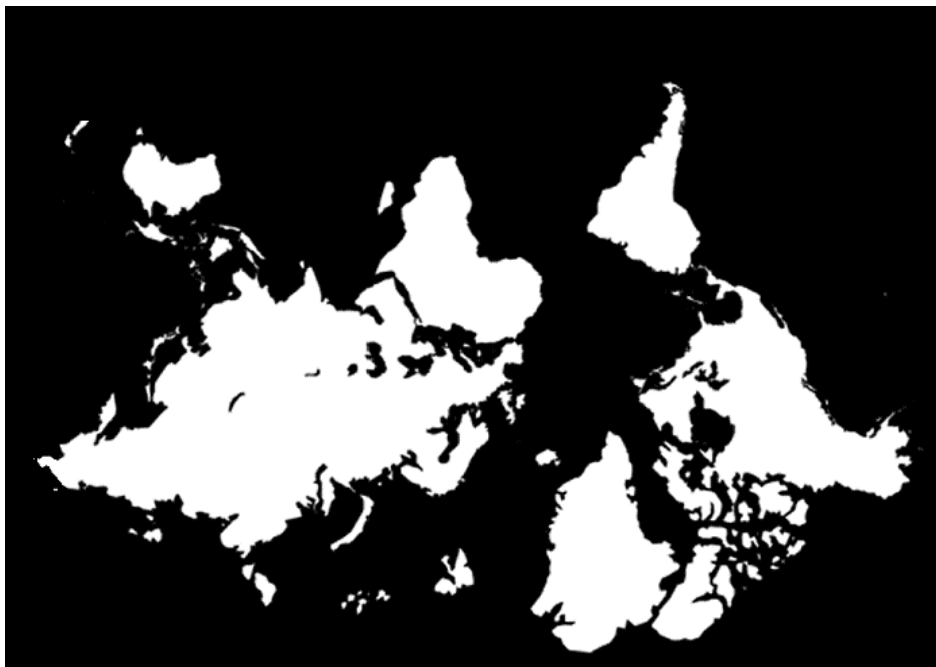


South-South de/postcolonial dialogues

Reflections from encounters between a decolonial
Latin-American and postcolonial Senegal



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“Decididamente, nos habían enseñado (pretenden seguir enseñándonos)
el mundo de cabeza”
Roberto Fernández-Retamar - *Calibán* [1971] (2016, p. 201).

« Je n'ai jamais eu la prétention de faire école, j'ai eu la prétention d'être moi-même,
d'abord, et d'être sûr que je suis moi-même »
Amadou Hampâté Bá - *Sur les traces d'Amkoullel l'enfant Peul* (1998).

Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Abstract..... | iii |
| Preface..... | iv |
| Acknowledgements | vi |
| Table of figures | vii |
| CHAPTER I: THE NEED FOR SOUTH-SOUTH DE/POSTCOLONIAL DIALOGUES | 1 |
| 1.1 Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1.2 The decolonial body of thought | 3 |
| 1.3 A land grabbing: An entry point to south-south de/postcolonial dialogues..... | 9 |
| 1.4 De/postcolonial inquiries | 13 |
| 1.5 Entering the South-South de/postcolonial dialogues | 13 |
| 1.6 Structure of the document..... | 18 |
| CHAPTER II: ENCOUNTERING THE NUANCED DE/POSTCOLONIAL SENEGAL..... | 20 |
| 2.1 Introduction..... | 20 |
| 2.2 The postcolonial Senegal..... | 21 |
| 2.3 Blurring the boundaries among de/postcolonial thought | 37 |
| 2.4 Conclusion | 41 |
| CHAPTER III: LAND GRABBING IN POSTCOLONIAL SENEGAL | 42 |
| 3.1 Introduction..... | 42 |
| 3.2 Senegalese views of a land grabbing case in a postcolonial context | 42 |
| 3.3 Reflections on (im)possibilities for a ‘colonial’ articulation | 55 |
| 3.4 Coloniality of power, knowledge, and being in the land grabbing case | 62 |
| 3.5 Conclusion | 67 |
| CHAPTER IV: EXPLORING DECOLONIALITY | 69 |
| 4.1 Introduction..... | 69 |
| 4.2 Landing decoloniality..... | 69 |
| 4.3 A reconciliation among de/postcolonial critical thought through Fanon..... | 73 |
| 4.4 “Not two but three”: A reflection on being decolonial..... | 75 |
| 4.5 Conclusion | 78 |
| CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS | 79 |
| REFERENCES | 81 |
| ANNEX | 88 |

Abstract

This research is about south-south de/postcolonial dialogues emerging from a critical reflection on my position in the global geo-politics of knowledge. I draw primarily on the Latin American decolonial framework, and on the work of de/postcolonial critical thinkers in postcolonial Senegal and Africa. My research is based on a five months ethnography in Senegal. First, I explore south-south de/postcolonial dialogues by analysing my encounters with the nuanced de/postcolonial Senegalese critical thought, which reveals the existence of an intense critique to ‘the something colonial’ that remains in postcolonial Senegal and suggests the necessity of blurring the boundaries among de/postcolonial thought. Second, I use the land grabbing case of Senhuile-Sénéthanol in the Ndiaël in northern Senegal to explore further this critique. In this case study, I explore how Senegalese perceive land grabbing in their postcolonial context, and whether they view it - or not - as a colonial phenomenon. I use the decolonial framework to interpret their views as well as to explore the coloniality of power-knowledge-being. This leads me to suggest that the decolonial body of thought is complementary and enriches analyses influenced by political economy to understand the coloniality of contemporary land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal. Aspects such as pejorative and racialized open discourses towards the affected population in the name of development gain relevance when using the decolonial body of thought. Finally, based on my encounters with postcolonial Senegal, I reflect on lessons around decoloniality, by focusing on decoloniality as an everyday ethics rather than as an unfulfilled and impossible project. I end the thesis exploring the convergences between de- and postcolonial thought, and a reflection on the confrontational aspects of the decolonial body of thought.

Keywords: (de)coloniality, decolonial thought, postcolonial thought, Senegal, land grabbing.

Preface

As a graduate in forestry sciences from the urban capital of Lima, Peru, I immediately went to the Amazon rainforest to work, where I became fascinated with botanical and ecological voyages. However, as my time was passing by in the Amazonian region, I started talking more and more with people than with plants, from the utilitarian role of forests and cognitive interpretations of the chaotic nature, to listening to local dwellers' needs, plights, and long-time struggles. Such time was marked by personal social encounters, although the 'social' had not been absent during my childhood and adolescence. Back at my parents', I grew up among sparks from the Latin-American theology and philosophy of liberation; the Cuban revolution and Peruvian leftist initiatives and movements in the 1960s and 1970s where family members took part; the guerrilla war of Ernesto Guevara dying in Bolivia; the incommensurable piles of 'social' books in the living room blocking the entrance of the house; my parent's magic stories before going to sleep expressing all the human and non-human condition around feelings, comedies, sufferings, social struggles and liberations; and the class-struggles songs played in cassettes on and on while having breakfast before going to school. Nevertheless, it was precisely at a remote biological station in early June 2009 where I can locate a foundational moment to me. With efforts to hold the frequency in a military radio, I heard about the tragic end to 55 days of Amazonian mobilizations: 35 people died in the Northeast Amazon. It was there where I vividly experienced the racialization of the 'Other' through pejorative representations, such as the labelling of indigenous population as 'citizens of second class' by the Peruvian President Alan García, and the disavowing of indigenous' customary lands considered as 'unproductive', 'wasted' spaces blocking the national 'development'. I silently started formulating overarching questions to myself regarding the idea of development, development by who and from whom, as well as the clash among traditions and modernity. I realised that these clashing images repeat on and on also in Latin America. In my personal search for answers out of a classroom space, I accidentally came across two books that contributed to my critical thinking: *Witness to Sovereignty: Essays on the Indian Movement in Latin America* (2006) by the Peruvian anthropologist Stefano Varese, and *El Laberinto de la Soledad* (1999) by the Mexican poet Octavio Paz. Both somehow linking the idea that independences from colonial powers in Latin America mainly brought the colonized *mestizo/criollo* class to occupy the position of the former colonizer. This idea permeated deep in my way of reading and feeling the 2008-2009 Peruvian-Amazonian crisis, and somehow gave me an initial clarification to why the president García was openly denigrating Amazonians for the sake of development and public interests not for Peru, but for Lima. I learnt that something unresolved with our colonial past remains.

A few years later, I arrived at the Wageningen university to follow the MDR master programme because of its good linkages and introduction to social sciences for people with natural sciences backgrounds like me. During my first week of classes, I was asked to prepare an oral presentation for an introductory course to sociology. I remember choosing the work *Histories of development, predicaments of modernity: thinking about globalization from critical development studies perspectives* by Arturo Escobar (2010). I thought that maybe by reading it I could get some clues of the genealogy and history regarding what development taught me in the Amazon. A vision from the south. There, I found a better articulation on those previous Latin-American critical thoughts that were floating around. I found in Escobar's piece a proper name and structuration of such Latin American critical thinking

known as modernity/(de)coloniality. The vitality of this school seduced me and triggered my will to explore more its propositions and contributions through a practical case in a field research. This is how I ended trying to link to somehow my past experiences among land struggles and rural population with the propositions of such critical thinking. I realized that I needed to cross the Atlantic Ocean to face, in the living experience of my Peruvian existence confronted with Europe, the reaffirmation of such Latin American decolonial thoughts that started to generate few years ago, not embracing fundamentalism but the very act to critically think and dare to change the order of the things.

Studying in an international environment at Wageningen gave me the opportunity to expand my geographical boundaries. I found Global South students sharing similar realities to the ones I lived in the Peruvian Amazon, such as the on-going social conflicts related to development in rural African areas and their colonial past and post-colonial current situations. These encounters opened geographically my initial questions born in the Peruvian Amazon and Latin America, and pushed me to look for those African critical thinkers addressing the essence of development, modernity, and the tremendous impact of colonialism in their societies. When selecting a place for my research I became fascinated with Liberia, since it represented all these '*Orientalism*' frames put and constructed by the West to me, "The Horror! The horror!" as Joseph Conrad put it for somewhere in the Congo. However, it turned to be more difficult than expected to grab the essence of a decolonial thought, when finding Liberians seeing themselves as indirect colonized beings, in addition to the still vivid memories of the recent two civil wars. I decided to look for a more 'easy' case for my natural-social science transition, which the MDR program intends to. I decided to move to Senegal. Senegal constituted one of the first African places to be in contact with the European explorers, and in fact the city of Saint Louis became the first French African settlement back in 1659. I also found some contemporary pejorative rhetoric from the former colonial power, France. The discourse of Nicolas Sarkozy in Dakar on July the 26th in 2007, arguing that Africa had not entered in history yet enough, and the François Hollande's discourse on November the 29th in 2014, arguing that the French language gave the capacity of critical thinking to Africans to arrive to their independences, depict a persisting north-south colonial rhetoric. I remembered asking to myself, if such discourses from former colonizer-colonized occur in the XXI century, would it be possible to find the same development rhetoric I did for the Amazonian conflict in Peru but this time within the postcolonial Senegalese society? Would it be again in the name of development neglecting rural population their lands, voices, and their very existences? If so, wouldn't be necessary to talk, share, and discover among 'former' colonized beings? What a Latin-American like myself could learn/feel/share in another colonially touched place like Senegal? How our emerging south-south de/postcolonial dialogues would look like? The encounter and dialogues present in this document are based in such evolution of personal thoughts in almost a decade. They are part of a personal maturation process nurtured from the confluences of different historic-geographical vivid experiences, painful questions nailing the core of our contemporary societies and their injustices, and of course, dreams of liberation.

Dakar, 14/04/2017

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To all the Senegalese I met struggling, enjoying, dreaming, proposing, (de)constructing, in their own ways to decolonise the world(s). We will meet soon.

Inch Allah!

Table of figures

| | |
|--|----|
| Figure 1: Overview of the Ndiaël reserve and its categorization..... | 11 |
| Figure 2: <i>Déclassement</i> of the Ndiaël reserve and current location of the Senhuile-Sénéthanol project..... | 12 |
| Figure 3: Poster of the commemoration of the 30 th Anniversary of the death of Cheikh Anta Diop (2016) somewhere in the UCAD, Dakar..... | 30 |
| Figure 4: Poster of an event of the Block Anti Franc-CFA..... | 32 |
| Figure 5: Encounter in Dakar at the UCAD. Lecture for Postcolonial discourses course..... | 35 |
| Figure 6: Poster calling to vote for Emmanuel Macron for 2017 French Presidential elections in Dakar..... | 37 |
| Figure 7: Tangible impacts of Senhuile-Sénéthanol, route Diourki1-Tordonaube, Ndiaël..... | 44 |
| Figure 8: Collective imaginary of ‘foreigners’ arriving to Senegalese lands..... | 50 |
| Figure 9: Newspaper subtitle: “Installation of Senhuile at Ngnith. The state, godfather of a life-sized spoliation” | 51 |
| Figure 10: Newspaper subtitle: “Imprisoned life, site militarisation, imminent property conflict. How the State has destroyed lives in northern Senegal” | 52 |

CHAPTER I: THE NEED FOR SOUTH-SOUTH DE/POSTCOLONIAL DIALOGUES

“My final prayer: O my body, make of me always a man who questions!”
Frantz Fanon – *Black skins white masks* (2008, p. 181).

1.1 Introduction

Latin-American critical thinking is booming. ‘*Calibán*’¹ keeps challenging the conventional understanding on development while suggesting projects more aligned to local idiosyncrasies and life worlds (Escobar, 2012a, 2016). The aim is clear, to transcend the exhausted modern paradigm in the 21st century (Dussel 2015; Escobar, 2007; Grosfoguel, 2016; Santos, 2014; Quijano, 2007), because behind clashes regarding development there is the hidden notion of ‘modernity’ (Dussel, 2010; Escobar, 2010). For critical thinkers of Latin-America, modernity is the influence of a pure Eurocentric perspective coming into existence at the expense of colonialism (Dussel, 2000, 2002, 2015; Grosfoguel, 2016; Quijano, 2007). To understand European modernity, one needs to explore its dark-constitutive side known as ‘coloniality’ (Mignolo, 2007, 2014; Torres-Maldonado, 2007, 2016), the remaining after achieving the transition from colonies to republics. Coloniality emerged in 1492 (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) and represents what Quijano (2000a) put it as: “for a very long time we have been what we are not, what we never should have been and what we never will be” (p. 222). Because global coloniality emerged a decolonial option or turn, or a de-linking project is imperative (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2007). From the Latin-American standpoint, the decolonial perspective aims: first, to expose the reality of coloniality and, second to document the liberation struggles that enable us to envisage a decolonial future.

The African critical thinking is similarly arguing to change the modern paradigm (Césaire, 2000; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a, 2015c). Even though the Latin American school has coined the term ‘coloniality’, continental and diaspora authors such as Césaire, Fanon, Nkrumah, and wa Thiong’o were already dealing and referring to its essence long before, when arguing for a decolonization of the consciousness/mind and going beyond the national liberation struggles (Chiumbu, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a; Wilder, 2015). Coloniality in Africa could be understood as a ‘dismemberment’, which is an act of ‘absolute social engineering’ going beyond the physical fragmentation and digging into the colonisation of the mind, and therefore the need for struggles to ‘Re-membering’ according to wa Thiong’o (as cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b). Because of colonial impacts, decolonial thinking has been relevant for Africa along its social and cultural movements, especially because coloniality still articulates the modes of operation and appropriation of restructuring Africa as colonialism did (Sithole, 2014). Africanists movements such as Ethiopianism, Garveyism, Negritude, Pan-Africanism, and Black Consciousness Movement were indeed articulated by a decolonial horizon (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b). The decolonial turn in Africa is an enterprise

¹ Largely analysed Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* (1611), here I use the sense poet Roberto Fernández-Retamar gave to *Calibán* in 1971: “Our symbol is not Ariel, like *Rodó* believed, but *Calibán*. [...] *Próspero* invaded the island, killed our ancestors, made *Calibán* his slave and taught him his language to understand him. What is our history, what is our culture, if not the history, if not the culture of *Calibán*? [Translation mine]” (2016, pp. 155-156). *Calibán* here becomes collective to me.

yet to be achieved (Kane, 1996; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a; wa Thiong'o, 1986, 1993, 2009a, 2009b; Nkrumah, 1965, 1973; Sarr, 2016a; Sithole, 2014).

If colonialism touched Latin America and Africa in different intensities and times as Mignolo (2014) suggests, on the one hand, and if Latin-American and African scholars are claiming to transcend the essence of modernity/coloniality on the other, I believe the dialogue among decolonial seekers becomes relevant threefold.

First, it depicts precisely what Dussel (2015) argues on south-south dialogues between those 'beings' pushed away by European modernity (centre) and dwelling in its 'exteriority'². This exteriority in a Dusselian sense should not be seen as pure negativity but rather positively as those traditions alive, resisting, and distinct to the modern/colonial centre. For Dussel critical thinkers also exist in a sort of 'frontier' among their own culture and the European modernity. In the sense of dialogues Dussel states that: "With the cross-fertilization of the critical thinkers of the periphery and the 'frontier' spaces as a result of a dialogue; by being able to organize networks of discussion of their specific problems, the process of self-assertion becomes a weapon of liberation" [...] The dialogue, then, among critical thinkers of those traditions is not modern, not even postmodern, but strictly transmodern, because as we have argued, the localization of this creative effort does not come from the interior of modernity, but from its exterior, or even better from its 'frontier' [*Translation mine*]" (pp. 293-294). I embrace Dussel's idea of exteriority and how dialogues from here become an urgent task before passing into an undeniable dialogue south-north, and to overcome modernity/coloniality, as an attempt for a trans-modern and pluriversal *époque*.

Second, speaking with decolonial jargons becomes already a 'refreshing' and alternative project for debates around modernity, globalization, and development according to Escobar (2007). It becomes 'refreshing' as Fanon (2001) would said: "Let us decide not to imitate Europe; let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction" (p. 252).

Third, today the Global North sees the South as a crucial generator of critical thinking, theories, realities, and worlds that are relevant to study in benefit of 'all' humanity (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2012). Put it in another way, the Global North has been provincialized (Escobar, 2010; Santos, 2014) and it is the South that is now posing the questions today (Mbembe, 2013, 2016). Importantly, following Santos' (2014) 'Epistemologies of the South' and Grosfoguel's (2007) 'locus of enunciation', I understand the Global South not in its 'geographical' sense, but from where the critiques to the modern/colonial paradigm are posed.

There are no scripted or fixed decolonial menus for decolonial world(s). Positioning myself in this Dusselian exteriority, and from there seek to dialogue with Others from the 'exterior' to explore the 'something colonial' that remains, as well as the potentialities/resonances of the Latin American decolonial body of thought in other southern contexts, become truly attempts for these south-south decolonial³ dialogues.

² As Ciccariello-Maher (2017, pp. 107-113) has well explored in his *Decolonizing Dialectics*, Dussel's exteriority emerges in the task of decolonizing the concept of exteriority formulated by Emmanuel Levinas, so exteriority as a critique towards the colonial paradigm of 'totality' that attempts to group *all* in the *same*. Dussel's exteriority is a rejection to the rejection of alterity and difference, is an historical appeal/recognition to the *Other*, not as an abstract individual 'face of the *Other*' as Levinas would argue but the *Other* as collective.

³ At this point, I use 'decolonial' because my original approach was to *only* dialogue with those embracing the decolonial body of thought. Nevertheless, the literature review for the African critical thought made me aware of the divergences/convergences among de/postcolonial schools, as well as my own personal encountering with postcolonial Senegal, opening these dialogues from 'decolonial' to 'de/postcolonial'.

1.2 The decolonial body of thought

Latin America

“[...] Y preguntó al español qué es lo que comía, responde en lengua de español y por señas que le apuntaba que comía oro y plata [...]”

Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala – *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* [1615] (1980a, pp. 266-269).

“Con espanto y tantos tenientes destruye las provincias y le quitan cuanto tienen a los indios, no pudiendo poder demandar teniente ni alcalde mayor sino solo a Su Majestad y su Gobierno y su Consejo Real en el mundo y en este reino”

Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala – *Nueva corónica y buen gobierno* [1615] (1980b, p. 141).

The Latin American body of thought was coined in the late 90s as Modernity/Coloniality and Decoloniality (MCD⁴). It is a body of thought built on the work of mainly Latin America scholars with influences ranging from the dependency theory, the liberation theology, philosophy of liberation and the post-development thinking. Its first main thesis is to put modernity as the influence of a pure Eurocentric perspective coming into existence at the expense of colonialism. The Latin-American decolonial body of thought pretends to be a paradigm ‘otherwise’ that runs in parallel to the European (internal) modernist narrative, this is to position itself more as an ‘exteriority’ rather than a Latin-American contribution inserted within modernity as usual (Escobar, 2007). A second thesis is that to understand modernity we need to explore its dark and constitutive side known as coloniality (Mignolo, 2007, 2014; Torres-Maldonado, 2007, 2016), and basically how modernity became a powerful construction coordinating well the domination in the dimensions of power, knowledge, and being under a colonial world system that emerged in 1492. A third thesis is to seek for decoloniality to challenge the modern/colonial constructs that exist in postcolonial societies.

To elaborate on the first thesis, I refer to Escobar (2007) and the work of Dussel (2000, 2002, 2015) who argue that visions of modernity are contested. On the one hand, there is an intra-modern view of modernity that historically locates its origins around the 17th century with processes such as the enlightenment as the cultural domain of Europe positioning in the centre of world market. Modernity in this sense is characterized by the nation-state, the age of reason, and the Cartesian idea of man/nature separation, as foundations for ‘equality and freedom’ for mankind. This understanding of modernity was adopted as ‘universal’. On the other hand, there is an external view to the modernity described above. This ‘decolonized’ perspective locates the modernity origins with the Conquest of America because it was from there that the creation of the Europe’s ‘Other’ happened. So, modernity appeared with colonialism and the making of the capitalist world system. My research locates in this second perspective.

On coloniality of power, Quijano (2000a, 2007) states that there is a confluence between the European colonial domination and modernity, arguing that the Eurocentered

⁴ I will use from now on the idea of decolonial Latin-American thought instead of MCD. My main motive is that the group separated in the late 2000s, although the critical work from its original members is becoming more and more prolific. I believe that the use of ‘decolonial Latin-American body of thought’ does better justice to all people in Latin-America contributing to the maturation of such critical thinking, which as the same decolonial authors argue, dates to the very crucial 1492.

colonialism that conquered the world implied a social, political, cultural, domination. The political domination was defeated during decolonization processes but Western imperialism took its place due to the continuity of the specific colonial structure of power, or matrix of power, labelled as coloniality of power. So, coloniality of power is the global hegemonic system that persists decolonization achievements (Escobar, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Quijano, 2007). Two main axes of power are key to understanding the coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000a, 2007). One was a new structure of control of labour and its resources based on capitalist relationships. The other was the establishment of social categories such as the 'racial' or the 'ethnic', which can be found in the historical colonization of the imagination of the dominated. Overall, coloniality of power allows to understand how people live in a system of inequality and asymmetry traversed through the enactment of a modern/colonial power. For Quijano (2007), that explains why the myriad of indigenous groups in Latin America, with respective own names, were located under the reductive term of 'Indians'.

Coloniality of knowledge appeared through the systematic repression/genocide to beliefs, ideas, modes of knowing, and practices of the colonized that were not useful to the global colonial domination (Quijano, 2007). For Escobar (2007) it explains why 'high' cultures were reduced into the realms of illiteracy and peasantry, and at the same time why the European culture was made seductive for the colonized due to the possibility to access to power (Quijano, 2007). The work of Grosfoguel (2007, 2011, 2013) is helpful contextualizing historically the coloniality of knowledge. Firstly, with Descartes to locate what he calls the emerge of the 'non-situated', 'universal', and 'God-eyed-view knowledge', when a 'westernized-arrogant man' with attributes of God became able to produce scientific knowledge by himself as the only one capable to achieve universal truths (and not God, not women, not Africans, not American indigenous). The tragedy that coloniality of knowledge represents, according to Grosfoguel, is when this 'man' claimed universality without announcing a (his) locus of enunciation. So, a non-situated 'ego-politics of knowledge' instead of an explicit recognition of existing 'geographies of knowledge'. Secondly, with the missing link between the "I think, therefore I am" (*ego cogito*) of Descartes, with the "I conquer, therefore I am" (*ego conquiro*) presented by Dussel. For Grosfoguel the link is the logic of genocide/epistemicides produced from the "I exterminate, therefore I am" (*ego extermino*). The epistemicides to Muslims, Indians, Africans, and European women became "the socio-historical condition of possibility for the transformation of the "I conquer, therefore I am" into the epistemic racism/sexism of the "I think, therefore I am"" (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 77). Overall, coloniality of knowledge helps to understand how the Other's knowledge has been pushed aside from what is reliable, and in turn labelled inferior *vis-à-vis* superior modern European science. Unveiling coloniality of knowledge is debunking epistemological supremacies and the politics of one-sided knowledge production, as well as a critical engagement with the 'who' generates 'what' knowledge and for 'what' purposes.

Coloniality of being refers to the 'lived experience' of colonialism through which humanity is questioned (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, 2016). This is, in a myriad of ways, the experiencing of the Fanonian ""Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened!" Frightened! Frightened! Now they were beginning to be afraid of me. I made up my mind to laugh myself to tears, but *laughter had become impossible [Emphasis mine]*" (Fanon, 2008, p. 84). Coloniality of being is the ontological dimension of coloniality (Escobar, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2007). For Maldonado-Torres (2007) Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* depicts this sub-ontological classification of beings: "Beneath the 'I think' we can read 'others do not think', and behind the 'I am' it is possible to locate the philosophical justification for the idea that

‘others are not’ or do not have being” (p. 252). Grosfoguel (2013) citing Maldonado-Torres (2008), argues that the origins of coloniality of being can be traced back to the first racist debate in modern history when discussing about Indians having a soul or not in the period of 1492-1552. Based on Columbus’ entries on his diaries “...It appeared to me that they had no sect” the logic that follows was: “1) if you do not have religion, you do not have a God; 2) if you do not have a God, then you do not have a soul; and 3) if you do not have a soul, you are not human but animal-like” (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 81). The idea of lack of soul justified, in the eyes of God, the enslavement of Indians and their incorporation into the labour process on the one hand. On the other hand, the enslavement of Indians was a sin in the eyes of God, so it was better to make them Christians. This second position won in the Valladolid trial in 1552 and Indians were forced into the *Encomiendas*⁵ system in Latin America, while Africans replaced them in the slave trade. For Maldonado-Torres (2014, 2016), Indians appeared as the ‘first modern identity’ expressing the shift from theological debates to modern anthropological debates arguing different degrees of humanity depicting the very essence of the coloniality of being. Even considered as humans, the Indian’s subjectivity considered as *tabula rasa* persisted. Africans ended up involved in the same subjection and questioning of humanity, also passing from a theological debate (‘Moor’ as Muslim and non-Christians as pagans and infidels), to a racial condemnation with the emerge of the ‘negro’. Skin colour and not faith became the marker of subjection (Maldonado-Torres, 2014). Overall, coloniality of being helps to understand how (sub) humanity, in the Fanonian sense of the *wretched or damné*, is put into question through different modern/colonial markers.

For Latin-Americans, the liberation option of decoloniality is different than decolonization because it deals with the reductionist imaginary of colonialism as merely a finished episode. A decolonial struggle *must* articulate the decoloniality of power, knowledge, and being because they intermingle among each other, otherwise the success in only one of them becomes a pyric victory (N. Maldonado-Torres, personal communication, July 12, 2016⁶). Just to illustrate as Maldonado-Torres (2007) formulated, a decolonial turn seeks to bring to the fore the invisible, the *damné*, by analysing the mechanisms that create such invisibility (in a sense decoloniality of power/knowledge), a task that to some extent may need the reflections of the ‘invisible’ themselves (a decoloniality of being).

Africa

« *Étrange aube ! Le matin de l’Occident en Afrique noire fut constellé de sourires, de coups de canon et de verroteries brillantes. [...]*

Le résultat fut le même cependant partout.

Ceux qui avaient combattu et ceux qui s’étaient rendus, ceux qui avaient composé et ceux qui s’étaient obstinés se retrouvèrent le jour venu, recensés, répartis, classés, étiquetés, conscrits, administrés »

Cheikh Hamidou Kane - *L’aventure Ambiguë* (1961, pp. 59-60).

⁵ For Grosfoguel (in a class at the Decolonizing Knowledge and Power summer school, held in Barcelona, July 11, 2016) the ‘*Encomienda*’ began with the conquest of ‘*Al-Ándalus*’ and not with the conquest of America. That is, there was a conceptualization and put in practice before arriving to America. *Encomienda* was a form of forced labour where the “*Encomendero*” put in forced labour the *Moriscos* but also controlled their conversion to Christianity.

⁶ Out of a classroom space during the Decolonizing Knowledge and Power summer school, held in Barcelona, July 12, 2016.

« Je dis qu'après avoir décolonisé le pays, il faut à présent décoloniser les esprits »
Cheikh Hamidou Kane - *Les Gardiens du Temple* (1996, p. 173).

I follow Ali Mazrui (as cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a, pp. 485-486) review on the different schools understanding the impacts of colonialism in Africa as an entry point to engage with the African decolonial body of thought. First, the episodic school considers colonialism as an event/episode with “transitional rather than long-standing” impacts in the 1884-1960 period. Second, the epic school states that colonialism is equivalent to impacts of epic propositions. This second perspective considers colonialism as a structural and designed project that contributed to the imposition and permeation of a Euro-North American-centric modernity. So, this perspective understands colonialism incorporating Africans into the capitalist world economy through the Atlantic slave trade; the Africa’s exclusion from the post-1648 Westphalian sovereign state system, its partitioning in the 1884-1885 Berlin Conference, and its incorporation into the post-1945 United Nations sovereignty state system; and Africa’s incorporation into Euro-North American-centric cultures, languages, international laws, and modern technological age. So, colonialism cannot be understood merely as an ‘episode’, but as a “global process of *dismemberment* [*Emphasis mine*], subjectivisation, domination, control and exploitation” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b, p. 23). I embrace the African epic school as an entry point to the African decolonial body of thought.

By considering the long-standing impacts of colonialism in Africa, it is possible to grasp the long tradition of decolonial thinking in key academic works on continental Africa and its diaspora. For instance, from understanding the dehumanization of the colonized-colonizer (Fanon, 2001, 2008; Mamdani, 2001); exposing the ‘lie’ of colonisation presented as a civilizational model (Césaire, 2000); unmasking neo-colonialism (Nkrumah, 1965, 1973; Ly, 1981); seeking for Africa’s reposition in World’s history while decolonizing European epistemological privileges, and deconstructing imposed narratives and inventions (C.A. Diop, 1954; B.B. Diop, 2005, 2014; Rodney, 1973; Mudimbe, 1988; Sarr, 2016a); exposing the failures of nationalist movements in their decolonization struggles and the need for the decolonization of the consciousness (wa Thiong’o, 2009a; 2009b; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, 2015a, 2015b); and seeking and articulating the self-assertion of the African subjects, anti-Eurocentrism, and humanism desires, around Africanists movements such as Ethiopianism, Garveyism, Negritude, African Personality, Pan-Africanism, and Black Consciousness Movement (Sithole, 2014; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b, 2015d). Finally, the African decolonial body of thought gets nurtured as well in the endless anti-colonial efforts and political activism from Edward Wilmot Blyden, through Ahmed Sékou Touré, Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, Patrice Lumumba, Thomas Sankara, Amilcar Cabral, Steve Biko, Nelson Mandela, to many others.

Decoloniality, as a way of thinking-acting decolonially in Africa today challenges the episodic view of colonialism because it seeks to understand what remains after the ‘myths’ of fully achieved decolonization. It defies the presence of what Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015b) calls the ‘metaphysical empire’ that represents the legacy of colonialism today, and deals with how ‘dismembered people’ can be ‘re-membered’ (wa Thiong’o, 2009b). In nutshell decoloniality in Africa is: “A new base by the excluded and subordinated subjectivities from which to launch themselves into a new world order that is humane and inclusive” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b, p. 22).

After a long process of literature review, I depicted some similar elements between the African and Latin-American decolonial body of thought. This is well represented by

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015b) who states that decoloniality in Africa needs to deal with colonialism that combines a domination among power, knowledge and subjectivities. Likewise, this is a clear link to the Latin-American positioning regarding the liberation in these three realms all together (Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Furthermore, on (de)coloniality of knowledge, African scholars have worked and claimed for the decolonising of the Westernised universities. The Africa Decolonial Research Network (ADERN) at the University of South Africa (UNISA) depicts this effort, when working on history, genealogies, and practicalities of the African decolonial thinking. Scholars from ADERN have co-authored publications and contributed jointly to annual decolonial summer schools in Europe and South Africa with their decolonial peers from Latin-America. The student movement of Rhodes Must Fall were led by the motto of 'decolonizing' the university in 2015 in South Africa in a post-Apartheid context. Regarding (de)coloniality of being, African scholars claim to have engaged with it from the vantage point of the 'African personality' and 'Negritude', and it is through these movements that they have searched for the restoration of denied ontological realms and sovereign subjectivities, trying to make sense of what was left behind by the act of 'dismemberment' wrought by colonialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b). Finally, the Martinican Frantz Fanon with his theorization on ontological disqualifications done by a colonised world cut in 'two' (with zones of being/non-being), emerges himself as a theoretical-geographical 'bridge' among Latin-American and African critical thinkers to address still colonised realities.

