specifically on the Murīdiyya and the history and influence of Islam in Senegal in order to further contextualize the Senegalese community in Argentina within its larger significance and account for certain preferences and behaviors of the community that manifest in Argentina and are influenced by practices in Senegal.

Chapter III: Religious Organization and Influence

Even though there exist formal institutions in Argentina designed to assist Senegalese migrants, as with every immigrant group, the Senegalese count on informal self-help networks prior to and upon their arrival in Argentina. In order to support and assist this growing population and advocate on their behalf, in 2007 the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* arose as a means to act as an intermediary between the Argentine state and the Senegalese migrant population. As Senegal has no embassy in Argentina^r and there are no other formal representational institutions from Senegal in Argentina, the ARSA embodies the formal institution that Senegalese migrants can count on to advocate on their behalf. While the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* aims to support Senegalese migrants from all backgrounds in a variety of ways, it is the network of religious brotherhoods that many migrants turn to for aid. The largest religious group of Senegalese migrants in Argentina is the Murīd. The Murīd are a religious group, originally of Wolof ethnicity, who practice a characteristically Senegalese branch of Islam. It is important to the study of associations and their usage in Argentina to briefly review the role of religion and Islam in Senegal, as it holds strong social as well as political, and even economic power, and could be an influencing marker on the usage and preference for formal or informal associations. It is important therefore, to analyze the importance of Islam in Senegal and examine the role of the brotherhoods to begin to understand the nature of the relationship between these religious networks and the Senegalese migrant.

^r The only Senegalese embassy in South America is currently located in Brazil. Argentina closed their embassy in Senegal in the early 2000's during the presidency of Eduardo Duhalde as part of a financial readjustment in the middle of an economic crisis. The embassy was later reopened by president Cristina Kirchner in 2015, however no Senegalese embassy or consulate currently exists in Argentina.

3.1 The Islamization of Senegal

Islam arrived in Senegal in the 9th century when the country was divided into kingdoms in which they practiced various animist forms of religion and initially gained popularity among the elite members of society. Kleidermacher (2018) citing Castien (2016) discusses how religious leaders, *marabouts*, fused traditional beliefs and practices with the new religion of Islam to create a unique blend. As it came from outside the established political and social system, Islam therefore offered a new mode of social organization that became an alternative to the deeply entrenched systems and hierarchies, providing opportunities for dissatisfied sectors of the Senegalese population to better their position. Islam therefore soon replaced the customs of the previous tribal society, cementing its place during the arrival of the French in the mid 15th century, where the dismantling of the traditional regimes created a space for the rise of new governments founded by the Muslim elite, as well as increasing Islam's potency as a tool to combat against not only non-believers, but the colonial rulers themselves (Kleidermacher 2018). Markovitz discusses how the Islamization of Africa became synonymous with the creation of a new African identity, one that contrasted with that of their European colonizers. Markovitz argues that Islam became so widely successful in Senegal because, "it provided the religious, political, and social framework most of shaping the new historical realities, including the rise of commerce. With the continued spread of commercialization continuous contact with the west, a further decline of the warrior aristocracy was not surprising. It is in this context that the success of the marabouts must be partially seen. As new opportunities became available, conversion to was a way of legitimizing conversion to Islam from a once effective social system which increasingly lost moral worth and became abhorrent in the eyes of all those who suffered under feudalism." (Markovitz 1970:85)

Sufism and the Sufi brotherhoods, originating in North Africa and the Middle East, via Egypt, defined as, “asociaciones de místicos que buscan la unión con lo sobrenatural a partir de prácticas que llevan a un estado de bienestar espiritual y, por lo tanto, que facilitan de alguna forma la salvación...se caracterizan por tener una organización, una creencia y un ritual específicos, que son enseñados por el maestro y los discípulos los deben seguir.”^s

(Kleidermacher 2018:233), became increasingly popular among the Senegalese population. Behrman cites the brotherhoods as a major factor in transforming the traditional Wolof way of life to adapt to the modern changes occurring in Senegal. While many social structures were destroyed by the arrival of the French colonists in the 19th century, Islam presented itself as a means to replace the old way of life. Rather than impose foreign values, as the French did during their colonial rule (lasting from the 19th century until 1959 when independence was gained, resulting in Leopold Senghor elected as the first president of Senegal) the brotherhoods, “had a long history in the Muslim world of a flexibility characterized by their habit of accepting the customs of the people among whom they found themselves, imposing only their political authority and a few major Islamic prescriptions. Thus it was not difficult for the tariqas to adjust themselves to the Wolof situation, acting as a replacement for the old framework of political and social authority and providing a structure in which the Wolof could find a defined role to play.” (Behrman 1968:74) Thus Islam became a viable and legitimate authority in Senegal during the colonial period by replacing social structures with other hierarchies, often times transitioning power rather than rupturing established power dynamics. Islam also played an important role in shaping a new distinctly Senegalese identity for many, contrasting with that of a colonial subject.

^s “associations of mystics who search for union with the supernatural through practices that take them to a state of spiritual well-being and, thus, that facilitate some form of salvation...it is characterized by having an organization, a belief, and specific rituals, that are taught by the master and the disciples should follow.” (Translation by author)

However, the Islam that took root in Senegal was clearly not of the orthodox nature, and rather than impose a conservative view of religion, Islam adapted to the Senegalese context, incorporating several aspects of the previous culture, including music, songs, and dance (Kleidermacher 2018). In this way, Islam in Senegal took on a unique form through the formation of Sufi brotherhoods, the three main ones being the *Qādīriyya*, the *Tijāniyya*, and the *Murīdiyya*.

Out of the Islamization of Senegal, came the Murīdiyya (sometimes written in English as the Mouride, Mouridism, or the Mouride brotherhood). The Murīdiyya was formed at the end of the 19th century by the mystic and Senegalese Sufi, Ahmed Ben Mohamed Ben Allah, alias Xaadimu Rassul, otherwise known as Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba (1853-1927), who the Murīd consider to be a saint (Sow 2004). Bamba essentially waged a pacifist resistance against the French colonial power through religion. Founded on anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism, anti-French principals and centered on freedom, the Murīdiyya formed “una respuesta religiosa y política que tomó la doctrina de la igualdad ante los particularismos de linajes de la jerarquía wolof, de una parte, y ante el imperialismo francés de otra.”^t (Zubrzycki 2009:2) The early followers, according to O’Brien, mainly came from, “the semi-pagan remnants of the then dismantled traditional Wolof states—disemployed chiefs, courtiers, soldiers, slaves, whose view of the anti-French miracle-working Muslim holy hero had all of Weber's elegantly typified 'devotion born of distress and enthusiasm'.” (O’Brien 1977:85) The charisma of Bamba enabled his following to grow, attracting mainly rural peasants as new disciples, and soon the Murīd settled in uncultivated land where they began to grow peanuts and expand their territory. Bamba

^t “a religious and political answer that took the doctrine of equality over the particularities of the hierarchical Wolof structure, on the one hand, and over French imperialism on the other.” (Translated by author)

was exiled by the French imperialists towards the end of the 19th century due to his opposition to their power and his increasing influence, however, his exile only increased his followers and fame within the territory. The French finally allowed Bamba to return in the beginning of the 20th century, where he remained under house arrest in Diourbel. After his death, Bamba was buried in the holy site of Touba, which would become the spiritual center of the Murīdiyya and their holy city.

With the passing of Amadou Bamba in 1927, his descendants became the new spiritual leaders for the Murīd, or the *marabouts*. The Murīdiyya is rigidly structured and power is inherited genealogically. The descendents of Bamba are therefore considered to have the *baraka* or divine tolerance that gives them “energía de curar enfermedades y de conceder la salvación espiritual a sus seguidores. Se espera de ellos que enseñen y aconsejen.”^u (Moreno Maestro 2005:31) The relationship between the *taalibe*, the disciples, and the *marabouts* is defined as “un acto de sumisión que constituye la originalidad de muridismo, un acto voluntario y una adhesión a un proyecto de desarrollo del grupo para el que la emigración constituye una estrategia determinante.”^v (Zubrzycki 2009:2) This relationship of submission is what characteristically defines the Murīd and disciples. They work hard, sending part of their earnings to their spiritual leaders in return for their divine blessing. They adhere to the holy man’s words of *ñàq jariñu*, (work and get the fruit of/benefit from your labor) and dedicate their lives to working hard, in whatever venture, to prove their devotion to their leader and their saint.

^u “energy to cure diseases and concede spiritual salvation to their followers. They are expected to be taught and advised by them.” (Translated by author)

^v “an act of submission (or jèbbalu) that forms the originality of Mouridism, a voluntary act and adhesion to a group development project, that which emigration constitutes a strategic determinant.” (Translation by author)

In the urban setting, often street peddling is the manifestation of this devotion. It is not only an international immigration strategy implemented by the Murīd, but is also found within Senegal. Labor, street peddling as well as the historic cultivation of peanut crops, forms part of the Murīd philosophy of work, “la piedra angular del muridismo resulta ser una división de competencias que se traduce en la delegación al marabout (maestro religioso) de la plegaria y la meditación, mientras el discípulo se ocupa mediante el trabajo de la prosperidad de la comunidad.”^w (Zubrzycki 2016:55) This community is fundamental for the Murīd and is centered in Touba, the holy city that reaffirms the identification with the brotherhood, as their own unique symbol that represents community and solidarity.

Touba is the center of the Murīd community and a pilgrimage destination, equivalent to Mecca for other Muslims. The city holds the tomb of Saint Bamba and his descendants, and also the homes of the direct descendants of Bamba and other principal *marabouts*. It also is home to the great mosque, to which many journey to pray. Essentially, Touba has become an autonomous city within the Senegalese state. The Senegalese emigration is linked with the project of developing the city of Touba. Members of the Murīdiyya are found in various countries in the world where they work as street peddlers and vendors to send money, not only to their respective families in Senegal, but to the brotherhood in Touba. For many migrants, constructing a house in Touba represents a strong tie to the brotherhood. Moreno Maestro (2005) describes the migration project in Europe, where the Murīd send remittances to Senegal, where this money is used not only to benefit their individual family members, but to aid in the urbanization of the city of Touba and the construction of works that are tied to the well-being of the city’s inhabitants, such

^w“the cornerstone of Mouridism results in the division of competencies that translates into the delegation of prayer and meditation to the marabout (religious teacher); while the disciple occupies himself with work for the prosperity of the community” (Translation by author)

as hospitals. This fundamental sense of community and solidarity among the Murīd is based on the notions of *dërëm* and *gërëm*. *Dërëm* implies money or wealth that is earned in this life, while *gërëm* refers to money or rewards obtained in the afterlife. The Murīd believe that gaining *dërëm* will guarantee them *gërëm* when they die. This notion is predicated on the Senegalese world view that giving is not akin to a waste of resources, but rather through the act of giving one gains more, either in this life or next. The term *bernde*, epitomizes this notion of giving. Food is often seen as the primary way to give to another, and through this, wealth is earned in the afterlife (Interview with professor Samba Diallo, via Skype, April 2019). In this manner solidarity is essential for the Murīd as it is what gives them spiritual capital and rewards after death.

Considering the Murīd community and their function within Senegal therefore helps to understand the relationship between migrants and the state in other countries. It also sheds light on the reasons and motivations for many migrants as to why they migrate and how many have therefore ended up in Argentina, explaining why particularly the Murīd represent the largest ethnic group of Senegalese found in Buenos Aires.

3.2 The Murīdiyya and the Senegalese State

The Murīd, by their own drive for development and strong social ties between individuals and communities within and outside of Senegal, have converted themselves into a tightly knit group, not only a true civil organization, but with political power as well. The Murīd, “tienen una capacidad de movilización muy superior a los partidos políticos y sindicatos. La cofradía, a través de la urbanización de Touba, parece aportar una utopía creíble y movilizadora para una

buena fracción de la población senegalesa que el Estado no puede integrar en su lógica.”^x (Moreno Maestro 2005:37) Even in Touba, “el Estado hace una concesión mayor: la nueva institución es puesta bajo la autoridad del califa general y las elecciones del presidente del Consejo y de sus consejeros por sufragio universal no son más que un maquillaje que oculta mal la ausencia relativa del Estado.”^y (Moreno Maestro 2005:37) It is clearly evident political and social power that the Murīd community has within Senegal. As one of the first scholars to write about the Murīd’s influence, Behrman notes how this political and economic sway dates back to the colonial period, when the “French initially distrusted Muslim brotherhoods hegemony, they eventually came to rely on the peasant masses. The French, then, pursued interfering in internal brotherhood politics threatened to disturb their political balance, provided money and other forms of support to assure continued help in getting peasant co-operation acquiescence to - French programmes and policies.” (Brehman 1977:262) Babou (2013) examines this social contract between the French colonialists and the Muslim leaders, arguing that it was implemented as a strategy to first secure French interest, security, and order, using negotiations and cooperation rather than the typical use of coercion. Babou argues that due to the strength of the Murīd order, the French were more willing to cooperate, rather than risk conflict with such a politically and economically powerful group. Therefore, even though relations between the colonialists and the Murīd became strained, the French conceded by allowing Bamba to return to Diourbel. Babou (2013) argues how this act of allowing the Murīd to carve out a spatial location

^x “have a superior capacity to mobilize than political parties and unions. The brotherhood, through the urbanization of Touba, appears to offer a credible and mobilizing utopia for a sizeable part of the Senegalese population, for whom the State cannot integrate into their logic.” (Translation by author)

^y “The State gives a major concession:the new institution is put below the authority of the general caliphate and presidential elections of the council and their advisors by universal suffrage is no more than a thin veneer that hides the absence of a relevant state.” (Translation by author)

within the colony, represented “a project to achieve symbolic and cultural—and when possible, geographical—autonomy from the colonial realm. By stripping *daar al Islam* of its political content and infusing it with cultural meanings, the Murīds created the condition for its preservation under French colonial rule and later on in postcolonial Senegal.” (Babou 2013:129) Thus the creation of Touba became possible, a city that has only grown in its autonomy and influence since the colonial period.

