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West African Migrants in Spain: Human Factors and Emerging International Policy

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Abstract: Migration is as old as the human experience. Current globalization renders that experience almost inevitable for some groups. Yet, the recent trend in migration from West Africa into Western Europe is noteworthy. For the student of African Diaspora culture, today's migration constitutes the third most significant outpouring from the African continent in modern history. Of this trend, the most specific focus of this paper is the flow of Senegalese citizens into Spain. The more detailed comparative portion of this study forms part of a larger project that analyzes the outcome of migration from three different sending nations—Ghana, Guinea, and Senegal into the Southern European receiving nations of Italy, Malta and Spain. In many ways the Senegalese immigrant experience is similar to that of migrants from other parts of Western Africa and indeed the whole of the developing world. There are a variety of reasons why they choose to leave their countries, yet, the overwhelming cause of their trek is an economic one. Air travel is a significant mode of travel, but perilous boat travel is the only option for some. The migrants themselves are not the only actors involved in the choice to take the life-altering journey. Family, community, smugglers and others play a decisive role in the process. On the more formal, official side of the issue the governments of both the sending nations and of the receiving nation, Spain, have altered their approaches to the situation. The question becomes are the migrants, the sending countries and the receiving countries always better off because of the migration?

Keywords: African Diaspora, Aging Population, Brain Drain, Brawn Drain, Borders – Land, Sea, Air, Human Rights, Human Trafficking, Interdiction, Labor Migration, Low Birth Rate, National Security, Outmigration vs Inmigration, Points of Departure; Points of Entry, Push and Pull Factors, Remittances, Sending Country vs Receiving Country, Social Costs of Migration, Third Wave Migration, Undocumented Migrants

Introduction [1]

THERE IS A growing movement among young people who choose to leave the African continent and settle in other parts of the world. It is an exodus that constitutes the third most significant migration of the region's population in modern times. The first migration occurred from the late fifteenth century and stretched well into the nineteenth century as Africa's people were brought as slaves primarily to the Americas and to Western Europe. Later and because of post-colonial ties, sizable populations of Africa's elite made the choice to live mainly in the European countries of their former colonizers, becoming the second wave of mass migration. Today, a different pattern is emerging. It promises to have profound, long-term effects on Africa as well as the new settlement countries.

The current study has a two-fold purpose: a) to begin an examination of the implications of the current migration for the African Diaspora, and b) to begin to address the crisis-level of one aspect of the migration—that of the tragedies at sea that occur because of the outflow of humanity from the region. Furthermore, by focusing on one receiving country—Spain and one sending country—Senegal, I am able to present my preliminary findings regarding African Diaspora studies and the dangerous current circumstances. A future, more encompassing study looks at a broader pattern of migration from West Africa into Europe.

From a research point of view, this migration represents a situation in flux with facts that change even as words are put to paper. While no precise beginning date can be established for this modern history, the year 2004 appears to be a significant one. In 2003 there were thousands of African migrants in Spain, most of whom were Moroccan. As of 2006, Gambia alone had over 20,000 undocumented migrants in Spain. (OECD International Migration Outlook 2006; World Migration Report 2005). In 2006, it appeared that the migration numbers were about to explode and rival those of Eastern Europeans, Latin Americans and North Africans in Spain. By the end of 2008, if one can believe the

[1] I gratefully acknowledge the European Union Research Center (EURC) at George Washington University for seed money related to interviews for this article as well as the second more detailed article related to undocumented West Africans in Europe. In addition, colleagues, most particularly Professor Chouki El Hamel, at the 4th Biennial Association for the Study of the Worldwide Diaspora (ASWAD) in Barbados contributed valuable comments to an oral presentation of my preliminary findings.