Decolonial? Postcolonial?

As a Latin-American with a 'decolonial' jargon and positioning, and when trying to enter in dialogue with an African postcolonial context, I consider important to expose briefly the debate among de/postcolonial approaches.

Among the convergences Bhabra (2014) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015b) argue that both tend to challenge the historical narratives emanating from Europe. Both contest and unmask colonial 'inventions' of the self and the other, and defy the colonial world order established by European empires without falling in radical fundamentalisms. Lastly, both approaches allow 'universality' to become accountable (Mbembe, 2007b).

Divergences are several. Firstly, an historical-theoretical differentiation. Postcolonial studies locate its origins around the 18th (Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha - India) and the 19th century (Edward Said - Middle East), both emerging as intellectual movements focusing mainly on the material, the cultural, and the socio-economic. The decolonial body of thought locates its origins in the conquest of the Americas and its formative role in European modernity in the 15th century (Bhabra, 2014). The critique among decolonial authors such as Grosfoguel in MAEID (2014), is that considering only the 18th-19th century, the postcolonial school appears as a critique to the modernity/colonialism relationship, considered as a simultaneous process but not constitutive one from another. For him and decolonials, postcolonial scholars seem to neglect what happened from 1492 to the 18th-19th century, so decolonial claim to emerge from such historical omission (Asher, 2013). For instance, Cameroonian Mbembe's (2013) genealogy of postcolonial thinking considers a foundational moment in postcolonial studies the appearance of the 'high theory' in 1980s with Said's *Orientalism*, while ironically neglecting at the same time all the critical-theoretical work done by Latin-Americans reflecting from their own postcolonial situation.

Ironically, this occurs even when he argues that the postcolonial critique is a result of the circulation of knowledge among continents and their different antiimperialist traditions (Mbembe, 2013, p. 81).

Secondly, an epistemological differentiation. The decolonial school claims to have different 'sources' that emanate from European modernity. This is an attention to the cosmovisions of exploited and marginal groups, the Fanonian *damné* in a nutshell, and not from privileged modern institutions like in postcolonial studies (Asher, 2013; Mignolo, 2007). This approach of 'from without' resonates with Dussel's (2002, 2015) idea of 'exteriority' of the modern/colonial paradigm of totality, which consider postmodernists and postcolonials not really 'transcending' but remaining as the last stage of Western modernity. In this sense, Grosfoguel in MAEID (2014) and Mignolo (2007) have showed how the main postcolonial contributors have followed 'mainly' European authors in their seminal works. These are Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, and Homi Bhabha 'limiting' themselves to Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan respectively. For decolonials, Europeans critical thinkers obviously need to enter in the conversation, but not anymore as the 'centre' or the only possible way to pose relevant critiques. Among postcolonials, this becomes contradictory and problematic when Mbembe (2013, 2016) for example calls for an epistemic decentring while using mainly 'northern' authors.

Thirdly, for postcolonials the colonial experience is generalized, universalized and assumed to be homogeneous. No internal differences in the global south are documented and their authors speak about 'the' postcolonial subject or 'the' postcolonial experience (Marzagora, 2016). For decolonials there is no 'the' decolonial school, since it is a heterogeneous body of thought, and using 'the' school becomes a co-opted school by the colonial/universalist approach (MAEID, 2014).

The de/postcolonial debate in Africa has importance to my own geographical influences and positioning, which must be read as decolonial and Latin-American. Decolonials in Africa claim that their contributions are embedded in a longer tradition and they are not part of the proliferation of the 'posts' (postcolonialism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism) (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b). For Marzagora (2016), in the same line, the postcolonial school seeks to deconstruct Europe (and its unified subject and knowledge) and not Africa, which in turns may explain why it has not spread widely among the African academia. For her Africans are more involved into their own fundamental ontological, epistemological, and ethical questions, topics overlooked by the 'posts'. Omeje (2015) on the other hand, argues that Africans have been influenced by the postcolonial school, conceptually and ideologically, to unveil colonial discourses around Africa.

I continue with Marzagora's (2016) genealogy to grasp the current African de/postcolonial positioning, which I complement with insights from Mbembe (2007a, 2007b, 2013). Marzagora analysed the African scholar's position since the 60s-70s, where 'nativism' was central to regain and rebuild the African subjectivity, history, and humanity. African personality, Negritude, Pan-Africanism, and Afrocentrism, all examples of the African decolonial body of thought presented above depict such idea of nativism that took a paramount role on national liberation struggles. During the 80s-90s, poststructuralism and postcolonialism started to permeate African scholars, leading to an attention to the internal African agency, process that became favoured by the disillusion with nationalisms. From 2000s onwards, the postcolonial position has expressed through what Tuakli-Wosornu (2005) summarised as 'Bye-Bye Babar' or 'Afropolitan', which Mbembe (2007a, 2013) has further conceptualized as 'Afropolitanism'.

I use the Afropolitanism idea in this review 'only' as an example to show the de/postcolonial tensions. For postcolonials, Afropolitanism highlights the multicultural, fluid, and globalized features of current African subjects and identities in a continuum (Eze, 2014). I would argue a 'right' recognition of the endless blending of Africa into the world. Furthermore, afropolitanism criticizes the nostalgia for pure precolonial scenarios, stating ultimately that traditions do not exist so the need to embrace a cosmopolitan view. Finally, it sees nativism as the cause of violence, conflict, and genocides in Africa, while condemning the collective self-victimization by Africans (Mbembe, 2007b).

Decolonial authors have posed several critiques to Afropolitanism. First, Eze (2014) argues that it remains an exclusive and elitist perception on the African subject. It is about the African hipster speaking from London or New York and not the African peasant in rural Cameroon or Senegal. Second, it neglects the persisting of global coloniality. For Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a, 2015a), it becomes useless when Afropolitanism labels decolonial movements as false philosophies full of 'Afro-radicalism' because it neglects the African subject as a Fanonian *damné* and therefore, their historical struggles of re-positioning. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013b) adds: "While some of the theoretical interventions of postcolonial theorists have extended the frontiers of knowledge on the African condition and deepened our understanding of the postcolonial world, the main problem is that the focus on hybridities, negotiations, blending, syncretism, mimicry, and borderlands end up overshadowing the deeply negative and violent structural rather than agential processes that were unleashed by the spreading of European modernity through mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism" (p. 45). Mpofo (2013) also shows how Mbembe fails to recognize coloniality when he considered an 'exit' from the colonial situation: "specifically given historical trajectory - that of societies recently emerging from the experience of colonialism and the violence which the colonial relationship par excellence, involves" (p. 12). Even later, Mbembe (2007b) failed to recognize such continuities when stating "As far as Africa is concerned, colonialism is over. Apartheid is over too. Africans are now the free masters of their own destiny". Overall, according to decolonial Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015a), postcolonials in Africa seem to seek for universalism and cosmopolitanism whereas decolonials seek for pluriversality and a new humanism.

1.3 A land grabbing: An entry point to south-south de/postcolonial dialogues

"For a colonized people the most essential value, because the most concrete, is first and foremost the land: the land which will bring them bread and, above all, dignity"
Frantz Fanon - *The Wretched of the Earth* (2001, p.39).

"'Education is everything', Ngotho said. Yet he doubted this because he knew deep inside his heart that land was everything".
Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o' - *Weep Not, Child* (2012, p. 41).

Land grabbing has been a continuity in Africa. From the European colonial expansion, through the developmentalist policies of recently independent states in the 60s and national structural adjustments in the 90s, to the recently food-energy security and green-farming land grabs (Moyo, Yeros & Jha, 2012). Today's increase in land grabbing (ActionAid, 2012; Liao, Jung, Brown & Agrawal, 2016), is also increasing the number of social conflicts involving

rural population because rural dwellers are seeing their customary lands overpassed by modern/colonial dictates.

I believe that land becomes crucial in the understanding of the forging and acting of the modernity/coloniality on the one hand, as well as in the emerging of decolonial struggles, new personhoods, and humanities on the other (Ndlovu-Gatsheni & Tafira, 2016). How is land grabbing perceived in a postcolonial African context? Can the decolonial body of thought shed light on an African land grabbing case? These questions take special relevance when scholars have recently started to link coloniality and land grabbing.

In Latin America, Richards (2012), Stetson (2012), Assis (2014), Mollet (2015), Caubet (2016) and Parra-Romero (2016) have recently brought to the fore the idea of coloniality in land conflicts. Some of these authors have suggested going beyond the political ecology (Parra-Romero, 2016) and political economy (Mollet, 2015; Richards, 2012) analysis in land grabbing studies to start touching those long-standing racial hierarchies and colonial mind-sets that shape land and territorial control. So, based on the notion of coloniality it is important to pay attention to the use of the myth of empty lands, the invisibilization, inferiorization, and criminalization of traditional land users based on 'racialized' ideals of their production, uses, property regimes, and crops.

In Africa, decolonial scholars have highlighted the potentialities of Fanon's decolonial thoughts for understanding the 21st century's land grabbing (Stephan, Lobban & Benjamin, 2010). They also have exposed the use of epistemic privileges for land grabbing in Ethiopia due to the notion of 'incapability' of traditional land users (Gill, 2015), and presented practical examples of decolonial land struggles such as the one of the Landless People's Movement (LPM) in South Africa (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b). Furthermore, African decolonial scholars argued for the need of more/new research linking explicitly the decolonial body of thought to the land grabbing in the African context (S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, personal communication, October 27, 2016).

Senegal has been touched by European modernity since the Atlantic slave trade that began with the Portuguese arrival in 1441 (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015c) and continued with the control gained by France in 1667 and the assurance of its position through the Conference of Berlin in 1894-95. In 1959 Senegal merged with French Sudan to form the Mali Federation, which became independent in 1960. The federation split and Senegal began as a Republic the same year. Nowadays, Senegal is considered as one of the most politically stable countries in Africa since its independence (World Bank, 2016). However, Senegal faced a related set of so-called energy and food crisis that spurred current social conflicts regarding land since 2008 (ActionAid, 2012). The first was related to the high cost of oil during 2008 and Senegal's energetic sector dependency on imports to produce electric energy for commercial energetic needs and to support poverty alleviation programs (Dia, Sakho-Jimbira, Fall, Ndour & Dieye, 2010; ActionAid & *Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale*, 2012). The second one was related to the inflation of food prices during 2007-2008 due to the increase of oil world prices. To tackle these crises the Senegalese government promoted a biofuel expansion into the Senegal's agrarian system, and a phenomenon of massive purchases of land followed rapidly, where 17% of arable lands have been acquired in large-scale land transactions, mostly for biofuel cultivation (ActionAid, 2012; Diop, Diaw, Diallo & Kanoute, 2011; La Francesca, 2013).

The Senhuile-Sénéthanol case started in 2010, when first the Sénéthanol SA gained access to 20000 ha for a period of 50 years in the Rural Community (CR) of Fanaye, district of Thillé Boubacar, department of Podor, region of Saint-Louis (Bagnoli, Benegiamo, Cirillo &

Franchi, 2015; Word, Mousseau & Cirillo, 2014). The purpose was to cultivate sweet potatoes to produce biofuels in the Government's efforts to tackle the energetic crisis (ActionAid, 2012). Bagnoli et al., (2015) mention that the target was bioethanol for European markets. During 2010-2012, Fanaye's population mobilized in opposition to the project, claiming that they needed the land that was leased to support their livelihoods (*Coalition Pour la Protection du Patrimoine Génétique Africain* [COPAGEN], Inter Pares & *Reseau d'Etudes des Dynamiques Transnationales et de l'Action Collective*, 2013; Word et al., 2014). This opposition scaled up and the tension resulted in two dead villagers, detentions, and dozens injured in October 26th of 2011 (Bagnoli et al., 2015). Right after these tragic events, the former Senegalese president Abdoulaye Wade decided to move the project from Fanaye to the forest and wetland area known as *Réserve Spéciale d'Avifaune du Ndiaël* (RSAN) in an act known as the *Déclassement* of the Ndiaël (Word et al., 2014) (Figure 1 and 2).

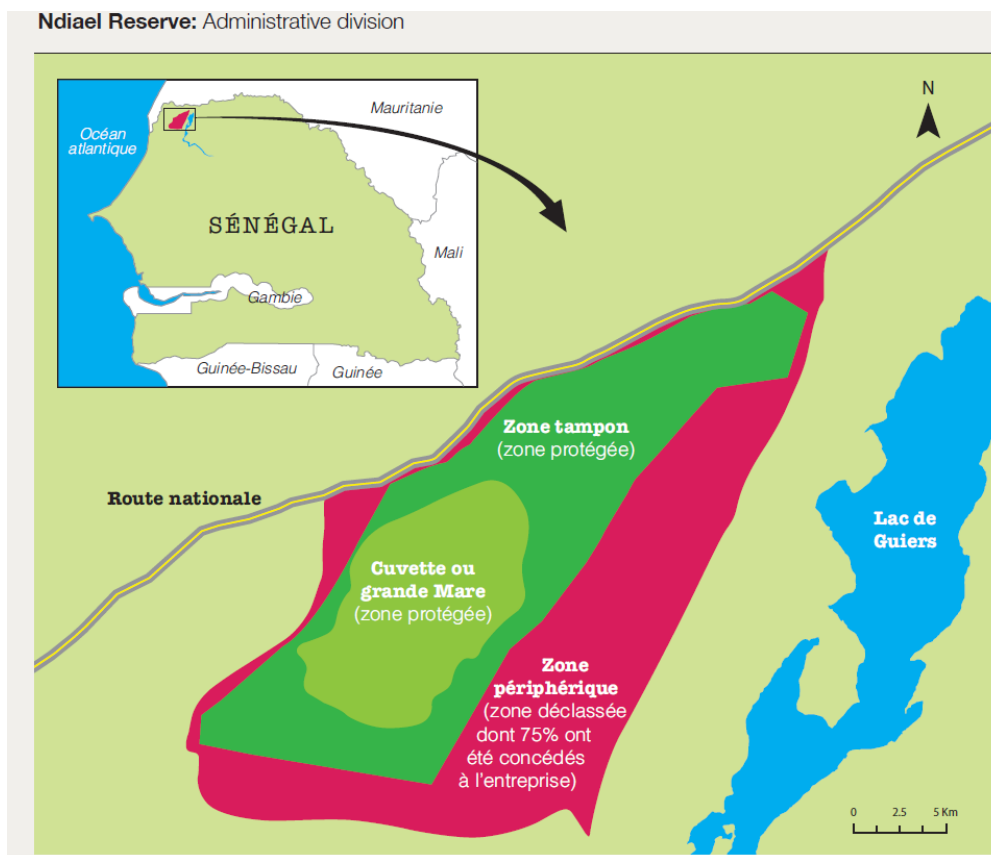


Figure 1: Overview of the Ndiaël reserve and its categorization. Source: ActionAid (2014)

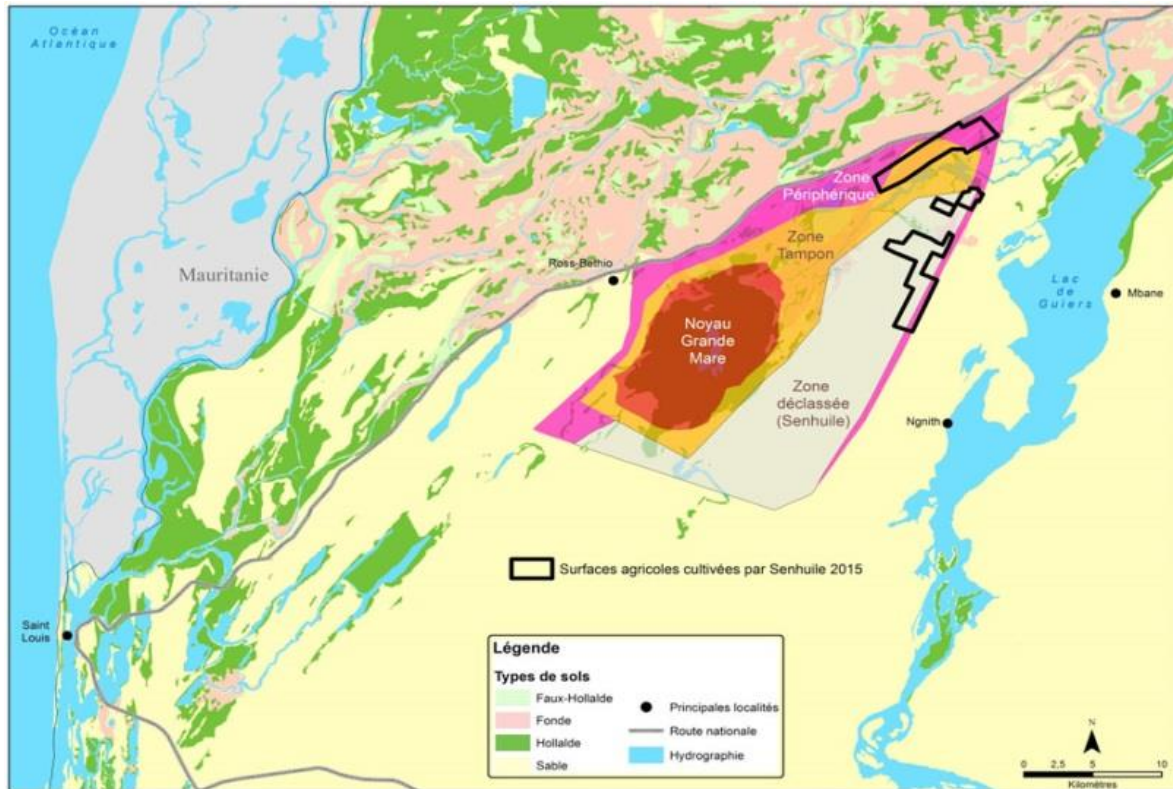


Figure 2: Déclassement of the Ndiaël reserve and current location of the Senhuile-Sénéthanol project.
 Source: Ardo Sow/Enda Pronat

Nowadays Senhuile-Sénéthanol is currently operating in the area with support from administrative authorities (*Institut Panos Afrique de L'ouest*, 2016), although it has been contested by local population during the last four years, especially with the *Collectif pour la défense des terres du Ndiaël* (CODEN). The affected area constitutes one of the last pastoralist areas in the Delta of the Senegal river (Bagnoli et al., 2015), where the Peuls are the main affected population. The Peuls protest for the consequences on the lives and livelihoods of approximately 9000 pastoralists from 37 villages in the area. The impacts of the project involves the displacement, loss of livelihood, and land dispossession of the local population (Word et al., 2014; Environmental Justice Atlas [EJ Atlas]., 2016); the limited access to water source since Senhuile-Sénéthanol uses the water of some natural canals to irrigate its farms and the damaging of the wetland ecosystem (Wetlands International Africa, 2014); the destruction of traditional places for religious purposes (Word et al., 2014); verbal intimidation and persecution to land defenders (EJ Atlas, 2016); and the affecting of their customary herding routes (Word et al., 2014). Several forms of contestation have occurred, including critical community-based participatory research, the creation of alternative reports/knowledge, the involvement of national and international NGOs, and street protest and marches (EJ Atlas, 2016).

1.4 De/postcolonial inquiries

General research question (GRQ):

How do South-South de/postcolonial dialogues evolve through encounters between a decolonial Latin-American and postcolonial Senegal?

Sub research questions (SRQs):

- What are the impressions that emerge from these encounters?
- How can a contemporary land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal enrich south-south de/postcolonial dialogues?
 - o How do the Senegalese perceive land grabbing in a postcolonial context?
 - o Can the decolonial body of thought shed light on a land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal?
- What are the lessons from these South-South de/postcolonial dialogues?

1.5 Entering the South-South de/postcolonial dialogues

How can I enter the de/postcolonial dialogues by knowing that social science methodologies have departed from a modern/colonial origin? I could say that I decided to take an ethnographic approach in the sense of Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), as gathering to whatever is available to respond to my focus of inquiry, from the living experience of watching people's daily life or participating in it, listening to what people say, questioning through interviews and informal talks, and collecting documents. Or as Bernard (2011, p. 20) when he describes a good ethnography as: "[...] a narrative that *describes* [*emphasis mine*] a culture or a part of a culture". However, my research does not follow a 'conventional' ethnographic approach characterized by participant observation, instead it is a reflexive dialogue, and encounters. In this sense, I follow James (2016, p. 227) when arguing that: "Ethnographic knowledge is co-produced in a field of cross-cutting racialized, classed and gendered power relations". This critical perspective doing ethnography put my thoughts, feelings, and writing into a constant self-reflection process throughout this research. I also embraced what I consider 'open recommendations' from Olivera's (2014) on how to decolonize ethnography: caring about my own subjectivity, reshaping the relation between observer and observed, relying on my memories and feelings, and interiorizing that 'I am not' producing the knowledge that 'I am writing', but it is the Senegalese and me, *we*. In this research, I tried to distance myself from any positivistic positioning on interpreting 'reality' as a single, measured, and accountable truth. Embracing a decolonial positioning made me aware (I hope) of this modern/colonial exercise. My field notes and diary followed all these premises from above.

I encountered my decolonial positioning through an Amazonian conflict regarding land, therefore, I decided to use land grabbing discussions and a land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal to bring to the fore possible South-South de/postcolonial dialogues. I followed de Vaus's (2013) recommendations and used a single case study focusing specifically on the Ndiaël Reserve due to logistics, costs, and time. My case study was a retrospective one requiring the reconstruction of the history of the case, using archival

records and documents, and interviews with people involved in it. To visit affected villages, I used the 'official' map that was elaborated to support the Senhuile-Sénéthanol project, and depending on accessibility I went to 'recognized' and 'not-recognized' villages. I visited seven villages⁷ from the 37 that exist according to the Ndiaël collective.

I used a mix of purposive sampling and snow ball based on Bernard (2011) to select people to talk with. My departure to Senegal was delayed by two months due to visa problems, so I distantly spent time exploring whom to talk to once in Senegal. (Un)luckily "*Les ateliers de la pensée*"⁸, a gathering of continental and diaspora African intellectuals to review the African contemporary critical thinking took place at the end of October 2016 in the Senegalese cities of Dakar and Saint Louis. I followed the event online and reviewed 37 online news articles related to it (Annex 01). This exercise contributed to my immersion in contemporary de/postcolonial African thought while having a clearer idea of specific people to contact in Senegal. I ended with a non-rigid list of critical thinkers and local collectives. The people I talked with are intellectuals (sociologists, historians, philosophers, economists, geographers, journalists, anthropologists, novelists, and artists), as well as activists (people working in the NGO sector, people belonging to social movements), and people from the affected communities in the Ndiaël. Some of them also addressed me to other people to talk with. This study involved 39 unstructured interviews (Annex 02)⁹ although many more informal talks occurred also in Dakar, Saint Louis, Ngnith, Touba, and the Ndiaël between January and May 2017.

My interviews were unstructured with open questions due to their flexibility. In some cases, I shaped the interviews regarding the work of the person I contacted (including a previous revision of them), though always including the main axes of the topics. I also believe unstructured interviews with open questions fit well with the type of flexible fieldwork I did, and for touching lived experiences like colonial subjections and decolonial thinking.

In my effort to decolonize my ethnographic approach, I followed Olivera's (2014) recommendations based on the idea of 'floating observations' of Pétonnet (1982). This is not to pick any place in advance but to let myself be carried by the research, rather than being rigid in the following of a specific plan. In this sense, I would add 'floating participation'. This was more rigid in the Ndiaël and with some of the intellectuals, although I followed this 'floating' idea in other contexts. This includes days disputing with immigration offices, chats in the beach or in the campus with students from the University Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar (UCAD), while discovering different Senegalese markets, talking with taxi drivers, meeting farmers in their fields, playing soccer or attending soccer matches, sharing hot mint teas or lunches, attending medical healing sessions, going to live-music concerts and cultural encounters, among other activities. Here I highlight some specific events that deeply contributed to this research due to their very critical essence: the film projections such as *Kemtiyu* remembering the decolonial legacy of Cheikh Anta Diop (18/01/2017) (which also won the first prize for best documentary at the FESPACO¹⁰ in 2017); book presentations such as "*Assumons notre temps - Ma génération rêve africain*" (25/01/2017); literature debates

⁷ Kadou Deff, Diourki 1, Tordonaube, Thiamène, Howandou, Djilim, and Daymane.

⁸ The organisers Felwine Sarr and Achille Mbembe have published in June 2017 a book based on the event's presentations: *Écrire l'Afrique-Monde*. I interviewed Felwine Sarr in early May in Dakar.

⁹ In total 24 intellectuals, and 15 activists and villagers. A rigid classification on who belongs to which group becomes difficult and unfair, since the boundaries among them are flexible. Saying that, this numeric description is just to have a simple/basic idea of the composition of the people I interviewed.

¹⁰ Pan African Film Festival.

such as “*Rencontre littéraire: L’aventure ambiguë*” (06/05/2017); cultural debates such as “*L’Islam a la sénégalaise est-il toujours un régulateur social et politique?*” (26/01/2017) and “*Cultures et Imaginaires du renouveau*” (15/05/2017); international academic encounters such as the international colloquia *Les Modernités Contestées* organised by the UCAD and the Radboud University (27-29/04/2017); meetings organized by local activists such as the collective anti-Franc CFA in the “*Samedi de l’économie: La gouvernance des ressources naturelles au Sénégal*” (11/03/2017), “*Quelles alternatives crédibles au franc CFA?*” (18/03/2017), and “*Les contrats avec Total: symbole de la mainmise Française sur l’économie Sénégalaise*” (13/05/2017), and monthly street poetry reunions such as the “*Vendredi Slam*” night (07/04/2017 and 05/05/2017). Additionally, I also conducted improvised focus group interviews in the Ndiaël and Dakar. In Kadou Deff, I spoke with the chief under the shade of an *Acacia* tree when villagers started to arrive and sit around us in mats. The reunion involved six women and six men, eight children, and two teachers of elementary (French and Arabic). In Thiamène I took advantage of the gathering of villagers for the Friday prayer which included two women and 19 men. Finally, I was invited by the Laboratory of postcolonial studies of the English department at the UCAD in Dakar to give a lecture on the decolonial Latin-American body of thought. The lecture was on the 12th May in front of approximately 200 students, where I took the opportunity to dialogue about de/postcolonial Senegalese topics.

I embraced the *Afrotopos* for this research. As the Senegalese poet, economist, musician, and postcolonial author Felwine Sarr put it in *Afrotopia* (2016a), the ‘*Afrotopos*’ (*L’atopos de L’Afrique*) is crucial as a space for thinking about the coming Africa not yet achieved, at individual/social levels, and which sometime occurs. An interface between the impossible/possible. This ‘*Afrotopos*’ made me aware of those other ways to grasp contemporary ‘de/postcolonial’ discussions such as Senegalese (and African) literature and cinema. Literature works including *L’aventure Ambiguë* (1961) and *Les Gardiens du Temple* (1996) of Cheikh Hamidou Kane; *Les soleils des Indépendances* (1970) of Ahmadou Kourouma; *La tragédie du roi Christophe* (1970) of Aimé Césaire; *La Grève des Bàttu* (1979) of Aminata Sow Fall; *Le Marabout de la sécheresse* (1979) of Cheik Aliou Ndao; *Le Baobab Fou* (1982) of Ken Bugul; *Le Temps de Tamango* (1981), *Thiaroye Terre Rouge* (1981), *Murambi*, *Le livre des ossements* (2000), *Los Tambores de la Memoria* (2011) of Boubacar Boris Diop; *La fièvre de la terre* (1990) of Aboubacry Moussa Lam; and *Weep Not, Child* (2012) of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’. As well as films such as *Moi un noir* (1958) of Jean Rouch; *La Bataille d’Alger* (1966) of Gillo Pontecorvo; *Touki Bouki* (1973) of Djibril Diop Mambéty; *La Noir de...* (1966), *Dakar* (1969), *Emitaï* (1971), *Xala* (1974), *Le camp de Thiaroye* (1988), and *Moolaadé* (2004) of Ousmane Sembène; *L’enfant de Ngatch* (1979), *Dial Diali* (1992), *Président Dia* (2012), and *Kemtiyu* (2016) of Ousmane William Mbaye, *La Pirogue* (2012) of Moussa Touré; *Les Sauteurs* (2016) of Moritz Siebert, Estephan Wagner and Abou Bakar Sidibé; and *Félicité* (2017)¹¹ of Alain Gomis. With a myriad of topics such as historic events relating to the West African French colonial past; the time of bloody anticolonial struggles and the disillusionment brought after national independences; the ridiculed postcolonial African political class and elite; the replication of imposed colonial rules and discourses in present times leading tragically to humanity’s worst face: genocides; the confrontation of European modernity with African traditions among colonial/postcolonial subjects; the religiosity in contemporary Senegalese society, the social configuration around it, and the

¹¹ Winner of the “*Etalon d’Or*” at FESPACO 2017.

tremendous power of mystical figures such as the *Marabout*¹²; the injustices within the rural world around colonial cash crops; the ‘split’ condition of African subjects when experiencing the diaspora phenomena within a ‘Balkanized’ Africa or within Europe; the thin layer among the Afro-pessimism and Afro-optimism, and many more. All these topics shaped my thoughts, hearings, questions, and emotions regarding my research topic. My writing would not have been the same if I had not have followed the notion/expressions of the *Afrotopos*.

To nurture and update my decolonial perspective, I also followed constantly the Facebook groups *Decolonialidad Latinoamericana*¹³, DialogoGlobal - Decolonizing Knowledge and Power¹⁴, Postcolonial and World Literatures and Cultures Reading Group¹⁵, *Curupiras: colonialidades e outras epistemologias*¹⁶, Decolonial International Network¹⁷, *Sortir du Colonialisme*¹⁸, *Labo Décolonial*¹⁹, *Parti des indigènes de la république*²⁰, *Paroles d'honneur*²¹, and Decolonial Thought Community²².

For the specific case study of the Ndiaël I also used secondary information. I used the ‘Farmlandgrab’ website²³ with an already prefixed keyword search of ‘Senhuile-Sénéthanol’ that automatically shows 177²⁴ existing online articles from 2011-2017 regarding the land grabbing case (Annex 03). I carried out three filters. First, I eliminated duplicates, articles with same content but in different languages (French, English, Italian, Spanish), resulting in 156. Second, I filtered those articles where I could potentially find elements to expose coloniality (based on power, knowledge, being). I excluded ‘on purpose’ those articles related to the financial crime and internal crisis of Senhuile-Sénéthanol, general aspects of land grabbing in Africa, and the firing of Senhuile-Sénéthanol workers. The list ended with 69 articles. Third, I found topics that were repeated constantly such as specific laws and land administrative mechanisms that have fostered the land grab, or maps that neglect the existence of villagers in the Ndiaël while contributing to the myth of the empty land. Then, I proceeded to analyse the expression of coloniality of power, knowledge, and being. Here I consider relevant to clarify a few points. First, power, knowledge, and being are usually seen

¹² Muslim religious leader, teacher, healer, and guide of Qur’anic schools.

¹³ Facebook close group with 8239 members (26/06/2017).

¹⁴ Facebook close group with 195 members (26/06/2017) that involves participants of the several editions of the Decolonizing Knowledge and Power summer school.

¹⁵ Facebook close group with 146 members (26/06/2017), from the University of Leeds for transdisciplinary reading, exchange, and discussions. Created in November 2016.

¹⁶ Facebook public group with 621 members (26/06/2017).

¹⁷ Facebook public group with 218 members (26/06/2017).

¹⁸ Facebook community about the ‘anticolonial week’ (a sort of artist-political festival and conservatory) celebrated each year in France.

¹⁹ Facebook community born in 2014 to spread “the Latin-American decolonial perspective”.

²⁰ Fan page of the *Parti des indigènes de la république* that engages in the struggle against racial inequalities that Blacks, Arabs, and Muslims suffer as indigenous peoples did in the former colonies.

²¹ Fan page for political debates from a decolonial perspective.

²² Fan page created in 2017 “to “translate and spread decolonial thinking on a world level, a point of convergence to create a plurinational community of communication and solidarity” (Accessed in 26/06/2017).

²³ It contains news about the global rush regarding. According to the website, its “purpose is to serve as a resource for those monitoring or researching the issue, particularly social activists, non-government organisations and journalists”. (Retrieved from <https://www.farmlandgrab.org/> - accessed in 26/06/2017).

²⁴ Accessed in February 2017. The database involves different sources, from national and international printed and online media, to organisational reports, audios, and videos of the civil society. Originally, I planned to search newspaper articles for the period 2008-2017, which involves since the Senegalese government decided to tackle its energetic-food crisis. The physical search resulted difficult in terms of access and availability in the Central Library of the UCAD and the Archives of Senegal located in Dakar. That is why I proceeded with Farmlandgrab.

as separate, yet the three of them intermingle. Second, there are more forms²⁵ of analysing coloniality, although the three I followed are useful organising principles of critique (Chiumbu, 2016). Third, in a sort of defence to potential critiques to the operationalization of my research inquiries, I embrace what Sithole (2014) argues that the (my) decolonial approach differs from classic and rigid scientific perspectives on research methodologies rooted more in the modern canon, since the idea to operationalize becomes a modern way of measuring and objectivizing. Fourth, when using coloniality of power-knowledge-being I am aware of my locus of enunciation (Latin-America), although they have also been adapted, applied, and critically discussed by African scholars (i.e.: Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c; Sithole, 2014; Vambe & Khan, 2013; Chiumbu, 2016). As some African authors have shown: “if what is at play in this debate is the competition amongst African and Third World intellectuals to coin new terminologies in academia [...], then, in fact, western theoretical hegemony has triumphed in waylaying Third World scholarship [...]” (Vambe & Khan, 2013, p. 305). Overall, I justify the borrowing and use of common analytical perspectives that later can be expanded, debated, compared or transcended, without neglecting that decolonial struggles differ everywhere.

