

Family Prestige as Old-Age Security: Evidence from Rural Senegal

Jean-Luc Demonsant¹

Job Market Paper
(October 2007)

ABSTRACT

This paper aims at studying the self-enforcing family contract between a migrant son and his ageing father who remained in the village and expects to receive support. In 2004, a household survey conducted in the Senegal River Valley was especially designed to account for the complex socio-political structure of the local institutions. The empirical results suggest that the social rank of the family within the village is a key to the enforcement mechanisms at work. Indeed, while belonging to a prestigious family lowers the probability of migrating, it raises the probability of frequently remitting to the patriarch. Conversely, sons from historically disadvantaged groups are more likely to both migrate and cut ties with their village of origin, including their family. Additional qualitative evidence is rather suggestive that despite their economic success, low status migrants keep being stigmatized in their village of origin. Hence, inheriting his father's dominant position in the village represents a strong incentive for a migrant son from a high-ranked family to remit. Under such circumstances, patriarchs from prestigious families only, can actually rely on their migrating sons as old-age security.

Keywords: Migration; Old-Age Support; Caste; Senegal River Valley

JEL Classification: O12; D12; J62

¹ TSE-ARQADE Université des Sciences Sociales, Manufacture des Tabacs - Aile J-J L. 21, allées de Brienne 31000 Toulouse, France; jean-luc.demonsant@univ-tlse1.fr. During my research in Senegal, I benefited from financial supports from both the ministry in charge of Higher Education (*Aires Culturelles* grant, 2001) and the ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Lavoisier* grant, 2003-04). First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Jean-Paul Azam for his continuous support and insightful suggestions. I also benefited from fruitful discussions with Flore Gubert, Robert H. Bates, Jean Schmitz and Issiaka-P. L. Lalèyê. I am very thankful to many seminar participants, and more specifically to: ARQADE colleagues for providing very useful feedbacks, François-Charles Wolff for the efficient econometric tips, and Philippe Antoine for allowing me realizing how sensitive interdisciplinary approaches are. Last but not least, I am extremely grateful to Monica Ramirez, Anthony Stenton and Ahmed Tritah for doing a great job in tidying up stylistic mistakes and making relevant comments on previous versions of this paper. I am solely responsible for all remaining omissions or errors.

INTRODUCTION

Few years ago, working on old-age support in Africa sounded rather strange. This is mainly due to two preconceived ideas: first the continent is not concerned with ageing issues, second the myth of the '*vieux sage*' still pervasive, and has prevented thorough scientific studies on their actual situation. In 1994, the World Bank sent a warning about global ageing: Africa was no exception as the share of people over 60 year old was forecasted to double in the next 25 years. On the other hand, respect towards elders is believed to be working well in Africa, though there is a greater awareness about cases of elderly abuse. Miguel (2003), for instance, analyzed the extreme situation in which elderly widows of Tanzania were either killed or expelled in times of hardships. In a poor agrarian economy, food scarcity tends to favor most productive members over young children or elders. Whereas children will soon become productive, elders do not seem to be in a position to reciprocate. Nonetheless the livelihoods of the elderly mainly rely on the support of the kinship group, and more likely the children in most developing countries.

From an economist point of view, there is an informal familial contract between the migrant adult son and his father. Though not denied to play a role, love and sense of duty alone do not provide credible enough incentives for the contract to be self-enforcing. This paper aims at finding out what enforcement mechanisms exist to make them abide by this informal contract despite geographical distance. Why do migrants send substantial parts of their earnings to their ageing parents who stayed behind in the village? What are the young migrant incentives not to renege on such contract? What do older parents actually have to offer in return? Based on an original survey conducted in 2004, around Matam, Senegal, empirical evidence indicate that within the traditional village society both migration and remittance decisions of a son are linked with the social ranking of his father.²

In their seminal paper Coate and Ravallion (1993) develop a theoretical model of solidarity networks in a village economy, formalizing Fafchamps (1992), giving the rationale behind

² I will indeed focus on father to son relationship as Haalpulaar is a patrilineal society.

the sustainability of the reciprocity without any commitment. Facing the same ex-ante idiosyncratic risks, villagers help each other today, keeping in mind that it could well be the other way around tomorrow. In comparison, economic theory does not provide a unified framework regarding the enforcement mechanisms in the case of children providing support to their elderly parents. Indeed, the reciprocity vanishes, as old parents are not in a position to reciprocate, yet some commitment exists. Laferrère and Wolff (2006) present a great variety of both theoretical and empirical microeconomic models on family transfers in general and the “children as old-age security” model in particular. In reality many mechanisms come into play at the same time, depending on the physical constraints as well as the cultural context.

Ex-ante, economies of scales at the household level suggest that ageing parents should co-reside with their children, and indeed, intergenerational coresidence is quite common in developing countries.³ However, low-income rural areas are risky environments, and once this feature is taken into account, sending a family member away in order to provide support for the family in times of hardships seems a much better response. The ‘new economics of migration’ lead by Oded Stark (1990) views migration as one of family strategies to cope with a risky environment. This has been well documented in theoretical and empirical literature on the economics of migration and remittances.⁴

Nonetheless, there remains an unsolved rationality problem: if the gains are obvious from the family viewpoint, it is less clear when turning to migrant’s point of view. Indeed, why wouldn’t he simply renege on the familial arrangements? The issue becomes even more striking when turning to the motivations of a young migrant providing support to his family left behind who primarily consists of his old parents. They do not seem to be in a position to assist him in return as the mutual insurance contract stipulates, in case of unemployment for instance. A classical motive invoked is the “strategic bequest motive”⁵: children compete for parents’ inheritance. In this view, parents can threaten their children not to bequest them anything if they had not being supportive. Accordingly, young children remit to secure their bequest. In Botswana, Lucas and Stark (1985) found that wealthier families

³ In fact this was the case anywhere, when no reliable pension systems existed.

⁴ See Docquier and Rapoport (2006) for a recent review.

