

Feb 24th, 10:00 AM - 11:40 AM

## Media in the Murid World: Analysis of Inscribed Faith and Religious Identity in Murid Agencies' Media Approach

Macodou Fall  
*Ohio University - Main Campus*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/africana\\_studies\\_conf](https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/africana_studies_conf)



Part of the [African Languages and Societies Commons](#)

---

Fall, Macodou, "Media in the Murid World: Analysis of Inscribed Faith and Religious Identity in Murid Agencies' Media Approach" (2017). *Africana Studies Student Research Conference*. 1.  
[https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/africana\\_studies\\_conf/2017/002/1](https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/africana_studies_conf/2017/002/1)

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Events at ScholarWorks@BGSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Africana Studies Student Research Conference by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@BGSU.

**Media in the Murid World: Analysis of Inscribed Faith and  
Religious Identity in Murid Agencies' Media Approach**

**Macodou Fall**

Ohio University, Athens – 45701

Mf924715@ohio.edu

Tel: 740-818-5903

## Abstract

Previous studies about Muridiyya have mostly focused on the economic and political influences of the Senegalese Sufi Islamic Brotherhood founded by Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. At the beginning, Muridiyya was a reactive force to colonialism and it aimed to propose alternatives to Western cultural and economic dominations. However, the rapid growth of Muridiyya was possible via the creation of decentralized Murid organizations and groups called *dahiras* (religious associations). Prior to the rise of *dahiras*, Murid's religious ideology spread throughout *daaras* (Quranic schools), which intended to initiate Murid *talibes* (disciples) to Islam and the Brotherhood's ideology. Over time and with globalization, different strategies were adopted in response to the growing influence of Western lifestyle in Senegal's main urban areas. This study examines efforts of Murid agencies to increase the Brotherhood's socio-cultural influences by creating urban *dahiras*, media outlets, TV and radio broadcasting programs. In that manner, this study shows that these efforts have been determinant in improving Murid faith as well as maintaining connections between urban-overseas Murids and Touba, their holy land.

## Introduction

About 30% of the Senegalese population are Murids (Mbacke, 2005). A Murid is a member of the Sufi-Islamic Brotherhood, Muridiyya, which was born in Senegal at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Kariya, 2012). Its founder, Shaykh Amadou Bamba, was a prominent Senegalese Islamic figure who preached Sufi Islam as a counter model to colonialism, Western education, and cultural assimilation (Babou, 2002). Some scholars argue that the Murid Islamic ideology might represent a threat to peace in a multicultural country where Christianity and other religious beliefs coexist in peace (Diop, 1981 & Hoven, 2000). This assertion requires particular attention for monitoring the ways Muridiyya is spreading around the country as well as the strategies Murid disciples are adopting to implement and foster their religious Brotherhood in Senegal.

Several studies suggest that Muridiyya symbolizes a unique religious model that is deeply embedded in Sufi-Islamic thought (Babou, 2007; Ngom, 2009 & Bousso, 2012). By settling local agencies in many Senegalese spheres via *daaras* (Islamic schooling systems that served to initiate people about Quran and Islamic sciences), the Murids have, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also established the key foundations of their cultural and religious successes (Babou, 2007). The same concept has been perpetuated between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century with the decentralization of the notion of *daara* in urban cities, such as Dakar and Saint Louis (Babou, 2003). In these new areas, the Murids were looking for more economic incentives (Diop, 1981) and their involvement in urban decentralized *daara* is intended to help the Murids to improve their religious beliefs and community lifestyle (Babou, 2003). With their implementation in urban areas, Murid disciples managed to drive political forces due to their economic influences (Kariya, 2012). They were courted by many political parties, who started to view them as an

electoral reservoir that could be easily reached after finding agreements with their leaders, the *marabouts* (Sufi leaders).

