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# Adapting & Appropriating Art from Afar: Negotiating a Global Identity Through Popular Culture, A Study of Salsa in the Senegalese Context

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*Adapting & Appropriating Art from Afar:*  
Negotiating a Global Identity Through Popular Culture,  
A study of salsa in the Senegalese context

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## Abstract

The following study is essentially an attempt to explore cross-cultural exchange and the resulting (re)creation of different forms of cultural expression. In its broadest sense it aims to explore the quotidian, cultural sides of globalization. It takes for its focus the re-appropriation of salsa music in Dakar, Senegal. Through interviews and participant observation in a number of salsa venues, I explore the various meanings Senegalese salseros put into salsa music and dance. Senegalese salsa is rooted in a very concrete historical background, while also holding meaning for the present. In short, the appropriation of salsa into the Senegalese context serves as a platform for negotiating local and globalized Senegalese identities.

## Introduction

The following study aims to tackle the ways that cross-culture exchange (i.e. cosmopolitanism) in Dakar is used to negotiate a distinctly Senegalese identity. In order to best approach this rather enormous topic, I chose to focus my energies on one specific style of music with foreign roots - salsa. This genre of music is particularly fitting for my study for the following reasons: because of its general popularity in Senegal; because it peaked following Senegal's independence, and paralleled a period in which a Senegalese identity was being actively determined and negotiated in relation to emerging notions of modernity; because of its pre-existing multicultural nature<sup>1</sup>; and because of my own knowledge of the art form.

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<sup>1</sup> As noted by a number of my informants, *salsa* comes from the Spanish word for *sauce*, and is a melange of rhythms from different countries and regions.

While I began this study with a thematic focus on the mixing and melding of cultures due to various economic and political factors causing and/or influencing migration and globalization<sup>2</sup>, I was encouraged by my informants to take a slightly different approach. My informants stressed a more cultural lens. Beyond being the basis of my study, my informants were key in guiding my secondary research, pushing me to go beyond topics that I had a solid background in to instead pursue the supporting research they themselves found applicable. My initial attempts to question Senegalese *salseros* on their re-appropriation of a foreign music were stymied by a refusal to term salsa as foreign. They preferred to term the music not *salsa* but *Afro-Cuban* music - a genre that has at its heart African rhythms and sounds. These responses of course did not undermine my research, but encouraged me to explore themes of Negritude and the ties between Senegal and its diaspora communities.

#### Background- Framing my approach

It would be remiss to not open with a note on the theory and background information that guided my methodology. My study explores the ways that distinct cultural art forms are created and re-created through processes of cross-cultural exchange, as art, people and ideas cross national, lingual, and/or cultural boundaries. As such, my project exists in relation to an established literature on processes of globalization. I use the term *globalization* to refer to exchanges across cultural, lingual, and national boundaries.

A cursory look at the term *globalization* might begin and end with ‘occidentalism’ or ‘McDonaldization’ - with the sense that cultural hegemony is held by the United States and other western powers and that the majority of cultural exchange follows a top-down model.

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<sup>2</sup> Globalization: a term I use here to refer to the rapid movement of arts, ideas, and people across national, lingual, and/or cultural boundaries.

While the strength of American and other western influences should not be ignored or minimized, it must also be noted that cultural exchange occurs at many levels. The ways that local communities receive, adapt, and localize foreign imports is a form of agency that should not be glossed over. Furthermore, I argue that the cross-cultural exchanges that mark today's globalization are not merely top-down or unidirectional, but instead that distinct cultures are always in a process of give and take. As cultures interrelate, they co-construct their identities in relation to each other.

This creates a paradox, where group identity and authenticity is "reconceived as a hybrid, creative activity in a local present-becoming future... [where] non-western culture and artistic works are implicated by an interconnected world system without necessarily being swamped by it" (Clifford, qtd. Harney 8). Notions of cultural authenticity and tradition are not entirely self-constructed; they emerge out of processes of cultural exchange.

Before broaching the chains of exchange that surround salsa music, I would like to offer a similar example of exchange, one that negotiates marked political and economic power differentials. In Mark Anderson's anthropological work among black male Garifuna youth in Honduras, he explores the ways in which this group adopts black American dress in an effort to claim respect within Honduras' marked racial hierarchy. This example relates the importance of analyzing local interpretations of imported goods. In this case, the Garifuna youth's taste in brands like Nike works to both strengthen their local identity as "black men in struggle" as well as to call upon imaginings of global solidarity with inner city black American men (Anderson, qtd. Tsing 2009 165). I offer this example to show how cultural exchange, even when apparently top-down and uni-directional, is subject to local

processes of reinterpretation and to also emphasize how imported images can become intrinsic to local self-identity.

## Methodology

It was with this background that I approached my research project. I framed my methodology in order to explore the ways that Senegalese cultural identity is negotiated in relation to the rest of the world, namely by studying how received foreign elements are appropriated and localized. With this in mind (and with a chosen focus point of salsa music) I planned my study. I initially planned on at least two formal interviews, one with an expert of salsa in the Senegalese context and the other with a disseminator of it. In addition, I intended to canvas a range of salsa consumers. As with any study, my actual methodology differed somewhat from this initial plan, as I adapted my research methods to the realities of the field. After three weeks of research, I spent roughly 120 hours in the field. I interviewed one salsa musician, a historical expert of salsa in Senegal, and three consumers. I also attended a number of salsa events, supporting my interviews with both participant observation and informal conversations with members of the salsa community in Dakar.

## Findings

My findings can be split into four sections: a history of salsa as understood by my informants; salsa and its connections to the Negritude movement; the unique role salsa played in creating a community and distinct culture in Senegal; and understanding the ways that today's salsa negotiates a space between innovation and continued transformation, and nostalgia and commitment to the past. In examining these elements, one can come to a better

understanding of the concrete ways that salsa has been both localized and re-appropriated, remaining distinctly foreign while also becoming simultaneously Senegalese.