⁵ As Bernheim, Schleifer and Summers (1985) named it

in terms of cattle ownership receive more remittances. Hoddinott (1994) tested this model on rural Kenyan data, and found remittances responsive to bequeathable lands. What happens then in a changing society when land or cattle ownership are no longer sought after? Furthermore, in most countries, inheritance division is settled by law. Under such circumstances, this mechanism doesn't seem credible anymore.

Since my first field trip in rural Senegal, I have had the opportunity to witness the influence that the former caste system still has in the decision-making process of any villager in both public and private spheres. However economic studies in Africa have usually put the emphasis on ethnic diversity, rarely incorporating social divisions within ethnic groups. Rephrasing Christopher Udry, I decided "mixing methods" confronting economic theory to other social sciences and direct observations from repeated fieldworks in Senegal, and among the Senegalese migrants here in France.⁶ Having control over the whole data collection process from the questionnaire design to the choice of trusted enumerators, gives precise knowledge of the reliability of such sensitive variables as caste status.

After briefly describing the cultural context of the fieldwork, i.e. the Haalpulaaren of the Senegal River Middle Valley, I will describe the theoretical framework placing the role of family prestige as a central enforcement device for the old-age support arrangements. The next section exposes the empirical strategy - from the data collection process to the econometric specification - developed to highlight the relevance of this hypothesis. After presenting the results based on the household survey, along with additional qualitative evidence that support this scenario, I conclude with some policy implications on migration and development.

⁶ Talk downloaded from his personal webpage : <http://www.econ.yale.edu/~cru2/pdf/conversations.pdf>

MATAM AND THE HAALPULAAR SOCIETY

Constraints from the physical environment on one hand, and the cultural context of the area on the other hand, make the “strategic bequest motive” not relevant. I collected data on remittance behavior in the Senegal middle valley where migration has long been considered a better strategy than working in the local agriculture sector. In this context, the return of ‘physical’ bequests has become close to insignificant for a migrant son.

A non-profitable environment

Less than a century ago, the middle valley was relatively prosperous and therefore economically attractive. The keys to success were the navigability of the river, the cattle breeding and fishing activities along with the existence of two harvest seasons in October and in March. Rain-fed agriculture in the semi-arid highlands combined with the flood-fed culture by the river banks allowed such prosperity.

Several factors contributed to render any agricultural activity very risky and almost not profitable at all. Since World War II, the region has a long tradition of migration: repeated droughts in the seventies and eighties accelerated the phenomenon. To curb rural exodus, the French during colonization, and the state after independence, both invested in huge irrigation projects, and dams. Irrigation provides year-around crops and the dam is planned to provide electricity to the three neighboring countries, i.e. Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. However the results are mitigated as the power supply objective is not compatible with natural floods cycles. Moreover, the cost of oil and maintenance for motor-pumps, along with the cost of fertilizers and seeds make it profitable for rich farmers or efficient peasant cooperatives only. The zone is also very remote, and the national road linking Saint-Louis to Matam has never been seriously maintained so that the local production cannot easily reach the urban sectors. For the vast majority of the peasants of the valley it remains impossible to make a self-sustainable business out of it. As a consequence, nowadays, there are many schemes and water supplies that are badly-kept. In fact, conventional wisdom

admits that it is rather difficult to make a decent living out of agricultural activities in the valley. In the meantime, migrants engage in conspicuous consumption either for religious celebrations or in housing, after just a few years abroad.

The cultural context: a pervading caste system

Some historical background on the Haalpulaaren, who represent the majority of the population of the area, formerly known as Fuuta Tooro, can be found in Wane (1969). The Haalpulaaren are responsible for spreading Islam all over West-Africa, and are highly respected for that in the country and the sub-region. They are rigorous Muslim followers. This gives an additional argument against the “strategic bequest motive”, as Islam has very precise inheritance sharing rules: a son gets one share and a daughter gets half a share.

At the political level, if the administrative system is inherited from the French one, villages have remained in the hand of the traditional chiefs. Descending from religious or political figureheads of the Fuuta is the most sought-after social recognition. Another very important aspect of the family prestige is determined by which social category the family belongs to. Traditional Haalpulaar society, like many Sahelian societies, (see Tamari, 1991) is based on a division into three main social categories:

1. The ‘free born’ is the largest yet the most heterogeneous group as both nobles and commoners can be found.
2. The artisans and musicians who are free but economically dependent on their patrons. The most representative ones being the *griots* (in French): the praise-singers.
3. The (descendants of) slaves, who despite the fact that both Islam and the 1905 law have abolished slavery, continue to suffer from many discriminations.

To get a better idea about the complexity of this system, go to table A.1 in the appendix where more detailed explanations are given. In reality, the use of the term ‘caste’ is rather controversial, as it usually refers to the different artisan social sub-categories: *les castés* in French. In this paper, I refer to ‘the caste system’ as the whole stratified social organization.

It is clear that all these social categories were not fixed, but that they evolved as some commoners have strategically been conferred a title of nobility as a reward for good services, or new warriors recruited among former slaves. It is important to keep in mind that these categories corresponded to a genuine need for a specific job allocation during the former era. The official abolition of slavery along with the emergence of the modern market economy render this classification outdated on practical grounds. Likewise, artisans do not necessarily work in the branch of their group's specialization, though both the artisans and the descendants of slaves still suffer from discriminations nowadays. They mainly consist of marriage constraints, as well as denied access to land, and to political and religious leadership.⁷ Indeed at the political level, if the administrative system is absolutely similar to the French one, villages have remained in the hand of the traditional chiefs. It is really striking how relevant this classification remains in contemporary Haalpulaar culture.

In this traditional view, your birth determines your personality (cf. Wane 1969 who depicts each caste with a specific personal trait). It is said for instance that one should not trust an artisan because he may just be trying to seduce oneself in order to receive gifts. Not knowing the whole genealogy of one's family is also a problem: it is the case that former slaves in particular have lost track of their ancestors... The role played by this caste system appears in everyday life, as there is a set of implicit rules that each group must follow, driven by 'the sense of honor' which is specific to the nobles. There are many ways for higher status individuals to distinguish themselves from lower status ones.⁸ At the core of the noble's code of honor, is the importance of always being in the position of giving and never asking. It is by giving and being publicly generous that the noble will be able to demonstrate his worthiness. When belonging to such families it is an unbearable shame to have economic difficulties. There are great pressures to display generous behavior. Maintaining a high social status is expensive as it means giving to their griots and many clients (former slaves, artisans...). The size of the clientele represents the power of the family. Along with the warm-glow effect of giving, griots directly raise the utility of the

⁷ See for instance Sy (2002).