Beginning in the 1960’s after independence and the emergence of political parties and free elections, *maraboutic* influence again became a fundamental feature of presidential elections. Voicing their support for the first president, Senghor, Murīd *marabouts* were able to mobilize large peasant blocks of voters to whichever political candidate they felt best represented their interests. Senghor in fact made appeals to the brotherhood to garner their favor, which, according to O’Brien, can be evidenced by “the great Touba mosque (completed in 1963) stands as monument to this rewarding collaboration” (O’Brien 1977:87) It is this mobilizing power that in the past, and still today, gives the Murīd spiritual leaders such authority. This period of the first presidency led by Senghor, is deemed by Babou, “The Golden Age of the Social Contract” between the Senegalese government and the Murīd leadership. During this time, the acting caliph, Falilou, and president Senghor entered into a mutually beneficial relationship, as they both needed each other to consolidate authority and legitimize their rule. Babou details how, the caliph, “needed government recognition and material support to complete his projects in Touba: namely, bringing water and electricity to the village, finishing the building of the mosque, and securing jobs and governmental support for the growing number of Murīd traders and businessmen living in Senegal’s cities. Falilou could take the risk of entertaining close relationships with the state only because he benefited from a certain aura that provided him with

much symbolic and cultural capital, which also shielded him against accusations of collaboration with the state.” (Babou 2013:131) Since independence, presidents and caliphs have fluctuated between close relationships of mutual aid and that of direct opposition. The power of the *marabouts* to issue support for a political candidate, while can be voluntarily followed by their disciples, has strong political implications. Most recently, President Wade, a Murīd disciple himself, symbolically blurred the lines between politics and religion by journeying to visit important *sheikhs* just after his election. As seen, clearly the marabouts hold not only serve as spiritual guides, but hold political authority due to the social contract with their disciples and influence over politicians. The ability to issue a *ndigel*, or religious command, for disciples to vote for a political candidate epitomizes the political capital these marabouts possess. Additionally, the authority of the marabouts comes from their ability to care for the needs of their community and disciples in times where the Senegalese state has been absent.

With regards to the Murīd authority towards the Senegalese state, Villalón states that, “the capacity for co-operating without being subjected to direct state domination has, in fact, been possible for the leaders of the Sufi orders in Senegal only because their organization has allowed them to pose credible threats to the state of adopting other modes of interaction.”(Villalón 1993:92) As early as 1968, when rural peasants became increasingly dissatisfied with corrupt government organizations, and additional pressures due to draught brought on further complications and resentment, those part of the Murīd brotherhood, found the religious group served as a vehicle to voice their grievances and organize themselves against the government’s policies. The Murīd had become a voice for their peasant community, an independent organization that could lobby, negotiate, organize, and defend their rights to the state. Furthermore, due to the fact that the Murīd produce, “no less than one half (and very

possibly more) of the national peanut crop, and the peanut export monocrop remains the necessary basis of the bulk of government revenue.” (O’Brien 1977:101) The Murīdiyya hold not only political, but economic sway due to their influence over a large part of the economy, giving them extremely important leverage when negotiating with state actors as the potential for organized strike would drastically threaten the government’s revenue.

As both Behrman and O’Brien were writing in the late 1970’s about maraboutic influence, a time soon after independence, both posited that influence would decline with increasing signs of modernity and development. Behrman stated however, that despite an increasing rise in population, education, and urbanization, the *marabouts* and the Murīd brotherhood actually managed to stave off or slow down the influence of modernization in areas under their control. In times of political crisis, *marabouts* were still turned to as a source of legitimacy and support. Villalón explains how this dependence is a result of the process of routinization of the maraboutic system, which established the religious model as an acceptable form of socio-political organization and interaction with the colonial, and later independent Senegalese state. Therefore, “today a social group under pressure—including, at times, an ethnic group—finds that the available model for organising a claim to the attention of the state is the maraboutic one. Because relations between Senegalese society and the state are mediated predominantly via the religious structures of that society, such structures appear as the most legitimate and effective organisational model available to social groups.” (Villalón 1993:85) Behrman, however, cites the lack of alternative authoritative figures in rural areas, the lack of social revolution that would have broken the traditional patron-client relations. In addition to the continued reliance on *marabouts* as intermediaries, “there has been no realignment of power within political structure. Economic and social developments have not progressed to the point where party leaders can do

without their traditional rural allies.” (Behrman 1977:271) In this case, Behrman argues that the Murīd stand in opposition to the state as they slow the process of modernization and development. While O’Brien examined the evolution and resistance of the Murīd brotherhood to adapt to new political and social climates, despite changes in leadership, both Behrman and O’Brien supposed that with increased modernity and development the hold of the Murīd would soften. Now, four decades later, the *marabouts* continue to exert political and economic sway in Senegal, as political candidates continue to vie for support from their large following. This emphasizes how the Murīd have become a viable and effective mutual aid option against an absent State, consequently attributing to their autonomous power.

In this way, belonging to the brotherhood takes priority over the State. Contrary to the ideas proposed by Lerner (1958) and Weber (1958), as well as other early modernization theorists, the spread of urbanization, industrialization, and the modernizing of Senegal has not necessarily led to the severance of ties with traditional forms of authority. In fact, the traditional religious brotherhoods continue to exert influence not just socially, but politically and economically as well, in Senegal and internationally where Murīd migrants live and work. This is important to consider when analyzing the presence of the Murīd abroad and the relationships that they have with the State in Argentina because the migrant’s traditional and cultural practices are not necessarily linked to the demands of the State of residence. If they are conditioned to a life where religious Associations dictate and make decisions, it is probable that when dealing with a foreign government, ties towards the Murīd community will be stronger. This is not only a phenomenon that occurs in Argentina as cited by Sarubbi (2013) and Zubrycki (2016), but is a pattern that has replicated itself in many other countries where Senegalese and Murīd migrants are found as identified by authors Espadas (2012), Carter (1997), Riccio (2013), and Wagbou

(2000). This will be the focus of the following chapter that explores this occurrence in Italy, Spain, and the United States.

3.3 The Daara and the Dahira: How Murīds Organize Themselves

Part of the power and strength of the Murīd brotherhood in Senegal and abroad comes down to how the brotherhood itself is organized. While in Argentina, the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* provides an organized structure that can politically advocate on behalf of Senegalese migrants, the brotherhoods are organized based strong vertical links. In order to begin to understand how Senegalese migrants utilize the ARSA and formal associations, it is important to understand how the brotherhoods are organized to see if this structure has any effect on migrant behavior.

Murīds first organized themselves into what is called the *daara*. Having started in rural areas, controlling large areas of the peanut crop production, the *daara* was originally connected to economic activity as a means to organize rural workers to farm the land and create a distinctly Murīd community. Today, the *daara* combines work and religious education for the sons of Murīd farmers. Led by *marabouts* (Sufi guides) or *sheikhs*, it is a space for the religious education of young Murīd boys, who learn how to read the Koran and are instructed in the Murīd traditions and beliefs. Boys usually attend from the ages 7-15, and life in the *daara* is harsh, as the *marabouts* view this lifestyle as a means to prepare the young Murīds for their future, valuing religious conviction over material wealth, and engendering the values of work, discipline, and obedience to the *marabout* that is so characteristic of the Murīd. The *daara* creates strong bonds between the disciples and their religious leaders, who will later help find a wife and provide for the wedding costs and land for farming for the young boys (Rosander 1995). Therefore the *daara*

is instrumental in creating the strong vertical, as well as horizontal bonds between the disciples and their leaders, a relationship that transcends geographic barriers.

As Senegal became increasingly urbanized, many Murīds began to move from the countryside to the city. There, the same rural structure of the *daara* became transformed into the urban *dahira* (in Arabic, *daayira* in Wolof) meaning circle. It is important to note that the first *dahiras* were organized by members of the Tijāniyya (Diallo 2011). Murīds also adopted the *dahira* structure as a product of the urbanization of the Murīd. The *dahira* is a grouping of Murīd *taalibe* with their respective *marabout*. It serves, “as an educational institution and an instrument for the socialization and integration of Murid urban communities.” (Babou 2002:154) The first one was established in the 1940’s by the grandson of Bamba, Cheikh Mbakke, in order to enhance solidarity and organization among the growing urban community of Murīds. Since then, the *dahira* has grown in popularity, an initiative taken by the disciples themselves, and has now become an integral part of the Murīdiyya (Babou 2002). It was first conceived as a prayer circle for disciples, a meeting place to recite the Koran and poems together and to develop and reproduce their values. A weekly, monthly, or annual fee was required of the participants as a means to contribute to the expenses of the brotherhood as a whole. In this manner, the *dahira* emerged as a response to the new socio-cultural experience that many Murīd s faced when moving to the city. It served as a means to maintain their culture and bonds with each other in the new urban setting in which they, Murīds, were a minority. Babou argues that “the feeling of marginality contributed to the development and strengthening of communal links between Murid disciples through institutions such as the *dahira*” (Babou 2002:156) The need to form solid bonds became a survival strategy, maintaining what was familiar, when suddenly faced with the strange new environment of the city.

Additionally, a move to the city implied a separation with the disciples' rural *cheikh*, or spiritual leader. The *dahira* therefore, became a place of solidarity and mutual support, a means to preserve their culture and religion despite the lack of contact with their leaders. Ebin argues that, "though these migrants are no longer under the cheikhs' direct authority, parallels with life on the da'ira are inescapable. Groups of young men living together, out off from the larger society in communities where work has an extra dimension - it is not just a way for immigrants to support themselves and their families; it also has a religious aspect, given that hard work improves one's chances of going to Paradise." (Ebin 1995:326) Even though they have changed their context, many Murīd migrants, nationally or internationally organize themselves in a manner that reproduces their cultural and religious formation, maintaining solidarity through their traditional ways of life. Ebin discusses how the *dahira* that have manifested themselves internationally in countries like Spain, France, Italy, the United States, and Argentina, originally served their function for migrants coming from rural areas to urban areas. The organized groups of Murīd create what Ebin terms, a channel for migration, where the extension of the village *dahira*, in the urban context receives new migrants, provides for them, and aids them in establishing themselves in their new environment. While they may live in the cities, many immigrants maintain their village as a point of reference, or deem their village to be home, a later manifestation of the transnational migrant, who, while residing abroad, maintains strong ties to Senegal as home. The *dahira* therefore in Senegal serves a similar purpose as it does abroad. Today as an illustration of the influence of the *dahira*, Senegalese law recognizes two main

dahiras as formal associations and political parties^z (Interview with professor Samba Diallo, April 2019).

With urbanization and modernization threatening to fracture the traditional identities and values of many disciples, the *dahira* was a place of refuge, a tool to reinforce cultural expressions against the wave of the modern world. It created solidarity between the rural migrants, bridging their ethnic, geographic, and other differences to create one community of Murīd disciples. It was therefore implemented as a migration strategy to deal with the difficulties of a new environment. In this case, the creation of the *dahira* in Senegal would later be implemented internationally as a strategy to facilitate the integration of newly arrived immigrants into the labor force, housing, as well as strengthening their familiar social, cultural, and religious bonds.

3.4 *The Murīd in Argentina*

In Argentina, the Murīd community holds more significance than a mere religious and economic network, but serves as a way for migrants to preserve ties to Senegal as well as maintain cultural and religious customs. The Murīd in Argentina, while not everyone knows each other, consider themselves a big family, one where solidarity is fundamental for mutual aid of the group.

In Argentina, the Murīd brotherhood performs various fundamental functions for the Senegalese migrants. Similar to the case noted by Moreno Maestro of Senegalese in Spain, specifically the cities of Sevilla and Granada, in Argentina, several brotherhoods, such as the

^z One such party, the Party for Truth and Development (PVD) started in 2004, manages the World Movement for the Unity of God (MMUD), a movement that unifies different Murīd *dahiras*, both were created and are led by the Murīd marabout Modou Kara Mbacké.

Tijāniyya, join the Murīd network. As Zubrzycki states, the brotherhood is not directly involved in the emigration project, as it is a heterogeneous migration. However, the Murīd networks serves as a mutual aid system and does “cumple un rol importante en la experiencia migratoria de sus miembros proveyendo puntos de referencia espirituales, culturales e identitarios, donde la dahira es el nudo de la red Murīd .”^{aa} (Zubrzycki 2009:10) The *dahira* or meeting place serves as a reference point, where Senegalese can come together to pray, talk, and receive advice. While Murīd migrants form part of various *dahiras* according to their own preference for a specific *marabout*, geographic connection, or other reasons, all form part of the general Buenos Aires *dahira*. In this way the brotherhood exercises an organizing force in the project of solidarity and offers opportunities for the migrants to come together and celebrate several important festivals. In the beginning, “estas asociaciones religiosas Murīds eran asociaciones de ayuda mutua que actuaban, por ejemplo, en la recepción de los migrantes recién llegados y respondían a problemas de salud, de documentos administrativos, de alojamientos, etc., pero permitían también que sus miembros se encontraran para rezar.”^{ab} (Zubrzycki 2011:54). Key for the migrants is the notion of solidarity. Many retell how arriving in Argentina, they knew no one, but contact with other Senegalese offered them opportunities to find housing, work, and orient them within the unknown Argentine culture and society. The nature of their work, street peddling, implies that daily problems need to be solved in the moment and require help from others, such as finding suitable and safe locations to work, or advising others when the police is coming. Therefore, today although the Murīdiyya does not facilitate the emigration from Senegal, it still serves as an

^{aa}“fulfills an important role in the migratory experience of their members, providing spiritual, cultural, and identifiable points of reference, where the *dahira* is the joint in the Murīd network” (Translated by author)

^{ab} “these Murīd religious associations were associations of self-help that acted, for example, in the reception of recently arrived migrants, and answered for health issues, administrative documentation, housing etc... but they also permitted their members to join together and pray.” (Translation by author)

organizing and uniting force, a point of reference to reinforce traditional and cultural ties for any Senegalese migrant.

Similar to other countries where the Senegalese have settled, in Argentina, the Senegalese have created associations to further support the community in their new context. The next chapter will explore the way these associations world wide have been organized and the common problems they have due to low participation and their interactions with the brotherhoods in order to contextualize this phenomenon within a global context, showing how the issues of the Association in Argentina are not unique.

Chapter IV: Senegalese Associations

While the Murīdiyya is an important organizing association that facilitates and is present in Senegalese emigration and communities worldwide, Senegalese migrants have also established formalized associations. Due to its proximity to Senegal and colonial ties, the primary destinations outside of Africa was Europe, most notably, France, Spain, and Italy (Kleidermacher 2013). The United States also became an attractive destination for many Senegalese migrants seeking to better their situation due to the propagated myth as the land of opportunity (Babou 2012). In each nation there appears a similar pattern to migration. Scholars such as Zubrycki (2011) and Maffia (2007) cite similar reasons for emigration, the role of the Murīd brotherhood in the migration and adaptation for migrants once they arrive, and how later migrants form their own mutual aid society, creating formal association to manage the needs of the migrant population. What is of notable interest in each of these cases is the disconnect noted by authors such as Sarubbi (2013), Zubrycki (2016), Espadas (2012), Carter (1997), Riccio (2013), and Wagbou (2000) between the intentions of said associations and the population that they serve, while all members may be integrated into the association, know of it and be aware, they are not consistent members or completely integrated within the association. This is the case not only in Argentina, but it also found present in Italy, Spain, and the United States. This chapter will seek to explore how the issue of participation and integration, that is the fundamental question of the thesis, manifests itself in other countries with the aim to shed light on why the Senegalese communities maintains the same preferences for informal associations in Argentina.

