



Television: Legitimization of Religious Figures and Alternative Discourse on the Status of Muslim Women

Sokhna Fatou SECK-SARR

Département Communication

Université Gaston Berger de Saint-Louis – Sénégal

sokhna-seck.sarr@ugb.edu.sn

Abstract: This article examines the relationship between television and religion in Senegal through religious figures and studies their position on the status of Muslim women. This study is part of a communicational approach and integrates the logic of individuation and individualization. It does not claim to list all religious programs; seven mainstream and *Sufi* brotherhood-related television channels, as well as fifteen programs, are studied through YouTube channels. Focused on the period from 2017 to 2020, the results show an expansion of religious programs and a legitimization of religious figures. According to the profile, ranging from ultra-conformists, *Sufi* brotherhood-related, authoritative figures, hybrid or complicit preachers, the speeches oscillate between subordination, assertions, and “subtle” resistance, tinged with socio-economic issues. Overall, the alternative discourse seems to be emerging, in order to spare the female community. But in reality, given sociocultural factors, religious leaders are reluctant to gender equality. By way of perspective, it seems interesting to study the profiles of “preacher 2.0” or religious “influencers.”

Keywords: Television, religion, media coverage, women, religious figures

Télévision : Légitimation des figures religieuses et discours alternatif sur le statut de la femme musulmane

Résumé : L'article interroge les rapports télévision et religion au Sénégal à travers des figures religieuses et étudie leur positionnement sur le statut de la femme musulmane. L'étude s'inscrit dans une approche communicationnelle et intègre les logiques d'individuation et d'individualisation. Elle ne prétend pas recenser l'exhaustivité des émissions religieuses, sept télévisions *mainstream* et confrériques ainsi que quinze émissions sont étudiées *via* les chaînes YouTube. Circonscrite sur la période de 2017 à 2020, les résultats démontrent un élargissement de la programmation religieuse et une légitimation de figures religieuses. Selon le profil, ultra-conformistes, confrériques, figures d'autorités, prédicatrices hybrides ou complices, les discours oscillent entre subordination, affirmation, et résistance « subtile » teintés d'enjeux socio-économiques. Globalement le discours alternatif semble se dégager, afin de ménager la communauté féminine. Mais en réalité au regard des facteurs socio-culturels, les leaders religieux sont rétifs à l'égalité de genre. En guise de perspective, il paraît intéressant d'étudier les profils des « prédicateurs 2.0. » ou des « influenceurs » religieux.

Mots-clés : Télévision, religion, médiatisation, femme, figures religieuses

Introduction

While Western media have “a more or less distant relationship with religion” (Damone, 2018) in Africa, the presence of religions on the media scene has increased in view of the diversity of work on this theme. If we start from a diachronic perspective, it appears that radio remains popular because of “its constant popularity on the African continent” (Douyère and Antoine, 2018). After radio, television stations give “a great deal of space to religious content in their programs” (Damone, 2018). At the same time, religious groups have created magazines, radio channels, and television stations with a “spiritual” or political perspective (Douyère, 2015). With the digital shift, the Internet has now become “one more medium in the dissemination of religious content” (Campbell, 2013) and “a medium on which religious actors act and interact, but also a place for the creation and recreation of the contemporary religious sphere.” (Duteil-Ogata *et al.* 2015).

In this perspective, television sets and digital social networks have become places of *visibility* (Doner, 2016) for religious figures, leaders or *stars*. The “sole ‘authorized’ designers and utterers of religious media content have now been supplemented, or even replaced, by ‘ordinary people’ who appropriate codes, while modifying practices and making them more accessible” (Douyère and Antoine, 2018). Alongside the normative discourse “stigmatized” for the obsolescence of religious language, *new media-religious figures are working on narrativity, playfulness and the function of testimony* (Marchessault, 2007), thus offering an alternative discourse. They offer “another way of looking at their religion,” and produce “information or communication that does not renew clichés, stereotypes or reticence” (Douyère and Antoine, 2018). In this regard, the place of religion in the media is subject to cultural negotiation/adaptation (Jreijriry, 2017; Riondet, 2014).

Thus, the way in which religious themes are treated in specific media contexts deserves particular attention, especially when it comes to subjects related to Muslim women. The literature emphasizes that the treatment of women’s issues attracts normative or alternative discourses depending on the profile of the host and the target audience. Furthermore, “women are particularly active subjects in Islam [...] and raise their voices in the public sphere to the point that some become figures of authority (Schulz 2012b; Frede and Hill 2014). These female figures or those evoking women are part of a ‘logic of individualization and individuation’” (Gomez-Perez, 2018). These observations raise questions about the media coverage of religion, religious figures and discourses, particularly those relating to Muslim women. In other words, this article examines the way in which religions appropriate television through religious

figures with heterogeneous profiles and studies their position on the status of Muslim women. It is based on the hypothesis that the context of audiovisual liberalization reveals logic of individuation/individualization of religious figures and drains normative or alternative discourses that take into account cultural but also socio-economic factors.

1. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Information and communication sciences are capable of understanding the media appropriation of religions and the meaning of religious discourse, especially since media and religion are both “mediational” and “cultural” devices. Existing research shows that the relationship between religion and the media evolves over time. Thus, religions no longer just transmit information to the media (Douyère, 2016); they also aim to communicate (Dufour, 2014; Riondet, 2014) and participate in debates on issues that concern contemporary societies.