### *History*

There is no such thing as an impartial history. In the telling of any story, meaning is invested in certain details while other details are glossed over. The particular way that Senegalese salseros track the history of salsa is significant - it reveals how and why they identify with the music and shows what aspects of salsa's roots are called upon and valued.

While the so-called history of salsa (the story of its creation, the way that different cultures merged to create a certain multicultural product that then spread and gained international popularity) is clearly of academic interest, I did not expect it to be of casual interest to its consumers. This assumption was quickly challenged by my informants, who were quick to invoke an understanding of its history to explain their interest in the genre.

My first experience with this response came at the start of my first interview with M. Diallo, who who works with the radio station Dounya FM on a Cuban salsa segment. After briefly introducing my interest in the genre as a multicultural product, Diallo opened into an account of its history, placing the start of his story in 1492 with Christopher Columbus and the discovery of the Americas. According to DIALLO and my other informants, the history of salsa is as follows:

In 1492 Columbus discovered the Americas, ushering in a new era of exploration, expansion, and exploitation. When indigenous labor failed to meet growing demand for labor, the slave trade picked up the slack. Millions of Africans were shipped to this New World. Specifically, a large number left Gorée Island for Cuba. *Son* (a precursor to salsa)



was born in Santiago, Cuba in the 16th century. This sound was heavily influenced by African slaves; as my informants put expressed it, *son* was essentially African slave music sung in Spanish. Over time *son* continued to develop with the addition of instruments like the guitar and drum. Cuban music becomes popular in the United States, and the records reach Dakar in 1925 via the American military stationed in Saint Louis, Senegal.

Meanwhile, Cuban music continued to change, in part due to heavy investment in the arts under Fidel Castro. Many of these same musicians left Cuba by the 1960s, many of them for the United States. It was here that salsa was born. In the barrios of Harlem and the Bronx, Cuban music (*son* and another sound called *charanga*) mixed with bolero, mambo, rumba, rock and roll, and jazz. Salsa emerged as a sauce (a *melange*) of different sounds, created out of the imperative to forge a positive Latino identity that could counter the marginalization of immigrants in the United States.

Salsa expanded in popularity, and was transmitted to Senegal via both Americans and French stationed in its major cities. Whereas it began as an elite good, accessible only in urban areas to those with access to record players, it quickly became a constant on the radio. When speaking with my informants, they were quick to say that they liked salsa because of its accessibility - it was everywhere. Salsa was the first music in Senegal to be disseminated through means of mass communication. As explained by Pape Fall in our interview:

*“Nous, on a grandi avec la Salsa. Donc, c’est ce brassage qui culturel qui a amené la musique afro-cubaine. C’est tellement que dans presque dans beaucoup de boîtes*

*de nuit on danse la Salsa. Il n'y a pas de quartier ici, de ville ou de région où les gens ne dansent pas la Salsa. Il n'y en a pas. C'est dans le sang.*"<sup>3</sup>

This element of accessibility was matched by a recognition of salsa not as foreign, but instead as intrinsically African. One consumer noted that salsa reminded him of *sabar*<sup>4</sup> music and also of his ethnic group's music for the male circumcision ceremony (Diouf, M.). Beyond a simple recognition of the sound, salsa also became a way to use "tradition to position oneself in modernity" (Mangin 2013 13). The popularity of salsa in Senegal hit its peak shortly following Independence; as such, it served as another platform for negotiating a modern Senegalese identity and was influenced by the philosophies *du jour* - notably, by Senghor's negritude.

#### *Salsa and négritude*

*"La negra tiene tumbao." - Celia Cruz*<sup>5</sup>

*"Dans la salsa est la négritude de Senghor." - Pape Fall*<sup>6</sup>

Before I began my research I would not have considered examining the ties between popular salsa music in Senegal and the negritude movement. However my informants (such as Pape Fall) made such connections clear, necessitated further research on my part. To begin, it is necessary to offer a cursory understanding of Senghor's negritude<sup>7</sup>. The movement began by "engaging blacks and sympathetic whites in a fight against French colonialist ideology... [but moved to engage] the citizens of the [newly independent]

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<sup>3</sup> Translation: "We grew up with Salsa... In many night clubs we dance Salsa. There is not a neighborhood, a town or a region where people do not dance Salsa. There is not. It [i.e. salsa] is in the blood here."

<sup>4</sup> *Sabar* is a traditional Senegalese music.

<sup>5</sup> Translation, from Spanish: "The black girl has rhythm." *Tumbao* is the name of a certain rhythm in salsa music. These are lyrics taken from a salsa song by Celia Cruz, a Cuban singer.

<sup>6</sup> Translation: "The negritude of Senghor is in salsa music."

<sup>7</sup> Senghor was the first president of Senegal, a poet, and also a defining member of the *négritude* movement.

Senegalese nation in a dialogue over African modernity” (Castaldi 2006 49). The movement embraced the arts as essentially *nègre* (black), in contrast to Western reliance and perhaps hyper-valuation of reason. The movement rose out of a need to validate a universal humanism that offered equality and personhood to blacks as well as whites.

Concepts of negritude are hard to pin down; the term has been invested with a variety of meanings with multiple working definitions. The term was originally coined in a poem by Aime Césaire:

my negritude is not a stone, its deafness hurled against the clamor of the day  
 my negritude is not a leukoma of dead liquid over the earth’s dead eye  
 my negritude is neither tower nor cathedral  
 it takes root in the red flesh of the soil  
 it takes root in the ardent flesh of the sky  
 it breaks through the opaque prostration with its upright patience

- *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land* (2001 35).