4.1 On Associations

Various authors have highlighted the importance of associations for the well being of immigrants and their fundamental role in most immigrant communities. An association can be defined as, “un grupo de personas u organizaciones formalmente organizado y con un nombre, que participan voluntariamente sin una recompensa económica por su participación.”^{ac} (Bolíbar 2011:162 citing Knoke 1986). This is useful when examining both the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* as well as the Murīd brotherhood as both reflect the fundamental concepts of this definition. Even though the Murīd is a religious group, where people gather together to receive religious instruction and to show their devotion to their saints, it can still be considered an association as it is formally organized and members do not receive money for their participation. However, here the line can be drawn between the type of association that encapsulates the Murīd and the ARSA. Using Weber's classification of associations Bolibar explains the difference between, “expresivas e instrumentales...que distingue entre la acción social basada en el sentimiento subjetivo, afectivo o tradicional, de pertenencia colectiva; de la acción social fundada en un acuerdo o compensación de intereses racionalmente motivados, intencionados y elegidos (Weber, 1978 en Bekkers et.al., 2008). A diferencia de la participación expresiva, la participación instrumental persigue unos objetivos o propósitos más allá del disfrute de la participación y la sociabilidad en sí misma. Entre las asociaciones expresivas encontramos aquellos grupos y asociaciones religiosas, de ocio o deportivas y culturales.”^{ad} (Bolíbar 2011:177)

^{ac} “a group of people or organization, formally organized with a name, that participate voluntarily without any economic compensation for their participation.” (Translation by author)

^{ad} “expressive or instrumental...that distinguishes between social action based on subjective feeling, affect or traditional, of collective belonging; to socialization founded on an agreement or compensation of interests rationally motivated, intentional and chosen. (Weber, 1978 in Bekkers et al., 2008) Different to expressive participation, instrumental participation follows some objectives or proposals beyond that of enjoying the participation and sociability in itself. Between expressive and instrumental associations, we find these religious, leisure and sport groups and associations.” (Translation by author)

While both constitute a form of association, they have been created to cater to different needs. The brotherhood arises as a religious association, with the *dahiras* serving as meeting points where members can pray, study religious texts, and converse. The *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* is more of an instrumental association that was formed with specific goals and objectives to provide support to the Senegalese community as a whole and is much more similar in structure to their immigrant associations that have been formed throughout history.

Immigrant associations have been the study of many literary works that have explored their evolution over time from informal meetings to collectives to formalized institutions. Bolívar (2011) describes Casey's (1997) work on how these immigrant collectives evolve over time to form associations, going from being informal meetings and reference points, to formal institutions that have a clear structure with resources and the ability to mobilize migrants. Bolibar describes the importance of associations for immigrants as, "el asociacionismo permite superar el aislamiento social en el proceso de asentamiento de las personas inmigradas en la sociedad de acogida, así como fomentar la sociabilidad y el intercambio de experiencias."^{ac} (Bolíbar 2011:165) In a foreign context that has fractured previous links and relationships due to movement from one place to another associations serve to connect migrants, establishing relationships and bonds, and provide a support network.

As Espadas notes, "all associations are responses to the unsatisfied needs of some members and a lack of channels for discovering how those needs can be satisfied." (Espadas 2012:447) As seen in each case, immigrant associations have been formed to address certain

^{ac} "associationism allows for social isolation to be overcome in the process of migrant people settling in the host society, as well as fomenting sociability and the exchange of experiences." (Translation by author)

needs of the Senegalese population in their host country, whether it is a path to citizenship, education, finding work or housing, or creating a cultural space where members can share their experiences and traditions from Senegal. The association serves as a means to avoid conflict within the host country and as an aid to navigate the culture and customs of the host society. Associations, therefore, are a means of social insertion and adaptation to the host country. They are necessary as they, “responden a un “imperativo afectivo”: a la necesidad humana de encontrarse, reunirse, dialogar, intercambiar efectos, inquietudes y experiencias, etc.; limitando un marco de pertenencia que proporciona seguridad”^{af} (Bolibar 2006:165) therefore catering to the human need for belonging and connection. This way associations are not only a means to provide support to newly arrived migrants by addressing urgent problems that arise with the process of migration, or a voice that advocates on their behalf, but creates a space where immigrants are able to identify with others in their similar situation, creating strong relationships and connections that are necessary for all human beings and especially for those who have been uprooted and displaced to a foreign context. Often associations are also developed by the migrants themselves focusing on the importance of solidarity and self-help and acting as a response to a society in which they are marginalized or excluded, as with the case of the Senegalese in Argentina. These associations can be created by the receiving society in order to provide services for migrants and meet their demands and needs, facilitating their integration into their new environment.

Associations can additionally form a medium through which immigrants can formalize demands, lobby for their interests, or voice suggestions to public institutions or society in general

^{af} “respond to an “affective demand”, the human necessity to meet, come together, dialogue, exchange effects, uncertainties, experiences, etc.; bordering a marker of belonging that provides security” (Translation by author)

(Bochaca 2013). Associations generally start informally, such as neighborhood organizations and are based on a specific population, like the Italian associations in Argentina at the beginning of the 20th century, and are not simply a way to organize and interact with society, but also a space to reinforce a common identity. Over time, many of these informal organizations and groupings become formally recognized by the state and count on lobbying power and can later have an influence on policy. The *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* as well as other Senegalese Associations in Italy, Spain, and the United States, all share a similar history and they serve not only as a reference point of solidarity for the Senegalese migrants, but also is able to dialogue within the receiving society.

4.2 Associations in Italy

In Italy, Riccio notes several cases that reflect this pattern. Riccio (2013) posits that while other scholars argue that the Murīd in Senegal act as a barrier to modernization and development by holding onto religious affiliations rather than adapting to the new modern world, abroad the Murīd and other Senegalese migrants engage in a complex co-development strategy. Similar to other authors who have written about Senegalese migrants in Argentina and Spain, Riccio discusses how Senegalese migration is one of transnational migration, as immigrants work to earn money in the country of residence while maintaining strong ties with their homeland, some with the ultimate aim to return. Riccio discusses how this phenomenon of Senegalese migration is one that has historically been part of Senegalese culture, since the colonial period. The Murīd are a social group that has always encouraged migration, first internally and then later externally, to search for cultivable land and later entrepreneurial opportunities. This pattern, Riccio argues, was later transposed onto the international communities of Murīd who left Senegal with the same

intentions to seek better opportunities in Europe. The primary destination for many migrants was France, due to language and cultural similarities.

However, in 1985, when the French government imposed a mandatory visa for all Senegalese migrants, the preferred destination shifted to Spain, Germany, and Italy. Riccio cites how, “Italy to become one of the main destinations of Senegalese immigration: above all the lack of a clear or adequate Italian legislative framework on migration, the ease of obtaining a visa, the geographical proximity and the growing presence and socioeconomic influence of the Italian enterprises in Senegal.” (Riccio 2013:223) Similar to the case in Argentina, many left Senegal due to harsh economic conditions as well as the allure of the immigrant experience and personal desires to become someone and earn a living. Additionally, similar to Argentina, it was the Murīd brotherhood who not only facilitated the emigration, but also helped migrants once arrived in Italy. Through their, “social, religious, and economic networks provided the migrants with some resources to live abroad and practice trade activities. As it occurred in the urban context of Dakar, also in the new Italian foreign environment, the Muridiyya has assumed a key role through the organization of several *da'iras*.” (Riccio 2013:224) This network, as in Argentina, supplied migrants with housing, job opportunities, and also a cultural and religious frame of reference, operating as both a religious and economic community. Riccio notes how the Murīd acted as the first frame of reference, facilitating the transition from Senegal to Italy, and supporting migrants while they navigated the unfamiliar surroundings. However, similar to other countries with Senegalese migration, in the 1990’s, migrants created their first association in Italy, the CASI (*Coordinamento delle Associazioni Senegalesi in Italia*), a unifying group that brings together several provincial Senegalese associations. Similar to the Argentine case, Riccio finds that these associations also started first, “initially to ensure services for funeral ceremonies

back in the home village, gradually the purposes of these associations have become more complex, involving the transfer of money or products (medical drugs and equipment) for collective objectives such as community development, the construction of health centers or small hospitals, and the improvement of regional transport.” (Riccio 2013:233) It is important to note that different from the Senegalese Association created in Buenos Aires, CASI was created by migrants with a primary aim to provide aid to the community in Senegal, rather than to act as an intermediary between the community and the State and provide support to the migrant community living in the host nation.

While Riccio cites the formation of these associations in Italy, Carter also explores the difficulties in maintaining associations for the Senegalese population in Turin. Carter mentions how in Italy, migrant groups who want “to have a voice in the local structure, if they do have the backing of one of the major parties, they must construct some sort of association. The association is based on the model of Italian voluntary associations and clubs. These juridical entities enjoy certain privileges in the Italian administrative structure: the groups may be eligible for the use of local facilities and funds, for example.” (Carter 1997:80) While Senegalese migrants have created their own associations in many cities in Italy, Carter posits that a main reason why many Murīd do not make use of the association is because it is non-religious. Carter explains how because, “the group is an association, there is the possibility of the "thing going astray and being used for other purposes." This possibility does not exist in the Da'ira, which is linked to the wider organization of the brotherhood and controlled only by Mourid.” (Carter 1997:80) Therefore, there was a fundamental lack of trust towards the association because it was not founded upon religious principles. Faith and trust were placed in the *dahira* and the religious leaders over any form of secular organization. Fundamentally, “Rigazzi non si fidono in nell'associazione Loro

insultano L'Associazione" (The boys don't trust the association, they insult it), the Marabout explains. There is considerable distrust of "intellectuals," in essence anyone who has attended French schools for an extended period of time or is influenced by the secular more than by the spiritual." (Carter 1997:80) Carter explains that even though the association had existed in Turin for more than five years, migrants still distrusted it as "the young Senegalese did not trust an organization founded by intellectuals, who they thought did nothing for them and did not take their interests to heart." (Carter 1997:92) The case of Italy as analyzed by Riccio and Carter sheds light into the Argentine case as many of the same elements have been repeated. Migrants arrive in Italy, an emigration facilitated by the Murīd brotherhood, and later establish an association to be able to formally interact with the state. However, the same phenomenon is present as many Murīd prefer to rely on their own network of the *dahira* and continue to place faith in the legitimacy of their *marabouts*, rather than trust so called intellectuals that come from outside their circle of trust. In this case, authority, trust, and legitimacy play important roles in determining how the associations are used and by whom.

4.3 Associations in Spain

The case of Senegalese associations in Spain also replicates many of the trends discussed by Riccio and Carter. In Spain, Wagbou describes how, similar to Italy, associations fall under a national umbrella association known as the *Asociación de Inmigrantes Senegaleses en España* (AISE). Also similar to other Senegalese associations, Wagbou mentions how this is an endogenous association, meaning that it was an initiative taken by the migrants themselves as a strategic move to organize and formalize interactions with the state. Founded in 1991, the AISE finally obtained legal status in 1992. The founders, according to Wagbou, "son mayoritariamente

varones con formación técnica o profesional y niveles de educación medios y superiores y tienen una larga carrera de militancia asociativa de carácter político, estudiantil y organizativo.”^{ag}

(Wagbou 2000:15) While it started with only several members and the founder, a migrant who previously lived in France, now it constitutes a diverse group of Senegalese migrants, coming from different geographical locations, and of various ethnic groups. Daily informal meetings take place between a core group of members who come together to chat, share their daily experiences, and simply pass the time. In this manner, the association acts as a reference point for many migrants, a place to reinforce their Senegalese identity and share stories with those who have similar experiences to them as immigrants. It is also a place where they can reinforce their Senegalese identity, speaking Wolof or French and sharing memories of home. Members pay a small fee to help maintain the association and support the various functions the AISE carries out. The rest of the funds come from the government, particularly the Department of Ministerial and Public Associations. The activities carried out by the association vary from raising funds to help build a hospital in Touba, as well as participating in initiatives designed to reduce xenophobia and racism in order to defend the rights of Senegalese migrants.

However, similar to in Italy, the AISE and its functions are severely limited, not only by their financial capabilities, but also by low participation on behalf of the migrants. Rather than trust, Wabgou emphasizes the “poca disponibilidad de senegaleses en Madrid porque las exigencias de sus actividades laborales, mayoritariamente comerciales, no les permiten tener horarios flexibles para poder participar en el desarrollo de dichas actividades aunque lo

^{ag} “are mainly men with technical or professional studies and medium or superior levels of education and they have had a long career in militant associative politics, student and organization.” (Translation by author)

deseen.”^{ah} (Wagbou 2000:18) Espadas (2012) also notes that the primary reason for low participation is mobility and occupational vulnerability. As many of the immigrants work selling their wares on the street, in addition to the religious devotion to work, many Senegalese simply do not have time to participate in the meetings and activities offered by the association. Thus their work hours are determined by the availability of their clients and migrants tend to work almost all day with few breaks, which conflict with the time the association would hold activities or meetings.

Additionally, Wagbou mentions how, “la falta de interés fundada en el individualismo y la desconfianza justificada por la situación irregular del inmigrante en Madrid explica la no-participación de algunos senegaleses en la vida asociativa.”^{ai} (Wagbou 2000:18) Again, the notion of distrust appears as a slight determining factor for why migrants decide to not participate. Many lack interest because they are focused on their migration project, make money to send back and eventually make enough to travel back home. Therefore, it is the very transnational aspect of their migration, the view of migration as only temporary that dissuades many Senegalese from joining the association as participating members. It simply isn’t viewed as something advantageous for many migrants.

Espadas also identifies several structural issues that account for low membership. Many Senegalese immigrants emigrate with little or no formal education, many Murīd migrants have only had education in the rural *daara*, and very few have ever taken classes at university.

Therefore within the association, issues of literacy or lack of education can limit the potential

^{ah} “the small availability of Senegalese in Madrid because of the demands of their labor activities, mainly commercial, that don’t let them have a flexible schedule in order to be able to participate in the development of said activities even though they may want to.” (Translated by author)

^{ai} “the lack of interest founded in individualism and distrust justified by the irregular situation of an immigrant in Madrid explains the non-participation of some Senegalese in the associative life.” (Translated by author)

growth or reach of organization as “illiteracy and ignorance of the Spanish language prevent some members from being eligible for certain functions...” (Espadas 2012:449) This may put pressure on only certain members of the migrant population who have achieved these levels of education and are therefore solely responsible for carrying out the administrative duties, organizing events, and dealing with documentation and paperwork. Furthermore, while education can influence the organization of the association, training and experience running a formal association is another structural factor that influences the lack of membership. Espadas identifies the, “need for training and information about how to manage non-profit organizations...they do not have the kind of access to training that pro-immigrant organizations have, partly because they do not even have anyone available to attend training when it is offered.” (Espadas 2012:449) Additionally, lack of resources, physical spaces, and financing also contribute to the ability of the association to reach its target population and goals. Often time the home of one of the board members of president is used as a meeting space for the association as there are no funds to create or no physical space available for the association. Funding is also difficult as the migrants themselves can only contribute a very small amount for membership due to the nature of their employment and because most of their earned money is sent back home. If the association cannot receive funds from elsewhere or raise finances, which would imply that the members had experience fundraising, it can be difficult to be able to fulfill all of the intended goals of the association.