Cochrane (2012) posits that gathering people around religious ideals that aim at promoting sectarian values to the detriment of the majority might constitute a serious impediment to the national unity and cohesion. Since these concerns about Muridiyya were raised, many Murid disciples started having difficulties publicly expressing their Murid identity in the early 1960s with the independent Senegal. They started being marginalized because of their religious belonging (Babou, 2003). Due to their inability to speak French and their lack of Western education, Murid *talibes* (disciples) had been labeled profane and compelled to follow their *marabouts'* desires (Diop, 1981). Knowing that most of them were reluctant to follow Western schooling methods, once in urban areas, they focused on creating the conditions to improve their social integration (Babou, 2003). By doing so, they invested in local businesses and contributed in increasing the influence of their religious Brotherhood. These different strategies have been determinant in consolidating the presence of the Brotherhood in Senegal as well as generating socio-economic incentives.

These advantages were reinforced by the development of media in Senegal. With the liberalization of the Senegalese media sphere in the 1980s, several radio broadcasts started accompanying religious events and contributed in spreading ideologies (Buggenhagen, 2001). For instance, the impact of radio broadcasting in religious ceremonies increased with the rise of media exclusively dedicated to religion. That is how the Murid Brotherhood worked to improve its approach vis-a-vis media and Murid adepts started to acquire radio and TV licenses for diffusing information related to Islam and their community (Buggenhagen, 2010). Their intention to be part of the global and media spheres means they had to implement many sociocultural and

religious organizations, which could help to establish platforms where they could convey information regarding their cultural beliefs (Nyamnjoh, 2005). Different religious movements, such as Tijaniyya and particularly Muridiyya, have started incorporating new media aspects reflecting their ideological propagandas (Buggenhagen, 2001). To expect national and international recognition, Murid adepts needed to invade the media sphere to improve the visibility of their religious structure.

This has been a great opportunity for Murid urban *dahiras* members who have been looking for communication means that could help bring light to their efforts to promote Muridiyya in Senegalese urban areas (Buggenhagen, 2010). For an impactful socio-cultural influence, urban *dahiras* had to be innovative and attract urban people who have been reluctant to follow indigenous-based lifestyles (Diop, 1981). To reach their goal, they have been focusing on ways to educate old and young urban Murids to master Ahmadu Bamba's texts as well as modernizing Murid praise singing (Babou, 2007). This has been helpful in organizing *kurels* (communal chanting of the *qasidas*) where all members are given the opportunity to perform *qasidas* chanting in all gatherings and events such as the *Mawlid* (celebration of the birth of prophet Mohammed) and the *Grand Magal* of Touba.

Previous empirical studies on Muridiyya are centered on the economic and political influence of the Brotherhood. This study analyzes the Murid community media approach to determine the ways Murid agencies such as the *dahiras* use *qasidas* chanting and inscribe faith and religious identity in their media approach. By doing so, this piece posits that developing an internal awareness of issues surrounding media, *qasidas* performing and urban lifestyle is determinant in increasing the influence of Muridiyya in Senegal and in the world.

## Brief History of Ahmadu Bamba and Muridiyya

Born around 1853, Ahmadu Bamba acquired, from his youth, a strong reputation of learning and piety. Even though he was promised a position of *Qadi* (Judge) by Lat Joor, the king of precolonial Kajoor, he declined that offer to devote himself to elevate his soul and religious belief (Kane, 2011). His piety, charisma and noninterest in mundane affairs widely contributed in his earning of the appreciation, attention, and respect of many Senegalese people who came to identify themselves as Murids. Ahmadu Bamba promoted a pious devotion to the teachings and laws of the Quran, but his principle focus was to encourage all Senegalese people to develop the culture of hard work. By emphasizing hard work, Ahmadu Bamba also promoted a grassroots' empowerment strategy that was unique during colonialism. In his view, it was important to build strong personalities that are referential societal models regarding both their relationships with God and their socioeconomic engagements (Babou, 2007). Along with his advocacy, Ahmadu Bamba argued in *Ways Unto Heaven*, a book translated by Mbacke (2010) that his goal was to lead humankind to the level of Islam as practiced by the Prophet Mohammed. For that, he had to give sense to his Sufi-Islamic orientation, apply his message to his daily life, and inspire people to embrace values of piety, learning, peace, love, *khidmah* and devotion. According to Babou (2007), these values are strongly related and they help to eradicate economic dependency, decolonize the minds, and assure freedom and social recognition to all devotees. Considering the numerous restrictions that went along with colonialism, one could argue that Ahmadu Bamba's message was, first and foremost, intended to restore the dignity and liberty of all Black people (Kane, 2011). Even though he is genealogically linked to the Sharifian (Arabic) family, Ahmadu Bamba never claimed this belonging, and he defended the idea that being a Black man does not mean that one is not capable (Kane, 2011). Despite his message of peace, he was exiled to Gabon

from 1895 to 1902 by the French, who considered him a threat to their domination. In 1902, Bamba was allowed to re-enter Senegal.