1.1 Media coverage and religion

The theoretical frameworks of reference are at the level of research on media coverage and religion. With reference to the interdisciplinary approach to the phenomena of mediatization developed by Bernard Delforce and Jacques Noyer (1999), three perspectives are adopted. According to them, “Mediatizing” primarily involves the dissemination and circulation of content through the media: “It is undoubtedly conveying a message from one space to another, from one social universe to another: that of the media” (op. cit.). Secondly, “media coverage cannot ignore the observation/analysis of the professional practices of those who convey information” (op. cit.). Finally, it seems important to take into account the “discursive materialities” as well as the “cultural” spaces of circulation and progressive construction of these discourses. In the case of this study, the aim is to analyze the processes of media appropriation of religion, the communicative practices of religious figures and the discursive modalities in the defined cultural space.

With regard to religious figures, it seems essential to identify their profiles through the logic of individuation and individualization. The latter is defined as “forms of emergence of the individual as an entity positioning itself in a distanced relationship with the group” (Marie 1997: 105). It is a question of seeing whether religious figures “mobilize to defend their individual rights in the face of the community’s identity” (Gomez-Perez, 2018). As for individualization, it is a “more selective process of producing more strongly marked individualities and promoting them to prominent positions (but these are also assigned positions), which they know how to conquer and for which their recognized dispositions

legitimize their claims” (Marie 1997: 73). Similarly, drawing on Simondon’s thought, the formation of groups of preachers can be considered as a process of individuation where each of the interactants “defines himself in his relations with others, in a transductive manner, a new being is constituted as a tendency, that is to say, individualizes itself, becomes visible as an individual” (Simondon, 1989).

Beyond this distinction, Muriel Gomez Perez emphasizes that the two concepts are intrinsically linked to the community, “to the point that a process of hybridization between individualization and individuation takes place” (2018).

To complete the theoretical framework, even if the research is not part of *gender studies*, it integrates gender when necessary. All the more so since preachers hold “notions that are conducive to putting in place the pieces of a mental infrastructure necessary for women’s adherence to religious norms or the social order” (Guilhaumou, 2012).

1.2 Methodology

This study focuses on Senegal, a secular country with a 95% Muslim majority, with a long tradition of Sufi Islam represented by *Sufi* brotherhoods (or *tariqa*), the main ones being: *Tidjane*, *Mouride*, *Qadr* and *Layène*. As for the Senegalese television media space, it has about twenty TV channels, four of which cover the entire national territory (RTS 1, TFM, 2STV and Walf TV).¹ In this research, the choice is focused on free national television channels available on Terrestrial Digital Television (TDT) for reasons of accessibility² and geographical coverage. By carrying out a stratified sampling that excludes the channels of the same press group, seven (7) generalist TV channels RTS1, 2STV, TFM, WALF TV, DTV, ITV, Sen TV and two (2) religious channels of different *Sufi* brotherhoods, namely Lamp Fall TV (*Mouride*) and Mourchid TV (*Tidjane*) are selected.

With regard to religious programs, this article does not claim to list the exhaustiveness of religious programs. Moreover, the exercise proved to be very complex since program schedules are not accessible, and religious programs disappear and/or reappear according to programming decisions. However, the audiovisual regulatory authority already advised in 2010 that with the new Press Code, “Radio and television channels established in Senegal ‘will be required to file’ an annual schedule of programs with the audiovisual regulatory authority ... as recommended in their specifications” and did not fail to specify that

¹ NARC, “Radio and Television – Facts and Figures”, September 2020.

² Cable offers the possibility of benefiting from hundreds of channels, but access is not free.

“compliance with the program schedule is an obligation.”³ Despite these provisions, and for reasons not mentioned except for the GFM group, which published on its website an outdated program schedule for TFM,⁴ the other television channels apparently did not consider it necessary to make the document relating to their programming available to the public. Thus, out of the corpus of nine (9) media outlets studied, five (5) agreed to provide us with a complete or partial schedule of their programs. In order to supplement the data on religious programming, the YouTube channels of the television stations studied were of considerable assistance. Indeed, through video *replays* and *playlists*, it is possible to have a relatively exhaustive idea of television programming. The corpus studied includes programs recorded by the National Audiovisual Regulatory Council (NARC), and those broadcasted on YouTube channels.

In line with the approach, this study distinguishes between Religious Programs (RP) and Programs with Religious Dimensions (PRDs). Religious programs are those presented by one or more men or women of religion (imam or *ustaza-a*). The latter is an administrator of the sacred, monopolizing the production and dissemination of religious statements and the goods of salvation (Cohen and al., 2005). The *Ustaza*, whose profession is to be a specialist in religious affairs, form a closed body whose access is governed by titles and degrees. Programs with a religious dimension, on the other hand, bring preachers and lay people into dialogue. They organize the participation of a religious actor as a presenter, speaker or guest. They are mostly hosted by Muslim women (unlike religious programs where men are in the majority), and the topics addressed are primarily dedicated to women and family life.