Writing about the impact of the economic crisis in Spain on the migrant population, Fernandez (2017) examines how the Senegalese in Granada faced increasing economic difficulty. Fernandez remarks how the Senegalese community in Granada managed to remain fairly resilient to the crisis due to the strength of their networks and associations. Fernandez cites how

many migrants would first turn to their *dahira* to solve problems. If those problems couldn't be solved by their local *dahira* they would then look for help from more national *dahiras* in Barcelona or Madrid (Fernandez 2017). This was their first recourse when facing increasing economic strife. Fernandez mentions how several NGOs would offer help to the migrant population, but the first source of aid was always the *dahira*. Through this reliance on their own network, the Senegalese migrants in Granada managed to cope with increased economic hardship, despite their exclusion from statewide programs designed to target poverty. Similarly, Espadas notes how in Andalucía, associations often struggle to be effective, since cultural associations, such as brotherhoods tend, "to be much stronger than in Spain and to hold more sway over their members, due to the ethnic relationships that usually underpin each association. These relationships create moral rules of membership that force commitment and engagement with the association's collective work." (Espadas 2012:445) Thus the case of Senegalese associations throughout Spain offers several insights into the problems that associations face when trying to organize and provide services for their target population. The lack of trust, time due to the intense work schedule of many migrants, lack of interest based on the individual migration project of each migrant, as well as structural problems such as lack of education or training on how to run an association, funds, financing, and resources all contribute to why participation and membership in Senegalese associations has not always met expectations. Additionally, for many, the religious associations of the *dahira* remain a primary reference point for many migrants who defer to their brotherhood rather than immigrant association.

4.4 Associations in the United States

Senegalese immigration to the United States came in two waves. Starting in the 1970's the first migrants, similarly to the migration to Europe, came due to the harsh economic conditions of Senegal as well as the severe drought that took place in the 1970's and 80's. The United States also presented itself as a desirable location due to the potential market for African crafts. However, primary reasons stem from the fact that due to the increase in emigration from Senegal, many European countries began to enforce stricter immigration policies, forcing many Senegalese to opt for alternative destinations. The initial migrants in the 1970's paved the way for later migrants in the 80's, who were attracted to the United States due to the image of the US as a land of opportunity and freedom, its relatively relaxed laws on street peddling, and the absence of much competition (Babou 2002). Additionally it was easier for migrants to enter the United States as, "American immigration authorities were then more concerned with restricting other sorts of migrants. There are no identity checks which target specifically black men in New York, no dormitories for immigrant workers and there is greater opportunity for clandestine employment." (Ebin 1995:334) The first migrants to arrive in the 1980's formed a small group of students involved in an exchange program from the University Cheikh Anta Diop in Dakar.

Over time, migrants created their own businesses and established themselves in several neighborhoods in New York City, mainly Harlem and Brooklyn. In the mid 1980's, the first *dahira* was established in New York by Mustafa Mbakke, a great-grandson of Bamba, providing, "a formal and regular structure that brought the whole community together. His house served as a rallying point for the Murids of New York. The Brooklyn headquarters was also a place where people learned about Amadu Bamba's message and teachings." (Babou 2002:163) Since then more *dahiras* have been established an umbrella *dahira* works to organize and communicate the

interests of all groups together. Babou describes how the organization “mediates between the Murid community and the administrative and political authorities of New York City. It raises funds to finance local projects and contribute to the functioning of the brotherhood in Senegal.” (Babou 2002) Functioning as an immigrant association, the *dahira* in New York caters to many of the needs of the Senegalese immigrants. It plays a religious role, socializing its members into the practices and beliefs of the Murīd brotherhood as well as organizing religious events such as *magal*. It also plays an economic role, helping newly arrived migrants who have no other contacts in New York. The *dahira* is often, “the first institution to provide support to disciples. Its actions range from finding housing and providing start-up money for a job, to paying bail and financing the repatriation of deceased migrants to Senegal for burial.” (Babou 2002:166) Additionally, similar to the case in Italy and Spain, the *dahira* is involved in raising money and resources to help fund development projects in Senegal, such as the hospital in Touba. Babou argues how the *dahira* fosters trust between migrants as they each have to fulfill their responsibilities to each other.

However, different from the previous cases discussed, in the United States, it was the Association that came before the establishment of the *dahiras*. Beginning as an idea in 1986 and becoming a reality in 1988, the *Association Des Senegalais D’Amerique* (ASA) evolved from the desire of the first Senegalese migrants to establish an association to help develop the police force in Senegal (Dramé 2015). Growing from that desire to assist their community, the idea of an association extended to the need to help all Senegalese living in the United States. Similar to the situation in Argentina, the ASA began as a small group meeting in cafes, people’s residencies, and later grew to occupy an official location, which has been located on 116th Street in Harlem since 2001 (Interview with board member, New York, April 2019). The ASA has a clear

structure composed of two boards, an executive board that consists of the president and other executive positions and a board of directors of about 40 members. Members are composed of two delegates from each religious, the various Muslim brotherhoods, Christians, etc. Catholics, and ethnic group, such as Wolof, Diola, Fula, Serer, etc. and elections are held every two years. Meetings with the board take place regularly every two weeks and every three months a meeting is held with representatives from all over the United States. The ASA consists of approximately 100 consistent dues paying members, but like other Senegalese associations, is open to all Senegalese migrants, who number over 10,000 in New York City (Interview with board member, New York, April 2019). They aid the community by helping find jobs, housing, translation of official documents, assisting in the process of acquiring formal documentation, and have a radio show that informs the migrants about the goings on in the Association and happenings in the community. The ASA works closely with the Senegalese consulate in New York City and embassy in Washington D.C. The ASA has been known to work with the Senegalese government in assisting the community with voting in national elections in Senegal. The Senegalese government has even invested in the ASA by providing funds for the purchase of buildings and spaces related to the ASA (Interview with board member, New York, April 2019). The office on 116th street in Harlem is a reference and meeting point for migrants newly arrived to the United States. The television plays Senegalese music, broadcasts the news from Senegal, and many members show up periodically throughout the day and after work to talk, discuss problems, socialize, and meet new members of the community. Many newly arrived migrants are instructed to go to the Association for help when they arrive. The ASA appears to maintain a strong presence in the community as not only a reference point but also a viable self help institution (Interview with former executive board member, New York, April 2019). A long time board

member and former general secretary, credits its influence due to the fact that the Association came before the establishment of the *dahiras*, a phenomenon that has enabled the ASA to be the first place many migrants turn to (Interview with former executive board member, New York, April 2019). However, there are several in the community that explain that, similar to the situation in Argentina, they go to the ASA for formal problems with documentation and other government concerns, but it is the *dahira* that they turn to in times of financial need.

Additionally, while the board consists of a considerable participation in the community, there is a disproportionate number of active participants, those who consistently pay their monthly dues and are card carrying members, and the rest of the Senegalese community in New York. It has been remarked that this is largely due to financial restrictions, as not everyone can contribute monthly to the association (Interview with board member, New York, April 2019). However, these same individuals would readily give to the *dahira* if its leaders commanded (Interview with board member, New York, April 2019). Therefore, while the ASA appears to work effectively and has a strong influence in the community and an established presence in the city with its office, the same issues of participation appear to be present.

Having reviewed these three countries and the way in which associations have been organized and function within their context, it becomes evident that the issue of participation is not an isolated phenomenon or unique to Argentina. The next chapter will focus specifically on the Argentine context and will explore the goals and aims of the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina*, examining their history, functionality, and outreach in the Senegalese community.

Chapter V: The Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina

As illustrated in the previous chapters, Senegalese migration has followed distinct patterns worldwide. In Argentina, as with other nations in the world throughout history, immigrants have formed groups, civil organizations, or associations to serve various functions in order to satisfy the needs of the recently arrived. These associations serve as meeting places and self-help spaces, where groups can face issues of societal isolation and reinforce ties to their country of origin through shared language, traditions, and other practiced customs. Overtime, the Senegalese community has also created the *La Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina*, with the objective, similar to associations in Europe and the United States, to provide support to Senegalese migrants in Buenos Aires. While the Murīdiyya also operates in Argentina, acting as an additional informal association that provides support, the ARSA is a formalized association, recognized by the Argentine State and serves as an intermediary between the community and the State. This chapter will focus on tracing the history and goals of the *La Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina*, exploring the gap between the intended outreach and the actual preference of migrants for informal associations.

5.1 La Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina

While the majority of Senegalese migrants count on a network based around their religious affiliation, there also exists several international and national organizations that offer services and help for the Senegalese population in Buenos Aires. The *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* (ARSA) is the first association that focuses specifically on the Senegalese population. Founded in July 2nd, 2007 with the goal of “legitimar la presencia de

senegaleses y obtener un reconocimiento formal por parte de las autoridades argentinas.”

(Zubrzycki et al 2008:8)^{aj} the ARSA was a response to the way in which the Senegalese migrants were organizing themselves. It was founded by some of the first Senegalese migrants who came to Argentina in the 1990's and early 2000's. At this time, they had formed two significant groups, those with Wolof ethnicity, from the north of the country, who mainly belonged to the Murīdiyya, and those with Diola ethnicity from the southern region of Casamance, who were not linked with any religious brotherhood (Traore 2006). Due to the informality of the religious brotherhoods' network, a more specific structure was needed. In this way, against the absence of an Senegalese consulate or embassy, and consequently an absence of diplomatic representation, it was “los propios senegaleses de estas cofradías quienes proponen crear una asociación civil que sirva de intermediaria entre sus nucleamientos y el estado argentino y entre los inmigrantes y el propio estado senegalés.”^{ak} (Zubrzycki et al 2008:9) The importance of some sort of civil association was necessary as, “Las autoridades argentinas no conocen estas estructuras religiosas, y por lo tanto no hay un reconocimiento formal por parte de las autoridades...Plantearon la idea de crear una asociación, porque se dieron cuenta que con la estructura religiosa cofrática no podían llegar a resolver sus problemas, que hacía falta tener una Asociación Civil que sea reconocida, con personería jurídica y todo lo que hace falta para insertarse en el circuito formal.”^{al} (Zubrzycki 2013:133) While in Senegal the *dahiras* may have both political and social authority, the context

^{aj} “legitimizing the presence of Senegalese and obtaining a formal recognition on the part of the Argentine authorities.” (Translation by author)

^{ak} “the Senegalese themselves from these brotherhoods who proposed the creation of a civil association that would serve as the intermediary between their groups and the Argentine state and between the immigrants and the Senegalese state.” (Translation by author)

^{al} “the Argentine authorities do not know these religious structures, and thus there is no formal recognition by the part of the authorities...They decided to set out the idea to create an association, because they realized that the religious structure of the brotherhoods could not solve their problems, that what was missing was having a civil association that could be recognized, be a legal entity, and have everything that was lacking to be able to insert themselves into the formal circuit.” (Translation by author)

of Argentina required a different approach when it came to relations with the state and advocating for the rights of the migrants. Therefore, not only serving as a space to gain formal recognition by the Argentine state, the association is “donde se puede dialogar y discutir, orientar a los migrante y también promover la solidaridad y la hermandad y difundir la cultura nuestra.”^{am} (Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018)

Just as other migrants groups begin as informal gatherings that later evolve to formally structured associations and institutions, the ARSA similarly experienced the same transformation. While the ARSA started in 2007, it only became formally recognized in 2010 with the acquisition of *personería jurídica*, a feat that was not easy. As the Argentine State holds strict policies for the creation of all associations, such as the inclusion of a formal assembly, a structured directive committee where all members are legal residents of Argentina with all the necessary documents, a fixed residence and meeting space for the association, as well as membership fees, several of these requirements were not easy for the association to acquire. Former ARSA president Moustafa describes the difficulties faced due to the fact that, “la mayoría de senegaleses que estaban acá e interesados en armar o formar parte de comisión directiva tal vez no todas tenían los documentos de residencia como el DNI y que para ser miembro de comisión directiva uno tiene que tener la residencia acá en el país. Entonces para juntar la comisión directiva no quiere decir que tiene que ir a buscar gente que tiene DNI sin ser interesado, tiene que tener gente que esté interesado, comprometido y que tiene documentos necesarios y legales y eso no era fácil.”^{an} (Interview with the former president of the ARSA,

^{am} “where you can talk, discuss, orient other migrants, and also promote solidarity and brotherhood and spread our culture.” (Translation by author)

^{an} “the majority of the Senegalese who are here and interested in forming or becoming part of the board of directors perhaps not all have the residential documents like the DNI and in order to be a member of the board of directors, one has to have their

Buenos Aires, December 2018) Additionally, the ARSA has had trouble renting a fixed location as, “con los libros el AFIP^{ao} hasta hoy en día genera ciertas dificultades por tener una asociación definitiva hay que entregar domicilio fiscal y ese es algo que se puede complicar.” (Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018)

Furthermore, funding and continued membership continues to be a struggle, especially in a country where prices constantly change and Senegalese migrants do not necessarily have time to dedicate to meetings or participation in the Association. The former president Mustafa describes how, “hoy en día no podemos alquilar local y no asegurar la posibilidad de formar los gastos mensuales todos sabemos que hoy en día en este país todo es caro; el tema de alquiler, luz, gas y la disponibilidad de gente que pueden estar en el lugar siempre como para orientar.”^{ap} (Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) However, despite the many difficulties faced in the past, and the continuing struggles to maintain the Association, the ARSA continues to function with various objectives towards both the Senegalese community and the Argentine State.

5.2 Goals of the Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina

As a formalized Association, its main function is to act as an intermediary between the Argentine State and its citizens and the Senegalese population. In this sense, the ARSA focuses on problems concerning documentation of the migrants, a defense against violations of human

residency in the country. Therefore, in order to gather a directors board, it doesn't mean that you have to find people with the DNI who are not interested, you have to find people who are interested, committed and who have the necessary and legal documents, and that is not easy.” (Translation by author)

^{ao} The AFIP stands for Administración Federal de Ingresos Públicos, and is the institution that handles revenue services and taxation in Argentina. .

^{ap} “today we can't rent a place and can't ensure the possibility of gathering the monthly expenses, we all know that today in this country everything is expensive; the rent, light, and gas and the availability of people to always be there to orient others.” (Translation by author)

rights, and diffusing, supporting and promulgating Senegalese culture and traditions in Argentina. The Association organizes and participates in events that are aimed at increasing the visibility and presence of the Senegalese community. Such events are the Semana Africa, gastronomic events that display African and more specifically Senegalese cuisine, and perhaps are most known for their work aiding in the organization of religious events such as the Grand Magal and the Gamu. While the Association has specified that they do not specifically organize these events, as an intermediary, they aid the religious brotherhoods in the organization execution of these occasion. Moustafa illustrates the help the Association offers from, “la impresión de flyers, desde la publicidad, desde la confección de notas o invitaciones a autoridades, hasta el apoyo a búsqueda de un lugar donde se puede hacer el evento, hasta la redacción de discursos o notas que pueden difundir el mensaje de ellos etc. Y también participar en todo lo que es la organización del evento, lo que puede aportar algo en la cocina, lo que puede aportar algo en la organización de mesas de las distintas etapas de eventos. Todo lo que uno puede aportar en un evento, la ARSA puede mandar gente a asistir en todo lo que esté trabajando en el evento.”^{aq} (Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) Capitalizing on the knowledge and relationships the members of the Association have, as well as the status of the Association as part of a formally recognized institution in Argentina, the ARSA is able to facilitate such events through the interactions with state actors, therefore helping spread awareness of the Senegalese community in Argentina and aiding the integration of its members.