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analyses by government officials, the tide of migrants has been stemmed, and the appropriate agencies are addressing the issues that begat such a wave of migration in the first place. However, upon closer scrutiny and with the inclusion of the perspective of the migrants themselves, a different picture could emerge.[2]

Methodology

The current article is both an overview and the beginning of an analysis of the limitations related to African migration now in progress.[3] I draw from general sources related to migration trends, including the growing body of literature on recent West African migration in Europe. Given the unfolding nature of this movement, newspaper articles play a larger role than usual in my research. It is the daily news that chronicles events as they happen. Furthermore, my direct contact with migrants as well as with others involved in migration is still unfolding; only the initial interactions with participants are presented here as empirical research.[4] Space limitations do now allow me to present the full range of questions and answers between me and interviewees. Suffice it to say that for both the migrants and those who interact with them, there were questions regarding the immediate situation as well as future, long-range plans. Finally, because of the vast array of countries and actors involved in West African migration to Europe, I found it best to limit the specific scope of this essay to one portion of my research—that which focuses on Senegalese migration to Spain.

General Overview of Migration

Migration, or the mass movement of people from one place to another, is not a phenomenon new to this group of West Africans. Instead, it is as old as humanity itself. Even in the West African region that is the focus of this paper, there have been large movements of people from their place of birth to areas new to them—be it Fulani herdsmen looking for new grazing areas for their cattle; the internal migration of country folk looking for a new start in urban areas; war-weary citizens fleeing the prospect of certain death if they remained in their native region, or the newly educated elites choosing the country of their colonizer over their now-independent nation. Finally, there is one of the greatest forced migration experiences in all of history that started some 500 years ago when Africans left the shores of the continent and settled in the New World. What all of these seemingly disparate movements of people have in common is the very fact of their permanent uprooting that in turn translated into a new beginning, transfiguring both their homelands as well as the areas where the immigrants moved. Can one expect the same for the current situation of young people who are leaving Western Africa in search of a better life in Europe?

Whatever one's position on the issue of whether or not this current migration is a naturally occurring phenomenon, two undeniable facts stand out: a) the boat travel represents a high-risk experience for the migrants; and b) this entire migration constitutes a significant moment in Diaspora history. The implications are vast for this third wave of modern migration because social, political, economic and cultural landscapes might change at a more rapid pace than would occur had the migration not transpired. Finally and despite recent pronouncements that the flow of human beings out of Africa in this perilous mode of transportation has been arrested, there continues to be significant enough movement of the continent's people to warrant further study, policy initiatives, and action.

A considerable amount of research already exists on the impact of "brain drain" from developing nations into developed countries that have the capacity to absorb the talented, educated elite. Less research and policy focus is available for the "brawn drain" flowing from these same countries.[5] Given that manual laborers also possess at least the potential for certain skills and expertise, their absence from their countries of origin should receive equal, if not more, study than their educated counterparts. This is particularly true when vast amounts of young people leave a country.

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[2] See Ambassador Navarro as well as Roca in the bibliography. Throughout the present article, all figures for migration represent official reporting of immigrants. If one were to count those who escape detection, the numbers would increase exponentially.

[3] The current paper is part of a two-tiered study. By necessity, this first article is an introductory one. The second article provides greater in-depth, comparative analysis.

[4] Some of the interviews were formal question and answer sessions in person, on the phone, or via email. Other interview sessions were less formal conversations with migrants selling their wares on the streets of Madrid after I was denied access to recent detainees as described below. All of the immigrant interviewees were men. The future, more extensive stage of this project will allow me to look at more settled communities where women play a major role and are more accessible to me.

[5] The term "brawn drain" is often associated with the talents of athletes who seek better opportunities in more industrialized nations. Here, however, the focus is on the manual laborer who finds little chance to advance economically and socially at home. OECD International Migration Outlook provides statistics on the brain drain, most notably as it relates to doctors. The number of university-level educators is noteworthy as well, although there is little statistical data on this. There is even less dis-aggregation of the data by country for manual laborers. Furthermore, the uneducated, by default represent an overwhelming percentage, albeit not the only makeup of this group because educated persons have the potential to work in many more labor sectors than their uneducated counterparts.

General Overview of Migration Policies

Article 13 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights states that: "Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state" and "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country." (http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html) This UN Declaration penned in 1948 grew out of concern for post World War II Europeans facing persecution at home and abroad. It is doubtful that the framers of the original UN declaration foresaw the huge outpouring of humanity from developing countries into more industrialized nations that is the pattern of much of today's migration.[6] Yet, today, a huge portion of the world's migration is due to this economic pattern of labor migration.