⁸ Bodily posture, where one sits and how one addresses others in public meetings are manners of displaying one's rank. Typically, although not specific to Haalpulaar society, lengthy traditional greetings are relevant to the social status of protagonists. One aspect is the repetition of the family name, which is called 'yetode' in Pulaar and literally means 'the name that honours'.

giver by advertising his generosity, which directly improves his reputation⁹. Aristocratic families still ought to give to their former clientele during baptisms, weddings and religious events.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: 'THE SYMBOLIC *BARAKA* MOTIVE'

In a stratified society ruled as a gerontocracy, an old man may benefit from an advantageous position in local politics if and only if he belongs to a high ranked family. Few families have a say in choosing the village leader, and even less have a chance to become one. Hence, the family name becomes a valuable symbolic bequest for such important families. At the same time, it is well known that nowadays, many former slaves, or bards take advantage of their position too, and like to remind their former masters of their duty to provide them with gifts. Thus respecting this social pressure to give requires high income. Migration appears as a solution to finance these conspicuous expenses.

Conducting focus groups and individual interviews, I was told many times during my investigations - both in France among the Diaspora, and in Senegal - that a very strong motivation for remitting is to earn blessings and prayers for felicity. Here religion and traditional beliefs interfere. Indeed there are some mystical practices in Haalpulaar, Wolof and Serer traditions, consisting in calling the migrant to come back home (Sylla & M'Baye 1991). There are legends about migrants coming back home in a rush and losing memory of how this happened and then going insane. This is said to be adapted as a last resort, as retaliation for an unreliable son. Repeatedly the importance of being near your dying parents as they will transmit the *baraka* of the whole dynasty through their last blessing, was raised.¹⁰ Indeed a dying old man will call his beloved sons, and give them his final blessing: the *duhahu* - in Pulaar - which transmits *barka* - in Pulaar. This Islamic word could roughly be translated as Allah's blessing, and it has strong influence throughout the whole Islamic world. It is important to bear in mind that it is strongly linked to good luck, wealth, happiness, health, fertility, and social success. *Baraka* can be acquired hereditarily

⁹ See Azam (1995) for an interesting economic interpretation of such norm.

¹⁰ The importance of the parent's last blessing is not specific to Islam, though. It is mentioned in many parts of the Bible, and particularly in the Genesis. Think of Jacob's story: he valued so much his father's blessing that he managed to get blessed instead of his brother Esau.

through genealogical link to saints, or their contacts (see Schmitz, 2000), but also by a strict observance of the five pillars of Islam. It can be transmitted by blessings. Being old and a well known good Muslim puts oneself in a good position to have some.

Since living abroad makes it rather difficult to be physically near your dying parents, sending money appears as one practical alternative. Of course, the value of this *baraka* in the eyes of the migrant strongly depends on the notability of his patriarch and consequently on the status of the family. Obviously belonging to a prestigious family yields considerable returns in terms of prospects for marriage and political position in the village. While on migration, he could also benefit from the status of the family to rely on migrants from the same village. Besides, migrants from the same village usually live in neighboring rooms in workers' hostels - *foyers de travailleurs* in French - reconstituting the village society. It has been repeatedly suggested that this is a way of reproducing hierarchic village society (e.g. see Ba 1996: 207). In other geographic areas, Whitehouse (1994) describes *baraka* as one motive for returning migrants among Soninke in Mali. Again, remitting can be a way for the migrant to pay tribute to the village stratified socio-political structure.

Back to the economic literature, Lucas and Stark (1985) had mentioned that reputation concerns play an important role too. In their view, the migrant may remit 'to enhance prestige or political influence' for the days when he will return. Taking good care of one's parents is a hallmark of reliability. This could for example be an incentive for migrants seeking wives within the community. The loss of prestige incurred by defaulting sons could also prevent their return for retirement, which is central to many African migrants. Last but not least, the desire to be buried at home is an additional motive to maintain the social status of the family. It is essential for many Muslim migrants, and in particular those from the Senegal River Valley. The main concern is more a deep attachment to homeland, than religious grounds. Many migrants associations were indeed created in order to collect money for the repatriation of dead bodies.¹¹

Aware that it may not be the only mechanism at work, I will emphasize here the role of social status. In a patriarchal stratified society. Within the family the patriarch is the

¹¹ See Petit (2002) in Marseille, France.

decision-maker. At the village level, there are two groups of families: the nobles and the others (non-nobles). Only the patriarchs from noble families can accede to influential positions. To deserve their advantageous dominant position, the nobles must pay non-nobles substantial gifts in monetary terms. The non-nobles who benefit from these transfers must in return renounce basic human rights: not choose a spouse among the nobles, give up their political ambitions, and admit the superiority of the nobles in community decision-making. There is an implicit family contract between the patriarch and his adult sons. The patriarch sends his most promising sons on migration, expecting them to remit. The motivation of migrant sons is to obtain the father's position on their return. In this view, remittances should be observed for high ranked migrants only. The migration of the lower status migrants relates to other motivations: trading monetary gifts for social mobility. They will loosen ties with their community, and make their new life abroad, taking advantage of the anonymity of city life.

Let us now turn to the data collected to test this scenario.

DATA

*The Survey*¹²

Of course, the link between the migrant and his relatives who stayed behind is central to understanding remittance behavior. This is not an issue in my study, since I focused on the case of sons remitting to their ageing father. So, in the survey sample, all migrants have in common that their father is alive and lives in the village. Hence, remittances are interpreted as old-age support from the migrant sons.