^{aq} “printing flyers, to the publicity, to the creation of notices or invitations to authorities, to the help in finding a place where the event can take place, to the writing of speeches or notices that can be used to spread their message etc... And also participating in everything that is the organization of the event, what we can add in the kitchen, who can add something in the organization of the tables of the different stages of the event. Everything that one can offer in the event, the ARSA can send people to attend in everything that is working in the event.” (Translation by author)

The Association therefore plays a vital role as it provides a representational role of the Senegalese community towards the Argentine state and society.

As an intermediary, another objective of the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* is to defend Senegalese migrants when conflicts arise with the Argentine State. As previously stated, many Senegalese enter the country through informal methods, and without an embassy or consul present in Argentina, obtaining an official residential document (DNI) can be difficult. Thus, claims for papers are fundamental for the migrants, as many arrive with only passports but cannot access legal documentation from the Argentine State. Many solicit the *precaria*^{ar} or claim refugee status; however, few receive the desired DNI documentation. Obtaining documentation falls within the transmigrational project for many Senegalese, whose intentions are to live “here and there”, the ability to work in Argentina and return to Senegal without issues. The ARSA who have contacts and personnel working in migration, fill the space left by the government as representation for all Senegalese in Argentina, and often accompanies migrants through these administrative and bureaucratic procedures. Representatives from the Association advocate on the behalf of the Senegalese community by “hablar con los autoridades en migraciones para ver como facilitar los trámites para el DNI...tenemos reuniones, como el año pasado con el director de migraciones, otra autoridad de migraciones para ver cuáles son las posibilidades para los senegaleses de conseguir documento. Tratamos siempre de ver que se

^{ar} The *precaria* is a free legal authorization certificate of residency for foreigners coming to Argentina who have presented the correct legal documentation that allows them to begin the process of applying for permanent, temporary, or transitory residency. It is given to those who are applying at the beginning of their application, as an intermediary form of documentation. It last for 90 days and can be continually renewed until the application for official residency as been resolved. It allows individuals to stay in Argentina, work, study, and leave the country, and is an important first step for migrants coming to Argentina who wish to reside there on a permanent or semi-permanent basis.

puede hacer en este sentido.”^{as} (Interview with the current president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) If there is a need, representatives from the Association will even accompany migrants through their process in the Migration office and assist them through the documentation process, a process that does not always guarantee the acquisition of permanent residency and the DNI.

Another objective of the Association is to defend the rights of the Senegalese community in Argentina. As many Senegalese enter the country without formal documentation, they are in a vulnerable situation when it comes to legal migration issues. Additionally, the majority of Senegalese, as mentioned before, dedicate themselves to street peddling, which while is not illegal in Argentina, furthers their vulnerability, as many can have their merchandise confiscated by the police, be detained, or arrested due to resisting authority or violating trademark laws. The recent *Decreto 70/2017* by President Mauricio Macri has increased the ability of the Argentine State to process undocumented migrants, especially those who have broken Argentine law^{at}. Therefore, as a vulnerable community within Argentina, the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* serves a vital role in defending the rights of Senegalese migrants. As ARSA President, Arfang describes, “Nosotros tenemos un convenio con defensores de la ciudad

^{as} “speaking with the authorities in Migraciones (office of immigration) in order to see how to facilitate the process for the DNI... we have meetings, like last year with the director of Migraciones, and another authority in immigration to see what are the possibilities for the Senegalese to obtain their documentation. We always try to see what we can do in this way.” (Translation by author)

^{at} This decree modifies the existing immigration law of 2003 to expand the state’s role to exercise force over deporting, refusing entry, and shortening the deportation process for newly identified undesirable immigrants. This category has been expanded to include foreigners who have previous criminal records, who have committed crimes in Argentina, or have been identified as having links to illicit activity. It not only grants police and other authorities permission to deport migrants, it also severely restricts entry criteria for new immigrants. Inciso C of article 29 stipulates refusal for those that, “haber sido condenado o estar cumpliendo condena, en la Argentina o en el exterior, o tener antecedentes por tráfico de armas, de personas, de estupefacientes o por lavado de dinero o inversiones en actividades ilícitas o delito que merezca para la legislación argentina pena privativa de la libertad de tres años o más” (Decreto 79/2017) It also includes as a crime having paid to be brought into the country, unless they comply in identifying the person who brought them in.

para poder siempre estar presente cuando un senegalés tiene problema con la policía o la justicia. Por eso siempre estamos al tanto cuando hay un senegalés que necesita asistencia llamamos a los defensores de la ciudad para que intervengan.”^{au}(Interview with the current president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) In this fashion, the ARSA provides necessary links between state services and the Senegalese community who are at risk of being reprimanded by state agents. This is something that happens frequently, as Arfang notes, “A veces pasamos casi toda una semana de ir a los tribunales, a todos lados para asistir a la gente quien siempre están en la calle y siempre hay “quilombo” con la policía.”^{av} (Interview with the current president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018). The Association therefore sees themselves as the “representantes legales de la comunidad senegalesa”^{aw} (Interview with the current president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018). In order to defend the rights of the Senegalese migrant community, the Association seeks to improve the image of the Senegalese in Argentina through their events and dialogues with government agents to dispel the aforementioned myths and stereotypes, showing the migrants as peaceful, hard workers.

Apart from their outward representation of the Senegalese community, the ARSA additionally focuses inwardly to help and aid every Senegalese person who arrives in Argentina. It is an organization that is open to “cualquier senegalés sin tener en cuenta su rango económico, su estatus social, su participación en alguna cofradías, ni su fe, ni su etnia, digamos solamente

^{au} “We have an agreement with the city defense attorneys in order to always be present when a Senegalese person has a problem with the police or with the justice system. That’s why we are always informed when there is a Senegalese who needs assistance, we call the city defense attorneys so they can intervene.” (Translation by author)

^{av} “sometimes we spend almost a week going to the courts, going everywhere to help the people who are always in the streets and there are always problems with the police.” (Translation by author)

^{aw} “the legal representatives of the Senegalese community.” (Translation by author)

por el único hecho de ser senegalés.”^{ax} (Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) They consider the entire Senegalese population as members belonging to the Association, even if only a few regularly participate in meetings and organization. It fulfills an administrative role in aiding the transportation of deceased bodies back to Senegal or if a member of the community is sick and needs to return home, the Association takes care of all the paperwork necessary for the passage. Filling the void of a representational diplomatic institution, the Association has worked with the government of Senegal to help obtain Senegalese passports for those who were in need in Argentina. Additionally, recently the ARSA has organized and effectively carried out the “peticionar para senegaleses acá para votar en elecciones en Senegal... y acompañar en la inscripción de más de 1.700 senegaleses en las listas electorales...que sus documentos van a llegar en pocas semanas.”^{ay} (Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) This is the first petition of its kind in Argentina, and Latin America as a whole, a feat the leading members of the Association are proud of. In this sense, the ARSA works as an administrative body, looking after, accompanying, and protecting the needs of the Senegalese community by acting as an intermediary with the Argentine State, Senegalese government, and the Senegalese population in Argentina.

However, the ARSA additionally focuses inwardly on the social well-being of the community with its goal of helping Senegalese migrants in any way possible. It offers social support in the form of orienting the newly arrived migrants, aiding in the search for work, housing, and since 2011 providing available Spanish lessons to help integrate migrants into

^{ax} “which ever Senegalese no matter their economic or social status, their participation in a brotherhood, no matter their beliefs, their ethnicity, we say just for the fact that of being Senegalese.” (Translation by author)

^{ay} “to petition for the Senegalese here to vote in the elections in Senegal...and followed by the inscription of more than 1700 Senegalese in the electoral lists...that their documents are going to arrive in a few weeks.” (Translation by author)

Argentine society. It acts as a space where they can speak their own language and share culture and history, strengthening their identity. In this way, the ARSA not only performs a representational role towards the State and society of Argentina, it also offers a point of reference for self-identification, unity, and solidarity towards the Senegalese population.

While the knowledge of the Association is present for many migrants, they are connected through WhatsApp groups and Facebook, information is shared with the community, and knowledge of key personnel is common, there lies a preference among a large portion of the community for the informal, religious brotherhoods, rather than participate in the formally created ARSA. As explored previously, this phenomenon exists elsewhere in the world other than Argentina where Senegalese migrants have constructed associations. Additionally, it is clear that the Murīd brotherhood exert certain influence in Senegal and are major stakeholders in the Senegalese migration through projects in Touba and the sending of remises. The final chapter, therefore, will explore these final perceptions of both the ARSA and the Murīd brotherhood to help explain the preference for informal associations amongst the Senegalese community.

Chapter VI: Pertenencia, Preference, and Participation

Though the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* has clear goals to assist the Senegalese community in Buenos Aires, there is a gap in the reach of the Association's aid. Participation remains low, and even though the Association has grown over the years and become more respected and widely known, there are still few Senegalese who make consistent use of it and attend their meetings. During the course of research for this project, none of the interviewed migrants expressed that they had attended a meeting, and few expressed a desire to participate. While almost all migrants know of the Association, very few regularly attend meetings or make use of its connections, contributing to the gap between the services offered by the ARSA and the usage of its members. A similar discrepancy between intentions and goals of specifically Senegalese associations and the actual participation of its members has also been noted by several authors in a variety of countries throughout the world. The existent literature on participation and Senegalese associations in Italy, Spain, the United States, and Argentina have begun to shed light on the probable reasons why migrants prefer to utilize other pathways for mutual aid rather than going through the institutional channels provided for by the association.

One of the major influences on this particular immigrant group that perhaps either encourages or indirectly discourages participation are the brotherhoods, in this case particularly the Murīdiyya. These brotherhoods are unique to the Senegalese population and their influence needs to be explored in order to better comprehend the strong sense of solidarity and belonging within the migrant community. This sense of solidarity and belonging perhaps influences migrants in their decision to either solve their issues on their own, relying on friendships and other relationships to provide assistance, or through their religious affiliations to the Murīdiyya,

rather than going through the provided institutional space created by the Association. The literature covered, especially found in texts by Sarubbi (2013), Zubrycki (2016), Espadas (2012), Carter (1997), Riccio (2013), and Wagbou (2000), has presented several potential explanations that attempt to account for this preference, identifying trust, lack of time and resources, education, and motivation as elements that contribute to the lack of participation by the Senegalese community in their formal associations. This has also been identified as a problem facing the Association in Argentina, as President Arfang notes regarding participation in the ARSA, “Sí eso es algo que es poquito complicado porque hay mucha gente que, la verdad que la mayoría trata de participar pero hay muchos que no participan y eso es un poco complicado para nosotros. Nosotros necesitamos el apoyo de todos porque no es algo fácil no es algo sencillo pero eso es un poco complicado.”^{az} (Interview with the current president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) It is something the ARSA has also tried to identify, suggesting that perhaps the low turnout has to do with, “puede ser tiempo porque muchos trabajan casi siete días de la semana y a veces es un poco difícil dejar su trabajo y poder ir a asistir a una reunión o algo...”^{ba} (Interview with the current president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) While time and availability are certainly a restriction upon migrants, many professing that they work everyday from ten or eleven in the morning until ten or eleven at night, there are other elements that contribute to the lack of participation. Some come from within the Association, in terms of communication and restrictions on participants, and others come from the community towards the Association, mainly preferences or attachments to certain identifying markers over others.

^{az} “Yes, it is something that is a little complicated because there are a lot of people who, the truth is that the majority try to participate but there are many who do not participate and that is something that is a little complicated for us. We need the support of everyone and it is not an easy thing it is not a simple thing, but that is a little complicated.” (Translation by author)

^{ba} “it could be time, because many work almost seven days a week and sometimes it is a little difficult to leave your work and be able to go and attend a meeting or something.” (Translation by author)

6.1 Communication and Restrictions

While the Association's presidents have detailed the ways in which they communicate to the community, through WhatsApp and their Facebook page, many migrants have expressed that they either receive no information or the amount is too much and too confusing for them. Some have said, "Siempre me manda información, recibo mucha información y no entiendo que hacer con esto."^{bb} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, December 2018). Others say, "No se nada de la asociación, conozco el presidente pero no se nada." (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, September 2018) One explained that yes he had been to a meeting or two of the association, but they are not necessarily meetings open to the whole community, saying that, "capaz son reuniones para los jefes, los encargados de la asociación, no para todos."^{bc} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, December 2018) Another describes how perhaps information about the meetings is shared only with the board members of the association, not made public to everyone. Additionally, these meetings are not regular, they meet maybe once a month, if they can. If not, meetings are held over WhatsApp between the board members. Certainly, the lack of a fixed address where the Association can have a physical presence contributes to the lack of visibility the Association has, if members are not informed about meetings, in this case, at least they would have an address as a reference point.

While the Association does certainly diffuse information about legal procedures, such as the call to register to vote in Senegal, communicates with the community for money collections, or details upcoming events, many migrants express that they do not receive information about how the Association works. While the Association is open to everyone in the community and

^{bb} "They always send me information, I receive a lot of information and I don't understand what to do with it." (Translation by author)

^{bc} "Perhaps the meetings are for the bosses, those in charge of the association, but not for everyone." (Translation by author)

both participating members and non participating migrants express that they are aware of the association and feel part of it, only a few individuals in the community can actually become part of the board of directors. This is due to the fact that there are several restrictions placed upon those who can join. As former President Moustafa describes, “A ver, uno no puede ser presidente cualquiera o cualquier que se cayó del cielo. Tiene que estar cerca de la asociación durante dos años ocupando algún puesto. El presidente no es él que sale de acá de algún lado de su rincón y viene y es elegido presidente. Tienes que estar cerca de la asociación formalmente aunque no tienes un puesto interesante formar parte y demostrar de sus actividades y su participación durante mínimamente dos años respetar cotizaciones mensuales durante mínimamente dos años tener un comportamiento adecuado lenguaje también adecuado para ser presidente de senegaleses en Argentina.”^{bd} (Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) These restrictions are necessary for any legal association in Argentina, but for the Senegalese community, it places restrictions upon many due to the necessity of legal documentation. As not all migrants have permanent residency in Argentina, many of the migrants are young males between the ages of 20-30 who have only been in Argentina between one and three years and do not necessarily fluently speak Spanish, there is large majority therefore who excluded from being eligible to form part of the executive committee. Furthermore, many of the migrants have received education solely in various *daara* in Senegal, learning religious texts and Arabic, but few have finished their secondary schooling or even gone to

^{bd} “Look, not anyone can be president or whoever falls from the sky. One has to be close to the association during two years occupying some position. The president is not the one who comes out from some corner and arrives and is elected president. You have to be formally close to the association even if you do not have an interesting position, you have to be part of and demonstrate with your activities and your participation during a minimum of two years, respecting the monthly fees and have a behavior and language that are adequate to be president of the Senegalese in Argentina.” (Translation by author)

university in Senegal, contributing to the majority that cannot fulfill the requirements of the Association.