I transcribed my interviews, and digitalised my field notes from my floating observation/participation, field diary, and additionally documents. I used the software *ATLAS.ti 8.0*²⁶ to carry out an inductive codification instead of a previous codification for a better representation of the data (Fernández, 2006). I created code families to clarify my results and thoughts, and to visualize them in a more organized manner. Nevertheless, at the end I tried to escape from rigid structures of analysis.

Regarding ethics, I presented my research intentions to all the people I talked with, either by email, by phone or orally. In the Ndiaël, I first approached the traditional chiefs of each village to ask for permission. In the process of writing decolonially I faced the dilemma of anonymity of the people I encountered. I prefer not to use the codes *ATLAS.ti 8.0* assigned to each of the person I spoke with because I believe that would neglect their positioning in this modern/colonial world-system, their critical thinking emerging in our south-south dialogues, and their very existences. I expressed their names in this document to do justice to their own struggles because I did not talk with objects but subjects. I try to speak for myself with this research about encounters, and not for the others, I do not pretend to make the *subaltern speak* and this is the reason why their names appear throughout the text. This document should be read as such, and I apologize if I fail in such decolonial attempt.

Finally, there are some key points that may have influenced my interpretations as well. First, the use of translators in the Ndiaël was not easy. Wolof and Pulaar are the language used in the area²⁷ and school teachers helped me to conduct interviews in the seven villages. Translators had different styles of translating, interrupting the interviewee while responding to my questions to translate, others were letting the interviewee finish a response and then they translated. Some added their point of view during the interview, which ended to be interesting and I recorded them. The teachers all had spent different periods in the area due to their rotation within the country's rural schools, so some of them were more knowledgeable about the case than others. Second, I carried out this research

²⁵ Here the idea of coloniality of gender elaborated by Lugones (2008) comes to my mind.

²⁶ According to the Atlas.ti website, “It is a powerful workbench for the qualitative analysis of large bodies of textual, graphical, audio, and video data” (Retrieved from <http://atlasti.com/product/what-is-atlas-ti/> - accessed in 26/06/2017).

²⁷ A place where most of the people do not speak French, even official authorities such as the major and deputy major in the commune of Ngnith.

with my life partner as she was searching for research jobs in Senegal. She joined many of my interviews, and due to her social science background, we shared uncountable hours chatting and discussing our field impressions, debating and defending our respective positions, and sharing common point of views. In many pages of my field diary I ended up writing 'We' instead of 'I'. Therefore, her presence somehow conditioned my methodology and results in a myriad of ways, from the easy approach to women due to her presence and the fact of one 'couple' arriving to a remote village rather than a single man, to her contributions in the discussions, and in the help to improve my French skills (her mother tongue), to mention a few examples.

1.6 Structure of the document

In this chapter, I have presented the need of south-south de/postcolonial dialogues through exposing the claims coming from the Latin American and the African de/postcolonial body of thoughts. As a first general idea, I have presented my departure point that is my Latin-American positioning following Dussel's (2015) idea of exteriority and frontier, not as a narcissist but as an honest act making justice to the bag of personal inquiries and the notion of 'geographies of knowledge' (Grosfoguel, 2007, 2011, 2013). From my positioning, I seek for encounters with Senegalese in their postcolonial condition to make south-south de/postcolonial dialogues emerge. I have assumed postcolonial Senegalese in the same positioning of exteriority or frontier as me, since I followed those critical thinkers to the modern/colonial paradigm. Importantly, even if this research locates in a 'geographical' South (a Peruvian in Senegal), I have clarified what I consider by the 'South'. As a second general idea, I have presented the justifications to use a land grabbing case study, which first could help to 'land' the abstractions of de/postcolonial debates, and second, shed light on traditional views on land conflicts such as the use of the political economy framework. Importantly, this research is neither a theorisation on land grabbing nor tries to strictly define it, it 'only' uses a contemporary phenomenon and the specific case of Senhuile-Sénéthanol occurring in postcolonial Senegal. Finally, I have exposed my methodology.

Chapter II is about my encounters as a postcolonial Latin-American being (embracing the decolonial body of thought) with postcolonial Senegalese, bringing to the fore those dialogues with 'intellectuals of the frontier' or 'critics of the periphery' (Dussel, 2015). Although, these encounters must be read throughout the whole document. Through a collection of personal impressions from stories gathered in postcolonial Senegal, I engage with the following overarching questions to contextualize my thoughts in these encounters:

- What do Senegalese think in relation to the 'post' of the national independence in 1960?
- Does something colonial persist for them?
- What are the expressions of such colonial persistence?
- What are the responses or reflections carried out by critical de/postcolonial beings?
- Where does the critical thought in postcolonial Senegal fit in the de/postcolonial debate I encountered before my arrival?

To sum up, I attempt to present a 'nuanced' de/postcolonial contemporary critical thinking in postcolonial Senegal that can serve as a canvass for the following chapter that deals with land grabbing. I do it by presenting five personal general impressions through field stories. First, showing how 'something colonial' persists in postcolonial Senegal.

Second, the different forms of naming it. Third, the intensity of the recognition that 'something colonial' persists in postcolonial Senegal. Fourth, the main forms of manifestations of this persisting 'something colonial', and a decolonial perspective, effort, or attitude carried out by the Senegalese society. Fifth, my impression regarding the location of the current critical thinking in postcolonial Senegal among the de/postcolonial debate. At the end, based on my encounters in Senegal I call to blur the boundaries among de/postcolonial perspectives due to the need to pay more attention to their convergences.

Chapter III, is influenced by the fact that my interests in decolonial topics were born through a land conflict in the Peruvian Amazon. Therefore, I engaged with land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal, and more precisely, with the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case. My engagement was through the following questions:

- How do the Senegalese perceive land grabbing after 57 years of independence? (Do they link the persisting 'something colonial' to their explanations of current land grabbing - or not- in a postcolonial context?)
- How would the decolonial body of thought understand these Senegalese reflections?
- How are coloniality of power, knowledge, and being, expressed in a contemporary land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal?

First, I expose what the postcolonial Senegalese society told me about land grabbing occurring 57 years after 'independence'. Imagining a dialogue among us, this part is all about Senegalese talking to me, a decolonial Latin-American being, on whether they view contemporary land grabbing - or not - as a 'colonial' phenomenon.

Second, influenced by nuances of Senegalese views in the first part, I borrow from the decolonial body of thought (Latin-American & African) to comment their responses in this imaginary dialogue. I explore why for some Senegalese the view of contemporary land grabbing seen as a 'colonial' phenomenon (that 'something colonial' persists presented in Chapter II) becomes difficult? This leads me to propose what I call (im)possibilities to relate the 'something colonial' that persists to contemporary land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal.

Third, I strictly apply the decolonial positioning searching for the expressions of coloniality of power-knowledge-being in the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case. I show how coloniality is expressed through discourses and practices regarding land, by showing the rationalities and arguments used to justify Senhuile-Sénéthanol as a development panacea. I show those colonial imaginaries about the unproductiveness of traditional land users and the abundance of their unused land, which are supposed to be better in the hands of *willing investors* due to 'public interest'. I argue in both, second and third section of this chapter, that the decolonial body of thought can shed light on traditional political economy view of land grabbing conflicts in postcolonial contexts.

Chapter IV explores decoloniality recalling my encounters with postcolonial Senegal in Chapter II, and the fieldwork regarding the land grabbing case in Chapter III. In this chapter, I engage with the following question:

- What are the lessons from these South-South de/postcolonial dialogues?

I expose, as lessons of South-South de/postcolonial dialogues, that first at a practical level, decoloniality appears in the everyday, which could be translated as 'landing' decoloniality. Second, at a theoretical level, a reconciliation among the de/postcolonials critical thought could be done through Fanon. Finally, I present a reflection on being decolonial during this research and what the dangers or missing points could be.

Chapter V exposes an attempt for conclusions and few recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II: ENCOUNTERING THE NUANCED DE/POSTCOLONIAL SENEGAL

2.1 Introduction

“...Y pensar lo que se refiere a esa independencia arrancada con gran lucha,
¡Cuéntale a otros esa broma!”

Boubacar Boris Diop - *Los Tambores de la Memoria* (2011, p. 154).

As a Latin-American living in Senegal for almost five months, **my first general impression** is that many Senegalese voices, from *Talibés*²⁸ to *Griots*²⁹, from *Marabouts* to young poetry slammers, and people from all walks of life could express in different ways and situations: “Yes, ‘something colonial’ remains!”. My Senegalese time showed me *in situ* part of the current Senegalese society critically asking themselves about the fate of those once called *Les Soleils des indépendences*³⁰, those nominal features of what they call ‘flag independences’, and about the once era of the ‘African Enlightenment’ (wa Thiong’o, 2009b). The uncomfortable and visceral question is “Are we really independent?”. Independence. I remember seeing Abdoulaye Fall³¹ obfuscated in his office at the Gaston Berger University (UGB) at Saint Louis, when I touched the topic about the waves of national liberation struggles in West Africa. He proceeded saying that Senegal became independent just because *De Gaulle* wanted and said: “here is your independence” and that for him there has not been a real struggle for independence like the Algerians had. A bloody one. His spoken words sounded like dynamite to me, and I remembered those tragic images of *Ali La Pointe*, the hero of *La Bataille d’Alger* (1966) dying in his hiding place waiting for the explosion while not giving the French army the ‘pleasure’ to kill him face-to-face somewhere in Alger. The very act of arriving to independence in such condition in the early 60s resulted in a pyrrhic liberation victory, according to Abdoulaye, a Senegalese who has written about the decolonisation of the social science, a fact that helped me understand why he was speaking with so much emotions. For Abdoulaye, former French colonies suffer the syndrome of not being truly independent from their former colonial power, especially with the notion of the *Françafrique*. I bring this short memory because it depicts to me the critical de/postcolonial thinking alive while exposing the idea that colonial ties remain, or have not been trespassed. It also opens the space to explore those colonial elements that continue to replicate in a myriad of forms in contemporary postcolonial Senegal. Hence, these ideas and positioning allow me to see how part of the postcolonial Senegalese embrace that African epic school understanding colonialism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a, 2015b), perspective I mentioned in the section of the African decolonial body of thought. Long-standing impacts of colonialism in Africa exist! In a nutshell, I believe my encounter with Abdoulaye,

²⁸ Children dedicated to the learning of the Quran, away from home, in complete devotion and obedience to their master: the *marabout*. *Marabouts* rely on donations to live, so *talibés* are in charge to search/beg for them in the streets.

²⁹ Traditional figure of poet, musician, storyteller, and historian.

³⁰ Reference of Ahmadou Kourouma’s novel in 1970, to the wave of African independences in the 60s.

³¹ Sociologist, anthropologist, professor and researcher at l’UFR CRAC, Section *Langues et cultures africaines*, UGB, Senegal. Researcher associate in *Laboratoire d’Analyse des Sociétés et Pouvoirs / Afrique-Diasporas* (LASPAD) UGB. He has written « *Et si le développement n’était qu’une chimère à Saint-Louis du Sénégal ?* » and « *Décoloniser les sciences sociales en Afrique* », among others.

summarises well my large personal encounter, as a Latin-American, with part of the Senegalese society that appropriates the classic Fanonian attitude *vis-à-vis* the ‘fiction movie’ of being in something ‘post’ 1960. This attitude reads like this: “My final prayer: O my body, make me always a man who questions!” (2008, p. 181).

2.2 The postcolonial Senegal

« ... aucun peuple n'avait jamais sans doute été conquis, occupé, dominé aussi profondément, aussi mystérieusement que nous l'avons été et le sommes toujours d'ailleurs à tous égards par l'économie française, la culture française, l'armée française, la diplomatie française, la presse française, l'opinion française, l'ethnologie française, l'université française... »

Mongo Beti - *preface of Les temps de Tamango* (1981, p. 6).

Among coloniality and neocolonialism

‘Something colonial’ exists for a big part of postcolonial Senegalese. I would say that such quote (see above) from Mongo Beti fits into what I listened to, saw, and felt in postcolonial Senegal. Coming from the decolonial Latin-American position, I became intrigued to know how Beti would call such domination in his days? More precisely, how critical Senegalese today ‘name’ this persisting colonial essence, if possible. Maybe, this was also a personal attempt to search for clarifications. Coloniality for me due to my Latin-American influences. Coloniality among scholars in South Africa (Chiumbu, 2016; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c). However, francophone Africa was mostly unknown to me. wa Thiong’o’s ‘dismemberment’ perhaps? Neocolonialism like Kwame Nkrumah or Cheikh Anta Diop? Recolonization in Ali Mazrui’s terms? After several encounters ‘we’ realized that the naming differs in comparison to Latin-Americans labelling coloniality to such colonial metaphysical empire that drives the bread and butter of ‘independent’ republics and the world (Escobar, 2007; Grosfoguel 2007, 2013; Maldonado-Torres, 2007, 2016; Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2000, 2007). Only a few people recognized openly labelling it coloniality, and the ones who did it recognized Latin-American academic influences, which sometimes passed first through the European academy. This reminded me of the Cameroonian novelist Léonora Miano’s clarifications, which became clearer after Senegal, who after a brief literary meeting in Montpellier last December remarked: “You are the ones [*Latin-Americans*] who labelled it coloniality, it came from you”. Overall, these varied forms of naming become **my second general impression**.

The majority in Senegal, from intellectuals to activists, call neocolonialism that ‘something colonial’ that persists. In the broad picture, I would say that this refers to Kwame Nkrumah’s (1965, 1973) theoretical contributions in a Marxists political economy reading of African postcolonial societies. More specific in Senegal, the term neocolonialism refers to the seminal work of Abdoulaye Ly (1981) *L'émergence du néocolonialisme au Sénégal*, also based on a political-economy reading when paying attention to the formation of the neocolonial *bourgeoisie*. “Thus, Senegal appeared as an essential base for imperialist machinations in Black Africa during the period where neocolonialism installed in this region of the world, from 1958 to 1966 [...]” [*Translation mine*] (Ly, 1981, p. 91). The importance of Ly’s contributions makes me recall my very first interview in Senegal, two days after my

arrival, when historian Babacar Sall³², disciple of Cheikh Anta Diop, told me that if I had not read Ly's book I was missing the very first critique to the 'flag' independence of Senegal. Also, in Senegal, neocolonialism has the resonance of the political activism of Thomas Sankara (Burkina Faso) and Amílcar Cabral (Cape Verde/Guinea-Bissau) from neighbouring countries, where one can be marvelled by graffiti around Dakar streets dedicated to these decolonial martyrs. Young people wear t-shirts with their faces along phrases that go against neocolonialism.

Perhaps the main differentiation we found among users of coloniality and neocolonialism, is that using coloniality enables us to acknowledge the colonial remnants persisting in other realms of life rather than just economics, a more global complex reading of a postcolonial society than a political economic one. In this sense, neocolonialism seems to be somewhat reductionist and not open enough to the broader spectrum of colonial legacies. That mainstream reading towards the economy seems to prevail overall in postcolonial context even though Nkrumah (1965, p. 239) himself briefly argues that neo-ideas and methods persist, not only in the realms of the economy but also in the cultural, political, religious, and ideological spheres. Felwine Sarr³³ put it like this, "I think that the term coloniality is a more accurate than the other terms". However, there are people that do not use neither neocolonialism nor coloniality arguing that it is difficult to name this sort of continuity wrought by colonialism, so just better to recognize its existential essence.

"...the *new concept* [*Emphasis mine*] that Africans use is 'neocolonialism', since there has not been a decolonization and we are always [*within*] the enterprise of the Occident, always" (Fatou Dieng³⁴).

"Here, people speak about neocolonialism, but it is a problem of terminology, it is a problem of naming things. The appropriate word here, better to say the most used here, is neocolonialism. It is that maybe the former colonial power coming back in one way or another, not as the ways it did it in the past but it has clear interests here, and how this former colonial power arrives to concretize those interests it is through one way of neocolonialism" (Saliou Dione³⁵).

"Coloniality is a *formula recently used by scholars* [*Emphasis mine*] but people use neocolonialism at the level of politicians and common citizens [...]. However, the essence is the same even if the form of expressions may differ. It is the domination of something that

³² Professor at the history department at the UCAD, Senegal. Egyptology and follower of the legacy of Cheikh Anta Diop. He has written « *La pensée de Cheikh Anta Diop ou les sciences et la technologie au service du développement de l'Afrique* », « *De la modernité paysanne en Afrique noire* », among others.

³³ Economist, Professor at the UGB, writer, researcher associate in *Laboratoire d'Analyse des Sociétés et Pouvoirs / Afrique-Diasporas* (LASPAD). He has written « *Afrotopia* », among others. He also organised with Achille Mbembe *Les Ateliers de la pensée* in 2016.

³⁴ Researcher at *Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherches Genre et Sociétés* at the UGB. She has written « *L'incidence de l'accès des femmes au foncier dans le développement local : Le cas des femmes du Gie Seydy Babacar Sy de Ross Bethio* ».

³⁵ Associate professor of African and postcolonial studies for the Department of Anglophone Studies at UCAD. He has written "New trends in African and African-American women's writing: A study of novels by Amma Darko, Gloria Naylor and Buchi Emecheta" and "Female *migritude* as a challenge to masculinity(ies) in postcolonial Africa", among others.

persists, the domination of former colonial powers not only at economic, but military, political and cultural level” (Demba Moussa Dembélé³⁶).

“[...] we are inserted in a regime marked by the coloniality. This means that we have reached independence in the 60s but the asymmetrical relationships in economy, politics, epistemology, and in the domain of the symbolic, which is important, are still strong with colonial domination” (Felwine Sarr).

These quotes from interviewees clearly illustrate this idea of labelling that ‘something colonial’ that remains in postcolonial Senegal.

An intense critique

« *Mais alors, qu’apportèrent les Indépendances à Fama ? Rien que la carte d’identité nationale et celle du parti unique* »

Ahmadou Kourouma - *Les soleils des Indépendances* (1970, p. 25).

It was during my first walk from *la Rue de l’Université* to *La Brioche Dorée* along the Cheikh Anta Diop Avenue in Dakar, my first Monday looking for an ATM, that I noticed that among street vendors selling headphones hanging from their necks, or peanuts in several forms of presentations, newspapers, fruit, egg sandwiches, and clothe, there were also dozens of books either laying on the floor or in more elaborated wood stands. The first book I got was *L’aventure Ambiguë* (1961), since I remembered the Congolese writer Alain Mabanckou labelling it as a foundational point for Senegalese novels. After the traditional bargaining at the price, I recall myself devouring the novel and being fascinated by the hero Samba Diallo and his anxiety and ambiguity created by the clash of his Muslim traditions with the Western modernity and colonialism. Also, his ‘sacrifice’ to leave the Qur’anic school to go to the French colonial one. *L’aventure Ambiguë* shifted my perspective of those two hundred meters of the Cheikh Anta Diop avenue full of critical books, in the limit of *Fann* and *Point E* neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, this literary encounter triggered some memories of conversations with Latin-American peers along Wageningen canteens in 2015. Among the many topics, one was incisive: Are ‘we’, the Latin-Americans (and not Africans or Asians) more ‘*Tira-piedras*’, or rebels so to speak confronting mainstream modern discourses that touch our southern realities in the classroom? Yes, we could not have been more ‘colonial’ than that. Shame. I admit a heavy bag of ignorance towards Africa reinforcing without reflecting, or maybe even knowing, on the ‘idea of Africa’ as V.Y. Mudimbe call it. As a solace, I would like to believe that my imaginary towards Africa lacked those fantastic visions from colonials (world renowned) literature pieces, and *The Heart of the Darkness* of Joseph Conrad comes to my mind here. Although, my heavy bag was rather certainly vague, for instance talking about ‘The’ African de/postcolonial thinking and not Africa as many. Or ingenuously, allocating my own Latin-American decolonial critique towards own Africa’s readings, pace and ways of

³⁶ Member of the *Forum africain des alternatives* and coordinator of the World Social Forum. Director of *l’Africaine de Recherche et de Coopération pour l’Appui au développement Endogène* (ARCADE). He has written « *Sortir l’Afrique de la servitude monétaire* », « *Le financement du développement et ses alternatives : le rôle des mouvements sociaux et politiques* », « *Contribution à la déconstruction des théories conventionnelles sur le développement de l’Afrique* », « *L’Afrique répond à Sarkozy. Contre le discours de Dakar* », « *50 ans après, quelle indépendance pour l’Afrique ?* », among others.

posing a critique. As if we Latin Americans were speaking for the whole Global South claiming a sort of epistemic privilege or setting a modern/colonial zero-degree departing point for other southern realities due to our assumed far colonial past or assumed long-time process reflecting on our condition of postcolonial beings. I guess, as wa Thiong'o (2009b) would satirize, I (or 'we', those in the Wageningen Canteen) was Robinson Crusoe calling 'Friday' the man I encounter without asking first his name.

After several months in Senegal engaging more and more with African postcolonial novels, I started to learn how to swallow such geographical (and colonial) ignorance. Reading those novels in a random cafe in Saint Louis facing the colonial *Faidherbe* bridge, or while resting from a painful four-hours trip in *charrette*³⁷ through *la brousse* of Ndiaël, many of them, if not all, have something to say about colonialism and its current echoes, which constitute a powerful critique to me. I can go as far as asking myself how many contemporary Latin-American novelists dedicate two lines for an anticolonial heroine or a colonial buffoon? Is it that for us Latin-Americans colonialism is a historical 'event' too far away in time in comparison to the fresh memory of African authors? Where are those José Martí, Jorge Zalamea, Alejo Carpentier, Roberto Fernández-Retamar, Ernesto Cardenal, César Calvo, and traces of the Latin American Boom today? Surely, one can argue that the once *realismo mágico* in Latin-America was a sort of 'being autonomous' and a liberation in the literature production, to some extent anticolonial. Or the fact that in many Latin-American cities we can find novels targeting the modern/colonial paradigm in a myriad of styles. Although my point addresses my geographical preliminary ignorance, which was contested by the fact that is that it does not matter if it is in the posh *Librairie Aux 4 Vents* of Mermoz, or the books of street vendors surviving the dust from the *Harmattan* wind on the Cheikh Anta Diop Avenue, you always find something involving the colonial past-present 'explicit' to please you, to feed your de/postcolonial inquiries. With African and Senegalese postcolonial novels it became possible for me to point out the critical reflections on the meaning of living in a postcolonial society. Certainly, these were mostly novels written in the 60s-90s with a core in the (post)colonial denunciation, but their reflection is literally available in many street corners of the main Senegalese cities for an average of two euros, if not less when you know how to bargain. Senegalese writers that I spoke with, continued to pose relevant critiques through the realm of literature, such as Felwine Sarr, Aboubacry Moussa Lam³⁸ and Boubacar Boris Diop. Despite the process of naming such 'something colonial', I became astonished not only by the explicit recognition that 'something colonial' remains as mentioned above, but by the intensity while doing it through a myriad of forms. Valid forms. Decolonial forms. This became **my third general impression**, from my encounter with the de/postcolonial Senegalese critical thought.

Briefly as a second example to complement this idea of intense critique to modern/colonial remanences, and in case literature written in French is not available for all Senegalese, which is the case. Few people can hold a French conversation in the Rural Community of Ngnith, not even its mayor or deputy mayor, or in the villages at the Ndiaël. I was surprised by the use of the strong national language: Wolof. Drawing from African decolonial wa Thiong'o (1986, 1993, 2009b) and Boubacar Boris Diop³⁹ (2014), my

³⁷ Local form of transportation. Cart pulled by a horse.

³⁸ Professor at History department at the UCAD. Egyptology and follower of the legacy of Cheikh Anta Diop. He has written « *De l'origine égyptienne des Peuls* », « *La fièvre de la terre* », « *Les chemins du Nil, les relations entre l'Égypte ancienne et l'Afrique noire* », among others.

³⁹ Boubacar Boris Diop, novelist and journalist interviewed for this research, has critically reflected on the use of national language in the writing process among postcolonial African writers in *Africa beyond the mirror*

impressions are that having French used as official language, the ‘something colonial’ that remains, Wolof depicts a critique and organic response to it. Wolof is in the streets of Dakar or Saint Louis, on the radio or TV, in a taxi or bus, when buying *beignets* or *fatayas*, when going to a seventh store in less than half an hour to find ‘salt’ because the French ‘*sel*’ does not work. Wolof everywhere! A passage in Sembène’s *Xala* film comes to my mind, when the bureaucratic-postcolonial-elite father in a Francophile attitude asked his daughter from his first-marriage to speak to him in the official language, French, but she refuses to do so and keeps talking to him in Wolof. Wolof challenging the Fanonian *Black skins white masks* orchestration! Is this not a vivid de/postcolonial critical reflection in the form of a “yes, the colonial French is here, hence, we use Wolof”? Diop (2014) says that using local language is an act of embracing a place to feel ‘safe’, and thus his decision to write in his mother tongue after having become famous writing in the language left by the colonisers. Is this very ‘persistence’ of colonial French not what permits/catalyses the revenge of the Wolof language in an organic way by the Senegalese society? This encounter with postcolonial Senegalese made me wonder how many of my school-university fellows speak Quechua, or Aymara, in my far away home Lima?

For the postcolonial Senegalese I spoke with, such ‘something colonial’ that exists, despite its naming, is noticeable mainly but not exclusively, in the realms of development, education, economy, mind, and politics. These forms of expression constitute **my fourth general impression** regarding postcolonial Senegal. To illustrate these ideas, I will describe five concrete examples of my encountering:

- Development: Barcelona, Senegal
- The colonial library and the legacy of Cheikh Anta Diop
- The Franc CFA
- *Are You better than Us?*
- Macron in *La corniche* of Dakar

Development: Barcelona, Senegal

“When I search for Man in the technique and the style of Europe, I see only a succession of negations of man, and an avalanche of *murders* [*emphasis mine*]”
Frantz Fanon - *The Wretched of the Earth* (2001, p. 252).

“Barcelona is not in Europe but in the Sahel, in Senegal!” Serguey told me while waving his hands.

Skin scorched by that lethal combination of sun and salt, throats slowly extinguished by that macerated thirst in those colorful *pirogues* that threw into the conquest of the European dream. Pirogues ending drifting without that remote memory of sharing stories and voices that once accompanied the sea breeze like notes of the Kora played from a distant home. Bodies drowned by hundreds, no luggage, no dreams. Failed attempts to ‘reach’ Europe. I could see all these images when Serguey was telling his story. I could imagine them materialized in the cries and moans among Serguey’s neighbors asking the very same nostalgia for some additional visions of the lost ones, before everything goes dark when the last coal is consumed. I could feel those gone looks for life of some deportees who

(2014). In this context, he decided to stop writing in French and does it in Wolof. The same case is with the historian Aboubacry Moussa Lam, also interviewed.

have had the 'luck' to return home. "I was tired, exhausted of that", Serguey said ending with a pause. At one point in his life, Serguey left his carpenter job and decided to defy the madness of which he was initially branded in his town. He started on August the 7th, 2007 and ended on June the 3rd, 2010. Without rest on Sundays, working even throughout the month of Ramadan and the physical demands that this entails, after carrying daily 70 sacks loaded with 80 kg of sand each on a distance of more than 100 meters, he was able to achieve the physical conquest of what he calls his 'own' Europe: The Lake Guiers in Ngnith, the small town I was using as a base to visit the Ndiaël villages around. Serguey imagined and drew a productive small land plot of 0.3 hectares on that water until then indomitable. "You know, I called '*Baresolone*', in allusion to Barcelona of Spain, there is no need to go there", he told making his body position become proud. Beyond those years of that coming and going carrying sand, Serguey counted, as he was looking and pointing out to the horizon with his hands now made of sand to me, that in the name of those lost souls in the Atlantic he wanted to show that such Barcelona that brings tears to families or people becoming divided between the 'here' and the 'there', is not in Europe, but in the Sahel, at home, in Senegal. A Barcelona that without having the architecture of Gaudí, el *Corte Inglés* or an opulent *Paseo de Gracia*, is enough with a bunch of mango trees, lemons, and guavas, with some parcels of tomatoes, onions and bananas, with a pair of date palms still young, and finally with some space for aquaculture. Serguey was wearing a straw hat that covered his face from that inclement Sahelian sun in his now 'European' plot. And I imagined all those lost lives dreaming for such 'shade' somewhere in the ocean.

When it comes to the Senegalese de/postcolonial critical thought addressing the idea of modern/colonial development, I would be unfair leaving Serguey's story and efforts unrecognized. He challenges in a concrete manner and not only through words what other critical Senegalese told me in Dakar and Saint Louis: Development for some postcolonial Senegalese still embodies something coming from the exterior, from abroad, and in most cases from the North. This is Senegal embracing the ideology to follow the European path, and to be able to die for it, as if its needed such as the lives Serguey recalled vanishing with their *pirogues* in the sea. This is, as Felwine Sarr puts it, the idea of *rattraper l'Europe* (to catch up with Europe), while silencing and putting aside their own organics, century-succeeded, valid paradigms, and logics of life projects (2016a)⁴⁰. This is to follow a colonial development while not even attempting for an 'own' Barcelona, or Paris, or Lisbon, or anywhere 'in' Senegal, as Serguey did. Such colonial imitation of Europe even uses a foreign mental-linguistic societal project since the occidental notion of development does not have resonance in Wolof (Sarr, 2016b). Going to the development policies arena, for those critical thinkers I encountered, the 'something colonial' that persists also was pointed out in the application of the *Plan Sénégal Émergent* (PSE)⁴¹ that represents the feeling of 'finally' arriving to a sort of *décollage* or take off by Senegal. The project *par excellence* of current president Macky Sall, whose propaganda of the PSE exists everywhere in Senegal. Some

⁴⁰ Mouhamedoune Abdoulaye Fall with *Et si le développement n'était qu'une chimère à Saint-Louis du Sénégal ?* (2011), Demba Moussa Dembélé with *Contribution à la déconstruction des théories conventionnelles sur le développement de l'Afrique* (2015), and Felwine Sarr with *Afrotopia* (2016) are some of the interviewees that have critically reflected in the idea of *rattrapage* in development discourses.

⁴¹ The PSE is a governmental plan by current Senegalese administration to make Senegal an 'emergent' country by 2035. Mamadou Ndongo Dime of the UGB, has written an important reflection on the PSE, which he considers as a sort of 'development as usual' in: *L'émergence en lieu et place du développement au Sénégal : changement cosmétique, nouvelle mode institutionnelle ou (r)évolution paradigmatique ?* (2016). I was not able to personally interview him but we exchanged correspondence.

relevant interview quotes depict this idea of development as a ‘something colonial’ that remains.

“You ask any student or professor why they do what they do? They will reply, “I do it for development”. This university [UGB] has the motto of “The excellence in service of development” [...]. You ask them the definition of development, and they will not know what they are talking about” (Abdoulaye Fall).

“[...] such dream to say Dakar will be like Paris, a copy-paste of the life model, the idea to move everything as possible to make Dakar look like Paris. Is this a possible logic?” (Mariam Sow⁴²).

“You are going to see that the ‘emergence’ [*the PSE*], is another form of calling development. The idea that we have been submerged, and therefore we need to emerge, to take off, so we are always in such development metaphor, of growth, of emergence, of taking off. In fact, we change the terms but we follow the occidental modern paradigm” (Tidiane Ndoye⁴³).

To conclude, when listening to Serguey’s story, and passing by in front of his *Barcelona* in Ngnith the following days, I could not stop thinking of Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* (2001), so I borrow from him to read better Serguey’s story. Fanon says: “So, my brothers, how is it that we do not understand that we have better things to do than to follow that same Europe? [...], the European game has finally ended; we must find something different. We today can do everything, so long as we do not imitate Europe, so long as we are not obsessed by the desire to *catch up* [*emphasis mine*] with Europe” (pp. 251-252). Serguey’s motto is precisely challenging such beliefs of ‘incapability’ in ‘doing it on your own’ at home, challenging the very act of mimicry that Fanon speaks about. Moreover, Serguey is performing the Fanonian “Yes, it is very true that we need a model, and that we want blueprints and examples” (p. 252). Serguey is giving such model to those who may be doubting taking or not a *pirogue* to ‘chase’ Europe. To better put it, his decolonial attitude, at least to me, born from daring to move a little bit the sands, or, rather, the maps, Ithaca, the orders of importance, and the esteem of the being itself. In that sense, Serguey is truly working on the Fanonian “let us combine our muscles and our brains in a new direction” (p. 252), which is to counter the ‘motionless world’ that colonisation (and what persists of it) gives him as *damné*.

The colonial library and the legacy of Cheikh Anta Diop

« Je voulais découvrir quelque part ou en quelqu’un le lien sacré qui me manquait.
Pourquoi ne pas aller à la recherche de « mes ancêtres les Gaulois » ? »
Ken Bugul - *Le Baobab Fou* (1982, p. 170).

It was an incendiary de/postcolonial Senegalese afternoon to me. Fire to the perpetuation of colonial histories, I would like to believe. Four days after a chaotic and late arrival in Senegal, I left my temporary house right in front of the *La Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines* (FLSH) of the UCAD, with the idea to perhaps engage with, listen to, and feel the Senegalese

⁴² Coordinator of Enda Pronat, Dakar.