The corpus chosen for the content analysis is composed of religious programs (6) and programs with a religious dimension (9), published on the YouTube channels of television channels between 2017 and 2020. The themes selected to identify the religious discourse on women’s rights concern marriage, the status of women, the role of women in Islam and women’s health. A debate on married life moderated by a well-known Zeyda in 2017 (with 88,580 views), a talk held in 2018 as part of the Ramadan universities and five programs with a religious dimension (PRD) dated 2019 are selected because of the particularity of their themes (family planning, refusal of paternity and marriage). Four religious programs and four programs with religious dimensions (PRD), hosted by women and popular on social networks, complete the corpus. A total of fifteen shows

³<http://www.itmag.sn/focus/senegal-vers-lobligation-pour-radios-et-teles-de-deposer-une-grille-annuelle-des-programmes/>

⁴ <https://gfm.sn/programmes-tfm/>

chosen according to three criteria: the year of publication, the theme and the number of views.

Through a triangulation of the data collected, the methodological approach limited to the period from 2017 to 2020 made it possible to assess the place of religion in television programming in Senegal, to identify religious programs (RP) and programs with a religious dimension (PRD) but also to characterize the profiles of religious figures and their positioning on Muslim women through normative or alternative discourses. This article follows the triptych structuring of the methodology with a cartography of religious programming and a characterization of religious figures and their discourses on women.

2. Expanded Religious Programming

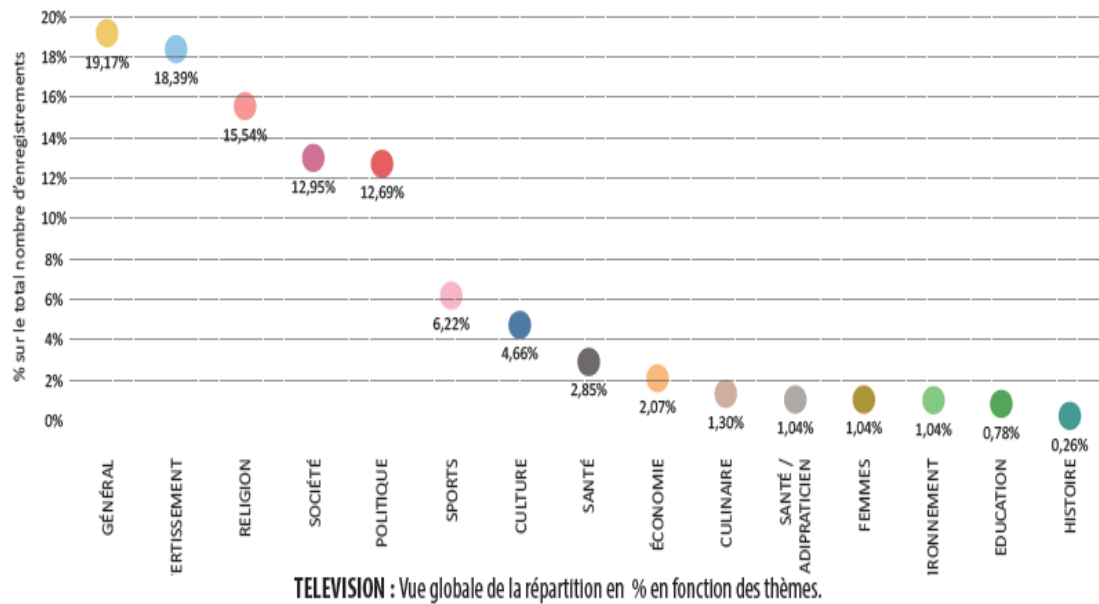
In Senegal, the history of religious broadcasts is linked to that of the Senegalese public service of television and radio. Appearing very early on the airwaves and small screens, Muslims and then Catholics gradually took their place in the program schedules. Today, the Senegalese media landscape has expanded with TDT, satellite program packages, as well as WebTV and YouTube channels. This new television space has become the privileged place for the expression of social, cultural and religious dynamics.

Non-religious media do not hesitate to open up their programming to Islam, churches and traditional African religions. In addition to this media universe, there has been a rise in the power of religious media “designed by and within religious bodies and, as a general rule, intended for an audience internal to the organization that produces them, or intended to reach (or even convince) an audience outside the organization, but potentially interested” (Douyère and Antoine, 2018). *A priori*, the media “have found in religion a ‘providential’ field that has allowed them to develop content” (Damone, 2018) with a real on-upmanship of religious programs.

2.1 Popular religious programs

Muslim religious programs occupy all channels and populate program schedules (Samb, 2017). The breakdown of television program themes published in the 2018–2019 NARC report is a perfect illustration of this.

Figure 1. Thematic distribution of television recordings (source: CNRA, 2019)



Television: Overall view of the distribution in % according to themes.

Religion is in third place with 15.54% after “General” news (19.17%) and “Entertainment” (18.39%). It is even ahead of politics, sport and culture. However, this position may vary from one media outlet to another. Thus, at the level of the corpus studied, it appears that religion is in second place for RTS, ITV, TFM, 2STV, in third place behind information, politics or society for Sen TV, Mourchid and Lamp Fall, and in fourth place for Walf TV and DTV. Whatever the position, it appears that religion occupies a privileged place in programming, as evidenced by the plurality of religious programming.