I include this poetic definition to stress the connection between negritude and the arts. It was in many ways a literary movement, a “coming of consciousness” that emerged from the black intellectual elite living in Paris (Clifford 1988 177). Césaire’s poem and the way it grappled with what one could term the black condition became the inspiration for a large movement, which spiraled into its own school of ideology with varying political implications. This paper does not attempt to address the full complexity of the negritude movement; its aim is to focus on the intersections between Senghor’s negritude and popular appreciation for salsa.

Senghor sought “to reignite pride in African cultural subjectivity and to engineer a philosophy to which all blacks, in Africa and throughout its diaspora, could look to revitalize their shared ‘soul’” (Harney 2004: 9). In pursuit of this effort Senghor’s writings valorize certain supposedly innate African qualities, such as a hyper attenuation to rhythm and emotion. As the first president of the newly independent Senegal, Senghor played a defining role in crafting a new postcolonial, modern identity for Senegal. He began his term with particular interest in building up the arts - the artist was to be “the representative of and advocate for a new nation” (Harney 2004: 5).

In working to define a Senegalese, black African identity through the arts, Senghor encouraged artists to paradoxically draw on both a “nostalgia for precolonial Africa” and also to include an element of the *métisse*, of the multicultural (Harney 2004: 6). The latter was accomplished through the appropriation of foreign elements. This type of work of self-definition was not confined within the sphere of academic and political elites. It was performed by the citizens of the nation - by the “Dakar musicians, masons, and tailors [who] were fashioning other modernities” (Shain 2002: 84). My field work supports this notion - this notion that the public was engaged in an everyday process of defining themselves and their nation. The following account, taken from my field journal, reveals how my informants made the connection between salsa and negritude, and how they viewed salsa as a platform to negotiate a global identity:

April 26th at Chez Iba in Dieuppeul 3 - We arrive shortly after 1am and the music has yet to start. Pape FALL, the artist of the night, comes over to greet us. He begins conversing with our group and the topic switches towards negritude, with FALL saying that

“*dans la salsa est la négritude de Senghor.*”<sup>8</sup> He expands on this through another reference to Senghor: “*L’ancien Président du Sénégal Léopold Sédar Senghor disait que si vous égratignez un cubain, vous touchez un nègre ; si vous égratignez un nègre, vous touchez un cubain.*”<sup>9</sup> These quotations were similar to the ones he used during our interview; what was striking to me was that he would invoke them again in a very different setting. He ends our discussion to go perform. Amongst the songs he sings is *Guantanamera*, perhaps the best-known Cuban salsa (Roebuck & Medina 2005). And midway into this Cuban classic, he inserts a Senegalese *m’balaax* rhythm.

Salsa music became a platform to imagine different global connections - here, the fraternity between Africans and Cubans and the strength they could both pull from their common black identity. As noted by scholar Richard Shain, Cuban music “was a crucial step toward enacting an alternative modernity to the Europeanized models so prevalent in postwar Senegal” (2002: 84). In addition to providing a global identity, salsa music also created strong ties of local community.

#### *Salsa as community and culture*

“*[La salsa est]... une musique pour développement, c’est la rythme qui essaie d’éduquer la population.*”

- *M. Diouf*

In my initial research, I was taken back by how highly my informants spoke of the salsa community they grew up with. Salsa’s popularity largely rests in how pervasive it has

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<sup>8</sup> Translation: “The negritude of Senghor is in salsa music.”

<sup>9</sup> Translation: “The old president of Senegal, Léopold Sédar Senghor has said that if you scratch a Cuban, you’ll find a *nègre*; if you scratch a *nègre*, you’ll find a Cuban.” Put differently, at the core of every Cuban is an African, and vice versa.

been in the recent past, making it the perfect music for nostalgia. As described to me by an informant, in the tiniest “morsel” of salsa rests the memories of a lifetime (Diouf, M.).

Paralleling this strong sense of a salsa community is a unique code for behavior and dress.

Each of my informants stressed to me the uniqueness of the salsa culture. Salsa music and dance was not just a vector towards a national globalized modernity; it was also a platform for negotiating a very localized, modern culture at the community level. For example, salsa inscribed new rules for the interactions between men and women. Women dressed to achieve an air of respectability, never flippancy. In return men, too, upheld high standards of dress. In order to approach a woman in order to request a dance, men (already “très correct” in dress) would approach, offer a small bow, and would softly and politely request a dance. According to Senegalese salsa codes for behavior, intelligence was valued over force and men were respectful of women (Diouf, M.).

Part of the appeal of salsa is its adherence to certain rules. As cited by an informant, “il doit suivre les règles de la musique” (Diouf, M.). There is no breaking out of the repetitive rhythms of salsa; one must always be self aware. Key to enjoyment of salsa is one’s connection to the community; one never dances solely for oneself without regard for one’s partner.

An analysis of my observations at salsa events in Dakar rounds out the information cited to me by my informants. In terms of dress and comportment, salsa music serves as a vector for certain western influences at the same time that it creates a space for a distinctly Senegalese salsa culture.

A salsa venue in Dakar is often a small restaurant or bar. Attendance levels vary, but tend to be marked by a balanced male-to-female ratio, with an average age range between 30

and 45 years of age. A night of salsa is an occasion to dress well. Regardless of what style of dress one chooses to wear, it is important to be well dressed and pulled together. Men tend to wear western-style suits and dress shoes, or else the traditional Senegalese *boubou*. Women tend to wear long, billowing gowns. Popular styles include tropically inspired floral prints. Alternatively, women might wear local styles, which tend to have a tighter, less flowy, fit. Younger women tend to opt for pants and less intentionally modest apparel. There are clear Cuban influences on style. Men often wear small hats; smoking and drinking are expected accretions to the music; and afro hairstyles are not uncommon.