However, his popularity worried the French that they decided to send him into exile for a second time. This time, he was sent to Mauritania for five years, then followed by 15 years of seclusion in a mandatory residence in Diourbel (Senegal) until his death in 1927. During his exile years, he also developed his own *wird*, which is a specific act of worship. According to Kane (2010), this is because the initiations he previously received from Sufi orders, such as the Qadiriyya, the Shaziliyya, and the Tijaniyya, did not satisfy him. His second exile in Mauritania marks the birth of the Murid order. After returning to Senegal from Gabon, Ahmadu Bamba asked his followers to remember that special day, which coincided with his return from exile (Bouso, 2012). Despite all the hardships he faced along with colonialism, Ahmadu Bamba's ideology has continued to prosper through the colonial and post-colonial era.

### **Background to Murid Urban *Dahiras***

#### **Murid Migration to Senegalese Urban Areas**

For a long period, the Murids were confined to Senegalese rural areas. Their holy city Touba, located at the center of Senegal, was deserted and non-occupied. For the most part, they were reduced to farming during the colonial era. However, knowing that the rainy season lasts only four months in Senegal, after having sold their crops, young and old Murids were involved in seasonal urban migrations in quest for temporary jobs in cities such as Saint-Louis (former capital city of Senegal) and Dakar. During dry seasons, they worked as street vendors and wage laborers (Babou, 2007). In early 1912, the French colonial administration deplored the increasing number of Murid migrants in Senegal's urban cities and started taking measures against their growing engagement in seasonal migrations. An urban database was created to count their

presence in the urban areas (Fall, 1992 quoted by Babou, 2007). The census conducted in 1913 found that there were 140 Murid *talibes* in Saint-Louis whereas Dakar counted about 150 Murid disciples (Nekkache, 1952 quoted by Babou, 2007). These surveys intended to provide to the colonial administration a general means to control the growing number of Murid adepts and to find ways to canalize them in rural areas.

Contrary to their *talibes*, Sufi Shaykhs (Islamic scholars), also known as marabouts, did not follow the migratory tendency. They remained in rural areas and focused on ways to educate new adherents about Islam and Muridiyya. Murid *talibes* not only received initiation to Islam, but also managed to align learning and *khidmah* (work), which is the spirit of most Sufi Islamic ideologies. It is important to note that, even far from the rural holy city of Touba, Murid disciples present in cities, such as Dakar and Saint-Louis, were also maintaining spiritual connections with their holy land and spiritual leaders. They gathered in *dahira*, which is a form of prayer circle that first emerged at Sandaga market in Dakar in the 1940s (Babou, 2007). Now it has flourished all around Senegal and the world and it is recognized as a social and religious force that contributes in fostering ties between Murids (Babou, 2002). Murid adepts work to improve their faith by using the *qasidas* in different forms of litanies. Also, to fight discriminations they faced, Murid disciples managed to organize themselves into a regional federation (Babou, 2003). This gave them the opportunity to articulate both socioeconomic and cultural responses against their marginalization in Senegal's urban spaces.

Although one might notice slight differences between rural and urban Murids, they both seem to represent an invariant religious ideology (Babou, 2002). However, Murid urban *dahiras* seem to be much more flexible than traditional *daaras*. This is mostly because urban *dahiras* members are directly involved in the creation of these groups. Different from rural *daaras*, which

have been created by Sufi Shaykhs, urban *talibes* are the ones defining the strategies and activities they want to develop in their respective *dahiras* (Diop, 1981). This new approach also consisted of incorporating all forms of means that would be relevant in disseminating the message of Ahmadu Bamba. This includes not only a high consideration of Ahmadu Bamba's ideology and *qasidas* when undertaking actions, but also it would serve as platform for urban Murids to publicly express their religious belonging.