The analysis of the schedules shows that television stations begin their programs with religious content. RTS starts with religious broadcasts from 5:30 am, DTV broadcasts prayers from 6:00 am to 7:00 am, TFM offers a recital of the Quran and the Sira (story of the life of the Prophet “peace be upon him”). With regard to the list of religious programs, RTS, which had only two programs at the beginning, has grown to more than a dozen religious programs. It is followed by commercial channels that display up to six (6) religious programs: 2STV, ITV and TFM and Sen TV.

Contrary to what one might think, the channels classified in the religious media category offer fewer religious programs (5) for Mourchid TV and Lamp Fall TV, Walf TV (4) and DTV (3) programs. It appears that religious television channels aim to display an increasingly generalist vocation. Meanwhile, the

general-interest channels are multiplying their religious programs. These are two contradictory trends, which require further analysis.

Religious and religious-oriented programs completes the mapping of religious programming. In the RP category, one can immediately integrate the “chestnut” religious programs, in particular those of Ramadan, Maouloud or Magal (pilgrimage) of Touba.

Table 1. Recap of religious programs (program schedules, 2020).

TELEVISION	PROGRAMS	Broadcast days	Broadcast time	Duration
RTS1	<i>Al Bayaan</i>	Friday	09: 00 am	1 hour
	<i>Tafsir Coran</i>	Friday	09: 00 pm	30 min
	<i>Al Mizaan</i>	Thursday	10: 00 am	30 min
	<i>Xaima Supreme Court</i>	Wednesday	03: 00 pm	30 min
	<i>The Way of the Believer</i>	Thursday	09: 00 pm	30 min
	<i>Tontou Bataaxkhal</i>	Friday	8am -9pm	1 hour
	<i>AN NABYA</i>	Friday	09: 00 pm	30 min
	<i>Pencoo</i>	Thursday	09: 00 pm	
2STV	<i>Al amine</i>	Monday	04: 00 pm	45 min
	<i>Dudal Gur Aana</i>	Friday	11: 00 am	01 hour
	<i>Yoon wi</i>	Thursday	10: 00 pm	01 hour
	<i>Kaddu Diné ji</i>	Friday	10: 00 am	01 hour
	<i>Tafsir Al Kuran</i>	Every morning	06: 30 am	30 min
	<i>Jotayu Jef</i>	Friday	10: 00 pm	02 hours
DTV	<i>Eutoub islam</i>	Friday	11: 00 am	1h 45mn
	<i>Zikouroulha</i>	Friday	02: 30 pm	1h 30mn
	<i>Ndenkaane</i>	Thursday	11: 30 am	1h 30mn
TFM	<i>Yewtere Islam</i>	Thursday		01 hour
	<i>Al Juma</i>	Friday	02: 00 pm	30 min
	<i>Sira</i>	Friday		01h
	<i>Fir Gent</i>	Friday		30 min
	<i>Khew Khewou dinner</i>	Friday		01 hour
	<i>Wakhtann Ak</i>	Friday		45 min
SEN TV	<i>Tafsir al quran</i>	Mon, Tue, Wed and Fri	08: 45 pm	30 min
	<i>Sen diine</i>	Thursday	09: 00 pm	30 min
	<i>An Nour</i>	Friday	12: 00 pm	30 min
	<i>Al Irchhad</i>	Friday	10: 30 am	30 min
	<i>Euttoub keurou diine yi</i>	Friday	12: 30 pm	90 min
ITV	<i>Ambar Ci Dine</i>	Thursday	09: 45 pm	01h 30min

	<i>Yaay Aicha</i>	Friday	09: 00 pm	01 hour
	<i>Kang Foore</i>	Thursday	09: 15 pm	26mn
	<i>Yete</i>	Monday to Friday	05: 30 am	13mn
	<i>Mimara</i>	Friday	10: 30 am	26mn
	<i>Tafsir al Quran</i>	Friday	02: 30 pm	90mn
LAMP FALL TV	<i>Jazboul Mouride</i>	Tuesday	10: 00 pm	01 hour
	<i>Sindidi</i>	Thursday	06: 00 pm	01 hour
	<i>Jotaayu l'islam</i>	Thursday	09: 00 pm	2 hours
	<i>Assirou Mahal Abraari</i>	Friday	06: 00 pm	01 hour
	<i>Leral yoon wi</i>	Saturday	09: 00 pm	01 hour
MOURCHID TV	<i>Al Badr</i>	Wednesday	01: 00 pm	01 hour
	<i>Jataay Al Quran</i>	Tuesday	10: 00 pm	01 hour
	<i>Laaye Beer</i>	Wednesday	09: 00 pm	01 hour
	<i>Tahawaayou</i>	Friday	11: 00 am	01 hour
	<i>Daray Mag gni</i>	Friday	10: 00 pm	01 hour
WALF TV	<i>Diine and Jamono</i>	Thursday	10: 00 pm	2 hours
	<i>A keur diiné yi</i>	Friday	11: 00 am	01 hour
	<i>Wakhtanou Dawn</i>	Every day	06: 00 am	45 min
	<i>Fatwa</i>	Thursday	10: 30 pm	45 min

It should be noted that the programming of religious programs is present in practically all time slots, with an extension to “prime” hours. The analysis of religious programs also reveals a certain redundancy in terms of the preferred names (*Tafsir, Euteu, Wakthan*, etc.) and the subjects covered.