⁴³ Head of Sociology department at the UCAD.

post/decolonial thinking in action. It was the projection of *Kemtiyu*, a film by Ousmane William Mbaye in 2016 presenting the legacy of Senegalese Cheikh Anta Diop (CAD). His legacy is the re-position and re-constitution of the black Africa in world history, whose essence was put in brackets by colonialism. The film did not start at 15:00 as it was supposed to, but the room was packed and full of young Senegalese including five Toubabs⁴⁴. A Q&A proceeded the film and that was the moment when Mbaye turned into flames. He condemned the fact that CAD's legacy has not been completely acknowledged in African elementary schools and universities: "It took 30 years after CAD's disappearance to come up with a film of the life-work of *le pharaon du savoir*", he claimed to the audience. Mbaye was referring to the fact that it took three decades to honour the man who according to Aime Césaire when referring to Diop's *Nations nègres et culture* in *Le Discours sur le colonialisme*, was "the most daring book yet written by a Negro and one which will without question play an important part in the awakening of Africa" (2000, p. 56). Mbaye trying to go back to the calm he kept when watching his film, he recalled the recent initiative labelled as *Pour l'enseignement de la pensée de Cheikh Anta Diop à l'école*⁴⁵ to bring CAD's exposition of the racialized science and knowledge, and therefore his enterprise to bring back the forgotten black component into the canonical belief that Greece was a zero point and Egypt was an isolated 'white' civilization.

This *Kemtiyu* afternoon unveiled to me such 'something colonial' persisting in the realm of education in Senegal. I confirmed this later with other Senegalese critical thinkers⁴⁶, and their arguments refer well to what Congolese philosopher Valentin-Yves Mudimbe's (1988) proposes as an existing colonial library that shapes the reading of what Africa is, its society, and its destiny. The use of French as official teaching language and mostly, the act of copying-pasting of curricula from French education institutions depict such immersion into the colonial library. Just to give an example coming back to the Ken Bugul's quote of "*mes ancêtres les Gaulois*" I used at the beginning of this section, I remember how Onoma Ato⁴⁷ in our meeting at the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), linked the French education system to such belief of some Senegalese. He said to me: "this is something they used to teach them, ah, that they would say "*nos ancêtres les Gaulois*", Ok? So before [...], all that people had, ah, all that these Francophones had was French ancestors. Ok?". Finally, I believe the following quotes illustrate further my point.

"But here in the universities, until today we are in the process of learning what happened in France, not what occurs here in Senegal, our realities, the traditional knowledge. We have great African thinkers but we are learning about Napoleon" (Fatou Dieng).

"You will see students mobilizing colonial references without knowing why [...]. It is the school we learn, but students do not realize that [...]. So that it is the most manifested expression of the coloniality of knowledge, it is the references we mobilize to aim to

⁴⁴ Word use in Central and West Africa to refer to whites, European descendants.

⁴⁵ Its Facebook group has 17462 members until June the 15th 2017.

⁴⁶ Mouhamedoune Abdoulaye Fall with *Décoloniser les sciences sociales en Afrique* (2011), and Felwine Sarr with *Afrotopia* (2016) calling for an epistemic decentralization are some of the interviewees that have participated in the rethinking of the colonized African education system.

⁴⁷ Coordinator of Research at CODESRIA. Political Scientist and Philosopher. He has written "The politics of property rights institutions in Africa", "Anti-Refugee Violence and African Politics", among others.

comprehend the world and concepts. This is a great problem here in Senegal” (Ndongo Samba Sylla⁴⁸).

“All our thinking apparatus, the whole architecture of our thinking, it is at great part tributary and legacy of the colonial library. [...] We have not reflected at the level of the education system, of that thing that says it is needed to educate ourselves like the French, that it is needed to live like them [...], so finally the values and culture end to be not ours” (Aminata Diaw Cissé⁴⁹).

However, this *Kemtiyu* afternoon also unveiled the vivid post/decolonial critical thought performing through the film, through the existing collective claims for CAD’s legacy in the Senegalese education system, and through the very existence of an audience such afternoon. Decolonizing the university efforts are on-going, as Saliou Dione told me in the Postcolonial studies department, “Yes, there are many Francophone universities that keep such colonial library, if you want to call it like that. However, now people like me and other colleagues, we are trying to deconstruct it, we are trying to not perpetuate the passing of such [*Colonial*] knowledge to our kids. We need to create a decolonial library, or postcolonial library, or better, an African library”. Dione’s words took more relevance when weeks later, the philosopher Souleymane Bachir Diagne⁵⁰ mentioned in the conference of Contested Modernities at the UCAD, “There is a need to say: “it is my responsibility to make a library, like the one in Djenné or Timbuktu [*Referring to the ancient libraries in Mali*]. Why not one in Wolof?””.

⁴⁸ Economist in charge of research at Rosa Luxembourg Foundation Dakar. He has written « *Redécouvrir Sankara – Martyr de la liberté* », « *Les mouvements sociaux en Afrique de l’Ouest* », « Fairtrade is an unjust movement that serves the rich », « *Dire la vérité sur le Franc CFA* », « *Pour Une Autre Afrique ; éléments De Réflexion Pour Sortir De L’impasse* », « *La démocratie telle que pratiquée au Sénégal n’est pas porteuse de développement* », « *La démocratie contra la République : L’autre histoire du gouvernement du peuple* », among others.

⁴⁹ Philosopher and professor, Cissé unfortunately passed away the 13th-14th April 2017. Through her work in CODESRIA based in Dakar, and her teaching position in the philosophy department of the UCAD, she championed the struggle against this colonial library in contemporary Senegal.

⁵⁰ Professor of French and Philosophy. Department Chair Columbia University. He has written « *La culture du développement* », “African Art as Philosophy. Senghor, Bergson, and the Idea of Negritude”, « *Les sciences sociales au Sénégal : Mise à l’épreuve et nouvelles perspectives* », among others.

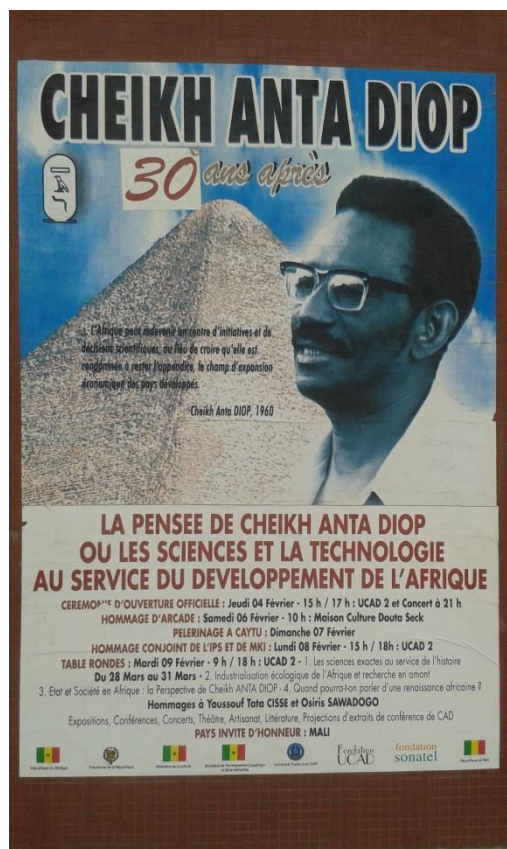


Figure 3: Poster of the commemoration of the 30th Anniversary of the death of Cheikh Anta Diop (2016) somewhere in the UCAD, Dakar. Source: Personal photo.

The Franc CFA

After we met in the “*Samedi de l’économie : La gouvernance des ressources naturelles au Sénégal*” (11/03/2017), and in the “*Quelles alternatives crédibles au franc CFA ?*” (18/03/2017), it took us about a month and a half to finally sit face to face in a kebab café near the VDN highway in Dakar. It was 17:15, and the sun was entering violently through the big window we were sitting next to on the second floor. After a prolonged hug, as the one he gave me before, he claimed: “Ah! Mathias! [*in a French accent*], nice to see you again [*while patting at my back*]. I told you to call me on Mondays, Mondays are good! [*It was Friday*]”. I took a sit and he sentenced: “When I am going to talk about something important, I drink some coffee even if it is late in the afternoon”. Later, he gently called the waitress and I asked for a ginger juice. While waiting for the juice he asked: “How have you been?”, “I am trying to clarify this idea of neocolonialism, coloniality, you know, the stuff that brought me here”. “Ah! Mathias! [*French accent again*]”. A moment of silence followed us.

Demba Moussa Dembélé, if the novelist Boubacar Boris Diop would portray him in a ‘possible’ novel, would be the tireless freedom fighter to liberate Senegal from the persisting colonial ties in the realm of economy. He could perfectly be the Badou, the young revolutionary brother of Fadel, combatting the Francophile General Adelezo in a postcolonial somewhere in Diop’s *Los Tambores de la Memoria* (2011). Or maybe, a strong village leader

dying at the hands of the French army when they were looking for *tirailleurs*⁵¹ in the Casamance in Sembène's film *Emिताï* (1971). With an impressive bag of lived struggles, Dembélé was proudly mentioning his participation in several World Social Forum editions during our encounter. "Ah! I was in Porto Alegre, I was in Caracas".

In the middle of our conversation, when the sun was going down this time, his forehead became tense, intense, robbing the protagonist role to his thick glasses I remembered during all the time we did not see each other. "To get rid of neocolonialism we need to recuperate our sovereignty! Therefore, the Franc CFA is so important!" he sentenced. We had arrived at the most concrete contemporary example, for him, of the 'something colonial' persisting in contemporary Senegal. The persistence of the Franc CFA⁵². Later he blamed the lack of a reincarnation of Thomas Sankara among West African politicians, one leader that could break such colonial domination in economy. "There are no political leaders who can say "let's exit this"", he said. And for Dembélé it is mainly because of fear, a fear that reins for two reasons. "Ah! Mathias! [*French accent*], *c'est la peur dans la tête* [*It is the fear on the head*]!". The first reason is because if someone presents a project to exit the CFA currency, that someone would be labelled as against the French interests and could receive a *coup d'état*. The second reason is because for him leaders tend to say: "What are we going to do when getting out of such currency?". He recalled a plan of a unique currency, from the *Communauté Economique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest* (CEDAO), but then he claimed again "*c'est la peur dans la tête*!". This idea about fear brought by Dembélé, made me recall my encounter as well with Ndongo Samba Sylla⁵³, his comrade in struggle with the Front Anti-CFA. For Samba Sylla the problem is not only the very currency, but the arguments behind the phobia of leaving the colonial currency, arguments even posed by the very Africans. He put it like this in our encounter:

"The Franc CFA it is a colonial currency, and it is the same Africans saying, "If we exit the CFA, it is going to be a catastrophe"! Because Africans cannot manage their own currency! But if others did it [*Algeria, Tunes, Morocco*] why cannot the West African countries do it too? You see? It is not a catastrophe but the logic of coloniality there" (Ndongo Samba Sylla).

After an hour or so, Dembélé went to the street with me to get me a taxi despite my refusal. I remembered telling him that I was going to *Auchan*⁵⁴ to buy some bread, eggs, and other things for the weekend. "Auchan!", I repeated. We laughed. "Ah! Mathias! [*in a French accent*], good to see you!", he said. We said goodbye to each other with a promise of calling each other on a Monday, and he invited me to join another *Samedi de l'économie* the following Saturday in the Centre Bopp, where we met for the first time. *Inch Allah!* I replied. And he vanished as my taxi was trying to get a place in the Dakar traffic.

In the road to *Auchan* of Point E, I could not stop counting those other tangible aspects in the daily Senegalese life that represent such 'something colonial' in the realm of

⁵¹ Word that refers to those African soldiers that were taken to fight the WWI and WWII.

⁵² The CFA is the actual currency of Senegal and 14 other West and Central African countries that has been passed on from the '*Colonies Françaises d'Afrique*', to '*Communauté Française d'Afrique*' to finally '*Communauté Financière en Afrique*' in West Africa since 1945.

⁵³ Ndongo Samba Sylla and Demba Moussa Dembélé, both interviewed for this research, are some of the most prominent figures that have carried out theoretical decolonial contributions and foster political activism with the Anti-CFA block in Senegal and West Africa. Work such as *Dire la vérité sur le Franc CFA* (2017) or *Sortir l'Afrique de la servitude monétaire* (2016) are examples of these contributions.

⁵⁴ Auchan, as well as Casino, are French international retail groups, present in Senegal.

economy, according to the people I talked with and based on my days until then in Senegal: From French *Orange* telephonic services everywhere, sponsoring the African cup of soccer and the Dakar marathon; to the influences of the omnipresent French Total Group in the Senegalese energy sector⁵⁵, as well as *Eiffage* having the monopoly of the country's highways, and the presence of *La Brioche Dorée*, to *Casino* supermarkets offering from family cans of tasty-expensive *confit de canard* to portions of insipid-cheap *La vache qui rit* cheese. With some almost deteriorated Franc CFA bills at hand to pay the taxi, I played on guessing the year of the emission of such bills.



Figure 4: Poster of an event of the Block Anti Franc-CFA. Source: Facebook.

Are You better than Us?

“I had the feeling that I was repeating a cycle. My originality had been torn out of me. I wept a long time, and then I began to live again”

Frantz Fanon – *Black skins white masks* (2008, p. 99).

“Mr. Howlands felt a certain gratifying pleasure. The machine he had set in motion was working. The blacks were destroying the blacks”.

Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o - *Weep Not, Child* (2012, p. 107).

⁵⁵ It was Dembélé who let me know this case. The scandal of a Total Group agreement in May 2017 depicts the influences of Total in Senegal’s government. The ministry of Energy criticized the agreement between the government and Total for the exploration and exploitation of oil concessions, agreement which was considered too favourable for the enterprise and not for the Senegalese society. The saga ended with the suspension of the ministry. I believe that the saga of Total during my stay in Senegal represents well the idea of Fanon (2001): “The ex-colonial power, which has kept intact and sometimes even reinforced its colonialist trade channels [...]” (p. 77).

I still remember such Friday just before the *Tisbaar*⁵⁶. I was invited by the Laboratory of postcolonial studies of the English department at the UCAD to give a short lecture on the decolonial Latin American body of thought. I ended up talking in a small conference room to about 200 West African undergraduate and graduate students, most of them wearing elegant *bubus*⁵⁷ to immediately go to the mosque for the Friday prayer after my lecture. After the presentation, from among a bunch of questions the last one that came from the middle of the room ended touching me deeply: “Do you believe that you [*Latin-Americans*], are better than us [*Africans, Senegalese, Blacks*]?” It was a foundational and existential question to me, which I ended up responding (I do not know if rightly or wrongly) based on our shared colonial past and experiences, and my believe that from our differences and similarities emerges an urgent need to talk among us, from our Fanonian condition of *damnés*, from our Dusselian position of ‘exteriors’. Why you vs me, them vs we, worst vs better, inferiority vs superiority, people without religion vs people with religion, people without soul vs people with soul? Do these words revive anything but modern/colonial logics and dualisms? This is what appeared somehow in that question to me. The students left to the Mosque, and with Saliou Dione, the coordinator of the course, we went to our traditional ‘eating’ spot on campus to keep talking about de/postcolonial topics, life, books, and projects. The question remained in my thoughts.

Two weeks later, the novelist Boubacar Boris Diop was waiting for us, Florie and me, in a sunny balcony at his home in Dakar. Considered one of the most influential contemporary writers in Africa, Boubacar decided to write in Wolof because it allows him to write with the ‘ears’. So, I was delighted to meet the man behind such decolonial courage to me. We shared correspondence for a few months, and from his lecturing position in Nigeria, he always showed interest in my research with affection and humbleness, addressing to me as ‘my dear Matías’. I knew about Boubacar due to his appearance on the *Kemtiyu* film I referred above, when he was describing Senegal as a two-parent nation: Senghor and Cheikh Anta Diop. In fact, the second one, his mentor, had a tutelary portrait standing in the corner of the living room next to the television, where he was watching news at the time of our arrival.

The conversation went on with his calm, slow and narrative voice, but with his responses addressing precisely the idea of superiority and inferiority that stayed unresolved in my head after such Friday at the UCAD. At one moment in our meeting, he arrived at a foundational theme according to him, that one of a before and after, not only for Africa but for humanity: the genocide of Rwanda⁵⁸. Such painful chapter of history written through machetes. When he started to talk about it, it was impossible not to make the connections on what he wrote in *Murambi le livre des ossements*: “And if that radical punishment - genocide - was the answer to a very old crime that nobody wanted to talk about [*Translation mine*]?” (p. 81). Boubacar continued to take my breath away with stories collected in the

⁵⁶ Muslim praying at 14:15 on Fridays.

⁵⁷ Traditional African clothes.

⁵⁸ Boubacar Boris Diop participated in the project “*Rwanda: écrire par devoir de mémoire*” in 1998. Such project took him along with a group of African writers to Rwanda, with the objective to write about the genocide. This experience has influenced some of his writings, considered peaks of literature and critical postcolonial African thought. For example, the novel “*Murambi le livre des ossements*” (2000) and the collection of essays “*L’Afrique au-delà du miroir*” (2006).

street and in the countryside of Rwanda from that sad 1994, where according to him, the final alignments of the Football teams ready to face in the Soccer World Cup in USA ended to be more important than the 800 000 thousand killed by machetes in 100 days. “Something like 10 000 deaths a day”, he said. “Babies were thrown against the walls, mutilated were sentenced to a slowly waiting of their sunsets, arms were systematically injected with AIDS, women rapes were uninterrupted day and night, and people were cooked alive or buried in latrines”, he continued. I was deeply moved from my very insight when looking at Boubacar’s eyes, and I had the feeling that my heart itself had already gone on a strike as a protest to the lives that disappeared during those three months, only just 23 years ago. Again, such question emerging after my lecture at the UCAD emerged, mixed with images of the Rwandan horror through Cornelius, one of the characters of *Murambi*, narrated by Boubacar.

After such a painful morning, what I took from my encounter with Boubacar was his idea of the ‘hatred of the self’ (*haine de soi*), which does not need to be mistaken with the ‘hatred of the other’ (*haine de l’autre*). As he put it, “I kill the other not because he is different from me, but because he brings me to confrontation to what I most hate in this world: myself”. Boubacar sentenced that such radical self-deprecation is anything but the legacy coming from the slave trade and the colonization in Africa. Such logic that Boubacar was articulating at that moment, and which he does in some of his works⁵⁹, became the same logic that brought me to Senegal. That is what I felt. Such logic, such repetition again and again of the ‘something colonial’ in the form of a global power, epistemological invasions of minds, and humanity (de)classified according to invented notions of race (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013a, 2013b). Coloniality for some, neocolonialism for others, ‘something colonial’ that perpetuates itself, through the *you vs us*. To me that was the founding message of Boubacar, the need for a denunciation of such erroneous or ‘constructed’ view coming from a colonial ethnology that claims that “Hutus kill Tutsis and Tutsis kill Hutus”, animally, as a mere interethnic war. “They were performing an invented ethnicity!”, as the African decolonial author Mahmood Mamdani also has highlighted in *When victims become killers* (2001). I felt that Boubacar invited to leave such comfort zone in the easy and digested interpretation of history to dig deep about those reasons for the genocide: colonialism. That was not only the Senegalese, but the pure African critical thought performing. Boubacar was inviting me precisely to read how these dualisms, as one student brought to the classroom in my encounter at the UCAD, were repeating on an on. Settler-native, colonizer-colonized, superior-inferior, light skin-dark skin, apt-inept, beautiful-deplorable, for Boubacar and Mamdani, they had been installed by colonialism and after replicated by the very Tutsis and Hutus themselves, with the same speed of the machetes that went through limbs and hearts in 1994. Dualisms that reset, at some point in history, their ontologies, cosmogonies, and social relationships.

These ideas brought by Boubacar mixed with my UCAD encounter such Friday, I believe have also relevance when linking Fanon’s (2001, 2008) arguments that there is a need to overcome those psychological effects wrought by colonialism. For Fanon, and I am keeping in mind the logic replicated by colonized beings, whether Tutsis-Hutus or me and my audience at the UCAD, there is an inferiority complex to be overcome. Césaire (2000, p. 43)

⁵⁹ To the work already mentioned, I include his essay “*Stephen Smith, passeur du racisme ordinaire*”, included in the book “*Négrophobie*” (2005), edited by Diop with Odile Tobner and François-Xavier Verschave, as a collective response to the work of Stephen Smith entitled “*Négrologie: pourquoi l’Afrique meurt*” (2003).

would say: “I am talking about millions of men in whom fear has been cunningly instilled, who have been taught to have an inferiority complex, to tremble, kneel, despair, and behave like flunkys”. According to Fanon (2008), such complex developed in two stages. First, as an economic and material inferiority due to the physical aspects of colonialism, this is what we can touch. Second, as the ‘epidermalization’ of such inferiority. What am I trying to expose is that “Do you believe that you [Latin-Americans] are better than us [Africans, Senegalese, Blacks]?” represents to me the ‘something colonial’ that persists mostly in the realm of the mind, or thinking, or in a Fanonian jargon, the “self-esteem”. Actually, it helps me to understand an encounter among the location of myself (my positioning, my gestures, my ideas, my way of talking, my way of looking, my time, my space), and the one of the Senegalese who posed the question, in a modern/colonial discourse that keeps going on, replicating itself the *you vs us*. We both played the modern/colonial discourse that morning. Not only them, not only me. Finally, I believe my encounter with the student at the UCAD, with Boubacar, and I would say with Fanon, finds also ground on the very essence of *Les Ateliers de la pensée*⁶⁰ of 2016. It was also there, in my forced time at Montpellier, where I found an articulation from de/postcolonial African critical thinkers claiming for the ‘reconstruction’ of the psychical and psychological infrastructures, the self-esteem, calling to address those representations of what has been posed as real because it has been imposed by colonial hands.



Figure 5: Encounter in Dakar at the UCAD. Lecture for Postcolonial discourses course. Source: Florie Chazarin

⁶⁰ I am referring precisely to the presentations of Felwine Sarr, Achille Mbembe, and Severine Kodjo-Grandaux. Articles I am referring could be seen in the ANNEX. I do not use any cite ‘in the text’ because their arguments appear widely along the online articles during and after the event of 2016.

Macron⁶¹ in *La corniche* of Dakar

« [...], tout avait été organisé pour que la colonie fût asservie à la métropole, de corps et d'esprit, avec armes et bagages, la raison d'être de la colonie étant le service du colonisateur »
Cheikh Hamidou Kane - *Les Gardiens du Temple* (1996, p. 111).

It was mid-April and Florie approached to me while doing the line to buy our classical *Thieboudienne*⁶² at the UCAD campus. The canteen was improvised in a sort of classroom. “I saw a poster of Macron on my way to the *Plateau*, I could not believe it! Next time I would like to take a picture of it”, she said. We received our plates and walked to find a sit, while avoiding the dozen cats ready to jump on a careless piece of fishbone falling from a random plate. While eating, I could not stop thinking the many political ties among France-Senegal, former metropole-colony, which for many of the people I talked with, represent a colonial link in the realm of politics. From French appointed political advisors in recent independent states in the 60s-70s (and here Sembène’s *Xala* film wins depicting this), the creation of the *Françafrique*, to the recent French ‘war against terror’ in the Sahel such as the *Serval* military operation in Mali⁶³ and actual French military bases settled in Dakar, Senegal or in Bamako and Gao, Mali. I remembered seeing some Senegalese military training operations with French soldiers one morning running through the neighbourhood of *Mermoz* in Dakar. I remembered as well Onoma Ato telling me: “Man! There are things that happen here [*in Senegal, he is from Nigeria*] that people just take for granted. The fact that French soldiers are based in all these francophone countries it is just normal, while in Anglophone countries, if you think of a British base in Nigeria or Ghana, people would be outraged!”.

In addition, the idea of the visible Balkanization of Africa comes to my mind, which is the persistence of colonial national boundaries from the Berlin Conference 1884-85. This is another ‘something colonial’ that remains regarding politics, the borders, going against such Federal vision claimed for Africa by Cheikh Anta Diop (1974), wa Thiong’o (2009b), and Mbembe (2013). Colonial borders also brought to my mind those debates in Dakar and Saint Louis, again, from of *Les Ateliers de la pensée* of 2016, and the figure of Achille Mbembe precisely arguing to “exit the theory of the intangibility of the frontiers inherited from colonisation” and to make Africa a vast space of circulation, instead of staying with colonial borders that brings Africa into a ‘colonial glaciation’. This topic of borders also resonated when I was reading *Les Soleils des indépendances*. There, Fama Doumbouya, the hero, would ask himself when trying to return home: “A Doumbouya, a real one, father Doumbouya, mother Doumbouya, would need the authorization and papers from bastards, dog’s sons,

⁶¹ When writing this thesis, Emmanuel Macron became Sarkozy of 2007 and Hollande of 2014 during the G20 meeting in Hamburg in July 2017 when referring to Africa: “The challenge of Africa, it is totally different. It is deeper, it is *civilizational* [*Emphasis mine*] today. What are the problems of Africa? Failed states, complex democratic transitions, the demographic transition that is, I remembered it this morning, one of the essential challenges of Africa. When you have countries having always *seven or eight kids per women* [*Emphasis mine*], you can decide to spend millions of Euros on them, but it will not stabilize anything [*Translation mine*].” (Retrieved from <https://m.huffingtonpost.fr/2017/07/11/cette-phrase-de-macron-sur-les-sept-a-huit-enfants-par-femme-e-a-23024830/> - accessed in 12/07/2017).

⁶² Traditional Senegalese dish made of rice, fish, and vegetables.

⁶³ Operation Serval was a French military operation in Mali. The aim of the operation was to oust Islamic fundamentalist militants from the north of Mali, who had begun a push into the center of Mali. Boubacar Boris Diop, novelist and journalist interviewed for this research, and Aminata Traoré have reflected on current French political interventions in Mali, Senegal and Africa in general in *La gloire des imposteurs* (2014).

and slaves to go to Togobala?⁶⁴” (p. 190). Overall, during such lunch ‘summary’ at the UCAD campus I ended recalling what postcolonial Senegalese told me, that Senegalese and *Françafrique* members so to speak, seem to be immersed in these political ties that become the ‘norm’. That poster calling to vote for Macron in 2017 French presidential elections, not in France but along *La corniche* of Dakar in Senegal, constitutes the perfect example of this.



Figure 6: Poster calling to vote for Emmanuel Macron for 2017 French Presidential elections in Dakar.
Source: Florie Chazarin.

2.3 Blurring the boundaries among de/postcolonial thought

“I got the impression that boundaries of de/postcolonial are becoming more blurred here in Senegal. Some students [*From the lecture I gave at the UCAD*] and Saliou [*Dione, coordinator of the course of Postcolonial Discourses*] mentioned Senghor and wa Thiong’o as truly ‘postcolonial’ authors, which for African ‘decolonials’ such as Sabelo [*Ndlovu-Gatsheni*] are ‘decolonials’. What a headache! Maybe to blur these rigid categorizations and instead to look for the nuances?”
(Field diary, 12-05-2017).

When I started, as a decolonial Latin-American, to submerge myself in the critical thinking in postcolonial Senegal, I somehow found ‘more or less’ clear those theoretical convergences and divergences among de/postcolonial schools in Africa. As I mentioned before, convergences when both challenging historical modern/colonial narratives (Bhambra, 2014; Mbembe, 2007b; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015b). Divergences, when showing an historical-theoretical differentiation among them (Asher, 2013; Bhambra, 2014), an epistemological differentiation (Asher, 2013; MAEID, 2014; Mignolo, 2007), and a differentiation when generalizing colonial experiences (MAEID, 2014; Marzagora, 2016). Nevertheless, after my Senegalese days dialoguing with their critical thinkers, or simply the very act of living, rigid boundaries among these schools became more blurred. This becomes **my fifth general**

⁶⁴ Translation mine.

impression. I have the impression that the Senegalese critical thinking in its postcolonial context does not seem to insert 'forcedly' or 'strictly' in one or the other school of thought, rather, it tries to grab from different archives, readings, and schools to elaborate its main critical body in a postcolonial context. It is diverse. Making justice to all critical de/postcolonial thinkers in contemporary postcolonial Senegal, hence, I call for a blurring of the boundaries among these schools, affecting my own reading on the postcolonial condition as a decolonial Latin-American. I present some random thoughts that justify this call, at least for me.

First, there is *no* homogenized African postcolonial critical body of thought. This is the idea of the not *one* but *many* postcolonial situations, which aligns more with a decolonial rather than a postcolonial approach to me (Marzagora, 2016; MAEID, 2014). However, Senegalese that recognized themselves as 'postcolonials' argued that this is a simplistic reading done by 'decolonials', like me, and therefore, they acknowledged different postcolonial situations and beings. I embrace 'their' invitation to understand the nuances of the critical de/postcolonial thinking in Africa, and in Senegal, by first exploring the different colonial rules set in motion during colonialism, especially the ones deployed after the Berlin conference in the late 19th century. An entry point to explain the vast diversity and active hybridity of postcolonial thinkers in Africa.

According to Gilbert and Reynolds (2011), the French direct rule established a clear chain of rules and regulations, and the setting of in-situ colonial officers, while Africans' participation was limited to report directly to colonial administrators. The critical aspect of the direct rule was the 'civilizing mission' to replace local cultures with the French one, since Africans in French colonies needed to be civilized. Again, Sembène's films show beautifully this and Ken Bugul's "*mes ancêtres les Gaulois*" fits perfectly. In Senegal, the main example comes from the *quatre communes*, where inhabitants of Saint Louis, Dakar, Gorée and Rufisque had the possibility to get the French citizenship. In contrast, the indirect rule applied by the British heavily relied on African participation and administrative structures to manage the colonies in a more efficient manner. Less colonial officers, more Africans involved. According to Onoma Ato, these varieties of experiencing 'colonial' scenarios led to different 'postcolonial' scenarios in Africa, and different ways of posing critiques to the modern/colonial world. Senegal is not isolated from Africa, not even by the Balkanisation of African borders, and the cross-fertilization of ideas among Anglophones and Francophones contribute on blending postcolonial critiques. CODESRIA with its headquarters in Dakar comes as an example to my mind, and its role in social science research in the last decades (Lepre, 2015).

Another way of seeing the diverse positions among de/postcolonial thinkers in Senegal is through the different 'ideological affiliations', according to Babacar Sall. For him, de/postcolonial Senegalese while calling to change the modern/colonial paradigm, inscribe themselves within different tendencies, such as Marxism, neoliberalism, and others.

Second, for critical Senegalese thinkers, methods and theories could differ but *goals* tend to be the same. This is a confirmation in Senegal of the convergences of both schools trying to challenge imposed historical narratives. Saliou Dione, 'postcolonial', comes to my mind when he told me: "Even in postcolonial school we can see the core idea of decoloniality. It is there! So, in my view there is not really a difference [...] They have the same objectives". Also, when talking with Aboubacry Lam, disciple of Cheikh Anta Diop: "Grab Cheikh Anta Diop's book *Nation nègre et culture or Antériorité des civilisations nègres*, he was the first one to affirm the need to decolonize our minds [...] To call it decolonial or

postcolonial, ah! Whatever [is] the case, the vision is there". This perspective of both schools having the same spirit in the long run, came also to light when I talked with Felwine Sarr and his plans with Achille Mbembe, of organizing the second edition for "*Les ateliers de la pensée*" in November 2017 and inviting 'decolonials' to talk, but affirming also that he does not recognize fundamental differentiations among de/post.

"I would like to invite Sabelo [Ndlovu-Gatsheni, a South African 'decolonial' author who has published about the decoloniality of Africa] for the next edition to have a de/postcolonial debate. My standpoint is that at the end, it is the same thing, fundamentally, it is the same thing. Some theoretical postures may differ at the surface level, but they are the same thing in depth. Instead, we need to work on what are those intellectual *convergences* [emphasis mine], the rest are details of form, not fundamental. *The point* [emphasis mine] is how we liberate ourselves, how we unfold all the humanity potential in terms of cultural, philosophical and epistemic richness, and how we put that in a common patrimony for more freedom, emancipation, and clarity of humanity. [...] What interests me is to open the field of possibility. The possible is open, it is wide, but coloniality hinders it, using only few resources, few archives, a small vision of the world, a mechanical reason, something reductive".

Third, those propositions that 'postcolonials' tend to deconstruct and 'decolonials' to rebuild or reconstruct (Marzagora, 2016) became less noticeable during my experience in postcolonial Senegal. When Saliou Dione, who identifies himself as 'postcolonial', said to me "we are trying to *deconstruct* [Emphasis mine] it [*The colonial library*]", I could 'see' his postcolonial positioning. However, as I understood, to construct a positive image of Senegalese, and Africans, by 'decolonials' would imply first to confront the idea of "*nos ancêtres les Gaulois*" rooted in some Senegalese who believe the idea of having French ancestors. Thus, the 'decolonial' movement *Négritude* (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a, 2015b) may have involved first with 'deconstructing' at one point the alienated African being before bringing the black identity to the fore. 'Deconstructing' "*nos ancêtres les Gaulois* is not supposed to be a 'postcolonial' task? On the other hand, one can argue that when 'postcolonials' say what the Senegalese 'is' today, it is a sort of 'construction'. The very *Les Ateliers de la pensée* of 2016, with some of its critical thinkers aligning in the 'postcolonial' stand but claiming for the 'reconstruction' of the psychical and psychological infrastructures: "*l'estime de soi*". Onoma Ato, again, comes to my mind lucidly reflecting from his Nigerian positioning when living in postcolonial Senegal:

"[...] Constructing or deconstructing, some of these dichotomies can be problematic. How do you construct without deconstruct? Or, how do you deconstruct without constructing? [...] when Sabelo [Ndlovu-Gatsheni] is writing on the construction of the African subject, you cannot really construct it without deconstruct previously it. And when Achille [Mbembe, Cameroonian 'postcolonial' author] is talking about Afropolitanism, cosmopolitanism, universalism and all of that, they are all basically sort of constructing the Africans [...]. And people like Diawara and Mbembe criticizes that *Négritude* is backward, but what they are doing is only possible because *Négritude*⁶⁵ created this opportunity".