### **Urban *Dahiras*' Approach and Implementation**

Due to the numerous restrictions they faced during colonialism, Murid disciples had to find ways to disseminate the message of the Brotherhood. Hence, after earning the title of Shaykh and receiving Islamic and mystical initiations from Ahmadu Bamba, early Murid *talibes* could also open their own *daaras*. Many of them, such as Shaykh Ibrahima Fall, Mame Cerno Mbakke, and Shaykh Issa Diene, founded villages in almost every part of Senegal where they could provide Islamic and mystical education to newer Murids they managed to convince. These basic initiations to Islam and Muridiyya intended to create alternatives to the settlement and development of Western lifestyles in Senegal as well as to increase people's awareness about Sufi values and Islam (Babou, 2007). In *Modern Muslims*, Howard (2016) draws attention to the ways African culture generally accommodates Islam, which, via Sufism, does not seem to impose any kind of tabula rasa of sociocultural practices that have, long since, been exerted in the African continent. In case of Muridiyya, Babou (2007) shows that, as a Sufi and indigenous-based ideology, it has increasingly become a cultural means for Senegalese subalterns to slowly start identifying themselves as part the Sufi order. Thus, the preoccupation was not to court people to become Murid, but to make Murid spaces in a French territory.

From that standpoint, one could notice that the creation of *daaras* was first and foremost intended to build “distinctive spatial configuration which articulates spiritual and social function” (Ross, 2002 quoted by Babou, 2007; p.164). Additionally, Babou (2007) argues that Ahmadu Bamba was not interested in ruling people, but his objective was to secure a space where he could experience his view of Islam and to particularly educate his disciples. Along with the growing influence of the Western culture, these different *daaras* became stronger and challenged the traditional norms of the educational system established by the French (Babou, 2003). In addition, Senegalese started to develop concerns about Murid agencies and viewed them as threats to the country’s unity. In this manner, Murid *talibes* were stigmatized, marginalized, and they encountered difficulties in settling in Senegal’s urban areas.

Facing these challenges, Murid disciples had to articulate responses to promote the Brotherhood in cities, such as Dakar and Saint-Louis. From rural *daaras*, which guaranteed Murid *talibes* access to basic initiations to Islam and Muridiyya, members of the Brotherhood started developing approaches that conform to the urban lifestyle. The rural concept of *daara* is transformed into *dahira* which is an association that gives the Murids the opportunity to be initiated to Islam and Muridiyya as well as to meet and gather weekly and monthly for developing and undertaking plans for the socio-cultural existence of the community. These *dahiras*, different from the traditional *daaras*, contribute in developing new understanding of Muridiyya by urban inhabitants (Babou, 2007). In addition to *dahiras*’ moderate initiation role, more emphasis is put on the improvement of urban Murids’ living conditions. In this manner, urban Murid *talibes* ended up incorporating socioeconomic activities in their events, reinforcing their presence and impact in urban areas, as well as keeping ties with Touba (Babou, 2003). This religious connection implies not only a vertical relation of difference when it comes to adopting

strategies, but also indicates an in-between relationship of solidarity and a high degree of social organization among the community of disciples (Villalon, 2007). To be member of Murid urban *dahira*, therefore, involves both being related to Touba and sharing a conscious identity held in common with fellow disciples (Babou, 2003). Knowing that religious organization in Senegal has been heavily influenced by the state context, including in urban areas, one could argue that urban cities' lifestyles contributed in shaping new forms of religious agencies. It is noteworthy that tendencies in Senegalese urban cities planted the seeds of urban institutional forms of the *dahiras*.

Understanding urban *dahiras* from Villalon's (2007) view, one could argue that urban *dahiras* deconstruct certain common assumptions that have long dominated the debate on the relationship between religion and the modern lifestyle. For instance, to better spread their message, most urban *dahiras* focus on making accessible Ahmadu Bamba's ideology by translating some of his *qasidas* into French, engaging all members into *durus* (*qasidas* reading) while teaching old and young members new forms of praise singing (Babou, 2003). This allows them to participate in *qasidas* chanting and performances that go along with all their events. The *qasidas*, known to be of great importance for the Murids, are used to explain Ahmadu Bamba's educational method, religious orientation, and to frame an urban-indigenous based lifestyle.