The formats of religious programs vary from program to program. Most religious programs adopt a magazine format, such as *Tafsir al Quran* (ITV) and *Kang Foore* (ITV). Other programs are in the form of talk shows (debate), *Al Amine* (2STV), *Diine ak jamono* (Walf TV), *Jotaayu l'islam* (Lamp Fall TV). The *Causeries* occupy a significant place in religious programming, such as *Ndenkaane* (DTV), *Sira* (TFM), *Yaay Aicha* (ITV). There are *video capsule formats* going over the recommendations and giving advice to the faithful *Yete* (ITV), *Sen dinne* (Sen TV). Reports are rarer: *Al Juma* (on TFM mosques), *Taxawaayou daara* (on Mourchid TV schools). The “interview” genre also returns to the *Yoon wi* (2STV) and *Laaye Biir* (Mourchid TV) formats. Religious programs that allow interaction with the public in the form of *questions and answers* feature prominently *Tontou Bataaxkhal* (RTS), *Firi gent* (TFM), *Fatwa* (Walf TV), *Xaima Xam Xam* (RTS). The “Investigation” and documentary formats remain little explored.

Each television station has a “flagship” program, the lack of audience measurement tools does not make it easy to classify the most followed programs

by the public, but the number of views on YouTube makes it possible to identify them. Thus, according to the number of views on YouTube, programs related to *Tafsir* (commentary/exegesis of the Qur'an) are positioned at the forefront of the audiences, they are presented by Ustaz of great notoriety. The table below gives an idea of the shows that are popular with the public. The choice was made for the largest audience for each program.

Table 2. Number of views for the most-watched show by channel (source YouTube.com, 2020)

Television	Program	No. Of views	Date
RTS	<i>Al Bayaan</i>	2k	20-03-2020
2STV	<i>Yoon wi</i>	88k	28-04-2020
DTV	<i>Ndenkaane</i>	66k	07-03-2018
TFM	<i>Sira</i>	73k	31-05-2018
SEN TV	<i>Sen dinee</i>	7.2k	23-10-2020
ITV	<i>Tafsir Al Quran</i>	53k	14-08-2020
LAMP FALL TV	<i>Jazboul Mouride</i>	31k	29-09-2020
MOURCHID TV	<i>Daray Mag gni</i>	5k	24-04-2020
WALF TV	<i>Dinee with Diamono</i>	11k	22-10-2020

2.2 "Society" programs with a religious dimension

Programs with a religious dimension are found in the theme "Society" with 12.95% according to the thematic distribution of the NARC. The table below lists the most followed PRDs by television channel. Alongside RPs, programs with a religious dimension offer the image of arenas in which social and political theories, explanations and conceptions of the world collide.

Moderated mainly by women (facilitator), the voice of religion is carried by a visiting specialist, who acts as an expert in the field of *shari'a* alongside academics, practitioners and columnists. PDRs often take the form of talks or *talk shows* and focus on themes focused on the role of women (rights and duties) in Senegalese society. The increased visibility of religious programs in the Senegalese cultural landscape is not solely due to the privileged position of spiritual capital; it is also linked to the rise of new religious figures with unconventional profiles in the television realm.

Table 3. Broadcast with a religious dimension

Channel	Programs with a religious dimension
RTS 1	<i>Jeeg ak kerem (The Woman in Her Home)</i>
	<i>Li ci bir Sey (In Marriage)</i>
2STV	<i>Keur Gui (Family Affair)</i>
	Celebrities & Religions
TFM	<i>Wareef, (duties)</i>
	<i>Quartier Général (Headquarters)</i>
	<i>Yeewulen (Wake Up)</i>
SEN TV	<i>Guiss guiss (Opinion)</i>
	<i>Waxtanéko (Let's talk about it)</i>
	The Grand Plateau
WALF TV	<i>Keur Sidy (Sidy's house)</i>
DTV	<i>Ndenkaane (Counseling)</i>
MOURCHID TV	<i>Kepparu jigeen gni (Women's World)</i>
	<i>Ker sama (My house)</i>
LAMP FALL TV	<i>Ett bi (the courtyard)</i>
	<i>Nun ak yen (You and Us)</i>
	<i>Wajal Ndaw (Youth Counseling)</i>

3. Religious Figures Between Individuation and Alternative Discourses

In the context of charismatic religious relations, individuals are designated as referents and recognized as such. In Senegal, preachers are first and foremost the spokesmen of Islam because religious discourse requires a selection process, a body of recognized and legitimate representatives.

3.1 Process of legitimation and individuation of religious figures

In reference to the Weberian trilogy, preachers embody legitimate domination: legal, traditional, and charismatic. The legal authority of preachers comes from the fact that their discourses are supported by “codified rules” in the Qur’an, legal and *jurisprudential sources/foundations (shari'a)*. They are qualified and religious specialists. They also embody the authority of tradition and invite the community to the duty of obedience and respect for customs. Finally, preachers have a charism that is expressed through the emotional support of the community through *their leadership*.

The media legitimized the spiritual power and moral authority of these religious leaders. In this sense, preachers are understood as *leaders*, i.e. a media icon who travels through the media, ubiquitous, to configure a symbol (Cortes and Ferreira, 2018). Thus, convinced that the media pave the way for popularity, and establish their legitimacy, some figures stand out through demonstration/staging (Goffman, 1976) and others are acclaimed on social networks, “connected imam” (Havard and al, 2020). Television sets have ended up imposing their image linked to a new religious discourse. This legitimization of power by popular approval through the media is a characteristic of the democratization of religious power (Damome, 2018).