With respect to the African Diaspora the past situation was often characterized by an outflow of migrants from their native countries into the former colonizing country. Hence, few are surprised to see an established community of francophone African immigrants in France, lusophone immigrants in Portugal, or Anglophone Africans in Britain, now with the third generation of those families and their European offspring. (Messina, 2006) What informs this paper are: motivations that push the person from a familiar environment and pull them to the uncertainty at sea and later the mere possibility of work in the Iberian peninsula; policies that are put into place in order to grapple with the situation; actions and outcomes that one gleans from both the sending nations as well as the receiving nations.

What can be said about the search for a policy initiative when all those involved possess a priori knowledge of both the root of the problem as well as its solution?[7] It is obvious to all actors involved that the primary reason for this migration is the pursuit of new economic opportunities. It is equally clear that, if one concern is to keep would-be migrants in the home country, a major corrective is to create opportunities in the originating country. Despite the obvious, however, getting from awareness of the issue to actual remedies is a much more difficult task than it seems to be in a theoretical setting.

Migrant Scenarios

The West African undocumented workers enter Spain through a variety of ways. Many aspirants make the journey by plane. Of those, the majority enter with valid papers for short-term stays, but then remain in the country. Particularly noteworthy are students who overstay their visas, professionals on short-term contracts who do not return at the close of the contract period, and tourists who choose to remain beyond the period alloted for such travel.[8] Not surprisingly, this bespeaks a class difference among the migrants. Those who are fortunate enough to get higher education, travel for leisure or take advantage of their expertise in a foreign country, need not be extremely wealthy individuals. Nevertheless, the very fact of their ability to move in such circles of higher education, leisure and world-class professionals places them in a rarified world of elites. The majority of the sea migrants are not a part of the elite, and they pay a double price for their travel. Not only is the journey a more perilous one, but also, the cumulative payment for travel may be greater than airfare due to the amount of money paid to smugglers. Finally,the amount of time that the would-be-migrant spends waiting for the opportune moment for the clandestine journey increases the financial burden. (Fortu, 2005; Winter, 2005)

Of those who brave the waters, the general points of entry, like the general points of departure are shifting locales that are determined by a number of factors. For example, a few years ago, Morocco was the preferred country of departure for most West Africans.[9] Regardless of their country of origin, the migrants would make their way to Morocco by hitching rides and by walking. Morocco's northernmost coast is the closest possible African terrain to the European continent. From there, the two European territories of Ceuta and Melilla are a stone's throw away. With the closing of that first route by authorities, other avenues temporarily opened up. Among them are the western African areas *away from* the major cities of Conakry in Guinea, Bissau in Guinea-Bissau, Banjul in Gambia, the Casamance region of Senegal, Nouakchott in Mauritania and even Praia on the island nation of Cape Verde. Increasingly the would-be-migrants leave from small fishing villages rather than large port areas because there is a greater possibility of

[6] Although intraregional migration continues as the dominant pattern in Europe, the inflow of people from the poorer countries grows at a study pace. Furthermore, even though there is a larger influx of people from Maghreb nations and from Latin America than there is from West Africa, the very fact of the exodus of so many West Africans warrants study. See OECD'S *International Immigration Outlook* for both 2006 and 2007 for details.

[7] For a succinct overview of the issue, see the African Union's summary "African Common Position on Migration" as well as the article by Chou (2006), both as cited in the bibliography.

[8] I am grateful to two Senegalese men whom I shall call Seringue and Mamadou for their candid interviews regarding their migration experiences. In addition, Mr. Omar Diatta, head of an NGO in Barcelona Spain provided much of the information for the on-the-ground observations.