#### *Balancing nostalgia and innovation*

Much of what I have discussed in relation to salsa can be tied to the concrete historical context of post-Independence. However, the presence of salsa music in Dakar both precedes and extends past that window of time. Yes, today's salsa is nostalgic. Yes, it is valued for how it connects to Senghor's negritude and for how it relates to that era. At the same time, today's salsa is also adapting and changing, becoming imbued with new meanings and values that are applicable to today and perhaps tomorrow.

In the context of Senegalese salsa, Pape Fall comes after those in the classical Cuban style (which includes Labas Salse, Mar Seck, Africando, and Number One). Pape Fall (along with James Gadiaye and Pascal Dieng) performs *salsa m'balaax*, a fusion of Senegalese rhythms with Cuban-style salsa. In my interview with Pape Fall I asked him what subjects he sings about. Prior to interviewing him, I had half-assumed that if he was popular due to the nostalgia of his listeners for a certain time period, that he would focus his songs on that same time period. This is not the case. With a number of themes, Fall continues to tie the importance of his songs to the present. He sings about the plight of children in the streets;

African unity; the common struggles of Africans and the black poor in Latin America; the love children feel for their parents; domestic violence; and faith in God (Fall, P.). These themes show the continued importance of crafting both a local and global identity through music. Further innovation on salsa continues. Today's Senegalese salseros Bala Ndiaye and Alias Diallo continue to mix in *m'balaax* and other rhythms.

### Conclusion

My study on salsa music in Dakar has followed the different ways that music is used to craft a local and globalized identity. Given the short time frame of my study, my findings merely scratch the surface of this issue. Further attention should be given to the ways that salsa continues to develop, as well as a more thorough examination of the youth that dance salsa in Dakar.



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## Appendix: Interviews

**Interview #1**

Informal Interview - April 15th at Selebeyoon in SICAP Baobab

Mass DIALLO

*Animateur* - "Echos de Cuba," *La voix du coeur*, 88.9

Notes from his account of the history of salsa:

Begins in 1492 with Columbus and the discovery of the Americas. Conquistadors oppress native Indian population in Cuba; culminates in an indigenous revolt. Need for more labor; African slaves are imported. This is important because DIALLO makes a clear connection between African slave traditions, culture, and music and Cuban music. Cuban music is a fusion of Spanish, Indigenous Native American, and African rhythms.

First cuban music: *le son*

Traditional music, heavily influenced by slaves. Born in Santiago, Cuba in the 16th century.

1925: Salsa popular in the United States. CDs stream to Dakar via the US military in Saint-Louis.

Second cuban music: *charanga*

Violin, flute, timbalas, and piano. Includes the cha-cha-cha. Dated at 1952.

Fidel Castro comes to power, wanting "politique culturelle" for Cuba. Heavily invests in the arts.

1964: ENA, *ecole national arts*

1976: ISA, *institute superior des Arts*. Here students learn to play multiple instruments; composition; etc.

Yet, by 1960, many musicians have left Cuba.

The result: In the US Cuban music is mixed, creating salsa. Salsa is a mix (a sauce) of *bolero*, *son*, *cha cha cha*, *mambo*, *rumba*, *rock and roll*, and *jazz*. It's a melange of Cuban, Dominican, and Central American music. Salsa was born in the barrios (i.e. Harlem, the Bronx) of the US as the sole way for minorities to forge a positive Latino identity that could counter their marginalization.

**Interview #2**

Informal Interview - April 18th at a small bar in SICAP Baobab.

Salsa consumer; 45 year old woman; born in Dakar.

Notes and Select Quotations from the Interview:

She was "born with salsa." Salsa is popular with those around the age of 30. For the younger crowd it's hip hop, m'balaax, & zouk.

Periods of Salsa in Senegal:

1st: Classic salsa cubano with Labas SALSE, Mar SECK, Africando, and Number One.

2nd: Salsa m'balaax with James GADIAYE, Pape FALL, Pascal DIENG in the 1990s.

3rd: Today's music with Bala NDIAYE & Alias DIALLO

She personally prefers Cubano and the music produced by the artists of the first period. She also stressed that salsa is generational. There is a distinction between the young, 'blingy', jean-wearing, thin, less modest generation and the more respectable salsero generation (particularly when contrasting those who listen to salsa and the youth who prefer R&B or hip hop).

On *dancing well*: She used the term several times, and I asked that she explain. She clarified that when young people dance salsa they dance with the movement quality of a different style (i.e. hip hop, m'balaax, R&B) - not classic salsa. It is the older generation that *dances well* - that dances in the classic style with smooth movements. Noted that those who dance salsa also tend to smoke and drink.

### **Interview #3**

Informal Interview - April 22nd at SIT

Mommadou DIOUF: salsa consumer; mid-40s; math professor; ethnically Serer.

Notes and Select Quotations from the Interview:

Salsa reminds him of sabar music, and also of the Seerer music for the male circumcision ceremony. He says that "[il est] vraiment à l'aise quand [il] écoute la salsa." Today, salsa holds a strong nostalgic draw for him. In just a "morsel" of salsa, he can think fondly of all the memories over the years, specifically those of his youth. Salsa music became popular when he was in his sixth year of school, along with the m'balaax of Youssou N'DOUR.

On the accompanying culture: With salsa, "l'homme respect la fille." Salsa music is both educated and educational, enforcing a certain code of behavior. In requesting a dance, men bow, are very polite and well dressed. This code of dress mirrors a Cuban style with popular style including afros, bell bottom pants, and flared shirts. This code advocates "l'intelligence sur la force" and a need for being "trés correct" in one's dress and behavior. Additionally one "parle doucement" with the "coeur et l'esprit ensemble."