### **Function and Activities of Murid Urban *Dahiras***

*Dahiras'* activities are celebrated throughout the year. They might take a form of a circle and consist of organizing meetings, *qasidas* chanting, and presentations on Islam and Muridiyya. In almost every *dahira*, adherents participate in both funding and organizing religious ceremonies. These events aim at sharing virtues of brotherly love, hard work, and discipline. In urban areas, the *dahiras* work to preserve and find ways to spread the values that structure

Muridiyya (Babou, 2002). The declamation of Ahmadu Bamba's religious poems is one of the most significant activities of urban *dahiras*. In rural *daara*, poems have only been chanted by well-educated disciples, but in Senegalese cities such as Dakar, the early Sandaga *dahira* followed by *Dahira des Etudiants Mourides de Dakar* (composed by University of Dakar Murid students), now *Hizbut Tarqiyya* in the 1980s, introduced important innovations in order to provide to Murid *talibes* strong tools for their socioeconomic, religious, and cultural existence. For instance, the *Dahira des Etudiants Mourides de Dakar* translated to French many of Ahmadu Bamba's poems (Diop, 1981). Thus, members who were unable to read Arabic were given the opportunity to understand Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba's message (Diop, 1981). This desire to share Ahmadu Bamba's poems with those who, primarily, did not understand the meanings has been an important step toward a general appropriation of Murid thought in Senegal's urban spaces.

Many young students in Dakar started to develop interest in the *qasidas* and joined the students' organization to counter the growing influences of socialist and Marxist thoughts that were flourishing at the university campus (Diop, 1981). In addition to *qasidas* chanting and *dhikr* that were organized during *dahira* members' gatherings, these *dahiras* also hosted panels and conferences that served as channels to talk about the life and accomplishments of Ahmadu Bamba. This highlighted the importance of Muridiyya, Ahmadu Bamba, and challenged the dominant assumptions about the Murids that had been developed in Senegalese urban spheres. First and foremost, *dahiras* are apolitical and nonprofit associations (Babou, 2015). Thus, their activities cannot be compared to those of political organizations or trade unions (Diop, 1981). Their focus is the same as rural *daaras*, but they emphasize the ways to improve the visibility of the Brotherhood (Buggenhagen, 2011). Today, most of their activities are publicized on community radio programs, and recordings of *qasidas* chanting, conferences, and other related

events are available for everyone interested in knowing and understanding the Murid ideology. The *dahiras*' fast spread in Senegal have contributed in shaping channels for disseminating Ahmadu Bamba's message.

### **Sufi Educational Concept at the Crossroads**

Education is a fundamental element in Muridiyya and it impacts the ways Murid *talibes* live and behave. Muridiyya is a code of conduct and the *talibes*, in all Senegalese spheres, are representatives of the Brotherhood. To propose a socio-political response to the deterioration of religious values, Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba began to develop an educational system based on spiritual education (Babou, 2007). Babou (2015) argues that Ahmadu Bamba's objective did not consist of simply transmitting Islamic knowledge to new adherents, but it mostly aimed at aligning theory and practice and providing them a strong *Tarbiyyah*, which was intended to put them on the path of constant self-purification. This form of religious training keeps Murid devotees occupied because of important amount of *khidmah* they also have to perform.

In cities such as Dakar and Saint Louis, Murid adepts have managed to create sorts of umbrella organizations, which serve as means of cultural identification. To communicate with Murid *talibes* in Senegalese towns, the *marabouts* used to send messages via the national radio station, but with the implementation of *dahiras* in urban cities, leaders of these decentralized religious organizations became the perfect links between urban Murid *talibes* and Touba. Beside the socio-cultural influence of urban *dahiras*, *dahiras* members were also in charge of assuring both the propaganda and the integration of new adherents (Diop, 1981). It appears clear that to be impactful, *dahiras* also needed to more practical media supports that would help disseminate their activities.