[9] This is true for the Maghreb region as well as for eastern Africa; however, the current study chooses to focus on West Africa.

escaping detection in rural areas. Some current choice ports of entry are the Canary Islands off the coast of Western Africa and any where the boat touches the shore in Andalusia. For this twenty-first century wave of migrants, Spain is now a nation of choice—at least for the initial entry into Europe—just as Malta and Italy were a few years ago (Frontex, 2006; allafrica.com: "Tiny Malta," 2006). At first glance, these three countries appear as peculiar migration choices for West African migrants. Unlike Britain, France, Portugal and the Netherlands, these countries have very few historic ties with Africa South of the Sahara and hence little relationship with the West Africans who are the subject of this article.[10] The migration into these three countries is undoubtedly because they have been easier to enter than other European nations. In all three countries, geographic proximity to the continent of Africa plays a major role. Regarding Spain, the choice may also have to do with immigration policies that, in the immediate past, were more lax than in other Western European countries. This inattention to immigration issues is beginning to shift at the insistence of the European Union. It is further possible that this peninsula country offers a more welcoming social environment, and that in turn transforms Spain into a desired point of entry.[11]

Migrants often do not act as lone agents in their decision to migrate. Several actors come into play when considering the process of migration. From the sending end, it is necessary to consider the family members, the village or community, and the smugglers. On the official side of the equation are the governments and formal organizations that exercise some level of policy decisions over their citizens. Equally important are the actors on the receiving end of migration. The actors here consist of governments and formal organizations. They also include individuals like new neighbors, co-workers, and other average citizens who have an opinion if not always a direct voice in the matter. Finally, for the receiving countries, the media is a key player, but the role of the media in the sending countries remains largely untapped.

Not surprisingly a primary motivation for the young migrants is the vision of a better life for themselves and their loved ones.[12] Add to that the proven fact that this internet generation—even in poor rural areas—receives a constant barrage of images that create an illusion of how well the rest of the world lives.[13] How many young people are likely to prefer to remain at home where even the most basic of last century's necessities like running water and electricity elude them? Even with the relative comfort of the bosom of the family, few cherish the thought of the status quo. Regardless of global periods of economic prosperity or crisis, the young calculate that life is better "over there." By any means possible, these young people will seek a better life for themselves and for their families.

Some families weigh carefully their options for deciding which family member is the most likely candidate to successfully cross the waters and find employment "on the other side". The community is also an actor in the push factor. Fueled by the global social disease of "keeping up with the Joneses", neighboring families feel compelled to obtain the same material possessions or social upward mobility as their neighbors. The smugglers figure prominently in the migration experience. Without them, it would be impossible for the poor to make the trek. In the past, this journey often occurred aboard fishing boats that are not seaworthy crafts meant to cross international waters. Many fishermen were eager to earn a little more money from transporting the migrants. Increasingly however, the actors are professional smugglers, often referred to as "the mafia," who are unscrupulous and uncaring about their human cargo. These include drug smugglers who can have a higher success rate of getting their "shipment" to its destination.[14]

[10] Spain has historic ties with Equatorial Guinea dating back to its purchase of the region from Portugal as an eighteenth century colony. Italy has late nineteenth century through twentieth century ties with the horn of Africa. North of the Sahara Desert the long-term relationships with Spain and Italy are much greater. No matter one's scholarly interests, there is no long-term, historical connection between Spain, Italy, and Malta and the present-day West African countries that comprise the larger focus of this research. Therefore, the increasing population of West Africans in these countries constitutes a shift in historical affiliations.

[11] For the issue of Spain's more welcoming environment, see studies by Bledsoe, Sow (2008) and Sow (2007) as well as direct interviews with Sow that have helped to convince me of the shades of difference between the reception of immigrants in various European countries. Regarding Spain's lax approaches to migration, see Frontex as cited in the bibliography.

[12] Individual interviews with street vendors in Madrid inform this statement. "Daoud," "Mamadou-2" and "Ibrahima" (not the real names of the interviewees) each spoke of the need to bring pride to their families.

[13] Whether through television, boot-leg or legitimate videos, and occasional opportunities to surf the net, no poor, rural youth are completely cut off from images of world materiality and excess in the 21st century.

[14] One example of unsuccessful smuggling that also points to unscrupulous behavior occurred in August, 2007 when more than 90 young people were stranded by their smugglers off the coast of Mauritania with their money taken and their lives in peril. They were duped by the smugglers who left them to fend for themselves after the smugglers apparently realized that officials were closing in on them. These were some of the relatively lucky ones who did not reach their destination. Far too many died at sea and continue to die, either because they are abandoned by their smugglers or because their rickety boat crafts are no match for the rough waters of the open sea. See the Ceesay (2007) article in the bibliography. Spanish newspapers and television do an admirable job of documenting each individual crisis as it unfolds.