Part of the appeal of salsa is its adherence to certain rules. "Il doit suivre les règles de la musique." There is a consistent, unbreakable pattern of counting and rhythm. Salsa advocates discipline and respect: you cannot dance only for yourself; you must be aware of your partner and what they want from the dance.

Salsa is "une musique pour développement, c'est la rhythm qui essaie d'éduquer la population, c'est un vector de développement."

### **Interview #4**

Informal Interview - at Mirador in Sacre Coeur 3

Astou DIATTA: 4.30

Salsa consumer; late 30s.

Favorite song: Sama Thiély

Recapped reasons for liking salsa. Emphasized slaves and Gorée, how slaves sang and this became the start of Afro-Cuban music.

## Interview #5

Pape FALL- April 25, 2013

Partial transcription by Kebe Balaaman

BOCKENFELD: Donc de ma recherche initial, j'ai trouvé que la salsa était très influent en créant une communauté et une identité au Senegal et que cela s'est passé en même temps que le Senegal définissait activement ce qu'était être indépendant et moderne, après Indépendance.

À ma connaissance, la salsa est (était) populaire pour les raisons suivantes:

- À cause de la nostalgie du passé
- Parce que c'était la première musique au Sénégal (FALL: oui) à être disséminé avec les nouveaux moyens de la communication de masse, oui et parce que
- La salsa n'est pas étrangère; c'était créée par les esclaves africains à Cuba, donc quand elle est arrivée au Sénégal, c'était quelque chose déjà africain et familier
- Elle était créée par les minorités (les esclaves africains et les immigrants aux États-Unis) et elle devenait populaire au Sénégal partiellement avec le mouvement de création d'une identité moderne, mais en même temps une identité moderne qui n'était pas française.

FALL: Bon, vous savez, comme tu viens d'en parler, il y a d'abord l'esclavage. Moi je suis allé en Amérique. En 2001, j'ai été en Amérique Latine. J'ai été à la Havane, à Cuba. J'ai eu à visiter certains instituts et quelques éléments que les colonisateurs avaient récupérés des esclaves, les Musées, je les ai visités. Donc, comme vous le savez, la musique afro-cubaine, on dit la musique afro-cubaine. La Salsa, ce sont les américains qui l'ont nommée comme ça. Mais nous, lorsqu'on commençait à faire cette musique là, on disait la musique afro-cubaine. L'ancien Président du Sénégal Léopold Sédar Senghor disait que si vous égratignez un cubain, vous touchez un nègre ; si vous égratignez un nègre, vous touchez un cubain. Parce qu'avec l'esclavage, partout à Cuba, ceux qui cultivaient les champs d'arachide, les champs de canne-a-sucre, c'étaient des nègres. Donc, l'ancien Président Senghor disait que la musique est nègre. Tu as vu ? Donc c'est à partir de ces champs que les nègres cultivaient, eux quand ils travaillaient dans les champs, quand ils cultivaient les arachides, la canne-à-sucre ils se mettaient à chanter. Vous voyez ? Donc c'est là-bas qu'est née cette musique afro-cubaine. Et maintenant, Cuba étant un pays Espagnol, eux ils parlent Espagnol et certains esclaves parlaient Wolof, et d'autres parlaient Pulaar et quand on est allé au Musée, on a découvert ça. Donc c'est ce qui a amené le rapprochement là. Alors nous, quand Jenny Pacheco est venu à Dakar, à ce moment se stade ne s'appelait pas stade le stade Demba Diop, il s'appelait le stade de L'Amitié. Il a joué là-bas. Et il a demandé aux organisateurs « est-ce qu'à Dakar, au Sénégal, il y a des écoles où on apprend à danser la Salsa ». On lui a dit « Non ! ». Il est venu ici avec son orchestre et il a joué. Et quand les gens dansaient, il a vu qu'ils dansaient si bien, alors il s'est posé cette question. Voilà ! On lui a dit que c'est inné. Il n'y a pas une seule salle où on apprend, c'est inné. C'est dans notre sang. Bon, donc avec les colonisateurs espagnole, et maintenant avec l'esclavage, il y'a eu un mélange. Ce qui a amené la musique afro-cubaine. Bon nous, à bas âge nous avons eu cet amour pour ce type de musique. Moi je suis de Rufisque. Que ce soit à Rufisque, à Dakar, à Kaolack, dans toutes les régions, il y'a eu des orchestres qui jouaient la musique afro-cubaine. Nous, on a grandi avec la Salsa. Donc, c'est ce brassage qui culturel qui a amené la musique afro-cubaine. C'est tellement que dans presque dans beaucoup de boites de nuit on danse la Salsa. Il n'y a pas de quartier ici, de ville ou de région où les gens ne dansent pas la Salsa. Il n'y en a pas. C'est dans le sang. On peut résister, et résister, mais.... «laught». Vous voyez ?