It appears that the growing media coverage has favored the emergence of atypical figures of preachers. We can thus distinguish five profiles of preachers: ultra-conformist Ustaz, *Sufi* Preachers, preachers with hybrid discourses, Ustaz “accomplices” to women’s rights, and sauthority figures. The observation was that, on the one hand, “new religious figures oscillate between an individualization of religious sentiment and an anchoring in the community” on the other hand, [...] There is a hyper-personalization of certain religious figures” (Savado and Gomez-Perez, 2011). The analysis of religious discourse shows a hybridization between the logic of individuation and individualization.

3.2 From conformist figures to complicit preachers

Overall, the preachers address the fundamentals of marriage, the status and role of women, and women’s health. They also deal with the main issues around life as a couple, inheritance, divorce, etc.

Table 4. Selected programs: analysis of the content of the speeches

TV CHANNEL	PROGRAM	TYPE	PROFESSION	DATE	VIEWS	THEME PRINCIPAL
RTS 1	The Way of the Believer	RP	<i>Imam</i>	5/3/2020	571	The Status of Women in Islam
DTV	<i>Ndenkaane</i>	PRD	<i>Oustaz</i>	20/10/2019	4945	Birth control: balancing well-being, risks, and refusals
DTV	<i>Ndenkaane</i>	PRD	<i>Oustaz</i>	20/1/2020	2348	Safe abortion
LAMP FALL TV	<i>Ett bi</i>	PRD	Host	18/2/2020	261	Islam and Birth control

ITV	<i>Cambar ci diine</i>	RP	<i>Imam</i>	12/3/2020	4918	Muslim women between tradition and modernity
2STV	<i>Keur gui</i>	PRD	Host	14/11/2019	3234	Marriage
LAMP FALL TV	<i>Ett bi</i>	PRD	Host	1-07-2020	221	<i>Wareffu Boroom Keur ci Ndjaboot Gui</i> (the duties of the head of family)
MOURCHID TV	Ramadan universities	RP	Host	19-05-2018	2 134	Ramadan Universities
DTV	<i>Al wassaya</i>	RP	<i>Oustaza</i>	05-06-2017	88 580	Life as a couple
RTS 1	<i>Li ci beer sey</i>	PRD	Host	28-01-2020	325 502	NAY (stinginess)
ITV	<i>Yaay aycha</i>	RP	<i>Oustaza</i>	23-05-2020	1 198	Role of Women with the Prophet (peace be upon him)
ITV	<i>Lgc</i>	RP	<i>Oustaza</i>	02-10-2020	484	The Role of Women in the Teaching of the Qur'an and Islamic Education
ITS TV	<i>Guiss guiss</i>	PRD	Host	26-08-2020	32 975	Infidelity in a Relationship: Fashion or Temptation
SEN TV	<i>Wareef</i>	PRD	Host	26-10-2020	13 655	Domestic violence
TFM	<i>Wareef</i>	PRD	Host	17-03-2020	6 100	<i>Wareefu Jigueen Si Askan Wi</i> (the role of women in the society)

Depending on the profile, the discourses oscillate between subordination, affirmation, complicity and “subtle” resistance.

Ultra-conformists are represented in Senegal by what are commonly known as the “*ibadou*” (Mané, 2018), qualified as fundamentalists. Both Arabists and graduates of modern universities, “These reformists, who are highly critical of the marabouts and the government, advocate a rigorous Islam, free of *Sufi* brotherhoods innovations and respectful of the holy texts” (op. cit). Through a normative discourse, they refute any reprehensible change (*bid'a*). Promoters of women’s religious education for rigorous practice, they are at the same time often

in favor of maintaining the unconditional *status quo* “men have firm authority over women.” Their female counterpart comes from a new elite of Arabists asserting spiritual authority through their religious knowledge and mastery of the Arabic language (Otayek 1993a). These preachers, commonly known as “*Sayyda*”, are mostly from the JIR school (Jamatonou Ibadou Rahmane, a major reformist school in Senegal). On the basis of normative discourses, they favor the *compliant agency* approach (Burke 2012), which consists of calling on women to conform to the logic of the social order without a critical reading of the fundamental texts of Islam, i.e. a logic of acceptance and subordination.

The Sufi preachers represents Maliki Islam. As a reminder, Islam in Senegal is predominantly sufis-based. It is therefore quite natural that the disciples from these religious families (*Tidjane, Mouride, Layéne, Khadre*) are represented in the television landscape, and in the television channels dedicated to them, Lamp Fall TV (*Mouridism*) and Mourchid TV (a branch of Tivaouane’s *Tidjanism*). As far as women’s rights are concerned, they are the privileged spokespersons of the patriarchal tradition, which they nevertheless manage to combine with a compassionate perspective towards women. All the more so since we have been witnessing for the past twenty years ‘the emergence of a female elite: as teachers, exegetes or Sufis who have climbed the “*daraja*” (ladders) [...] who are very numerous in the ‘*daah'ira*’ (religious associations) and constitute the bulk of the marabouts’ clientele’ (Mbow, 2001)