A Spanish Case Study

The new migration of West Africans to Europe, like all migrations, is a multi-level phenomenon involving more than the would-be immigrants and those who work to get them to their desired destination. Implicit in the process of this migration are also the nations themselves from which the young people leave as well as the countries to where they flock. Spain becomes an excellent case study for the migration of West Africa's young to Europe. It is currently a desired location by young people—if not as a final destination, at least as a foothold onto European soil. Further, the West African nation of Senegal offers an increasingly rich vein of data for analysis. Of note is the evolution of the formal reactions to the migration by government entities and other actors from both Spain and Senegal. Migration from Senegal appears to occur in a more organized fashion, but also responses to migration appear to be more forthcoming, including from President Wade with his characteristic outspokenness on the broader subject of developing nations and developed ones.[15] Because of these factors, a greater degree of research already exists on migration from Senegal than on the majority of other sending nations.

Of the recent West African immigrant groups in Spain, the Senegalese appear to enjoy more success once immigrants reach the peninsula. Some of this is due to the longevity of this national group in Spain. Dissimilar to countries like Ghana and Guinea, Senegal has a longer record of activity in Spain, particularly in the Catalonia region. Hence, upon arrival into the country, there is a greater possibility that the new immigrant can receive the basic necessities of shelter, food, and clothing as well as help in finding employment. This self-help strategy does not always work, but it nevertheless shows a higher scale of organization than what many other West Africans enjoy in Spain. [16]

Spanish reaction to this migration has been mixed and depends on a number of factors, among them: time frame under consideration, political party affiliation, region of the country, and to some degree, age of the person. When it became obvious that so many people from the developing world were entering the country illegally, Spain began to forcibly attempt to keep them out. Initially, the strategies used by Spain were predictable draconian maneuvers that served more to exacerbate the problem than to remedy it. Rather than address the issues of why these young people leave the African continent and arrive on its shores, Spain threatened the governments of those countries with cutting off development aid. Now with the backing of its EU partners, Spain exercises a more diplomatic, soft-power approach that involves more dialogue with African countries. (Ros, et al, 2007; Chou, 2006) Due to a number of combined factors, Spain's current migration strategy is arguably one of the most progressive in Western Europe. Whether it is from the top-down—government to grass roots organizations—or vice versa, Spain is providing a model for other EU nations seeking to grapple with a situation that has its deepest roots in the first modern colonial contacts between the continents of Africa and Europe.

When the Socialist Worker's Party of Spain (PSOE) came to power in 2004, it began to usher in a number of reforms that countered some of the actions of the previous government led by the more conservative Popular Party. Among those changes is a reexamination of immigration policies that has culminated so far in the formation of a cabinet-level position on immigration. As evidence of the mood of the average Spanish citizen on matters of immigration, the approval rating of President Zapatero is at 91 per cent for his immigration policies. In contrast, Mariano Rajoy and his Popular Party appear to have lost considerable ground. Not only did Rajoy lose in his bid to replace Zapatero as president, he also failed in his attempt to bring about austere penalties for undocumented immigrants.[17] Spaniards of the hip hop generation often embrace the cause of fellow young people—if not as their own cause at least as part of the perception that the young are "victims of society."[18] Predictably, the moods of the Canary Islands as well as Andalusia both offer a different picture when it comes to immigration. These regions are the first to receive the undocumented migrants, and reception for these West Africans is less welcoming there.[19]

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[15] Wade freely shares his consistent opinion that, because developed nations had a hand in the underdevelopment of struggling nations, it is only fitting that they work towards solving the development problems of the latter. In addition, Wade is one of the original architects of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) that advocates, among other initiatives, the partnering of developed nations with developing ones. See Wade (2008) in bibliography.

[16] The Senegalese NGO, like that of many such NGOs that came into existence in recent years, serves the clear objective of helping to integrate those who recently arrived into Spanish culture and society. In addition, the Association of Senegalese in Catalonia recently celebrated twenty years of official existence. For some observers, however, the presence of Senegalese in that region is as old as thirty years. I am grateful to Mr. Omar Diatta, Director of the Senegalese NGO for facilitating information on the Association.