The survey was conducted just before the rainy season from April to June 2004, when weather conditions are particularly tough. It is a time of drought and food scarcity as the granaries are empty. The good thing is that since peasants are preparing the fields for the

¹² I must thank Ousmane Ba, Moussa Ly, Abou Sow, Abou Thiam and Hamath Thiam for doing a great job in data collection, as well as providing useful assistance in the survey design.

rain cultivations, all members of the household who are away, but within reach, come back to give a hand.

The survey covers 149 patriarchs over six villages randomly chosen around Matam.¹³ Three are located by the Senegal river, in the so-called *waalo* region, the other three are located approximately 10 km away from the river, in the *jeeri* region, one of them being right by the highway (the others being 4km away on a dirt track). *Waalo* villages are isolated (at least) 3 months a year during the rainy season as roads become unfit for vehicles, which can only be reached by pirogues (2-3 hour instead of 20 minute ride during the dry season). *Jeeri* villagers do not own irrigated lands which are located near the river, but some noble families do own *waalo* lands by the river.

It is an exhaustive survey, as all the men of the selected villages who met chosen criteria were selected. The criteria are that they must be born before 1939, and that their eldest living son should have been born before 1979. Information was gathered at three levels:

- The patriarch level: Information on both his social status and his living conditions were gathered. To measure social status information on the family background were gathered such as which caste it belongs to, the family tenure in the village, the political and religious role played by the patriarch and his father. Then much emphasis was put on where the patriarch gets support from, but also on his wealth (housing, fields, cattle, belongings...), health, nutrition, education, past migrations and economic activities.
- The household level: I define a household as a unit of consumption and income sharing (as sometimes several households can co-reside in the same compound), which can be made of several nuclear family units.¹⁴ I collected very precise family links between household members, and some basic information on each one, such as: education level, economic activity, sources of revenue...
- Finally, information on each child has been collected. Special attention was given to

¹³ *Jeeri* villages are: Thiambe, Galoyabe Toucouleur, Hombo. *Waalo* villages are: Bow, Thiemping and Thially Souballo. All villagers and especially village chiefs must be gratefully acknowledged for their cooperation and kind hospitality. I would also like to thank Ousmane Diouf, and Bocar Ba's family in Matam for their logistic assistance and gracious hospitality.

¹⁴ The *Pulaar* word is *foyre* (plural: *poye*).

children living outside the household, for which I gathered indirect information with spouses, mother, siblings, or the father. The main focus was on remittances sent by migrant sons to their old father, and the rest of the family. Information on news and visits given to the family were also collected.

Much effort was put on making sure to have at hand the most precise and reliable information on the social status of the families. For double-checking purposes, the status of the family was gathered twice. First, I obtained the information directly by asking the patriarch, then indirectly, on a second round, asking informants (mainly the village chief). As it can be a very sensitive subject, the question was asked towards the end of the survey, in order to prevent the patriarch from being offended or upset, or even from refusing to be surveyed. The question was asked among a series of question on historical background of the family, to make it sound like the family 'social origin'. For the same reasons, I dared to ask the village chief about the status of my surveyed families, on a second round in September, so that we had already got to know each other better.

Descriptive Statistics

A detailed table of descriptive statistics for the initial sample, the migrants and the remitters is shown in table A.2 in the appendix.

Social composition of the sample

Only the sons of the patriarchs above 16 years old were considered as potential old-age support providers. There are 470 adult sons in the initial sample. 45% are on migration. Among the migrants, 62% regularly remit. It is noteworthy that only 66% of the migrants belong to 'free-born' families, whereas they represent 71% of the remitters. Table 1 displays the caste composition of the different samples studied:

Table 1: Caste composition of samples of interest

Categories	Patriarchs (%) (N=147)	All sons (N=470)	Migrants (%) (N=213)	Remitters (%) (N=133)
<i>Free Men</i>	70.1	72.1	65.7	70.7
<i>Artisans</i>	12.9	11.7	16.9	15.8
<i>Slaves</i>	17.0	16.2	17.4	13.5

As mentioned earlier, the largest caste is the ‘free men’ category, which encompasses aristocrats as well as commoners. To differentiate them, the list of notables was collected from our informants. As *le conseil des sages* is supposed to be composed of the elderly men of the village, barely 40% of them were designed as ‘notables’. They represent the actual and only decision-makers in the village.

Migrants’ destinations

The destination distribution is very similar to previous studies of Haalpulaar migration: mainly domestic, the international migration is mainly African, and very few have left the continent. 44% of all migrations are domestic migrations, or migrations to the neighboring countries, i.e. Mauritania, Mali, Gambia and Guinea. Dakar concentrates 77% of these ‘domestic’ (Senegal or neighboring countries) destinations. However, the capital city is often just a temporary stop on the way to further destinations. 38% of migrants went to another African country. Most of African migration (73%) is directed towards Central Africa: Gabon, Congo, and Cameroon. There is a long tradition of Senegal River Valley migration in this area. There are accounts of ‘*diamantaires*’ who made quite a good fortune in these countries¹⁵. Côte d’Ivoire has also been a frequent choice of destination, but since 2000 because of the political instability, and xenophobic practices many have fled.

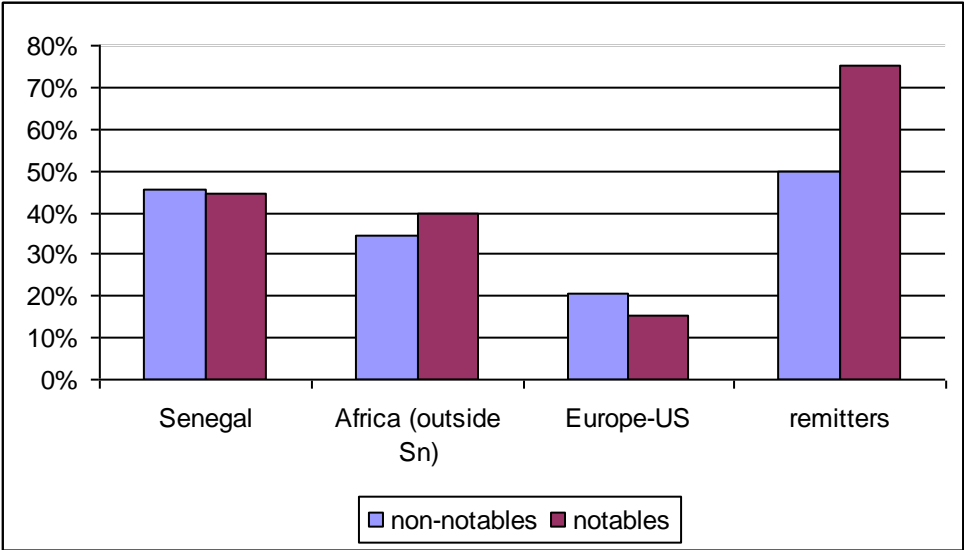
In the end, only 18% of the migrants left the African continent (they represent 39 migrants): not surprisingly, most went to France (26 migrants). The USA is the second destination (9 migrants) a few migrants being in Spain or Italy (5). The US is an increasingly attractive