## Media in the Murid World

### Muridiyya and the Murid Community Media Approach

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Information Communication and Technologies (ICTs) became an important tool for people to express their political, religious, and cultural belonging (Nyamnjoh, 2005). Senegal, as a pioneer of the development of ICTs in West Africa, started developing an inclusive approach by putting ICTs as a central means for facilitating access to information (Gbedemah, 2005). This intention to be part of the global sphere has fostered the rise of different types of media platforms where people could convey information related to their organizations (Nyamnjoh, 2005). In that manner, Murid *talibes* started to incorporate new media aspects in their ideological propagandas (Buggenhagen, 2010). These strategies focus on the important dimension of media, which can help to dispense information and activities of the Murid community.

To use ICTs to their advantage, members of the Senegalese Islamic Brotherhood have developed media strategies (Buggenhagen, 2010). This is mostly because information superhighway tools, such as Internet, Twitter, and YouTube are accessible and require only a modem and an efficient telephone line (Nyamnjoh, 2005). For instance, during the *Grand Magal* of Touba, which is the Murid annual pilgrimage, the national organization committee of this event established different sub-committees to promote it via new media platforms. Among them, an NCT committee was created to improve the visibility of the event (Ndiaye, 2013). Composed of IT technicians, this committee is in charge developing approaches that are conformed to NCTs.

## **Muridiyya and the Media Sphere**

By the 1980s, the Murids started to acquire several media outlets (Babou, 2007). To recruit Islamic adepts in Senegal, religious movements took advantage of the popularity of radio broadcasting to preach Sufi Islam (Buggenhagen, 2010). The increasing number of radio broadcasts in the Senegalese media sphere contributes to increase the number of Muslim adepts (Diop, 1981). To maintain this religious dynamism, Murid agencies, urban *dahira* members, and Murid scholars began to develop programs to influence the Senegalese audience (Bava, 2004). The rapid growth of religious programs in radio broadcastings mostly shape the strategies Senegalese Muslims generally adopt to spread Islam and Muridiyya in Senegal.

After they analyzed the sociopolitical and cultural situation, Murid students created The *Dahira Hizbut Tarqiyya* in 1979 to assure their propaganda (Diop, 1981). Members of this nonprofit association established media outlets (*Abreuvoir des assoiffés* magazine, Al Muridiyya radio) to produce Murid religious events, such as the annual pilgrimage in Touba, and the *Mawlid*, which attract millions of Murid disciples and sympathizers every year (Diouf, 2012). Different means of media, including the production of audio-videocassettes, CD recordings of sermons and praise singing of religious griots, are used to spread the ideology. These efforts aim to give the devotees of Muridiyya the opportunity to listen and look at their spiritual guides once they have returned to urban cities (Buggenhagen, 2010). Ordinary Murid adepts are, most of the time, using a variety of media circulating in Senegal to view their religious leaders. For a Murid, these media are of great importance because, having the opportunity to view and listen to the marabouts contributes to building a devoted and pious Murid personality.

## **Media and the *Grand Magal* of Touba**

### **Media and the Promotion of the *Grand Magal***

Every year, on the 18<sup>th</sup> *Safar*, which is the second month of the Hijri calendar, millions of believers converge in Touba to celebrate the *Grand Magal*. This event is one of the most important religious gatherings in the world and it marks the return from exile of Shaykh Ahmadu Bamba (Babou, 2003). To promote their religious gatherings, the Murids started to develop innovative approaches toward media. Many of them began to acquire radio and TV licenses as well as establish proper channels where they could broadcast information about Islam and their religious Sufi order (Buggenhagen, 2010). This trend has led to the creation of many channels, such as Lamp FM and TV, Touba FM, Al Azar FM, Touba TV, Touba Info, Mourides. Info, Al Mouridiyyah TV, which serve as mouthpieces for promoting Islamic values, and Murid ideology and events (Fall, 2015). The *Grand Magal* of Touba has been driving an increasing attention and has mobilized considerable means of communication. As recently as in 2014, 822 journalists were accredited to cover this annual event (Mbacke, 2015). For a successful and well-promoted ceremony, particular attention needs to be given to the importance of media, knowing that they can quickly deliver information. Also, social media, as the most commonly used means of communication, should be considered since they can help diffuse information and events in a very limited time.