Education has been brought up in several interviews as a dividing line between migrants. Voicu (2013) hints at this discrepancy between migrants by suggesting that, “People who volunteer more often in associations tend to share a 'dominant profile' (Smith 1994), that involve having more resources, better education, better social position” (Voicu 2013:619) Additionally Guarnizo et al. (2003) examine how education generally leads to greater political participation. In Argentina, many migrants who consider themselves to be card holding members of the ARSA frequently refer to their education. As one explained, “Yo soy inteligente. Yo estoy pensando. Yo paso la escuela, yo hablo francés yo tengo cabeza aquí estoy pensando bien, vine acá para trabajar pero yo respeto la ley de acá. Viste? Pero tiene mucha gente que no respeta nada, policia, ni nada.”^{be} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, November 2018) This migrant, while only occasionally attends the formal meetings, sees the value in the Association as he is “intelligent”. It is important to note that a symbol of education is the ability to speak French. Those who have been educated in the *daara* in Senegal can speak Arabic, but in order to speak French, many would have had to attend schools in Senegal that taught this language. Another similarly described himself as educated, “no soy como los muchachos. La asociación es muy importante porque te puede ayudar...voy para saber algo de las leyes explicado en mi idioma, en wolof. Así puedo entender.”^{bf} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, November 2018) These migrants were also generally those who had been in the country for more than five years,

^{be} “I am intelligent. I am thinking. I passed school, I speak french, I have my head here, I am thinking, I came here to work, but I respect the law here. You see? But there are a lot of people who do not respect anything, not the police, not anything.” (Translation by author)

^{bf} “I am not like the guys. The association is important because it can help you...I go there to learn about the laws that are explained in my language, in Wolof. This way I can understand.” (Translation by author)

the majority stating that they had been in Argentina for 10 years. Voicu (2013) adds that, “previous studies revealed that a longer stay in the host society implies more opportunities to learn how society works, to acquire social capital, and to find opportunities to become involved in voluntary associations.” (Voicu 2013:620) As migrants spend more time in Argentina and develop a more stable income and resident status, they are able to dedicate more time and energy to longer lasting enterprises, such as participation in an association. This correlation explained by Voicu (2013) appears to hold true for the majority of cases in Argentina as education and time living in Argentina begins to separate those who can actively participate in the Association and those who cannot. Due to this discrepancy, many Senegalese are unaware of the true benefits, discussions, and procedures within the Association, contributing to many young and recently arrived migrants to “hablar mal de la asociación, pero ellos no saben la verdad verdad que es una asociación.”^{bg} (Interview with Senegalese man, November 2018) It would be useful in further investigations to explore these statements made by Voicu (2013) to examine the correlation between the level of education and participation in the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina*, as it could shed light onto the influence education has on participation levels in formalized institutions.

6.2 Government vs. Family

Throughout the investigation during formal and informal interviews with Senegalese migrants, in terms of participation, many identified similar aspects as contributing to reasons why they or others do not participate in the ARSA. Many of the identified elements that contribute to this phenomenon of participation have to do with markers of belonging that often

^{bg} “speak badly about the association, but they do not know truly what an association is.” (Translation by author)

are stronger in the religious organizations than in the formal associations. One of the identified markers is that of conflicting concepts of family and government.

Trust is an essential trait that has been identified by several authors and is therefore an important marker of belonging. As stated by Alexander et al. in their analysis of the difference between participation and membership in associations that, members, “of community organizations, personal interest groups and cultural associations, for example, showed high levels of generalized trust and reciprocity, whereas, membership of political associations were more likely to be politically active, but were less likely to score highly in terms of generalized trust, political trust and efficacy, tolerance, optimism and free ridership.” (Alexander et al 2010: 45) Trust has been signalled as an influence factor in other countries, specifically the case of Italy and Spain. While trust was not mentioned during the investigation of the Senegalese community in Buenos Aires, many viewed the brotherhoods differently to the Association. One described how, “The association is very useful because we don’t have the government here, we don’t have like an embassy or a consulate, we have just the association.” (interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, July 2018) Many view the Association as an institution of the government, an administrative branch designed to support them. Others see the Association as an aid for getting documentation (such as the *precaria* or DNI) or in extreme cases if a body has to be returned to Senegal. As one migrant put it, “Yes we have associations here, I think they help with dead bodies or if you are sick or getting your papers. That kind of thing.” (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, November 2016) Documentation is one of the primary concerns of the community as it is what allows migrants to travel freely between Senegal and Argentina and enables them to reside on a more permanent and legal basis in Argentina, opening the doors to more stable employment and movement. Some profess a frustration with the Association as they

see it as their job to facilitate the process of securing permanent residence. As one states, “el problema para los Senegaleses es el documento. Necesitamos el documento pero es difícil tenerlo.”^{bh} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, November 2018) By viewing the ARSA as an administrative entity, migrants believe that it should have the power to solve these issues, however, by not fully understanding the functionality of the Association, many get frustrated by its limitations, leading to the sentiment that the Association, “no hace nada para mí.”^{bi} (Interview Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, November 2016) The Association is therefore perceived as having more of a functional and administrative role, acting like an embassy or consulate. Participation is therefore viewed as restricted to those who have the knowledge and capacity to interact in this government role and many view it as an entity that should be working for them, rather than an Association that needs their participation as well.

It is the *dahiras* that attract the majority of the migrants and consistently have more participation and involvement from members of the community. Many use words such as family, friends, or brothers when discussing their preference for participating in the *dahira* rather than attending meetings of the Association. One migrant explained how, “I enjoy it because it has given me opportunity to eat there every Monday I won’t have to pay for dinner. And then I can meet some brothers, it’s very nice...it’s an opportunity to see my friends, to be with a group of Senegalese, and I will feel like I’m in Senegal. It’s like a Senegalese house. We eat the way we eat in Senegal, we talk Wolof, we won’t talk Spanish...Sometimes we do some prayers, when we finish the *dahira*, together we pray for our development.” (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, July 2018) Not only do they consider the *dahira* an opportunity to reconnect with

^{bh} “the problem for the Senegalese is the document. We need the document, but it is difficult to get it.” (Translation by author)

^{bi} “doesn’t do anything for me.” (Translation by author)

other Senegalese migrants, but it is viewed as a time to be with family. Furthermore, in Argentina, a society in which the Senegalese find themselves a minority and marginalized, the brotherhoods take on a much more symbolic role than simply a religious meeting place. As Kleidermacher (2018) explains, “no se trata del simple encuentro, sino que este hecho adquiere nuevas connotaciones al reafirmar la pertenencia a una comunidad, en oposición a la sociedad mayoritaria en la que están insertos y en donde se tornan una otredad, muy distinguible visual y lingüísticamente...la cofradía es el refugio, el apoyo, la contención religiosa, comunitaria, social y anímica, que refuerza su identificación con el lugar de origen, con la religión y también con su comunidad.”^{bj} (Kleidermacher 2018:252) The brotherhoods therefore become a space for migrants where not only do they read the Koran and speak in Wolof, but it becomes a place where they can reinforce their Senegalese identity and feel as if they were back in Senegal, back home.

Additionally, many mention that the *dahiras* are associations that the Senegalese are accustomed to. Many have explained that the, “senegalés en todos los lugares del mundo no es un gran fan de las asociaciones el senegalés hoy en día es mucho más visto o reconocido en la parte religiosa, esos son los lugares que más llaman a los senegalés porque son eventos casi podemos decir son instituciones que uno puede ver sus actividades a través de eventos y cada uno le encanta ir y ver y disfrutar durante un día y después separarse.”^{bk} (Interview with the

^{bj} “it isn’t about a simple meeting, but this acquires new connotations to reaffirm the sense of belonging to a community, in opposition to a social majority in which they are inserted and where they take on an otherness that is very visually and linguistically distinguishable...the brotherhood is a refuge, an aid, a religious containment, community, social and emotional, that reinforces their identity with their place of origin, with religion and also with their community.” (Translation by author)

^{bk} “The Senegalese in every part of the world are not a big fan of associations, the Senegalese today is much more seen or recognized by the religious part, those are the places that attract the Senegalese because they are events, we can almost even call them institutions where one can see their activities through events and each one loves to go and see and enjoy during a day, and then go their own way.” (Translation by author)

former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) Others mention that the *dahira* is what they are used to doing in Senegal, stating, “ The dahiras are more familiar. Even in Senegal we have dahiras, the word Dahira is familiar...they do the same way as in Senegal, they cook for people to eat, do some prayers.” (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, July 2018) As the structure is the same in Argentina as in Senegal, the *dahiras* reflect practices from home that many are accustomed to and familiar with. Many participate in these religious brotherhoods in their home country rather than join civil societies or other associations. Voicu (2013) discusses how, “membership in associations can be conceived of as an individual behaviour nurtured by societal and community norms. Such norms are also reflected in the organizational culture, particularly in voluntary organizations. Consequently individual involvement in associations depends not only on personal characteristics but also on the pervasive norms to be found in their social context.” (Voicu 2013:616) In this way, participation does not depend solely on individual choices, but on the social context in which migrants find themselves. As migrants have left one culture and reside in another, they are therefore exposed to two different cultures of participation. While in Senegal, the religious brotherhoods are a major form of association, participation, and organization, in Argentina, civil societies and formalized associations and unions are part of the participatory culture. As migrants travel, “the associated social values of participation travel with the migrant and continue influencing his or her choices in the host society. The host society has its own norms and patterns of associationism. They influence all residents, migrant or native and contribute to shaping their behaviours.” (Voicu 2013:616) In this case, participation in associations that conform to the organizational structure found in Argentina, could correlate to a certain level of integration within the receiving context for migrants. As Voicu puts it, “involvement in associations can be understood as a manifestation of internalized

social values related to participation.” (Voicu 2013:616) In the case of the Senegalese, the brotherhoods continue to exert a strong influence over the organizational and participatory behavior of the community and are naturally an extension of a well known and established practice in Senegal that is repeated.

Like the Association, the brotherhoods are open to all Senegalese migrants, no matter what brotherhood they may belong to. In this way, Tijāniyya migrants are able to join the Murīd *dahiras* and visa versa, expanding the sense of community felt within these meetings. However, different from the ARSA, there are no prerequisites to become part of this community. As mentioned previously in other cases, young migrants often leave Senegal with little formal education, and due to the prerequisites of the Association, while any migrant can join the ARSA, board members are generally those who not only can speak Spanish but have a higher level of education that enables their effective participation in administering a formal association. Therefore while no individual mentioned the concept of trust, through terms related to family it remains clear that the *dahiras* hold stronger bonds between community members, as the perceived administrative governmental ARSA. The *dahira* therefore is viewed to be more of a community where migrants feel comfortable and relaxed, a home away from home.

6.3 Vertical Ties

Perhaps one of the main influencing factors that creates this sense of family or community that is felt so strongly within the *dahiras* is the strength of the horizontal ties within the Murīdiyya. As explained by Bolívar (2011), horizontal ties refers to the level of solidarity amongst members of the same group, organization, or association. While leaders are chosen in the Association through the creation of electoral lists where candidates are chosen amongst those

who have been deemed qualified according to the ARSA's expectations, followed by rounds of voting and the election of the next President, the Murīdiyya is extremely hierarchical where authority is handed down genealogically, through the descendents of Amadou Bamba. One migrant described the Association like presidential elections, where you vote and choose a candidate, and perhaps one gets elected that may not be the preferred representative. However, in the brotherhood, as leaders are descended from the Saint and founder Bamba, one knows that the leader is going to be a good person, an example to follow, while elections in the Association might not have the same result. The brotherhoods therefore have a much stronger pull on those who belong to the religious community as the leaders are seen to possess a divine connection and are able to give divine blessings to their followers. There is a direct relationship between the disciple and the *marabout*, as the *marabout* guards the spiritual well-being of his disciples in exchange for small contributions. In this way, the *dahiras* are able to call upon much greater participation, as in Senegal, as mandates from religious leaders can be followed rigidly.

Additionally, the *dahira* offers a different type of support for the community, appealing to their religious connections. One discussed how, "I like specifically, when they do prayers. Because every immigrant need prayers. We are here because we have some purposes some aims, we need prayers in order to accomplish our aims." (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, July 2018) The solidarity found within the *dahira* has an appeal to migrants as it can offer solace in the intangible realm of spirituality, a type of support the Association cannot give. As the Association is concerned with temporal problems, existing in the day to day Argentine society, the brotherhoods offer solace in the spiritual realm. President Arfang described the

dahiras as, “el tema religioso es algo espiritual que es parte de tu casa parte de tu ser.”^{bl}

(Interview with the current president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) Religious groups therefore are not seen as something foreign to the Senegalese, but part of their daily activity and daily lives. As over 90% of the country is Muslim, the brotherhoods are not simply seen as a religious organization, but part of the very Senegalese identity. As former President Moustafa described, “las cofradías no pueden ser comparadas con la asociación, las cofradías tienen un líder espiritual que ese líder es como la fuerza lo que llama lo que hace que la gente siente otra cosa. Y estos son los líderes religiosos en Senegal como Amadou Bamba el líder del muridismo que después su hijos etc., y cada uno con una dahira que tiene esa visión que va o trabaja en el nombre de cheikh Touba o que está esperando la baraka o bendición de los líderes religiosos de las otras cofradías. La asociación no tiene esto, nosotros no transmitidos ninguna baraka o beneficio religioso de más allá. No, nosotros trabajamos con la realidad y tratamos de cumplir con lo nuestro dentro del mundo temporal. El otro es el mundo espiritual más allá de lo temporal. Siempre podemos complementar en algunas cosas pero nunca podemos tener las mismas fuerzas o mismos objetivos bien determinados.”^{bm}(Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018)

The *dahiras* therefore have a command or influence in the afterlife, and as many migrants are concerned with their well-being now and in the future, the brotherhoods offer a solace, have a power that is beyond the reach of the Association. In this way, preference for the *dahira* over the

^{bl} “The theme of religion is something spiritual that is part of our house, part of our being.” (Translation by author)

^{bm} “The brotherhoods cannot be compared to the association, the brotherhoods have a spiritual leader in Senegal, like Amadou Bamba, the leader of mouridism who after came his children etc. And each one has a dahira that has this vision or way or work that is done in the name of Cheikh Touba, or is waiting for the baraka or blessing of the religious leaders of other brotherhoods. The association has nothing like this, we don’t transmit any baraka or religious benefit in the next world, no we work in reality and we try to do our part in the temporal world, the other is the spiritual world beyond the temporal. We always try to compliment them in some ways, but we can never have the same force or same objectives.” (Translation by author)

Association is clear as not only are followers bound more tightly to their religious leaders, the type of aid that comes with belonging to the Murīdiyya, beyond that of the physical material resources that the brotherhood also makes available, is unmatched by the Association and also something that many Senegalese are drawn towards.