¹⁵. Starting in the mid-fifties in Sierra-Leone, near both sides of the Congo rivers by the sixties, they have reached Angola and Zambia, striving to avoid being expelled, Bredeloup (1994).

destination, but this is still a recent phenomenon, so that the network is still weak, not to mention the cost of migration. During my field investigations, I met returning or visiting migrants from Germany and Denmark, and also surprisingly distant destinations like Australia and even China! Even if this is not statistically significant, it indicates that diversification of destinations is used to circumvent tough migration policies.

It is important to bear in mind that information about migrants is only second hand. I assumed the best information I could collect about them would be from the mother or the wife of the migrant. I also asked the brothers and the father if necessary. As a consequence, one common criticism to my findings is that low-rank migrants are simply not in a position to remit as they could not benefit from the network. This is rather difficult to find out from the data at hand. At the same time, a recent popular saying circulates in the villages: “Migrations are blind to castes”. Indeed, among migrants outside the continent (mainly Europe-US), where expected earnings are higher, the proportion of non-notables is greater than the one of notables, and yet the proportion of notables is higher than non-notables to regularly remit. Figure 1 gives a more detailed picture of this phenomenon:

Figure 1: Migrants’ distribution of destinations, and propensity to remit according to their notability



Empirical Strategy

The descriptive statistics evidence found in the previous section need to be checked ‘all things being equal’. Hence, let us now turn to the regression results.

Since only those who have migrated can make transfers, a two-step Heckman model generalized for probit models was used to take into account the selection bias.¹⁶ The question is: do the ones with a higher probability of being on migration have a higher or lower probability of remitting? As pointed out in the appendix, no such effects are found: both decisions to migrate and then to remit are not correlated, which implies that these two regressions can be studied separately.

Furthermore, since there are migrants from the same families (up to 7 brothers), the correlation within the family was accounted for using a robust estimator of standard errors with family clusters.

Regressions with different model specifications are displayed to show the robustness of the results, putting much effort on the specification of the family social status and wealth.

RESULTS

Probability of being on migration

Several model specifications are displayed in table 2: the first two columns aim at identifying the relevant wealth variables, while the last ones identify the social status effect. In the last column, only significant variables are kept in order to avoid multi-collinearity problems. The main results are consistent throughout different model specifications.

¹⁶ Sometimes called ‘Heckit’ model, with STATA it is the ‘*heckprob*’ procedure.

Table 2: Probability of being on migration (marginal effects)

<i>On migration</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>(adult son)</i>				
age	0.065 (2.94)***	0.073 (3.69)***	0.074 (3.61)***	0.072 (3.54)***
(age) ²	-0.001 (-2.51)**	-0.001 (-2.98)***	-0.001 (-2.97)***	-0.001 (-2.90)***
Birth order	-0.003 (-0.13)			
=1 if married	0.02 (0.32)			
=1 if has ever been to formal school	-0.033 (0.48)			
<i>(patriarch)</i>				
Age	0.009 (1.23)	0.006 (1.14)	0.005 (0.9)	0.006 (1.16)
Size of the household	0.008 (0.72)			
Years spent on migration	0.008 (2.39)**	0.008 (3.00)***	0.008 (2.76)***	0.008 (2.91)***
=1 if receives a pension	0.025 (0.28)			
=1 if has received bequeathable wealth	0.013 (0.67)			
=1 if landless		-0.118 (-1.02)		
=1 if doesn't possess any cattle		-0.157 (-2.21)**	-0.177 (-2.55)**	-0.173 (-2.47)**
=1 if belongs to the "free man" caste			-0.163 (-2.50)**	-0.142 (-2.11)**
=1 if belongs to a family with political power			0.089 (1.42)	

Observations: 470; 147 clusters (families)

Robust z statistics in parentheses; * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%

Nb: villages dummies are included in the regression, but not displayed (non significant)

Overall this model correctly predicts 74% of migrating behavior. In contrast to previous studies, the number of migrating brothers appears not to be significant. In reality, there are two opposite effects: a network and a saturation effect. Having a brother can facilitate migration: older brothers can finance their cadets, creating shifts of migrants.¹⁷ On the other hand, when there are already migrants in the family, the patriarch may require other sons to stay to help him manage the household. Here it seems that both effects are neutralized.

The age of the father has no significant effect, but the older the son is, the higher the probability of being on migration, though with a decreasing effect, as the significantly negative squared age variable indicates.

The fact that the having attended formal schooling is not significant is relevant to the fact that migrants do not need to hold literacy skills for the job they will find in migration. One must keep in mind that most migrants work in the informal sector, in Dakar and Africa, and in unskilled jobs in industrialized countries (mainly in the hotel or catering trades).