Lorsqu'on a fait le Brésil aussi, quand on jouait, quand les gens venaient, il y'a certains qui étaient pressés, mais d'autres n'étaient pas pressés. Ceux qui connaissaient l'histoire de la musique afro-cubaine eux ils ne demandaient pas. Mais il y'a des brésiliens qui demandaient où est-ce qu'on a appris d'abord. Moi avant d'aller à Cuba en 2001, j'ai joué avec la Orchestra Aragon ici au Centre Culturel français, j'ai joué avec la Orchestra Aragon. Et quand ils ont fini de jouer, eux-mêmes, les musiciens de la Orchestra Aragon, ils m'ont invité dans un restaurant à l'Avenue Ponty en VSD (Vendredi, Samedi, Dimanche) et ils m'ont demandé « est-ce que j'ai une fois fait l'Amérique Latine » J'ai dit « non ». Et ils m'ont alors demandé « où est-ce que j'ai appris l'Espagnol ». Vous savez, ici au Sénégal, dès que tu fréquentes les cours secondaires (après l'entrée en 6<sup>e</sup>), il y'a presque plus de dix langues. Il y'a l'Espagnol, le Portugais, l'Anglais, l'Allemand, l'Arabe, etc., et c'est à toi de faire ton choix. Et moi, comme j'aimais déjà la musique afro-cubaine, j'ai choisi l'Espagnol. Voilà ! J'ai fait 4ans à 5ans d'Espagnol. Mais avant même d'être musicien, j'ai appris ça. A la maison familiale à Fidjemidje, il y'avait un gendarme qui avait loué à la maison avec sa femme, ils étaient deux. Mais lui, il avait des disques, plus de cinquante disques en plateau, tous, la musique afro-cubaine. Je l'empruntais et quand j'écoutais la musique, je relevais les chansons en Espagnol et je les traduisais en Français pour comprendre. J'avais un carnet comme celui-ci, et je notais tout dedans. [(Wolof), Quand je relevais les paroles en Espagnol, je les traduisais en Espagnol]. C'tait pour mieux comprendre les paroles, parce que mes parents n'aimaient pas que je fasse la musique. Donc je les écoutais et je les copiaais. Ensuite je les chantonnais. Et je chantais déjà super bien. Maintenant, il y'avait le chef de quartier à Fidjemidje, il y'avait ces enfants là. Ils aimaient la musique mais ils n'avaient pas les moyens pour acheter du matériel moderne. Donc, les pots de café là, ils les cassaient et ils mettaient des cailloux dedans pour faire des Maracas. Ils prenaient des seaux d'eau là, remplis d'eau, et ils mettaient des calebasses, ou du plastique comme Tumba. [laugh]. Et puis ils faisaient la musique comme ça. En ce moment là, le musicien le plus populaire c'était Laba Socé. Il chantait « El Manisero », « El Caratero », etc. Les gens aimaient beaucoup ça. Une fois il y'a eu des musiciens qui devant partir chez eux au Dahomey, en ce moment ce n'était pas le Bénin, mais c'était le Dahomey, et ils avaient du bon matériel moderne. Maintenant, ils étaient venus tester ces gens là pour leur remettre le matériel mais leurs chanteurs étaient absents parce que l'un travaillait à la Bata, et l'autre aussi, donc ils n'avaient pas vu quelqu'un. Parmi eux, il y'a quelqu'un qui habitait en face de chez moi, il s'appelait Ibou Ndiaye. Il est venu me voir pour que je chante pour l'orchestre. J'ai dit « Non ! MOI Mes parents ne veulent pas que je sois chanteur ». Il me dit « Non, viens nous aider sinon ça n'ira pas (en Wolof). Parce que nous ne voulons pas que le matériel nous échappe ». Finalement, je vais avec lui et je trouve des gens là-bas, c'était des musiciens et aussi le chef d'orchestre. Il lui demande « où est votre chanteur ? » Il lui répond « c'est lui ». Il me demande comment je m'appelle ? Je lui dis « Pape Fall ». « Qu'est-ce que tu veux chanter ? ». Je lui réponds « El Caratero , El Manisero et aussi .....la Cubana». Il dit « d'accord » Et quand j'ai chanté deux morceaux, Il me dit : « mais où est-ce tu as appris l'Espagnol ? » Je lui dis au Lycée ! Je lui dis que l'année dernière, j'avais comme Prof d'Espagnol un guinée qui avait une femme sénégalaise qui travaillait à l'hôpital Fann, Mr Bangoura, mais que cette année, j'ai comme Professeur Melle Bourgi. Il me dit « Ah bon ? Mais ce sont mes collègues ! C'est excellent ! » « Mais depuis quand tu as commencé à faire la musique » ? Il ne se doutait pas que c'était la première fois que je chantais dans un groupe [laugh]. Et avec deux morceaux ; il se demande est-ce que c'est la peine de continuer. Je dis non, on joue le troisième morceau. Et à la fin, ils ont décidé de nous remettre le matériel. Après tous sont partis sauf un, lui il est resté jusqu'à présent, c'était pour superviser le matériel parce qu'il fallait que les gars lui verse de l'argent chaque semaine pour s'approprier le matériel. Maintenant, le problème pour moi c'est de sortir avec ces gens pour aller jouer, parce que mes parents ne veulent pas que je chante. Mais qu'en même, ça nous a permis, parce que en ce moment là, ça fait plus de 25 ans que je joue la musique afro-cubaine. DIEU a fait que l'orchestre a beaucoup voyagé. On a fait deux fois l'Angleterre. J'ai sorti un CD avec la maison XL qui est à Londres, j'ai représenté le Sénégal au Festival « Néné Africa » d'Asterdam. On a fait les pays de la sous-région. On a fait deux fois le Brésil. Et Dieu merci ! Actuellement on s'apprête en

début Descembre, avec le Directeur du Centre culturel français, pour aller à Paris pour faire des concerts là-bas. Donc c'est ça. C'est une musique qu'on a dans le sang. C'est pourquoi l'orchestre, je l'ai appelé « African Salsa ».

BOCKENFELD: Quand est-ce que vous avez commencé à jouer de la salsa?

FALL: J'ai beaucoup écouté la musique Salsa. Mais quand j'ai commencé véritablement ma carrière musicale, c'était le 16 Juin 1976.

BOCKENFELD: Comment est-ce que vous avez commencé à vous intéresser à la salsa?