[17] Examples of the proposals were segregated schooling and signed integration contracts that would have the immigrant pledge to speak only the Spanish language. See Garea, (June 11, 2008 and July 7, 2008) in bibliography.

[18] Not only do Spanish young people express their acceptance through work in NGOs and other social outlets, they partner with the migrants in the production of videos and other media viewed by the young. See Mensah (2007) in the bibliography as one example of this cooperative spirit among the young.

[19] See, for example, the coverage of migration in the daily newspapers like *La opinión* (Canary Islands) and *El diario de Sevilla*.

Within the EU there are a number of intergovernmental agencies, NGOs and other entities involved in the question of undocumented migrants. Of particular importance to this article are both the ministerial coalition that produced the Rabat Declaration and the organization known as Frontex. Within Spain itself, both the Spanish Red Cross and the National Guard play decisive roles in the matter of undocumented migrants.

The 2006 Rabat Declaration is an initiative by the European Union that managed to get from the EU, the Middle East, and Africa to sign an agreement related to joint cooperation. Twenty-six of these are African countries and twenty-one countries are European. The stated aim is for the two regions to work together for the mutual benefit of both continents. In addition to agreeing that legal migration is the only type of migration acceptable, the action plan of the declaration seeks ways to stem the flow of illegal migration by addressing its root causes. The EU has provided an increasing number of financial resources to bolster the effort, and it appears to adopt a multi-pronged approach to undocumented migration. While the EU clearly supports Frontex and its coercive approach to halting migration, with the Rabat Declaration it is also attempting a soft power approach of development initiatives (Chou, 2006).

Frontex, on the other hand gets physically involved in removing undocumented migrants or preventing them from reaching any part of Europe. It has become very adept at stemming the flow of migrants—apparently by any means necessary. The organization is in the forefront of the effort to detain would-be migrants in holding camps before they can reach the European cities where they want to work. For example, they now repel these young people in national waters that are sovereign to African countries like Senegal, Mauritania, and Gambia.[20] Their self-touted successes in their first year of operations netted them an increased operational budget in subsequent years. (www.frontex.europa.eu/)

For the migrants who are not forced back into African waters by Frontex, the Spanish Red Cross is often the first to respond to their arrival on Spanish soil, especially if there is a disaster at sea. Theirs is a rescue mission, plucking survivors out of the water and hauling the drowned to make-shift morgues. It is a scene that is played out constantly on Spanish television as well as other media. Behind the scenes and once the basic human needs of the migrants are assured, the National Guard takes possession of the captured migrants. The migrants are then detained in temporary holding facilities. If the authorities can determine their country of origin, they are returned to that country. If no home country can be established, they are taken to Madrid where they are further held for a period of two months. Unless there is a revelation of their home country, the former sea migrants are released onto the streets of Madrid. Some without orientation fend for themselves by any means necessary, while others with a bit of knowledge of the migration process find informal or formal support outlets to help with their integration into the new country.[21]

In contrast to the efforts of receiving nations and regions, the governments and other non-family actors from the sending countries in Africa have had less direct say in the matter of their young people leaving in high numbers. This is starting to change from the highest levels to the level of non-state actors with less political and economic sway. For example, there is now a joint effort between the EU and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that attempts to tackle the reasons for migration. This effort in turn is tied to the Millennium Development Goals as put forth by the UN. Initiatives are beginning to emanate from the continent's ruling governmental body—the African Union—and an overarching policy agreement among African countries that grapples with the crisis is gradually coming to fruition. One telling action is the creation of an official position known as a Migration Officer with concrete duties related to all manner of migration, including the flow of undocumented Africans out of the continent.[22]

As an example of both regional cooperation and the legal course of action from sending nations, there is the attempt by the Bundung Magistrates' Court in Gambia to clamp down on undocumented migrants. The court decided to imprison then deport undocumented Senegalese migrants poised to make the international sea journey. In addition, NGOs and other non-governmental entities are starting to address the situation. Of particular note are actions taken by the NGO West African Women's Association (WAWA)