Turning to variables capturing wealth of the family, they all seem to be not significant, but two. Firstly, the fact of owning cattle increases the chance of being on migration. Second, the fact that his father spent many years on migration increases the chance of the son migrating. There are here 2 intertwined positive effects: a wealth and a network effect. All migrations are costly but especially for distant destinations: fares, bribing to get documents, or to get across the border safely. It usually represents far more than what a basic rural household can afford. Then there are some high costs of accommodation: even in Dakar renting a room has become very expensive.... Of patriarchs who have been on migration around 55% receive a pension. However the ones who did not get a formal job usually managed to invest in productive activities financing their own sons' migration and settlement. Consequently, it appears that sons of economically better-off families have a higher chance to migrate. Along with this wealth effect, there is a network effect: fathers who have been on migration have been able to build networks in their destination and acquire accordingly easy entry on some job markets. The best illustration of this is that many first migrants of this area started working in the hotel trade in Dakar, many at the

¹⁷ In French this is called 'noria' (see Ba 1996: 30). This can no longer hold for destinations which have become very difficult to reach such as Europe...

airport, then in France. Or even working as boy or cook for French colonizers who then took them to France to work for them. This result is in line with other studies.

Finally, sons of families belonging to the higher castes are less inclined to migrate. This result contradicts Gubert's (2000) findings among Soninke: she found that only aristocrats migrate. It is necessary to turn to migrants remitting behavior to understand if migrants from high and low status have the same behavior once in migration.

Probability of remitting

Among the migrants, I turn now to their probability of frequently remitting. This model has a good predictive power as overall nearly 77% of migrants are properly predicted to remit or not. Table 3 displays five different model specifications.

Table 3: Probability of remitting among migrants (marginal effects are displayed)

<i>Remitting</i>	1	2	3	4	5
<i>(adult son)</i>					
Ages	-0.004 (0.55)	-0.003 (0.55)	-0.004 (0.59)	-0.005 (0.71)	-0.005 (0.81)
Borders	0.002 (0.07)				
=1 if has ever been to formal school	-0.223 (2.46)**	-0.244 (2.55)**	-0.244 (2.55)**	-0.192 (2.07)**	-0.198 (2.17)**
Years spent on migration	0.017 (1.90)*	0.015 (1.63)	0.016 (1.68)*	0.016 (1.76)*	0.018 (2.00)**
=1 if lives outside the African continent	0.361 (3.48)***	0.371 (3.84)***	0.372 (3.90)***	0.378 (4.34)***	0.377 (4.20)***
# of brothers on migration	-0.004 (0.13)				
=1 if one spouse lives with the patriarch	0.16 (1.72)*	0.146 (1.68)*	0.147 (1.69)*	0.194 (2.22)**	0.181 (2.05)**
<i>(patriarch)</i>					
Age	0.02 (2.10)**	0.02 (2.60)***	0.02 (2.60)***	0.018 (2.45)**	0.017 (2.36)**
Household size	0.001 (0.06)				
Years spent on migration	0.006 (1.54)				
=1 if has received bequeathable wealth	-0.018 (0.61)				
=1 if landless		-0.288 (1.93)*	-0.291 (1.95)*	-0.28 (1.90)*	-0.281 (1.94)*
=1 if doesn't possess any cattle		-0.026 (0.25)			
=1 if belongs to Family of higher caste				0.111 (1.11)	
=1 if belongs to family with local power				0.234 (2.68)***	0.257 (2.99)***

Observations: 213; 102 clusters (families)

Robust z statistics in parentheses * significant at 10%; ** significant at 5%; *** significant at 1%

Nb: villages dummies are included in the regression, but not displayed here (non significant)

First, the age of the migrant appears not to be significant for his remitting behavior. More surprisingly, the size of the patriarch household has no impact on his probability of remitting.

Some expected 'wealth effects' are found: data on the migrant's earnings were not available, but there are some proxies. The time spent on migration appears to be

significantly positive, which reflects the idea that it usually takes time for a migrant to obtain a secure earning, i.e. regular wages. Similarly, living in a developed country positively affects his probability of remitting. This is obviously linked to the higher earnings available there: he earns more than his own living expenses and can accordingly send back a part of his earning.

Naturally, having a spouse who remained in the father's household increases significantly the probability of remitting. When turning to the strategic bequest motive, results similar to Hoddinott (1994) are found: if the father owns land, it increases the probability of remitting.

Surprisingly, no monitoring effects are found here: having brothers living in the same place of migration has no significant effect on his remitting behaviour. More surprising still, the number of years of completed formal schooling decreases the probability of remitting. This is not due to sons studying abroad, as only seven migrants are actually finishing their studies, which represents less than 3% of migrants. As shown in the appendix table A-2, the average years of schooling is very low: around two. But still, few years of formal schooling could be enough to acquire such basic skills as reading and writing, and lead to better job opportunity. This could in turn give the migrant more incentive to settle in the host destination, and cut ties with the hierarchical village society.

Finally, central to the main point of this article: belonging to a politically powerful family in the village makes the migrant more likely to remit. Indeed, this status dummy variable is strongly significant at a 1% level. Here what seems to be central is the fact that the patriarch plays a significant role in the village belonging to the circle of influential notables. Indeed, belonging to the free born category is not precise enough, as this is a heterogeneous category. For instance, newly arrived free born families may not have regained a dominant position in the village¹⁸. On the contrary, a few families from the artisans or former slaves groups may have acquired a political position being linked with a very prestigious family.

¹⁸. It is the case of many Mauritanian refugees (from the 1989 unrest) who despite being Fulbe have rarely gained a position as notable in their new Senegalese settlement.

Other Supportive Evidence

Unfortunately the lack of social status variables in other larger statistical surveys makes it impossible to compare this result with other studies so far. As a complement to the empirical evidence some other qualitative pieces of evidence which confirm the hypothesis made in this paper: some are listed here.¹⁹

To gain respectability in the village the most efficient way is to contribute to the building of a mosque. There are several anecdotes I heard during my stay in the valley, about the boycott of mosques built by migrant slaves. The Imam who is necessarily a noble, simply refused to lead the prayers... I heard a similar story about a well built by a successful slave that the nobles boycotted, opting for the more distant well. These anecdotes show that it is rather inefficient for a slave to invest in order to raise his respectability in the village: he will always be considered as a slave and accordingly will be reminded to keep his low-profile rank. The only way to get rid of these social stigmas is to migrate. In anonymous cities or foreign countries, he will more easily merge into society and be free in his acts.