FALL: Parce que j'ai toujours aimé la musique afro-cubaine. Mes grands frères ils avaient une association qui s'appelait « Les Compagnons » à la rue 17 angle 34 à Fidjemidje actuel Gibraltar ici à Dakar. Donc, eux ils avaient beaucoup des disques de musique cubaine, les « 33 tours ». Ils en avaient beaucoup. Alors quand j'ai quitté ma ville natale Rufisque et je suis venu ici et quand j'ai commencé les cours secondaires et que j'avais choisi l'Espagnol comme langue, dès que j'avais cette musique là, je voulais savoir ce qui se disait dans cette musique là. Donc, j'empruntais un disque « 33 tours », je copiais la chanson en Espagnol, après je traduisais en Français pour comprendre. En même temps, je les chantonnais comme ça car en ce moment je n'avais pas l'idée d'intégrer un groupe pour faire la musique, parce que je ne voulais pas faire de la musique ma profession. Je voulais continuer mes études. Mais malheureusement, par accident, oui accidentellement, voilà, je suis tombé dans le trou. Parce que je voulais aider certains à se procurer du matériel, c'est pourquoi je suis tombé dedans, à force de les aider, leur donner un coup de main, je suis parvenu à faire parti du groupe. Et j'avais le plaisir. Quand j'ai des problèmes, dès que je monte sur scène, j'oublie tout. Moi la musique afro-cubaine, je vis ça intensément. Oui ! Et puis ça me rappelle beaucoup de choses. A mon âge, vraiment quand je monte sur scène, bon....D'abord je pense à mes débuts dans la musique, je pense à Ibra Kassé, on l'appelle le Père de la musique sénégalaise ; là où tout les grands chanteurs de Salsa au Sénégal sont passés : les musiciens comme Pape Seck Dagana, les .....etc. le Miami Club. En même temps, quand je joue comme ça, sur les grandes scènes en Angleterre, en Hollande, en Amérique latine, c'est la passion, quoi ! Oui !

BOCKENFELD: Dans quelles langues chantez-vous? Comment est-ce que vous décidez quoi dire dans quelle langue?

FALL: Non ! Non ! Même dans les morceaux que je joue, je chante en Wolof, et je fais le mixage : Wolof, Français, Espagnol. La musique afro-cubaine, on peut chanter ça dans plusieurs langues. Le fond musical est cubain mais avec une certaine coloration. Soit tu chantes en Wolof, soit tu chantes en Français, soit tu chantes en Espagnol, ou une autre langue. Vous savez, nous les artistes nous sommes des messagers.

-J'ai composé un morceau pour les enfants de la rue. Parce que souvent ils sont laissés pour compte. Ils naissent, ils ne voient pas leurs parents, on les laisse vadrouiller les pieds nus. L'enfant, il doit être éduqué, il a besoin de ses parents, il doit être protégé. Il y'a des ONG qui veillent sur les enfants de la rue. Donc j'ai chanté cette chanson en Français et en Wolof.

- Il y'a d'autres thèmes sur le plan international, comme sur l'intégration africaine et j'ai chanté en Français. Tout est en Français.

-Il y'a aussi un autre thème qui parle des relations entre l'Afrique et l'Amérique latine. L'Afrique et les ghettos noirs, là ça nécessite le Français et l'Espagnol.

-Il y'a aussi le thème sur l'amour que l'enfant doit avoir pour sa mère, pour ses parents.

-Il y'a un autre sur les femmes battues, les femmes qui sont maltraitées par leur mari. La femme est sacrée.

-Le civisme aussi fait partie des thèmes que j'ai chantés, le civisme et la citoyenneté.

-Le paludisme, la malaria, la lutte contre le SIDA.

-L'unicité en Dieu, la foi en Dieu. C'est qui a tout créé ; c'est Dieu qui décide tout. Ici quand quelqu'un décède, on dit que c'est toi alors quand on a foi en Dieu, on la conscience tranquille. Il y'a beaucoup de thèmes.

- Par exemple, le Sénégal et la Gambie ; j'ai un morceau qui s'appelle « Doomu ndey » ou « Sénégalgambie ». Le Sénégal et la Gambie pouvaient bien être un seul peuple. Eux ils parlent Anglais et nous on parle Français, mais c'est le même peuple. C'est les colonisateurs qui nous ont divisés, mais nos dirigeants doivent tout faire pour bien corriger cela. Toutes les langues parlées là-bas sont aussi parlées ici. Même si chacun a son indépendance, on doit être le même peuple. Le plus important c'est le brassage culturel, même s'il y'a une certaine diversité culturelle, mais nous avons beaucoup de chose en commun qui peuvent nous faire avancer ensemble, c'est très important.

L'inspiration là, ça vient quand tu es au bord de la mer, dans la brousse, quand tu te laves, il y'a des notes qui viennent, et si tu n'as pas une bonne mémoire, dès que tu sors tu peux les oublier. Des fois, quand je quitte ici, il m'arrive des fois, j'ai un air et quand le taximan me parle je ne veux pas bavarder pour ne pas oublier. Et dès que j'arrive, je dis au guitariste ou au claviériste joue ça et il nous arrive de créer des morceaux comme ça. La musique afro-cubaine, il n'y arien de tel. Moi, je remercie Dieu d'avoir fait de moi un salsero. Je m'y plais beaucoup et puis avec les inspirations là, je parviens à véhiculer des messages. C'est bien de jouer ce que les gens sentent « dafa am solo quoi », « dafa am solo » (« c'est important quoi, c'est important »).

