

Migrant Diaries

Ep.0 - Prologue

Alba: Travelling heals you, travelling allows you to comprehend or understand aspects of yourself through other contexts.

Migrating is a transformation that not only involves a loss, but also a huge gain. There is a strong balance: it is true that you can have a double absence, but also a double presence when you change and when you transform.

Carolina: You walk down the street, look around and see many people: some faces are familiar, neighbours you have always seen in the area; others are new, perhaps recently arrived, perhaps faces of people who have decided to move elsewhere and who are now looking for a space in this new world. Heading towards a new destiny is a vital impulse, but at the age of 13, Lamine has learnt...

Lamine: That freedom of movement, freedom to move around in the world, freedom to want to go and discover new things, was a right, was a freedom that not everyone was granted.

Carolina: Their diaries are now opening up, telling the story of a journey that changed their lives. By land, air or sea, they have exchanged the stationary for the fluid, the true for the uncertain, in order to seek answers, dream or rebel.

Alba (while writing in the Diary): *A land that tells, but no es mia, alli estoy cuando te veo, no...* [sound of a pencil writing and erasing sentences].
The women in my family have all emigrated at different times in history. Not just me, but my sister, my grandmother, and my great-grandmother. This aspect of the Ulysses woman, the woman who moves, the woman who travels – this rootedness is in the world – and who, in order to be at ease, in order to live, to endure, transforms, changes, is obviously a structural aspect of my identity.

Carolina: Some wonder what is the basis for deciding who can move and who cannot. Or why they overhear people murmuring: they are refugees, migrants, asylum seekers.
But here in person they tell you their names and their stories.

Lamine: At the age of 13, I discovered that there are things that are not permitted to me, purely and simply because I'm African and I said no and rebelled.

I began to wonder why nobody ever did anything to change things. I had made a decision after my end-of-secondary school party to enter France by plane WITHOUT A VISA.

If my life will be what I make of it, I can't be stationary.

Carolina: This is the teaching of Lamine's grandmother: go and find your place in the world. Alba, too, hears the polyphonic chant of the women who came before her, inviting her to conquer distance and extension. Feeling the stirring passion of a new beginning.

Alba: There is a kind of 'sabila' that makes us grow to the extent that we transform ourselves, and, paradoxically, transforming our context and adapting to different contexts gives us life.

Lamine: [in Wolof] *Your life will be what you make of it; you are at the helm and you can steer it where you want.*

Migrant Diaries. Stories of life on the road