6.4 Availability and Transnational Project

As mentioned in previous literature about Italy and Spain, time and availability is also a factor that influences the level of participation in formal associations. Many migrants work in the street, peddling their wares informally in various urban locations throughout the city of Buenos Aires. They generally work from around 10 or 11 in the morning till around 10 or 11 at night, after which, migrants describe how they go home, eat, pray, and go to sleep. Many profess that they simply do not have time to go to the Association's meetings or participate in the Association. One man detailed, "I don't (have free time), I just have the night to go, to take a rest in my house because I wake up early to go to work, at eight I have to be in the place to work until like seven in the evening and then I go home. I don't have time...I don't have free time." (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, July 2018) Their work is all consuming and also the main motivation for their migration. For the Murīd, work is also their way of showing their devotion to their Saint and *marabout*, compelling many Murīd to focus solely on their work, and save little time for other activities. It has been mentioned in many occasions that migrants are generally concerned with earning money to send back home. One migrant illustrated that, "La gente de acá necesita plata no sabe de verdad verdad de la asociación. No sabe nada, siempre está pensando

en plata. Plata plata. Y trabajo, plata.”^{bn} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, December 2018). Furthermore, former president Moustafa adds that, “el trabajo de asociación es distinto, es ir viendo y analizando lo que ocurre en la comunidad levantarse todos los días llamar y ver las cosas tratar de ver quien tiene problemas a quien podemos ayudar cómo podemos resolver los problemas de la comunidad etc. y tal vez no todos estén dispuestos a hacerlo.”^{bo} (Interview with the former president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018) Speaking to migrants it becomes evident that many simply do not have the time to participate in other associations as they spend most of their time working. This foments their transnational project, as the goal of many is to work and to send money home to family members in Senegal, as it is the main purpose of migration for many.

The desire to eventually move back to Senegal also plays an important influencing factor. As they are transnational migrants, the Senegalese maintain their links to Senegal, and for many, these relationships are strengthened through practices such as attending the *dahira*. While migrants express that they have little availability for the ARSA, many do make time to attend the weekly *dahira* meetings. As previously discussed, these meetings take on a more powerful meaning, as they transcend their religious nature and become a means to connect meaningfully to their home. Perhaps, as the majority of migrants are young and have not been in the country for an extended period of time, they do not view their stay in Argentina as permanent. Even those interviewed who declared that they had been in the country for more than 10 years expressed an ultimate desire to return to Senegal to live. As transnational migrants, the many Senegalese in

^{bn} “The people here need money, they don’t know the truth about an association. They don’t know anything, just always thinking about money. Money. Money. And work, and money.” (Translation by author)

^{bo} “The work of the association is different, it is seeing and analyzing what is happening in the community, getting up every day to call and to see things, trying to see who has problems, who we can help, how we can solve the problems of the community etc. and perhaps not everyone is able to do it.” (Translation by author)

Argentina view their stay as temporary, perhaps leading them to value less their participation in an association that works more with bureaucratic procedures. Involving themselves in the Association would signify a certain attachment to Argentina, as they would be working in an Argentina association with relations with the State, rather than staying on the margins of society, working informally, enabling them to have more mobility and eventually return easily. Therefore, it is the very reason for their migration and the nature of their migration that influences the Senegalese to privy meetings with the *dahira* over the more formal meetings with the ARSA, as availability, motivation, and the effort required to take part in the Association is something many migrants are unwilling to give into.

6.5 *Teranga*

The final possible influencing factor that accounts for the lack of participation in the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* that was discovered throughout the investigation is the unique nature of the Senegalese community, more specifically the strong sense of solidarity amongst the Senegalese. Senegal is known as the “Country of Teranga”. The term *teranga* is used to describe a certain type of hospitality or treatment of the other. The concept is predicated upon the notion of welcoming someone into your home, inviting people to eat, and providing for someone with whatever you can. As one migrant described, “*teranga* es, eres mi amigo, te doy mi camisa, mi comida, mi casa. Esto es *teranga*.”^{bp} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, November 2018) *Teranga* can be seen as one migrant who worked in a shop he owned in the neighborhood of Once, had a bottle of soda and a cup for anyone who was thirsty. Migrants working out on the street under the hot summer sun, would

^{bp} “*Teranga* is, you are my friend, I give you my shirt, my food, my house. This is *teranga*.” (Translation by author)

come in periodically to take a drink. He expressed, “Mira la botella, a mí no me gusta esto, pero lo tengo para los muchachos.”^{bq} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, December 2018)

The culture of *teranga* can be seen in the way the Senegalese receive newly arrived migrants, giving them housing, food, and money to start working, without a thought of payment in return. Many migrants speak on how when they arrive in Argentina, rather than seeking out the Association, they look for other Senegalese migrants. Many come with a contact or number which they can count on to provide housing, work, and money to get them started in their new country. A newly arrived migrant who has no family or at least no direct contact will seek out other migrants and ask for help. This solidarity that exists between Senegalese migrants, known as *teranga* is what provides the initial reception. One migrant describes how, “When I came...when I arrived to Retiro, the station, I did not know where to go. I also didn’t speak Spanish. I was in really big trouble. I was waiting to see some black man to help me. To be able to talk with. One passed and I went to see him. I asked him, hey man can you help me I came from Brazil, I came here to live and I don’t know nothing. The Man gave me a number, the number of one brother of Senegalese. And he took me to his house, gave me some money to start working.” (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, July 2018) Other migrants have described how upon arrival they told the taxi driver to take them “to where the black guys are” (Interview with Senegalese, Buenos Aires, November 2016) and from there was able to find housing, work, and support from other migrants who he found on the street. One described how upon his arrival, he had no contacts, however when he saw a group of Senegalese speaking Wolof, he explained, “yo vine acá yo no tengo plata yo no tengo casa para dormir, el (the other Senegalese) dice, ‘viene a mi casa a dormir uno tres días, despues te ayuda a trabajar.’ Me

^{bq} “Look at the bottle, I don’t like to drink this, but I have it for the boys.” (Translation by author)

compra para trabajar uno reloj, y voy a la calle a vender.”^{br} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, December 2018) Another migrant expressed how, “estaba en la calle hablando wolof con mis compañeros. Llegó un Senegalés y empezamos a hablar. Me dijo que recién llegó y no sabía nada. Lo invité a mi casa y lo ayude por unas semanas. Después se fue a otro lugar. Lo vi una vez, en el Magal, y me dijo que nunca había olvidado, dijo este es el hombre que me ayudó cuando llegué y nunca lo voy a olvidar.”^{bs} (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, December 2018) There is a strong sense of solidarity between Senegalese migrants and often help is found informally, without consultation from the Association.

When discussing *teranga* with Senegalese migrants in Argentina, one migrant explained that this culture perhaps originates in the fact that in Senegal, families and extended families live together in the same house. In this way, they are used to helping and being around others who may not be directly related. Another factor that contributes to the culture of *teranga* are certain tenants within Islam. Many profess that *teranga* is done for god, rather than for themselves. It is seen as a good deed to help others when you can, as one day you may be the one who needs help. Especially in Argentina, a country where many migrants arrive with few connections, this form of solidarity is a vital survival strategy and what keeps the community together and united.

In this way, rather than seek out the formal Association, migrants resolve their problems internally and informally. Between migrants, the Senegalese instruct one another on what steps to take to obtain the *precaria*, where to work, where to stay, how to work, and also information

^{br} “I came here and I had no money, I had no house to sleep in, he said, ‘come to my house and sleep for three days, later I will help you find work.’ He bought me some things to work, a watch, and I went out into the street to sell.” (Translation by author)

^{bs} “I was in the street speaking Wolof with my companions. A Senegalese guy came and we started talking. He told me that he had recently arrived and didn’t know anything. I invited him to my house and I helped him for several weeks. After he went to another place. I saw him one time in Magal, he told me that he had never forgotten what I did, he said, ‘this is the man that helped me when I arrived and I will never forget it.’” (Translation by author)

about *dahiras* and the Association. As ARSA President Arfang described, the Association accompanies migrants when they seek out their legal documents, but many migrants will go themselves and begin the process for the *precaria* alone. Many have stated that the Association has, “done nothing for me” (Interview with Senegalese man, Buenos Aires, November 2016). While everyone knows of the president and former presidents, there are few who seek them out their help. When many are in trouble economically, or need certain resources, they turn to the *dahira* rather than the Association, as the *dahira* has the capacity to mobilize more people and gather more money and is a more established network that migrants count on not only during their travels, but upon their arrival in Argentina as well.

If the Association needs to gather money for an individual that needs the funds, the president will go to the heads of the *dahira* to ask that they put out the message. As more migrants participate in the *dahiras* and to a certain extent, follow the mandates of their *marabouts*, the brotherhoods are able to mobilize more people and collect more money for aid. In this way, many migrants prefer to turn to the brotherhoods, as they can receive more help faster. However, when a migrant finds themselves in legal trouble, it is the Association that is the most effective means of aid, due to their contacts and connections with state actors.

Chapter VII: Development Considerations

As it has been demonstrated, while the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* has concrete objectives and serves an intermediary role for the Senegalese community in Argentina, they are unable to maximize their intended reach and impact in the community due to a lack of resources and member participation. To increase the benefits offered by the ARSA, it will need to increase participation and use within the community. One of the issues facing the ARSA has been the lack of visibility. While many migrants profess a knowledge of the president, few know the specifics about meeting times and locations. While the ARSA communicates through various social media outlets, many migrants explain that they either do not receive information or they are inundated with messages from the Association. One of the ways to improve this would be to create a fixed and formal location for the ARSA. This way, not only would the community have a physical space to use as a point of reference, a place they could go or turn to when in need, but having a locale would strengthen the ARSA's image among the Argentine community as a formal, functional, and respectable institution, as well as establish itself as a visible manifestation of the Senegalese community and presence within Buenos Aires. Given the fact that the African identity has been largely minimized or negated throughout the history of Argentina, a physical space for the ARSA would help counteract that long held narrative and normalize the presence of this community.

While the ARSA has tried and continues to try to secure a location, it lacks financial resources. Perhaps the Argentine State could delegate an office or locale for the Association. As Deutsch (1966) explains, sometimes during a transition from a traditional form of authority to a modern way of living, communities might need “a direct transition from traditional government

to the essentials of a modern welfare state.” (Deutsch 1966:391) Transitioning to the Argentine way of life, societal norms, and behavior patterns constitutes a shift in many aspects including structures of governance and authority. Rather than view this as a process of modernization, this can be considered simply a transition in cultural practices and ways of organizing. Viewed this way, Senegalese structures and practices are considered valid rather than lacking in modernity, which connotes a certain amount of ethnocentrism and preference for the Western way of life. However, certain modernization theories can be useful in application as they constitute a shift in practices and a transition to adaptation to the western world. The ARSA represents a response to this need for adaptation, as the authority of the brotherhoods were not recognized by the Argentine State. However, in order to increase participation and mobilize the Senegalese community, perhaps the State needs to take on a greater role in aiding the Association to ensure its success and intended reach. As Deutsch (1966) argues, when the population cannot fully integrate, it is the state that should fill the gap as an investor in society to aid this transition. Consequently, “a greater scope of governmental services and functions requires ordinarily and increase in the capabilities in the government. Usually it requires an increase in the numbers and training of government personnel, an increase in governmental offices and institutions, and a significant improvement in administrative organization and efficiency.” (Deutsch 1966:392) By bringing the State in closer relation to the ARSA, through added funding and allotment of a fixed location, as well as potentially training capable members of the community to become capable to lead the Association, the state could address the lack of participation and hopefully mobilize individuals to increase their activity within the ARSA. As Senegal has no diplomatic presence within Argentina, the need for a well functioning institution that can advocate on behalf of the

Senegalese is of the utmost importance. In this fashion, the ARSA could be able to reach its potential as the intermediary between the State and the Senegalese community in Argentina.

It is important to note that the interactions between the State and the Senegalese community have often been hostile through conflict with State representatives such as the police and municipal agents against migrants who sell their wares in the street. Additionally, the State has made clear their stance towards undocumented migrants who break the law through their recent proclamation. It is therefore important to not only consider these actions but the relationship that has been established with the community before advocating for an increase in the State's presence. Hence, there is a need for the State to adopt a more comprehensive stance towards the Senegalese community in Argentina, and to understand better the ways in which this community organizes itself. Developing a more ethnorelative approach, recognizing and seeing the value in differing standards and customs of those from another culture, would allow the Argentine state to not only comprehend the way the Senegalese organize themselves, but would also facilitate diplomatic and effective policy. While these migrants do not reside in Senegal and are therefore expected to respect, follow, and carry out the laws and formal practices of their new host country, the Argentine State should recognize that this community behaves in a manner that is distinct from other groups residing within its borders. Coming from a different non-Western context, the Senegalese have their own ways of organizing and mobilizing. If the State truly wants to protect, encourage, and reap the benefits from a mobilized society, they should adopt an ethnorelative stance and meet the community half way. It is therefore necessary that the State take a more active role in assisting the ARSA to mobilize the Senegalese community, through recognition of the strength and benefits of the brotherhoods and the *dahiras* to increase aid and assistance necessary for the community to thrive. This is perhaps a useful lesson for many

Western nations, as currently Muslim immigrants and refugees are seeking a better life all around the world. As their way of life comes in contact and perhaps conflict with the existing structures of these Western nations, a good degree of understanding and empathy could go a long way to aiding their transition to the host society in which they find themselves.

Another measure that could strengthen the presence of the ARSA in the Senegalese community would be to have the brotherhoods aid in advocating for its services. As the brotherhoods represent a powerful authority to many Senegalese, having the leaders of the Murīdiyya diffuse information about the use of the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* could increase the legitimacy of the ARSA among those who previously failed to see the value in the Association. Key members and leaders of the brotherhoods are already part of the executive committee in the Association and the President of the Association has remarked that the ARSA and the *dahiras* are one in the same (Interview with the current president of the ARSA, Buenos Aires, December 2018). Therefore, it should not be too difficult to strengthen the message of the Association among the devout followers of the Murīdiyya. Rather than impose the Association as a substitute for the solidarity and support that is offered through the brotherhoods, the ARSA should increase its message that it is an important formal channel to go through when dealing with issues relevant to the Argentine State. Having the leaders of the brotherhood expound this message could only increase the legitimacy of the ARSA within the community, and perhaps lead to a greater participation from its members.