## Appendix: Log of Hours

## Week One:

Date	Activity	Time Frame	Hours
4.12	Part. Obs. at Selebeyoon	11pm-1:30am	2.5
4.13	Background Research	11am-3pm	4
4.14	Background Research	5pm-7pm	2
	Interview Preparations	7:30pm-9pm	1.5
4.15	Background Research	9am-11am	2
	Meeting with Advisor	4pm-6pm	2
	Interview with Mass Diallo	10pm-12pm	2
4.16	Writing interview questions	11am-2:30pm	2.5
4.17	Background Research	1pm-4pm	3
	Meeting with Advisor	4:30-6pm	1.5
4.18	Secondary Research	12pm-2pm	2
	Work on interview questions	4pm-7pm	3
	Part. Obs. at Selebeyoon	11pm-1am	2
4.19	Interview with M. Diouf	12pm-2pm	2
4.20	Interview with salsa consumer	4pm-6pm	2
	Part. Obs. at small salsa venue	11pm-2am	3
4.21	Organizing information	11am-1:30pm	2.5
	Clarifying topic	3pm-5pm	2
	Revise research plan	6pm-8pm	2

## Week Two:

4.22	Secondary Research	12pm-3pm	3
4.23	Analysis of my results to date	2pm-6pm	4
4.24	Interview preparations	11am-3pm	4
4.25	Interview preparations	3pm-5pm	2
	Interview with Pape Fall	7pm-9pm	2
4.26	Part. Obs. at Chez Iba	1am-3am	2
4.27			
4.28	Transcription of Interview	11am-5pm	6

## Week Three:

4.29	Transcription of Interview	9am-12:30	3.5
	Writing up of background	1pm-6pm	5
4.30	Interview with salsa consumer	10:30pm-11:30pm	1
	Part. Obs. at Mirador	11:30-2:30am	3
5.1	Analysis of Findings	3pm-6pm	3



5.2	Part. Obs. a Mirador	12am-4am	4
5.3			
5.4	Part. Obs. at Adeane	12:30am-4:30am	4
5.5			
Week Four:			
5.6	Secondary Research	10am-12pm	2
	Analysis of my findings	2pm-5pm	3
5.7	Analysis of my findings	10am-12pm	2
	Writing	2am-6pm	4
	Part. Obs. at Mirador	12am-3:30am	3.5
5.8	Writing	11am-6pm	7
5.9	Part. Obs. at Selebeyoon	12am-3:30am	3.5
5.10	Writing	10am-4pm	6
	Meeting with Advisor	6pm-7:30pm	1.5
	Writing	9pm-11pm	2

Total of Hours: 124 hours, 30 minutes.

Appendix: Application for Review of ISP Research with Human Subjects

1. Name: Elizabeth Bockenfeld
  2. Program: National Identity & the Arts in Senegal
  3. Student Phone / Email: (630)251-1292 / liz\_bock@gwmail.gwu.edu
  4. Title of ISP: Adapting & Appropriating Art from Afar: Negotiating a Global Identity Through Popular Culture, A study of salsa in the Senegalese context
  5. Site of ISP: Dakar, Senegal
  6. Funding Source: n/a
  7. ISP Advisor: Abdoulaye Diallo; sociologist; 221-77-411-9008 (cell).
8. Brief description of the purpose of study:  
The study aims to tackle the ways that cross-cultural exchange (as evidenced by salsa in Dakar) is used to negotiate a distinctly Senegalese identity.

9. Brief description of procedures relating to human subjects' participation:
- a. How are participants recruited? (Is an inducement offered?)  
Participants were not reimbursed. They were recruited informally; most of the research occurred over informal discussions.
  - b. What is the age range of the participants?  
Participants ranged from 25-50.
  - c. What is the gender breakdown of participants?  
The male-female ratio of my participants was 3:2.
  - d. What are other characteristics of subjects, including but not limited to institutional affiliation if any?
  - e. What is the number of participants?  
Five.
  - f. If there is a cooperative institution, how was their permission obtained?  
N/A.

What will subjects be asked to do, and/or what information will be gathered? (Append copies of interview guides, instructions, survey instruments, etc.)

- g. If subjects are interviewed, who are the interviewers?  
I was the interviewer.
  - h. In what language(s) will you interview participants?  
French and partial Wolof.
  - i. How will the interviewers be trained?  
N/A.
  - j. What number of times will the intervention be made?  
Interviews were held informally and, while directed, were open to interjections.
10. Protection of human subjects. Before completing this section, you must read and agree to comply with both The SIT Study Abroad Statement of Ethics, SIT Human Subjects Policy, and the program's additional Human Subject Research Guidelines. Have you read and do you agree to comply with the SIT Study Abroad Statement of Ethics, SIT Human Subjects Policy, and the program's additional Human Research Guidelines (attached)?  
Yes I have read them and I agree to comply.

Do subjects risk any stress or harm by participating in this research? If so, why is this necessary?  
How will these issues be addressed? What safeguards will minimize the risks?

- a. How will you explain the research to subjects and obtain their informed consent to participate?  
I asked questions in public spaces where my informants were free to skip a question, ask me a question, and/or walk away at any point.
- b. If subjects are minors or not competent to provide consent, how will it be obtained?  
N/A.
- c. How will subjects be informed that they can refuse to participate in aspects of the study or may terminate participation whenever they please?  
I told them so.
- d. If subjects are students or clients, how will you protect them from feeling coerced due to the (if only perceived) power differential?  
N/A.
- e. How might participation in this study benefit subjects?
- f. Will participation receive a summary of results or other educational material?  
Unfortunately I do not have the resources to translate and distribute my findings. I will however discuss them with my participants.

11. How will the following be protected?

- a. Privacy  
I addressed this with each participant individually. I have omitted their names unless they gave me permission to use it.
- b. Anonymity  
See above.
- c. Confidentiality  
All data not expressly in this document (and approved by participants to be published) will be destroyed.

12. Are there any other details or procedures of the study that should be known by the ISP Program local Review Board, and if so, discuss.

N/A.

By signing below I certify that all of the above information (and that attached) is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and that I agree to fully comply with all the program's ethical guidelines as noted above and as presented in the program and/or discussed elsewhere in program materials. I further acknowledge that I will not engage in ISP activities until such a time that both my ISP proposal as well as my Human Subjects Research application are successful and I have been notified by my Academic Directors to this effect.

- Elizabeth Bockenfeld