[20] This legal situation became questionable to NGOs like the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), and now Frontex is working with African governments in joint efforts to keep the young people on African soil. Specifically through their operations called Hera I and Hera II, Frontex states in one example that: "Frontex experts and Spanish authorities identified 100% of the illegal migrants. 6076 of those illegal migrants were returned to their countries of origin backed by the Spanish authorities; the countries of origin were mainly Morocco, Senegal, Mali, Gambia and Guinea. Through the information collected during the interviews, it was possible to detain several facilitators mainly in Senegal and to avoid the departure of more than one thousand people". (Frontex, 2006) Hera I and Hera II are named after the Greek goddess who was both the wife and sister of Zeus. The naming pattern is similar to other operations that Frontex undertakes.

[21] Again Mr. Diatta's observations proved invaluable to this portion of my research.

[22] Other actions include the multilateral "African Common Position on Migration and Development" and the "Workshop on Inter-state and Intra-Regional Cooperation on Migration Management." Visit www.africa-union.org for greater detail.

which is beginning to wrestle with the social costs of this migration.[23]

Not only at the official level are discussions and actions starting to take place, but also at the level of the family unit there are second thoughts on sending their young people where they are placed in harm's way. One example of direct family involvement is evident in the Thiaroye-Sur-Mer group in Senegal which was formed out of concern for loved-ones who were dying at sea. Despite the lure of supposed wealth and social betterment among their migrant offspring, these rival co-wives engaged the help of local *mourides* (Islamic leaders) in order to combat the perception among their children that getting to Europe was easy and that life on another continent was paradise. (IRIN, 2006) One can only expect more such grassroot initiatives and at a higher level of regional organization.

Conclusion

Modern African migration is in its third wave of existence that, up until 2004, went undetected by the majority of scholars who focus on the Diaspora. With such large groups of young people leaving home, the African Diaspora now has a new face that points toward untraditional African settlement in Europe. The Americas are not imaginable without the five-hundred year contribution of the African Diaspora. Will the same hold true for Western Europe when this third wave of migration is looked at retrospectively decades from now?

Equally significant is the difficult journey made by the undocumented migrants from their native countries to their new home. On the one hand, migration specialists remind us that the movement of people from one region to another is a basic fact of human existence. On the other hand, when migration involves significant loss of life—as does the sea journey of the poorest aspirants—the situation becomes an ongoing crisis. Proactive measures by both the receiving and sending nations provide some hope that the most negative effects of the sea journey will decrease substantially in the not-too-distant future.[24]

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[23] For the legal action taken by Gambia see, Bajo, et al (2007). Regarding WAWA, the organization held its founding meeting in August, 2007, and they are in the forefront of efforts to stem the tide of losses of the region's youth. See Ufford (2007) article.

[24] This current article is but an introduction to the issue of West African migrants in Europe. My upcoming research includes a comparative look at what happens to those who make it beyond the shore and into the host countries of Spain, Italy and Malta. I explore the economic impact that the new immigrants have on nations with low birth rates and with more jobs than citizens to work them. There is analysis of how these receiving nations change as a result of the influx of West African immigrants. Data is beginning to be more readily available on the effects on the family and the society "back home," and most of this data shows positive gains for the sending country like remittances that contribute to the family and the local economy. (Bledsoe, et al, 2008; Sow, 2007; Ros, 2007; Trager, 2005) My future research reveals some of the negative consequences to a migrant's long-term absence from the homeland. Also part of the larger research is the issue of why some people stop migrating while others choose not to leave at all. Equally important is the study of when migrants voluntarily return home. A broader, more comparative study allows me to measure longitudinally these factors and outcomes and show what the wider implications are for African Diaspora studies.

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About the Author

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Professor Captain teaches courses related to Latin American Film and Intellectual History in addition to a course on U.S.-Africa Relations. She is an expert on the African Diaspora in Latin America and has broadened her research scope to include comparative approaches to the African Diaspora including: the historic Diaspora and the recent Diaspora; comparative regional Diaspora experiences; and Louisiana Creole experiences as part of the Diaspora. She has published, interviewed, and lectured widely on Latin America and is preparing a manuscript on the recent Diaspora in Europe. Finally, Professor Captain is the Executive Director of Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars which boasts a membership of over 165 colleges and universities.

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