⁶⁵ In a same line, Boubacar Boris Diop not in the interview but in his essay in "*Nérophobie*" (2005, p. 97) argues that "The movement of Césaire, Senghor, and Damas is over everything a heritage. It belongs to the history of ideas in Africa and it is present, even in an unconscious way, at the heart of our daily life [*Translation mine*]".

Perhaps, two aspects still can depict a slight differentiation among de/postcolonials after my Senegalese experience. One was the mentioning of decolonials as more radical, in comparison to the consensual approach of the second ones. Onoma Ato said:

“They are [*Decolonial authors*] in a more militant approach, a more *confrontational* [*Emphasis mine*] school that sort of sees very thick lines, where lots from the postcolonial school are trying to forge, you know, build the bridges, engage with each other [...] So decolonials more confrontational and radical, and postcolonials more in the hybridization”.

The second one, a recognition that decoloniality as proposed by Latin-Americans is recently arriving, or it is a debate much more used in academic circles and not by people from all walks of life in Senegal.

“The decolonial thinking is there, but in the francophone world the expression ‘decolonial’ [*as known as in LA*] it is not so much in vogue. People talks more about postcolonial [...]. It takes time for the appropriation of the word” (Ndiouga Adrien Benga⁶⁶).

Finally, I believe the critical post/decolonial thinking in Senegal is well represented by their nuances, and the fact that critical thinkers in their postcolonial context grab and nurture from them. For instance, Saliou Dione told me “[...] I avoid belonging to one school, I belong to all, if they allow me to express myself, to say what I think, to bring a reflection [...]”. Or Aminata Diaw saying that “I think it is diverse, we cannot say there is a real tendency [*on schools*]”. Finally, to complement this idea I present an extract of an interview with Felwine Sarr’s on the borrowing from different sources:

Matías: Felwine, how did you arrive to this topic of *décolonialité*?

Felwine: In Senegal we reflect on who are we? What we have become after the colonial experience? In this task [...] we read Fanon, the authors of the Negritude that have attempted to liberate the thinking in the 30s-40s, we read the authors around the Pan-Africanist movement, we read Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, the Indians, the people from Latin America such as Mignolo, Dussel, Santos, etc. So, I think it is all this body of literature that helps us to reflect and to be aware that there are strong points of divergences but also of convergences.

Matías: The critical thinking in Senegal, and I am talking about you, Mamadou Diouf, the people of *Les Ateliers de la Pensée*. How do you position between this de/postcolonial debate? Is it that we need to stop talking about rigid frontiers?

Felwine: In fact, I do not believe people [*in Senegal*] define themselves as either decolonials or postcolonials. I believe that the idea to grab from different archives exists. [...] Where are the spaces of intellectual dissidence? This is the most important idea for me, and those spaces can be found in several geographies, in India, in Latin-America, in the same occident. And how people think emancipatory processes from dominant hegemonies, from a point of view intellectual and symbolic?

Matías: I think I agree with you on this. I recognize myself as decolonial, I like Sabelo [*Ndlovu-Gatsheni, decolonial author based in South Africa*] but it does not mean I can refuse reading Achille Mbembe [*postcolonial author*].

Felwine: Yes, voilà!

⁶⁶ Professor at the history department at the UCAD. He has written « *Citoyenneté française, citoyenneté locale. La municipalité en Haute-Volta (1926-1960)* », « *Entre Jérusalem et Babylone : jeunes et espace public à Dakar* », among others.

2.4 Conclusion

As a Peruvian being influenced by the Latin American decolonial body of thought, encountering postcolonial Senegal is (has been) an act of embracing, while exploring further, the notion of geopolitics of knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2007, 2011, 2013). My encounters with postcolonial Senegal brought me the learning and vivid experiences of how other Fanonian *damnés* recognise those haunting colonial pasts and presents, those hidden logics that repeat and perpetuate seamlessly, but also how Senegalese move forward to embrace truly decolonial futures. How Senegalese confront such long pending list of *Les soleils des Indépendances* yet to be achieved. These five-months of south-south encounters were in their very essence the act of dialoguing among beings located in the exteriority and frontier of the modern/colonial world-system, following Dussel (2000, 2002, 2015). These dialogues were the act of playing positively even in negative conditions of damnation, while embracing the very act of cross-fertilization debating about our realities, flag independences, *Adventure ambiguë*. Such dialogues that emerged from my encounters with postcolonial Senegal, from the very positioning of our exteriority, I would like to believe achieved some transmodern sparks in Dussel's terms.

It is after my encounters with the different faces of postcolonial Senegal that I decided to speak about the 'nuanced' de/postcolonial critical thinking in contemporary Senegal, which is characterised by some general and personal impressions born in those encounters. First, 'something colonial' remains in postcolonial Senegal and it is recognised by part of its society. This is an embracement of the African epic school understanding the long-standing effects of colonialism. Second, the labelling of whatever remains and persists of colonial essence differs, whether it is coloniality as mainly in Latin-America, neocolonialism, or purely the 'something colonial' that remains, the critical thinking towards the modern/colonial paradigm persists. Third, this critical reflection towards the nominal independence is intense and vivid, from streets to books, from student poetry nights to the use of the national language, the everyday. Fourth, this 'something colonial' recognized by part of the postcolonial Senegalese society manifests itself mainly but not exclusively in the domains of development, education, economy, politics, and mind. Nevertheless, as each of these colonial forms, logics, and mantras emerge in those several domains in postcolonial Senegal, a relevant critique/act does it as well. From Serguey moving his own Ithaca to Cheikh Anta Diop addressing the colonial library, from the activism of Demba Moussa Dembélé against the colonial currency to the novels of Boubacar Boris Diop, Senegal today breaths decolonial responses. Fifth, to be fair with my encounters with postcolonial Senegal, I suggest blurring the boundaries among the de/postcolonial perspectives, especially because those theoretical differentiations may appear in paper nicely but at the end, objectives from both schools tend to be the same. I call for the concentration of efforts toward the existing convergences. It is by setting this Senegalese postcolonial context characterised by a nuanced de/postcolonial critical thinking, that I pass to explore contemporary land grabbing with the aim to tangibilize these de/postcolonial dialogues and explore what the decolonial body of thought can say.

CHAPTER III: LAND GRABBING IN POSTCOLONIAL SENEGAL

3.1 Introduction

As stories, images, thoughts, phrases, conversations, feelings, and vivid experiences were unfolding during my de/postcolonial encounters with contemporary Senegal day in and day out, I could not stop thinking about land. Precisely, on how conflicts around land pushed my early personal decolonial search back home in Peru. In Senegal, this time my thoughts were not different. *Suuf*, land in Wolof, such pivotal element and genesis of life for the ‘colonised’ according to Fanon (2001). *Suuf*, Sahelian red land that has inspired beautiful protest songs in Wolof/French such as *Ma terre ma vie*⁶⁷ against current land grabbing, song that became my anchor during the writing of my proposal in 2016. Therefore, in this chapter I engage with the questions of:

- How do the Senegalese perceive land grabbing after 57 years of independence? This could be understood as well as: Do they link the persisting ‘something colonial’ to their explanations of current land grabbing - or not - in a postcolonial context? (Section 3.2)
- How would the decolonial body of thought understand these Senegalese reflections? (Section 3.3)
- How are coloniality of power, knowledge, and being expressed in a contemporary land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal? (Section 3.4)

Finally, based on these findings I try to expose briefly the contributions from the decolonial body of thought *vis-à-vis* the traditional political economy perspective in understanding better contemporary land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal.

3.2 Senegalese views of a land grabbing case in a postcolonial context

I remembered writing on my field diary around a month after my arrival in Senegal: “[...] but I am still feeling that is difficult to link land. What could they [Senegalese] say about it, about their colonial past, the continuation of colonial dynamics, or not, related to land? Are their contemporary land struggles against the essence of colonialism and its traces? How can these land struggles help to materialize coloniality?” (Field diary, 25-01-2017). I believe such confusion or uncertainty I had at that moment during my fieldwork needed a clarification by the very Senegalese. Hence, this section is about the Senegalese talking to me on how they do - or not - link the ‘something colonial’ that persists to explain contemporary land grabbing.

I would like to clarify two points when I am referring to Senegalese ‘colonial’ views or readings.

⁶⁷ Lyric written by the Senegalese group *Bideew Bou Bess* for the event: “*Forum de réflexion et de partage sur la problématique et les enjeux d'une politique foncière, levier d'un développement rural durable*” at Dakar May 2012, organised by the NGO Enda Pronat. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1FU_zopi9Y (Accessed in 28/06/2017).

First, I understand and use 'colonial' as Grosfoguel (2007) puts it, not referring to 'classical colonialism' or idea of former 'colonial administration', but 'colonial' in the sense of persistence of 'colonial situations' today. This is also what Senegalese have shown me in Chapter II.

Second, I am using 'colonial' in its broader sense, blurring the boundaries among de/postcolonial thought as mentioned also in Chapter II. My goal in this section is to:

- Show the different Senegalese views to explain land grabbing occurring after 57 years of independence.

Putting the 'colonial' aside

Some Senegalese told me that there is no a possible concrete link between the 'something colonial' that persists and the on-going land grabbing. This occurs even if some of them may have recognized the remaining of 'something colonial'. I summarized this idea of not linking, through what I propose as four (im)possibilities for a 'colonial' reading of contemporary land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal. I label them (im)possibilities and not *deadlocks* or *impasses* because even though there may not be a direct link of the 'something colonial', thus valid '*impossibilities*', in a following section in this Chapter I expose their becoming of 'possibilities' (at least for me) when using the decolonial body of thought. This is to become 'imaginable' for entering to dialogues. I believe considering them *deadlocks* or *impasses* drastically 'close' their *becoming*. These four (im)possibilities are:

- Lack of recognition of a persisting 'something colonial';
- Inexistence of conflicts with the enterprise Senhuile-Sénéthanol as it epitomizes development in the Ndiaël area;
- The intermingling of the abstractions and the ethereal level in which 'colonial' (de/postcolonial) views reside, with a defined 'academic' locus of enunciation where views originate;
- The call for a more politically economic reading of a land grabbing case focusing on the workings of global capitalism.

First, the idea that independences have succeeded and nothing colonial remains. It was my first visit to one village of the Ndiaël, especially, in the area affected by Senhuile-Sénéthanol. Albui, a man who Aliou Kamara would describe as 'the best butcher' in Ngnith, was the driver of the *charrette*. Aliou Kamara was our host in Ngnith but he could not join to the visit due to his official position in the municipality of Ngnith, overseeing all the countable books and the campaign of giving identity cards. Aliou's younger brother came with us to help us with the translation, although he remained in silence during the whole day and school teachers ended up helping me. The morning was hot and it took us more than one hour to arrive to Tordonaube from Ngnith. In our way, we passed by an area where we saw concrete impacts of Senhuile-Sénéthanol, such as deep channels for irrigation purposes, wire fences, and even a check point. I remember telling Albui to stop the *charrette* and getting out of it as soon as possible. I walked towards the impacted area, the area owned now by Senhuile-Sénéthanol, while imagining those reports I read mentioning the *bétail*⁶⁸ getting

⁶⁸ Livestock in French.

stuck or dying in such irrigation channels, and even three kids⁶⁹ getting drowned maybe in some infrastructure similar like that. The check point reminded me again Fama Doumbouya from *Les soleils des Indépendances* needing to show his papers to go back to his beloved Togobala. In Ndiaël people and their *bétail* do not walk freely anymore. Once in Tordonaube we met the chief Salif Sow who kindly invited us into his house. The chief's house, as the other ones from the seven villages I visited, is the most elaborated, robust, and constitutes a hub point for other villagers and visitors. We started sharing some *ataayas*⁷⁰ there, a perfect shelter from the sun's fury at midday in the Sahel. The conversation started with some jokes, personal presentations, and a funny discussion on where the hell was Peru in the world map. It continued smoothly until we arrived at a point where I got confronted by Salif. Especially, his perception that 'independence is independence'. Salif, through the translator, suggested me to not try to define if independence has been partially or fully achieved. I became astonished with such articulation happening right there, where precisely the land grabbing took place. The only thing that made me pass such bitter taste when naïvely I was trying to read the 'colonial' everywhere, was the extra amount of sugar that the *ataayas* usually carry in this side of West Africa. Salif's comment was the following:

"He said he has abandoned this *thing* [emphasis mine] of colonialism, because if we say independence, something has had to happen to actually have arrived at the independence. Now, [if we say] total or partial independence, that is not the problem. For him colonialism has passed".

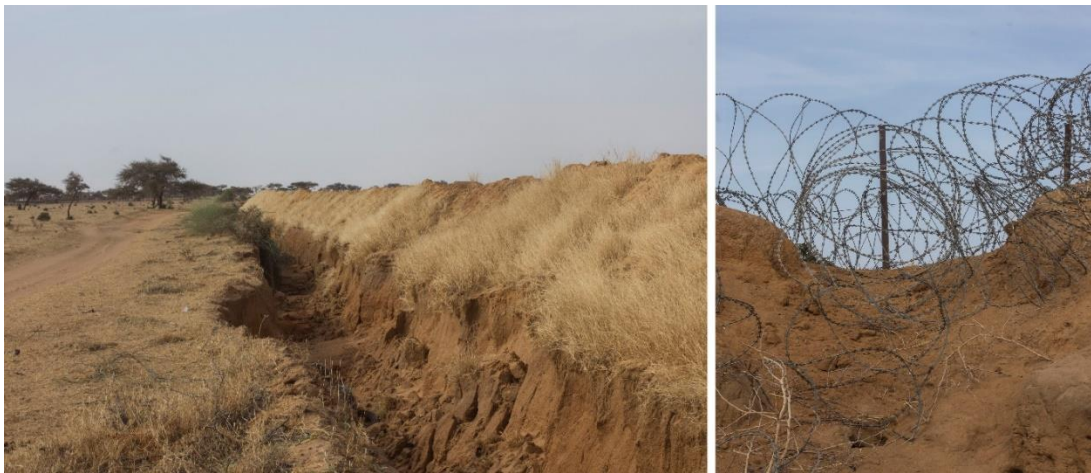


Figure 7: Tangible impacts of Senhuile-Sénéthanol, route Diourki1-Tordonaube, Ndiaël. Source: Personal photo.

By saying this, the main argument used to support this impossibility of a colonial reading was that there has not been a real 'imposition' from any former colonial power to Senegal today to accept a deal regarding the leasing of land. France did not come for the land this time in the Ndiaël. Louis Faidherbe or Charles De Gaulle did not show up in the *brousse*⁷¹. In other words, for Salif, in his village at the Ndiaël, it was the very Senegalese

⁶⁹ <https://www.farmlandgrab.org/22189> (Accessed in 27/06/2017).

⁷⁰ Senegalese mint tea, usually shared throughout the day, while enjoying conversations with those around.

⁷¹ Remote place, wild.

society who was 'facilitating', 'acknowledging', and 'welcoming' the arrival of Senhuile-Sénéthanol what precisely depicts the 'rupture' with a colonial past and its replication in the present. No resonance with the articulation coming from the African epic school understanding colonialism as posed by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015a, 2015b). No continuities because "*mes ancêtres les Gaulois*" are 'not' coming back! Instead, this idea of rupture with the colonial past embraces the understanding of colonialism as transitional, as the episodic school does (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a) understanding colonialism as something that had a date of expire.

The second (im)possibility reminded me *La Grève des Bàttu* of Aminata Sow Fall, when Mour Ndiaye, the director of the public health service justified the 'cleaning' of the city from beggars and invalids, considered as human debris, in the name of development. Back in the Ndiaël, I was confronted by the fact that some people recognized no problems with the presence of the Senhuile-Sénéthanol in the land grabbing case. In fact, five villages of 37 of the affected zone of the Ndiaël were in favour of the project during my fieldwork, which deeply surprised me, since I left Dakar knowing that there were 37 villages and not 32 that were opposed to the project. The justifications of the ones in favour of the project were mainly based on the idea that the project 'finally' materializes the arrival of 'development' in the Ndiaël area. Development was epitomized by the creation of one school in Ngnith, the construction of a few irrigation channels next to some of the villages in the northern part of the area given to the enterprise; the potential transition of former unused lands into arable lands; the better availability of food for animals; and the creation of jobs for some of the local population. Images of my days in the Ndiaël come to my mind. Poor infrastructures of schools where Arabic and French is taught, and trying to resist another year or at least the coming rainy season to then be rebuilt for one more year with some straw and steaks. The tiresome dusty and sandy road that students need to follow on foot over a big number of kilometres to go to high school in Ngnith. Hence, it is interesting to emphasize the link among the Ndiaël population's needs, the desires for development, with the justification of the project, which at the same time rejects any sort of colonial linking (de/postcolonial views) that can overshadow and threaten the real possibilities of concretizing promises done by development projects. Thierno Diop's⁷² comes to my mind, a Senegalese Marxist scholar who has criticized European modernity and who I had the opportunity to meet at the UCAD in Dakar. He said:

"People need to eat first [...]. So, if it is through selling the land people will do it [...]. There is no colonial link. There is *no time* [emphasis mine] to reflect on such colonial/decolonial positioning [When starving?]"

As a third (im)possibility, I have proposed the intermingling of the abstractions and the ethereal level in which 'colonial' (de/postcolonial) views reside, with a defined 'academic' locus of enunciation where views originate.

First, some Senegalese informed me that colonial views of the land grabbing case may be unnecessary and excessively abstract, so better to understand the phenomenon and the case in more pragmatic ways. This brings to my mind my encounter with Issiaka-Prospere

⁷² Professor at the philosophy department at the UCAD. President of the Network of Intellectuals, Artists, and Social Movements in Defence of Humanity. He has written « *Marxisme et critique de la modernité en Afrique* », among others.

Lalèyê⁷³, a philosopher, epistemologist, anthropologist, and retired professor at the UGB after 40 years of teaching. We ‘sneaked out’ into his office because he told me that he does not usually go there, so students were passing on the rumour to try to meet him. At one point in our conversation he said to me: “Matías, Matías, Matías”. Then, he took a pause and explained why he called me three times⁷⁴. Later he asked me: “Why do you search the ‘colonial’ thinking in a land grabbing case? Colonial thinking has key places and we can observe it through the system of teaching and the school that the ‘whites’ have brought”. He argued that abstract de/postcolonial views or readings fit better in other Senegalese life domains, not in a contemporary land grabbing case. Again, it comes to my mind the colonial library of Mudimbe (1988) with those influential ‘colonial’ curricula imparted in Senegalese universities, or the colonial currency Franc CFA, which Demba Moussa Dembélé and Ndongo Samba Sylla are fighting against. Both examples fit in what Issiaka-Prosper Lalèyê labelled as ‘key places’ for the colonial thinking.

Second, something that surprised was the invitation for a self-reflection on who is really reading and interpreting whatever case used about land grabbing. Put it in another way, who is talking? Is it the African *intelligentsia* putting the ‘colonial’ everywhere or is it truly the affected and dispossessed population articulating a colonial reading in the land grabbing case? These questions ended resonating throughout my time in Senegal and have deeply influenced my analysis and writing paying more attention to the geopolitics of knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2007, 2011, 2013). Furthermore, these questions at least made me aware to recognise even ‘more’ my own subjectivity. They also invited me to think of an exploration on how certain populations could see themselves out of the scope of colonial traces, as I showed above with my encounter with Salif telling me that independence is independence in the Ndiaël. I illustrate this idea of a defined locus of enunciation (this should be read as the academic one) putting ‘the colonial’ everywhere, with one quote from an interviewee with Ndongo Samba Sylla and a passage of my field diary.

“Who talks? Does the population have the feeling of being colonized? Or is it us, intellectuals, that live always in a colonised society? [...]. I mean if I locate myself in the point of view of the population, I have the impression that they do not live it [*The ‘something colonial’*] directly, that they do not feel themselves as colonized subjects. Although it is true that maybe some [*Political*] leaders may have colonial expressions towards them” (Ndongo Samba Sylla).

“An interesting point made by Amadou Ka, his wife, and mother in law (these last two coming from Rufisque, near Dakar), is that the Peuls [*People mostly affected by the Senhuile-Sénéthanol land grabbing case*] have not been affected so much by the French colonization. In fact, cooperation with French administrators seems to have been minimal due to their mobility as pastoralists. So, the effects of colonization in people’s mind may be something that could be located more in people that lived such French *quatre communes* design, like people living in Goree, Dakar, Saint Louis, and Rufisque” (Field diary, 04-02-2017).

Finally, the fourth form of (im)possibility is the call for a more politically economic view of a land grabbing case focusing on the workings of global capitalism. My exposition to

⁷³ He has written « *20 questions sur la philosophie africaine* », « *De l'économie, si elle est encore humaine ou "Ce que l'Afrique attend de l'Europe" in La liberté* », among others.

⁷⁴ The Senegalese way of expressing something important. This is to call slowly the name of the listener three times before delivering the message. According to him, one, two or four times, is not the same.

try to use a de/postcolonial view in a land grabbing case even surprised some Senegalese. Amadou Cheikh Kanoute⁷⁵ for example told me at Dakar: “I situate myself in understanding the land grabbing case through the process of capitalism. Land grabbing of today is not anything but a new form of expression of capitalism and that is why the title of your research surprised me. I would never have thought that we could link neocolonialism [*A colonial reading*] with land grabbing!”. I elaborate on the ideas I encountered during my days in postcolonial Senegal that illustrate this positioning to link global capitalism-land grabbing.

First, I would say that proper, extended, decolonial analysis on the land grabbing phenomena seems to not have been carried out yet. Rama Dieng, a land grabbing PhD researcher in Senegal, responded me in an email: “There has been very little theorizing of land grabbing [*in Senegal*] as you know apart from the usual frameworks (Harvey); but that would not be decolonial enough I guess”. This also made me recall an email exchange with the African decolonial scholar Ndlovu-Gatsheni, who told me that research explicitly linking the decolonial body of thought to land grabbing in the African context was something to be done yet. In fact, such position explains well to me the ‘only’ possibility seen as left for studying the phenomena, as Abdoulaye Fall said: “The only analysis we can use to better understand land grabbing [...], it is the one of open markets, capitalism, the one which arrives and installs, creating impacts in rural population”.

Second, land grabbing is also carried out today in Senegal by foreigners without any colonial link or past, such as countries like India, China, South Africa, and Egypt. In fact, in the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case an Italian enterprise and not French is the one involved. Iba Mar Faye⁷⁶ put it like this:

“[...], there are countries like had nothing to do with Senegal during the time of colonialism, such as China, so, people explain that better with the context of global capitalism, you see?”.

Third, the fact that the same Senegalese society is involved in land grabbing. Some Senegalese told me to look at the Senegalese *bourgeoisie* and even the spiritual-religious leaders such as *marabouts* grabbing big pieces of land in every corner of Senegal. I remember receiving one of these insights in an office of a Dakar NGO dedicated to combat land grabbing in Senegal. I especially remember looking at a didactic poster communicating the civil society about land grabs with pictures of the 400 hectares-farm of former president Abdoulaye Wade dedicated to the breeding of ostriches. Foreigners with no colonial past, as mentioned before, and the Senegalese society grabbing land, explain for some Senegalese the proletarianization of the peasantry in contemporary Senegal. This is the expulsion of rural population from their lands and the increasing urbanization of Dakar and Saint Louis. Oussouby Touré⁷⁷, a specialist in pastoralist legal frameworks and land reform, illustrates this perspective:

⁷⁵ Director of *L'Institut Panafricain pour la Citoyenneté, les Consommateurs et le Développement*. He has written reports denouncing land grabbing such as « *Accaparement des terres en Afrique de l'Ouest. Exporter ou nourrir les populations. Impact sur les consommateurs ruraux* ».

⁷⁶ Sociologist and researcher at GRET Senegal. *Professionnels du développement solidaire*. Ex member of *Initiative Prospective agricole et rurale* (IPAR). He has written « *Les acquisitions de terres à grande échelle au Sénégal : description d'un nouveau phénomène* ».

⁷⁷ Consultant at ENDA PRONAT and Ex member of IPAR. He has written « *Amélioration de la gouvernance foncière au Sénégal* », « *Cadre d'Analyse de la Gouvernance Foncière au Sénégal (CAGF)* », « *Note conceptuelle sur les enjeux liés au foncier pastoral dans le contexte actuel du Sénégal* », « *Prendre en compte les droits collectifs pastoraux dans la réforme foncière au Sénégal* », among others.

“It is false saying that all land grabbing transactions have multinationals behind. It is not true, it is just not true. There are Senegalese actors behind as well [...]. We tend to hide all national actors’ responsibility behind. I refuse such statement [...]. Senhuile-Sénéthanol is an emblematic case, and we would like to talk about *neocolonialism* [*emphasis mine*], yes, Ok, but, we cannot reduce all land transactions to the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case. Ok? We need to pay attention to which part of the transaction profits the foreign capital and which the national one, which implies the *marabouts* and political leaders, we need to pay attention to that”.

Fourth, the current dynamic of land speculation and on-going search for land within African countries to supply land to feed the world is a problem that has grown exponentially in Senegal since early 2000s, especially with the food-energetic crisis of 2008. However, this crisis was a global one, hence, it depicts the global feature of the phenomena of land grabbing. This also has fostered the involvement recently of the civil society. I illustrate this with few quotes:

“We cannot do a direct link [...] because even in France occurs [*Land grabbing*] [...], so it is not directed linked to colonialism for me” (El Hadji Thierno Cissé⁷⁸).

“[...], they [*social movements*] are denouncing it [*Land grabbing*] in the form of understanding social justice and the way in which the world is structured, not with this historical consciousness of colonialism and all of that, Ok?” (Onoma Ato).

Putting back the ‘colonial’

Conversely, other Senegalese link the persisting ‘something colonial’ with current land grabbing. Interestingly, sometimes some Senegalese that have argued for a not colonial reading, also have had a comment linking somehow the ‘something colonial’. I believe this is also one reason to call it (im)possibilities for de/postcolonial views or readings, since there seems to be a very thin line when taking a stand for a type of view, colonial or not, of contemporary land grabbing. The possibilities I present here paint a broader picture of land grabbing taking place in Senegal than just the Ndiaël case explored by this research. I summarized such possibilities around two main axes.

First, I explore the ‘something colonial’ on the land grabbing case with insights from the Senegalese society positioning *vis-à-vis* the idea of who is guilty for the land grabbing case: the enterprise, the state, or both. I start this discussion by exploring who is considered the bad guy (*méchant*) of the Ndiaël story because it facilitates the following discussions that involve the decolonial body of thought.

Second, I present the recognition of the ‘something colonial’ that persists in current land aspects in contemporary Senegal. This is Senegalese acknowledging a general colonial legacy in the land administration on the one hand, and the presence of colonial discourses regarding land users on the other. According to the people I spoke with, both form a canvas for contemporary land grabbing to occur in postcolonial Senegal, such as it has happened with Senhuile-Sénéthanol in the Ndiaël.

⁷⁸ Coordinator of the *Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux (CNCR)* and coordinator of the *Cadre de réflexion et d’action sur la foncier (CRAFS)* in Senegal.

Who's guilty?

When the little old-white bus turned to the right (West) leaving the main paved road 'N2' that connects the city of Saint Louis and Richard Toll located near the border of Mauritania, we were stopped by the security of Senhuile-Sénéthanol for 'regular' inspections of papers, though we, Florie and me, two foreigners, were the only ones whose IDs were checked and asked why we were going to Ngnith. On another note, this made me imagine the reluctance and fear of Senhuile-Sénéthanol of having people come investigate their case – which emphasized my idea of them being the guilty ones. When we passed the 'check-point' I remember noticing an Italian flag in the entrance standing tall, along the company's flag, though the Senegalese one was missing. A few weeks later, another Senegalese made me recall this experience. He said that if land grabbing was continuing at the same pace as it did in the first decade of 2000, in 10 or 15 years, the Senegalese society will be walking on French territory or Italian territory, the same story as colonialism did with the Berlin Conference in the 19th century. This is how a first 'colonial' reading or view of land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal revealed to me. That is, putting emphasis on the responsibility of 'foreign' enterprises arriving, as Senhuile-Sénéthanol in the Ndiaël, expropriating land, and displacing people when settling their operations. The culpability emphasized in former colonial powers now under the form of foreign multinationals.

To illustrate, I present below an example of the campaign launched by the Senegalese civil society to protest land grabbing in Senegal in 2012, and a poster that was exposed in a conference⁷⁹ at the UCAD in Dakar during my fieldwork. Overall, the idea that foreigners are 'coming back' is materialized in the belief that it is 'neocolonialism' what embodies and informs better the current land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal since 2000.

“Once again, we have our hands tied - [*Une fois de plus on a les mains liées*]
it's a barter in exchange of reflections - [*C'est un troc de chair contre des reflets*]
400 years later they came back - [*400 ans après ils sont revenus*]
they want our lands for income - [*Ils veulent nos terres pour des revenus*]
they colonize us - [*Ils nous colonisent*]
they use us - [*Ils nous utilisent*]
Slaves in the fields they came to get us - [*Esclaves au champ ils venaient nous chercher*]
they don't have any space to survive - [*Ils n'ont plus d'espace pour leur survie*]
they destroy our lands and exploit it” - [*Ils violent nos terres et veulent l'exploiter*]
Lyric of *Ma terre ma vie* –Bideew Bou Bess⁸⁰
[Translation by Florie Chazarin]

⁷⁹ *Journées scientifiques du littoral*. « *Le Littoral Ouest Africain confronté aux changements climatiques. Quelles adaptations possibles ?* »

⁸⁰ Lyric written by the Senegalese group *Bideew Bou Bess* for the event “*Forum de réflexion et de partage sur la problématique et les enjeux d'une politique foncière, levier d'un développement rural durable*” at Dakar May 2012, organised by the NGO Enda Pronat.



Figure 8: Collective imaginary of ‘foreigners’ arriving to Senegalese lands. Credits: Bastien Defives

A second colonial reading or view of a land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal puts emphasis on the State being the main responsible. It is the state, using its power in a colonial way, which is opening lands for foreign investors instead of favouring local users and their existing practices. I remember talking with a taxi driver in my way to the Dakar *plateau*, he was from *Kaolack*⁸¹, and former farmer with a wife and two kids living in an expensive Dakar. He did not stop talking about his desires of going back to put his hands on the corn and peanut, but the land that was once his grandparents were not his anymore, they were in the hands of foreigners. I remember he asked me if I knew why the State did not support its own farmers? I answered that maybe the State sees its farmers somehow as unproductive as well as their lands. And I remember his ‘no’ as a response, a very strong ‘no’, when we were just passing by the Mosque located next to the General Police Department on the *corniche*. He continued saying that if only the State would support its farmer and give them the means to produce, the story would be different. Instead, the State giving the land to foreigners represented for him the injustice of his own land grabbing story in *Kaolack*.

I also recall for the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case, a visit to the village of Djourki 1 and my talk with the chief Mamadou Sow. He told me furiously that the State sees the Ndiaël population as incapable to produce. To remember, Senhuile-Sénéthanol got the land by the State in 2012 for biofuels from sunflower seeds, but it ended doing potatoes, onions and other legumes. According to Kadou Deff dwellers gathered in an improvised focus group, Senhuile-Sénéthanol ended doing “the same thing that a Ndiaël kid could do”. The painful question that Ndiaël villagers pose is: “why to Senhuile-Sénéthanol and not *us*, if they are going to grow the same local crops we may can done better?”. Finally, such idea of the role of the state was also articulated in the village of Thiamène: “We live here, we are Senegalese, these lands belong to our ancestors. Why an agricultural plot is refused to us? Foreigners arrive and the state gives them the right to the land. Colonization begins there, colonization begins there, foreigners that arrive and the states gives them the land, our own land. It is like that!”

The idea that it is the state the guilty one, is complemented with the perspective that there exists complicity also from the Senegalese society in the form of traditional land authorities, religious leaders, among others. This invites to explore how actually such involvement happens. Put it in another way, through what kind of ‘colonial’ mechanisms or discourses prevailing nowadays a land grabbing is carried out? To some extent the following section contributes to that. As a final point, I believe this approach really nails on the

⁸¹ South of Senegal, at approximately 190 km from Dakar.

presence of the ‘something colonial’ persisting among Senegalese, which if I would use the decolonial approach, I would argue for the very performance of coloniality. I present some quotes and figures to illustrate more.

“It is the State who has given the papers, it is the State which facilitates multinationals the access to land” (Mamadou Mignane Diouf⁸²).

“It is the State that accepts the return of colonization. It is the State that has given them [Senhuile-Sénéthanol] the right. [...], it is like a return to slavery, where you will end working for *them* [Foreigners], and you will have no land. You will have nowhere to cultivate, you will have nothing” (Aliou Sow⁸³, through a translator).

“It is a continuity of ‘something colonial’ but in another form [...]. It is another form of colonization because it is State who has the means now and negotiates with big investors, but it is the State who should protect small-scale producer’s interests [...]. It is not like Fanaye [previous land grabbing case before Ndiaël where community leaders signed contract with Sénéthanol for the leasing of land], it was Abdoulaye Wade and Macky Sall [presidents] who gave the land” (Magueye Thiang⁸⁴).

“[...], maybe this colonial thinking that we are speaking, maybe it is in our logic, in the administration and administrators, because it is a State that thinks like a colonial State [...]” (Ibrahima Dia).