The Senegalese community in Buenos Aires constitutes a minority within the population of the city and among other migrant groups. However, their presence has only been expanding since this wave of migration began in the early 2000's. With no embassy or consulate, the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* is a necessary institution that not only assists

the community, but represents and advocates on their behalf to the Argentine State. The ARSA continued to expand and grow in reputation since its founding, but there remains more work to do to expand their services and presence among the community. There are many decisions that the State and the ARSA itself could make in order to improve this institution and the situation for the Senegalese in Argentina. If the government wants the community to have the proper tools to succeed and advance within their borders, there should be more collaboration between the State and the ARSA, however, always through a more ethnorelative stance, considering the needs of the community first.

Conclusions

The Senegalese presence and manner of organizing is a phenomenon that is not unique to Argentina. As a nation that has experienced many waves of migration, the Senegalese continue the tradition of migrants arriving and adapting to their new circumstances, inserting themselves into Argentine society through the creation of self help networks and later associations. As the presence of Africans in Argentina has existed for centuries, the new wave of Senegalese migration represents a new stage in relations between Africans and the Argentine State. As an intermediary between the State and the community, *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* has risen to not only fill the void left by the absence of an embassy or consulate, but has also responded to the demands of the State, adapting cultural practices and ways of organizing to be able to advocate on the behalf of the community. Precisely due to this lack of formal representation, the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* takes on an important functional role not only towards the community, as a provider of legal services and representation, but also towards Argentine society by representing the Senegalese community, dealing with legal issues, and dispelling long held stereotypes and prejudice. The Association works best in this role, as an intermediary, aiding migrants with legal issues, transportation of deceased members back to Senegal, providing key information or key contacts when organizing events, and using their access to increase the presence of the community in Argentine society. Functioning with the few resources, lack of a fixed residency, and the transitory nature of their community, the ARSA is successful in completing its goals towards the Argentine State and society, as well as supporting the legal needs of its community. In this manner, the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses en Argentina* is an association that works, much like others, to support

the Senegalese community in Argentina by acting as an intermediary between the community and the State.

However, much like other Senegalese associations worldwide, participation remains low in general meetings and interest among the community has been designated as an area of improvement by the Association's board of directors. This lack of participation has been documented in other Senegalese associations globally, and many of the similar explanations are found to be present in Argentina. The lack of time and resources is obviously a large factor for individuals in deciding whether or not to participate as well as the migratory project of living here and there. Furthermore, the very strong sense of solidarity that is unique within the Senegalese community, that manifests itself as *teranga* inherently provides a support network for many migrants, who turn to their compatriots before utilizing an association. While other authors cite lack of trust for not joining formal associations, it can clearly be seen that migrants have differing perspectives of associations in comparison to that of their brotherhoods. Migrants are drawn to other associations that have a greater capacity to mobilize and aid individuals. The Murīd brotherhood with its strong vertical ties and familiar structure that exerts political, social, and economic influence both in Senegal and abroad, is where many of the migrants turn to if they have problems. This religious association serves a function much greater than providing material aid through housing, money, or work, but also provides support in the spiritual world, assuring dedicated migrants the promise of an attractive afterlife. However, beyond all this, in a foreign land, the brotherhood reinforces the migrant's Senegalese identity, acting as a meeting place where individuals can come together and feel part of a larger family. Additionally, it is clear that the very restrictions placed upon the Association influence participation. Through the

limitations about residency, resources, and language, many Senegalese view the Association as not for them or something that they cannot participate in.

While both the ARSA and the Murīd brotherhood indeed arise as a means to address this fundamental “affective” human need described by Morell (2005), there exists a clear preference among the community to either resolve issues in the moment through solidarity, or defer to the mobilizing influence of the brotherhoods. While the Murīdiyya is the largest and most influential network that exists abroad, others, such as the Tijāniyya function very similarly. Therefore, it is important for policy implementation to consider the value of both the ARSA as well as the role of the brotherhood. It is essential in terms of increasing participation in the ARSA to increase knowledge about the Association and expand outreach into the community to engage with individuals and explain the benefits of adapting to a new system in a new country. There are many who find value in the Association, however, generally they have a higher level of education and have been in Argentina longer. It would be useful to this continuing study to examine more in depth this connection between level of education, time in the country, and age to see if there does exist a correlation that might account for the preference of one Association over another. It could provide insight into generalities between the types of individuals who become more politically active and has the potential to influence policy decisions to engage with those who are not, to increase participation. Furthermore, it is important to take into account the mobilizing sway of the brotherhoods and find a way to incorporate their influence into policy decisions that target the Senegalese community.

In an increasingly globalized and connected world, it is vital that there are attempts at reaching understanding and empathy between different cultures. By understanding the brotherhoods and the solidarity found amongst Senegalese migrants, perhaps the Argentine state

can understand the validity of these influences in order to design policy that thereby incorporates and makes visible this historically marginalized community.

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Immigrants

1. How did you decide to come to Argentina? Did someone or any organization help you in this process?
2. How did you arrive to Argentina? Who helped you find housing and work once you arrived?
3. Once you arrived, did you obtain a *precaria*? Who told you or helped you to do obtain this documentation?
4. Can you describe your daily routine? Are there moments when you have free time?
5. Do you consider yourself to be part of an Islamic brotherhood in Senegal? Here in Argentina?
6. What does it mean to you to be part of a brotherhood?
7. Have you been to an event that was organized by the Murīd brotherhood here in Buenos Aires?
8. Are you familiar with the *Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses*? How did you become familiar with this association?
9. Have you ever been to an event organized by the ARSA?
10. What type of help has the Murīd brotherhood offered you during your stay in Buenos Aires? What about the ARSA?

Questions for personnel from the Murīd brotherhood

1. How many members of the Murīd brotherhood are there in Buenos Aires?
2. Can you describe the relationship the brotherhood has with the Senegalese immigrants here in Buenos Aires? How often do members come together and meet?
3. What type of events do you organize for members of the brotherhood? Are they open to all or only those who form part of the association? Can you describe the process of organizing an event?
4. What type of relationship does the brotherhood have with those Senegalese who are not Murīd ?
5. What type of help do you give to immigrants who have recently arrived or during their stay in Buenos Aires?
6. How is the brotherhood organized? How do you maintain contact with members here in Buenos Aires? In Senegal?
7. How does the Murīd network work in Buenos Aires? What ties are there with the brotherhood in Senegal? In other countries?
8. What type of interactions does the brotherhood have with the state?
9. Can you describe the interaction with the ARSA? Do you ever work together?
10. What type of help does the ARSA offer that the brotherhood cannot?

For personnel from the ARSA

1. How many members make up the ARSA?
2. What are the goals of the ARSA? To what extent do you consider these goals to be met?
3. What type of events do you organize for your members? Are they open to everyone or only people who form part of the association?
4. What type of help does the ARSA offer immigrants both recently arrived and during their time in Buenos Aires?
5. What are the requirements that the state has placed on the organization of the ARSA?
6. Can you describe the interaction between the state and the ARSA?
7. What links does the ARSA have with other associations or organizations that work with Senegalese immigrants in Buenos Aires? Internationally?
8. What are the links that the ARSA has with Senegal or Senegalese in other countries?
9. Can you describe the relationship between the ARSA and the Murīd brotherhood?
10. Is there any type of help or aide that the brotherhood offers that the ARSA does not?

Appendix B: Recruitment Script

Hello, my name is Miles Johnson and I am a student at the University of San Martin and Georgetown University in the United States. I am doing a research project for my master's thesis about the role of associations in daily life of Senegalese migrants here in Buenos Aires. I am focusing on the ARSA (Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses) and the Murīd brotherhood.

I want to know how these associations influence your life and what type of interactions you have with them. For my research, I will be interviewing willing participants who are either Murīd , Tijāniyya, or have no religious affiliation, as well as those that form part of and do not form part of the ARSA. If you would like to participate in an interview, the interview will be recorded by me on my phone, will last about an hour, and be at a location and time convenient for you. Participation is completely voluntary and there will be no type of remuneration for participation.

All information will be kept confidential and will be kept for 3 years in a password protected Georgetown Box service. I will use this information to help write my thesis, with the hope that it could be used to improve policy to be beneficial towards migrants such as yourself in the future.

Any questions that you have you can contact me at my cell phone +54 911 6899-5505 or the personnel at Georgetown University at +1 202 687 1506. Also if you know of any other migrants who are Senegalese, can speak English or Spanish and are interested, please pass my phone number to them or share with me their contact information if they agree to participate.

Thank you for your time,

Miles Johnson

Hola, me llamo Miles Johnson y soy un estudiante de la Universidad de San Martín y de la Universidad de Georgetown en los Estados Unidos. Estoy haciendo un proyecto de investigación para escribir mi tesis de maestría sobre el rol de las asociaciones en la vida diaria de los migrantes senegaleses aquí en Buenos Aires. Mi enfoque es la ARSA (Asociación de Residentes Senegaleses) and la cofradía Murīd .

Quiero saber como estas asociaciones influyen su vida y que tipo de interacciones tienen con ellas. Para mi investigación, estaré entrevistando participantes que estén dispuestos para dar una entrevista y son Murīd , Tijāniyya, o que no tengan afiliación religiosa, también los que sí o no forman parte de la ARSA. Si está usted dispuesto a dar una entrevista, la entrevista será grabada en mi celular, será una hora, y estaré en un lugar y hora que este conveniente para usted. La participación es totalmente voluntaria y no habrá remuneración para su participación.

Toda la información será mantenido confidencial y guardada por tres años en un Box service de Georgetown bajo contraseña. Yo voy a usar esta información para escribir mi tesis, con la esperanza de que en el futuro podría ser útil en mejorar las políticas migratorias para beneficiar migrantes como usted.

Para cualquier pregunta, me puedes contactar a mi celular, numero +54 911 6899-5505 o con personal de la universidad de Georgetown University, numero +1 202 687 1506. También, si usted conoce otro migrante que sea senegalés, que pueda hablar inglés o español, y que esté interesado en participar, por favor que le pase mi numero de telefono o con su permiso, comparte conmigo su información.

Gracias por su tiempo,

Miles Johnson

Appendix C: Consent Forms

You are invited to participate in a research study titled “**The Role of Associations on the Daily Life of Senegalese Immigrants in Buenos Aires**”. This study is being conducted by graduate student Miles Johnson for his thesis for the masters program, International Development Policy. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary at all times. You can choose not to participate at all or to leave the study at any time. Regardless of your decision, there will be no effect on your relationship with the researcher or any other consequences. You are being asked to take part in this study because you are Senegalese, over 18 years old, speak and understand English or Spanish proficiently, and live in the city of Buenos Aires.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take part in 1 interview about the role of associations in your daily life, especially about your use and the aid provided by the Asociacion de Residentes Senegaleses and the Murīd brotherhood. This interview should last around 45 minutes to an hour. The interview will take place at a time and location that is convenient for you and of your discretion. The researcher will take notes during the interview and your interview will be audio recorded by the interviewers phone.

What you say during this interview will remain anonymous and cannot be linked to you in any way. No identifying information about you will be collected at any point during the study, and your recording will be identified only with a random number. If you say something during the interview that may identify you, it will be removed during the transcription of the interview.

Once your interview is over, there will be no way to withdraw your responses from the study because the interview will contain no identifying information. Study data will be kept in a digital

format in a password protected digital storage space. Access to digital data will be protected by password. Only Miles Johnson will have access to the data. Once the study has concluded, the data will be deleted and any hard copy forms will be shredded.

There are no risks associated with this study. While you will not experience any direct benefits from participation, information collected in this study may benefit others in the future by helping to potentially devise policies that enable immigrants to receive maximum benefits from formal associations and change the interaction between state and immigrant association. If you have any questions regarding the interview or this research project in general, please contact the principal investigator, Miles Johnson, at or via email at mbjmiles@gmail.com or his faculty advisor, Mark Rom at romm@georgetown.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Georgetown University IRB at +1 (202) 687-1506 or irboard@georgetown.edu. By taking part in this interview, you are indicating your consent to participate in this study.

Miles Johnson

Graduate student of International Development Policy: University of San Martin and

Georgetown University

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Se le ha solicitado a Ud. participar en un estudio de investigación. Antes de firmar este acuerdo, el investigador debe hablarle sobre (i) los objetivos, los procedimientos y la duración de la investigación; (ii) cualquier procedimiento que sea de carácter experimental; (iii) cualquier riesgo, malestar o beneficio de la investigación razonablemente previsible; (iv) cualquier procedimiento o tratamiento alternativo potencialmente beneficioso; y (v) cómo se mantendrá la privacidad.

Donde sea pertinente, el investigador, además, debe hablarle sobre (i) cualquier indemnización o tratamiento médico disponibles en caso de lesión; (ii) la posibilidad de riesgos imprevistos; (iii) las circunstancias en las cuales el investigador puede suspender su participación; (vi) cuándo se le hará saber sobre nuevos descubrimientos que puedan afectar su buena disposición para participar; y (vii) cuántas personas habrá en el estudio.

Si Ud. está de acuerdo en participar, se le debe entregar una copia firmada de este documento además de un resumen escrito sobre la investigación. En caso de tener preguntas, usted puede ponerse en contacto con Miles Johnson, llamando al teléfono No. +549116899-5505 en cualquier momento.

En caso de tener preguntas sobre sus derechos como sujeto de la investigación o sobre cómo proceder en el caso de una lesión, usted puede ponerse en contacto con el personal de la Universidad de Georgetown teléfono No. +1 202 687 1506. Su participación en esta investigación es voluntaria y no se le podrá penalizar ni perderá sus beneficios si rehúsa a participar o si decide retirarse del estudio.

Su firma en este documento significa que tanto el estudio de investigación como la anterior información le han sido descritos oralmente, y que usted voluntariamente expresa su acuerdo en participar.

Firma del participante

Fecha

Firma del testigo

Fecha

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you agree, the investigator must tell you about (i) the purposes, procedures, and duration of the research; (ii) any procedures which are experimental; (iii) any reasonably foreseeable risks, discomforts, and benefits of the research; (iv) any potentially beneficial alternative procedures or treatments; and (v) how confidentiality will be maintained.

Where applicable, the investigator must also tell you about (i) any available compensation or medical treatment if injury occurs; (ii) the possibility of unforeseeable risks; (iii) circumstances when the investigator may halt your participation; (iv) any added costs to you; (v) what happens if you decide to stop participating; (vi) when you will be told about new findings which may affect your willingness to participate; and (vii) how many people will be in the study. If you agree to participate, you must be given a signed copy of this document and a written summary of the research. You may contact Miles Johnson at +549116899-5505 any time you have questions about the research.

You may contact personnel at the University of Georgetown at +1 202 687 1506 if you have questions about your rights as a research subject or what to do if you are injured. Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you will not be penalized or lose benefits if you refuse to participate or decide to stop. Signing this document means that the research study, including the above information, has been described to you orally, and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

signature of participant

date

signature of witness

date

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