### **Social Media and the Murids**

Traditional media, such as newspapers, radio, and TV, have been the most important means of communication used by Murids to promote their events (Diop, 1981). With the increasing influence of NCT worldwide, different strategies have been adopted to incorporate these new aspects in the production of Murid events (Ndiaye, 2013). Social media have become

the leading force in the lives of millions of people around the world (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, & Sturgis, 2014) and Murid disciples have started using them as platforms where sermons of Murid Shaykhs, *qasidas* chanting, and other religious activities are disseminated and shared with people from all around the world (Ndiaye, 2013). Before being officially adopted by Murid events' committee members, social media have been disproportionately used by Murid adepts, who had tendencies to share religious videos, audios, and images with their friends (Ndiaye, 2013). This approach toward NCT became more formal when, in 2010, the National Organization Committee of the *Grand Magal* of Touba decided to start Facebook and Twitter accounts for sharing the experience of the *Grand Magal*. Additionally, the committee created a website, [www.magal-touba.org](http://www.magal-touba.org), where their activities are disseminated live and in prime time via YouTube (Ndiaye, 2013). This is a consequent approach that aims to give an international dimension to the *Grand Magal* and at the same time spreading the Murid ideology. These newer approaches toward social media mean that the Brotherhood has started to be more attentive to the use of NCT and the audience they might reach. In addition to promoting the *Grand Magal*, social media helps to unite Murids worldwide.

Even far from Senegal, Murid disciples tend to remain connected to Touba. The use of videos, audiocassettes, and sermons of Sufi Shaykhs helps Murid disciples to keep and develop their religious faith (Buggenhagen, 2010). This media approach has been reinforced by the rise of NCT, which offer a more important audience than the traditional media (Nyamnjoh, 2005). Facebook and YouTube are known to account for more than a billion users, while Twitter has more than 500 million users (Langmia, Tyree, O'Brien, & Sturgis, 2014). This constitutes a consequential audience, and should be considered by organizations that intend to develop networks within their members and sympathizers.

With NCT, information spread in a very superhighway (Nyamnjoh, 2005). Providing quality information about organizations and other important events, might help to have positive outcomes worldwide (Ndiaye, 2013). Today, cable and satellite channels, such as ASTV Africa, which includes a number of Senegalese and Murid TV networks, help to facilitate the connection between the Senegalese and Murid diaspora to their homeland (Fall, 2015). In many cases, it has been demonstrated that NCT and social media have been playing a central role in promoting Muridiyya, which, at its birth, was seen as an indigenous belief. Furthermore, to take advantage of NCT, local and overseas Murid disciples have started to use social media, such as Facebook and particularly YouTube, to view, in real time, sermons and other religious singing that go along with Murid events.

## Conclusion

Media have played an important role in spreading Muridiyya. They have been helping to develop that sense of proximity between Murids as well as promoting Murid events and other devotional practices, such as urban *dahiras'* gatherings, *qasidas* performing, and religious sermons. These forms of media productions contribute to provide alternatives to Murid disciples who, previously, did not have the opportunity to receive direct education from a Sufi Shaykh. In urban cities, it has been shown that Murid *talibes* have genuinely managed to transform their rural concept of *daara* to sorts of umbrella organizations that have served to reinforce ties between them and foster their piety and faith.

From traditional media, such as newspapers, radio, and TV, the Murids have also been able to shift toward more efficient tools of communication. It is noteworthy that information superhighway tools, such as Internet, Twitter, and YouTube help to disseminate information in a very limited time. By effectively using NCT, Murid agencies have been able to articulate responses to the growing influence of modern lifestyle. This trend to impact on the media sphere has led to the incorporation of NCT in many Murid activities, such as the *Grand Magal* of Touba, weekly gatherings, and the *Mawlid*.

Besides the roles played by Murid agencies and traditional media in spreading the Brotherhood, social media have given to it another dimension. By adopting newer techniques of communication, Murid adepts could articulate efficient strategies for adapting their religious activities to new tendencies. In that manner, they managed to inscribe faith and religious identity in tendencies that are globally adopted.