“[...], there is a form of alienation that is there, [...], for in a certain way discourage the peasantry from their land, because we think that they are not capable to produce and it is the State that does not give them the means to do so [...]” (Ndiouga Adrien Benga).

IMPLANTATION
DE SENHUILE A GNITH
**L’Etat, parrain
d’une spoliation
grandeur nature**

Figure 9: Newspaper subtitle: “Installation of Senhuile at Ngnith. The state, godfather of a life-sized spoliation” [Translation mine]. Source: Walfadri Newspaper. September 6th, 2013. N 6442. Page 1.

⁸² Coordinator of the World Social Forum in Dakar. He has participated in the « *Projet d’observatoire des cas d’accapement des terres au Sénégal* ».

⁸³ Chief of Kadou Deff and member of the CODEN.

⁸⁴ President of the Producers of the West side of the Lac Guiers (Collective that forms part of the CNCR). He also works at the municipality of Ngnith.

VIE EN CAGE, MILITARISATION DE SITE, CONFLIT FONCIER IMMINENT...
Comment l'Etat a détruit des vies au nord du Sénégal

Figure 10: Newspaper subtitle: "Imprisoned life, site militarisation, imminent property conflict. How the State has destroyed lives in northern Senegal" [Translation mine]. Source: Walfadri Newspaper. September 6th, 2013. N 6442. Page 6.

Finally, a third colonial reading of a land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal is the merging of both points made above: together the enterprise, and the State with part of the Senegalese society being responsible of the land grabbing case.

Current colonial forms of expression around land in contemporary Senegal

I present some examples through which part of the postcolonial Senegalese society articulates readings of the persisting 'something colonial' in a land grabbing case. I do this by exposing what I believe is an interesting junction between the recognition of a colonial legacy persisting around land administrative mechanisms, with those mainstream discourses towards rural people, especially pastoralists. I focus on pastoralists because pastoralism constitutes the main livelihood strategy for most of the affected population in Ndiaël. The readings I am referring to are:

- The ambiguous idea of '*Mise en valeur*'⁸⁵ in the national land legal framework, which in turn leads to a sort of disavowal of some land uses and users;
- The idea of land rules directly copied from the French administration, while carrying the same modern-European logic;
- The idea of private property as chiefly the main land tenure arrangement, while neglecting customary forms;
- The existing pejorative discourses *vis-à-vis* pastoralists.

First, I encountered the fact that the ambiguity born in the notion of '*Mise en valeur*' (re)brings colonial ways of valuing the land to the fore when paying a more positive attention to agricultural activities in detriment of others land uses, such as pastoralism in the *Déclassement* of the Ndiaël. '*Mise en valeur*' appears in the articles 2-3 of the land legal framework that dates to the Law of National Domain (1964)⁸⁶. Such articles refer to the ways of making land susceptible to registration, such as explicitly proving to have carried out "constructions, installations or managements in a permanent way" in the land involved.

'*Mise en valeur*' was never clearly explained in following regulations after 1964, allowing different interpretations by official land administrators from the verification office in charged and the civil society. Some Senegalese told me that '*Mise en valeur*' has been interpreted since its origins more towards the 'visible' presence of agricultural improvements in lieu of pastoralists ones. This is because agriculture played a greater economic role during colonial times, especially with the peanut (agri)culture developed in

⁸⁵ '*Mise en valeur*' as enhancing/highlighting/valuing positively the land, according to the national land framework.

⁸⁶ Law of *Domaine National* N° 64-46 of June 17th, 1964.

the early 19th century that reshaped land uses, social relationships, and local economies in Senegal (Bonneuil, 1999). The greater valuing of agriculture seems to have permeated the collective imaginary from colonial to postcolonial Senegalese.

I present two examples to illustrate this point. One from Oussouby Touré talking about the disregard of pastoralism. A second one from a discourse of current Senegalese president Macky Sall⁸⁷ urging rural population of *Mbane*⁸⁸ to let investors valorise their 'agricultural' lands. Salls' declaration at the same time crystalizes the 'something colonial' that persists linked with development, exposed in Chapter II.

"The rights of pastoralists have been really little considered in modern legislations, explicitly, the Law of the National Domain did not involve them. Concerning pastoralists, we have until today just one legal decree that dates to 1980⁸⁹. There is a pastoral code in elaboration since 2013 but it has not been validated by the national assembly" (Oussouby Touré).

"We must facilitate the implementation of agricultural development programmes. It is not use leaving lands unused while they could be *valorised by willing investors* [*emphasis mine*]. You will not be forced to anything, not under my rule at least. *However, do not hinder development. This is the time for emergence* [*emphasis mine*]" (President Macky Sall).

As a second colonial articulation around land administrative mechanisms, there exists an impression that the existing land legal framework was copied from French administration after achieving national independence in 1960. Oussouby Touré for example recognized that the inspiration of the 1964 Law of National Domain carries a modern/colonial logic, even though it tried to implement a socialist spirit claiming for communal management of lands as well as for their condition of inalienability. He also pointed out that the 1964 law started being conceived by a working commission in 1958 during colonial Senegal. Also, I remember Salif Ka⁹⁰ in a skype meeting we had, he was joking with the motto *Liberté, égalité, fraternité* and the spirit of the French revolution present in the 1964 Law. I present some other quotes that illustrate more my point.

"It is the vestige of a colonial logic what we find in the law, in the administration, and in practices. It is because we have grabbed the rationality of French administrators [...], the rules we have elaborated after independence are not based on our realities but copied from the French model, the colonial model [...]" (Fatou Sarr Sow⁹¹).

"All our land rights legislations are directly inspired from colonization" (Oussouby Touré).

"The philosophy of the texts [*Land legal frameworks*], when you read them you see the logic they defend, it is the reproduction of the colonial logic [...], to say: "customary laws and

⁸⁷ March 09th, 2017. <https://www.farmlandgrab.org/post/view/26987-senegal-macky-sall-urges-rural-populations-to-let-investors-valorize-their-agricultural-lands>

⁸⁸ Mbane (Department of Dagana) is located at the other side of the Lake Guiers from where I did field research in *Ngnith*. Mbane is also a place for pastoralism, as Ngnith in the Ndiaël. The features of the lands in the Mbane area relatively the same to the ones I saw in Ndiaël.

⁸⁹ Decree 80-268 of March 10th, 1980.

⁹⁰ Sociologist working in the *Société d'aménagement et d'exploitation des terres du delta (SAED)*.

⁹¹ Anthropologist and sociologist. Director of Laboratory on Gender and scientific research at the *Institut fondamental d'Afrique noire (IFAN)*, at the UCAD. She has written « *Talaatay Nder : La tragédie de femmes de Nder appelée* », among others.

rights do not have value, your forms of organization and land management mean nothing [...]” (Iba Mar Faye).

The rise of private property, as a western form to secure land tenure in postcolonial Senegal was a third colonial articulation around land administrative mechanisms. Some people pointed out that private property regimes, enforced during European colonialism, have reached their zenith with the on-going land speculation and land titling campaigns across Africa nowadays. Hence, private property for them seems to be important for understanding land grabbing due to the making of land as capital, and therefore being susceptible for speculation. Additionally, private property and *‘Mise en valeur’* present a link in postcolonial Senegal, because from Mamadou Dia⁹²’s original project of a land reform based on “land for those who work on it”, there was a shift with Senghor’s 1964 law to the “land for those who can put it in value”, serving as the origin of land privatization in postcolonial Senegal (Sene, 2013). Finally, Onoma Ato mentioned that private property regimes are fuelling those clashes among the ones who *de jure* own the land and the ones who *de facto* have the legitimacy to it based on customary land forms of arrangements. These customary forms were not recognised by the 1964 Law but are still working on the ground despite such neglect in postcolonial Senegal. I present some quotes to show the colonial origin of private property and its ties with land grabbing.

“De Soto for example, your honourable country man [*Peru*]. He was very influential with the idea that we need to title property, we need to create maps, [...]. This is extremely implicated in land grabbing. Because if you look at the land that has been grabbed, its only minimal proportion has been used, has been actively cultivated, or anything like that. So, there is a lot of land speculation [...] because of this system of titling, land titling gives you a right, that the state is supposed to enforce. This process of titling that was supposed to help these people to transform these lands in capital, is helping a lot of these companies to grab land” (Onoma Ato).

“It was during colonial times that the land registration began, because here Africans did not have such culture because we all knew what belonged to whom. It is a European logic, to inmatriculate land titles and grab the rest. That was the logic” (Fatou Dieng).

“Customary land laws were erased with the Land Law of 1964 [...], so people were not able to say ‘legally’ [*Emphasis mine*]: “my ancestors occupied such land before”” (Cheikh Oumar Ba⁹³).

Finally, I pay attention to what some Senegalese referred as colonial discourses in postcolonial Senegal around land, which are basically the labelling of lands and their users in a pejorative or derogatory way. Senegalese used the notion of despising (*méprisant*) discourses. The number of discourses were considerable, although I condensed them first around the ideas of the ‘empty’ land, and second, pastoralists portrayed as ‘antidevelopment’ agents. Both ideas were explicitly referred as part of the colonial heritage.

First, some pointed out that urban Senegalese from Saint Louis or Dakar cities believe that pastoralist have too much land and they do not use it properly. This happens when passing by and seeing some rural lands during the dry season, which gives the impression of

⁹² First prime minister of Senegal from 1957 until 1962.

⁹³ Socio-anthropologist and director of IPAR. Ex member of the Land Reform commission.

wasted spaces with no people ‘unfortunately’ making a living from those lands. Therefore, the necessity to bring such lands into better hands. In that sense, I remember when being at the Ndiaël transiting from one village to another in the painful *charrette* as a transport, lands look dry in such part of the Sahel, unfertile. However, when speaking with their dwellers, I was not able to imagine the idea of life explosion when the rains comes in July. This vision of empty land was also the idea around president Senghor’s mandate when claiming: “all the available lands” in the land legal framework in the 60s, which did not make sense in real Senegal because it is so difficult to have a vacant land. Onoma Ato also linked the colonial past to this perception of emptiness, he said: “When you go to the French archives, they had what they called *Afrique utile* and *Afrique inutile*. *Afrique utile* was that place with people that you could tax, places that [...] you could give them some sort of economic value [...]”. Finally, the idea of empty land brings a confrontation according to Ibrahima Dia, a rural sociologist specialised on land issues I spoke at the UCAD. This confrontation is among the colonial geometrical logic of land such as geometrical polygons ready to enter in private property schemes and be assigned to a determined used, with the many Africans’ topocentric logic, where a piece of land has different usage rights, such as a *Walo* doing agriculture, later the *Peuls* pastoralists passing by, and after them a hunter.

Second, regarding the idea of the ‘antidevelopment’ agent that continuously has been replicated from colonial times to the Senegal’s emergence in the 21th century, I remember that Oussouby Touré told me that there seems to be a simplification of pastoralists’ realities, following a techno-economic perspective, where pastoralism is presented as an exclusive activity to supply meat and leather to the cities, no more. Therefore, according to him, the following postcolonial governments replicated the vision of ‘colonial veterinaries’ to interpret pastoralists’ realities. Furthermore, for him pastoralists seem to be locked in reductive cultural and ethnic representations, which to some extent touches the realm of animality and irrationality. This is, pastoralists in Senegal are portrayed as bandits, beings not helping or contributing to the success of the colonial regime due to their mobility and impossibility to be taxed, in comparison to agriculturalists inserted in the colonial peanut system according to Ibragima Dia. Or as the ones that are ‘not’ going to help in the emergence of Senegal. As Demba Moussa Dembélé pointed out regarding the discourse against this ‘antidevelopment’ agents: “They [*pastoralists*] don’t have the means to exploit them [*lands*], so why we don’t we call multinationals or foreigners to put these land in value?”. Overall, pastoralists represent the beings of not helping the Senegal’s emergence of today. I present an additional quote that depict such imaginary around pastoralists.

“It is true that the colonial vision towards pastoralism persists. [...]. All that Macky Sall has said of pastoralism has colonial prejudices. [...], I would say to him: “There is a thinking that you need to get rid of, you cannot be president and speak like that about pastoralism”. He says that it urges to bring pastoralists to sedentarism! To modernize them!” (Oussouby Touré).

3.3 Reflections on (im)possibilities for a ‘colonial’ articulation

“When transcribing the interview of Issiaka-Prosper Lalèyê something caught my attention, his second critique to my research: the fact that I was putting the decolonial aspect on ‘land’ instead of

the academic system, colonial indeed. Perhaps to me this is what shows an overemphasized attention to the aspect of colonial legacy in the university. To put it in another way, it is tremendously valid the search for decolonizing the university, but it should not be the only the way to look this task of decolonizing worlds. Coloniality to me is everywhere, and land can contribute to this debate. I am feeling that land in the coloniality debate it is overestimated due to the lack of research searching for those links. From Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni's statement in an email correspondence that the link has barely been done in the African context, to the very rural voices of Ndiaël, such as Ardo Sow stating that yes, through land one can be 'absolutely' decolonial. Maybe this research approximates the land grabbing debate with decolonial eyes, and shows in fact what rural affected people claims. In that sense, I had some disagreement with Florie this afternoon who pointed out at the stairs of our little house in Ngnith that "education could be the entry point to look at the whole system that has been permeated by coloniality, and from there start spreading around to other domains to be touched by decoloniality". Valid, as well as Lalèyê's argument, I feel that essentiality of land remains neglected. That is what calls me to be stubborn to claim that land cannot be forgotten from the decolonial equation, chiefly, cannot be relegated in an order of importance, all matters, since land is the very basic and needed element to produce and reproduce life in rural areas of Senegal if I could recall the Fanonian "the most essential value" mantra. Can we imagine the little Monday markets at Ngnith happening (or reproducing social relationships, feeding people back home), if more villagers of the Ndiaël were expropriated of their lands? A new market may take place, certainly, with different products and different nexus, maybe not even only Mondays, but every day. Although, maybe with people expropriated that have migrated to the town of Ngnith to look for jobs not anymore with their *bétail*. Other analysis to land grabbing are relevant, why can we not add an extra entry point?" (Field diary, 13-02-2017).

In this section, I attempt to:

- Show how those 'impossibilities' identified by Senegalese to make a 'colonial' reading in a contemporary land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal, as valid as they are, could be somehow linked to a 'colonial' articulation by using the decolonial body of thought.

The possibilities of 'becoming' de/postcolonial views

I go back to those non-linked colonial views that part of postcolonial Senegalese exposed to me and I explore each through their main arguments the possibilities of becoming 'de/postcolonial'. In other words, the possibility to introduce 'the de/postcolonial' as a framework of analysis.

In the "lack of recognition of a persisting 'something colonial'"

I refer to the lack of recognition of 'something colonial' persisting in the Ndiaël, as Salif Sow did in Tordonaube. I embrace a decolonial reading through two arguments that basically expose the essence that 'something 'colonial persists'. My arguments also align well to what other Senegalese have said to me throughout my de/postcolonial encounters in Chapter II.

My first argument is based on what the decolonial body of thought has generally posed: We have moved from global colonialism to global coloniality (Grosfoguel, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013b, 2015a). I support this argument even after when doing triangulation of information at the Ndiaël, I noticed that some villagers that supported the

first (im)possibility have some nexus to Senhuile-Sénéthanol, such as being former employees or have family members currently working for the enterprise. Despite that 'revelation', I believe it is precisely the existence of the omnipresent global coloniality what explains the denial by some in postcolonial Senegal of the persistence of 'something colonial'. It is coloniality itself leaving those very scant spaces for critiques that even with Senegalese recognizing the persistence of 'something colonial' in other realms in postcolonial Senegal, such as in education, language, and economy, the linking to land grabbing remains elusive.

To illustrate, someone told me in Dakar that those who did not recognize the possibility of linking land grabbing with colonial traces were in a sort of 'blindness'. Such blindness to me depicts coloniality performing at its best in its favourite field: invisibility. Blindness for him, coloniality to me, allows the actualization of Fanon's (2001, p. 42) perception about the 'natives' during colonial times: "the natives try to persuade themselves that colonialism does not exist, that everything is going as before". The actualization would be that "some postcolonial Senegalese persuade themselves that coloniality does not exist, that everything has passed". Why? Because it is the discovery of the continuation of a colonial world after decolonial struggles what becomes "unpleasant, bitter and sickening" (Fanon, 2001, p. 116). Yes, how painful are such Fanonian revelations passing from idyllic imaginaries brought by decolonization struggles to a sort of 'semidarkness'. Furthermore, Salif's arguments with "independence is independence", approach to the myth built around the 'decolonization of the world' and its apparent success (Grosfoguel, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013b). It is independence in 'question marks' recalling wa Thiong'o (1993). So, a reading without any 'colonial' reference to the land grabbing in the Ndiaël obscures the continuities between the colonial past and current global coloniality (Grosfoguel, 2007; Mignolo, 2007). I would not say Salif's view is a naïve one but incomplete because it sees impacts of colonialism in a transitional way rather than long-standing (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a). His reading brings to the fore the 'African episodic school' noted by African scholar Ali Mazrui that sees colonialism just as an episode, which in turn harms profoundly the decolonial thinking needed today (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015a, 2015b). As decolonial Amílcar Cabral was not blaming Portuguese but the colonial system itself, I am not blaming Salif or his *legitimate* reading on what land grabbing in a postcolonial context. That must be clear. I am blaming instead the metaphysical empire and notion of totality that coloniality represents and tragically brings to all.

To sum-up, I reckon these findings from the field neglecting the 'something colonial' today resonate well with Maldonado-Torres' (2016) 'ten theses of coloniality', especially with the first and second that claim that coloniality perpetuates itself through multiple forms of deception and confusion. 'Blindness' or 'independence is independence' are some of these forms of deception and confusion to me. Why? Because when someone raises the question towards decolonization in question marks as wa Thiong'o (1993) would say, anxiety and fear appear (Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Because as Maldonado-Torres (2016) argues, the *damné* stops him/herself questioning due to the very fear and anxiety to confront 'obfuscation, constant evasion and aggression', and that situation of frustration puts him/herself into an internal war that constrains his/her emergence from the condition of being *damné*.

My second argument implies the 'who is grabbing the land in Senegal', where the recognition of responsibilities among Senegalese is, or equals in my opinion, a recognition of the existing of the 'something colonial' that persists, or coloniality to me. I take those

responses that claim for a rupture with any 'colonial' remanences because land grabbing is done by Senegalese and not by French imposing themselves in the Ndiaël. Salif Sow again comes to my mind. On the one hand, I think such responses address an aspect of a colonial reading, which is the Senegalese mainstream understanding of neocolonialism as 'foreigners coming back', recognized by some who did the link with land grabbing. On the other hand, such responses automatically, I believe, leave space to explore those Senegalese favouring the land grabbing, which lead me to pose the following questions:

- "We have Senegalese contributing to land grabbing", is not the performance of the colonized becoming colonizers pointed out by the decolonial body of thought? Or "those black people who believe that the revolution consists in replacing the white colonizers and continue, in their place, to oppress other black people"? (Césaire, 1970, p. 84)⁹⁴
- Is this not the postcolonial *bourgeoisie's* motto of 'replacing the foreigner' according to Fanon (2001, p. 127)?
- Is this not the mantra of coloniality operating according to Quijano (2000a, 2007)?
- Is this not a recollection on what wa Thiong'o' (1993) in a Fanonian way wrote?

"The age of independence had produced a new class and a new leadership that often was not very different from the old one. Black skins, white masks? White skins, black masks? Black skins concealing colonial settler's heart? [...], as soon as independence is declared, far from embodying in concrete form the needs of the people in what touches bread, land and the restoration of the country to the sacred lands of the people, the leader will reveal his inner purpose: to become the general president of that company of profiteer impatient for their returns which constitute the national *bourgeoisie*"? (p. 65).

Therefore, I consider the Senegalese society recognizing its part in the land grabbing case as recognizing coloniality, and here relies the 'colonial' (de/postcolonial) reading and linking possibility I am trying to expose. The *becoming* possible. Former president Abdoulaye Wade and current president Macky Sall, both involved in the Ndiaël case, do perform the wa Thiong'o's play in postcolonial Senegal. This is the political elite asking its people for the "gigantic effort" as Fanon would call it (2001, p. 77), which in the Ndiaël translates into "give me your lands!". In a nutshell, I believe it becomes possible to read the land grabbing case 'colonially' in both ways, either with neocolonialism as the imperialists powers and foreigners coming back but also with coloniality as the political class, the marabouts, people from all walks of life performing the colonized-colonizer play in detriment of other Senegalese.

In the "Inexistence of conflicts with the enterprise Senhuile-Sénéthanol as it epitomizes development in the Ndiaël area"

A second possibility for a colonial reading on the land grabbing case appears when some Ndiaël villagers mentioned that they did not have problems with the enterprise Senhuile-Sénéthanol because it "represents development". My entry point is to understand the historical roots of such development they refer to, which I believe is an ideal that has been carved and awakens all sorts of dreaming and desires that remain even after a land grab such as the one of Senhuile-Sénéthanol. Like Escobar (2012a) puts it while mentioning the

⁹⁴ Translation mine.

work of Medeiros (2005) who applies the decolonial body of thought in Bolivia, “It is local people’s historical experience of *modernity* [*emphasis mine*] that informs their vision, their suspicions, and their hopes” (p. xxxvi). The de/postcolonial possibility of the land grabbing case appears precisely here to me. Escobar (2010, p. 28) also argues: “As a historical discourse, ‘development’ emerged in early post World War II period, even if its roots lie in deeper historical processes of modernity and capitalism”. The deepness of those roots for the decolonial body of thought lies in colonialism and modernity. This means seeing development as emerging under the logic of modernity, which is the logic of coloniality because there is no modernity without coloniality (Mignolo, 2007; Escobar, 2007, 2010). In the light of such historical connections, I was confronted by several questions in the Ndiaël through which I have clarified my argument:

- Is it possible that those villagers defending the presence of Senhuile-Sénéthanol in the Ndiaël are performing western labels of who is developed/underdeveloped, according to Castro-Gómez (2007) and Mignolo (2007)?
- Are those villagers not taking part in the role of the invented category from the 20th century of ‘people without development’, according to Grosfoguel (2007)?
- Is this justification for Senhuile-Sénéthanol not a form of swallowing the ‘bait’ of the European paradigm that was made seductive through the rise of coloniality, following Quijano (2007)?
- Is this acceptance of Senhuile-Sénéthanol not assuming that Europe’s development needs to be followed unilaterally by those left behind this time in the Sahel, according to Dussel (2000) and Escobar (2007)? (Which neglects the Fanonian effort of Serguey designing his *own* Barcelona moving his ‘muscles and brain’ towards a new direction and leaving behind the motionless world of the colonised, as I showed in Chapter II)
- How well do those villagers’ justifications echo the sound of the colonial storm that talks according to Césaire “[...] about progress, about ‘achievements’, diseases cured, improved standards of living” (2000, p. 42)?
- When touching the realm of desirability completely torn, touched, and dismembered by colonization, when referring to Mudimbe (as cited in wa Thiong’o, 2009b): To what extent are those villagers accepting Senhuile-Sénéthanol materializing the idea of “offering and imposing the desirability of its own memory, that colonization promises a vision of progressive enrichment to the colonized” (pp. 26-27)?

I argue that the idea of ‘finally’ embracing development strongly resonates with the idea of *décollage*, taking off, as Senegal emerging with the PSE project of president Macky Sall I presented in Chapter II. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015c) mentions, this ‘Afro-enthusiastic’ idea of the ‘Africa rising’ or emerging may be dangerous for Africans because it hides the notion of coloniality in the new scramble for Africa’s natural resources. It legitimizes and makes seductive coloniality. In other words, contemporary ‘development policies’ continue unfolding Western modernity, so reinforcing coloniality (Maldonado-Torres, 2016). Following Castro-Gómez (2007), those development representations and discourses, this time embraced by or coming from the very affected Ndiaël villagers, at the end may perpetuate those modern/colonial hierarchies.

In “the intermingling of the abstractions and the ethereal level in which ‘colonial’ (de/postcolonial) views reside, with a defined ‘academic’ locus of enunciation where views originate”

I believe this valid argument of not linking the ‘something colonial’ could be somehow contested, since other people ‘in’ and ‘out’ of the Ndiaël area did view the Senhuile-Sénéthanol land grabbing case with a de/postcolonial reading. So, this is not people from the academia using abstract and complicated jargons but members from emerging rural social movements such as CODEN.

“In Africa, the link [*Land grabbing – colonial reading*] it is not really automatically done between our colonial history and our postcolonial situation with land grabbing cases. Now, there are actually organizations of the civil society that argue that accepting a land grabbing case it is like accepting neocolonialism” (Iba Mar Faye).

As mentioned, the possibility of colonial linking may not appear at first sight but when we see those social movements’ slogans posing the idea of neocolonialism either in mass media spaces, institutional reports, and YouTube songs, the colonial linking becomes possible despite its apparent abstraction.

To support my argument of becoming possible or imaginable, I recall Fanon (2001, p. 90) when he argues: “The memory of the anti-colonial period is very much alive in the villagers, where women still croon in their children’s ears songs to which the warriors marched when they went out to fight the conquerors”. Based on my fieldwork this could not be truer. In Dakar, I met Fatou Sarr Sow from IFAN, who has documented well the role of women’s participation in anticolonial struggles in Nder, 11 kilometres north from Ngnith where I was staying at the border of the Lac Guiers. This was a work carried out with local population’ oral traditions. Overall, these findings contradict the arguments advocated by some Senegalese that French colonizers did not have much presence in the Ndiaël.

Nevertheless, I believe it is fair to say that this possibility enters again in the realm of the impossible, which is a ‘becoming’ that is thwarted and frustrated, when reflecting on such a locus of enunciation taking place and putting the ‘colonial’ everywhere while speaking on behalf of, a mechanism that the very decolonial authors reject and condemn. In other words, by taking serious decolonial warnings of epistemic privileges and what some Senegalese mentioned to pay attention to the ‘who is talking’, I am afraid that the possibility of linking the colonial may remain vague. So, the colonial reading - or not - of the land grabbing case is a careful task. I believe that it is only if those affected people feel like (or see) themselves as colonized beings or are aware of their Fanonian condition of *damné*, we may be able to use or justify ‘colonial’ readings in the land grabbing case. Using Grosfoguel’s (2007, 2013) ideas, the main goal is to *not* replicate the non-situated, universal, and God-eyed view position to say where the ‘colonial’ should be.

In “the call for a more politically economic reading of a land grabbing case focusing on the workings of global capitalism”

As valid and applicable as it is this reading with ‘global capitalism’ taking place, a ‘colonial’ reading is possible or imaginable to me, or at least there is a need of contextualization of the

capitalist analysis suggested with the colonial origin⁹⁵ of capitalism. I based my argument linking historical capitalism as the economic system that raised with the modern/colonial world system according to decolonial scholars.

For Dussel (Dussel, 2002; Dussel 2015), the Valladolid dispute in 1552 put indigenous people into the *Encomiendas* system in Latin America, without salary working in the mines of gold and silver on their own lands. That was a key ontological moment and the origin of a new world-system economy, the mercantile capitalism, transforming indigenous' corporeality into minerals, while bringing the African slave trade as well. European modernity, capitalism, colonialism, and eurocentrism appeared simultaneously for Dussel. Furthermore, Wallerstein (as cited in Dussel, 2002) exposes that "Marx himself notes that the discovery [of America] is a fundamental moment for the origin of capitalism and "primitive accumulation" (p. 223). It was later with "the Dutch, English, French, and Danish expansion to India and Asia, that capitalism acquired a global dimension" (Dussel, 2015, p. 87). What is interesting to me is to expose how the Latin American mines and African slave trade became the laboratory for what global capitalism is today, drawing therefore, historical connections.

For Quijano (2000b), capitalism was the new world structure for the control of labour since 1492. "In the historical process of the constitution of America, all forms of control and exploitation of labour and production, as well as the control of appropriation and distribution of products, revolved around the capital-salary relation and the world market. [...] a global model of control of work was established for the first time in known history. And while it was constituted around and in the service of capital, its configuration was established with a capitalist character as well. Thus, emerged a new, original, and singular structure of relations of production in the historical experience of the world: world capitalism" (pp. 535-536). It is interesting when Quijano notes that even if capital, as a social relation, may have had an early origin than the Conquest, it is through America that it becomes 'globalized' until now.

For wa Thiong'o (2009b) colonization equals a 'dismemberment' of Africans and Africa occurring in two stages. First, during the African slave trade that divided the 'African personhood' on the continent and its diaspora. Second, during the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 that divided continental Africa among Europeans nations. It was in the first phase where "Africans slaves became the central commodity in the mercantile phase of capitalism, formed the basis of the sugar, cotton, and tobacco plantations in the Caribbean and American mainland" (p. 5). It is relevant to notice that wa Thiong'o points out that the slave trade and the plantation system served as a primary accumulation of capital, becoming the possibilities of the rise of Europe in a new configured world-system.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015c) notes that the world-system emerging in the 15th century was characterized by a world economic system 'known as capitalism'. While engaging with genealogies of coloniality, he argues that we can speak today about the coloniality of markets driving the new scramble of natural resources in Africa, which in other words, is "capitalism continuing on its deployment of the long-standing strategy of primitive accumulation" (p. 34).

⁹⁵ This becomes a (decolonial?) reading different on what Polanyi's *The Great Transformation* (1944) argues as the genesis of capitalism in its chapter three "Habitation versus Improvement". To my understanding, he sets such genesis in England's enclosure movements that occurred during the earlier Tudor period to benefit the wool production.

I argue what Amin (2005) noted before: capitalism and colonialism are inseparable, capitalism has been colonial. There is a clear complicity “between capitalism and the violent forces which blaze up in colonial territory” (Fanon, 2001, p. 51) and the making of the capitalist world system was constitutive of the rise of a European modern/colonial world (Escobar, 2010; Mignolo, 2007). I remember that Iba Mar Faye summarized well in Dakar all the exposed above: “[...] we need to say that capitalism is nothing but the result of the colonization process. That is a fact”. Therefore, a global capitalism suggestion to read contemporary land grabbing in Senegal cannot be neglected but it should entail a deliberate reading of colonialism, its past, and what remains from it in postcolonial Senegal. In other words, to acknowledge the forms of continuities that the overarching essence of coloniality or ‘something colonial’ that remains expresses historically and rightfully well. At the end, what is land grabbing today in the Ndiaël, if not a sort of echo to those massive appropriation of lands that occurred since the 15th century under new logics of labour exploitation and commodification at global scale?

Finally, “use global capitalism instead”, as I was told by some people in Dakar, reminds me violently of some of the warnings by Grosfoguel (2007, 2011, 2016). By using only capitalism as a focus of analysis in contemporary land grabbing in Senegal may become misleading regarding the whole colonial package that emerged with the Occidental civilizational project. Misleading not only due to the historical links I exposed above, but because capitalism “is only one of the multiple entangled constellations of colonial power matrix of the ‘European modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system’” (2007, pp. 218-219). “We live in a civilization that has an economic system and not in an economy system that produced a civilization” [*Translation mine*] (2016, p. 163). Therefore, I borrow Grosfoguel’s contributions that argue that blaming only global capitalism, dismisses all the other spheres that have jointly built the current world-system since the 15th century, which may lead to a pyrrhic analysis, therefore, a pyrrhic decolonial victory. So, to read ‘(de)colonially’ a contemporary land grabbing case would be a way of establishing the basis for decolonizing the political economy.

3.4 Coloniality of power, knowledge, and being in the land grabbing case

« Sous prétexte de modernité, de progrès, et afin d’assurer l’égalité des chances pour tous, on tente de faire honte de leur naissance aux descendants des familles qui dirigeaient le pays avant l’invasion coloniale »

Cheikh Hamidou Kane - *Les Gardiens du Temple* (1996, p. 118).

I use the decolonial Latin American body of thought to read ‘independently’ the land grabbing case of Senhuile-Sénéthanol. I say ‘independently’ because I am not basing my readings on what the Senegalese told me, which are the previous two sections, but relying on my own decolonial background. During this research process, I must acknowledge that I have been influenced as well by some decolonial African scholars, such as part of the South African school that aligns with the Latin American critical thinking. Therefore, I am using the decolonial body of thought in a general sense to be fair with these influences. My main entry point is the information gathered from the ‘Farmlandgrab’ website from 2011-2017 regarding the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case, which in turn led me to specific administrative mechanisms, reports, and maps related to the case in the Ndiaël. By doing so I attempt to:

- Show how a decolonial reading on the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case would look like by using the notions of coloniality of power, knowledge, and being. I consider these expressions of coloniality in constant intermingling due to the impossibility to separate one from the other.

I start with coloniality of power, understood as the invisible power used to produce asymmetry and inequality, bifurcating population and territories under modern/colonial logics. I argue that coloniality of power applies well in helping to understand first the perpetuation (decrees), and second the justification (public interest) done by the Senegalese State and Senhuile-Sénéthanol in detriment of local communities' livelihoods in the Ndiaël. I must say that coloniality of power expressed in the Ndiaël, resonates with other cases implicating indigenous population and the developmentalist/modern/colonial paradigm, as recently documented by Stetson (2012) for Peru, Richards (2012) in Chile, and Mollet (2015) for a bigger picture in Latin America.