It is noticeable that during my repeated visits at different workers hostels, I met very few descendants of slaves or artisans²⁰. This is consistent, with reported cases of continuing discrimination against slaves on migration. The pattern is that slaves are excluded from any decision-making position in the migrant's association. Ba (1996) reports such a case in Cameroon (Ba 1996: 238).

In Dakar, many people with Haalpulaaren names who do not speak Pulaar happen to be of slave or artisan origins. They seem to be the product of this melting pot.

In many previous studies on migration among the Haalpulaaren it has been mentioned that the desire to escape from rigid social constraints were among the main motives for migration. As they usually refer to the position of younger brothers willing to escape the tyranny of older brothers (see Platteau 2000), it could easily be extended to lower status

¹⁹ And others in French in Demonsant (2007).

²⁰ except the descendants of slaves of the village chief's family, which would tend to prove that former slaves of important families have some kind of respectability too.

migrants. The study of Delaunay (1984) goes in the same direction as my results. He finds that any type of caste can be found among the migrants from the Senegal valley, but recognizes that the former slaves are more likely to settle definitively, whereas the nobles go on temporary migration returning to the village, and sending remittances.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

These empirical findings suggest that migration is available to any social category, but for different aims: it can either be seen as an individual decision to escape from a poor social position with dire prospects in the village or, conversely, as a family decision to maintain its dominant local position. As a consequence, it is obvious that the first type of migrants will not be interested in investing in the development of the village but will benefit from the urban melting pot to get rid of their social stigmas. The good side of this is that they are factors of change as they move from a network-based to a modern market economy. In order to prevent rural exodus and urban concentrations, an efficient policy would be to invest in intensive consciousness-raising campaigns to get rid of the obsolete caste system. This will probably take time and be hard to implement as I found out that this was still a highly taboo subject in contemporary Senegal.

Central to political debates in France, republican values of racial integration and assimilation may differently appeal to both types of migrants previously described. France's model of integration aims to assimilate immigrants by instilling French cultural values. As a result, keeping strong ties with the country of origin is not well received. Accordingly, any attempt to assimilate the migrants of noble origins will fail. Indeed, they see themselves as temporarily migrant and have sound plans to return to the village. When returning they will genuinely keep silent their shameful subordinate occupations²¹ while abroad and turn into powerful notables. Alternatively, the migrants from lower social categories will display strong motivations to fit in the host society.

The aim of this study was primarily to draw attention to the local institutions when trying to understand migration in a non-western environment. Economists and econometricians too

²¹ I can witness that it is absolutely taboo to ask a visiting migrant about his job in the host country (or in the capital city). As one might guess such work was not prestigious, it is generally accepted to keep it silent... or to tell it only to a total foreigner away from other villagers!

often draw conclusions from surveys that were lacking the social context. As this was a limited study, it would be interesting to pursue on a broader range. The recent World Bank book *Culture and Public Action* (Rao & Walton, 2006) sends a good signal that things are changing and that more and more cooperation between economists and anthropologists will be expected in the near future.

REFERENCES

- Azam, Jean-Paul. 1995. "L'Etat Autogéré en Afrique." *Revue d'Economie du Développement* 4: 3-19.
- Azam, Jean-Paul and Flore Gubert. 2006. "Migrants' Remittances and the Household in Africa: A Review of Evidence." *Journal of African Economies* 15 (AERC sup. 2): 426-62.
- Ba, Cheikh Oumar. 1996. "Dynamiques Migratoires et Changements Sociaux au Sein des Relations de Genre et des Rapports Jeunes/Vieux des Originaires de la Moyenne Vallée du Fleuve Sénégal." PhD thesis, Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar.
- Bernheim, B. Douglas, Andrei Schleifer and Lawrence H. Summers. 1985. "The Strategic Bequest Motive." *Journal of Political Economy* 93:1045-76.
- Coate, Stephen and Martin Ravallion. 1993. "Reciprocity without Commitment: Characterization and Performance of Informal Insurance Arrangements." *Journal of Development Economics* 40: 1-24.
- Delaunay, Daniel. 1984. *De la Captivité à l'Exil : Histoire et Démographie des Migrations Paysannes dans la Moyenne Vallée du Fleuve Sénégal*. Paris: ORSTOM.
- Demonsant, Jean-Luc. 2008. "Un Système Informel de Retraite Basé sur le Prestige des Notables au Village: Etude de cas à Matam (Sénégal)" in *Les relations Intergénérationnelles en Afrique : Approche Plurielle*, edited by P. Antoine, Paris : CEPED.
- Demonsant, Jean-Luc. 2002. "Old-Age Support Arrangements in Developing Countries: A Critical Review and New Directions." *Mimeo*.

- Fafchamps, Marcel. 1992. "Solidarity Networks in Preindustrial Societies: Rational Peasants with a Moral Economy". *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 41 (1), 147-174.
- Gubert, Flore. 2000. "*Migration et Gestion Collective des Risques. L'exemple de la région de Kayes.*" Ph.D. dissertation in Economics, Université de Clermont-Ferrand I.
- Hoddinott, John. 1992. "Rotten Kids or Manipulative Parents: Are Children Old-Age Security in Western Kenya?" *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 40:545-65.
- Laferrère, Anne and François-Charles Wolff. 2006. "Microeconomic Model of Family Transfers." In *Handbook of the Economics of Giving, Altruism and Reciprocity, Vol. 2*, edited by S.C. Kolm and J.M. Ythier, ch11. Amsterdam: North-Holland/Elsevier.
- Lucas, Robert and Oded Stark. 1985. "Motivations to Remit. Evidence from Botswana." *Journal of Political Economy* 93 (5), 901-918.
- Luke, Nancy and Kaivan Munshi. 2005. "Women as Agents of Change: Female Income, Social Affiliation and Household Decisions in South India." Mimeo, Brown University.
- Ly, Boubakar. 1966. "Honneur et Valeurs Morales dans les Sociétés Ouolofs et Pular." Ph.D. dissertation, Université de Paris.
- Miguel, Edward. 2005. "Poverty and Witch Killing." *Review of Economic Studies* 72(4):1153-72
- Platteau, Jean-Philippe. 2000. *Institutions, Social Norms and Economic Development*. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publisher.
- Rao, Vijayendra and Michael Walton, eds. 2006. *Culture and Public Action*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Rosenzweig, Mark R. 1988. "Risk, Implicit Contracts and the Family in Rural Areas of Low-Income Countries." *Economic Journal* 98, 393: 1148-70.
- Stark, Oded. 1991. *The Migration of Labor*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Schmitz, Jean. 2000. "Le Souffle de la Parenté. Mariage et Transmission de la Baraka chez les Clercs Musulmans de la Vallée du Sénégal." *L'Homme* 154-155: 241-77.