## References

- Babou, C. A. (2002). Brotherhood solidarity, education and migration: The role of the dahiras among the Murid Muslim community of New York. *African Affairs*, 101(403), 151-170.
- Babou, C. A. (2003). Educating the Murid: Theory and practices of education in Amadu Bamba's thought. *Journal of religion in Africa*, 33(3), 310-327.
- Babou, C. A. (2007). *Fighting the Greater Jihad: Amadu Bamba and the Founding of the Muridiyya of Senegal, 1853–1913*. Ohio University Press.
- Babou, C. A. (2007). Urbanizing Mystical Islam: Making Murid Space in the Cities of Senegal. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 197-223.
- Bava, S. (2004). Le Dahira urbain, lieu de pouvoir du mouridisme. In *Annales de la recherche urbaine* (No. 96, pp. 135-143). Lavoisier.
- Bouso, S. A. (2012). Grand magal de Touba : Dimension religieuse et sociale. *El Maarif Al Jadida*, 1-65.
- Buggenhagen, B. A. (2001). Prophets and Profits: Gendered and Generational Visions of Wealth and Value in Senegalese Murid Households<sup>1</sup>. *Journal of religion in Africa*, 31(4), 373-401.
- Buggenhagen, B. (2010). Islam and the Media of Devotion in and out of Senegal. *Visual Anthropology Review*, 26(2), 81-95.
- Cochrane, L. L. (2012). Religious Motivations for Local Economic Development in Senegal. *Africa Today*, 58(4), 2-19.
- Diop, M. C. (1981). Fonctions et activités des " dahira " mourides urbains (Sénégal) (Functions and Activities of the Murids' Urban'Dahira'in Senegal). *Cahiers d'études africaines*, 79-91.

- Diouf, M. (2013). *Tolerance, democracy, and Sufis in Senegal*. Columbia University Press.
- Fall, T. (2015). Lamp Fall Fm et Tv, Touba Fall Fm, Al Azar Fm, Touba Tv, Touba Infos,Mourides.Info, Al Mouridiyyah Tv... : Des Medias Au Service Du Mouridisme. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.mourides.info/lamp-fall-fm-et-tv-touba-fall-fm-al-azar-fm-touba-tv-touba-infosmourides-info-al-mouridiyyah-tv-des-medias-au-service-du-mouridisme/>
- Gbedemah, E. G. (2009). Sénégal : La recette du succès en matière de TIC. Retrieved from  
<http://cursus.edu/article/1582/senegal-recette-succes-matiere-tic/>
- Howard, S. (2016). *Modern Muslims: A Sudan Memoir*. Ohio University Press
- Kane, O (2011). *The homeland is the arena: Religion, transnationalism, and the integration of Senegalese immigrants in America*. Oxford University Press.
- Kariya, K. (2012). The Murid Order and Its ‘Doctrine of Work’. *Journal of Religion in Africa*,
- Langmia, K. Tyree, T. C. M. O’Brien, P., & Sturgis, I. (2014). *Social Media*. NY: University Press of America.
- Mbacke, A. A. (2015). Lamp Fall Fm et Tv, Touba Fall Fm, Al Azar Fm, Touba Tv, Touba Infos,Mourides.Info, Al Mouridiyyah Tv... : Des Medias Au Service Du Mouridisme. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.mourides.info/lamp-fall-fm-et-tv-touba-fall-fm-al-azar-fm-touba-tv-touba-infosmourides-info-al-mouridiyyah-tv-des-medias-au-service-du-mouridisme/>
- Mbacke, K. (2005). *Sufism and Religious Brotherhoods in Senegal*. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers.
- Mbacke, A. A. (2010). *Ways Unto Heaven*. Majalis

- Ndiaye, A. G. (2013). Interview Amadou Gueye Ndiaye: Responsable Ntic Comite D'organisation. Retrieved from: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6O\\_GCPITK54](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6O_GCPITK54)
- Ngom, F. (2009). Aḥmadu Bamba's Pedagogy and the Development of 'Ajami Literature. *African studies review*, 52(01), 99-123.
- 42(1), 54-75.
- Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2005). *Africa's media: Democracy and the politics of belonging*. Zed Books
- Van Hoven, E. (2000). The nation turbaned? The construction of nationalist Muslim identities in Senegal. *Journal of religion in Africa*, 225-248.
- Villalón, L. A. (2007). Sufi Modernities in Contemporary Senegal: Religious Dynamics Between the Local and the Global. *Sufism and the 'Modern' in Islam*, IB Tauris, London, 172-93.