First, historically the Ndiaël population had already faced a top-down state imposition when the Reserve of the Ndiaël was created in 1965⁹⁶ due to the relocation of another natural reserve to compensate the development of a rice agricultural project nearby. At that time, overnight the villages found that they were in a classified natural reserve, as Magueye Thiang suggested in our meeting in Ngnith. Few decades later, with the decrees favouring Senhuile-Sénéthanol, people in the Ndiaël feel the same imposition. The history of the relocation process of the biofuel project from Fanaye to the Ndiaël reserve goes as following. Two presidential decrees were issued on March the 20th of 2012 to relocate the project. The first decree (366) removed the environmental protection status (also the RAMSAR classification that the area gained in 1977), from 26550 ha of the peripheral zone of the Ndiaël reserve. Such act has been known as *Le déclassement du Ndiaël*. The second decree (367) leased the area of 20000 ha to the Senhuile-Sénéthanol project for 50 years and the resting 6550 ha were reserved for the relocation of the hamlets residing that would be eventually displaced by the project of Senhuile-Sénéthanol. Both decrees considered public interests in their texts. After Macky Sall took office the same year, he issued a decree (448) on April 3rd derogating the decrees 366 and 367 because his electoral campaign was against the land grabbing (Bagnoli et al., 2015)⁹⁷. However, on August 6th also in 2012, he enacted the decree 882 repositioning *Le déclassement du Ndiaël* and giving back the 20000 ha to Senhuile-Sénéthanol. I consider relevant to mention that the imposition of the project finds also ground even in legal inconsistencies, based on the national land legal framework from 1964. I recall what Sidy Mohamed Seck⁹⁸ told me in his office at the UGB in Saint Louis:

“They [*Senhuile-Sénéthanol*] have arrived at a classified area [*the Ndiaël belonging to the zones classées according to the Law of National Domain 1964*] that depends on the state to be managed. We have two different contexts. We have lands that are managed legally by local communities [*Fanaye, previous to the relocation of the project to the Ndiaël. Fanaye fits*”

⁹⁶ Presidential Decree 65-053 doing the *déclassement* of *Boundoum et Djeuse* reserves and creating a compensatory reserve in the Ndiaël.

⁹⁷ Ardo Sow from CODEN in Dakar told me that because the Ndiaël decrees were given during an electoral campaign, Macky Sall derogated them among others to have time to review them carefully with his team.

⁹⁸ Geographer, professor at the UGB. Coordinator of the project of securitization of property rights. Member of the commission for the Senegalese Land reform. Member of IPAR. He has written « *Amélioration de la gouvernance foncière au Sénégal : enjeux actuels et défis pour l'avenir* ».

in the zone des terroirs of the National Domain]. Then, in the second case of the Ndiaël it is the state who manages the land. The state has the legal right to affect these lands. *Conversely [Emphasis mine] the national domain [Lands of the Ndiaël fall under this classification] does not belong to anyone, it does not belong to the state, it does not belong to the communities, and no one can appropriately own it privately. The only possibility to do it is by taking to eliminate its classification as national domain, and put it in the domain of the state. In other words, the state must remove the national domain and put it in its own domain, in the name of public utility. So, this classified area [Ndiaël] is part of the national domain, it does not belong to the state even if the State has the services to manage the lands of the zones classées of the National Domain. Now, has the Ndiaël been removed from the national domain and placed in the state domain in the name of public interests before giving it to Senhuile-Sénéthanol? Is the project of Senhuile-Sénéthanol really of public interest? Those are legal questions”.*

The Senhuile-Sénéthanol decrees signify an arbitrary imposition of power by the State, while undermining Peuls’ territory and livelihoods in the Ndiaël. This has occurred even if in theory and in (modern) legal terms, the affected population (Peuls) have a say in the execution of the project. Nevertheless, there was never a proper consultation considering the Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) process with the Ndiaël villages as reported by ActionAid (2014). Even when the National Code of Environment of 2001⁹⁹ requires a Social and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIES in French) in consultation with the population involved¹⁰⁰ before the beginning of activities of the enterprise in question. The EIES carried out by the firm SYNERGIE hired by Senhuile-Sénéthanol started only after the activities of the enterprise began and before the emission of a resolution from the Ministry of Environment approved the operations. Only two villages from 37 of the Ndiaël were consulted during the elaboration of the EIES. I believe that the voices of the affected population such as Ardo Sow of the CODEN in a report of Wetlands International Africa (2014) confirms this coloniality of power: “We are witnessing a new form of colonization. The project *imposes the behaviour [emphasis mine] of a colonial master in the area [...]*”. In such ‘new’ form of colonization articulated by Ardo Sow, the postcolonial Senegalese elite represented by Abdoulaye Wade and Macky Sall in the case depicts the attitude of the postcolonial political parties working against the rural world according to Fanon (2001, p. 89), when he argues: “They believe it lies *in their power [emphasis mine] to give the initial impulse to the nation, whereas in reality the chains forged by the colonial system still weigh it down heavily. They do not go out to find the mass of the people”.*

Second, I found shocking the discourse of ‘public interest’ to give the land to Senhuile-Sénéthanol for 50 years, which is imposed over the ones of the Peuls claiming for the recognition of lands for subsistence agricultural purposes. The Peuls I met during my days at the Ndiaël, as I presented before for the villages of Diourki 1 and Kadou Deff, claimed that they were using the land even before the area was declared a reserve, although the ‘public interest’ discourse prevailed. So, this case exactly represents the prioritization of such modern/colonial conceptualization of development (and therefore, the operationalization of modernity/coloniality) over local dweller’s claims because they lack ‘capital to invest’. To me it is the Senegalese political class justifying its interventions through modern/colonial discourses. From the government of Abdoulaye Wade launching the *Grande offensive pour la nourriture et l’abondance* (GOANA) of 2008 claiming that “Land must be granted only to

⁹⁹ Article R38 – Article R44.

¹⁰⁰ Ministerial decision n° 9468 MJEHP-DEEC of November 28th, 2001.

those who are able to develop it and who have the means” [*Translation mine*] (COPAGEN et al., 2013; Touré, Ba, Dieye, Fall & Seck, 2013); to Macky Sall’s open discourse in March 2017 arguing: “We must facilitate the implementation of agricultural development programmes. It is no use leaving lands unused while they could be *valorised by willing investors* [*emphasis mine*]. You will not be forced to anything, not under my rule at least. *However, do not hinder development. This is the time for emergence* [*emphasis mine*]”. Both examples show the atmosphere of pressure, and the use of a colonial power, to establish a development project like Senhuile-Sénéthanol.

I believe through the performing of coloniality of power we can visualize clearly what Grosfoguel (2007), Maldonado-Torres (2007, 2016), and Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s (2013a, 2013b, 2015a, 2015b), state while articulating Fanon’s (2001, p. 29) proposition of a “world cut in two”. This is the view of the contemporary world divided in two ‘parcels’ by continuities of modern/colonial logics and legacies. This is a world divided in zones of being and non-being by a line separating humanity, from a sort of invisible, neglected and condemned sub-humanity. This is the sub-ontological or ontological colonial difference for Maldonado-Torres (2007)¹⁰¹. I would say that coloniality of power-being and postcolonial Senegal plays this Fanonian world. On the one hand, Senhuile-Sénéthanol belongs to the ones who matter, the ones above the line of what is considered ‘human’, the ones privileged and governed by ‘norms’ and programs such as those decrees enacted in 2012 through modern legal frameworks, or the State programs and initiatives, such as GOANA and *Retour Vers l’Agriculture* (REVA) of 2006, which support behind the very idea of development rooted in a modern/colonial paradigm. I suggest that also Senegalese claiming for the development and the ‘emergence’ of Senegal through the PSE program, and the ones claiming the importance of the concretisation of the project of Senhuile-Sénéthanol belong to this zone of being. On the other hand, the Peul villages and others affected, confronting directly the impacts of the leasing of the land to Senhuile-Sénéthanol, and the impacts of development programs in the name of public interests, belong to the second zone. They are governed by exclusion, exploitation, and literally expropriation. They are in the zone of *The Wretched of the Earth* literally breathing violence, they are the *damnés*.

I consider that coloniality of knowledge, and the intermingling of knowledge-being, can be depicted through some concrete examples. First, in a World Bank (2013, p. 121) report done to justify the development project related to commercial agriculture and sustainable land management involving the Lac de Guiers, which is next to the Ndiaël reserve. The report mentions that Senegal covers a surface area of 19.5 million ha, of which 19 percent are farming lands and the remaining is divided between ‘wasteland’ and ‘unclassified bush’ and urban lands. This shows how the rhetoric and knowledge of productivity of lands is imposed on the idea of customary uses of land, such as pastoralist activities carried out by the Peuls, which seems to be undertaken in areas lacking economic value. Pastoralists play negatively with the idea of ‘*Mise en valeur*’ as Senegalese have shown in a previous section. Regardless what the Peuls could say about the productivity of their apparent ‘wasted’ landscape, their version remains without any objectivity at the lights of the coloniality of knowledge. So, rationality does not exist in the Ndiaël for some Senegalese, as following Senghor’s mantra that reason is Hellenic. Would the postcolonial

¹⁰¹ Maldonado-Torres (2007, pp. 253-254) makes a difference from ‘ontological difference’ as the “difference between Being and beings”, and the ‘Sub-ontological or ontological colonial difference’, as the “difference between Being and what lies below Being or that which is negatively marked as dispensable as well as a target of rape and murder”.

Senegalese elite in a contemporary cruel modern/colonial world trust in the information of the knowledgeable Magueye Thiang, president of the producers of the West side of the Lac Guiers, and Gordgi Sow, vice president of pastoralist at the level of Dagana department, more than a seductive World Bank report? Certainly not, I am afraid to admit.

Second, in the revision of documents regarding the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case, I understood coloniality of knowledge and being interrelated through the official map created to justify the Senhuile-Sénéthanol development project. According to Word (2014), the *Direction des Travaux Géographique et Cartographique* (DTGC), under the Ministry of Equipment and Transportation, released an official map of the area leased to Senhuile-Sénéthanol. This map, created by state technicians, only identified six of 37 villages affected in the Ndiaël. Despite that their villages exist, the Peuls were deprived of their 'being'. They suffered the removal of their condition as human beings, which I could not believe until I spoke with those 'erased' villagers during my visit to the Ndiaël, those beings being as real as the ones considered as existing by the State. As Maldonado-Torres (2007) argues: "Invisibility and dehumanization are the primary expressions of the coloniality of being" (p. 257). Also following Maldonado-Torres (2007, pp. 252-253), this example of the Ndiaël map constitutes the very modern/colonial Cartesian link among the coloniality of knowledge-being. First, the Peuls did not take part in the Descartes' formulation 'I Think' but in the 'I do not think properly'. Their knowledge, which could be translated into the views of their own landscape as traditional places for religious purposes or customary herding routes, was overlooked for an elaboration of a map that resembles those explorations for mapping Africa to be divided in the late 19th century. Second, they did not take part in the Cartesian 'I Am' but in the 'I am not', 'I do not have a being', 'I am dispensable', and 'I do not exist'. This is Descartes in the Ndiaël.

Third, the intermingling of coloniality of knowledge-being in the EIES done by SYNERGIE for Senhuile-Sénéthanol. The EIES, for one of the rural communities (Ronkh) affected by the project, mentions how the pastoral communities of Peuls "[...] lack of professionalism and are not *open* [*Emphasis mine*] to innovation and modernization. It is because the Senhuile-Sénéthanol project brings worries and fears to pastoralists that hold on their traditional practices of pastoralism and are incapable of imagining any other way of life" [*Translation mine*] (2012, p. 23). I believe this example shows the knowledge construction in the form of narratives and common discourses affecting the construction of a type of 'being' for/by the Peuls. Put it in decolonial jargon, on the one hand, it is the invisibilization of the own subjectivities of the Peuls, on the other hand, it is the producing and favouring of a way of being: 'modern', 'open', not 'hindering development' as president Macky Sall put it in his discourse on March 2017, a 'collaboration' with the arrival of investors that are ready to do the dirty job of '*Mise en valeur*' in the land that the Peuls were not (and will not) able to achieve. It is the construction of markers affecting and questioning the humanity of the other: The rural population, the indigenous, the Peuls, which are taken out from the zone of being and put it in the zone of non-being. As Ciccariello-Maher argues (2017), it is 'fabricating' the vision of the colonised not as "insufficiently ethical or even nonethical, but as utterly *anti-ethical*" (p. 79). To illustrate more I recall on Fanon (2001) who shows how the settlers and the postcolonial elite construct the idea of the native:

"It is not enough for the settler to delimit physically, with the help of the army and the police force, the place of the native. [...] the settler paints the native as a sort of quintessence of evil. [...] The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values. He is, let us dare to admit, the enemy of values, and

in this sense, he is the absolute evil. He is the corrosive element, destroying all that has to do with beauty or morality; he is the depository of maleficent powers [...] their traditions, their myths – above all, their myths – are the very sign of that poverty of spirit and of their constitutional depravity” (pp. 31-32).

“When the settler seeks to describe the native fully in exact terms he constantly refers to the bestiary. [...], that laziness stretched out in the sun, that vegetative rhythm of life” (p. 33).

“The fact is that as a body these people [*native, in this case the Peuls*] appear to them to be bogged down in fruitless inertia. The members of the nationalist parties (town workers and intellectuals) pass the same unfavourable judgment on country districts as the settlers)” (p. 87).

3.5 Conclusion

Senegalese do - and do not - link colonial past and present to explain contemporary land grabbing after 57 years of independence. In this sense, the myriad of articulations that appeared when dialoguing with Senegalese exposes well the nuanced contemporary de/postcolonial Senegalese critical thinking I presented in Chapter II. It is precisely this diversity of views what led me to suggest the idea of (im)possibilities for ‘colonial’ articulations in contemporary land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal. I argued that even if some views may not suggest possible links towards the ‘something colonial’ that persists, as valid and critical as they are, they could become *possible* linking modern/colonial traces by using the propositions of the decolonial body of thought. Nevertheless, being fair with the geopolitics of knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2007, 2011, 2016) and my encounters with postcolonial Senegal, this suggestion of (im)possibilities are first, *my* own interpretations of Senegalese readings on the land grabbing case, and second, are based on literature produced in the modern/academic world (even if the decolonial body of thought tries to minimize this) and its interpretations of the world.

The use of the decolonial body of thought brought interesting discussions when looking at the land grabbing case differently than understandings influenced by political economy.

First, is the idea of neocolonialism interpreted as ‘foreigners’ meddling in African interests. On the one hand, neocolonialism shows the ‘something colonial’ more in tune towards a political economy reading on postcolonial societies emphasizing the role of ‘exterior’ forces working in already ‘independent’ countries, such as those Senegalese embracing that part of the song *Ma terre ma vie* “400 years later they came back”. On the other hand, it poses the question to what extent a critical self-reflection of the role of Senegalese and of the State exists in rendering possible land grabbing in postcolonial times. By not denying the existing political ties with the former metropole (France) as I presented in Chapter II, interpretations of only ‘foreigners’ coming back may overlook the performance of colonial logics by Senegalese themselves when arguing that former African ‘colonizers’ are *returning*. So, at a very first level, the contribution of the decolonial body of thought appears precisely here, exposing colonial logics that remain, which are appropriated and replicated by Senegalese. At a second level, it contributes to the idea of blurring the boundaries among de/postcolonial positions, by seeing land grabbing in postcolonial Senegal as a point of convergence. In that sense, some postcolonial African authors would say that the only

'foreigners' discourse exemplifies the performance of the African 'victimization' (Mbembe, 2007b), while neglecting the African agency itself. Interestingly, for decolonials like me, the denial of responsibilities such as the role of the state or the same Senegalese society using modern/colonial justifications to grab land would be the disavowal of global coloniality.

Second, exploring the intermingling of coloniality of power-knowledge-being contributes to the understanding of the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case and supports the call of moving beyond political economy frameworks that read clashes around land overusing the idea of class struggle (Mollet, 2015; Richards, 2012). If the 'delinking' from "the exploitative international capitalist system" in political economy jargon, would be the panacea in the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case, as proponents of neocolonialism (in a deterministic and reductive focus towards the economics) would suggest (Omeje 2015, p. 3), one could argue where those modern/colonial/racists forms of expressions towards the Peuls are coming from? Hence, this research supports going beyond the act of 'subjugating' a myriad of systemic relations of domination born in the modern/colonial world-system to the economic one (Grosfoguel, 2007, 2016), as I mentioned when Senegalese were suggesting me to read the land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal 'only' with global capitalism in view. The struggle in the Ndiaël was fed by modern/colonial/racial articulations and markers towards the Peuls. Those colonial categories to classify people (Quijano, 2007) *are* the entry point to expose the invisibilization and inferiorization that Maldonado-Torres (2007) talks about, these discourses created to justify development under the rubric of 'public' interest over the population of the Ndiaël. So, political economy readings appear with some blind spots towards that reproduction of modern/colonial/racial logics today that in decolonial jargons put people under an invisible 'line' on what is considered human. As Mamdani (2005) argued for the African context: "The limits of political economy as a framework for political analysis began to surface in the face of postcolonial political violence, for political economy could only explain violence when it resulted from a clash between market-based identities—either class or division of labour" (p. 2). Such violence around grabbing/defending lands in the Ndiaël case and in its predecessor in Fanaye, may find not a better but a complementary ground in a decolonial articulation. By doing this we can unveil the essence of how the Senegalese, regardless of their class, affect other Senegalese by dispossessing them of their land. Being aware of such missing components could be already a decolonial achievement from these south-south de/postcolonial dialogues.

Insisting on class as "*the* universal political identity" becomes a disavowal of the racialized current world (Ciccariello-Maher, 2017, p. 69). So, if race matters (Fanon, 2001, 2008), how can *damnés* move towards an imaginable world of liberation?

CHAPTER IV: EXPLORING DECOLONIALITY

4.1 Introduction

I present three main topics related to decoloniality, condensing the lessons that have emerged from five months in Senegal and the writing process of this document. I chose decoloniality to balance my thoughts, since much more could be added regarding the 'something colonial' that persists, presented in previous chapters. In Chapter II, I have presented my general impressions born in the encounters between my decolonial Latin-American positioning and the nuanced de/postcolonial Senegal positioning of Senegalese critical thinkers. In Chapter III, I used the land grabbing occurring in Senegal after 57 years of 'independence' to establish dialogues between the Senegalese understanding the phenomenon and my positioning in the decolonial body of thought. Thus, considering that I started my research searching for de/postcolonial south-south dialogues, my attempt in this chapter is to engage with the following question:

- What are the lessons that emerge from these South-South de/postcolonial dialogues?

In that sense, I explore **decoloniality** arguing that:

- First at a practical level, decoloniality appears in everyday life, which could be translated as 'landing' decoloniality.
- Second at a theoretical level, there may be a reconciliation among the de/postcolonials critical thought through Fanon.
- Finally, there is a need for a critical reflection on being decolonial.

4.2 Landing decoloniality

"[...] the peasants alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose and everything to gain"
Frantz Fanon - *The Wretched of the Earth* (2001, p. 47).

I personally met Aliou Kamara an evening after a four-hours trip in a small bus from Saint-Louis to Ngnith. Aliou's position as treasurer in the municipality, his skills in dealing with the 'official' language bureaucracy (French) contrary to the mayor and deputy mayor of Ngnith, and his role as a coach of the football team *Mako* that won the local tournament last year, make him a celebrity in town. We saw each other every day and night for around two weeks, recalling stories from his wedding, debating on the clash among Cheikh Anta Diop and Leopold Sedar Senghor, his time of being unemployed, his father's¹⁰² days, and of course struggles around land in the Sahel. One we started talking about Senhuile-Sénéthanol while

¹⁰² Aliou was proud of sharing the history of his father, who once was a *talibé* in his childhood, later went to the II WW as a *tirailleur*, then became a *Marabout*, got three wives, and then went to la Mecca. Now he spends his afternoons telling stories to kids in the terrace of the house.

laying down on the floor, drinking some *attaaya* and eating peanuts in his living room. He said:

“The first day Senhuile-Sénéthanol came to bring their heavy machinery, we were four people! At that moment, they were trying to start working on the land I told the operator of the tractor to stop! I told him: “You will need to pass over me!”. Today, people have awakened if we talk about land [...]. You know, if there is such colonial thinking in minds, it means that people have not been awaked yet. Here, if you are going to grab our land you will need to be ready to die first. In Senghor’s times, the State arrived and said: “I will give 10000 ha to Matías”, and people did not say anything because it was the state. Today we do not allow that, people has awakened”.

I remember Aliou being proud of his attitude that day when Senhuile-Sénéthanol came, and I asked him if stopping the tractor was a way of expressing a de/postcolonial thinking (*I used the words ‘pensée décoloniale’*). He agreed, while pouring more *attaaya* in to my little glass and continuing remembering other anecdotes of such day in the Ndiaël.

With this brief passage from my shared days with Aliou, I want to reinforce as a **first lesson that emerges** from these South-South de/postcolonial dialogues to me, the idea that **decoloniality appears in everyday life**. I refer with ‘landing decoloniality’ to those expressions of decoloniality articulated ‘simply’ by people from all walks of life, complementing academic debates I found in postcolonial Senegal. Aliou actively taking part in the resistance against the land grab in the Ndiaël becomes an example. To support this idea of decoloniality appearing in everyday life, I base my arguments on four of the five decoloniality theses proposed by Maldonado-Torres (2016), to which I link my own Senegalese experience. As already presented in Chapter II, here I understand ‘decoloniality’ as the ultimate converged goal claimed by de/postcolonial critical authors. The theses argue that decoloniality is:

- Rooted in a decolonial turn or turns away from modernity/coloniality.
- Involves a decolonial epistemic turn whereby the *damné* emerges as a questioner and thinker.
- Involves an activist decolonial turn whereby the *damné* emerges as an agent of social change.
- Is a collective project.

First, decoloniality is rooted in a decolonial turn or turns away from modernity/coloniality. I understand this as a ‘shift’ that occurs to the *damnés* moving from coloniality to the emergence of a ‘decolonial’ attitude. Fanon (2008, p. 180) would say that “before it can adopt a positive voice, freedom requires an effort at disalienation”. Here, not only Aliou and the Ndiaël people affected by Senhuile-Sénéthanol come to my mind, but also Serguey from Barcelona, Senegal, I presented in Chapter II. Was Serguey aware of his attitude *vis-à-vis* the modern/colonial paradigm at the time of our encounter in his own conquered Ithaca in Ngnith? Did he know what he was doing for the period of three years carrying sand? I believe that yes, certainly. In that sense, Maldonado-Torres (2016, p. 23) argues that “the most basic expression of the decolonial turn is at the level of attitude, leading to the formation of a decolonial attitude”, and for him this shift brings an orientation towards a ‘decolonial’ love and rage. In Serguey, love towards himself and rage towards the false dream drowning Sub-Saharan people in the Atlantic. In the Ndiaël, love towards the

land, to the *bétail*, to the continuity of traditional Peul logics, to the Monday markets at Ngnith, and rage towards the land grabbing by preposterous legal decrees and the indifference of postcolonial elite.

Second, decoloniality involves a decolonial epistemic turn whereby the *damné* emerges as a questioner and thinker. Interestingly, Adrien Benga in his office in the history department of the UCAD remarked that for me in my first week at Dakar. He argued that for a daily action to be considered as an articulation of decoloniality, people need to ‘make sense of it’ after a self and collective reflection on what is going on, rather just than applying survival strategies on defending instinctively land such in the Ndiaël. Ndongo Samba Sylla in his office at Rosa Luxembourg in Dakar, in the same line mentioned that land could be a mean for decolonial struggles *if* people who mobilize around it becomes conscious about the paradigm they are confronting. In other words, this requires in the Ndiaël that people would need to reflect on the critique they are posing.

With these sorts of warnings, I argue that such self-reflection that Adrien Benga and Ndongo Samba Sylla were asking for currently happens in postcolonial Senegal. For instance, Ardo Sow from the group CODEN of the Ndiaël told me that the land struggle they were facing was a ‘double source’. On the one hand, a source of auto reflection by the same population within the system they are living in, and about their own history. On the other hand, a source of inspiration for other ‘decolonial struggles’ (*he used ‘lutte décoloniale’*), and to inspire other social movements in West Africa and in the Global South. “There is a lot of people in the Ndiaël that understood *why* [*emphasis mine*] we are engage in the struggle. Those people that have confronted the *gendarmerie* [*police*], those who are struggling to preserve their land and identities”, Sow added to our conversation. Additionally, Mamadou Mignane Diouf from the World Social Forum in Dakar told me that: “those struggles [*Land, because according to him land is sacred*], can help change the *mentality* [*emphasis mine*] for a decolonization of the mind of population. It is an exercise to arrive to a true decolonization, *voilà!*”. Finally, Iba Mar Faye also told me in Dakar that: “In their everyday actions [*referring to the ones of people from all walks of life*], there are things related to the decolonial thinking [*he used ‘pensée décoloniale’*], which is very important because it glues all the different struggles, such as around land, the Franc CFA, and other colonial domains. It [*decolonial thinking*] is what unifies a bit the social movements. Everyone does something related to the decolonial thinking”. So, based on these remarks, I argue that the process of being conscious on decoloniality in everyday life *exists* in postcolonial Senegal. Senegalese do emerge as critical questioners and thinkers. I believe this reflection aligns well first when Fanon (2001, p. 31) argues that “To wreck the colonial world is henceforward a mental picture of action which is *very clear, very easy to understand* [*emphasis mine*] and which may be assumed by each one of the individuals which constitute the colonized people”. And second, with Maldonado-Torres (2016), who identifies that more and more social movements and activists are using decolonial jargons, identifying coloniality and reflecting on it but not disassociating reflection from action.

Third, decoloniality involves an activist decolonial turn whereby the *damné* emerges as an agent of social change. So, the *damné* does not remain only in the academic and abstracts levels. In *Black Skins, White Masks*, Fanon (2008) would call for an ‘actional man’. I remember when Fatou Sarr Sow told me at IFAN in Dakar: “It is not all about intellectuals but *activists* [*emphasis mine*] who struggle in a more concrete manner. Talk to them”. Her words became a reaffirmation on paying attention to people out of academic spheres when dealing with the ‘something colonial’ that persists in postcolonial Senegal. Also, Adrien

Benga in the UCAD mentioned that decoloniality appears in those bottom-up movements: “Such struggles against land grabbing in Kenya, in Nigeria, in Senegal, etc, all make evident the decolonial thinking, so, it effectively comes from those marginalised communities at the bottom”. Lastly, Abdoulaye Fall in the UGB reaffirmed these two previous ideas by saying that we need to search these decolonial essences in daily life: “Discussions need to be more tangible. [...] the most important is to see how we can theorize and conceptualize all these that happen on the ground, in the everyday nature of the people. Decoloniality in land struggles? Yes, every day, absolutely, every day! [...], so, go see those solutions out there, on the ground, live with them. Peasants are all the time making solutions. [...] People do not wait for theorists or politicians, life goes on. Those are the solutions we need to grab, learn, fertilize, so let’s understand what is happening closer to the ground and reality”. Overall, I believe that if decoloniality is articulated by intellectuals in postcolonial Senegal (Sarr, 2016a), the same happens with activists and people from all walks of life being ‘actional’ in a Fanonian sense.

Fourth, decoloniality is a collective project. For Maldonado-Torres (2016) the etymological root of *damné* relates to ‘*donner*’, which means ‘to give’. However, being a *damné*, one cannot give anything because everything has been taken away from him/her by the convergence of the coloniality of power, knowledge, and being, such as losing lands, *bétail*, resources, and space to speak and participate as in the Ndiaël, and the idea of home, family members, and friends as in the case of Serguey. Nevertheless, also in a Fanonian sense the *damné* still wants to give even if he does not have anything. Therefore, this is the *damné* forming a group, a new community, encountering other activists, this is the transition from *damné* to *damnés*, looking for links and connections with others *damnés* that may be or not in the same awakening process from their position of subjugation. As Maldonado-Torres (2016, p. 29) argues: “*damnés* and others who also resign from modernity/coloniality who, thinking, creating, and acting together in various forms of community can seek to disrupt the coloniality of knowledge, power, and being and change the world”. Therefore, in this sense, I found that my own dialogues with the affected population in the Ndiaël when talking informally in their affected villages were part of the decoloniality appearing in the everyday life. We were sharing experiences. A first memory that comes to me is when I spoke with Mamadou Sow from the village of Diourki 1 and we started talking about the situations of land grabbing in our respective countries, and how the affected population were facing them. Here is a brief part of our dialogue:

Matías: Mamadou would you like to ask me something?

Mamadou Sow [*Translator*]: He says that at your home, what do you do to gain lands and what strategies do you use to fight against land grabbing? What is your definition of struggle? [*I mentioned in our dialogue the experience of Amazonian people and the discourse of the president denigrating them for the sake of development*].

Interestingly, Gorgui Sow from the village of Daymane asked me a similar question: “What are the land problems and how do you carry out land struggles in Peru?”. In both situations, I felt that we were crossing the same path: The existing allure of development/modernity/coloniality and how people respond to that. Again, I believe we were experiencing the decoloniality appearing in everyday life because we were addressing the same ‘target’ in an informal talk. A second memory comes to my mind when discussing with Ardo Sow on decoloniality examples, he reflected on the ‘West-African Caravan for

land, water and seeds¹⁰³, and his dream to see something like that in Latin America. I mentioned to him about some initiatives in Andean countries, and that the long-distance marches have become a type of civil society strategy to make the claims more visible. I gave him examples of Peru and Mexico. Later, he also reflected in his experience as an activist going to Brazil, sharing time with the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST)*¹⁰⁴ when going to their *assentamentos*¹⁰⁵. These two examples show me that encounters of land defenders from different countries, just as an example of actors, is already achieving decoloniality in the everyday. Just to talk about it becomes performing decoloniality. Ardo finished saying to me “Why we cannot foster more of these encounters? Why we cannot mix more these experiences to share lessons of failures and victories?”, which in Fanonian words sounded to me like a calling to build worlds together, touching, and feeling each other.

4.3 A reconciliation among de/postcolonial critical thought through Fanon

“I am my own foundation”

Frantz Fanon – *Black skins white masks* (2008, p. 180).

“Ah! Mathias! *It is the fear on the head!*”, told me Demba Moussa Dembélé when talking about the difficulties to exit the Franc CFA. “Do you believe that you [*Latin-Americans*], are better than us [*Africans, Senegalese, Blacks*]?” asked me a student at the UCAD in a postcolonial lecture. Boubacar Boris Diop told me in relation to the Rwandan violence, which I also believe applies for the very act of grabbing land in the Ndiaël case and its predecessor in Fanaye: “I kill the other not because he is different from me, but because he brings me to confrontation to what I most hate in this world: myself”. Macky Sall’s open discourse in March 2017 was calling to not ‘hinder development’ because it is ‘the time for emergence’, to finally ‘take off’. The EIES done by SYNERGIE for Senhuile-Sénéthanol labelling the Peuls as ‘lacking professionalism’ and being ‘incapable’ of imagining any other way of life. An official map understanding Senhuile-Sénéthanol in a zone of being and some Peuls villages in the zone of non-being. All these memories and images expose what I understand as a sort of inferiority complex (Fanon, 2001, 2008), articulated in one way or another, during my encounters with postcolonial Senegal and my days in northern Senegal with the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case. Therefore, these experiences motivate me to explore one more time the encounter among my theoretical positioning as a decolonial from Latin-American and the de/postcolonial Senegalese critical thinking of postcolonial Senegal.

In this brief section, a **second lesson that emerges** from these South-South de/postcolonial dialogues, is the idea of reconciliation among **de/postcolonial critical thought through Fanon**. I have already presented some basis at the end of Chapter II when calling to blur the boundaries of de/postcolonial critical thought, especially because those theoretical differentiations may appear nicely in paper but at the end objectives from both

¹⁰³ Known in French as the ‘*Caravane ouest-africaine pour la terre, l’eau et les semences*’, was an initiative launched by the *Convergence Globale des Lutttes pour la Terre et l’Eau – Afrique de l’Ouest*. Searching to transmit communities’ claims towards the authorities and formed by peasant movements and organisations, travelled from Burkina Faso to Senegal, passing through Mali, from March the 3rd to the 19th, 2016.

¹⁰⁴ Landless Workers’ Movement.

¹⁰⁵ Occupied land by the MST.

schools tend to be the same. Here, I argue that decoloniality of being proposed by the decolonials (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, 2016), and *montée en humanité* (to enter in humanity) (Mbembe, 2013) or *La reconquête de l'estime de soi* (to reconquer the self-esteem) (Sarr, 2016a) proposed by postcolonials, speak the same language and share the repositioning of the being of the *damné* as a common thread. The articulation of Fanon's (2001, 2008) contributions to deal with such inferiority complex brought by colonialism becomes the anchor point and both decolonials and postcolonials embrace these contributions. As Felwine Sarr suggested to me in Dakar: "Look at the convergences!".