Preachers with more committed speeches in favor of women’s rights stand out with a subtle mix of normative and alternative discourses. They favor pious agency approaches (Mahmood 2009), *using the potential of their status but also their limits to challenge or integrate social norms*; and pious critical agency (Rinaldo 2014), Similarly, relying on the fundamental texts of Islam to provide a critical exegesis in order to contribute to changing social and gender dynamics and raising awareness among women about their rights within the community (Gomez-Perez, 2018). Through discourses, they use tactics to “reappropriate religious knowledge and thereby distance themselves from patriarchal interpretations of religious texts in order to make them aware of their rights” (op. cit.). Considered a pioneer, F.B.D. intends to “introduce women to authentic Islam because men mix Islam and tradition”. For example, it encourages women to practice Birth control in the event of close pregnancies, taking into account the woman’s health. It has an atypical profile combining the reformist-Salafist school (JIR), and the neo-sufis milieu, (with the *Tidjane dahira* called *Ababacar Sy* (which became the *dahira* of the *Moustarchidines*). Younger profiles like this “*Sayyda*” are slowly starting to emerge at the level of RPs and PRDs, they can be found on TFM, on Sen TV, DTV, ITV, Lamp Fall, Mourchid TV, but a little less so on RTS.

We can remember that they have a hybrid profile halfway between acceptance, affirmation and “subtle” resistance. The other characteristic of these *pious critical agency* preachers refers to authority figures leading to a certain “stardom.”

Authority figures who have become stars occupy a prominent place on television sets. Indeed, the market for religious programs has contributed to accentuating the hyper-personalization of the host insofar as his or her religious knowledge is staged in order to account for his or her authority, eloquence and religious legitimacy (Gomez-Perez and Madore, 2013) to the public. Some women become authority figures. At this level, F.B.D., with its great notoriety as well as its positions on women’s rights, positions itself as a figurehead. ZF, a preacher (deceased) who was highly visible in the media, had also distinguished herself as an authority figure among women and girls. Some preachers have acquired the audience of real stars: P.H, M.F and I.N etc. The latter has built a place for himself in the Senegalese media by shaking up the codes of language and addressing taboo subjects (modalities of sexual relations in the couple, causes and modalities of the great ablution, etc.). In addition, most of the star figures display a certain “complicity” for women’s rights.

Finally, “**complicit**” preachers (Berrada and Schensul, 2018), without compromising their anchoring in Islam, promote women’s rights at the level of the home, society, education, etc. With reference to Koranic texts or hadiths, they galvanize women, who remain their target audiences. They condemn misogyny (lack of fulfillment in the couple, domestic violence, etc.). On closer inspection, this complicity seems to cover socio-economic logic (women are the main “clients” of these preachers. They regularly organize religious conferences led by these well-known Ustaz, who are progressive towards women. Indeed, the use of the media has given rise to an alternative religious discourse in order not only to meet the demands of a female audience. However, due to the factors (social, cultural, etc.) that are strongly anchored in the transmission of knowledge, the latter are in fact reluctant to gender equality.

Conclusion

In summary, concerning the connection between religion and television, the trend of audiovisual liberalization expands religious programming, strengthens the mediatization of religious figures, and concurrently reshapes the discourse on religion. The results of this research confirm a relatively wide religious programming through *mainstream* television and Sufis channels. By combining religious and religious programs, we obtain very important time slots dedicated to religion in the television space. The interactive format of religious programs allows television stations to expand their audience but also to have

subsequent revenues through voice servers. There is also a growing interest among advertisers in religious programs, and some programs are even sponsored.

In addition, due to the plurality of religious programs, new figures of preachers have emerged and are brought to the forefront of television sets. Among them, a minority of women stand out in preaching with atypical profiles essentially from the reformist school, women belonging to *Sufi* brotherhoods appear a little less on television sets even if they constitute the main audience for religious and religious programs. This interest in preaching seems to be dictated by a variety of factors. The opening of Arab universities to young Senegalese who, upon their return, choose teaching and preaching as their main activity (Samb, 2017) alongside the *Oustaz* from the *daaras* (Wolof term for religious school) and *sufis* families. The various requests (lectures, learning of the Qur'an, etc.) from women mean that the essential discourses revolve around the subjects that concern them. The other factor reveals economic underpinnings related to services or sponsors (travel agencies, clothing, food, etc.). These are all factors that explain, on the one hand, the growing interest in preaching and, on the other hand, the tendency towards the *dilution* of religious discourse.

Similarly, concerning religious discourses, content analysis does not enable an in-depth study; an approach like lexicometry would have been necessary to better highlight occurrences and similarities. However, the study highlights a confrontation between fundamentalists, conformists and other Sufi preachers, who are strongly anchored in Senegalese cultural codes. Moreover, when it comes to women-related subjects, the hybrid/complicit discourse seems to emerge. In this regard, among the five profiles identified, only the conformists are part of a logic of acceptance and subordination, the others oscillate between complicity and subtle resistance to social and gender logic, in order to make women aware of their rights within the community. However, it must be recognized that because of the factors (social, cultural, etc.) that are strongly rooted in the transmission of knowledge, preachers are in fact reluctant to gender equality. In other words, a complementarity between the logic of individuation and individualization.