Wane, Yaya. 1969. *Les Toucouleurs du Fouta Toro: Stratification Sociale et Structure Familiale*. Dakar: IFAN.

Whitehouse, Bruce. 1994. "Centripetal Forces: The Construction of Hometown Loyalty in a West African Migrant-Sending Community". Presentation at the « *PPA Annual Meeting* » in Boston, MA.

APPENDIX

Table A-1. The Haalpulaar complex caste system (translated from Wane 1969: 33).²²

Main Social Categories	Strata (sub-division)	'Caste' sub-divisions		Occupation and Title
Rimbe (free men)	Rimbe ardiibe (free)	Toorobbe	Lawakoobe or fileteebe	Temporal power
	Rimbe huunybe (courtiers)	Sebbe	Jangube or ardiibe diine	Spiritual power : ceerno
			Miiskineebe	Free men, farmers: demoowo
			Worgankoobe	Former monarchs: farba ceddo
			Kolyaabe	Koly's soldiers : jagaraf
			Mbonaabe	Local variants of kolyaabe
			Awgalnaabe	
			Helgalagel, etc.	
			Jaawambe	Courtiers and advisers: sooma
	Subalbe	Fishermen: jaaltaabe		
Nyeenybe (artisans and 'griots')	Fecciram golle (artisans)	Maabube sanyoobe	Weavers: jarno	
		Wayilbe	Baleebe	Blacksmiths: farba baylo
			Sayakoobe	Jewelers: farba baylo
		Sakkeebe	Alawbe	Shoemakers: foosiri
			Wodeebe or garankoobe	Cobblers
		Lawbe	Laade	Pirogue builders: kalmbaan
			Worworbe (bobi)	Kitchen tools' makers: maalaw
	Buurnaabe	Potters and ceramicists		
	'Griots': Naalankoobe (entertainers) or nyaagotoobe (praise singers)	Wambaabe	Traditional guitar players	
		Maabube suudu Paate	Singers	
		Maabube jaawambe		
		Lawbe gumbala (kontimpaaji)		
		Awlube	Griots genealogists : farba gawlo	
Jyaabe (slaves)	Soottiibe (freed slaves)	Maccube	Free but servile	
	Halfaabe (dependants)	Maccube	Slaves and servants: jagodiin	

²² Yaya Wane voluntarily excluded the stock breeders (in Pulaar: *Pullo* in singular / *Fulbe* in plural) from the Haalpulaar caste system.

Table A-2 : Descriptive statistics for the initial sample, the migrants and the remitters.

		Initial Adult Sons (N=470)				Migrants (N=213)				Remitters (N=133)			
		Mean	Std.	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std.	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std.	Min.	Max.
SON	On migration	45%				62%							
	Remitting												
	Age	30.8	8.4	17	61	33.2	8.1	17	61	34.5	8.5	18	61
	Age when leaving the household					27.4	8.3	3	50	27.8	8.3	11	50
	Birth order	2.6	1.6	1	8	2.4	1.5	1	8	2.3	1.6	1	8
	Formal schooling	36%				33%				27%			
	Years of (formal) schooling	2.4	3.7	0	17	2.4	4.2	0	17	1.8	3.6	0	13
	Years on migration					6.1	5.7	0	25	6.9	5.8	0	25
	In migration for over 3 years					54%				66%			
	Residing in a developed country					18%				26%			
	Spouse (of the son) left in the household					41%				52%			
	# of brothers already on migration	1.0	1.3	0	7	1.0	1.3	0	6	1.0	1.4	0	5
	# of brothers remitting					1.3	1.5	0	6	1.6	1.7	0	5
# of brothers who don't remit					0.8	1.0	0	4	0.4	0.9	0	4	
FAMILY	Age of the patriarch	73.9	6.3	66	91	74.9	6.4	66	91	76.2	6.3	66	91
	Age of the patriarch when son migrated					69.1	8.4	42	89	69.5	8.4	42	89
	Number of dependants of the patriarch	7.6	3.8	2	17	7.4	3.7	2	16	7.0	3.7	2	16
	Family in region of migration					33%				32%			
	# of years the father went on migration	10.6	12.9	0	47	13.9	14.2	0	47	15.0	15.1	0	47
	Family of higher castes	72%				66%				71%			
	Local power of the lineage	42%				46%				56%			
VILLAGES	Valuable agric land on bequest	58%				61%				56%			
	Thiempeng	31%				28%				31%			
	Bow	18%				15%				15%			
	Thially	5%				5%				3%			
	Galoyabe	14%				15%				16%			
	Hombo	16%				18%				18%			
	Thiambe	16%				18%				17%			

Table A-3: Probability of remitting conditional on being on migration: “Heckit” regression results

1st step: On migration : cf. (5) table 2

2nd step : Remit (conditional on being on migration)

<i>(adult son)</i>	
Age	-0.008 (1.31)
=1 if has ever been to formal school	-0.185 (1.93)*
Years spent on migration	0.018 (1.94)*
=1 if lives outside the African continent	0.342 (3.42)***
=1 if one spouse lives with the patriarch	0.177 (2.02)**
<i>(patriarch)</i>	
Age	0.016 (2.01)**
=1 if landless	-0.278 (1.96)*
=1 if belongs to Family of higher caste	0.256 (2.85)***
Rho	-0.282

Wald test $H_0:(\rho = 0)$ $\chi^2(1) = 0.85$ $p\text{-value} = 0.3561$

Presenting only the most suited specification