Fanon's legacy (2001, 2008) shows a 'world cut in two', which I presented when applying the decolonial body of thought to understand some elements from the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case in Chapter III. This is a world divided in zones of being and non-being by a line separating humanity from a sort of sub-humanity. Hence, while being aware of Fanonian contributions, assuming my decolonial positioning and encountering de/postcolonial Senegalese critical thought, I find interesting the similarities of what the *damnés* must go through to emerge from the zone of non-being. On the one hand, decolonials call to work on the decoloniality of such ontological colonial difference (Grosfoguel, 2016; Maldonado-Torres, 2007, 2016), to address the colonial idea of race organising the world (Quijano, 2000a, 2000b, 2007). Grosfoguel (2016) emphasises the act of erasing such dividing-racist line. Maldonado-Torres (2016) calls to embrace a recognition of the own self, the formation of new forms of subjectivities, and community through love and rage, as I showed above when talking about decolonial attitude. Overall, to take out those *white masks* in a Fanonian sense. On the other hand, postcolonials like Mbembe (2013) consider that this idea of sub-humanity expresses well those living in the zone of non-being, which he calls *La grande nuit* in allusion to Fanon. For Mbembe, the task should be emphasised in the *montée en humanité* (in Fanonian jargon is to enter in the zone of being) to then carry out the '*déclosion du monde*'. *Montée en humanité* is the quest of the subjugated (the *damné*) by the formula of racism/colonialism, to appropriate him/herself of his/her consciousness, of his/her *myself*, and of his/her voice to speak in first person. As I presented before for *Are You better than Us?* In Chapter II, *Les Ateliers de la pensée* of 2016 in Dakar and Saint Louis also articulated a similar idea on the 'reconstruction' of the self-esteem among its panellists. With this summary of both positions, I argue that similarities among both currents could not be more evident when addressing the emergence of the colonised being. Importantly, 'emergence' not in a modern/colonial understanding to 'catch up' as the PSE of Macky Sall, but just to become alive, to enter the Fanonian living zone. In fact, when I spoke with Felwine Sarr about his book *Afrotopia* (2016) in Dakar, and specifically the idea he presents as *La reconquête de l'estime de soi*, he agreed with the similarities of the decoloniality of being presented by the decolonial school.

In this context, one thing shared by decolonials and postcolonials is the idea of the invention of race as a dividing line in humanity. Colonialism equals racism. Quijano, Grosfoguel, Maldonado-Torres, Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Sarr, Mbembe, Césaire, Fanon, all converge to this point. Being aware of this convergence takes relevance when in the field I encounter people arguing that there is no racism in Senegal, like Onoma Ato told me in Dakar: "[...] we are just here, we are all black! Africanness make sense in a context when you are confronted with somethingness. The Negritude people, Leon Damas, Senghor, Césaire, they were all confronted with something in Paris [*Whites*]. They were in France, in this cosmopolitan setting where they were confronted with racism and all of that". Or Ndongo Samba Sylla saying that: "The racial logic could be depicted more in countries like South

Africa, it is more evident there. [...] But in Senegal there is not a divergence as such. [...] Here people say that it is more class struggles than racial struggles". And Fatou Dieng telling me that: "No, it is true that it is a different story here [*The open discursive denigration of the peasantry by the political class*]. The president will not say that peasants belong to a second or third citizenship". As valid as these perspectives are, I could not stop thinking in the Ndiaël, and such painful map erasing existences, or Macky Sall denigrating land uses of people in a public discourse. What are those, if not derivative forms of racism? What are they if not an echo of the same logic I lived in Peru with the racialization of the 'Other' through pejorative representations, such Amazonian indigenous population being labelled as 'citizens of second class' by the Peruvian President Alan García? Thus, to me such invention of race, speaks in Peru as well as in the Ndiaël by that rhetoric of development-modernity-coloniality, performing, neglecting, and condemning.

Overall, at a theoretical level, I believe that the idea of the **reconciliation among de/postcolonials critical thought through Fanon** contributes at least in two points. First, it clarifies the debate Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015b), Marzagora (2016) and Omeje (2015) hold about the presence or not of the postcolonial school in Africa, in this case in Senegal. The postcolonial school *is* very much present in Senegal. The fact that I was invited by people of the postcolonial discourses class to give a lecture of the Latin American thinking at the UCAD shows the presences of postcolonials. Second, some decolonials may say that postcolonials do not recognise coloniality, such as Mporu (2013) or Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013a) talking about Mbembe, however, my experience in Senegal has told me the opposite. To search for *montée en humanité* is recognizing implicitly a previous situation of damnation existing in 2017. Felwine Sarr as a coordinator of *Les Ateliers de la pensée* speaks about *La reconquête de l'estime de soi* and locates himself among both schools, as he told me in Dakar. So, I believe that getting involve with the decoloniality of being and similarities proposed by postcolonials, becomes a double task when following Maldonado-Torres (2016) regarding the 'something colonial' that persists. These tasks, I argue again, apply also for postcolonials. A "critique of coloniality, on the one hand, and the affirmation of all practices and knowledges that promote love and understanding, on the other" (Maldonado-Torres, 2016, p. 22). To look at the convergences among de/postcolonials is to recognize that decoloniality of being (Maldonado-Torres, 2016), *montée en humanité* (Mbembe, 2013) or *La reconquête de l'estime de soi* (Sarr, 2016a) search the same de/postcolonial goal to address the exit of the sub-humanity line. To focus discrepancies among currents as the primary goal, is giving up towards the modern/colonial paradigm. "We need to reconcile those two thinking. [...] Can we effectively reconcile these critical thinking?" Adrien Benga asked me. I believe the recognition of such common goals and convergence points are steps to do this.

4.4 "Not two but three": A reflection on being decolonial

As I mentioned in Chapter II, *L'aventure ambiguë*¹⁰⁶ of Cheikh Hamidou Kane made me re-think my perception of the Cheikh Anta Diop Avenue in Dakar, and overall Senegal. Although, it was not only that. I remember when reading the book, I started to align my own decolonial critique towards the paradigm that was imposed in the life of *Samba Diallo*, the

¹⁰⁶ To remember Samba Diallo experiences the anxiousness, the sadness of arriving to an occidental world that demands him to learn how to live like an occidental. In turn, this foreign world does not take anything from his culture or tradition, because it is inferior, not relevant.

hero of the novel: the French school, which is the modern/colonial system of education and living. However, one Saturday in May I went to a public discussion of the book in a literary meeting celebrated at the French Cultural Institute in the *plateau* of Dakar. It was there that I met Youssoupha Félé Sarr¹⁰⁷ from the *Institut National des langues et civilisations orientales* (INALCO), from whom I remember a phrase that keeps resonating among my thoughts and writing: “We can read the three parts of ourselves in Dakar streets, a *mélange* [mixture] in us. We are not two but three heritages”. That was something new to my own decolonial reading of *L'aventure ambiguë* and Senegal. Part of my diary illustrates that day:

“My reading of *L'aventure ambiguë* seems to have been influenced by my decolonial background. The reading of a world *vis-à-vis* the occident but not questioning the *before*. In the event, I found a reading much more open, talking about three heritages instead of two. A critical reflection with no fear, I would say. Youssoupha articulated some imaginary questions to Cheikh Hamidou Kane: What about the Black African society *vis-à-vis* the Islamic world? Where is that clash in Kane's legacy to the African world? Where is the Black African *in* Samba Diallo and not only his Qur'anic school getting affected by French colonialism? I found then a concrete example on the reflection of getting away the face-to-face against the occident. In other words, such clash is not everything that has passed, Dakar has three heritages and maybe, contemporary problems could be an inheritance of them instead of two main roots” (Field diary, 06-05-2017).

This memory of my decolonial reading of *L'aventure ambiguë*, and in contrast a more open reading by a young Senegalese, pushes me to reflect on what we can learn from each other in terms of decoloniality. Although, it is not my place to say what the de/postcolonial Senegalese need or must learn from decolonial Latin-Americans. They themselves have argued during my fieldwork some admiration to the critical thinking coming from Latin America. For instance, the capacity of Latin Americans to have articulated a critical thinking in almost 150-200 years of being ‘independent’, according to Fatou Sow and Thierno Diop; the last vibrant wave of left governments at the beginning of 2000s¹⁰⁸, according to Adrien Benga, Abdoulaye Fall and Onoma Ato; or the advances in the realm of political ontology brought by the National Constitutions¹⁰⁹, according to Felwine Sarr. What I would like to suggest instead, as a third **lesson that emerges** from these South-South de/postcolonial dialogues, is the idea to (re)think the **confrontational feature of being decolonial**. Therefore, I suggest what I myself could learn from de/postcolonial critical thinkers in postcolonial Senegal.

Along this research process, I have been told that I am too confrontational and that this idea of decoloniality puts too much fire in the/my critique to modernity, unveiling its dark side known as coloniality. As I mentioned before, citing Maldonado-Torres (2016), I do believe this critique of the development/modernity/coloniality is urgent, as well at the same time the affirmation of the own self, “that promote love and understanding, on the other”. A lesson that emerges from postcolonial Senegal is what Aminata Diaw Cissé articulated

¹⁰⁷ Doctoral student at INALCO, Paris-France, with a research on Rap in Wolof in Senegal. He is also Felwine Sarr's younger brother.

¹⁰⁸ Today in a transition to the right in some of these countries. Brazil and Argentina are some examples.

¹⁰⁹ The recognition of the ‘rights of nature’ appeared in the last Ecuadorian and Bolivian constitutions in 2008 and 2009 respectively, with the introduction of a self-conceptualization of development known as the *sumak kawsay* (Quechua) and *suma qamaña* (Aymara), *buen vivir* (Spanish) or ‘living well’. This epistemological and ontological irruption is known as a ‘bio-centric turn’, in which nature is perceived as a collection of subjects but not objects (Gudynas, 2011).

recalling the Senegalese historian Mamadou Diouf¹¹⁰: “We need to exit the face-to-face against the Occident”. In other words, to exit the confrontation with excessive tendencies to critique while forgetting the exploration of ‘possibilities’. Interestingly, Escobar (2012b) has critically reflected on the weakest points of the decolonial body of thought. He warns the decolonial body of thought to not become ‘only’ a rupture discourse, where is all about histories of rupture in lieu of more proposing and visualizing, and theorizing the becoming. The excessive discourse on rupture, in a way, for him reproduces a modern/colonial act and blocks what is next. With that self-critical reflection in mind, and Aminata Diaw Cissé’s suggestion, I believe a dialogue with Felwine Sarr illustrates this point of what I could learn from de/postcolonial positioning of Senegalese.

Matías: I believe that it is interesting the tolerance I find here in Senegal. In Latin-America, it seems to be that we are always in the process of confrontation, more in a sort of face-to-face with the Occident, as Aminata Diaw Cissé told me.

Felwine: Voilà! Yes! But even if there is a lot of tolerance, I would say that there is an absence of resentment. There is no resentment here. It is a very real feature of African societies at the south of the Sahara, they have always integrated their differences in everything, in religion, among Gods, all foreign Gods have been welcomed, and we could embrace that or another one God, to integrate different types of religious traditions. The idea of family and kinship is big, and they are weaved and reweaved. I believe that we have integrated the different contributions from different encounters to reinvent ourselves, even if they have been violent.

I believe the confrontational aspect of the decolonial body of thought seems to highlight some aspects that may pass unnoticed for some Senegalese. For example, “[...] we are just here, we are all black!”, when recognising a sort of lack of racism in postcolonial Senegal. This takes relevance when I found existing elements of racist discourses in one way or the other towards the rural population, like in the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case. However, confrontation should not be the goal, following Escobar (2012b), but a mean. I believe with my decolonial reading I was staying only in the critique to the world-system that emerged in 1492, but not seeing the critique that some Senegalese articulate to the Arabic world that impacted them before and after in many domains¹¹¹. I would say in Dussel’s (2015) terms, I was staying only in one exteriority, the one from modern European modernity. This make sense when Abdoulaye Fall in the UGB pointed out to me: “You do not consider that before encountering the Occident, a society like the Senegalese encountered first the Orient, and many of the dynamics that we could point to the second encounter [*Occident*] already happened during the first”. Of course, distinctions should be put among these encounters, like decolonial African Ali Mazrui does (2005, p. 70): “Arabs alerted the people of sub-Saharan Africa that they were black. Europe tried to convince Black people that they were inferior”. In Latin-America, we are continuously in a struggle about two worlds, the clash among them and the split subject that emerges from that clash. This encountering with postcolonial Senegal offers me a third element unknown to myself, and to my Latin

¹¹⁰ Director of Institute for African Studies, and a professor of Western African history at the Columbia University.

¹¹¹ The Arabic world impacted very much in the land system in Senegal. For example, the access for women to land. Fatou Dieng told me more in deep about such impacts during our interview. She did a master thesis on the topic called « *L'incidence de l'accès des femmes au foncier dans le développement local : Le cas des femmes du Gie Seydy Babacar Sy de Ross Bethio* ».

American history and readings of contemporary social conflicts. Would it be something to explore in the future under decoloniality?

4.5 Conclusion

After this Senegal experience, *decoloniality* has taken a broader meaning than before when entering this research. This is already in itself a lesson from these South-South de/postcolonial dialogues.

First, I have argued that decoloniality appears in the *everyday*, which could be translated as ‘landing’ decoloniality. Myself doing research and talking with Senegalese was already a decolonial action, which supports what I stated in Chapter II saying that encountering and dialoguing with Senegalese critical thinkers delivered some sparks of transmodern dialogues (Dussel, 2000, 2002, 2015). In decoloniality, I believe it is important to reflect on how it should be perceived as something tangible and not as an impossible quintessence of life, or a sort of war producing martyrs as the only way to achieve decoloniality. Also, this lesson speaks to the (de)coloniality abstractions I faced when entering this research and I asked myself if it would be possible to look at decoloniality through a land grabbing case. In Peru and Senegal, in the world, people take part in decolonial tasks day in and day out. In this sense, my exploration of decoloniality theses was productive, helping me to visualize what and how de/postcolonial Senegalese align among these theses.

Second, calling again to a sort of blurring the boundaries among de/postcolonials thoughts, I argue for a reconciliation this time emphasizing how both schools approach the emergence from the ‘damnation’ of colonised beings. Importantly, I do not say it is a reconciliation among de/postcolonial critical thought through the ‘decoloniality of being’, which would be the recognition of *only* my positioning while being unfair with the geopolitics of knowledge. Instead, I expand this reconciliation when looking at the very anchor point: Fanon (2001, 2008) and pretend to be fair with other decolonial projects like *montée en humanité* (Mbembe, 2013) and *La reconquête de l’estime de soi* (Sarr, 2016a) I encountered throughout this research in postcolonial Senegal.

Third, I believe decoloniality due to its liberational spirit needs to pay attention to the excessive discourse of confrontation and rupture. This lesson speaks directly to me and my positioning, of being aware of the degree of emphasis looking for ruptures with the modern/colonial world system while not paying attention to possibilities or other needed confrontations. Confrontations are needed, of course, especially if a modern/colonial world continues to ravage cultures, to silence voices, to pack societies, to exterminate knowledges, and to create a (sub)humanity line as in the Ndiaël case. Nevertheless, with the same intensity of confronting, decoloniality also creates possibilities, those transmodern imaginaries, and the what is coming. In that sense, I presented a provocative self-reflection of what I have missed or misunderstood precisely by my sort of Latin-American ‘obsession’ with ruptures *vis-à-vis* the modern European world in a postcolonial Senegalese context.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

« *Alors que conclure ? Mais précisément faut-il conclure ? Ne concluons pas. Rêvons plutôt, imaginons. L'histoire du monde n'est pas finie* »
Maryse Condé¹¹² (2017).

South-South de/postcolonial dialogues emerged first through a collection of personal impressions while encountering postcolonial Senegal. I assumed my own geopolitics of knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2007, 2011, 2013), the Latin American decolonial body of thought, and from there I searched for encounters with Senegalese critical thinkers to the modern/colonial world-system, those located in exteriority and frontier (Dussel, 2015). Several impressions inform these south-south dialogues I believe under the overarching idea that the critical thinking in postcolonial Senegal is vibrant and nuanced, neither quiet nor inactive. It is nuanced due to the varied forms of naming the 'something colonial' that persists, such as coloniality, neocolonialism or 'something colonial' that remains in a nutshell. It is nuanced because it locates the 'something colonial' that persists in different domains mainly but not exclusively, in development, education, economy, politics, and mind. Importantly, at the very same time these domains express a colonial essence, Senegalese continuously pose relevant critiques to them when carrying out counter actions every day. Another aspect of the nuanced contemporary Senegalese critical thinking is that it should be considered as de/postcolonial thought, blurring academic and theoretical boundaries. Senegalese grab from different readings, concepts, and positioning that 'speak' to them and do not limit to one body of thought or the other.

The exploration of land grabbing case in postcolonial Senegal has allowed me to come to grips with the de/postcolonial theoretical abstractions and to present the nuanced de/postcolonial critical thinking that exists in contemporary Senegal. For instance, to explore why Senegalese did and did not link the 'something colonial' that persists to their explanations of the land grabbing occurring in postcolonial Senegal. I suggest that the decolonial body of applies well to explore the Senegalese arguments that did not link the 'something colonial' that remains, as well as to carry out an independent reading of the land grabbing case when looking for the expressions of coloniality of power-knowledge-being. The decolonial body of thought sheds light in the sense that it brings to the discussion the idea of racialized discourses in the name of development, which in turn shows elements that stay overlooked by understandings influenced by political economy. Neocolonialism as *only* the foreigners are coming back, or to read the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case *only* with global capitalism taking place, become some examples. Examples that neglect in turn the modern/colonial/racists forms of expressions towards the Peuls or the act to grab land by the same Senegalese. The decolonial body of thought applied in this research aligns with the suggestion of moving beyond the act of 'subjugating' the myriad of systemic relations of domination born in the modern/colonial world-system to the economic one (Grosfoguel, 2007, 2016), to pay attention to racial discourses (Mollet, 2015; Richards, 2012) and showing the limits of political economy for postcolonial conflicts (Mamdani, 2005).

¹¹² Novelist from Guadelupe. First president of *Comité pour la Mémoire et l'Histoire de l'Esclavage* created in 2004. (Retrieved from <http://bibliobs.nouvelobs.com/idees/20170609.OBS0501/la-colonisation-fut-coupable-de-pas-mal-de-crimes-par-maryse-conde.html> - accessed in 24/07/2017).

Finally, some lessons emerged from these South-South de/postcolonial dialogues when exploring decoloniality as a way of moving forward than just recognising that 'something colonial' persists. First, decoloniality appears in the everyday, which could be translated as 'landing' decoloniality. So, the importance to reflect on how decoloniality should be perceived as something tangible and not as an impossible. Recalling my encounters with postcolonial Senegal and the Senhuile-Sénéthanol case, and using such information in four theses of decoloniality (Maldonado-Torres, 2016) proved this point. Second, calling for a reconciliation among de/postcolonial thoughts through Fanon (2001, 2008). Again, a sort of blurring the boundaries among de/postcolonial thought, since both speak the same language through the idea to make the *damné* regain space in humanity. The Senegalese I encountered positioning *vis-à-vis* the modern/colonial paradigm through these five months of research in Dakar, Saint-Louis, and the Ndiaël proved those convergences. Finally, decoloniality should not be only a discourse of rupture. It does well when pointing out the performing of coloniality, neocolonialism, or the 'something colonial' that persists. However, the confrontation should not be the main goal, since it blocks possibilities and imaginaries, or other valid readings that should be done especially when being a *guest*, like myself with my own Latin-American positioning, in postcolonial Senegal.

Recommendations

First, to explore more the existing de/postcolonial convergences as suggested by Senegalese. This is needed due to the growing impact of de/postcolonial critical thought in social sciences. This exercise should not be only done at the theoretical level, since convergences are in the everyday life.

Second, land grabbing was only an exercise to bring to the fore the idea of development working in a modern/colonial/racist/patriarchal world system. As I have shown, coloniality and decoloniality are everywhere and every day. So, to attempt for transmodern scenarios implies then to explore not only other land grabbing cases, but other expressions and geographies of development.

Third, I presented how the decolonial body of thought would look at the land grabbing case, finding differences with understandings influenced by political economy. It would be interesting to read what a *pure* political economist would say about the Ndiaël, and the missing points I have suggested.

Four, much could be added to the idea of exteriority I used in this research. My positioning, the decolonial body of thought from Latin America, needs to learn from other *encounters* that have happened in postcolonial Senegal, and West Africa, where to talk about exteriority takes another dimension due to the encounter with the Arab world. Especially in the contemporary expansion of Islamic fundamentalism in the region. Contemporary land grabbing seems to be influenced as well under the logics of such encounter. A de/postcolonial exploration on any topic should not neglect the impacts and what remains from this encounter.

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ANNEX

ANNEX 01: References reviewed from *Les Ateliers de la Pensée*

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ANNEX 02: People interviewed

| | Name | Location | Institution | Position |
|----|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1 | Babacar Sall | Dakar, Senegal | UCAD | Professor - history department |
| 2 | Thierno Diop | Dakar, Senegal | UCAD | Professor - philosophy department. President of the Network of Intellectuals, Artists, and Social Movements in Defence of Humanity |
| 3 | Aminata Diaw-Cissé | Dakar, Senegal | UCAD | Professor of philosophy. Ex Principal administrator of research program at CODESRIA |
| 4 | Tidiane Ndoye | Dakar, Senegal | UCAD | Head - Sociology department |
| 5 | Ndiouga Adrien Benga | Dakar, Senegal | UCAD | Professor - history department |
| 6 | M Onoma Ato | Dakar, Senegal | CODESRIA | Coordinator of Research at CODESRIA. Political Scientist and Philosopher |
| 7 | Coumba Ndoffene Diouf | Dakar, Senegal | CODESRIA | Program Manager, Anthropologist, Sociologist |
| 8 | Fatou Sarr Sow | Dakar, Senegal | IFAN - UCAD | Anthropologist, Sociologist, Director of Laboratory on Gender and scientific research |
| 9 | Sidy Mohamed Seck | Saint-Louis, Senegal | UGB | Geographer, professor. Coordinator of the project of securitization of property rights. Member of the Senegalese Land reform commission |
| 10 | Mouhamedoune Abdoulaye Fall | Saint-Louis, Senegal | UGB | Sociologist, anthropologist. Professor and researcher I'UFR CRAC, LASPAD |
| 11 | Issiaka-Prosper Lalèyè | Saint-Louis, Senegal | UGB / Paris V - Sorbonne | Philosopher, Epistemologist and Anthropologist. Retired professor |
| 12 | Fatou Dior Dieng | Saint-Louis, Senegal | UGB | Researcher at Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherches Genre et Sociétés |
| 13 | Cheikh Oumar Ba | Dakar, Senegal | IPAR | Socio-anthropologist |
| 14 | Rama Salla Dieng | ----- | SOAS University of London | Writer, Phd student, land grabbing researcher |

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| 15 | Ndongo Samba Sylla | Dakar, Senegal | Fondation Rosa Luxembourg à Dakar | Economist, in charge of research at Rosa Luxembourg Foundation Dakar |
| 16 | Ibrahima Dia | Dakar, Senegal | UCAD | Professor at Sociology department |
| 17 | Oussouby Touré | Dakar, Senegal | ENDA PRONAT | Rural sociologist, consultant for the project of Pastoral Code |
| 18 | Aboubacry Moussa Lam | Dakar, Senegal | UCAD | Professor at History department |
| 19 | Saliou Dione | Dakar, Senegal | UCAD | Associate professor of African and postcolonial studies - Department of Anglophone Studies UCAD |
| 20 | Iba Mar Faye | Dakar, Senegal | GRET | Sociologist. In charge of the mission: <i>Agriculture familiale et foncier.</i> |
| 21 | Demba Moussa Dembélé | Dakar, Senegal | Forum africain des alternatives et coordinateur du Forum social mondial / ARCADE | Economist, researcher, coordinator |
| 22 | Felwine Sarr | Saint-Louis, Senegal | UGB | Economist, Professor, Writer, Researcher associate in LASPAD |
| 23 | Amadou Cheikh Kanoute | Dakar, Senegal | CICODEV Africa | Executive director |
| 24 | Boubacar Boris Diop | Saint-Louis, Senegal | UGB | Novelist, journalists, professor |
| 25 | Ardo Sow | Dakar, Senegal | CODEN | Spokesperson for the collective |
| 26 | Salif Ka | Bakel, Senegal | SAED | |
| 27 | Bayal Sow | Village of Thiamène, Ngnith, Senegal | CODEN, City Hall of Ngnith | Deputy Mayor in Ngnith |
| 28 | Amadou Ka | Saint Louis / Village of Kadou Deff, Ngnith, Senegal | CODEN | Treasurer of the Collective |
| 29 | Aliou Camara | Ngnith, Senegal | CODEN, City Hall of Ngnith | Accountant for the City Hall of Ngnith |
| 30 | Amadou Sow | Village of Thiamène, Ngnith, Senegal | CODEN | Chief of Village |
| 31 | Salif Sow | Village of Tordonaube, Ngnith, Senegal | Collective Pro Senhuile-Sénéthanol | Chief of Village |
| 32 | Mamadou Sow | Village of Diourki 1, Ngnith, Senegal | CODEN | Chief of Village |

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| 33 | Aliu Sow | Village of Kadou Deff, Ngnith, Senegal | CODEN | Chief of Village |
| 34 | Daughter of Chief (Decided to stay anonymous) | Village of Djilim, Ngnith, Senegal | | Villager |
| 35 | Magueye Thiang | Ngnith, Senegal | Producers of the West side of the Lac Guiers) | President |
| 36 | Gorgi Sow | Village of Daymane, Ngnith, Senegal | CODEN | President. President of pastoralist at the Ngnith Commune, and Vice president of pastoralist at the level of Dagana department |
| 37 | El Hadji Thierno Cissé | Dakar, Senegal | CNCR / CRAFS | Coordinator of CNCR /CRAFS |
| 38 | Mamadou Mignane Diouf | Dakar, Senegal | Social Forum of Senegal | Coordinator |
| 39 | Mariam Sow | Dakar, Senegal | Enda Pronat | Coordinator |

ANNEX 03: 177 references reviewed from Farmlandgrab

| D | M | Y | Title | Source | Short URL |
|----|----|------|--|----------------------------|---|
| 30 | 3 | 2011 | Protocole d'accord entre la Société SENETHANOL et la communauté rurale de Fanaye | No Source | http://farmlandgrab.org/19529 |
| 4 | 10 | 2011 | Réportage vidéo de la marche de Fanaye contre l'accaparement des terres | Ecofin Agency | http://farmlandgrab.org/19382 |
| 26 | 10 | 2011 | Death toll in Senegal clash over biofuels land rises to two | AFP | http://farmlandgrab.org/19554 |
| 28 | 10 | 2011 | "Suspension du projet agricole de Fanaye", annonce le Premier ministre | NETTALI.NET | http://farmlandgrab.org/19535 |
| 31 | 10 | 2011 | Accaparramento delle terre: rivolta in Senegal contro un progetto italiano per i bio-carburanti | greenreport.it | http://farmlandgrab.org/19553 |
| 31 | 10 | 2011 | Sénégal: Dérives foncières du pouvoir | Afrique en ligne | http://farmlandgrab.org/19540 |
| 3 | 11 | 2011 | Momath Bâ, directeur des opérations de Senéthanol : « Si le projet était arrêté, ce serait dommage pour Fanaye » | Wal Fadjri | http://farmlandgrab.org/22111 |
| 16 | 11 | 2011 | Accaparement des terres : vers une Afrique sans terres pour les africains | San Finna | http://farmlandgrab.org/19627 |
| 27 | 11 | 2011 | Cuando un gran proyecto de biocombustible se convierte en trampa mortal | Mediapart (via Viento Sur) | http://farmlandgrab.org/22381 |
| 28 | 11 | 2011 | Memorandum sur l'accaparement des terres dans la communauté de Fanaye : révélations autour d'un deal de 20000 hectares | PiccMi.com | http://farmlandgrab.org/19665 |
| 24 | 1 | 2012 | Fuenteovejuna africana contra la venta de tierras | GuinGuinBali | http://farmlandgrab.org/23256 |
| 30 | 5 | 2012 | Politique foncière : Les ruraux disent stop à l'accaparement des terres | Le Soleil | http://farmlandgrab.org/20565 |
| 18 | 6 | 2012 | La course aux surfaces agricoles, une bombe à retardement en Afrique | Agence France Presse | http://farmlandgrab.org/20652 |
| 20 | 7 | 2012 | Macky Sall demande à revoir l'offre de Sen-Ethanol | APS | http://farmlandgrab.org/20807 |
| 7 | 9 | 2012 | Le retour de la menace de l'accaparement des terres | Slow Food | http://farmlandgrab.org/20991 |
| 5 | 11 | 2012 | Ronkh Sous surveillance : Accaparement de terres et jacqueries ... | Leral.net | http://farmlandgrab.org/21253 |
| 10 | 1 | 2013 | Land Grabbing: il nuovo colonialismo? | Cronache Internazionali | http://farmlandgrab.org/21632 |

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| 23 | 1 | 2013 | Sen-Ethanol, el proyecto agrícola que llena de rabia a los senegaleses | Slate Afrique | http://farmlandgrab.org/21924 |
| 23 | 1 | 2013 | Sen-Ethanol, le projet agricole qui rend les Sénégalais fous de rage | Slate Afrique | http://farmlandgrab.org/21554 |
| 9 | 3 | 2013 | Sen-Ethanol, el proyecto agrícola que llena de rabia a los senegaleses | Slate Afrique | http://farmlandgrab.org/21958 |
| 12 | 3 | 2013 | Agribusiness in Africa – land tenure risk | Aegis Advisory Strategic Risk Alert | http://farmlandgrab.org/22114 |
| 17 | 3 | 2012 | Projet SenEthanol : Djibo Kâ dénonce les violences et arrestations dont sont victimes les éleveurs | Ferloo | http://farmlandgrab.org/21793 |
| 22 | 3 | 2013 | Bénéficiaire de 20 000 hectares à Ronkh et Gnith, Senhuile-Senethanol vers ses premières récoltes | Le Sud Online | http://farmlandgrab.org/21816 |
| 25 | 3 | 2013 | Saint-Louis : Senhuile/Senethanol diversifie sa production pour gagner le pari | PressAfrik | http://farmlandgrab.org/21838 |
| 27 | 3 | 2013 | Reportage sur le projet Sénéthanol | Enda Pronat | http://farmlandgrab.org/21867 |
| 29 | 3 | 2013 | «Comment Macky et Abdoul Mbaye nous ont permis de relancer le projet» | GFM | http://farmlandgrab.org/21884 |
| 30 | 3 | 2013 | Reportage Sénéthanol-mars 2013 | Enda Pronat | http://farmlandgrab.org/21868 |
| 4 | 4 | 2013 | Lutte contre les accaparements de terre : deux regards d’Afrique de l’Ouest | Oxfam France | http://farmlandgrab.org/22115 |
| 30 | 4 | 2013 | Victimes de Ndiaël (Senhuile-Senéthanol) | Enda Pronat | http://farmlandgrab.org/22200 |
| 16 | 5 | 2013 | Riserva naturale di biocombustibili | Agora Vox | http://farmlandgrab.org/22078 |
| 18 | 5 | 2013 | Réserve naturelle de biocombustibles | Agora Vox | http://farmlandgrab.org/22089 |
| 7 | 6 | 2013 | Mort par noyade de trois enfants à Gnith : Sen Huile Sen Ethanol au banc des accusés | Walfadjiri | http://farmlandgrab.org/22189 |
| 12 | 6 | 2013 | Danger à Ndiael | YouTube | http://farmlandgrab.org/22203 |
| 23 | 7 | 2013 | Plaidoyer pour une démarche inclusive au service du développement de l’agriculture au Sénégal | Leral.net | http://farmlandgrab.org/22351 |
| 25 | 7 | 2013 | Projet SENHUILE-SENETHANOL : A Gnith, une unité de biocarburants fait renaître l’espoir | Le Soleil | http://farmlandgrab.org/22350 |
| 5 | 8 | 2013 | Questions Directes avec Cheikh Tidiane Sy | TFM | http://farmlandgrab.org/22420 |

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| 20 | 8 | 2013 | ¡Fanaye no se vende! | El Pais | http://farmlandgrab.org/22440 |
| 7 | 9 | 2013 | Agrobusiness au nord du Sénégal : L'Etat parraine une spoliation grandeur nature | Walfadjri | http://farmlandgrab.org/22524 |
| 7 | 11 | 2013 | Des groupes dévoilent qui est derrière le projet d'accaparement de terres Senhuile-Senéthanol au Sénégal | CRAFS GRAIN Re:Common | http://farmlandgrab.org/22770 |
| 7 | 11 | 2013 | Who is behind Senhuile-Senethanol? | CRAFS GRAIN Re:Common | http://farmlandgrab.org/22776 |
| 8 | 11 | 2013 | Actionnariat de Senhuile-Senethanol : Ousmane Ngom mouillé par un rapport | Walfadjri | http://farmlandgrab.org/22774 |
| 7 | 12 | 2013 | L'accaparement des terres au Sénégal | RFI | http://farmlandgrab.org/22897 |
| 23 | 12 | 2013 | Senegal's shady farmland agreement | Al Jazeera | http://farmlandgrab.org/22968 |
| 30 | 12 | 2013 | Gnith : des populations expriment leur déception face au projet Senhuile-Senéthanol | Agence de Presse Sénégalaise | http://farmlandgrab.org/22982 |
| 3 | 1 | 2014 | Senhuile-Senéthanol : Les éleveurs déterminés à s'y opposer | Le Sud Online | http://farmlandgrab.org/22986 |
| 4 | 1 | 2014 | Accaparement massif des terres du Sénégal : Des proportions inquiétantes | Le Sud Online | http://farmlandgrab.org/22988 |
| 30 | 1 | 2014 | Senhuile fait la paix avec les populations Ngnith et de Ronkh | Dakar Actu | http://farmlandgrab.org/23109 |
| 30 | 1 | 2014 | Senhuile-Senéthanol: Farmers determined to oppose it | Africa Europe Faith Justice Network | http://farmlandgrab.org/23104 |
| 20 | 2 | 2014 | Sénégal : l'agrobusiness à quel prix ? | RFI | http://farmlandgrab.org/23194 |
| 27 | 2 | 2014 | L'agrobusiness attaque le Sénégal | Libération | http://farmlandgrab.org/23220 |
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