In addition, thanks to the Internet, which has led to an increase in the number of channels for broadcasting religious programs and a wider audience (Gomez-Perez, 2018), a new generation of clerics is positioning themselves as "connected imams" (Havard et al., 2020). It would be interesting to study these new profiles of preachers 2.0 or religious "influencers".

References

- Cohen, M., Dianteill, E., Hervieu-Léger, D., & Saint-Martin, I. (dir.) (2005). *La modernité rituelle. Rites politiques et religieux des sociétés modernes*. Paris : L'Harmattan.
- Cortes, D. F., & Ferreira, J. (2018). Une religion à double lien: médiatique et religieux? (Afipe, Bresil). *Revue française des sciences de l'information et de la communication*, (13).
- Damome, É. (2018). Religions et médias au Ghana et au Togo. *Revue française des sciences de l'information et de la communication*, (13).
- Delforce, B., & Noyer, J. (1999). Pour une approche interdisciplinaire des phénomènes de médiatisation: constructivisme et discursivité sociale. *Études de communication. langages, information, médiations*, (22), 13-40. <https://doi.org/10.4000/edc.2341>
- Doner, K- B. (2016). *Hypervisibility: medias an religions in Turkey*. Berlin: De Gruyter
- Douyère, D. (coord.) (2016). *Le religieux, le sacré, le symbolique et la communication, Cahiers de la Sfsic*, 12, 107-209.
- Douyère, D., & Antoine, F. (2018). Penser l'entrelacs des religions et des médias. *Revue française des sciences de l'information et de la communication*, (13). DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/rfsic.3756>.
- Dufour, S. (2014). La *parresia* : le Verbe et la vérité. L'évangélisation selon le pape François. dans Bratosin, S et Tudor, M. (dir.), *Espace public et communication de la foi*, Iarsic, 137-149.
- Duteil-Ogata, F., Jonveaux, I., Kuczynski, L. et Nizard, S. (dir.). (2015). *Le religieux sur internet*, Paris : L'Harmattan, 330 p.
- Frede, B. et HILL, J. (2014). Introduction: En-Gendering Islamic Authority in West Africa. *Islamic Africa*, 5, 2 : 131-165,
- Goffman, E., & Kihm, A. (1973). *La mise en scène de la vie quotidienne* (Vol. 2). Paris: Editions de minuit.
- Gomez-Perez M. et F. Madore. (2013). Prêcheurs(es) musulman(e)s et stratégies de communication au Burkina Faso depuis 1990. Des processus différenciés de conversion interne ». *Théologiques*, 21, 2 : 121-157.
- Gomez-Perez, M. (2018). Prêchesses arabisantes à Dakar et à Ouagadougou: des logiques d'individualisation et d'individuation. *Anthropologie et Sociétés*, 42(1), 205-226.
- Guilhaumou, J. (2012). Autour du concept d'agentivité. *Rives méditerranéennes*, (41), 25-34.

- Havard, J. F., Wilhelm, C., & Malick Diouf, F. (2020). Un imam «connecté» au Sénégal. Auto-entrepreneuriat religieux et stratégie «agendatique». *Communication & langages*, (3), 35-55.
- Jreijiry, R. (2017). La visite de Benoît XVI au Liban (2012) : décalage ou concordance des dispositifs communicationnels ? *Essachess*, 10/2(20), 171-187. Repéré à <http://essachess.com/index.php/jcs/article/view/394/440>.
- Mahmood, S. (2009). *Politique de la piété. Le féminisme à l'épreuve du nouveau islamique*. Paris : Éditions La Découverte.
- Mané, I. (2018). *Les «ibadou» du Sénégal. Logiques religieuses, logiques identitaires*. Thèse de doctorat. France : Université Pau.
- Marchessault, G. (2007). *La foi chrétienne et le divertissement médiatique. Essai de théologie pratique*. Québec : Presses de l'Université Laval.
- Marie, A. (1997) *L'Afrique des individus*. Paris : Karthala Éditions.
- Mbow, P. (2001). L'islam et la femme sénégalaise. *Éthiopiennes: Revue socialiste de culture négro-africaine*, (66-67), 203-224.
- Rinaldo, R. (2014). Pious and Critical : Muslim Women Activists and the Question of Agency. *Gender and Society*, 28, 6 : 824-846.
- Riondet, O. (2014). Les médias dans l'espace public chez Jürgen Habermas et le rite dans la communauté croyante chez Jürgen Moltmann. *MEI*, 38, 177-188. Disponible
- Samb, M. (2017). Médias, Religions et Dialogue islamo-chrétien en Afrique de l'Ouest: exemple pilote des médias sénégalais. *Revue internationale des francophonies*, (1).
- Savadogo, M., & Gomez-Perez, M. (2011). La médiatisation des prêches et ses enjeux. Regards croisés sur la situation à Abidjan et à Ouagadougou». *Revue Ethnographique de l'Institut d'Ethnologie de l'Université de Neuchâtel*, 22, 1-25.
- Schulz, D. (2012b). Dis/Embodying Authority : Female Radio "Preachers" and The Ambivalences of Mass-Mediated Speech In Mali. *International Journal Middle East Studies*, 44 : 23-43,
- Simondon, G. (1989). *L'individuation psychique et collective*. Paris : Aubier.